



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

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STATEMENT BY MR. A. R. SMITH, M.P., TO  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY PLEDGING CONFERENCE FOR EXTRA-BUDGETARY FUNDS  
ON CANADA'S CONTRIBUTION TO UNRWA

The Pledging Conferences for contributions to the United Nations Refugee Programmes, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East this morning and the programmes of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees later this afternoon, are among the most important meetings which take place during the course of the General Assembly. Both of these United Nations agencies are preoccupied with the solution of refugee questions which are the unfortunate legacy of war and political upheaval. My Delegation has always laid great emphasis on the necessity of strong and widespread support for these extra-budgetary agencies set up to deal with these great humanitarian problems. I think that we are all of us here agreed that it is one of the fundamental duties of our United Nations Organization to make effective provision for assistance to those members of the human community who, for a multitude of reasons, have lost their homeland. Our objective is, of course, to help the refugees help themselves, and we therefore approve the emphasis which is being placed on improvement of educational facilities, and especially vocational training, directed towards the rehabilitation of the refugees. We in Canada have always regarded the refugee not as an object of pity but as a potential contributor to the development of the welfare and culture of whatever country in which he now lives.

During the past year we have witnessed a unique and outstanding example of international cooperation for humanitarian needs in the special extra effort made by more than 70 nations for World Refugee Year. In particular, the success of this Special Programme was in a great part due to the unceasing efforts of the Director of the Relief and Welfare Agency



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for Palestine Refugees and the High Commissioner for Refugees, as well as of the Secretary General and his special representatives. I should like to take this occasion to place our appreciation for these efforts on record once more.

Ever since the United Nations began to work for the relief of refugees, the Government of Canada has voluntarily assumed special obligations to offer both financial assistance and possibilities for resettlement, demonstrating in this fashion its continuing interest in and sympathy for the refugee. I shall not speak of the refugee re-settlement programmes which Canada has undertaken because you will hear those details in the statement which we shall make this afternoon, but I shall try to give you some idea of what financial contributions--I think I can say generous contributions--we have made.

The Government of Canada has already announced its contribution of 500,000 Canadian dollars to the 1960 budget of UNRWA. This figure is the same as that for 1959. Canada will also make a further contribution for 1960 of 1,500,000 dollars in wheat flour.

As an additional and special contribution to UNRWA as part of the extra effort asked for in World Refugee Year, the Canadian Government is providing, over and above our regular grants, another \$1,500,000 worth of flour. This contribution was announced on June 30 last and the shipments should arrive in the Middle East during this present month. In this connection, we should like to point out that the amount of \$1,020,000 shown in the annual report of the Director of UNRWA (Document A/4478) as an "unpaid pledge" by Canada represents merely the value of shipments which had not been completed when that report was prepared.

As I have said, this is not a regular contribution but has a special significance. In the first place, it will help to feed close to one million Arab refugees. It will also provide UNRWA with the money, which would otherwise be spent by that agency on food purchases, to build, equip, staff and maintain for three years two vocational training institutes for young Arab refugees. These two schools, which will provide technical



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training for perhaps 500 students each year, will enable the graduates to contribute effectively to the maintenance of a large number of Arab refugee families. The addition of such a number of skilled workmen to the economies of the Middle Eastern countries will be a considerable contribution to the prosperity and stability of that troubled area.

I would not like this statement to convey the impression that Canada considers that refugee problems can be settled by financial contributions alone, and you will hear more later about the practical steps Canada has taken and will take to discharge her obligations. Nevertheless, money is needed to maintain the relief programmes carried out by United Nations agencies and my Delegation would like to stress the continuing need for adequate financial support for UNRWA from all states which can afford to contribute. My Delegation hopes earnestly that all members of the United Nations will respond to this need to as great a degree as their resources will permit. Only with the broadest possible financial support will the agency be able to make adequate provision to meet this great human need.



