

External Affairs
Supplementary Paper

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U.N. HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

Text of a statement made on October 26, 1953, by Mr. S.D. Hemsley of the Canadian Delegation to the eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly, on agenda item 28 - work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

I should like to thank the High Commissioner for his clear and persuasive statement on the work of his office.

After our statements in the Third Committee I need hardly assure the High Commissioner of the appreciation that the Government of Canada has of his work. We know he is endeavouring to carry out very difficult and far-reaching responsibilities and we would not like to see any step taken that would hamper him in fulfilling the responsibilities given him by the Assembly. We, therefore, have a great deal of sympathy for the position taken by the distinguished delegate of the Netherlands.

I must, however, revert to an earlier statement, repeated this afternoon, by the distinguished Chairman of the Advisory Committee in which he mentioned that a tight budget is a good budget; and that if the Secretary-General (in accepting the cuts recommended this year) found himself in any part of the budget in a difficult position, he could rely upon a sympathetic hearing from the Advisory Committee. For this reason I am tempted to vote for the recommendation of the Advisory Committee. I will, however, reserve our position until we have heard further from the High Commissioner before voting; for no doubt in his concluding statement, the High Commissioner will wish to give Ambassador Agnides' comments full consideration.

Note - The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had recommended cuts of \$58,000 in the 1954 budget estimates of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (\$743,000). The High Commissioner was unable to convince the Fifth Committee that the recommended cuts would hamper him in the discharge of his important responsibilities. The Advisory Committee's recommendation for a total administrative budget of \$685,000 was approved by 40 in favour (including Canada) and 5 against, with 4 abstentions. The text of the Canadian statement in the Third Committee on agenda item 28 is available in Supplementary Paper 53/35.