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Interview with Mr. H.R. Labouisse

Conducted by
John Charnow
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Charnow: Now, Harry, we have a great deal of personal biographical materials on Maurice Pate and the influences on his life up to the time he became Executive Director. My feeling is that what we have on you is more or less bare-bones C.V. material. If you agree, I think it would be useful to get further information about you as a person and your preparation, in a sense, for your responsibliities as Executive Director.

Labouisse: Okay. All right.

Charnow: Now, could we begin with your family background, your early life.

Labouisse: Good, okay. I'm not one of these people with a dramatic background. I remember once Truman Capote comes to New Orleans. So does Kitty Carlisle Hart and Moss Hart, and once we were interviewed by a New Orleans newspaper, the three of us, and I said, "It couldn't be more different, these people really had a kind of colorful history and I just started off with a rather quiet, unpretentious way of life". So I'm not sure my background would be very helpful, but I'll try.

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Charnow: First of all there is the name "Labouisse." Immediately everybody thinks you've got a French background. Is that correct?

Labouisse: I have a French background, but about four generations ago.

Charnow: Your family was an old established family, I understand, comfortable, well-to-do.

Labouisse: Well, reasonably well-to-do, comfortable. My father's family all came from New Orleans. They'd come over from France in the last part of the 18th century, they were Huguenots. My mother's family were Huguisse, they came from Charleston; they also were Huguenots, and they came over about the same time. So I was born and brought up in New Orleans, went to school there, and went away to prep school in Virginia.

Charnow: You grew up in the South. There is a belief that for people in the South, attitudes about race may be different than people in the North. What about that?

Labouisse: Well, I think it's true. I think it's changed a great deal in recent years — this feeling, since the Jim Crow era in the South in which there were "colored only" and "white only" signs in restrooms, restaurants, and whatnot. I never felt too much affected by this. I think it was a different philosophy between many people in the South. My family really had no racial hang-ups. There was discrimination - there's no question about

that. But my mother used to say that the difference between her friends in the North (who used to sometimes question her or kid her about the black population) and the attitudes of the Southerners to the blacks, is - and I think it's quite true - that in the North the people had a feeling of sympathy for the blacks as a race that had nothing to do with the black individual. They didn't know anything about them, they didn't have anything to do with them. Most of them had white servants. Whereas in the South, we had a concern about the race as a whole, but we were very, very intimate friends with black people.

I just came back two days ago from the country, and I found a package sitting, waiting for me from a great friend of mine -- a black -- named Dr. August Terence, who practices medicine in Appaloosas, Louisiana. He sent me some okra, some beans, and some plum jam, which he and his wife had made. We've been on a first-name basis ever since I was in the young teen-age group. He used to help me with my Latin school work, and there's been that kind of relationship. And this isn't an exceptional thing. He comes to see me all the time. I never had a feeling against him. When I used to come home from school and visit at Christmas time when I was away at prep school, there was always a question of who was going to meet me, who was the person who was going to kiss me first, my mother, or Louisa Jones, who was black as the ace of spades. But it was that kind of a feeling. There's no question that there's a difference in feeling towards the race and there was

discrimination, but I've never called people niggers or used similar obnoxious terms about the black people. This we never really did.

Charnow: Did you have siblings?

Labouisse: I had two older brothers, one four years older, and the other eight years older. But I'm the only one that went North to live. We all went to preparatory school in Virginia, to a school called Woodbury Forest. Then we all went on to Princeton. My oldest brother left Princeton when he had to go to war, the First World War; and my second brother did the same before he got through Princeton. But they lived in the South -- in the Carolinas. I think in Carolina there was a tendency toward greater discrimination than there was in New Orleans, which was more cosmopolitan.

Charnow: Would you say that in the family atmosphere there was an interest in broad social issues?

Labouisse: Yes, there was. During the First World War my father was a volunteer head of the regional area for the American Red Cross in the South, New Orleans, and several areas down there. I was brought up to try to do things of kind of a civic nature. I remember during World War I, one of my first public speeches was made in what they called the Four Minute Men, selling Liberty Bonds. I won a prize for selling more bonds, or something or other. My father also wanted all of us boys to work. It wasn't

only a question of having to get a job in the summertime; we worked around at home.

We went up to Lake Champlain in the summer. My father believed in the importance of change of atmosphere, of getting away from the flat Louisiana in the summer. We all took care of the place. I used to run a vegetable garden and sell all the vegetables that the family couldn't eat, to the local neighbourhood and to the local market.

