

PALESTINIAN REFUGEES

Other Middle East issues continue to be the centre of attention at the United Nations. One of them has to do with the grave plight of the Palestinian refugees, and in this context one cannot say that any real progress has been made during the past year. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, to give it its full title, has continued to provide essential rations and other relief services, but shortage of funds has increasingly hampered the Agency in its effort to maintain these services or to proceed in an orderly way with the limited rehabilitation projects possible under present conditions.

I am happy to report that Canada during the past nine years has been the fourth largest non-Arab contributor to Palestine refugee relief, and in 1957 Canada was the third largest contributor. We have continued to urge other countries that they should accord greater support to UNRWA in order that there will not be a further decline in the standard of living of these unfortunate refugees. The estimates for 1957-58, at present before the House, seek approval of a Canadian contribution to UNRWA of \$750,000 to cover the 18-month period ending December 31, 1957. When the estimates for 1958-59 are brought before the next session, Parliament will be asked to approve a Canadian contribution to UNRWA of \$500,000 (for the calendar year 1958).

Before I turn from the United Nations I desire to inform the House of certain other contributions to the United Nations extra-budgetary programmes. The following amounts are included in the 1957-58 estimates at present before the House to cover Canadian contributions to these programmes of the United Nations during the calendar year 1957. In the 1958-59 estimates Parliament will be asked by the Government to approve Canadian contributions of the same amounts to cover the programmes of these organizations during the year 1958.

These are the amounts. In addition to UNRWA there is \$2 million to the United Nations Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, \$200,000 to the United Nations Refugee Fund and \$650,000 to the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund. All these proposed contributions are on the same scale as those to which the previous Parliament gave its approval....

There are negotiations going on now at the United Nations - the Minister of Finance referred to this in the House last week - with respect to the providing of financial assistance outside of the Colombo Plan to nations not only in South-East and South Asia but throughout the world. I do not regard the negative vote (cast by the Canadian Delegation to the Economic and Social Council) against the proposal of SUNFED as indicating that the Canadian Government will not support a proposal that I hope will come out of the negotiations....