

25 years of service ANERA Newsletter

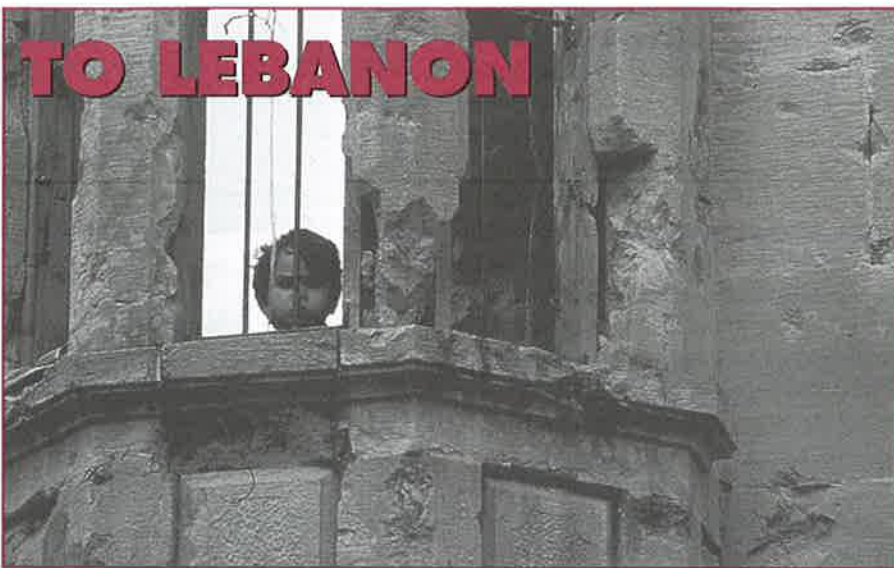
American Near East Refugee Aid

Number 120 Spring 1998

RETURNING TO LEBANON

Lebanon is rebuilding! During my visit this past fall, my first in fourteen years, I was struck by the vast amount of recent and current construction in both the private and governmental sectors. During the fifteen year Lebanese Civil War, the historic center of Beirut was damaged beyond repair. This area has been leveled, with the exception of a few salvageable structures, and is now being rebuilt. Nationally, a new highway system is being constructed. In many affluent neighborhoods there are new 5 to 15 story apartment buildings. In the poorer outskirts of Beirut considerable construction is also apparent, but of decidedly lesser quality. In contrast to richer sections, a number of partially destroyed buildings still stand, some of these are inhabited. All of the construction, especially in the private sector, is a definite sign of optimism. Construction would not occur if investors thought a new round of violence was forthcoming.

People, too, are different. West



World Bank

(Above) Amid destruction from the war, children, who are almost 40% of the population in Lebanon, struggle to find their place during this time of reconstruction and development.

Beirut used to be a rich mixture of Sunni Muslim, Greek Orthodox, Druze and foreigners. The American University of Beirut (AUB), many international companies and embassies were located here. AUB, as beautiful as ever, still overlooks the Mediterranean, but the companies and embassies have not returned. The

sectarian mix of people there is now strongly dominated by Shia and Sunni Muslims. Interestingly, while school directors told me of the new mix, just looking at the students — hardly a head scarf to be seen — one could not observe this change. On the streets, more women

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In Memory of Ambassador Marshall W. Wiley

Ambassador Marshall W. Wiley served on the ANERA Board of Directors from 1984 to 1997, the last three years as Chairman. Sadly, five months after stepping down, he passed away, having been stricken with acute leukemia. Ambassador Wiley will be missed.

Born and raised in Rockford, Illinois, Ambassador Wiley was a Navy aviator during World War II. Later he received his bachelor's, law and master's degrees from the University of Chicago. A career diplomat stationed throughout the Middle East, Amb. Wiley retired in 1981 after 23 years in the U.S. Foreign Service, including three years as U.S. Ambassador to Oman.

Ambassador Wiley was a Middle East expert who truly cared about Palestinian rights and the welfare of all the people of the region. Employing fundamental American principles, he always stated that Middle Easterners should enjoy basic human rights as well as democracy and economic freedom. He communicated these views broadly through numerous lectures and radio/television network news programs.

Our deepest sympathies go to Marjorie Wiley, his wife of 40 years, and to their three children. ■

*Returning to Lebanon, continued
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with head scarfs are apparent, but they are distinctly in the minority.

When I asked friends about the rich, middle and poor people of Lebanon, there was surprisingly more consensus than I expected. The Lebanese GNP per capita is estimated to be about \$3,000 to \$4,000 per year, which is a relatively high figure for a country emerging from a fifteen year war. My friends estimate that perhaps 15% of the Lebanese people are well-to-do or, if you will, rich. These families enjoy monthly incomes of \$5,000 and above, and can afford to dine in Beirut's new cafe society and shop at upscale stores such as Versace and Gucci.