And then later on, when I was in law school, I was also secretary for my father in the summertime, basically taking dictation, writing his letters, keep his checkbook, etc. We were not a wealthy family; we were comfortably well-off, I guess, but we didn't have an automobile until I was in my early teens.

My father was in the cotton business in New Orleans and a man of tremendous integrity. He once tried to stop the panic in New Orleans, I think in about 1907 (maybe the year's wrong), but there was a great run on the markets. He tried to prevent it - though he risked losing all his money to do it - to buy and to stop this panic of sales. He lost a lot of money but he did help stop it. He was quite an example to me because he cared about other people. He considered prohibition about the second greatest curse this country had ever suffered — the first was slavery — but because he believed so strongly in obeying the law, he wouldn't drink

during prohibition, and he didn't want any of his sons to drink. Unfortunately, his sons were not of that calibre, and my father as a result almost became a recluse, because he said if he couldn't serve alcohol in his own house during prohibition, he didn't feel it was appropriate to go out to someone else's house and drink their liquor. So we just didn't entertain. This was quite a different attitude than what my two brothers and I had on the subject, but it was a rather wonderful one.

Charnow: Well, I think the principle of integrity obviously stuck with you all the years, even though perhaps in this particular area you were a bit flexible. Now let's go back to the vegetable garden. Does this kind of start, with a feeling about agriculture and farm life and nature and the Adirondacks, influence what I have observed in UNICEF as a special feeling for rural life and rural areas. It seems to be apparent in what you've done with the farm school in Greece.

Labouisse: I've always liked that type of thing, Jack. I like nature. I like to see things grow. There was real work in organizing the garden. Sometimes when I was at school, I couldn't get up early enough to do the plowing and planting, but I'd get someone to do that for me. But then I ran the thing. That was quite a big garden. It wasn't just for our family, which had a very large turnout in those years, particularly during the days of Plattsburg which had an Officer's Training School. During the days just before the war, the First

World War, and then during it, we used to have huge numbers of people down for the week-ends with my brothers - we both were going to Plattsburg. And I used to produce all the food for these people.

Labouisse: I would say my integrity wasn't all that great either, because one of the theories was that the first priority for my produce was my family. Because I was using family land to grow these things, my mother expected me to produce things for the family. But I found out that my green peas were particularly good, and I could make more money selling them down the road to other people - until one of my mother's friends was bragging about the peas she had gotten from me, and my mother didn't even know we had peas in the garden. So I don't think I was all that fine.

Charnow: Was there anything special in Princeton, in your undergraduate years, that would be relevant to the things that we're now talking about?

Labouisse: I don't think so, particularly.

Charnow: Any special teachers that stood out?

Labouisse: When one of my older brothers died, he had a plantation down in North Carolina. Eve and I went down there when he was dead, and we were sorting some of the papers. He had some old correspondence, some letters I had written. Eve has been kidding me much about it

because she read some of these letters, and apparently the things I was interested in when I was at Woodbury Forest were golf and how my golf was coming along, and secondly, that I wanted a letter every day from some member of the family. And the third thing was that my clothes didn't seem to fit all the time, and I had to go to a new tailor. She thought it was kind of presumptuous for a young man, or a young boy in prep school, to talk about his tailor. I don't think I was a great credit to society at that time.

Charnow: Did you work at all when you were going to Princeton?

Labouisse: Not in college. I didn't work my way through college. My only work was in the summertime. There was a YMCA camp, Camp Dudley up in Westport at Lake Champlain, where we went, and a great many friends used to go there. I never went to it because, as I say, I was otherwise occupied around the home and so forth. But I used to go with my friend and take some of the younger kids from the camp on climbs. We'd go up Mount Mossey on four-day trips and that kind of thing, but I never was at the camp myself as a camper.

Charnow: Well, then, after Princeton you went to Harvard Law School, I gather.

Labouisse: Right.

Charnow: Why did you choose law?

Labouisse: Well, I think two reasons. Number one, I think, was that I liked the law; I liked legal processes of thought. I think I always felt it was very helpful, no matter what you were going to do, to get that kind of training. And this is, I think, the major reason that I went. There's always a subsidiary reason in these things, when you hadn't quite made up your mind what you wanted to do precisely and therefore thought you might continue being educated a little longer. A lot of people do that. It wasn't really the main thing for me, because I felt that I was enough of a burden to the family having to pay for my education that I wouldn't kind of stretch it out just for the fact of my own pleasure.

