



NEWSLETTER

Number 15 AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID, INC. Oct. -Nov. - Dec., 1971



The Four Homes of Mercy, Jerusalem

NEW GRANTS

- \$ 500 Wasfieh Orphanage
- 2,000 Rawdat el Zuhur
- 2,500 Dar al Awlad
- 500 Arab Women's Society, Jerusalem
- 3,000 The Four Homes of Mercy
- 5,000 Industrial Islamic Orphanage
- 5,000 World Alliance of YMCA's

ANERA has recently made seven grants totaling \$18,500. A new building for Wasfieh Orphanage will be equipped with the aid of ANERA's grant. This orphanage in Nazareth is directed by Archbishop Joseph M. Raya of Galilee. Rawdat el Zuhur, Dar al Awlad, the Industrial Islamic Orphanage, and the Arab Women's Society are receiving continuing support from ANERA for their educational programs. All are located in Jerusalem. The Four Homes of Mercy, the recipient of two earlier grants from

ANERA, serves people in the Jerusalem area and is currently completing a new building (see photo) which will house all Four Homes. The youth leadership training program which the World Alliance of YMCAs conducts in refugee camps has just been awarded its third grant from ANERA.

UNRWA HEAD HONORED

While attending the current U.N. General Assembly in New York, UNRWA Commissioner-General Sir John Rennie visited Washington where he was guest of honor at a luncheon hosted by ANERA on October 27. Present at the luncheon were representatives of the U.S. Dept. of State and Capitol Hill, and Ambassadors from the "host countries". In brief re-

EVENTS IN GAZA

On July 8 Israel's Minister of Defense informed UNRWA's field Director in Gaza that housing units in Jabalia camp would be demolished to make way for wider roads. These new roads would increase security in the area which had been the scene of 80 murders in the past five months. After the demolition had begun, the UNRWA Commissioner-General, Sir John Rennie requested more information about Israel's plans. He was told that the operations would be limited to Jabalia camp; the people affected would be rehoused and compensated, but that due to a housing shortage, the majority were being transferred temporarily outside the Gaza Strip to El Arish. Only 500-800 families in Jabalia camp would be affected.

However, similar demolition and resettlement operations were undertaken in Sahti and Rafah camps during August. The inhabitants of doomed houses were given from 2-48 hours notice and had the choice of being transported to El Arish, the West Bank, or finding their own accommodations within the Gaza Strip until new housing was completed. The displacement of these individuals presented many problems for UNRWA in providing services such as health care and rations, particularly in El Arish. Before the demolitions stopped at the end of August, approximately 2,900 families representing from 9,000-15,000 people in three camps were moved. According to recent news reports, the Israelis are preparing to transfer more refugees into new camps and shelters in Gaza, without consulting UNRWA.



John P. Richardson

JPR PROMOTION AND TRIP

At its meeting on September 1 the ANERA Executive Committee accepted the recommendation of ANERA President, John H. Davis, that John P. Richardson be promoted to the newly-created position of Executive Vice-President. Dr. Davis stated that he was transferring to Mr. Richardson additional responsibility for ANERA's operations in order that he (Dr. Davis) might have more time for other interests.

On November 9 Mr. Richardson left on a four-week tour of the Middle East. During this trip he will visit refugee-related organizations in Cairo, Beirut, Amman, and the West Bank, including Jerusalem. The purpose of this trip is to make an assessment of conditions and refugee needs in order to insure that ANERA's activities meet the greatest needs. Upon his return, Mr. Richardson will make a report to the Board of Directors.

PROJECT PROFILE: NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF LEBANESE YMCAs

The National Alliance of Lebanese YMCAs has been assisting the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon for several years. The YMCA maintains centers in Beirut, Tyre and Sidon which provide educational, social and recreational opportunities for the refugees living in UNRWA camps. At the Y's summer camp, Camp Faris, in Ras el Matn, refugee youth have an opportunity to get out of the camps and enjoy a unique camping experience for two weeks during a 14 week summer season. ANERA has provided 80 camperships over the past several seasons for refugee youths who would not otherwise be able to attend Camp Faris. Contact: Mr. Alex Ghammachi, Administrator, National Alliance Lebanese of YMCAs, P.O. Box 5520, Beirut, Lebanon.

