

faith in the ability of the nations of the world to surmount the crisis with which they are confronted at the present moment.

Budget and Contributions

On December 15 the General Assembly approved the budget estimates for the year 1951 submitted to it in the Report of the Fifth (Administrative and Budgetary) Committee. The total appropriation, on the basis of which member states will be assessed, amounts to \$42,829,335. This figure takes into account the expenditures and miscellaneous income envisaged for 1951 as well as certain supplementary appropriations submitted for the previous financial year.

The Working Capital Fund will be maintained at \$20,000,000, and the Secretary-General has been authorized to make advances from the Fund to meet unforeseen expenditures or expenditures whose extent cannot be precisely determined at the present moment, including loans required to finance assistance to Palestine refugees and the programme of relief and rehabilitation in Korea.

The scale of assessment of 23 member states has been slightly revised during the course of the current session of the General Assembly. The revision affects principally the countries of the Soviet bloc, whose contributions have been increased by 10 per cent. Under a working rule previously adopted by the Committee on Contributions, this is the maximum increase which can be made in the assessment of a member state in any single year. A corresponding revision has been effected in the United States contribution which was reduced from 39.78 to 38.92 per cent. The Canadian contribution has been increased from 3.2 to 3.3 per cent. This increase reflects, in part, the substantially higher level of economic activity in Canada in the past year.

Economic and Social

Refugees and Stateless Persons

At its Fifth Session, the General Assembly devoted a great deal of time to the consideration of important questions which probably will affect the lives of refugees and stateless persons for some years to come. The Canadian delegation was very active in these discussions and, in particular, in the moulding of satisfactory compromise definitions of the term "refugee" which will determine the scope of the responsibilities of the new High Commissioner for Refugees and of the proposed convention of refugees.

In brief, the Assembly decided what persons should be the responsibility of the High Commissioner for Refugees who will commence operations on January 1, 1951. It was agreed that certain broad groups of refugees would be entitled to his legal protection and assistance, the definition approved for this purpose being much broader than that stipulated, for example, in the terms of reference of the International Refugee Organization. At the same time, the Assembly approved a detailed statute which outlines the general principles, organization, powers, functions and competence of the High Commissioner's Office. Finally, the Assembly elected Dr. G. J. Van Heuven Goedhart of the Netherlands as its first High Commissioner for Refugees. The only other candidate was Mr. J. Donald Kingsley, the present Director-General of the IRO.

The Assembly also adopted a more restrictive definition of "refugee" which it suggested might be included in the proposed convention on refugees that was drafted in 1950 by the Ad Hoc Committee on Refugees and Stateless Persons. A decision was also taken to convene a special conference of plenipotentiaries for the final establishment and signature of this convention and of the protocol relating to the status of stateless persons. This conference will be held in Geneva during 1951.