



NEWSLETTER

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Mealtime in Jebaliya Camp

MISERY IN GAZA

By John K. Cooley

At the bottom end of the ladder of human misery in Gaza lives a woman we will call Samira.

She was interviewed outside the tiny room that she shares with a working husband and their four young children in one of Gaza's Christian missions.

In 1948, as a young girl, Samira and her family fled from their Arab village near Jaffa — a village which like hundreds of others no longer exists — as Israeli soldiers advanced. The family walked more than 50 miles to Gaza and were sheltered in the Nusirat refugee camp, first run by American Quakers before 1950 and since then by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

In 1956 war came to the Gaza Strip briefly, but invading Israeli soldiers allowed Samira and her family to stay in their shelter in Nusirat.

Before the 1967 war Samira married a refugee who works in one of Gaza's municipal services — though his salary does not reach the approximately \$60 a month level which would disqualify them for further UNRWA rations of 1,500 calories daily per person.

They moved to her husband's shelter in Jebaliya, the large refugee camp north of Gaza Town. When in July, 1971, Israeli forces began bulldozing new "security roads" and open spaces in this and other camps, Israeli soldiers told them one night that they must leave by morning and find new shelters elsewhere.

Samira says that when they refused, then pleaded for a little time to gather their few possessions and bake some bread for her children, Israeli soldiers beat her with sticks and cursed her in Arabic.

(Israel said the clearing operation was needed to halt terrorism and killing of refugees who collaborated with the Israelis or acted as informants.)

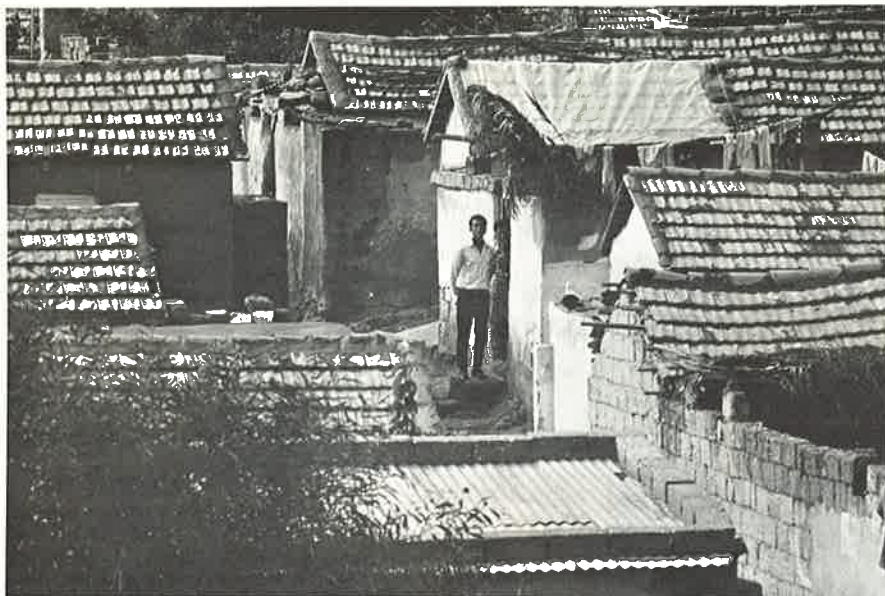
(Some disciplinary measures were taken against a few of the Israeli officers for these incidents in July and August, 1971, after protests from the Israeli League for Human Rights and eyewitness newspaper accounts of the evictions.)

Some of those driven out were taken in buses to Al-Arish, in the Sinai Desert and a few of these accepted accommodations offered there in abandoned Egyptian apartment buildings. Others found shelter elsewhere in Gaza, with friends or relatives. *Cont'd. on page 2*

LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

Where does a refugee living in a camp in Amman turn when he needs capital to open a carpentry shop? When his baby is sick, where does the Palestinian go to find medical care for the child? Who can provide a scholarship loan for a young Palestinian wishing to attend university in the Middle East? What agency distributes clothing, food, and helps organize reconstruction of entire communities? One such agency is the versatile, highly effective Lutheran World Federation, which provides these services in Jordan, the West Bank, and Syria. In 1971 the Lutheran World Federation provided loans or grants to 118 individuals from a revolving loan fund; awarded 98 university scholarships, and treated thousands of people in their health clinics. In cooperation with other agencies, the LWF was instrumental in establishing homes, schools, and irrigation canals in Jordanian villages such as Taibeh, Kahhiyb, Thanieh, and Jabal Zuhour. The villagers themselves took an active part in improving their towns. All they needed was a little material help and direction from LWF.