PALESTINE PETITION

The current session of the United Nations General Assembly serves as a backdrop for a private American initiative to focus attention on the plight of the displaced Arab people of Palestine. The Melbourne (Florida) branch of the American Committee for Justice in the Middle East (ACJME) has prepared a petition appealing for justice on behalf of the Palestine Arabs. This effort is viewed as a "statement of conscience" on the part of concerned Americans, particularly Christians, affirming the moral obligation to reassert and uphold the rights of the Arab people of Palestine. A number of interested groups are urging organizations and individuals across the country to circulate this petition and return it. The petition, with a list of signers, will be presented to Ambassador George Bush of the United Nations. Copies of the petition are available from, and should be returned to:

ACJME - Melbourne Branch
P.O. Box 1856
Melbourne, Florida 32901

Events in Gaza (Continued)

If Israel would work with UNRWA during the next stage of its resettlement program to arrange for an orderly rehousing of the affected individuals within Gaza, the unfortunate refugees might be spared some unnecessary hardship in their already tragic lives. This would merely be making the best of an impossible, tragic situation which exists in defiance of many United Nations resolutions.

UNRWA (Continued)

marks, Sir John outlined UNRWA's current financial status and the outlook for the future. The projected deficit for the current calendar year of \$6 million has been reduced to \$2.5 million, thanks to an all-out fund-raising effort. However, next year there will be another deficit necessitating cuts in education if additional funding is not found. The effect of the admittance of Red China to the United Nations on the Foreign Aid bill then pending in Congress was the subject of much discussion. This luncheon gave people in Washington with an interest in UNRWA a chance to meet Sir John Rennie and be brought up-to-date on UNRWA's operations.



Alexandra A. Barmaki

VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOL GRADUATES

Two years ago ANERA made a grant for 64 scholarships to UNRWA vocational training schools. We have recently received reports from UNRWA about the activities of the scholarship recipients, who have now graduated. Of the 64; 48 are known to be employed, and 4 are receiving further training in West Germany. Considering the unrest and disruption of classes during the last academic year, these figures are very encouraging. Thanks to their training, these young people are now self-supporting, contributing members of Middle East society. They are employed in a great variety of positions, including factories, beauty parlors, dressmaking shops, schools and garages.

One new employee is Alexandra Barmaki, (see photo) a graduate of the UNRWA Women's Training Center in Ramallah, who is now teaching kindergarten at St. George's school in Jerusalem.

In the 1970-71 fiscal year which ended June 30, ANERA gave \$10,750 to UNRWA for Vocational Training Scholarships. We feel that these grants are worthwhile investments in the future of the Middle East.

PHOTO CREDIT

The photograph of Jerusalem used on the front page of the last issue of the ANERA Newsletter was taken by Lelia (Mrs. Evan) Wilson and published in *Jerusalem, Key to Peace* by Evan Wilson, (The Middle East Institute, 1970). We would like to apologize for not having credited the photograph when it appeared.

U THANT SPEAKS

In response to a question concerning petitions which had been submitted to him by Russian Jews requesting permission to immigrate from the U.S.S.R., U.N. Secretary-General U Thant made the following comments:

"Of course, in an ideal society everybody should have the right to leave the country in which he or she does not want to live. At the same time, everybody in an ideal society should have the right to return to his or her own country. That is the essence of the Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the General Assembly in 1948 Therefore, in an ideal society, I think those Soviet citizens of the Jewish faith in the Soviet Union who want to leave the Soviet Union should be permitted to leave, and, at the same time, Palestinian refugees who have been refugees for more than twenty years should be permitted to return to their own homes. So there are two aspects to this problem in terms of the Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted in 1948. But our society is far from ideal, and so we have to keep on trying to fashion the kind of society we want. Only then, of course, shall we be able to implement the Declaration of Human Rights, which, as you all know, is just a declaration and is not mandatory."

