

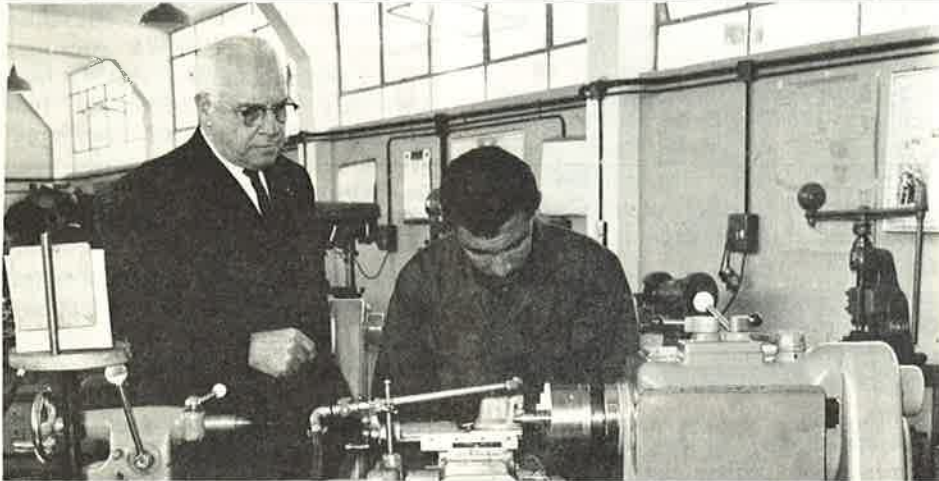


NEWSLETTER

Number 18

AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID, INC.

May-June 1972



DR. DAVIS VISITING AN UNRWA VOCATIONAL
TRAINING CENTER

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST

By

Dr. John H. Davis

(Editor's Note: The following are Dr. Davis' comments following his recent three week trip to the Middle East from April 30-May 26 (see ANERA Director and Staff Activity - Page 2.)

The United States today is being subjected to severe criticism in the Arab World. The reason is that in recent months America's Middle East policy seems to have shifted to an even more partisan position than in recent years. Arab leaders date this change in policy to December 1971, the time of the Israeli Prime Minister's trip to the United States. They point out that prior to that time the United States had insisted that Israel commit itself to withdrawal from territories occupied during the 1967 fighting, whereas in January 1972 the United States announced the decision to make available planes and other arms and financial assistance for Israel—without reference to withdrawal. Hence, Arabs con-

clude that American policy now is one of supporting the *status quo* in the Middle East, manifestly detrimental to the Arabs.

I have been asked over and over again, "Why this change in American policy?" One Arab explanation is that as of December 1971 the United States realized that Israel would never withdraw from occupied territory without being forced to do so, and the White House decided that the United States would not press Israel to the point of forcing her to withdraw. This meant that for all practical purposes the Rogers Plan had failed and that new fighting might break out. To forestall a new round of fighting between Egypt and Israel, the United States then decided to further "tilt" military advantage on Israel's side so that Egypt would not attack her.

As one would expect, most Arab leaders are bitter about this change in American policy. They feel that they, and, particularly President Sadat, have been betrayed by America and in a way which leaves them no honorable way out but to fight.

A second fact that stands out in the Middle East today is the extensive and systematic way in which Israel is improving and settling her own people on occupied Arab lands. This is taking place in East Jerusalem, the Sinai, the West Bank, the Golan Heights and the Gaza Strip. This, too, adds to Arab anxiety and bitterness.

A third fact that confronts one visiting the Arab World today is Arab awareness of the growing dependence of the West—including the U.S.—on Arab oil. Many Arabs anxious for an equitable American policy are now contemplating how their oil advantage might be used by them in bargaining with the United States. How this might be done has not taken clear form. One prominent Arab said to me that whereas a few months ago he felt the Arabs had to accept concessions to Israel or fight to get their rights back, the oil issue might now provide a middle road—one that can bring a re-assessment by America of its Middle East policy.

A logical posture for America at this point would be a call for unity by the members of the United Nations in bringing about Israel's withdrawal from occupied territory, as called for in the Rogers Plan and U.N. Security Council Resolution 242. In return, Israel would be assured of security within her pre-1967 borders along with the other guarantees stipulated in Security Council Resolution 242. For America to take this posture would be for her to act in the interest of the American people. It also would be a long step towards peace. If this were done the Palestinian refugee problem could be resolved.