By far the biggest project undertaken by the LWF was the rebuilding of the town of Karameh, Jordan. There the LWF provided funds and materials for the reconstruction of houses and the school building. Last fall the LWF opened a clinic in Karameh. With a school, homes, clinic, and water supply all available, the town is again thriving. However, further developments have been held in abeyance because the Jordanian government is considering moving the town further away from the Jordan River to a location above the projected extension of the East Ghor Canal. Dr. Joseph Thompson, LWF's "man in Amman", is in charge of all of these activities.



Khan Yunis Camp — Gaza

Gaza — Cont'd.

Today, Samira and her family are one of what UNRWA says are about 900 out of the original 2,554 families — some 15,855 persons in all — driven out of the camps in that summer of 1971.

This happened despite the fact that the Israeli Government had promised before the demolitions and expulsions began that alternate shelters would be provided for everyone affected.

Col. Joseph Leran, Israeli liaison officer between the military government and UNRWA, disputed the UNRWA figures in a telephone interview. "There cannot be more than 350 families in this situation now," he said. "UNRWA compiles their lists from records which are obsolete, as they have admitted themselves."

There are three Jewish Nahal (paramilitary farm) settlements on Gaza Strip territory. "The Israeli objective here," says a Gaza lawyer "is to get as many Arabs to leave as possible without overtly antagonizing world opinion."

When the Israel Army seized between 5,000 and 10,000 acres of land belonging to Bedouin tribes just south of Rafah last spring, there were protests from some Jews living in some surrounding settlements, and demands inside the ruling Israel Labor Party that the injustice be redressed. The Bedouin were offered other land which they refused, but the original land was not returned.

UNRWA, unable to finance the new electricity, running water, and other improvements being introduced by the Israelis in some camps, agreed to these. But it suspects that there are Israeli plans to eliminate UNRWA entirely as a first step toward an imposed settlement of the refugee problem.

Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban said Nov. 16 that Gaza would not be separated from Israel, though under a peace settlement its shallow water port, now being expanded and soon to be deepened, might be shared with Jordan.

On Nov. 24, during a long debate of the Labor Party leadership on the future of the occupied territories, Mr. Eban said Israel ought to promote a long-term plan to abolish all refugee camps inside territory it controls and raise the economic level of their present inmates.

One Gaza Arab working in a responsible job for a relief organization had an answer to this. "If I lose my refugee ration card," he said, "I lose my identity as a Palestinian. As long as we Palestinians have no responsible political leadership anywhere, this identity is all we have to survive."

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CHILDREN'S ART SHOW IN D.C.

ANERA's Palestinian Children's Art Show, which has been on tour around the country for the past 2½ years, will be on public display in Washington for the first time starting February 9. The show will take place in the "Secondup" Gallery, located over the Community Bookshop, 2028 "P" St., N.W., in Washington. An opening reception will be held the evening of February 9, and the show will run for about ten days. These 35 drawings are a powerful expression of the inner lives of refugee children, whose world is a harsh blend of dust, violence, and hope. For further information about this unique art event, call the ANERA office (202/347-2558).

AID TO SOUTH LEBANON

ANERA has approved a special grant of \$2,000 to Marja'youn National College in South Lebanon, to be used to provide emergency scholarship assistance to students whose families have suffered as a result of recent Israeli attacks in the area. The College, a recipient of past ANERA assistance, served as a temporary refuge in 1967 for large numbers of Palestinian refugees.

Mr. Labib Ghulmiyyah, Director of the School, serves on the Council of the South, a group of individuals responsible for identifying areas of greatest need in the South and channelling assistance toward them.

NEW ANERA GRANTS

Industrial Islamic Orphanage	\$3,000
Dar Al Awald	2,000
Rawdat el Zuhur	2,000
Marja'youn National College	2,000
College des Freres	800
UNRWA Scholarships	10,000
	\$19,800

PROJECT PROFILE

Beirut College for Women

In 1835 the Presbyterian Mission founded the American School for Girls as the first high school for girls in the Turkish Empire. This school has evolved into the present Beirut College for Women, a four-year liberal arts university with an enrollment of 1,000 young women housed in 8 modern buildings in Beirut.

The metamorphosis from high school to university began in 1924, when a two-year junior college program was added to the high-school curriculum. In 1927 the school changed its name to the American Junior College for Women. Beirut College for Women adopted its present name and a four year university-level liberal arts program in 1950. The school is chartered by the New York State Board of Regents, and its B.S. and B.A. degrees are recognized by the Lebanese Government. ANERA has just recently made a grant to B.C.W. of \$500 for a scholarship for a refugee student. President William H. Schechter, Beirut College for Women, P.O. Box 4080, Beirut, Lebanon.



