



CANADIAN DELEGATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
(FIFTEENTH SESSION)

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Statement by Mrs. H. H. Steen, Canadian Representative
on the Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural)
Committee, on Thursday, October 27, 1960

World Refugee Year

Mr. Chairman:

At its 13th Session in 1958, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution which brought into being World Refugee Year. That resolution, 1285 (XIII), sparked one of the most far-reaching cooperative efforts in the humanitarian field which the world has ever seen. As originally conceived, World Refugee Year aimed at focussing world attention on the problem of refugees - all refugees and not simply those coming under the mandates of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees. It was hoped that by stimulating an interest in refugee problems, it would be possible to encourage not only additional financial contributions from governments, voluntary agencies and the general public, but additional opportunities for permanent refugee solutions through voluntary repatriation, re-settlement or integration on a humanitarian basis.

The Secretary-General's report on World Refugee Year, incomplete as it admittedly is, gives ample evidence that these objectives have in a great measure been achieved. Through their participation in National Committees for World Refugee Year, local Committees and other voluntary organizations concerned with refugee questions, millions of people around the world have become aware of the magnitude of the suffering and needs of refugees. This awareness has spurred them to remarkable heights of ingenuity in devising imaginative plans to help meet these needs. It has, of course, been impossible for the Secretary-General to report in any detail on these private efforts but through our discussions of this report, I am sure that a more vivid picture will emerge.

As a result of the interest in refugees generated during World

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Washington, D.C. 20248

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Division of Land Management
Room 5000

Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20248

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide information regarding the proposed action of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to acquire certain lands in the State of California. The lands in question are located in the vicinity of the town of [redacted] and are currently owned by [redacted].

2. The proposed acquisition is necessary for the BLM to carry out its statutory responsibilities under the Federal Land Management Policy Act (FLMPA), 43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq. The lands are situated in an area that is being developed for residential purposes, and the acquisition is intended to ensure that the lands are managed in a manner consistent with the public interest.

3. The proposed acquisition is being undertaken pursuant to the authority granted to the BLM by the FLMPA. The acquisition is being undertaken on a voluntary basis, and the lands are being acquired for the purpose of [redacted].

4. The proposed acquisition is being undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the FLMPA. The acquisition is being undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the public interest, and the lands are being acquired for the purpose of [redacted].

5. The proposed acquisition is being undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the FLMPA. The acquisition is being undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the public interest, and the lands are being acquired for the purpose of [redacted].

6. The proposed acquisition is being undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the FLMPA. The acquisition is being undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the public interest, and the lands are being acquired for the purpose of [redacted].

7. The proposed acquisition is being undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the FLMPA. The acquisition is being undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the public interest, and the lands are being acquired for the purpose of [redacted].

8. The proposed acquisition is being undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the FLMPA. The acquisition is being undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the public interest, and the lands are being acquired for the purpose of [redacted].

9. The proposed acquisition is being undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the FLMPA. The acquisition is being undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the public interest, and the lands are being acquired for the purpose of [redacted].

10. The proposed acquisition is being undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the FLMPA. The acquisition is being undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the public interest, and the lands are being acquired for the purpose of [redacted].

Refugee Year, the Secretary-General has been able to report so far a total of approximately \$80 million contributed, pledged or raised from all sources in cash and kind in addition to the sums normally contributed and raised each year for refugees. These contributions come from Governments, National Committees, local voluntary organizations and international voluntary agencies which are members of the International Committee for World Refugee Year. Another \$1 million is expected from the Stamp Plan sponsored jointly by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. The major contributors to these impressive figures--the United Kingdom, the United States and Austria to name only the top three--deserve our congratulations. At the same time, I think we owe a special debt of gratitude to others who, despite the hardships in their own countries, have willingly and eagerly made their contribution to the success of the Year. As the Secretary-General reported, "one of the outstanding characteristics of World Refugee Year is that even economically less privileged countries of Asia and Africa, sometimes burdened with refugee problems of their own, made their modest, but generous, contribution to reduce the burdens of others".

In the section of his Report on voluntary repatriation, re-settlement and integration, the Secretary-General has noted as one of the most significant achievements of World Refugee Year the new opportunities made available by governments for settling physically and socially handicapped refugees. His generous reference to my Government's contribution serves to emphasize our interest in making the most effective contribution possible, not only to programmes of material assistance through annual financial contributions, but to permanent solutions of refugee problems.