When I left law school — Harvard — my thought was to go back to New Orleans to practice law. There was a firm in New Orleans called Monroe and Lemon, which was the leading firm in the city and they had offered me a job; so I didn't look for a job in New York at that time. Normally, when you graduated from Harvard Law School - I guess all law schools in the East - around the Christmas of your senior year in law school, you come down to New York or go to Chicago or Washington, or what not, to look for a job in a big firm. I didn't do that because I thought I was going to New Orleans, but when the summer of 1929 came and I graduated, Norm Monroe, the head of the firm in New Orleans, said to me he wanted me to go to Tulane for a year to study the Louisiana code. And Louisiana law is somewhat different from the common law of the court of the other schools, and I had just had enough of it.

I thought it was time to start earning my own living, so at that point I decided to come to New York. And, as you know, 1929 was the year of the great stock market crash -- suddenly the bubble burst. But just before that, in August, I came down to New York. I had a cousin, the first cousin of my mother, who was Frank Polk, who was Secretary of State at one point. He was a partner in the firm of Davis Polk in New York which still bears that name. He always asked me to come down but I didn't want to go practice in his firm, I thought it bordered a little on nepotism, so I never accepted that. But I did call him up that August and said that recent developments about going to New Orleans had cooled me off from doing that, so I thought I'd rather start earning a living here in New York. He offered to take me in with the firm, although I'm sure they were filled up. I didn't want to do it and I didn't do it, but I asked him for the names of some other firms. He gave them to me and I finally came to New York. I guess I started in September 1929 at the very fancy salary of $2100 a year, which was reasonably good for a lawyer in those days right out of law school. I mean, I think some of them went a little higher, maybe $2400. Anyhow, come Christmas time the little envelope was brought around in which normally you'd get a little raise as a Christmas present, but this time we got a little note saying tha,t unfortunately, because of what happened in October and on into the depression, my salary had been cut $300. So I was getting $1800 a year instead.

But I thought I'd just practice law in New York for a couple of years and then go back to New Orleans, and I just never did that. I stayed on for about 12 years. I wasn't terribly happy with big New York practice, the corporate practice, and we did a lot of corporate mortgage work. Our firm represented the old Farmers Loan and Trust Company. I thought it left something to be desired, but I stayed on because, you know, when you start one of these things you like to stay to the end of it. The result of it was that I wanted to become a partner in the firm and so stuck on till that happened.

I had a great friend from New Orleans named Walter Butterworth, who was in the Foreign Service, and at that time he was a kind of a financial man in the U.S. Embassy in London. He used to come back periodically to consult with people on Wall Street and also in Washington, and he kept asking me to come to Washington to work. I never wanted to do it but, finally, at one point he suggested that just about the early fall of 1941, before Pearl Harbour. The war was on, but we weren't in it, and Dean Acheson was Assistant Secretary of State in charge of Economic Affairs in those days. There were only four Assistant Secretaries of State (God knows how many there are now). Tom Findley, a lawyer from New York, was starting a new operation, a kind of economic operation. They called it the Division of Defense Materials to acquire war materials and also to prevent them from going to the Germans or the Japanese. We would try to tie up, prevent the Japs from buying war

materials, say scrap iron from Brazil, various other places. It was economic warfare. So I went down to do that. I thought I'd do it for two years or a year or two or a while, and then came the war. We were in the war and I just never went back to practice law again.

Charnow: Was it during this period when you were practicing law that you met your first wife and got married and started a family?

Labouisse: Yes. We were married in 1935. I started saying, I started practice in 1939 and we had a daughter, and then we moved to Washington. I went overseas for a while, during the last year of the war, 1944-45, to Paris, and Betsy my wife was going to join me with our young daughter Ann. But unhappily Betsy died in 1945.

There was one thing, Jack, that's relevant to the questions you originally asked about my background, that of interest or concern with social problems. When we were first married, we used to live on 68th Street between 2nd and 3rd Avenue, and there was a settlement house - a neighbourhood house, they called it - on 70th Street between 1st and 2nd Avenue. It was called the Lenox Hill Neighbourhood Association, and I had gotten interested in it. As a matter of fact, I had worked over there quite a lot with my wife Betsy when we were young marrieds. The resident paid head was a very wonderful human being called Rosalie Manning, but the Board was kind of a social society board in those days. It had a lot of

