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Refugee

At the Division Chiefs' meeting on September 24th, Mr. Lavergne, Acting Deputy Director for Refugee Affairs said:

Each of the Refugee Commissioners (and there have been four) have had some sort of plan for resettlement and rehabilitation of refugees. Each plan varies considerably from its predecessor. Furthermore, Mission technicians have submitted reports offering suggestions and pointing out problems. Since the rush of refugees seems to be letting up it seems desirable that this wealth of material be evaluated and certain plans acceptable to the Mission be determined for the purpose of further discussions with the Vietnamese authorities.

A committee of Schwartz, Ackley, and Adams, with Mr. Schwartz as chairman, was asked to study the material and be ready to report recommendations for the consideration of the staff at the meeting scheduled for Friday October 1st.

#### COMMITTEE REPORT

Should the problem of resettling North Vietnam refugees, numbering some 400,000 to date, with the realities telling us that the most that immediate resettlement can mean is temporary relocations, be viewed as something separate from the requirements for resolving the overall problem of arriving at a kind of social and economic health for the region below the 17th parallel?

Should not the Mission consider and recommend to the Government, that apart from proclamations of overall objectives, the most serious problem is not one of the specifics of the action program, but that of arriving at a better formula for (1) determining what needs to be done, and (2) for doing what needs to be done than we have had to date?

#### Basic Concepts.-

1. The Evacuee cannot be considered in exclusion of the Displaced Person.
2. Both D.P.s and Evacuees must be provided with at least a minimum livelihood at the earliest date for obvious financial reasons.
3. Moreover, the Refugees must be happy with their situation for equally obvious political reasons, let alone humanitarian reasons.
4. The Vietnam Government must take positive, aggressive action to ensure the maximum utilization of all available manpower and natural resources. This includes land in fallow, and land or other natural resources never utilized.

There are two basic objectives which must be constantly kept in mind. The first is that evacuee program politically would have adverse effects on the economy if the people were unhappy with their position. Therefore, every efforts should be made to ensure an adequate resettlement plan not only for the humanity sake but also for the political implication.

The second objective is to point for the maximum utilization of the resources in the South. Three areas of land stand idle, power is unused and various natural resources have not been tapped.

Some of the basic concepts center thought on the evacuees or the displaced persons. Other concepts center on maximum development for the country. These foci are not to be contradictory but completely complementary. What is good for the refugees is good for the country and what is good for the country is good for the refugees.

#### Recognition of the Phases in the Operation

(Summary statement: The overall job and the progression with which emphasis may be placed relative to a time-accomplishment sequence needs to be thought of in terms of three phases: 1) Emergency resettlement, 2) Rehabilitation program, and 3) Development program).

What has happened up to now in refugee resettlement is only phase I, namely Emergency Resettlement. Though the accomplishments of phase I have been formidable and commendable at the most, it is presently only a "stop-gap" measure.

We have been noting with growing concern the loose thinking in connection with the sub-reception centers. Some have called them resettlement centers simply to differentiate them from the reception centers of Saigon. The others have permitted this improper classification to influence them to the point where they honestly believe that the areas are in fact permanent resettlement areas.

Let us look for a moment at the development of these points to throw additional light on the picture. Saigon was over-crowded, additional ships and planes were bringing in evacuees at the rythm of approximately 4000 per day. In desperation, the Government, encouraged by participating agencies requested assistance from provinces in finding areas where these people could be located to relieve the pressure in Saigon. The first province chief to respond was the chief of the Bien-Hoa province. As result Bien-Hoa has the largest number of evacuees outside of Saigon itself. The very fact that the land was available and in such quantity, makes one wonder as to the desirability of the land. While it would be wrong to categorically state that no permanent resettlement could be effected in Bien-Hoa, it would be equally unwise to

say at this time that it does represent permanent re-  
settlement, when one relates his thinking to the two  
principles given above namely of maximum benefits to  
both the individual and the State.

Since the soil and the water, the rivers in their valleys, are the  
things that the people will have to live by, Rehabilitation of the Lands and  
other Physical Resources, logically follows as phase 2. One can rehabilitate  
the refugee and the rest of the population through rehabilitation of the  
lands and other physical resources once in use, but now in disuse.

It is reasonable to assume that lands that have  
been formerly under cultivation could be quickly put to  
work once more. Undoubtedly they represent good lands  
and as rapidly as security can be achieved, people should  
be encouraged to return to the land. Obviously, the dis-  
placed person should have a priority consideration for  
lands which he once worked but this consideration should  
not permit him to delay his return for an unreasonable  
length of time. It is suggested that government, keeping  
in mind the desirable dates for planting of rice and the  
necessary rehabilitation prior to planting, establish in  
areas which are security cleared, "dead-lines" for the re-  
turn of the former tenants, after which, if the land is not  
taken, it will be distributed to evacuees by some fair means  
to be established, for example: drawing of lots. This is an  
immediate step which the government can undertake. It will  
also be highly desirable for the government to establish  
certain principles concerning the amount of land the  
families should have, the percentage of crop to be returned  
to the land owner, the length of time the tenant may remain  
on the land, etc. Only when these qualifications are met  
should the government endorse resettlement and pay the  
necessary expense. Likewise, American Aid should be limited  
to such lands that meet these fair terms.

Phase 3 is that of development program.

#### The Problem of the Formula

(Summary statement: A sort of Super Planning Board and the Project Area  
approach afford best instrumentalities for getting the job done).

There is a certain "goodness" about most of what the Mission has  
done. Yet, up to now - goodness has not been enough. The situation requires  
a different order of administrative arrangement for getting the job done.

Specifically, the committee recommends:

1. The formation of a supra-ministerial board to deter-  
mine projects to bring economic development to the country.  
with initial emphasis on the early utilization of the man-  
power represented in the Refugee. This board or National  
Redevelopment Authority would have planning, coordination,  
and financial control functions.

*Resettlement  
should guarantee  
to the tenant  
the right of  
ownership with  
the Government  
acting to acquire the  
land and setting up  
an acceptable loan  
agency to allow the  
tenant time  
to pay for it  
from  
production  
AR/c*

2. The substitution of the project area formula for the project by subject field approach to program operation and implementation. The project area approach is simply a formula for focusing program attention on a complex of problems. Whereas the subject field approach places emphasis on certain fields of activity.