



NEWSLETTER

Number 12

AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID, INC.

April - May 1971

INTERVIEW WITH JOHN H. DAVIS

ANERA President Dr. John H. Davis spent three weeks in February in the Middle East. He gathered the following information during conversations with Palestinians, UNRWA officials, and individuals involved in refugee relief work in Beirut.

What is life like for the Arab refugees now?

I think in some areas they are worse off than they have ever been, including the Gaza Strip and Jordan. The Gaza Strip is bad because the Palestinians there are very restless under occupation. There is almost daily action on the part of the Palestinians protesting Israel's occupation and retaliatory action by Israel. This keeps the whole area in tension.

In Jordan the refugees have problems because of the civil war fought last September and October between the Palestinian commandos and the Army of Jordan. This strife, of course, is still going on. In this fighting tens of thousands of refugee homes were destroyed, thousands of refugees were killed, and more than 10,000 injured. These people were forced to go through the winter in improvised shelters, many of which have been inadequate. In addition to actual privation, refugees there feel bitter over what has happened to them. They are bitter towards the government of Jordan and towards governments which they feel have been supporting Jordan. Rightly or wrongly, they put the United States government at the head of this list.

What progress has been made in repairing the damage done during the fighting last year?

Well, a great deal has been done, some of it by UNRWA, some of it by governments that have moved in tents and prefabricated building material, and much

has been done by voluntary organizations. The World Lutheran Federation, in particular, has concentrated on the housing problem and has helped hundreds of refugees to get a roof over their heads. Joseph Thompson, an American, is in charge of this operation for the Lutherans, and he has done an outstanding job.

What has been done to rebuild the schools and hospitals?

Some progress has been made on that. This is a rather considerable undertaking because damage to the schools and hospitals involves structural damage that in some cases required tearing down part, or all, of the buildings and rebuilding them from the ground up. Such major rebuilding projects have not been completed. However, schools and hospitals that were not too seriously damaged have been reopened, and where necessary tents have been put up for schools. This means that schooling is going forward on an improved basis. This is not satisfactory because there is little chance to heat a tent, and tent walls do not hold heat like mortar.

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JOHN PENDLETON

John Pendleton, ANERA Director and ARAMCO Vice-President in Washington, died suddenly on March 31, 1971. Mr. Pendleton was an outstanding person who gave freely of himself to causes he believed in. We came to know him well at ANERA, and we benefitted from his constant counsel and service as Chairman of the Projects Committee. Mr. Pendleton was a fine man and a good friend. His wry humor and deep convictions became part of our lives as well, and their absence leaves all of us poorer.

INTERVIEW WITH JAMES F. SAMS

ANERA Director James F. Sams, an international lawyer in Washington, D. C., recently returned from the Middle East. While in Beirut he discussed the current political situation with many people — Palestinians and Lebanese businessmen, educators, and government officials. In the following interview he reveals some of his impressions.

How do people in the Middle East assess the prospects for the Jarring peace initiative?

The people with whom I discussed the Jarring peace initiative were essentially negative. No one really appears to have confidence that a permanent peace settlement based upon the terms of reference of the Jarring Mission is a realistic possibility for the near future.

What did they feel was wrong?

It is not so much what is wrong with the approach taken by Jarring or the new efforts to implement the November 22 Resolution under the "Rogers' Plan", but more that most of them believe that despite significant changes in the Arab position with respect to, among other things, recognition of Israel and renunciation of belligerency, the Israelis have no intention of voluntarily withdrawing from *all* territories occupied during the "June War." Withdrawal is a critical ingredient to permanent peace, and no one has confidence in either the ability or willingness of the United States to exert its full influence with Israel to obtain withdrawal.

How do the Palestinian refugees fit into the current peace negotiations?

The Palestinians are not formally represented in the peace negotiations. The various organizations comprising the "Pal-

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PROJECT PROFILE Dar El Tifl

In 1948 after the tragic Deir Yassin massacre, Miss Hind Husseini started an orphanage and school to care for 55 of the survivors. Located in Jerusalem, this institution has grown to an enrollment of 1,100 girls, including 400 orphans, 400 from poor families, and 300 who pay full tuition. The school provides academic courses through high school, and training in secretarial skills, teaching, and home-making. Recently a science classroom, two new dormitory rooms, and a sitting room have been constructed. ANERA has made three grants to Dar El Tifl: \$1,000 in September 1969, \$1,000 in April, 1970, and \$7,000 in August, 1970. Like all private institutions in the Occupied Territory, Dar El Tifl is dependent on outside aid to meet operating costs. Dar El Tifl, P. O. Box 19377, Jerusalem via Israel.