ARAB WOMEN'S CHARITABLE FESTIVAL

The Union of Arab Women sponsored an "Arabian Festival" on April 29 at the Washington Islamic Center in order to raise funds for assistance to Palestinian orphans in the Holy Land. The Union, organized in 1970 by Arab women resident in the United States and by American women married to Arabs, plans to expand both its membership and its scale of activities in the near future. Mrs. Aida Aboud is acting president of the organization. The Festival raised \$1,000, which will be sent to Dar el-Tifl and Dar el-Eytam, both of which are schools for needy youngsters in East Jerusalem.

ARAB-AMERICAN ASSOCIATION (CINCINNATI)

The Arab-American Association of Cincinnati announces that in recent months it has sent a total of \$1420 to the Middle East in direct support of charitable institutions. The Orthodox Educational Society (Amman) received \$100; Project Ryaiat (Jerusalem)—\$120; In'Ash el-Usra (Ramallah)—\$200; and the United Holy Land Fund—\$1000. In addition, the Association has been active in promoting a variety of social and informational programs in the Cincinnati area. Victor Asfour serves the group as President.

PHARMACEUTICAL SOLICITATION PROGRAM

Dr. Gerald Dorman, Chairman of the AMER Division Medical Committee, and John Richardson have now completed a series of visits to fourteen of AMER's major donors of pharmaceutical products, to express appreciation for past support and to request continued contributions of needed items for UNRWA and other organizations providing medical services to Palestine refugees. The firms are located in nine different states in the East and Middle West. The consensus of both men was that the visits were beneficial since most company representatives appeared sincerely interested in the AMER program and appreciated the effort made to come and visit them personally. The visits' success was enhanced through previous personal familiarity by Dr. Dorman with several of the representatives.

PROJECT PROFILE

THE PALESTINE WOMEN'S UNION AL—REMAL, GAZA

The Palestine Women's Union-Gaza (PWU) was founded in 1964 under the direction of Miss Yusra el-Barbari, President, whose personal determination provides most of the stimulus of the organization. PWU's purposes are to raise the social, cultural, health and economic standards of women in Gaza. The center in Al Ramal, as well as two sub-centers in Khan-Younis and Rafah, provide free courses in adult education ranging from the preparatory level of English or Hebrew to instruction in dressmaking and knitting—machine workshops. These practical courses enable the women to earn income by working in the centers as well as to sell their products locally.

The Union also runs nurseries and distributes clothing and rations to women and children, hospital patients, and needy families of detainees and prisoners. Cash assistance supports the blood bank in the Gaza Strip and underwrites medical services to ophthalmic patients from Gaza in the St. John's Ophthalmic Hospital (Jerusalem).

A stated aim, "to look after working women and to achieve equality with men in public life", becomes a relevant direction for contemporary life. ANERA's recent grant (see page 3) will assist the Union in its programs of self-support for the women and children of Gaza.

ANERA DIRECTOR AND STAFF ACTIVITY

Evan M. Wilson, member of the Board and chairman of the Projects Committee, left on May 31 for a visit to Jerusalem and the West Bank on behalf of the Spafford Children's Center, which he serves as Chairman of the Board of its American fundraising arm, American Colony Charities. Mr. Wilson plans to be in the Middle East for about two weeks and hopes to publish an article upon his return based on conversations and personal observations in the area. Mr. Wilson served in Jerusalem as Minister-Consul-General from 1964-67, including the period of the June War.

Dr. John Davis spent most of the month of May in the Middle East, primarily as a panel chairman at a Beirut International Communications Seminar underwritten by the Ford Foundation. The conference, sponsored by a mixture of graduate journalism schools and Arab governmental unities, addressed itself to problems facing Western journalistic interpretation of Arab society as well as problems which confront Western journalists trying to perform their jobs

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effectively in the Arab World.

John Richardson, Executive Vice-President, presented a lecture at Ohio Wesleyan University in April as part of the university's "Forum" series this year on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Mr. Richardson's topic was "Middle East Refugees: Victims of the Palestine Conflict", and he included in his analysis comments about the Jewish communities of the Arab World as well as the Palestinian Arabs. The House Subcommittee on Foreign Operations of the larger Appropriations Committee distributed to all its members a statement submitted by Mr. Richardson focusing on the UNRWA vocational-training program and the crisis it is facing now that originally-authorized funds from Congress have not been appropriated. Mr. Richardson testified before the Senate Subcommittee on Foreign Operations on the same subject on June 2. In his testimony Mr. Richardson emphasized the high degree of impact achieved through comparatively small dollar investment by the American government in the UNRWA vocational-training program. He also stressed the "visibility" of tangible results of the program — in great contrast to the dubious and imprecise nature of both goals and results achieved in many other areas of massive American foreign spending.

