

Examination of 1952 Budgets of the United Nations and Specialized Agencies

United Nations

The estimates submitted to the sixth session of the Assembly by the Secretary-General called for expenditures during 1952 of \$46,568,300. While this amount was \$1,230,300 below the budget finally approved for 1951, a reduction was possible only because certain exceptional expenditures which appeared in the 1951 budget were not repeated in the 1952 budget. These included the cost of moving to the new headquarters in New York City and the cost of holding certain meetings away from the headquarters. The 1952 estimates actually represented an increase of 6.24 per cent over what the 1951 appropriations would have been without these non-recurrent items.

Although part of this increase reflected the general rise in prices and automatic increments in pay for staff members, large increases were also proposed for new or expanded activities — mainly for the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, information centres, Regional Economic Commissions, contractual printing, and the maintenance of headquarters at the new location.

The Secretary-General added to his original estimates, during the session, by submitting proposals for substantial additional expenditures, including \$1.33 million for a cost-of-living adjustment for headquarters staff, \$1 million to cover part of the increased costs of constructing the headquarters buildings, and \$327,000 for Korean service medals.

In its pre-Assembly examination of the estimates, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had recommended reductions of \$2,035,400, or a budget for 1952 of \$44,532,900. Although the Secretary-General indicated his willingness to accept many of these proposed cuts, he told the Assembly that the adoption of the remaining recommendations of the Advisory Committee would impair the effectiveness of many important United Nations programmes.

The Fifth (Administrative and Budgetary) Committee of the Assembly, after considering the views of both the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee, approved most of the cuts recommended by the Advisory Committee. In its report to the Assembly, the Fifth Committee expressed its confidence that these economies could be achieved “without detriment to any essential activity or service, through better organization of the work of the Secretariat, greater efficiency and versatility on the part of its staff combined with an assurance of reasonable security of tenure, and above all by the elimination of low priority and proliferal activities particularly in the economic and social fields”.

Canada took an active part in the deliberations of the Fifth Committee, whose chairman was a member of the Canadian Delegation. The Canadian Representative in the Committee urged that the resources available to the United Nations be devoted to the most