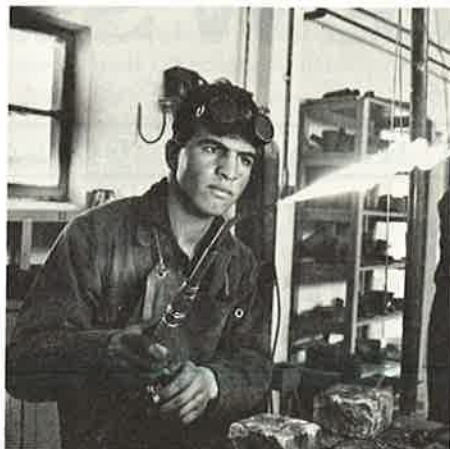
GARRY OWEN

Garry Owen, retired Vice-President of Aramco, suffered a fatal heart attack on March 7, 1971. Mr. Owen had served with Aramco both in the Middle East and as Government Operations Vice-President in Washington, D. C. Mrs. Owen requested that persons wishing to provide a remembrance contribute to ANERA. These contributions will make possible five vocational-training scholarships for Palestinian refugee youth at UNRWA Vocational-Training Centers. The scholarships are a fitting testimonial to Mr. Owen's long concern for development in the Middle East.

REFUGEE AID GROUPS MEET

On April 21 ANERA hosted another in a series of meetings of representatives of voluntary organizations active in Arab refugee relief. The meeting was held in the United Nations Church Center in New York and was highlighted by a report from Ambassador Mansour Khalid, who has been raising funds for the UNRWA/UNESCO educational program (see UNRWA story). Among those present at the meeting were representatives of the Church World Service, the Armenian Church, the Antiochian Orthodox Church, the Mennonite Central Committee, and the Islamic Cultural Center. The

participants exchanged information about current activities of their respective organizations, and several individuals reported on recent trips to the Middle East. These gatherings have served as an important, informal forum for discussing subjects of mutual interest.



Khaled Mohammed Zawawi

UNRWA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

There was something missing in UNRWA's year-end grade reports on the vocational trainees who received scholarships from ANERA last year: grades for one of the students, Khaled Mohammad Azwai, were not included in the report ANERA received last fall. In a covering letter, UNRWA noted that he had failed to graduate from the Blacksmith/Welders course at the Kalandia Vocational Training Center. It was hoped that Khaled would retake his final exams and pass. UNRWA wrote: "However, whatever the outcome, we remain confident that the experience and knowledge he has acquired during his two years at the Centre will be of sufficient practical value to him in the future. I feel sure that ANERA will appreciate that, because of the intensity of the situation in the Middle East, it is inevitable that some trainees are finding it difficult to concentrate on their studies. Fortunately, most of them are able to persevere."

ANERA just recently learned that Khaled had missed classes and neglected his studies because he was suffering from severe headache attacks. After two successful brain operations he returned to the training center and repeated part of the course. In January Khaled passed the final exams, and is already employed. We are sure you will be as pleased as we are with Khaled's successful recovery.

NEWS ACROSS THE NATION

CHICAGO — PAL-AID

Pal-Aid International was formed in Chicago in 1967 to channel clothing, medical supplies, and financial aid to the Arab refugees. Pal-Aid became a Founding Member of ANERA in 1968 through a substantial donation of medical supplies. Pal-Aid President Ribhi Kalla has just made a contribution of medicines valued at \$4,211 to ANERA. The shipment will be handled through the AMER Division in New York, and sent to UNRWA.

ANERA/WAUSAU

The Wausau, Wisconsin Chapter of ANERA is undertaking a number of initiatives relating to the Middle East. They drafted a letter which was sent to Wisconsin's two Senators, supporting an increased U.S. allocation to UNRWA, organized a drive to collect funds to be sent to the Middle East through ANERA, and planned a rummage sale/bazaar for this spring to raise more money. Senator Proxmire (D.-Wisc.) sent a favorable reply and said he would be pleased to work in support of the amendment to increase funds for UNRWA. The fund-raising campaign has netted \$150 to date, which has been allocated by ANERA to UNRWA.

ANERA/SEATTLE

During the month of April ANERA/Seattle conducted a membership campaign, and on April 24 held a dinner banquet. Copies of the booklet and tape recording of "A Plea for Justice for People of the Holy Land" are being distributed. Chapter President Mousa R. Murad reports that more fund-raising activities are in the planning stage, including the showing of a film.