Mrs. Ellynn Crippin has now replaced Katy Compere as secretary to Mr. Richardson and editor of the *Newsletter*. Katy, who contributed a great deal in her three and one-half years at ANERA, toured Europe for a short time prior to returning to the Washington area. Mrs. Crippin, a native of Tulsa, Oklahoma has lived in Cairo, Beirut, Amman, and Damascus. She is married to Virgil Crippin, Executive Vice-President of American Friends of the Middle East, Inc.

DR. ELSON RELINQUISHING PASTORAL RESPONSIBILITIES

According to news reports in Washington papers, Dr. Edward L.R. Elson, pastor of the National Presbyterian Church and chaplain of the United States Senate, informed his parishioners at the close of services May 14 that "upon the most emphatic medical advice" he was relinquishing his major pastoral duties forthwith. Dr. Elson, a member of the ANERA board, cited a "combination of physical situations" but did not elaborate save to mention a lingering disability from World War II. Dr. Elson indicated his intention to continue to serve as chaplain of the Senate and to devote more time to writing.

RECENT ANERA GRANTS

The ANERA Board of Directors has recently approved the following grants to projects and institutions in the Middle East:

Lebanese YMCA "Camperships" (Beirut)	\$1,000
Association for the Resurgence of Palestinian Camps (Beirut)	2,000
Five UNRWA Vocational- Training Scholarships	2,750
College des Freres (Jerusalem)	700
Birzeit College (West Bank)	5,000

All of the new grants are continuations of previous support given by ANERA to the same recipients. The grant for "Camperships" will give some 35 Palestinian refugee boys from the south of Lebanon an opportunity to escape the heat and boredom of summer through taking part in the YMCA-sponsored Camp Faris in the mountains of Lebanon. The camp experience will also give the refugee boys a chance to meet and become friends with boys from other parts of Lebanon and elsewhere. The grant to the Association for the Resurgence of Palestinian Camps will be applied to operating costs of the program run by this organization in Shatila Camp, just outside Beirut. Shatila, one of the poorest of all the UNRWA camps, is assisted by a 200-student kindergarten, sewing classes for women, a library, and a sports program—all sponsored by the Association. The grant of five UNRWA vocational-training scholarships represents ANERA's continued support for this key program of UNRWA which provides young people with priceless opportunities to become employable and to fashion their own lives. Four of this group of scholarships were made possible through the work of the Cambridge (Mass.) committee of AMER (see separate story). The grant to College des Freres will make possible scholarship assistance to two Palestinian boys studying at this very good primary and secondary school in the Old City of Jerusalem. Birzeit College, the only Arab institution of higher learning in the Occupied Territories, will benefit from ANERA's grant of \$5,000, part of which was made possible through the generosity of the United American-Arab Appeal of Massachusetts, represented on the ANERA board of directors by Sam Hassan. The college is facing ongoing financial difficulties but is moving ahead under the leadership of Dr. Hanna Nasir, son of the late founder of Birzeit College, Musa Bey Nasir.

UNRWA'S VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



*An UNRWA classroom-workshop
for electrical training*



IBRAHIM BADER RAJABI

AMER CAMBRIDGE COMMITTEE RAISES SCHOLARSHIPS

The Cambridge (Massachusetts) Committee of AMER, headed by Mrs. Malcolm Peabody, has closed the books on a most successful, year-long fund drive which raised \$1,985.00. It was the wish of the Committee that this sum go in its entirety toward the creation of vocational-training scholarships in UNRWA vocational-training centers for Palestinian refugee boys and girls. Since UNRWA scholarships for a full one-year program costs \$550 each, ANERA contributed a small amount from its own funds to round off the grant at \$2,200 for a full four scholarships. The larger sum has been transmitted to Sir John Rennie, UNRWA Commissioner-General, for the desired purpose.

Founded in 1966, the Cambridge Committee has loyally supported AMER's work and the needs of the Palestinian refugees. Both ANERA and the AMER offices are greatly appreciative of the efforts of Mrs. Peabody, Mrs. Margaret D. Penrose (Treasurer), and the members and supporters of the Committee.