big businessman. I think the head or Chairman of the Board was a man named Harvey Gibson, who used to be head of the Manufacturers Trust Company. They also had a lot of mortgages on property in that neighbourhood, these railroad flats that went through. And Miss Manning kind of felt that people who owned these buildings and people that held the mortgages weren't treating the population quite properly. She was quite a forceful lady and she antagonized the Board. So the Board decided they wanted to get rid of her. Betsy and I opposed this very strongly and, finally, one day at a Board meeting — it was very unpleasant — where I thought they were being unfair, I was asked if I would be prepared to take over. And that was kind of a shocker. I was about 30 or 31 years old or so at that time, and this was a big responsiblity. The settlement house was home for about 25 different nationalities that lived in that area - Hungarian, German, Irish - you name it. It was a needed place. And I thought Miss Manning was right, and I asked them to give me time to think it over with. I got some young friends of mine together and they said they would support us, and I said, yes, we would take it over. I didn't want to be head of it so I got a friend of mine named Frazier McCann, who also had a certain amount of money, to agree to be president. I was vice-president and kind of organized this thing, and we ran that for a while. And that was kind of my first active taste of this kind of thing.

Then there was another thing that was known as Hope Farm, later called Greer School. This was a school up near Millbrook, New

York, a place called Burbank, I think it was. This was a school for boys and girls who had kind of broken lives, and many of them were committed by courts. Some of them had just plain broken families. Some child welfare organization would try to find a place for them. So we ran a place that had a cottage community; you had about 25 kids in each cottage and gave them an education year round. Some were pretty tough little monkeys, but they were rather wonderful people. And I was also Chairman of the Executive Committee and worked on that for quite some time.

Coming back to your original question about the South and the difference between the South and the North on the racial question. I remember that about 1941 or early 42, when I was first going to Washington, the then Chairman of the Board of Greer School, Arthur Butler, called me up one day for advice. He said the city of New York, under LaGuardia, I think it was, had decided they would not make any grants to any institution where there was any racial discrimination. Up to that time there were no blacks in the schools, but there all sorts of other mixtures but not blacks. He said that the Board had some question whether or not they could take blacks and they asked my opinion. And I said, "I think you have got to take them," and he said, "It's funny, you are the only Southerner on the Board and you are first one to say so." But Greer School and Lenox Hill were where I got my feet wet in this kind of problem.

Charnow: I gather your wife came from a wealthy family.

Labouisse: She did. And I was going to add that gave me the ability to do what I did at Lenox Hill; not the Greer School thing, because that was just a question of working, of being interested and doing the job on the Board. But Lenox Hill was a terrible responsibility, when you have a whole Board of very rich people who are resigning and leaving the situation in your lap. And the only reason we could do it was because Betsy did have money, and this man Frazier McCann had a lot of money, and between the two of them they almost underwrote the budget. I kind of felt that I could assume this responsibility because I knew I could get this backing. But the great thing that happened was that this younger group of people who were about my age, some of them even younger, in their 20's, really pitched in; and it was their first kind of confrontation with charity work or social work, and they gave a lot to it. They collected money, and this thing kind of hummed along. Miss Manning stayed on, it was wonderful. But as I said, the background of it was that Betsy's family did have money and that helped. I might say, her family were the Clarks, Stephen Clark. Their money comes from the Singer Sewing Machine Company. Her grandfather, I guess it was, had been a lawyer for Singer when they developed and got a lot of money out of this business. The question of the use of money is I think an important thing. And I got a lesson on this from her, and also from her father, who was a rather wonderful human being who spent his money in a very sensible, effective, and efficient way. This is one of the examples.

Charnow: Her death at an early age must have been quite a trauma for you. She had a lingering illness, did she?

Labouisse: Yes, she had carcinoma cancer. I was asked by the State Department to go to Paris as Minister of Economic Affairs in the American Embassy in France in 1944, just after Paris had opened up and the war was still going on; but Paris was opened. The ambassador there was a man named Caffrey, Jefferson Caffrey, who was an old foreign service officer, very much on the political side and had very little to do with economics. And so I was called in one day by Acheson and three other people in the State Department and they asked me if I would go over there; I'd be the second man in charge of economic affairs at the embassy. I said there were three reasons I could think of why I shouldn't go. First of all, I wasn't an economist. And secondly, my French wasn't all that good. And third, I had this young child and I didn't know if we wanted to start moving right away.

Charnow: How old was she at the time?

Labouisse: She was about five or six. And anyhow, I said let me think about it. And I thought about it, one of these kinds of pressure things. They said, "Well, don't think more than overnight." So I finally decided we would go. And so I went. And in the early fall of 1944, Betsy really took pretty ill after that. They found out what was the matter with her. So she never did come over and she died in September 1945.

