

It is true that aid to individual beneficiaries involves higher over-head expenses and meticulous attendance to details, but in a country where private initiatives currently constitute the corner-stone of agricultural and economic development, the extra cost is certainly justified.

Cooperation among voluntary agencies is effected through frequent meetings of their senior officials. But still there is obvious overlapping and occasional conflict in their lines of activity, more so in that they have different affiliations and because most of them are doing a little in many directions.

d. Relations with Israel

Despite their philanthropic identity voluntary agencies face close supervision and even harrassment by Israeli authorities. They all have to submit their proposed projects long in advance and wait long periods for approval. Here lies the crux of the confrontation between most VA's and the Military Administration, for they have sharply different perceptions of development priorities.

Israel would like to see the bulk of aid go to improving living conditions in refugee camps and rural communities, but without introducing important changes in their production base, unless that conforms with Israel's own economic strategies in the occupied territories.¹ Furthermore, the Military Administration

1. The researcher read a letter sent to the director of ANERA from the Ministry of Defence in which they told him that they knew the needs of local residents better than he did. Then they list for him a wide range of welfare projects which they would like to see him assist. None of the listed projects had anything to do with agriculture or production activities.

is anxious to exploit economic aid in gaining political leverage by channelling aid to the "right" people.¹ This is strongly resisted by most agencies.

Project proposals which do not meet Israeli favour are often shelved and later rejected. This often triggers a tedious process of bargaining and lobbying involving local and foreign media, as well as senior political echelons. Usually this results in more approvals by the Israeli authorities, but sometimes not without corresponding concessions. A balance sheet of Israel's initial reaction to proposed projects is presented in Table (IV-5) which shows, though not quite typical of all VA's, that of 19 projects submitted by ANERA for 1979, only 9 were cleared, 3 are still pending, and 7 were rejected. The researcher was told furthermore, that it took two years of lobbying to have the nine projects cleared.

Slow processing of project proposals entails important difficulties for both sponsoring agencies and recipient organizations. Agencies which rely heavily on US AID for finance find it increasingly embarrassing to ask for more funds when they are unable to dispose of outstanding allocations. In contrast

1. The Israeli Government is trying now to channel all VA financial support through those "leaders" who are willing to join autonomy talks promoted by Camp David (US, Egypt, Israel). For that purpose, they have created what they call "villages leagues" which they like to see replace the P.L.O and local municipal councils as representatives of local communities. By 1982 five such leagues were established and their members were even armed by the authorities.