



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 60/28 WORLD REFUGEE YEAR--THE GOVERNMENT PROGRAMME

An address in Toronto on June 29 by Mr. W.B. Nesbitt, Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, at a luncheon meeting of the Canadian Committee for World Refugee Year marking the formal end of World Refugee Year in Canada.

... The Canadian Government was one of the early supporters of the concept of World Refugee Year. On December 5, 1958, the Canadian Delegation supported a resolution in the United Nations General Assembly calling for a World Refugee Year and shortly thereafter the Secretary-General was informed that Canada would actively participate in the programme.

From the outset it was evident that this was a project in which there should be both governmental and private participation. The Government took the view that it should contribute in two ways. In the first place it could undertake specific projects which were costly and difficult and somewhat beyond the scope of the voluntary organizations. The Government could also create conditions which would encourage private individuals and groups to give their support to the voluntary WRY programme. The most important thing was to provide a strong lead in the early months of WRY and to announce significant action by the Government. In this way the public could be made to realize that WRY was something to be taken seriously, something which merited active support.

Before dealing with the special steps taken by the Government in support of WRY, I shall refer briefly to the regular annual contributions which have been made by the Government to the various refugee assistance programmes being carried out by the United Nations. You may already be familiar with some or all of these contributions but it may help to keep the picture in perspective if I list them for you.

Canada's Contribution

In 1959 Canada made the following contributions to the regular budget of continuing refugee programmes:

- (a) To the Camp Clearance Programme of the High Commissioner for Refugees.....\$ 290,000