

The Government initiated discussions with the High Commissioner for Refugees and consulted the provinces. In consequence, on September 24, 1959, the Secretary of State for External Affairs was able to announce in the General Assembly that, as a special contribution to WRY, Canada would waive immigration regulations and admit a substantial number of tuberculous refugees and their families for treatment. At a press conference immediately following his statement Mr. Green said that the number to be admitted would be at least 100 and possibly more. In the first instance it was decided to admit 100 TB cases since the project involved many novel problems and was a new departure in federal-provincial co-operation. With the co-operation of the provinces, a good deal of red tape was dispensed with and the 100 TB refugee families arrived in Canada by early 1960. As a matter of fact, a senior representative of the High Commissioner for Refugees stated that in all his experience he had never seen a project of this sort implemented so swiftly.

The Canadian TB refugee scheme attracted favourable notice all over the world, and there is no doubt it helped stimulate the world-wide support which built up through the winter for WRY. The High Commissioner for Refugees termed the project a "breakthrough" in that Canada was the first country outside Western Europe to accept refugees afflicted with tuberculosis from the European camps and to accept full financial responsibility for them.

It soon became evident that the first 100 families were being settled in Canada with a high degree of success. With the modern methods of treatment available in Canada the family member suffering from TB responded quickly, and by early spring, almost one-third of the cases were already cured. At the beginning of June, 75 of the cases had been discharged from sanatoria. On June 1, 54 of the men in the group admitted were employed and 31 women were employed. There were 28 other persons considered employable for whom the Government was seeking suitable employment. Those refugees who are out of hospital but not yet working are studying English or French. It is obvious that in the near future almost every family will be well integrated in the Canadian community.

Programme Extended

In view of this success, it was agreed to go ahead with an extension of the programme. The provinces expressed interest in joining in the extension and a similar arrangement was agreed upon, under which they accepted the cost of treatment in the provincial sanatoria; all other expenses (including transportation and maintenance where necessary until the families are reasonably able to support themselves) were paid by the Federal Government. Under the extension so far, arrangements have been made to bring 112 TB cases and their dependents from Europe to the various co-operating provinces in Canada. These cases will be arriving in Canada during the next few weeks. The Federal Government has spent or committed hundreds of thousands of dollars on the TB refugee project and the provincial governments have spent additional amounts. It is not possible to state now the final cost of the project.