U. S. OMEN — CALIFORNIA

U. S. OMEN recently announced its new national Board of Directors for 1970-71 under the leadership of Mr. D. J. Asfour of San Francisco, who is also an ANERA Director. The officers are:

- President — D. J. Asfour
- Vice President — Dr. Ray Jallow
- 2nd Vice President — Dr. Aly Shabaik
- 2nd Vice President — Mr. Fakhry Kawar
- Secretary &
- Legal Counsel — Mr. George Shibley
- Treasurer — Mr. Bahidj Sabouni

UNRWA FUND APPEALS

How do the Palestinian Arabs feel about the future?

Well, I think in general they were shocked by the destruction in Jordan of last September and October. Also, I am sure that it is accurate to say that they are embittered, but they are determined to live on, and it seems to me that there is every evidence that they are determined to regain what they believe are their basic rights as human beings. They are still demanding appropriate action to fulfill United Nations resolutions that call for repatriation and compensation. Even though the Palestinian leadership is divided, they continue to speak in terms of a Palestine that is unified and that grants equal rights to people of all religions, particularly the three great faiths.

How do the Palestinians view the present peace efforts?

In general, the Palestinians that I talked with oppose the present peace effort. They state that it does not specifically deal with their basic rights. They feel left out of the peace effort. This feeling of being left out accounts, at least in part, for the cleavage between the Palestinians and the Jordanian government.

How does the Palestinian position concerning a possible settlement differ from that of the Jordanian government?

Well, the Jordanian government, as I understand it, has supported the U.A.R. position which puts in the forefront of the peace talks the question of Israeli withdrawal from all territories occupied in 1967. Jordan is not so articulate in pressing for negotiations as the U.A.R., but this is its basic position, as I understand it. The Palestinians I talked with feel that the question of justice for the people of Palestine should be the number 1 priority item. I think also that they feel that the question of justice for the Palestinians may become a forgotten item should an understanding between Arab governments and Israel be reached on the questions of withdrawal and boundaries and so forth, and an agreement signed. The Palestinians also express objection on another point — they want representation at the peace talks. They feel that they are the people most directly concerned on the Arab side and hence they should be participants.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine has been operating on deficit budgets since 1963 (with the exception of 1967). These deficits total \$15 million. In the past this sum has been covered by the Agency's Working Capital Fund, but this source is now dangerously depleted and new funds must be found to meet this year's projected budget deficit of \$5 million. This situation is caused by several factors: increased costs of goods and services; static levels of contributions from governments, individuals, and businesses; increasing refugee population; and emergency expenditures brought on by unrest in the Middle East.

UNRWA has already "trimmed the fat" from its budget, and during 1970 major cut-backs were delayed in the hope that additional funds would be forthcoming. No more cuts can be made in such vital services to the refugees as medical aid, shelter, and food. Any future cuts will have to come in the educational programs, which would prevent Palestinians from getting the education they need to become self-supporting.

In the face of this continuing financial crisis, two separate groups were recently set up to appeal for contributions from governments, businesses, and individuals around the world. A nine-member Working Group on UNRWA's Financial Situation was created during the last General Assembly to examine UNRWA's financial plight and suggest a possible solution. Under the leadership of Ambassador Nuri Eren, Turkey's Deputy Permanent Representative to the U.N., the Working Group includes representatives of France, Ghana, Japan, Lebanon, Norway, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. Ambassador Eren is currently in Europe raising funds for UNRWA.

A separate appeal for funds to support the educational services run jointly by UNRWA and UNESCO is being made by Mansour Khalid, Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the U.N., in the capacity of special advisor to the Director-General of UNESCO, Rene Maheu. This appeal was launched on New Year's Day, and Ambassador Khalid has been successful in getting pledges from Libya, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, Switzerland, Dubai, Qatar, and Bahrain which total \$604,000. Visits have also been made to Scandinavia, the U. S., Canada, Japan, and

South America. Spain has provided \$50,000 worth of school equipment which will be put to very good use in the UNRWA/UNESCO educational program. Specific requests include textbooks and school supplies of all kinds, as well as funds to meet current payrolls.

While in Washington, Ambassador Khalid met with State Department officials and members of Congress regarding a possible increase in United States support for the UNRWA/UNESCO program.

Ambassador Khalid said, "The situation facing UNRWA in general, and the joint education program in particular, is extremely serious. Cuts which will have to be made in the education program if extra financing is not forthcoming could deprive from 80,000 to 100,000 refugee children from school. This is not only a human problem, it is one that could have serious implications and affect efforts for the promotion of peace in the region."

