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FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE

Introduction

It is the responsibility of the General Assembly to review the financial and administrative aspects of the work of the United Nations and to approve the budget. The Assembly discharges this task with the assistance of the Administrative and Budgetary (Fifth) Committee which is a Committee of representatives of all member states. The Fifth Committee is, in turn, assisted by the Advisory Committee on Administrative & Budgetary Questions which is composed of nine members including at least two financial experts of recognized standing. The Advisory Committee is responsible for expert examination of the United Nations' budget and at the beginning of each regular session submits to the Assembly a detailed report on the budget for the next financial year and on the accounts for the last financial year. It also reports on a variety of other administrative financial questions referred to it by the Assembly for comments. On the basis of these reports the Fifth Committee debates the questions at issue and makes recommendations to the General Assembly.

In addition to its responsibility for budgetary review, at the thirteenth session the Fifth Committee dealt with administrative questions in connection with public information, documentation, staff pensions and other personnel matters.

Finance

Examination of the Budgets

At its twelfth session the Assembly approved appropriations for 1958 of \$55.1 million. At the thirteenth session supplementary appropriations of \$6.1 million were approved, bringing total appropriations for 1958 to \$61.1 million (agenda item 43). Since miscellaneous income was estimated at \$3.2 million the net budget was \$57.9 million. Canada's share of this amount was 3.09 per cent or \$1.8 million.

The gross budget for 1959 was set at \$60.8 million and miscellaneous income was estimated at \$5.3 million (agenda item 44). The net budget was therefore \$55.5 million. On the basis of an assessment of 3.11 per cent for 1959 Canada's contribution is \$1.7 million.

As will be seen from the above the gross budget for 1958 exceeded that for 1959 by a small margin due to the very heavy 1958 supplementary appropriations of over \$6 million. Of this amount, \$3.7 million or about 60 per cent was required to meet expenses of the United Nations Observation Group in Lebanon and the activities resulting from decisions taken by the General Assembly at its third emergency session in August, 1958. Several delegations expressed deep concern at the size of the supplementaries for 1958 and urged that steps be taken to keep them to a minimum in future years. Before the end of 1959 there will be an unknown amount required for Supplementary Estimates to meet the cost of items which were unforeseen at the time of approving the main budget estimates.