ANERA'S UNRWA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

The office of the Commissioner-General, UNRWA, has notified ANERA that the most recent grant of \$550 to the UNRWA Vocational-Training Scholarship fund has been awarded to a first-year student, Ibrahim Bader Rajabi. Ibrahim, having completed nine years of basic education at UNRWA schools, applied successfully for admission to the Kalandia Vocational Training Center, where he enrolled in the 1971-73 general electricians course in September 1971. Young Mr. Rajabi was born in Wadi El-Joz, Jerusalem District, his father having settled there after fleeing from the new city of Jerusalem following the outbreak of hostilities in 1948. The Rajabi family of four sons and seven daughters depends on UNRWA relief services for much of their support. It is the hope of Ibrahim that at the end of his two-year training that his qualifications will enable him to pursue his chosen career as an electrician and secure a job in order to assist his parents, younger brothers and sisters.

CAPITOL HILL TESTIMONY SUPPORTS UNRWA

On April 19 two highly-qualified witnesses urged the Congress to maintain its support of UNRWA in the difficult times now facing the agency. Laurence Michelmore, former Commissioner-General of UNRWA, and John Armitage, Director of the Office of United Nations Political Affairs of the State Department, appeared before the Near East Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee in a special session on UNRWA. Representative Lee Hamilton, Subcommittee Chairman, observed in his opening remarks that "it has become almost axiomatic that there will be no peace or settlement in the Middle East that does not address the plight of the Palestinian refugees. If no just future for these refugees is found, another Mideast conflict becomes almost inevitable. The United States, for its part, must redouble its efforts to insure that another generation of Palestinians does not grow up in refugee camps, and to find ways and means of providing their lives with hope and dignity, their bodies with sustenance and strength, and their vocations with purpose and skills".

Dr. Michelmore gave a summary of agency operations and then addressed himself to implications of reductions in services: "Further reductions—would certainly be strongly resisted by the refugees and would doubtless cause very serious difficulties for the governments concerned." Dr. Michelmore noted that if the United Nations "contributions scale" (based on ability to pay) were applied to UNRWA contributions, six Arab countries (none of them "host countries") are currently making donations at a rate

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more generous than either the United States or England—the largest two donors.

Mr. Armitage addressed his remarks primarily to an analysis of the inter-relationship of UNRWA's work, American support of it, and broader American policy goals in the Middle East. Acknowledging the necessity of UNRWA "from the humanitarian point of view alone", Mr. Armitage went on to say that "—our continued support of UNRWA is an integral part of our overall efforts to maintain political stability in the Middle East and to help bring about a negotiated peace settlement between Israel and her Arab neighbors". Mr. Armitage added that American support to UNRWA is "a visible and significant indicator for the Arabs of our continued support for a peaceful settlement that takes into account the legitimate concerns of the Palestinian refugees".

Included in the official document containing the testimony of both witnesses was a reprint of an article from the December 10, 1971 edition of the Israeli newspaper, *Davar*, which reported on the findings of a team of social scientists at Hebrew University who examined UNRWA's program in depth. The team was most favorably impressed by the administrative efficiency of UNRWA and credited the dedication of both its international and Palestinian staff for this situation. The team was outspoken in its criticism of Israeli government policy toward the Palestinians, particularly in Gaza. They reported that very little positive and a great deal that was negative made up the official government record since 1967.

CANDIDATES' VIEWS ON REFUGEE QUESTION

1972 is a major election year, and in March ANERA queried the Democratic candidates by letter concerning their views on the Palestine refugee issue and UNRWA's role. Letters were sent to Senator Edmund S. Muskie, Senator George McGovern, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, Mayor John Lindsay, Representative Shirley Chisholm, and Senator Henry M. Jackson. The letter of inquiry briefly summarized ANERA's range of activities and orientation. Only Lindsay and Muskie responded to the query, and Lindsay did not address himself to the question, on the grounds that he was no longer a candidate. Senator Muskie's letter stated, "I strongly believe that a final political settlement in the Middle East must, among other things, be a just one of the Palestine refugees. Until such a settlement is reached I support efforts such as those of UNRWA to assist these people in maintaining their welfare." In the event that additional responses are received, the candidates' views will be shared with ANERA's *Newsletter* readers.

U.S. OMEN

(Los Angeles Chapter)

U.S. Omen (United States Organization for Medical and Educational Needs) Los Angeles, an ANERA Founding Member is dedicated to aiding the Palestinian refugees and other needy people in Asia and Africa. The following are the newly elected Executive Board Officers for 1972–1973.

Dr. Spear Sayegh — President
Mr. Issa G. Khoury — 1st Vice Pres.
Fr. Enoch Jones, Jr. — 2nd Vice Pres.
Dr. George E. Shibley — Secty. &
Legal Advisor
Mr. Mustafa Siam — Treasurer



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