



NEWSLETTER

Number 10

AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID, INC.

Dec. — Jan. 1971

ANERA in PERSPECTIVE

by
John P. Richardson

ANERA has now been in operation for twenty-eight months, and this passage of time has permitted us to gain perspective on our mission. Perhaps the most basic question that we must ask ourselves is: "Have the results justified the efforts?" The answer is an unequivocal "yes." ANERA's approach has been to expand meaningful assistance for the Palestine refugees through all existing channels, as well as raising funds for institutions in need of outside support in the refugee "host countries." ANERA has concentrated particularly on helping maturing refugee youth to gain skills that will make them employable, and on meeting urgent health needs. ANERA has contributed in excess of \$200,000 in cash to organizations in the Middle East. ANERA has helped bring into closer working relationships the approximately fifteen major voluntary organizations — secular and church-related — concerned with the Palestine situation. The merger with American Middle East Rehabilitation (AMER) has now been completed, and AMER is functioning in its own name as a division of ANERA. ANERA's direct-mail program has demonstrated its viability as a money-raiser and as an important informational vehicle. ANERA's publications and the programs of its affiliated organizations have made hundreds of thousands of Americans more aware of the Palestine refugee issue. ANERA has assisted in increasing the American budgetary contribution to UNRWA.

Despite these creditable achievements a full analysis of ANERA must include other, objective "realities." One such reality is that ANERA's fund-raising potential appears to be lower than was

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UNRWA's financial situation is aggravated by the necessity of repairing many schools, like this one in New Amman Camp, which were destroyed during the fighting last fall.

UNRWA THREATENED WITH BANKRUPTCY

by
Prof. Harry N. Howard

ANERA Board member & U. S. Representative on UNRWA Advisory Council, 1962-63

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East — UNRWA — is now threatened with the prospect of closing operations by September 1971 or, at the very least, with very severe curtailment of activities, especially in the field of education. Dr. Laurence Michelmore, the UNRWA Commissioner-General, stated flatly in the annual UNRWA Report in the fall of 1970 that, unless the General Assembly acted positively "to exercise its responsibility," the continued existence of the Agency would be "at stake." The annual report estimated the budget for 1970 at some \$47,000,000 — 46 per cent of which goes to education, 42 per cent to relief and 12 per cent to health services. A shortfall of some \$5,500,000 to \$6,000,000 was foreseen for 1971, with all the dire consequences which such an eventuality might entail, whether in curtailment of services or outright closure of

UNRWA. As Dr. Michelmore explained, UNRWA renders vital services to the Palestinian refugees, with some 837,000 (out of 1,425,000 registered) on full-time rations, a health service serving all refugees, more than 280,000 children in UNRWA and other schools, and a technical assistance program including vocational and university training.

While there was much praise for the work which UNRWA had accomplished over the years, especially in the educational field, and genuine concern with its financial plight, few countries responded with additional contributions to the UNRWA budget — Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, Canada, etc. At the annual pledging conference on November 30, 39 governments pledged \$16,326,067, barely one-third of estimated needs. The United States, which had no problem in extending some \$500,000,000 in military and economic assistance to Israel, was not able to announce its contribution, but, in any case, it was not expected to be more than the usual \$22,200,000. One may add that a working committee was appointed to study UNRWA's financial problems, and there was some prospect, if not much, that immediate needs might be met.

RECENT ANERA GRANTS

Association for the Resurgence of Palestinian Camps	\$5,000
Al-Makassed Al Khairiyah	\$10,000
World Alliance of YMCAs	\$5,000
UNRWA Vocational Training Scholarships	\$3,850

The Association for the Resurgence of Palestinian Camps was formed in the Autumn of 1968 by a group of Lebanese and Palestinian women headed by Mrs. Huguet Caland. The Association is initiating the following facilities in Chatila camp (near Beirut): a kindergarten for 200, an artisan workshop, a medical clinic, and a library where literacy and language classes are held. ANERA's donation will help establish a community center in the camp.

Al Makassed Hospital, which provides medical care to the poor in Jerusalem, will use its grant from ANERA to purchase an up-to-date operating table and expand its laboratory facilities. Mahmoud Y. Hibbiyyeh, General Director of Al-Makassed, wrote to ANERA, "It is an encouragement to know that people abroad sympathize with us. We do carry on our work under difficult circumstances and feel that we would like to give greater services to the greatest number of people possible. Recently we have started a laboratory to advance the hospital services. Your donation has filled a gap in hospital needs."

