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MEMORANDUM No. 18

To: Advisory Commission, UNRWA

From: John B. Blandford, Jr.

Subject: The PCC-UNRWA Agenda

PCC and UNRWA have had a meeting devoted to a general discussion of their respective spheres of activity. I believe it was the conclusion of this meeting that each organization should face forward and attempt to trace a cooperative course of conduct. This result was to be sought through the free exchange of information as to operations and reasonably frequent consultation as to next steps.

In the interest of advancing our cooperative efforts, I am venturing to list below some subjects which might be included on the agenda of an early meeting or serve as a basis for informal conversations.

1. UNRWA REINTEGRATION PLANS

UNRWA is approaching its reintegration task as a process whereby refugees move from relief rolls to self-support and self respect. In this effort the Agency hopes to avoid raising basic political and economic issues either with respect to Israel or the Arab countries. We hope that our activity will not be the cause of enlarging the area of basic negotiation. We take this position on the premise that cooperation of refugees and Arab countries is more likely to result through this approach.

2. PCC APPROACH TO REPATRIATION

There is probably common agreement that there is no gain for either of our efforts in fanning anew the fires and hopes of repatriation. This might suggest that current discussions with Israel helpfully could be undertaken with a minimum of fanfare. On the other hand, when the firm position is fully known, it would seem desirable that the refugees be fully and promptly informed. Delay in advising the refugees because of Israeli insistence that the subject be merged with general peace negotiations would be unfortunate.

3. PCC APPROACH TO COMPENSATION

Compensation conceivably means all things to all men. Progress might be made by a frank identification of the scope of compensation claims. Also reintegration might be expedited if the problem could be approached by categories and in stages. Clearly it would be advantageous early to identify refugees not entitled to compensation, and certainly it would be desirable, if feasible, to first report as to compensation claims of

refugees receiving relief and eligible for reintegration. Both PCC and UNRWA have a common interest in the form of payment and in the relationship of payments to the reintegration fund.

4. PCC AND UNRWA WORKING ARRANGEMENTS WITH NEAR EAST GOVERNMENTS

It should prove mutually helpful if the two organizations would exchange information as to their respective plans for conversations with Near East officials. Are there to be full and formal meetings which need coordination or are there to be individual and informal conversations? Are the agencies to make any formal announcements as to their future plans and procedures?

5. ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONSULTATION WITH REFUGEES AND REFUGEE RECORDS

Presumably each agency, whether in the interest of reintegration or repatriation and compensation plans, will have discussions with refugees or refugee groups. How can these conversations be coordinated and facilitated? What will be PCC's response to questions on reintegration eligibility? What will UNRWA representatives tell refugees with respect to their compensation inquiries? Such questions as these become especially pointed when it is realized that each agency may have different, even though overlapping, clients.

6. ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF REINTEGRATION, COMPENSATION, BLOCKED ACCOUNTS AND THE BLOCKADE

This title in itself should be sufficient to suggest that PCC and UNRWA have large responsibilities in the basic Near East problem of major interest to the United Nations and the countries on the two Commissions. The blocked **accounts may prove a contribution** to reintegration and a stimulant to economic development. Compensation payments may loom as an asset to the refugees or a liability to Israel. Economic relationships between Israel and the Arab countries are obviously major economic phenomena and presumably within the frame of reference of PCC so long as it remains a matter of negotiation and until peace treaties are signed. Of no less interest is the reintegration programme of UNRWA which merges into a programme of general economic development and reaches a total of 400 or 500 million dollars. These topics achieve new significance when viewed against a background of technical assistance and grants and loans to the Near East area.

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