

Canada/UN co-operation on Latin American refugees

The Minister of Manpower and Immigration, Bud Cullen, who recently met with representatives of the Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America to discuss the plight of refugees in South America, assured them of his concern. "The solution of this problem," he said, "depends on an international effort and Canada will continue to play a vigorous part in close collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)."

Mr. Cullen agreed with members of the group that every effort should continue to be made to expedite the processing of cases referred to Canada by the UNHCR. He emphasized that refugees selected by Canada in Latin America were not required to meet the selection criteria applied to regular immigrants. He also assured the group that all cases referred by the UNHCR to Canada's offices in Latin America were carefully considered in the light of the definition of refugee status embodied in the United Nations Convention on Refugees.

While Canada processes applications as quickly as possible, Mr. Cullen reminded the group of the importance of adequate safeguards to ensure that terrorists and criminals did not enter the country. (Since the inception of the special program for refugees from Latin America, only some 10 per cent of applicants have been refused on security grounds.)

Mr. Cullen emphasized, also, that he was receiving frequent reports and was monitoring closely events in South America. "Should the situation of Latin American refugees deteriorate, Canada in co-operation with the UNHCR will consider further measures," he said.

Canada has accepted more South American refugees for permanent resettlement than has any other country. As of December 31, 1976, the admission of 5,360 persons had been authorized, including 91 political prisoners together with their 200 dependents who have been accepted under a special program for political prisoners in Chile. This special program continues. The Government has spent about \$2.4 million to date to assist South American refugees in establishing themselves in Canada.

Advanced field radio

Canadian-designed, portable field radios, described as "the most advanced in the world", have been bought for the Canadian Armed Forces to augment long-range communications needs, particularly in hilly or built-up areas.

The radios were designed to Canadian Forces specifications by Collins Radio of Canada of Toronto. The contract is for \$6.7 million.

The radio, called the Army-Navy Portable Radio Communications 515, has a range of 15 miles when operating on field antenna, and an unlimited range when connected to a more sophisti-

cated antenna system. It can operate on 280,000 channels, including those used by ships and aircraft.

Including field pack, frame and 25-volt nickel cadmium battery, it weighs 12.6 kilograms (27.8 pounds). The battery may be recharged by a hand-crank attachment while operating in the field.

Project officer for the new set, Lieutenant Robert Lavigne of National Defence headquarters Ottawa, says "it's been three years in development, and some very recent electronics were incorporated, making it the most advanced field radio in the world."

A number of countries are interested in the radio, including Germany, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia and Iran.

Old temporary building goes under the hammer

The first of the Cartier Square "temporary buildings" is being torn down this month under a Public Works plan to demolish all the temporary buildings in Ottawa, Public Works Minister Judd Buchanan announced recently.

There is a story in Ottawa about a public servant who spent his days wandering through the Cartier Square temporary buildings with a file under his arm. He had given up looking for someone who could answer his question and was concentrating on trying to find an exit, quite an achievement for someone not working there. If his ghost is still there, it is hoped it is not in "B" Building on Lisgar Street,

which is now starting to disappear.

"B" Building, as it has been known since the Second World War, was built for the Air Force for \$559,000 in 1942-43. The last National Defence unit to occupy it was the personnel group which has been moved to L'Esplanade Laurier — a new building nearby.

The contractor has until July to clear the site. Plans call for the remaining two buildings on Cartier Square to be torn down this summer.

The term "temporary" was used to describe these buildings as they were entirely constructed of wood, and designed primarily for use during wartime. Out of a total of 15 such buildings four have been removed.

