



NEWSLETTER

Number 20

AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID, INC.

Nov.-Dec. 1972



UNRWA's Health Service In Action at Marka Camp, East Jordan.

PROJECT PROFILE

UNRWA

Since a large percentage of ANERA's grants go to UNRWA, we felt that our readers would like to know more about this vital organization.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency is the major international organization responsible for aiding the Palestinian refugees. UNRWA was established by the General Assembly of the United Nations in its Resolution No. 302 (IV) on December 8, 1949. It was the successor to the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees (UNRPR) established in November, 1948. In its enabling resolution UNRWA was charged by the General Assembly with the task of providing shelter, health, welfare and educational services for the refugees. Past Commissioner-Generals of UNRWA include ANERA President John H. Davis (1959-63) and ANERA Board member Laurence V. Michelmore (1964-71). The current Commissioner General of UNRWA is Sir John Rennie. UNRWA's main office is in Beirut, and it maintains field offices in Syria, Jordan, the West Bank, and Gaza. There are UNRWA Liaison offices in

Cairo, Geneva, and at the United Nations in New York.

In June of 1950 there were 960,021 Palestinian refugees registered with UNRWA. By June, 1972 this number had increased to 1,506,604 refugees living in East Jordan, the West Bank, Gaza, Lebanon, and Syria. About 39% (643,333) of these Palestinians inhabit 63 UNRWA camps. Tents are still in use only in emergency camps in Syria, where they are being replaced by concrete shelters. Basic daily food rations (1500-1600 calories per day) are being provided for 831,425 refugees.

UNRWA's extensive educational programs provide schooling for 245,078 elementary and preparatory students in 517 schools. 687 University-level scholarships have been provided by UNRWA, and 2672 students are enrolled in vocational training courses in 7 vocational training centers. These educational programs account for 47% of UNRWA's expenditures.

The refugees receive a full range of health services through UNRWA at 93 health clinics, plus 13 UNRWA-subsidized centers and 11 centers maintained by host governments.

For the past several years UNRWA has been plagued by serious financial problems. A projected deficit of \$4.5 million in this current calendar year has been cut to \$1.4 million by increased contributions resulting from strenuous efforts by the Agency and the U.N. Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA, and by cutting expenses as much as possible without reducing key services. UNRWA's projected budget for calendar 1973 is \$52.8 million, which would leave a \$4.4 million deficit based on estimated 1972 income. In the introduction to his recently-released Annual Report, UNRWA Commissioner-General Sir John Rennie states, "The Agency's mandate was extended by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session for three years, from 1 July 1972 to 30 June 1975, but there was no assurance of the financial support required to maintain the programmes to be carried out under this mandate by the Agency for Palestine refugees."

On November 27, 1972, representatives of fifty nations participated in the annual UNRWA pledging conference, during which they announced their governments' intended contributions to the Agency for 1973. The total amount pledged was \$42.9 million, and several representatives said their pledges would be announced at a later date. Among governments announcing their pledges were: The United States — \$23.2 million; Canada — \$700,000 plus food commodities; The United Kingdom — \$5 million; United Arab Emirates — \$220,000; and Libya — \$600,000.

ANERA has contributed \$70,400 in cash plus many shipments of medical supplies to UNRWA in the past four years.

The statistics cited above were taken from the report of the Commissioner-General of the UNRWA, 1 July, 1971-30 June, 1972 (U.N. doc. No. A/8713), U.N. doc. A/SPC/155 of 3 Nov., 1972, and Press Release GA/4683 of 27 Nov., 1972.

AMER DIVISION

On October 30 the Advisory Council of ANERA's AMER Division and the AMER Medical Committee held consecutive meetings in New York. Among major decisions taken at the meetings were: visits to pharmaceutical companies by Dr. Gerald Dorman, Mr. Richardson, and others will continue in an effort to further increase contributions of drugs; a sub-committee of the Medical Committee will be organized on the West Coast by Dr. Hadi Salem; and officials of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem will be consulted to explore further the feasibility of a mobile eye clinic for use on the West Bank, Gaza, and the East Bank. Both committees expressed approval of the way the AMER Division has been run during this past year under the leadership of Mary Anne Kolidas and Dr. Dorman. In October AMER shipped \$44,542 worth of medical supplies to UNRWA. These goods had been donated in the latter part of fiscal year 1971-72. Since July 1, Lederle, Pfizer, and Parke-Davis firms have donated pharmaceutical goods worth a total of \$85,000 (wholesale) which will soon be on the way to the Middle East.