Science Class at UNRWA's Amman VTC

AMMAN VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTER OPENED

Just a few years ago there was only a lovely fruit orchard on a hill five miles south of Amman. Today some of the fruit trees are still there, scattered among the modern buildings which make up UNRWA's newest Vocational Training Center. This Center, UNRWA's eighth, was officially opened on October 3, 1972 when King Hussein unveiled a commemorative plaque. Also attending the ceremonies were UNRWA Commissioner-General Sir John Rennie, and John Tanner, UNRWA's Director for Jordan affairs. The Jordanian government was represented by Prime Minister Ahmed Lawzi and Minister of Development and Reconstruction Subhi Amin Amr. A grant of \$1,540,186 from Near East Emergency Donations provided funds for construction and equipment for the center. It has an enrollment of 560 teacher trainees (320 men and 240 women) and 156 vocational trainees (women). Vocational courses offered include office practice, tailoring, and beauty culture. The Center contains a library, science laboratories, and sports facilities.

U.N. MIDDLE EAST ACTION

During the recent United Nations General Assembly session the Special Political Committee submitted several proposed resolutions concerning the Middle East which were adopted by the General Assembly on December 13. These resolutions reiterated positions taken in past years by the General Assembly praising the work of UNRWA, urging generous contributions to the Agency from Member Nations, approving of the efforts of the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA and extending its mandate for another year. Other resolutions deplored Israeli actions in the Gaza Strip, calling on them to stop and labelling them violations of the Geneva Convention; reaffirmed the right of the refugees displaced in 1967 to return to their homes and camps; and recognized the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. The General Assembly also reaffirmed its Resolution 242 of November 1967 calling for Israeli withdrawal from the Occupied Territories and justice for the Palestinian refugees. Israel was taken to task for its unwillingness to comply with these provisions.

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY LUNCHEON

ANERA President Dr. John H. Davis was one of several individuals recognized recently for their efforts on behalf of human rights. The occasion was the second annual Human Rights Day luncheon, sponsored by the Capital Area Division of the United Nations Association. Dr. Davis' citation highlighted his efforts both as Commissioner-General of UNRWA (1959-64) and as President of ANERA to increase vocational training and other opportunities for Palestinian refugees. ANERA's guests at the luncheon included the Ambassadors of Kuwait, Lebanon, and Jordan, and the Charge d'affaires of the Egyptian Interests Section.

MUSA ALAMI FOUNDATION

In the past few months the Musa Alami Foundation of Jericho has received several generous grants which will be used for the benefit of Musa Alami's Arab Development Society. The U.S. Agency for International Development provided scholarships for 30 boys, bringing enrollment at the vocational training school and farm up to 100.

A second donation came from the Holy Land Center of New York. This \$400 was part of the proceeds from a dinner held in December. The remainder will be given to Rawdat el Zuhur school for girls and St. John Ophthalmic Hospital, both in Jerusalem.

The American Arab Association of Boston (AMARA) has contributed \$1,000 to the Musa Alami Foundation. This amount was raised through the sale of the book "Arabic Cooking in America", edited by Yvonne Homsy, Evelyn Menconi, and Mary Malouf.

The Arab Development Society is still faced with many problems, but this additional support will strengthen the ability of the farm and school to persevere. Dr. Davis, President of the Musa Alami Foundation, is planning to visit the farm in Jericho the end of January.





Karameh Elementary School

KARAMEH SCHOOL

Last fall the opening of a clinic and school in Karameh, Jordan induced many of its Palestinian former inhabitants to move back into the revitalized town which they had abandoned in 1968. Now over 200 families are resident in the fertile valley near the Jordan river, and 313 pupils are attending the elementary school. The school building itself has twelve rooms, including a handicraft unit and a science laboratory. Reconstruction was made possible through the efforts of several voluntary agencies. There are six elementary grades — with two sections each — and three preparatory classes. This is one of the few co-ed elementary schools in the Arab world.

An UNRWA report vividly describes current conditions in Karameh: "Today camels graze between the school and the nearby river. Large fields of tomatoes and other garden products attest to the area's watered fertility. In Karameh town small boys and girls in UNRWA's striped school uniforms carry their books back and forth along the dusty streets between

home and school, as their older brothers and sisters did a few years ago.

The Palestine refugees realize that only through education can their children hope to achieve a secure future, a future independent of world charity, whether or not that 'just and lasting peace' so frequently called for arrives within their lifetimes. The children at Karameh school are poor and shabby compared with boys and girls in many other schools. But their minds are bright and they deserve the opportunity to fulfil, through education, their potential for the future."

Last year ANERA made a \$5,000 grant to UNRWA which is being used to sponsor 100 students at the school. ANERA is actively promoting UNRWA's student sponsorship plan through which a \$50 donation provides a one-year scholarship for an elementary school child. This effort has resulted in an additional 100 scholarships for Karameh school, so ANERA has been instrumental in providing scholarships for a total of 200 of the 313 students at the school.

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