



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
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SPECIAL SESSION - 22nd PARLIAMENTHUNGARIAN REFUGEES

Following is the text of a statement in the House of Commons by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, the Hon. J. W. Pickersgill, on Wednesday, November 28, 1956.

The other evening when I spoke on the address I reported to the House everything which the Government had decided to do up to that time; but this afternoon the Government had an opportunity, for tragic reasons, to give further consideration to this question, and it was decided that as almost all refugees have nothing with them, have nothing they can bring with them except the clothes they are wearing, and as many of them have little or no money, it was not reasonable to expect them to try to establish themselves in this country with a debt over their heads at the very start.

It has therefore been decided by the Government not to make the assisted passage a loan but to make it free. This policy, of course, will also apply to those who have already arrived and to those who are en route and who have given an undertaking to make repayment.

I think perhaps I should also tell Hon. Members the Government decided this afternoon, in order to be quite satisfied everything was being done that could and should be done to move as quickly as possible to Canada those Hungarian refugees who wish to come here, that it might be desirable for a member of the Government to go to Vienna to see that everything was being done that could be done. I am proposing therefore to leave on Friday afternoon, and I expect to be in Vienna on Saturday.

S/C