



NEWSLETTER



Amneh Ismail Thaher, a young Palestinian studying to be an Infant Leader at the UNRWA Ramallah Women's Training Centre.



Khaled Mohammed Zawawi, seen at the UNRWA Kalandia Vocational Training Centre. He is studying to be a Blacksmith/Welder.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

A Key to a New Life for Palestinian Youth

Every year, about 3,000 young Palestinians receive vocational training through the facilities of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine (UNRWA) or one of the voluntary agencies operating vocational training programs. Every year 37,000 others have to get along without it. Without training, most of these young people face the same dreary existence led by their parents since 1948.

The reasons for this situation are not hard to find. Seventy percent of the Arabs who fled Palestine in 1948 were farmers. The Arab states which received

the refugees had, and still have, a surplus of farmers of their own. Without other skills, there was little chance for the Palestinians to find work and support themselves. Worse still, the Palestinian parents had no useful skills to pass on to their children so they might become employable.

Most Palestinian youth are literate. UNRWA, the Arab host governments, and many of the voluntary agencies provide primary education for all, but the fact remains that without training in a specific skill these young people stand little chance of improving their lives.

The need for vocational training has been recognized by many leaders in refugee relief efforts since the refugee problem first developed in 1948. The Arab Development Society, founded by Musa Alami, a prominent Palestinian, has had the training of young orphaned boys as its major goal since its beginning in 1949. The YMCA and YWCAs of Jerusalem have had vocational training projects in Jerusalem and Jericho since 1950. The Rawdat el-Zuhur project was started in 1952 by Miss Elizabeth Nasir, a Palestinian. UNRWA's vocational training program dates from the mid-fifties.

Good jobs are available for training program graduates. In the developing Middle East there is a great need for qualified technical personnel. All of the vocational training programs are geared to train people in skills for which there is a demand.

The greatest single problem is lack of funds. All of the training projects together spent about five million dollars last year. To have real impact on the program, this amount must be increased ten-fold. One reason for the lack of funds is that the plight of the Palestinian refugees is not well-known in the West. Each round of the Middle East war has brought an increased flow of money from both governments and private donors in the west. During these periods the news media focused attention on the conditions of the refugees spurring concern in the western world. In these times of crisis the money received was necessarily spent on the short-run emergency need for food, clothing, medicine and shelter. Clearly, a sustained well financed effort is urgently needed to support vocational training programs.

ANERA is part of that effort. Already the organization has contributed more than fifty thousand dollars to vocational training programs. Additionally, ANERA's American Middle East Rehabilitation Division (AMER) has contributed more than 600 scholarships through the "Pills for Skills" program. This program is based upon an agreement with UNRWA that money saved through AMER donations of pharmaceuticals will be applied to vocational training scholarships.

During this year, ANERA expects to raise more than one million dollars in gifts of cash and kind. Most of these funds will be channeled to support vocational training projects.

ANERA has contributed to five projects which are among the best of the vocational training programs for Palestinian youth.

Musa Alami, a former member of the Government of Palestine before the partition, began the Arab Development Society (A.D.S.) in 1949.

He established a farm and vocational training project to assist Palestinian orphan boys in the Jericho valley. A Ford Foundation grant of \$149,000 for a vocational training center was a key factor in getting the project started. By 1953, more than fifty boys were being

fed, clothed, sheltered, given medical care, an education and vocational training in farming and related skills.

The project has been seriously damaged and rebuilt twice: once during local political disturbances in 1955, and again in the course of the June, 1967 war. Since the war, the farm has continued to rebuild. Plans are underway to put even greater emphasis upon vocational training and making the project self-sufficient by stressing the profit-making aspects of the farm. ANERA has contributed \$5,000 to the Arab Development Society.

The YMCA of Jerusalem has had a vocational training project in Jericho since 1950. The project was started by Labib Nasir, a Palestinian who found himself cut off from his job as secretary of the Jerusalem YMCA by the Arab-Israeli war. Wanting to continue YMCA work among his fellow refugees in Jericho, Mr. Nasir opened the vocational training center with six students and a donation of tools from the World Alliance of YMCAs. Soon, there were 100 students and classes were moved from tents to mud buildings. Donations of money and equipment have helped to modernize training. The YMCA's Jericho Vocational training Center has programs in electric welding, air conditioning maintenance, carpentry and leather work.

The successful program in Jericho led to the establishment of a YMCA in the Old City where sports and recreation programs are operated. ANERA has contributed \$4,000 to the Jericho project and an additional \$4,000 to the YMCA in Jerusalem for its leadership program.

The YWCA of Jerusalem was begun by members from Palestine who joined together to form a National YWCA Association in Jordan. The YWCA in Jerusalem began vocational training projects in 1950. This program includes courses in dressmaking, business, home economics and language instruction in French, English and Arabic. Cultural and recreational programs are also held.

At UNRWA's Aqabat Jabar refugee camp near Jericho the Jerusalem YWCA supplements UNRWA's vocational training program with classes in homemaking, dressmaking and handicrafts. ANERA has contributed \$4,000 to the YWCA program in Jericho.

Rawdat el-Zuhur was founded in 1952 by Miss Elizabeth Nasir, a retired Jordanian welfare worker. A class of 65 to 70 girls is chosen on the basis of need.

