

NOTES ON THE POSSIBILITY AND THE JUSTIFICATIONS OF POPULATION RESETTLEMENT PROJECTS IN LIBYA

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In this theoretical paper, an attempt has been made to answer two major questions : 1) Is it possible to resettle those Libyans who are living in small groups scattered in the Libyan desert ? 2) And, what are the justifications, if any, of population resettlement projects ?

The writer sees that it is possible to develop a number of population centers. Libyans living in scattered oasis are to be moved into such centers. However, it is suggested that socio-economic research should be carried on among the small communities for whom the population centers are going to be developed. Such research should focus on providing planners with an adequate picture of the major social and economic characteristics of these small communities. Because, it is very important that planners know in advance the age and sex distributions of individuals of these communities, their skills, major values, habits, customs, attitudes, and even their level of aspirations. In other words, planners should be aware of the dominant sub-cultures and social structures in order to be able to draw plans of practical and suitable population resettlement projects.

The justifications of developing population resettlement projects in Libya can be summed up in the following :

1. One of the obstacles facing economic development programs in

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Libya is the shortage of man-power. Therefore, plans have to be developed to utilize all locally available labour.

2. Individuals live in small groups scattered in remote areas are not and cannot be fully employed. It is not feasible to build factories or establish large scale economic or social institutions in a village with a population of two or three hundreds.
3. It is not practical to build schools, hospitals, community centers etc., in every small village. But citizens should be given equal opportunities in enjoying a decent life.

It is suggested that carrying on population resettlement projects is not an easy task. Individuals develop some sort of psychological relationship with the geographic environment. It should be expected that some individuals would resent the idea of leaving their land no matter how poor that land is. If such individuals are forced to leave their land, they may develop negative attitudes toward their living in the new environment and become, in the long run, some sort of economically dependent individuals.

Resettled individuals have to go through a period of social change. A few of their old social institutions have to be replaced with rather modern ones. Many social positions are going to lose their traditional prestige, and some of the agencies of informal social control will be weakened. Therefore, an increase in crime rates can be expected, and new forms of social disorder may appear. However, it is argued that data gathered through adequate research projects would provide objective information. Planners are expected to make, on the basis of such information, intelligent decisions to deal with the anticipated aspects of maladjustment in the new environment.