(For more about UNRWA, see ANERA Newsletter Number 10)

"UNTIL SUCH A TIME"

The following quotation is from a letter received by ANERA from a Professor who showed "Until Such a Time" to his seminar on the Middle East.

"There was unanimous agreement about the effectiveness of the OxFam film. It communicates with touching simplicity the integrity of the Arab family, even under great stress, as many of the people in the camps are."

ANERA has two prints of this fine film available for use by interested groups.

ANERA NEWS

Currently the ANERA staff is involved in preparation for the Third Annual Meeting of the ANERA Board of Directors to be held in Washington on May 11. At this meeting one-third of the Board will be up for re-election, and such business as the annual budget and future activities will be considered.

Tape recordings and booklets containing the proceedings of "A Plea for Justice for People of the Holy Land" are now available from the ANERA office.

Sams Interview- Continued

estinian Resistance Movement" have categorically rejected the concept of a political settlement based upon the November 22 Resolution and the "Rogers' Plan" to implement it. There are no representative Palestinian spokesmen who have sought direct participation in the current peace talks to my knowledge. On the other hand, no efforts have been made to obtain Palestinian representation.

What is the basis for the dispute between the Palestinians and the other Arabs?

The Palestinians fear that the Arab governments will settle for a compromise solution with Israel inconsistent with the stated goals of the Palestinian resistance organizations. From their point of view, it would be admitting defeat to accept such a pact. Some Arab States, on the other hand, see the insistence of the Palestinian resistance organizations on full implementation of their programs as unrealistic in the context of the present political and military situation.

As you look back on the impressions gathered during your trip, what do you feel is required for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East?

I do not think I can answer that question by saying what I think is required for a "just and lasting peace" because I do not think a just peace is really possible in the context of redressing the wrongs that the Palestinians have suffered over the years. I think I can only talk in terms of requirements for a lasting peace. In order to redress the wrongs to the Palestinians, the destruction and havoc of another war would be inevitable. Another war, in my view, would be the ultimate tragedy for the Arabs, including Palestinians, as well as for the Israelis.

Therefore, I think that what we need to look for is a solution which can create conditions of peace, and I subscribe whole-heartedly to the approach taken by the November 22 United Nations Resolution. I think a solution must envision an option of repatriation to substantial numbers of Palestinians and a multi-billion dollar fund with which to resettle and compensate displaced Palestinians and to provide funds for economic development. I think there must be a way worked out whereby the Palestinians have a political voice and a truly representative voice in defining final terms of peace.

Do you think the Palestinians would accept such a settlement?

I suspect that there would be greater support from among the Palestinians if a referendum were taken than we might imagine.

In my view, Palestinian nationalism can find its best hope of expression through establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and in Gaza. This Palestinian state, closely linked with Jordan and other Arab states, could be viable. The alternative appears to be continuation of the status quo, which means continued suffering of the Palestinian refugees. The best solution is one which reflects human values and minimizes human suffering, rather than political doctrine.

I do not believe that Zionism can survive more than one generation of peace in the Middle East. I have too much respect for Judaism to believe that the values of that religion will be perpetually subverted by an essentially negativist political ideology. Zionism thrives on the political instability which is present in the

Middle East and the constant threat of war. Once those threats are removed, anti-Zionism will grow within Israel, as well as without, and the basic character of the State will change to be in harmony with the region as a whole.

Finally, I should like to emphasize that as long as the situation remains as it is in the Middle East, we cannot overlook the condition of the Palestinian refugees. I think it is more important than ever before that ANERA renew its commitment to help alleviate their suffering and continue to offer support to them as the minimum responsibility of the United States and the world community.

It is true that humanitarian efforts of the type sponsored by ANERA do not go to the "roots" of the political problems in the area, nor do they offer hope to the Palestinians that their political aspirations will ever be fulfilled. However, given the terrible complexity of the political problems, humanitarian efforts are all the more urgent. The Palestinians are a proud people, and they have been the victims of great injustice. They understandably resent being offered charity instead of the justice they deserve. Nevertheless, as long as they remain a people without a country, their needs are a world responsibility.

RECENT ANERA GRANTS

- \$2750 Five UNRWA Vocational Training Scholarships, in memory of Garry Owen.
- \$500 American University in Cairo in memory of John Pendleton.
- \$150 to UNRWA
- \$550 UNRWA Vocational Training Scholarship



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