From the transcript of a Press conference held on 14 Sept., 1971 - U.N. Press release SG/SM/1530.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Christmas cards produced by the Friends of Jerusalem Society have now arrived in the United States and are on sale for 15 cents each. Individuals are urged to order *now* before the cards are all sold. ANERA has a supply, and they are also available from:

Atlanta Friends of the M.E.
P.O. Box 29132
Atlanta, Georgia 30325

Dr. A.S. Kuri
250 S. Chestnut Street
Ravenna, Ohio 44266

Mrs. George Loutfi
41 Woodlawn
Chestnut Hill, Mass. 02167

U.S. OMEN, Inc.
708 Ellis St.
San Francisco, Calif. 94102



16th Century Bible, one of the Christmas cards produced by The Friends of Jerusalem Society.

AROUND THE COUNTRY

Wausau, Wisconsin

ANERA/Wausau, under the leadership of Shafeec Mansour and Mrs. Joan Schmitz, is planning a rummage sale to raise funds for an UNRWA Vocational Training Scholarship.

San Francisco, California

Two students will complete their second year at UNRWA's Gaza Vocational Training Center through the generosity of NAJDA. The two scholarship recipients are both in the electronics course. Mohammad Elmughari is first in his class, and Omar E. Habbash is third.

New York, New York

ANERA's AMER Division is gathering pharmaceuticals for a shipment to UNRWA. Specific drugs which have been requested by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society are also being sought. On October 29 the ANERA/AMER Medical Committee held a meeting to discuss methods of strengthening AMER's appeals to pharmaceutical companies. A distinguished visitor to the meeting was UNRWA Commissioner-General, Sir John Rennie.

The Holy Land Center of New York will hold its annual Christmas party on Wednesday, December 8 from 5:30-8:30 P.M. at the Church Center for the United Nations. Contributions will benefit Musa Alami's project in Jericho and Rawdat el Zuhur school in Jerusalem.



MIDDLE EAST NEWS DIGESTS AVAILABLE

In the past few months two excellent digests of Middle East news have been published which would be invaluable for people who are interested in keeping up with events in the Middle East which are not generally reported in the American Press. Both publications review a comprehensive list of newspapers and magazines from the Eastern U.S., Europe, and the Middle East. These news reviews are similar in purpose and format, but they tend to stress different stories so they are complimentary documents. *The Middle*

East News Review is produced by the Middle East and Europe Dept., Division of Overseas Ministries, of The National Council of Churches. This is a weekly publication priced at \$10 per year. For more information write: *The Middle East News Review*, Room 610, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10027. *The Middle East Monitor* is a bi-weekly digest put out by the Middle East Institute at \$15 a year. Contact: *The Middle East Monitor*, 1761 N St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

FAIRUZ RECORD RELEASED

The Forum for Arab Art & Culture which organized Fairuz's recent successful concert tour, announces the release of a record made during her performances in New York and Montreal. This unique album would make an ideal Christmas gift. It is available for \$7.00 including postage exclusively from:

Forum for Arab Art & Culture
135 East 44th St., Suite 1002
New York, New York 10017

**ARTICLE ON REFUGEES
PUBLISHED**

The November 4th Eastern edition of *The Christian Science Monitor* carried an excellent AP story entitled "Arabs in Refugee Camp Bitter and Bored" which contained much background material about the refugees. The article was "personalized" by highlighting one individual, Salim Moussa, a resident of Irbid camp in Northern Jordan who had been born in Haifa, fled to the West Bank in 1948, and became a refugee for the second time when he moved to Irbid in 1967. In telling Mr. Moussa's story, details of life in refugee camps are brought out, and feelings of the refugees are disclosed. Mr. Moussa is quoted as saying that he is resigned to dying in the camp,

"Even though a day doesn't pass when I don't think what it would be like to return to Haifa. Everything's changed, I'm sure, but I would like to go back. That is unrealistic, but so are all the other solutions mentioned — including a state on the West Bank federated with Jordan. That doesn't get any of us back to our homeland" The article then moves on to a discussion of the political position of the refugees, beginning with various proposals for some type of state on the West Bank. Although the U.N. has consistently called for the return of refugees to their homes, no one seriously expects Israel to allow them to return in great numbers. Let us hope that more articles such as this will be published, so that the American public will have an objective understanding of the Palestinian refugee problem.

Season's Greetings
 عيد مبارك
Meilleurs Voeux

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- Annual Patron \$1000.00

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