

Visit of UN High Commissioner for Refugees

ON DECEMBER 9 and 10, 1968, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, His Highness Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, paid an official visit to Ottawa. The purpose of the visit was to review the activities of the UNHCR in assisting refugees in many parts of the world, and to discuss the 1969 programme of his Office with the Minister for Manpower and Immigration, the Honourable Allan MacEachen, and the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, and government officials.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees was established by the UN General Assembly in December 1949 to replace the International Refugee Organization, which had previously protected the interests of refugees. Prince Sadruddin, who was originally appointed for a term of three years in 1962, has recently been re-appointed for a five-year period ending December 31, 1973. The terms of reference laid down by the General Assembly for the UNHCR have also been extended. Conceived originally as a non-operational agency limited mainly to the international protection of refugees, the Office of the High Commissioner is now authorized to appeal for funds and to conduct programmes which provide relief and rehabilitation for the most needy groups of refugees within its mandate.

UNHCR Budget

The 31-member Executive Committee of the UNHCR, of which Canada is a member, has recently approved the 1969 programme involving a record expenditure of \$5.6 million (U.S.). This amount is \$1 million more than in 1968. The contribution of \$370,000 in 1969, increased from \$324,074 in 1968, places Canada third, behind the United States and Sweden, in contributions to the High Commissioner's programme.

The largest part of this budget will be spent in Africa, particularly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (\$876,000) and the Sudan (\$820,000). In addition, some \$500,000 will be used to improve primary education facilities for Congolese, Rwandese and Sudanese refugees in Uganda. Funds will also be used to provide relief for refugees from the Nigerian civil war in Gabon, Togo, Dahomey and Ghana. During his visit to Ottawa, the High Commissioner expressed particular satisfaction with the African programme. Of approximately 800,000 refugees in Africa, only about 70,000 are still receiving food rations; the others have already been integrated into the economies and societies of the countries in which they have sought asylum.

In Asia, a major allocation (\$300,000) has been made to assist in settling aged and handicapped Tibetan refugees in India. The UNHCR has recently established an office in New Delhi to participate in this programme. Considerable