Mr. Joseph Bednarek, of the World YMCA, wrote ANERA expressing thanks for its latest contribution. "This grant will be of great help to us in our leadership training programs and our plans to assist boys and young men in refugee camps in their efforts to rebuild their youth centres and resume the activities which were carried on before the last crisis."

The seven most recent UNRWA vocational training scholarships (\$550 each) were made possible by donations from individuals for vocational training programs. ANERA has learned that two of the students given scholarships through ANERA last year have graduated and are now employed; one is teaching in Gaza and the other is working in an aluminum factory on the West Bank. UNRWA Commissioner-General Michelmores wrote, "I should be grateful if you would thank the contributors warmly on our behalf, and let them know how much we appreciate their support of the UNRWA training program."

CATHEDRAL PROGRAM TO FOCUS ON PALESTINIANS

An important public meeting presenting a *Plea for Justice for People of the Holy Land* will be held at the Washington National Cathedral on Wednesday, January 27, at 8:00 P.M. Rev. Edward L. Elson, pastor of the National Presbyterian Church and member of the ANERA Board, heads a Sponsoring Committee including Senator Hatfield, Senator Bellman, Dean Francis Sayre, Hon. Frances Bolton, Dr. Andrew Cordier, and many others. The main address will be given by Christopher Mayhew, a distinguished Member of the British Parliament, long active in promoting greater understanding of the Middle East. Dr. John Davis will give an "Appeal to Americans." The program will include music from two Washington choirs and soloist Laurice Peters. Prayers and a Litany for Justice will be given by representatives of several faiths. The evening promises to be an historic occasion, and people are urged to demonstrate their concern for the issue by attending.

THE HOLY LAND CENTER

On December 16th the Holy Land Center of New York (a supporting member of ANERA) held a Children's Christmas Tree Party attended by 150 people which benefited Musa Alami's School and farm for boys in Jericho and the Rawdat-el-Zuhur Girls school in Jerusalem. About \$800 was collected for these two organizations. Historical Palestinian dresses were exhibited, Arabic food served, and traditional carols were sung.

The Holy Land Center was founded in 1965 by Mrs. Isabelle Bacon. Under the leadership of Mr. Hugh D. Auchincloss, Jr., and Mrs. Elizabeth Lightfoot, the Holy Land Center conducts language classes and sponsors lectures about the religions and history of the Middle East. Historical artifacts and handicrafts from the area are displayed in a museum open to the public and included in tours conducted by the United Nations Church Center. During this Christmas season the Center sold greeting cards produced by the Friends of Jerusalem Society. The address of the Holy Land Center is: 777 United Nations Plaza, Room 7A, New York, New York 10017.

PROJECT PROFILE:

THE FOUR HOMES OF MERCY

The Four Homes of Mercy were established in 1939 by Mrs. Katherine Siksek and members of her family. The Four Homes consist of the Orthodox Invalids' Home and Charitable Society, St. Mary's Home for Waifs and Strays, St. Mary's Maternity Hospital, and the Crippled Children's Home. In 1964, the cornerstone of a new building in Bethany was laid by King Hussein. The June, 1967 War prevented the completion of this building, and funds have not yet been found to finish construction. When the new building is completed, all Four Homes will be housed under one roof. At present three of the Homes are in temporary buildings in Bethany, and the St. Mary's Maternity Hospital is located in Beit Jala. The total number of beds available in the Four Homes is 150. To date ANERA has granted \$3,000 to the Four Homes of Mercy. In her most recent letter, Mrs. Siksek wrote that certain regular donors have had to cut back on their contributions, and now the Four Homes are hard pressed to meet current operating expenses.

In explaining the purpose of the Four Homes of Mercy, Mrs. Siksek says, "In Arabic the title of our work is Al Malja, meaning 'refuge.' Any cripple, old age person or a homeless child falls under the category of people needing refuge." (The Four Homes of Mercy, P.O. Box 19185, Jerusalem via Israel.)



Creative children in the Four Homes of Mercy

THE EVASIVE PEACE

The Evasive Peace, by ANERA President Dr. John H. Davis, has been published in a paperback edition containing a postscript that brings this book, first published in 1968, up to date. The new edition can be obtained from The New World Press, 132 West 44th St., New York, New York 10017. (Price per copy is \$2.95.)

THE PALESTINE REFUGEES

by Georgie Anne Geyer

(This is a condensation of an article in The New Republic of November 21, 1970.)