The middle class, perhaps 20% of the people, are "ok". Overall the Lebanese middle class is less secure and smaller than in pre-war days. This leaves low-income families, perhaps 65% of the society, living in poverty. As prices of goods continue to rise, these families survive on incomes of \$100 to \$800 per month. In Lebanon the rich-poor divide is harsh, and is growing worse. Six years after the cessation of hostilities, wealth has not yet trickled down. Unless the broad base of the economy starts growing, perhaps over 2 million of the people in Lebanon will not reap the benefits of their country's post-war reconstruction.

People say the Lebanese unemployment rate is over 20%. Yet 1 million or more foreign workers, mainly from Syria, but also from Egypt, India and the Philippines, are in Lebanon. Most of these workers are construction and agricultural laborers, as well as domestics. These are occupations many Lebanese eschew.

Unemployment among the Palestinian refugee population, estimated at about 300,000, is said to be over 50%! Palestinians are prohibited by law from being employed in many occupations. They may work only inside the camps or outside the camps as day laborers in agriculture or construction, which is dominated by foreign workers. Naturally some Palestinians are illegally employed off the books, placing them in precarious circumstances.

For fifteen years, ANERA has worked with the Association for the Development of Palestinian Camps (ADPC) to support its revolving loan fund. Recipients have received loans

ranging from \$500 to \$1,500, and are repaying the loans at a rate of 100%! These entrepreneurs are establishing production and retail shops as well as setting-up businesses which provide skilled services. I visited one new business where three young men were busy working in their own garage. Each received a \$500 loan from the ADPC. The loans allow them to use their own skills in body and engine repair, and general automotive maintenance. Once unemployed, these men now support their families and are filling a great need in the community for their services.

For Lebanon to grow and develop, it must be free of the war and geopolitical constraints — the Arab-Israeli conflict and Syrian dominance. As a small country with a strong mercantile tradition, it is unlikely Lebanon will be able to break

out of geopolitical realities on its own. However, constraints would be alleviated if the larger Arab-Israeli conflict could be contained. This is a big "if" and certainly not a prospect about which we can be optimistic. The rich-poor divide must also be addressed to assure economic progress. While the government is investing greatly in needed infrastructure, much more must be done in the social sector — improvement of public schools, access to health care and at least minimal assistance for social welfare.

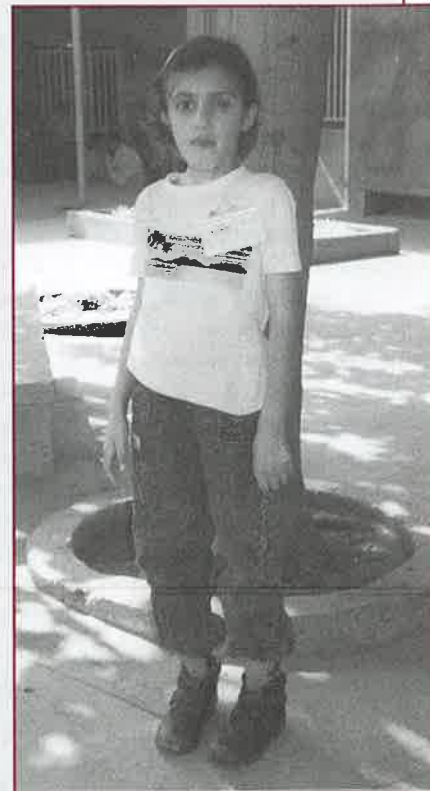
In all, Lebanon is still Lebanon. Regardless of the difficulties, the Lebanese are rebuilding and hoping to once again become a center for banking, business and tourism, as well as a place of opportunity. ■

by Peter Gubser and Doris E. Warrell

Al Kafaat Rehabilitation Institute's buildings suffered considerable damage during the war. Each time, the staff and students bounced back, rebuilt and continued their work at impressive levels. Today, they are being pushed to excel by the challenges all of Lebanon is facing during its national reconstruction.

You can help Al Kafaat reach other students like Zeinab. Join ANERA's Scholarship Donors by using the coupon on the next page. ■

(Right) Earlier this year Zeinab, a talkative and outgoing girl, posed for her student picture in Al Kafaat's courtyard. She, along with two of her brothers who are also handicapped, live and study at Al Kafaat. In spite of her mental retardation, and with the support of staff members and resources, Zeinab will fully develop her potential. Al Kafaat believes that education and vocational training leading to gainful employment are the best long-term therapy for disabled children.



Al Kafaat

In Honor of...

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Farewell Paula



(Above) Paula Stinson made many visits to ANERA projects, learning what more was needed to foster Palestinian development. Paula (middle) is pictured here with Lana Khaldi (left) and Dr. Ahmad Annab (right), ANERA's Public Health Consultant.

