

On the other hand, it would be equally useful if the Arab Governments concerned could, for their part, give full support to schemes for rehabilitation and re-settlement of those refugees who prefer not to be repatriated. It is in our view both essential and urgent that the countries concerned should redouble their efforts to overcome any political and technical obstacles which impede the progress of plans for the eventual re-settlement and rehabilitation of the refugees. These plans are, of course, as essential to the economic interests of the host countries as they are to the welfare of the refugees themselves. Human beings are the most precious asset of any country, and we are certain that a great many of these unfortunate refugees, if enabled once more to live useful lives, would make an invaluable contribution to the countries which have given them refuge. In this connection we have noted carefully and with approval the comments made in paragraphs 10, 11, and 12 of the special report of the Director and the Advisory Commission. These paragraphs point out the extreme difficulty in existing economic and political circumstances in the Near East of rehabilitating Palestine refugees in the host countries, and stress that one of the difficulties is the attitude of the refugees themselves towards rehabilitation. We agree that new efforts must be made both by the governments concerned and by the Agency to make it clear to the refugees that the Agency's programme of rehabilitation is designed for their benefit. We also very strongly agree with the statement that it is desirable for the Agency to continue its efforts to reach agreement with governments in the area on new projects capable of supporting a substantial number of refugees, and we share the hope that the necessary agreements will be promptly forthcoming.

I have stressed the importance our delegation attaches to cooperation between the Agency and host governments in rehabilitation and re-settlement projects, since part of the solution must be found along these lines. I have also referred to the grave responsibilities of the Government of Israel, and have expressed the hope that Israel might be able to take some step now towards bringing the problem to an end. Whatever the outcome may be, I must emphasize our understanding that UNRWA's relief programme is to be only an interim measure pending the formulation and implementation of plans for a final settlement. It cannot be expected that member governments of the United Nations will be able or willing to contribute indefinitely to a relief programme of undiminishing proportions.

On the subject of contributions, we can perhaps note with some satisfaction the response from such a large and representative group of governments and private agencies, although further contributions are required if the Agency is to meet its commitments. The host countries themselves have, of course, borne a substantial share of the burden of caring for the refugees. Among countries from outside the area of the Near East, the United States has again, as on many occasions, made an outstanding contribution, while the United Kingdom and France have also taken on a large share of the financial responsibility. Canada has made the fourth largest total contribution to the various programmes for Palestine refugees and, with respect to the UNRWA budget now before us, I can state that the Canadian Government intends to seek parliamentary approval for a contribution of \$500,000 to the UNRWA relief programme for the financial year 1954-55.