Doctors in the Middle East have a great need for medical reference books, and AMER is working with UNRWA to collect such literature. Individuals able to assist us in this endeavor should send a bibliography of available materials to the AMER office: 777 U.N. Plaza, Room 7E, New York, New York, 10017.



Artist at work

CHILDRENS ART SHOW

ANERA's travelling art show, consisting of 35 drawings done by Palestinian children expressing their feelings during the aftermath of the June, 1967 war, was shown in two communities in Kansas during November. Plans are underway for it to be on display in Washington, D.C. during Christmas. The drawings have recently been remounted by Kamal Boullata, a Palestinian artist living in Washington, D.C. Any group wishing to display these unique works of art should contact the ANERA office.



Howard R. Cottam
NEW ANERA BOARD MEMBER

Dr. Howard R. Cottam has covered a lot of territory in his lifetime. The U.S. Foreign Service took him out of the American West (Utah) and sent him to Paris, Rio de Janeiro, Rome, and points in-between. As Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (1960-63), he travelled extensively in the Middle East. From 1963-1969 Dr. Cottam served as United States Ambassador to Kuwait. Since 1969 he has been the North American Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the U.N., resident in Washington, D.C. He holds a B.A. degree from Brigham Young University and Masters and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Wisconsin, where he specialized in agricultural economics and rural sociology. Dr. and Mrs. Cottam have one daughter. With his extensive background in the Middle East and concern for humanity the world over, Dr. Cottam will be a valuable addition to the ANERA Board of Directors.

THINK ABOUT IT

"...I can assure you that our government will continue to expend every ounce of energy we can to convey to others this deep commitment to the elimination of discrimination and to the principle that all people have a fundamental right to emigrate, that all people have a fundamental right to go home... We will not rest until families are reunited, until people all around this globe are guaranteed the basic freedoms that the conscience of the world has promised."—George Bush, U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., speaking at a Rally on Soviet Jewry, Washington, D.C. September 12, 1972.

INFORMATION ON REFUGEES

As part of its expanded program, ANERA now has compiled a bibliography of 25 sources of information concerning the Palestinian refugees. This listing would be a good guide for anyone wanting either a short general history of the refugee problem or a more detailed, factual treatment of the subject. A copy is available upon request from the ANERA office.

Some of the items in the above bibliography now form the nucleus of a library in the ANERA office. These materials are intended for the use of people doing research on the Palestine refugees. Call the ANERA office if you are in the Washington area and wish to make use of these materials.

U.S. OMEN — L.A. CHAPTER

Out on the West Coast the Los Angeles chapter of U.S. OMEN has been very productive. Under the leadership of their new president, Spear S. Sayegh, the chapter has donated \$300 to Jeel al Amal, the new school for boys which was recently opened in Jerusalem by Mr. and Mrs. Basil Sahhar. Christmas cards are being sold by the members of the chapter, and a campaign is underway to collect more drugs to be sent to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society in Beirut. The National U.S. OMEN Convention was held in Los Angeles on December 2nd. Dr. Kamal Naffa, Professor of Philosophy at Fullerton College, was the convention's guest speaker.

UNIVERSITY TEXTS NEEDED

We would like to draw the attention of our readers to a program which involves gathering reference materials and text books for the use of Arab students at the University of Haifa, Israel. The aim of the program is to set up small reference libraries in the students' home communities so that they can use the materials over the weekend. In addition, the books could be used by local teachers to further their own knowledge. It is hoped that libraries could be established in Nazareth, Kafr Yasif, and Tamra. This program is being sponsored by the International Christian Committee for Israel. Mr. Richard Butler has a list of university-level texts which have been requested. Anyone with access to such books should contact him at: The Division of World Service, United Church Board for World Ministries, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, New York 10027.



YMCA volunteers in Souf Camp, East Jordan.

REPORT OF WORLD ALLIANCE OF YMCA

The World Alliance of YMCAs has just issued a progress report on its leadership training programs in East Jordan. Some of the general comments from the beginning of the document are particularly interesting:

"During the last months there were no incidents which could disturb the public order or have influence on the life in the camps. Even the tragic events of Munich followed by Israeli retaliation against Lebanon did not cause any apparent public reactions or demonstrations as was usual in the past.

