

1944
NEW ZEALAND

UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND REHABILITATION ADMINISTRATION

REPORT OF THE NEW ZEALAND DELEGATION TO THE FIRST MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL AT ATLANTIC CITY, N.J., 10TH NOVEMBER TO 1ST DECEMBER, 1943

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Leave

The Agreement formally constituting the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration was signed at the White House in Washington, D.C., on 9th November, 1943. Immediately thereafter, on 10th November, the first session of the Council of UNRRA was convened at Atlantic City, New Jersey, continuing until 1st December.

In the preamble to the Agreement the determination is expressed that immediately upon the liberation of any area its population shall receive aid and relief from their sufferings, food, clothing and shelter, assistance in the prevention of pestilence and in the recovery of health. The preamble further sets out as amongst the essential purposes of the Agreement the making of adequate arrangements for the return of prisoners in exile to their homes, the resumption of urgently needed agricultural and industrial production, and the restoration of essential services. To these ends provision is made as follows:—

(1) The necessary authority is vested in UNRRA to plan, co-ordinate, and administer measures for the relief of victims of war in any area under the control of the United Nations—activities within any territory in which a member Government exercises administrative authority being carried out after consultation with and with the consent of that member Government.

(2) The Administration is also given power to acquire, hold, and convey property, enter into contracts, and undertake obligations appropriate to its objects and purposes.

(3) The Council of UNRRA which is to meet not less than twice a year and to which each member Government names one representative, is constituted the policy-making body of the Administration. Voting is to be by simple majority, except in the case of amendments to the Agreement when a two-thirds vote is required, and the Council is empowered to determine its own rules of procedure.

(4) There is provision for a Central Committee of the Council consisting of representatives of China, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom, and the United States of America, with authority to make policy decisions of an emergency nature between sessions of the Council. All such decisions, however, are open to reconsideration by the Council at any of its regular or special sessions. The participation of representatives of a member Government at meetings of the Central Committee where action of special interest to such Government is discussed, is provided for. Similar provision is made for the Chairman of the Committee on Supplies to attend meetings at which policies affecting the provision of supplies are under consideration.

(5) The Committee on Supplies is to consist of those members of the Council representing countries which are likely to be the principal suppliers of materials for relief and rehabilitation. The Agreement provides also for the appointment by the Council of two Regional Standing Committees, one for Europe and another for the Far East, to advise the Council and Central Committee on relief and rehabilitation policies within their respective areas. The Council is empowered to appoint such other regional or technical advisory Committees as it considers necessary. In this respect, specific reference is made to such problems as nutrition, health, agriculture, repatriation, and finance.

(6) Executive authority is vested in a Director-General appointed by the Council on the unanimous nomination of the Central Committee. The Director-General is given full power and authority for carrying out relief operations within the limits of available resources and the broad policies determined by the Council or its Central Committee. In carrying out these operations he and his representatives are required to consult and collaborate with the appropriate United Nations authorities and to use wherever practicable the facilities made available by such authorities.

(7) To ensure co-ordination of policy and best use of available resources, the Agreement stipulates that foreign voluntary relief agencies shall not operate in any area receiving relief from UNRRA without the consent of the Director-General.