Charnow:: I have heard that you had had dealings with oil companies and people in the oil trade when you were with the State Department. Is that correct?

Labouisse: Yes.

Charnow: That gave you some connections later on.

Labouisse: Yes. Probably around the early 50's or late 40's. The British were having a difficult time after the war. Many countries were. Financially, they were very extended around the world. They were kind of responsible for sterling, though many, many countries had sterling. There were great runs on it due to the bankers, the world bankers, at one point. And an organization was set up in the State Department to look into this thing, and studies were made as to the British financial situation. The U.S. oil companies, the big companies, were upset. They thought the British were moving in on some of their markets improperly. My recollection is that, particularly with the Argentine, there'd been an outlet for the American companies, and now one of the British companies tried to take over the market. I've forgotten the details of it. But this kind of upset people. We made a study of this — not me — but a study was made which indicated that every time the British sold a gallon of oil, they lost dollars because they had to pay dollars or gold for the raw material as a royalty to Saudi Arabia, or wherever it was. And when they sold it, they sold it for sterling or for

other currencies; so their dollars were going out and gold was going out, and weaker currencies were coming in. And this is where they were having trouble. And so we set up an organization called ABC - it was American, British, and Canadian - to kind of discuss these things on the side. The oil companies would come down and talk, but because of anti-trust laws and whatnot, they could never agree on anything. So you would get them all in the room, and it was a kind of remarkable performance because you could talk to them about the problem, and they would just talk about their problem. But they all were worried about the legal implications of this thing, whether they were contrary to the trust laws. But this is where I got to know several of these oil company people.

Charnow:: It strikes me that your experience with the Lenox Hill Board and with people like this getting together, was good preparation for the UNICEF Board and being so unflappabl eabout what seemed to be a crisis.

Labouisse: Well, I don't know about unflappable. Sometimes you don't know enough to be worried.

Charnow: I gather you were involved in the origins of the Marshall Plan.

Labouisse: Yes. This was in the winter of 1947-48. I was in the State Department, and General Marshall had made his speech at commencement at Harvard in June 1947, I believe it was. The

European countries, particularly France and Italy, were in very bad economic condition. They wanted more and more loans, and it became apparent that something was going to have to be done about it; making bilateral loans wasn't going to work very well. So, General Marshall's speech, which I think was probably written by George Kennan, was in a sense a speech saying to the Europeans that you had to get your house in order. You work together, not do this thing on a piecemeal basis. And there was a big movement in the American Congress. People like Bill Fullbright, who was then Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate, thought that there should be a unified Europe, a united Europe, and the original thought was that the conditions of this aid, the Marshall Plan aid, would be the basis for the economic integration or political unification of Europe. But that's another whole story.

Anyhow, we worked on this thing - I did, and a lot of people were concerned with it. And it was a new kind of thing, and people spent the whole winter in a kind of informal meeting, preparing the kind of thing that we were going to present to the Congress. And this was a kind of a very new approach, to think of asking the U.S. Congress to put up money over a long-term commitment, this was over four years. Usually Congress only wanted to appropriate for one year at a time. So this was a rather fascinating thing. You weren't quite sure what was wanted, what was needed by the Congress. We did such things as studies, hypothetical studies of what would happen if the European countries could be put back on

their feet. We made studies - I think there were maybe sixteen countries. We estimated what their trade would be under certain conditions in a whole series of commodities. Some of this made sense, some of it didn't make sense, but finally it went through the Congress because of the bipartisan approach, and very largely because of Senator Vandenburg of Michigan, who was a rather wonderful person. We had a Democratic administration. Truman was then president. I had a relatively small part, but I did participate in all these developments in Washington. And then during the winter of 1948, I was sent to Paris. They were creating in Paris what was to be known as the Organization of European Economic Co-operation, OEEC, which has subsequently become OECD. The theory was that the Europeans ought to get together and form an organization that was going to deal with some of the European problems, and to do it co-operatively.

Charnow: This was the Western Europeans?

Labouisse: Well, the original offer, the original speech of Marshall, really wasn't addressed to just the Western Europeans, it was to Europe in general - the Russians, and the Poles, and the Czechs, all. But it was the Russians that called the other ones off -- they were afraid of the American influence. They didn't want the Poles or the Czechs to get involved, even though they wanted to participate. So in this initial phase it was not just Western Europe. A lot of people think now, you know history is rewritten by a lot of people,

that this was done just as an anti-Communist operation. Well, that may have been in some people's mind, but that was not the only thing by any means.

