

"UNRRA has had steady publicity now for about 18 months—but what has UNRRA done during that time? UNRRA, we supposed, would dash into occupied countries as soon as they were liberated—but it hasn't. Europe was longing for UNRRA's help, we believed—but now the Western countries seem much less anxious to receive UNRRA's help. Volunteers were called for in New Zealand—but only one so far has actually been engaged. Is UNRRA a washout? Have we been led up the garden path in offering it personal goodwill and a national contribution, and in organising our voluntary activities through CORSO? We've got steam up, but nowhere to go..."

# HITLER'S FAULT—NOT UNRRA'S

*Though Results Are Not Yet Spectacular, Relief Work For Liberated Countries Goes Steadily Ahead*



UNRRA'S BOTTLENECK No. ONE: The "Combined Boards" control practically all essential world supplies, including shipping. UNRRA is advocate before them for countries that cannot speak for themselves. Left to right: Oliver Lyttelton (Britain), Donald Nelson (U.S.A.), C. D. Howe (Canada).

HAVING discovered that this was more or less how many people were feeling about UNRRA, *The Listener* used the presence in New Zealand of Dr. Walter Chudson, UNRRA's Deputy-Director of Supply for the Pacific Area, and of the New Zealand delegates returning from UNRRA's conference in Sydney, to find answers to these questionings.

Dr. Chudson, young, slight, brown-skinned, soft-voiced, spectacled and modest, former Rhodes scholar, and economist, was clear if cautious in his answers.

"Certainly we are not running spectacular soup kitchens in France," said he, "nor paying every business man any old price for all the stocks he wants to get rid of. But then our job never was conceived to be dispensing charity in either of these ways. When a country is liberated the military authorities have to keep its essential services going and its people somehow fed for the first few months or longer. For UNRRA to come in before military control lets up would merely make worse confusion. Then when UNRRA does take over in any place it does so only to the extent that the local government asks it to. We go to places to assist local effort, not to replace it or to dominate it. Furthermore, it was always understood that countries which had funds abroad should pay for their own requirements. But, anyhow, as I said, soup-kitchening is only the first few days' stage of relief and ought to be over by the time UNRRA arrives in most countries. Our job is much more positive and long-term. We have to set the farms and necessary factories working again and the health and transport systems on their way. This undertaking is far away more important and complicated than private relief was after last war."

## Bigger Job Than Last Time

"But apparently, Dr. Chudson, from what you say it is not going to be so extensive."

"No, that's not so. France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland and Norway have the money to buy their own needs—when they can get them. Italy, too, is only a limited responsibility to us. (The Army feeds Italy: UNRRA looks after only mothers, children, and refugees at its request.) Then in the Far East China is the only country to ask for help so far. But this still leaves us more people to help, and more far-reaching help is needed for them than all last war's relief organisations faced together.

What's more, for all that our 200,000,000 dollar budget looks enormous, it is only two-thirds of what they spent. The more countries that can help themselves from the jump, the more UNRRA has for the rest and the better we shall be pleased."

## "All Tuned Up But Unable to Start"

"But are you helping any countries at present?"

"Sure we are. And it's not UNRRA's fault—or the Allied armies' for that matter—that the war didn't stop when some expected it would, and left us in some places all tuned up but unable to start. You know, I suppose, that we have been running refugee camps of over 50,000 for Yugoslavs and Greeks in the Middle East and that our men worked in Greece (some got shot, too, by mistake) under the military administration. We have recently signed an agreement with the new Greek Government to look after their country's full needs. Then we have men and goods in Yugoslavia and have even been able to send supplies—thanks to Russian help—by a dog's-leg roundabout through the Black Sea to Poland and Czechoslovakia. Distances are big in Eastern Europe. Ports and roads are poor. War uses the transport. I admit we haven't got much in so far."

"Then you definitely have the goods piled up somewhere?"

"Not always piled up," said Dr. Chudson. "But secured—if not immediately, then for some future date. That has been UNRRA's job so far. First, the quiet and steady discovery of just what goods are likely to be needed, and where, and when. Second, a needle-in-the-haystack hunt to run supplies of them to earth somewhere, or find places to grow them, or factories able to start making them for us. Doing that, we have to contend with the fact that most countries are rationed already and have no surpluses. What is more, surpluses, where they exist, are allotted round the world by the combined U.S. and U.K.



DR. WALTER CHUDSON  
He stacks the stock-piles

Boards, and UNRRA is only one claimant before these Boards for what essential military needs leaves them to spare. Actually, shifting in and distributing goods will be only the last phase of our job. Our biggest service to a country is done before ever we send it one ship. UNRRA is advocate before the Combined Boards for communities that cannot speak for themselves. It is procurement agent and will be finder of shipping for them. It is already manufacturing locomotives and rolling stock for some countries and has even arranged to have produce grown and factories set up to manufacture for others."

## Prospects for the East

Considerably reassured that, whatever unexplained delays might occur in West or East for military or political reasons, UNRRA was really on the job, *The Listener* inquired of the New Zealand delegates to UNRRA's Far Eastern Conference at Lapstone what prospects were for UNRRA's Eastern work.

"At our Conference in Sydney," said C. G. Burton, Wellington Vocational

Guidance Officer, who represented New Zealand on the Welfare Technical Subcommittee, "we were mostly getting our task surveyed and our people lined up. This gives no immediate spectacular results, but it saves months and millions later on. Imagine us over there as fitting together a jigsaw picture of the Chinese situation from little bits of unrelated information from the military commands, letters, reports, and people recently come out. This gives us data for the sort of gear and personnel to obtain and for the sort of training to give them. This was all done for Europe long ago, of course. As far back as six months ago 500 to 600 trained people were in Egypt equipped and ready to move into the Balkans as soon as ships and military necessities would let them. Half of them, incidentally, were from voluntary organisations like our CORSO. Volunteers have actually been able to do more in Western Europe than the official UNRRA staff. However, to have started training personnel for the Far East earlier than now would have been wasteful."

## Volunteers Through CORSO?

"But people are wanted from New Zealand to help UNRRA, aren't they?"

"I am sure some New Zealanders will be taken. Only let us remember that the entire UNRRA staff is small, and that New Zealand is a comparatively small place also. Volunteers through CORSO, carefully selected, may well make up a team—perhaps more. But Chinese relief will probably be our main job, and the opportunity for it has not yet come."

"And how will Far Eastern relief and rehabilitation be different from European, Mr. Burton?"

"Well, to speak of my own field: 'Welfare work,' as we call it, means everywhere providing first of all for the elemental needs of food, clothing, and shelter. But that is only the start. Getting education and recreation going is just as important if people are to feel themselves settled back again into their community life—and they are not rehabilitated in any but a superficial sense until that happens. Obviously the pattern of daily life is different in China from that in Europe. Therefore our job of winding it up to start ticking again is different. For example, we must bring in hoes, not tractors, to a country of three-acre farms. We must supply food not too different from what they are used to eating. Any clothing will do for men, but we must not collect clothing, either new or secondhand, which Chinese women will think it indecent to wear."

## Farming and Food in China

Mention of farming and food took us to another New Zealand delegate to the Sydney UNRRA Conference, Brian Low, Economist at Massey Agricultural College. Mr. Low had worked for some years at Nanking University, and knew Chinese agriculture at first hand.

"At any time," said he, "China's 400 millions live on the margin of subsistence, and every year there is starvation

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