Paula Stinson, who served as ANERA's Vice President from 1987 to 1997, and who in October began pursuing a new career, is greatly missed. In charge of private sector fundraising, public education and administrative matters, she helped ANERA grow in size and quality. Many of the fine newsletters and videos, and our involvement in the development community, were results of her assiduous efforts. Paula helped us weather times of great challenge — the Palestinian intifada, the Gulf War,

the prolonged Lebanese hostilities — but also times of great hope — the Oslo Accords and the end of the Lebanese Civil War.

On the personal side, during Paula's decade with ANERA, she married Daniel Nakamura from California. In late 1997, she decided to leave ANERA and follow one of her life-long loves — art. She is now enrolled at the Corcoran School of Art. As noted in the last ANERA newsletter, in a restructuring of positions, two new Vice Presidents, Nina Dodge and Philip Davies, continue her excellent work. ■



Andy Tick/PWS

Anera Medical In-kind Program Exceeds \$1,000,000 Again This Year!

Thanks to partnerships with many organizations and professionals concerned with health in the West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon, ANERA's medical program has provided over \$1,000,000 in medical equipment, pharmaceuticals and supplies for the second consecutive year! We wish to thank *AmeriCares, American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, Children International, Direct Relief International, the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut, the George Frederick Jewett Foundation, Operation USA, St. Alban's and St. Luke's Episcopal Churches, The U.S. Priory of the Order of St. John, USAID, U.S. OMEN (U.S. Organization for Medical and Educational Needs), Laird Mortimer, anonymous donors,*

continued on next page

Stocks Appreciated!

Thanks to many friends who have had the opportunity to make gifts of appreciated stock to ANERA in recent months. These gifts are crucial for our work and have major tax advantages for you. Such gifts can be arranged by check or direct transfer.

Please contact Nina Dodge or Cyril Bindah at (202) 347-2558. ■

YES, I want to help the people of the West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| _____ \$10,000 and above: Founders | _____ \$1,000 to \$2,499: Sponsors |
| _____ \$5,000 to \$9,999: Builders | _____ \$500 to \$999: Sustainers |
| _____ \$2,500 to \$4,999: Benefactors | _____ \$250 to \$499: Creators |

Contributions of \$250 or more to ANERA's Annual Fund will be recognized in the coming year by category in ANERA's FY98 Annual Report.

_____ I have remembered ANERA in my will.

_____ \$200 _____ \$100 _____ \$75 _____ \$50 _____ \$35 _____ \$25 Other _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

- General Programs
- Gaza/West Bank Fund
- Lebanon Relief
- Scholarship:

I would like to provide a one year scholarship (\$100 per child) for a:

- Palestinian child
- Lebanese child
- Where need is greatest

Scholarship Donors receive a photo of the child and letters from the child's school.

Your donation is tax-deductible

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*Medical In-Kind, continued
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members of the ANERA Medical Committee and Board, health volunteers, and the support of all our donors for making this work possible.

Health care challenges in the West Bank and Gaza are enormous. Poverty, violence and lack of health education all contribute to preventable sickness and death. Resources are not available locally to adequately face these challenges. International funding directed to the health sector is scarce. Thus, health care providers must turn to other sources. ANERA, with your support, is there to help local institutions develop the means to provide high-quality, accessible, and affordable health care to needy Palestinian 1

ANERA's medical program sends materials to hospitals and clinics in the West Bank and Gaza struggling under tremendous economic constraints and in constant need of equipment, medicines and supplies. ANERA carefully reviews the quality of donated medical supplies and matches the donations with the needs of hospitals and clinics. We ensure that materials get to hospitals and clinics in a timely manner. As a result of these medical donations, thousands of men, women, and children in their communities are benefitting from improved services.

In Lebanon, too, ANERA continues to provide health and relief supplies to institutions helping families facing displacement and destitution resulting from continued conflict and violence. ■

ANERA's Peace Plan

Consider making a modest monthly donation through our automatic program. Your on-going gifts provide a steady, year-round stream of resources supporting peace through ANERA's programs in economic and community development, education and health care. Contact Philip Davies at (202) 347-2558 for details.

A continuing, personal commitment like this makes an amazing difference! ■

Your Legacy

Our thanks to the many contributors who have remembered ANERA in their wills or trusts, including charitable remainder trusts. If you have not taken advantage of this opportunity, we invite you to do so. Through a bequest, you can extend your support for lasting peace in the Middle East - for Palestinians and Lebanese in need, and the worthy institutions that help them - beyond your lifetime. *Please use ANERA's full name "American Near East Refugee Aid" in your bequest documents, followed by our address.*

For information on bequests to ANERA or on the ANERA Legacy Society, please contact Nina Dodge at (202) 347-2558. ■

ANERA

The ANERA Newsletter is published quarterly by American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA), a non-profit agency established in 1968 and dedicated to reducing poverty and relieving suffering in the Middle East.

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