And it was through this that I got to know Hammarskjöld. He was representing Sweden in the discussions on the Marshall Plan. In that winter, 1948, I was in Paris from time to time. I'd already come back when Betsy died in 1945, but I was in the State Department. But I was sent back with two or three people to sit in. We were not a member of OEEC; we didn't want to be. We thought this was a European thing. But we were very anxious, trying to force the Europeans to form something meaningful of the OEEC, something which had a real force in it, and that was going to require the Europeans to take some rather difficult decisions. And in the creation, the setting up of this thing, there were people from various countries; one from Sweden, as I say, was Hammarskjöld. Hammarskjöld at that time was either in the Swedish Treasury or Under-Secretary of State. I got to know him quite well, as well as a Frenchman, Marjolin, who was working with Monnet and the British. We used to meet almost every day in this little group. The Dutch Representative used to come in to see me every morning in the embassy to talk about how things were coming and to sound us out as to how we thought Congress would react to something or other.

And so it was through this that I got to know Hammarskjöld and later on, after 1948 and the Marshall Plan legislation was passed,

I was back in the State Department, and there was an organization set up in the State Department called Co-ordinator for Foreign Aid and Assistance, which I didn't think made much sense. I was it. I had a staff of, I guess, twelve people. I thought it didn't make very much sense because the ECA under Paul Hoffman had been created to deal with the Marshall Plan. But there had been, previous to the Marshall Plan, the Greek-Turkish Aid under Truman, and that was run from the State Department. So there were a lot of State Department people who were jealous of their prerogatives and didn't want to lose the grasp on this new aid programme. They thought they would establish a thing which could sit over Hoffman as far as policy was concerned. As I say, I didn't think it made any sense at all, and so I tried to kind of work it out of a job as soon as we could, which we did. Later on, I was asked to go to France as head of the Marshall Plan mission. This was in 1951. I was there up until 1954, I guess.

It was when I was in Paris, back again as Minister for Economic Affairs, that Hammarskjöld, who had recently been named Secretary-General of the United Nations, wanted someone to go to the Middle East to head the Agency for the Palestinean Refugees. For some unknown reason he decided I was the fellow to do it. I hadn't really followed this situation and it was a rather foreign operation as far as I was concerned, but he was rather insistent because he was a person who believed in dealing with people he knew and trusted. He thought it had to be an American, but he didn't

want it to be any American; so he asked the U.S. Government to release me and they said okay. So I went out there, and that's how I started my U.N. connection in 1954. Instead of going for one year, I used to write him to suggest or talk to him about resigning, and he never would answer me. So I stayed four years until I said I finally had to get out of it.

Charnow: Well, when you were in the State Department, did you have much connection with, or follow directly, the UNRRA operation?

Labouisse: Not much, a little bit. Mostly there was a division in the State Department on the economic side, called Division of Liberated Areas, as I recall, and they dealt mostly with that. I was in another section.

Charnow: Were you the first director of UNRWA?

Labouisse: No, there had been a previous director who had been, I think, a retired general.

Charnow: Well, I assume that your four years with UNRWA gave you a good understanding of problems in the Middle East and things like health conditions, education, environmental sanitation, children's problems, and so on.

Labouisse: Well, very much so, I think. The Palestinians were not organized particularly at that time, and the refugees were defined in the

U.N. legislation as Palestinians who had lost their homes and means of livelihood as a result of the activities during 1946, '47, '48, and in the establishment of the State of Israel in '48. The UNWRA was told to take care of these people, but we were limited to that definition. And if a person still lived in his home with all his fields on the other side of the demarcation line of what was now Israel, he didn't become a refugee under that definition. As a matter of fact, to digress a moment, I had to make a study at that point of some 111 villages on the demarcation line between Israel and Jordan. Those villages had lost part of their lands, in varying degrees, to Israel. They were on the west side of the divide going down toward the sea. But a lot of the houses were still on the Jordanian side. Those who did have their homes and hadn't lost everything were people that I, as a Director of UNRWA, could do nothing for. And so we called on UNICEF to help them out, and that was my first contact with UNICEF. They could help with the children in those border villages. And they used to provide skim milk powder as well as other things. The UNICEF office in Paris did some purchasing for UNRWA in general. But that was the first contect I had with UNICEF.

Charnow: Is that when you first got to know Maurice?

Labouisse: Yes.

End of interview