

CANADIAN DELEGATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(SIXTEENTH SESSION)

RELEASE ON DELIVERY

PRESS RELEASE NO. 21
December 6, 1961.

PRESS OFFICE,
750 - 3rd Avenue,
New York,
YU. 6-5740.

Statement by Mrs. Jean Casselman, Canadian
Representative at the 1961 Pledging Conference
on Contributions to the Programmes of the
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Mr. President,

In Canada we have always had a warm and special regard for refugees, some 238,000 of whom have sought sanctuary on our shores in years since the Second World War. It would have been difficult for us to do otherwise when they have made so large a contribution to the continuing development of our country. We have never had in Canada any refugee camps or hostels, and have been particularly careful that refugees should not be designated as a separate group, different in any way from other citizens, whose privileges and responsibilities they share.

One of the most heartening sections of the excellent report submitted to us this year by the High Commissioner for Refugees, was that in which he noted the progress which his Office has made in its camp clearance programme for European refugees. The High Commissioner has now set aside the necessary funds to provide for his camp clearance programme. We can all, I think, take considerable pride in the fact that after all the long years of patient effort on the part of organizations like UNRWA, the IRO, the UNHCR, and of the countries from which we come, that the end may now be in sight.

Despite the many encouraging developments which the High Commissioner has pointed out in his Report, there is still much more to be done. We cannot afford to slacken our efforts until the task is finished. As he has indicated, there are also



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a number of difficult and distressing refugee problems in other parts of the world, where the assistance given by his Office provides for large numbers of these unfortunate people the bare necessities of life.

With this in mind the Canadian Government has decided to offer again this year a contribution of \$290,000 Canadian, subject to Parliamentary approval, to the programmes of the High Commissioner for Refugees. At the same time our Government has also decided to ask Parliament again this year for a further \$60,000 to be used in transporting refugees under the closely related programme of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration.

It is the sincere conviction of the Canadian people that this contribution may alleviate to some degree at least the misery of the refugees, and restore to them some measure of hope, which will enable them to carry on until the day when they are able once more to resume their normal lives, either by returning to the homes from which they came or by seeking new opportunities elsewhere.