The Palestinian Arabs . . . are not what they seem to be. They are not, as they have widely been pictured, poor. They are not, by and large, uneducated. They are not a people without hope and their cause is not a cause born primarily of depredation and poverty. Some of the approximately 2.5 million Palestinians living today are poor, but, even in their poverty, even in the admittedly miserable refugee camps, they have had the kind of education and the kind of peculiar historic experience that has made them a rare "modern people" in the Arab world. . . . And in this apparent contradiction lies the fascination of this curious people. They are a revolutionary force in the world today not because they are poor and without hope but rather because they are the most advanced people in the Arab world.

But why, I asked (a Palestinian) was it only these Palestinian refugees who kept on with this insane insistence upon a turn?

"It was the wholeness," he said slowly, "the wholeness of everybody being put across a frontier . . . and not on a time scale to allow the great healer time to do his work. You woke up and you said 'Am I not in Jaffa? Of course, I must be.' Then, compounding injustice plus insult, there was the closeness of standing in Jerusalem and seeing a Jewish family washing clothes on your balcony. And at the same time, there was the din of applause for your persecutors ringing constantly in your ears."

What most analysts have missed in interpreting the elusive but endlessly fascinating Palestinian phenomenon was that being driven out of Palestine . . . was what took the Palestinians out of feudalism and into modernism. It was this experience of diaspora that eventually forged the link between this people and the "scientific" socialist ideologies of the third world, something that would have been impossible back . . . in the villages of Palestine. After this Arab diaspora . . . the poor Palestinians settled in the refugee camps of Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and . . . Gaza The life in the camps . . . was a very special life. It made vegetables of the fathers, living in

memory, without hope, without work, without future, without the security of the timeless Moslem village hierarchy. But it made cosmopolites of the sons, educated in the far more sophisticated UN schools, given good medical care by UN doctors, and exposed to the sophisticated influence of educated Arabs who came to them as political mentors and, for the first time, as equals

In all of this, the Palestinians consider themselves the vanguard of the Arab world . . . the catalyst for social revolution in the traditional Arab countries . . . the bearers of a "scientific socialism" allied to the socialist countries of the third world. And in many ways they are all these things

This is what distinguishes the Palestinians so markedly from so many other bread-and-butter revolutionary movements of the world and makes them, like their Jewish "cousins," with whom they share a certain cerebral view of life and against whom they are not accidentally pitting themselves to regain their own honor, such an equally extraordinary people.

The Palestinians are fighting today not for bread . . . but for an ideal. Whether you agree with the ideal or not, it is an idea that has just begun to move the world and one that the world will ignore only at its own peril.

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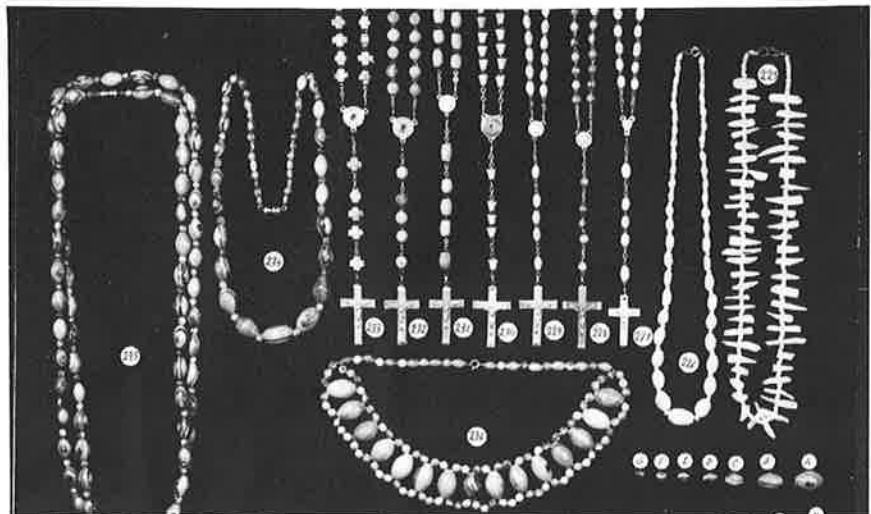
INCREASED AID FOR UNRWA BOTTLE-NECKED IN U.S. SENATE

On December 2, Senators Mark O. Hatfield (R.-Oregon), George D. Aiken (R.-Vt.) and Edward M. Kennedy (D.-Mass.) cosponsored an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1971 (S. 4542). This amendment (S.A. 1092) would increase the U. S. Government's contribution to UNRWA by \$1.5 million to bring the United States' payments back up to the pre-'67 level of \$24.7 million and provide support for UNRWA's current vocational training and educational programs. These funds are urgently needed by UNRWA in light of this agency's financial situation (see Dr. Howard's article). Unfortunately, this amendment remained in committee and has not been acted on. The Senate needs some urging to take action on this important measure early in the new session of Congress.

