

to draw on its working capital, appears to be continuing. The Commissioner General states in paragraph 64 of his report that it is more than ever essential that the Agency's requirements be adequately financed if it is to carry out its mandate. The Canadian delegation is convinced that at this time it is especially important that the Agency be enabled to carry out its responsibilities. The alternative of severely cutting UNRWA's expenditures would involve difficult decisions with grievous consequences at the very moment when UNRWA's responsibilities have increased as a result of the recent hostilities. In his summary and conclusions the Commissioner General lists some questions on which the General Assembly will have to take a decision. I should like to comment in turn on each of the questions raised by the Commissioner General in Paragraph 66 of the introduction to his Report.

My delegation believes that UNRWA must continue, so far as possible, its existing services to the registered refugees on the same basis as before the hostilities, in accordance with need, until a solution to the refugee problem is found. The concern of the Canadian Government for the welfare of these refugees has been manifest in its substantial contributions to UNRWA's budget since the creation of the agency, including its emergency contribution last summer. At that time my Government gave an additional \$1 million in food aid and approximately \$225,000 in cash to cover transportation costs. In addition \$100,000 were given to the International Committee for the Red Cross to assist that organization in its invaluable emergency work in the Middle East. On December 6 my Government contributed \$1.2 million in food aid and cash as our regular contribution to the Agency for 1968.

My delegation believes that we cannot refuse to the refugees created by the recent hostilities the assistance which they perhaps need more than any other group. In this context, the Commissioner General mentioned in his statement that, due to events not foreseen at the time his report was drafted, UNRWA's budget will likely fall some 1.5 million dollars short of the agency's requirement for 1968. Some way has to be found to provide funds to meet this need - whether through additional voluntary contributions or some other method.

With respect to the new refugees, my delegation notes that the steps envisaged in Resolution 2252 (ES-V), and Security Council resolution 237 - namely the return to the West Bank of those inhabitants who fled following the outbreak of hostilities - would greatly ease the problem and significantly lighten the burden borne by UNRWA. While we were heartened to see that certain arrangements were made pursuant to these resolutions to bring about a return of new and old refugees to the homes in which they lived prior to the hostilities in June, we have been very disappointed by the results. Paragraphs 185 to 199 of the Secretary-General's report in document A/6797 indicate that the arrangements made in August resulted in the return of only 14,000 individuals out of a total of some 200,000 who were reported to have crossed to the East Bank of Jordan. Moreover, it appears from the Commissioner General's Report that only 3,000 of these returnees were UNRWA-registered refugees. We sincerely hope, Mr. Chairman, that procedures will be instituted - starting either perhaps from the points enumerated at the conclusion of the Secretary-General's note of September 12 (A/6795), or from some