

The Commission was not satisfied with the proposals of the Arab states and Israel. It was disappointed, moreover, to find that its efforts to halt the rapid deterioration of abandoned Arab orange groves under the control of the Israeli custodian of enemy property produced no results. It succeeded, however, in arranging for direct negotiations on the simultaneous release of blocked assets of Arab refugees in Israel and in the Arab states.

While the discussions were in progress at Lausanne, the Conciliation Commission sent a technical committee into the field for a preliminary study of the refugee situation. After this group had reported, the Conciliation Commission decided on August 23, that as a matter of urgency, the General Assembly during its Fourth Session, should be asked to approve a programme for overcoming the economic dislocations caused by the Palestine conflict and for re-absorbing the refugees into the economic life of the area on a self-sustaining basis. Mr. Gordon R. Clapp, Chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority, was appointed to head an Economic Survey Mission, which rapidly won the cooperation of most of the states concerned and succeeded in publishing by November 16, in time for consideration by the Assembly, a first interim report on measures to enable the refugees to become self-sustaining. Its final report, on the question of overcoming the economic dislocations caused by the Palestine conflict, was not published until January 1950.

The General Assembly approved the interim report of the Economic Survey Mission in most of its details on December 8, 1949, by a vote of 47 to none, with 5 Eastern European states and South Africa abstaining.\* The Economic Survey Mission had reported that an early solution of the refugee problem as a whole was precluded by the continuing political stalemate in relations between Israel and the Arab states. What was proposed, therefore, was only a first measure towards the rehabilitation of the refugees through the establishment of a programme of public works for the employment of those who were able-bodied. This was not to prejudice, however, the principles of repatriation and resettlement voted by the Assembly on December 11, 1948. Useful, gainful employment could be found for all refugees able and willing to work, the Economic Survey Mission stated, although such work could not be provided immediately for all. Afforestation, terracing, irrigation and road-building would improve the productivity of the area, while enabling a progressively increasing number of refugees to become self-supporting. The Arab states would be asked to bear the cost of all direct relief remaining after December 31, 1950, unless the Assembly should later decide otherwise. On this basis the relief and works programme would not result in an increase in the existing rate of monthly United Nations expenditure for Arab refugees.

The cost of the plan proposed by the Economic Survey Mission and approved by the Assembly was estimated to be as follows:

January to March 1950.....	direct relief alone.....	\$ 5,500,000
April to December 1950.....	direct relief.....	14,700,000
	works programme.....	13,500,000
January to June 1951.....	works programme alone	<u>21,200,000</u>
Total, 18 months.....		\$54,900,000

It was decided that this amount should be raised by voluntary contributions in funds or in kind from members of the United Nations and non-

\*For the text of the resolution, see Appendix 17, pp. 261-264.