

Fifth Committee

After approving its report to the General Assembly on cost estimates for the United Nations Operation in the Congo, the Fifth Committee took over on October 16 consideration of the organization's estimates for 1964.

In his opening statement to the Committee, the Secretary-General described his budget estimates as "rigidly conservative" and added that he would not consider it wise for expenditures to be reduced below the level he proposed. (The Secretary-General has presented an initial gross-expenditure budget of \$96,611,350 for 1964, from which the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has recommended reductions totalling \$1,115,570). The Secretary-General also warned the Committee that operations were likely to continue at a financial deficit for some time. For his own part, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee stated that any expansion during the coming year would be controlled and the initiation of new activities would mean a proportionate curtailment of existing operations and programmes.

Appropriations so far agreed to by the Committee (November 15) on first reading include: Travel and other expenses of representatives and members of United Nations organs (\$1,774,000); special meetings in 1964 (\$2,370,000); travel of staff (\$1,988,000); hospitality (\$105,000); permanent equipment (\$482,000); operation maintenance and rentals (\$3,610,000); general expenses (\$4,014,000); printing (\$1,424,000); special expenses (\$7,712,800); special missions (\$2,350,000); United Nations field missions (\$1,525,700); salaries and wages (\$45,083,980); common staff costs (\$10,347,000); technical programmes (\$6,400,000); Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (\$2,275,000), and International Court of Justice (\$955,000). The Committee also approved, in first reading, an estimate of \$9,365,000 under Income Section 1 of the Budget: Staff Assessment Income.

Speaking in the general debate on the budget on October 28, the representative of Canada, Senator D'Arcy Leonard, declared that Canada, with others, believed that a strong United Nations was one of the best guarantees for development and independence in a peaceful world. If the United Nations was to develop into an organization capable of playing a larger and more effective role in the solution of international problems however, it had first to be placed on a firm financial foundation, to which end arrears would have to be liquidated. With this in view, Senator Leonard suggested preparation of a list outlining the amounts owing by member states to all United Nations accounts and to those of the Specialized Agencies. He also felt that the current period of budgetary containment should be used to organize priorities for United Nations activities and to make procedural and organizational changes, since there were clearly not enough funds to carry out all proposed activities. In particular, Senator Leonard called for a rationalization of the organization's pattern of conferences. A first step in this direction might be to postpone or eliminate those programmes and meetings not absolutely essential in 1964. Finally, Senator Leonard looked to the United Nations to make