In testimony before the Senate subcommittee considering the UNRWA appropriation, Senator Hatfield said: "If one were to visit refugee camps on the Jordan side of the river, as I have, one could not help but sense the human anxiety and suffering which gives rise to many of our political problems. That is why I feel we must do more than we have been doing to remove the causes of war, and other than to merely come up with some military answers for military problems that are really rooted in human problems."

PALESTINIAN HANDICRAFTS

ANERA has recently learned of a company operated by Palestinian refugees in Bethlehem that exports articles made by hand from mother-of-pearl shells and olive wood. The goods available include a large selection of jewelry, boxes, figurines, plates and silverware, and religious statues. For more information write directly to: Hany M. Oumsiyah, P.O. Box 196, Bethlehem, via Israel.



Some of the jewelry available from Hany M. Oumsiyah in Bethlehem.

(Continued from Page 1)
 originally anticipated. Another reality is that the initial impetus for assisting refugees peaked just following the crisis of 1967 and faded rather quickly, as people channelled their energies into other activities. A third reality is that the new political consciousness of the Palestinians *as a people* has made them less willing to accept refugee status or to be viewed by others as dependent refugees. The word "refugee" has taken on a negative connotation, suggesting the relatively helpless and scattered condition of the Palestinians prior to the 1967 war. A corollary to this fundamental change is that fund-raising appeals for the Palestine commando movement (and related, non-military activities) are capturing both the imagination and the dollars of a great many potential ANERA supporters. Over and above these "realities" remains the extremely confused situation in the Middle East. The flickerings of hope for an overall peace settlement have been complicated by the harshness of the confrontation in Jordan between the commandos and the King's army in September.

What conclusions can one reach on the basis of ANERA's experience? ANERA's greatest contributions have been in less tangible areas such as bringing refugee organizations together, supporting greater assistance to UNRWA, and in broadening American understanding of the refugee problem. There *is* a continuing role for a professional organization like ANERA in soliciting funds and gifts in kind for the Palestine refugees — but the extent of such activity is limited by the intracta-

bility of the political situation. The most constructive use of funds in the Middle East is to maintain training and rehabilitation programs at existing levels and to expand those for which funds are available. Despite problems, ANERA remains an important bridge between America and the Arab World in an increasingly difficult period of time.

DIRECT-MAIL EFFORTS SUCCEEDING

In response to the fighting and destruction in Jordan in September, ANERA mounted a major direct-mail fund-raising campaign to appeal for emergency assistance. 160,000 pieces were mailed, and 2,200 responses came back, totalling \$21,300. This resulted in a net profit of almost \$9,000 for refugee relief, the highest yet in any single ANERA direct-mail appeal. Mailing costs have remained higher than normal during the expansion period of ANERA's direct-mail program, but the ratio of income to cost will improve sharply as proven contributors are solicited in the future. An additional mailing of 250,000 pieces went out in early December, and the returns are still coming in. Early tabulations indicate that this will be a successful mailing as well. AMER, with an assist from ANERA, mailed out its traditional Christmas appeal to some 3,000 traditional donors. In the appeal it was noted that henceforth AMER will be an operating division of ANERA. This appeal has been a key source of dollar support for AMER's activities.

Please enroll me as an ANERA member

Annual Memberships

- Regular Member \$10.00
- Participating Member \$25.00
- Contributing Member \$50.00
- Supporting Member \$100.00
- Annual Patron \$1000.00

Life Membership

- Patron \$5000.00
- Founding Member \$10000.00

Amount enclosed as a non-membership contribution to the work of ANERA \$ _____

Please send further information about ANERA

(Mr.) (Mrs.) (Miss) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Total amount enclosed \$ _____

Check Money Order Cash

Please make your check or money order payable to: ANERA

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS TO ANERA ARE DEDUCTIBLE
FOR INCOME TAX PURPOSES



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NEWSLETTER

The Palestine Refugee Problem

by John H. Davis

This is the last of four installments of chapter 5 of The Evasive Peace.

In the aftermath of the war of 1967 and of Israel's occupation of the West Bank area of Jordan, the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights of Syria, a critical new refugee problem emerged. By December 1967, an estimated 245,000 persons had fled from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip into the area of Jordan East of the River; 116,000 had left the Israeli-occupied area of Syria, and some 61,000 persons, including 11,000 from Gaza and 50,000 from the Sinai Peninsula had taken refuge in Egypt. Of this total, about 145,000 were UNRWA-supported refugees, who had been uprooted for a second time.