As I mentioned in my statement on the Report of the High Commissioner for Refugees, my Government took a number of special measures to help achieve one of the High Commissioner's main objectives during World Refugee Year - the closing of the refugee camps in Europe. To mark the official end of World Refugee Year, it contributed one million dollars in wheat-flour to UNRWA over and above the two million dollar contribution in cash and kind which it had been making annually to the Agency. This special gift has a twofold significance. In the first place, it will help feed the Arab refugees under the Agency's mandate. It will also permit

UNWRA, with the money which would otherwise be spent by it on food purchases, to build, equip, staff and maintain for three years two vocational training centres for young Arab refugees. These two schools, which will provide technical training for perhaps 500 students each year will add skilled workmen to the economies of the Middle Eastern countries, thereby making a considerable contribution to the prosperity and stability of that area.

In Canada the Federal Government has actively promoted the idea of World Refugee Year. On many occasions both in the House of Commons and before various audiences across Canada, senior members of the Government have made speeches to stimulate interest in the needs of the world's refugees. As patron of the Canadian Committee for World Refugee Year, His Excellency the Governor General has spoken on television to encourage the people of Canada to participate wholeheartedly in the activities of their local committees.

Although Canada did not participate in the Stamp Plan, the Canadian Government authorized post offices throughout the country to use a special World Refugee Year postal cancellation during May and June of this year, which read "World Refugee Year - Remember and Give". It was hoped that this would provide in the final stages of World Refugee Year a reminder and an encouragement to the general public to contribute to their local World Refugee Year committee.

For their part, the Canadian people responded to the United Nations appeal for support of World Refugee Year and carried on an intensive fund-raising campaign. This campaign was co-ordinated by the Canadian Committee for World Refugee Year set up by 43 major voluntary and religious organizations. Some 35 local committees were formed to carry on the campaign in their respective districts. The Canadian Committee carried out an intensive publicity campaign involving press releases, publicity brochures and radio and television spot announcements. During one four-month period it was estimated that over 30,000 announcements had been made on radio and television in support of the World Refugee Year programme in Canada. In addition, mayors and reeves of municipalities across Canada proclaimed the last week of April to be National Austerity Week. During that week Canadians were requested to deny themselves some luxury or pleasure on which they would ordinarily spend money and to send the money so saved to their local World

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Refugee Year committee. During that week tag days and other methods of fund-raising were employed in aid of World Refugee Year.

The sum collected by these private groups, which has not yet been finally calculated, will be used in assisting programmes carried on by the High Commissioner for Refugees and UNRWA. Thirteen European camps have been adopted by name and will be closed by various local committees across Canada, using part of the "pledged" funds. The Canadian Committee also hopes to allocate a substantial sum towards building and maintaining for several years a vocational training centre for young Arab refugees in Syria. Part of the funds will also be used to assist Chinese refugees in Hong Kong.

Canadian schoolchildren, through the Junior Red Cross, have also been active during World Refugee Year and as the Secretary-General mentioned in his Report, they have been able to collect \$150,000 to help refugee children. Part of this money is to be used to provide two physio-therapists and a school teacher to serve in Hong Kong for the next two years. A part will be used to provide drugs and clothing to children in Greece and Indonesia and a part will help provide milk and protein supplements to refugee children in Tunisia and Morocco.

In carrying on the World Refugee Year campaign, Canadian committees and voluntary organizations received invaluable assistance and encouragement from the High Commissioner's Special Representative for World Refugee Year, who did much to create an awareness in Canada of the refugee problem. Because of his experience, he was also able to help organize the committees to get maximum effect from their efforts.

Mr. Chairman, I have dwelt on the role played by the voluntary groups of private citizens not merely because, in financial terms, they have contributed the most to World Refugee Year but because I think the part they have played represents a major advance for the United Nations and the high purpose of international co-operation which animates this organization. As a result of the general public's direct participation in this United Nations initiative, the lives of millions, both donors and beneficiaries, have been enriched by a closer sense of fellowship. I have no doubt that World Refugee Year has marked the beginning of a continuing and greater interest on the part of the general public in the humanitarian activities of the United Nations.

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In concluding, I should like on behalf of the Canadian Delegation to commend the Secretary-General for the report which he has submitted on World Refugee Year. We appreciate that World Refugee Year has added to the already heavy burden of his Office. His report leads me to believe that he has gladly taken on these additional activities in the great humanitarian spirit which has always animated him in the past. For this, we warmly thank him.

