

# CHEAP AT THE PRICE

## *Where These American Food Talks Touch Us*

**W**E, the New Zealand Public, are dimly aware that conferences concerned with feeding and generally rehabilitating the world after the war have been, or are being, held in America. Press editorials have assured us that they are no less important in the long run than the more obviously useful, exciting and colourful conferences at Quebec, Casablanca, Moscow, Cairo and Teheran. Nevertheless, the papers that said this gave them no banner headlines or columns of surmise à la Quebec, Moscow, Casablanca, etc., but only occasional bald paragraphs in out-of-the-way corners. Instead of front page politicians in attendance, we were given chiefly names we had never heard before. And even the conference titles were cumbersome and meandering — United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture (Hot Springs, May-June), and United Nations Relief and Reconstruction Administration (UNRRA, Atlantic City, November).

However, when Mr. Nash told us during the election campaign that we should have to keep our belts pulled in after the war until Greeks, Jews, Russians, Frenchman, Chinese, Italians (and even Japanese), could let theirs out a hole or two, we realised where Hot Springs touched us. Now UNRRA has promised to touch us, too—for eight million dollars!

### What It Will Cost

All the nations are being similarly billed—U.S.A. itself for \$1,100,000,000! Yet actually these sums are about one per cent of national income—2½d in the pound. Compared with one week's

war expenses, or considered as the cash price of building a better world, they strikingly reverse the usual ratio between demolition and construction costs. However, a better world, not in windy phrases but in solid terms of human welfare, is just what UNRRA is after. It is not merely another resolution-passing conference, note, but an international "Administration" in active being, with World and Regional Committees, and a permanent Director-General in Herbert Lehmann, ex-Governor of New York State, and head of OFRRO (Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations), which restored North Africa.



*"One of these little ones . . .": A U.S. Army sergeant shares his food rations with five hungry Italian children*



**DR. R. M. CAMPBELL**  
*They listened to him*

### Food—And Exercise!

Its personnel, too, are not likely to be dull—not intellectually dull at any rate, since they are the experts for whose planning our statesmen will in due course take full credit. The Hot Springs delegates appear to have been bright in other ways also. Hot Springs Homestead (!) is an enormous health-resort hotel in the Virginian mountains, and golf clubs and tennis rackets as well as statistics sheets and agricultural tomes swelled the load of luggage. Though working from 9.0 a.m. till midnight on solid technical sub-committees, the Conference's "spiritual father"—white-haired and witty Frank Lidgett McDougal from Australia—and our own James Fawcett, Director-General of Agriculture, made time to show that Australia and New Zealand have other uses besides agriculture for green fields. India's Hardit Singh Malik put Europe and both Americas in the shade by excelling not only on links and debating floor but on tennis court and ballroom floor also. Conference iists reveal a preponderance of Spanish names. For Latin America is a sick man's society largely through lack of balanced diets, and its Governments were intensely interested. But Chinese, Filipino and Persian faces also appear in the conference photographs—not to mention the black face of Yilma Deressa (Ethiopia), vice-chairman of the committee concerned with "Measures for Shifting Production Out of Commodities in Chronic Surplus Toward Commodities the Supply of Which Should be Increased."

Political considerations barely intruded among these practical men bent upon results rather than personal prestige. (However, reports say that though the Giraudist delegate spoke excellent English, he would never use it in the presence of his purely French-speaking de Gaullist colleague). And when, on the final day, Alexei Krutikov (nicknamed "Inskrutikov"), who, with his Russians had sat silent and sphinx-like through all discussions, announced that the Soviet would stand solidly behind the decisions of the last 16 days, it was plain that world agreement on how to attain world food sufficiency was, in outline at least, attained.

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**CHILDREN OF ALGIERS** line up with their cups and containers to receive milk from the Red Cross. Allied relief agencies are following close on the heels of advancing armies