The refugee camp elders and leaders take the philosophical view that 'long frustration naturally leads towards desperate moves and violence brings always new violence.' These things — they say — will continue to happen as a tragic reminder of the fate of Palestine refugees and especially of their youth without future.

The Syrian and Iraqi borders are still closed and the business in the country suffers much from these restrictions. There is only one plane (once a week) to connect Amman with Beirut and foreign newspapers arrive with considerable delay, if at all.

The prices for basic food items are being kept down, which makes it easier for modest people. During summer, seasonal public works as well as farming provided temporary employment from which also refugees from camps benefited. However, there are still in each camp a number of young men with 'nowhere to go and nothing to do' once they have finished school."

RECENT ANERA GRANTS

| | |
|---------|--------------------------------|
| \$5,000 | World Alliance of YMCAs |
| 3,000 | YMCA Jerusalem |
| 3,000 | YWCA Jerusalem |
| 3,000 | Gaza College |
| 1,000 | Palestine Women's Union (Gaza) |
| 1,000 | Birzeit College |
| 5,650 | UNRWA Scholarships |

The above organizations have received grants from ANERA in the past, and the Projects Committee felt that their worthwhile efforts on behalf of the Palestine refugees deserved additional support. The three "Y" organizations run leadership and vocational training programs in Jordan and Jerusalem. Gaza College is the only private secondary school in the Gaza Strip. Birzeit College, located on the West Bank outside of Jerusalem, is in the process of expanding from a junior college to a full, four-year liberal arts program. The Palestine Women's Union in Gaza, under the direction of Miss Yusra I. Barbari, runs kindergartens, health clinics, libraries, and educational programs in the Gaza Strip. The grant to UNRWA consists of 5 vocational training scholarships (\$550 each) and 58 elementary school scholarships (\$50 each).

THE JERUSALEM DEBATE

A new booklet contains major documents in the discussion which was sparked by Dean Francis Sayre's March 26th sermon concerning Israel's oppressive policies in occupied Arab Jerusalem. Order "The Jerusalem Debate" from: Middle East Affairs Council, P.O. Box 112, Leonard Center, American University, Washington, D.C. 20016. 50¢ per copy, pre-paid.

THE GAZA SITUATION

On October 24 an article by Terence Smith concerning recent developments in Gaza appeared in *The New York Times*. Among other things, the article discussed the controversy surrounding the dismissal of the Arab Mayor of Gaza City, Rashad Shawa, and his council because they refused to extend municipal services to the adjacent refugee camp. These services include provision of water, electricity and sanitation. The Mayor contended that such action would jeopardize the refugees' eligibility for aid from UNRWA, and he viewed this order as an indication of Israel's intention to formally annex the Gaza Strip.

The order for local municipalities to assume responsibility for municipal services to nearby refugee camps was issued by the Israelis two months ago. Rafa, Khan Yunis and other towns accepted it without objection. The occupying Government assured the Gazans that the status of the refugees would not be altered by this action, and there was no immediate intention to annex the Strip.

The article in the *Times* went on to describe the overcrowded, poverty-stricken conditions existing in the Strip, which has been a political football for 25 years alternating between Egyptian and Israeli occupations. The people are now very bitter, and according to former Mayor Shawa, they wish the Israelis would leave before they (the Arabs) become second class citizens of Israel. The Gazans would prefer to be part of a new Palestinian political entity.

October 25, 1972

TO THE EDITOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

One passage in the report on the Gaza Strip by your correspondent Mr. Terence Smith in your issue of 24 October may be taken to imply that in towns in the Strip other than Gaza town municipal councils have taken over from UNRWA some of the services provided by the Agency for the Palestine refugees. This is not so: UNRWA continues to provide the services required by its mandate both in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank of the Jordan in the same way as before these territories were occupied by Israel.

J.S. Rennie
Commissioner-General
UNRWA



His name will be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, held in honour in this world and the Hereafter –

The Holy Koran, Surah 3, Verse 44;
Drawing by Kamal Boullata.



**AMERICAN NEAR EAST
REFUGEE AID, INC.**

900 Woodward Bldg.
733 15th St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dr. John H. Davis,
President
Margaret Pennar
Vice President
David G. Nes
Vice President
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*Executive Vice-President
and Secretary*
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