At the Special Session of the General Assembly, convened in June 1967, a resolution was adopted calling on Israel to permit these new refugees to return to their homes in the occupied areas. Although some 85 per cent of those who had fled to the East Bank filled out applications asking to return, as of January 1, 1968, only about 15,000 had been admitted by Israel. Meanwhile, additional refugees continued to flee from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank area to East Jordan — the total number moving in that direction during the months of September, October and November exceeding the total number of refugees re-admitted to the West Bank by Israel.

On January 1, 1968, there lived within Israel and the areas under her occupation



Palestinian boys studying at Baqa'a camp (Amman)

an estimated 2.5 million Jews and 1.6 million Arabs. Of these, almost all the Jews and about 300,000 Arabs lived in Israel itself, and 1,400,000 Arabs resided in the occupied areas. Thus, of the combined population only about 60 per cent were Jews and the remaining 40 per cent were almost entirely Arabs.

Israel's desire for land, and for minimizing the Arab population on that land, is also reflected in her policy of land seizure and occupation following the fighting of June 1967. Prime Minister Eshkol, in a statement on October 30, 1967, opening a session of the Knesset, said: 'It is our intention to continue to develop East Jerusalem [the former

Jordanian section] . . . A special team is preparing a comprehensive master plan for the eastern city. It will include about 1,000 to 1,500 housing units. In the same address, commenting on other occupied areas, the Prime Minister said: 'I must add that the area that was under Jordanian occupation, and the Gaza region, which the Egyptians ruled, were held by them not of right but by force, as the result of military aggression and occupation.' The strong implication is that Israel now has acquired a right to hold these areas by 'military aggression and occupation' and even without reference to the wishes of the 1.4 million indigenous Arabs who live there.



Pre-fabricated cabins replace tents as homes in Souf Emergency camp in Jordan.

In an interview carried on the Columbia Broadcasting System's programme 'Face the Nation' on June 11, 1967, General Moshe Dayan replied as follows to a question as to Israel's ability to absorb the Arab population in the newly occupied areas:

'Economically we can; but I think that is not in accord with our aims in the future. It would turn Israel into either a binational or poly-Arab-Jewish state instead of a Jewish state, and we want to have a Jewish state.

Israel's insistence that peace talks must take place directly between herself and the Arab States and before she withdraws her forces from any of the occupied areas, places her in the position that she can argue over territorial boundaries and even claim land in addition to that held on June 1967. Thus, it would seem that Israel's decisive action to hold occupied territory is motivated by a combination of a desire for land for settlement, a belief that the new boundaries provide greater security, and an intention to be in a strong bargaining position at the conference table, if and when negotiations take place.

Any attempt to examine the Palestine refugee problem in its various aspects would be incomplete unless some thought is given to the refugees as people. As one would expect, basically they are much like people everywhere — particularly rural people, since, as already mentioned, most of the dependent refugees were farmers and peasants in Palestine. By nature the Palestinian Arabs are a friendly and an orderly people. They are also an inately industrious people — notwithstanding the impression to the contrary that a casual observer might gain from visiting a large refugee camp today. This is borne out by the fact that all refugees who could find jobs in 1948, and all who have acquired specialized skills since, have taken jobs and become self-supporting. Almost universally, refugee parents want their children to receive an education that will make them independent. Whereas in 1950 only a limited number of refugee girls — particularly those from rural areas — received formal education, and most of these only for two or three years, by 1966-67 the enrollment of girls in extending increasingly to the lower secondary level. Also noteworthy is the

tact that the refugee camps and the host countries have never been harassed by hooliganism or unruly bands of youth with idle hours on their hands — not even in the Gaza Strip, where employment opportunity is minimal. The life of the refugees has been hard and full of bitter disappointments. Even greater than the physical privation has been the lack of hope — hope that for years was nurtured by the annual passage of unfulfilled resolutions in the United Nations General Assembly calling for repatriation or compensation by Israel.

If and when the refugee problem moves towards solution, there will still be several hundred thousand older refugees who will remain as welfare cases, unless an extraordinary effort of rehabilitation is undertaken. This group includes both older refugees who have been mostly idle since 1948, and younger ones who have had inadequate opportunity to learn work disciplines and habits before reaching maturity. Looking back, it is regrettable that a greater effort has not been made by the world community to make the Palestine refugees employable through rehabilitation programmes and education in skills.

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