They are given a basic education and taught homemaking skills. A free lunch is provided every day. ANERA contributed a total of \$2,000 to Rawdat el-Zuhur.

The largest vocational training program is run by UNRWA. Begun on a small scale in the mid-fifties, the program was greatly expanded during the early sixties. Presently more than 2,200 young Palestinians are graduated every year from training centers in East Jordan, the West Bank, Gaza, Lebanon and Syria. They receive training in seven categories of trades ranging from metal working and electronics to commercial and para-medical professions. ANERA has provided 64 scholarships through a cash contribution of \$35,000.

Typical of ANERA scholarship recipients are Khaled Mohammed Zawawi and Amneh Ismail Thaher. Khaled is 19 and the son of a Palestinian refugee who lived in Jaffa before partition. The family now lives in the UNRWA Kalandia camp on the West Bank. Khaled attends the Kalandia Vocational Training Centre. He will complete the blacksmith/welder's course in 1970.

Amneh is the daughter of a fisherman from the Majdal District of Palestine. She was born one year after her family was forced to leave their home. Her family now lives in the UNRWA camp at Khan Younis. Her father is unemployed. Amneh is enrolled in a two-year Infant Leaders Course at the Ramallah Women's Training Centre on the West Bank.

The story of the vocational training programs is the story of Palestinian youth — those who will have a chance for a better life, and those who will not. Amneh Thaher, who will have her chance, wrote ANERA:

Dear Dr. Davis,

"I am one of the three students in the infant leader class who have been sponsored by your generous organization, ANERA. On behalf of my classmates, I wish to extend to you our deep gratitude for making it possible for us to continue our education.

"Please extend our thanks to members of your organization whose thoughtfulness and generosity have made our hearts lighter and our plight easier."

Thousands more want the same chance. With a little help, they can have it.

AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID, INC.

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Washington, D.C. 20005

AMER

(Editor's note: The following is a short summary of the 22-year history of American Middle East Rehabilitation (AMER), which is becoming a division of ANERA. The ANERA Newsletter will carry reports of AMER activities regularly.)

American Middle East Rehabilitation, Inc. (AMER), founded in 1948 under the name of American Middle East Relief, is the oldest, non-sectarian, American voluntary agency providing help for the Palestinian refugees. From 1948 to 1963, AMER devoted itself largely to direct relief work by sending food, clothing, and blankets to the Middle East. Then, in 1963, AMER changed the "r" in AMER from "relief" to "rehabilitation" and focused its attention on providing vocational training scholarships, through UNRWA, for the Palestinian refugee youth. Through the UNRWA scholarship program, young people are trained in technical skills so that they will be able to find jobs and become productive members of society. More than 600 scholarships have been awarded in AMER's name since 1963.

Today, AMER's principal activities are to supply UNRWA with a large proportion of its annual requirement of drugs and medical supplies, to grant vocational training scholarships, and to support special projects designed to meet critical medical and health needs in the Middle East. One such project, last year, was to equip two rehydration/nutrition centers in which dehydrated and malnourished refugee children receive special medical care.

AMER has always enjoyed the trust and support of leaders of the community. Past presidents include Prof. Philip K. Hitti of Princeton, Dr. Bayard Dodge, former president of AUB, Miss Virginia C. Gildersleeve, a U.S. representative at the San Francisco convention for the establishment of the United Nations, Millar Burrows of Yale, Harold Minor, the former Ambassador to Beirut, and C.D. Mercer, a Massachusetts businessman. Dr. L. Emmett Holt, Jr., the renowned pediatrician and nutritionist, served as president from 1963 to 1968 and was succeeded by Rev. Dr. Daniel Bliss, grandson of the founder of AUB. Other posts have been filled by Karl S. Twitchell, discoverer of oil in Saudi Arabia, Mitchel E. Hadad, investor and Arab-American community leader, and Mrs. Malcolm E. Peabody of Cambridge, Mass. These dedicated people have all helped to guide AMER, and to make it a

respected organization both in the United States and the Middle East.

U.S. OMEN

U.S. OMEN, an ANERA Founding Member, is winding up another successful year of providing support for Palestinian refugees. During the current fiscal year the California based organization has already raised and distributed more than \$130,000 in cash and gifts in kind.

Founded in 1961, U.S. OMEN is dedicated to aiding the Palestinian refugees and other needy people throughout Asia and Africa. There are now U.S. OMEN chapters in Los Angeles (the original chapter), San Francisco, Torrance, and Sacramento, California.

In the year following the June 1967 War, U.S. OMEN contributed \$462,000 in cash, clothing, medical supplies and scholarships to the Palestinian refugees and other victims of the conflict.

During this year, U.S. OMEN has contributed \$30,000 in cash grants, \$50,000 in medical supplies, \$50,000 in used clothing, a complete dental clinic (\$3,000) and 82 tons of Metrecal, a food supplement. U.S. OMEN established a scholarship fund to aid Palestinian refugee students threatened with having to drop out for lack of funds in their last year of study. The program was to be started with \$2,000 capital, but a special appeal brought in \$5,000.

At their annual meeting last November, the Board of Directors of U.S. OMEN re-elected the following officers to one year terms: Mr. Elie Houry, National President; Mr. Joseph Asfour, Vice President; Mr. Isam Qubain, Second Vice President; Mr. George Shibley, Secretary and General Counsel; Mr. Bahidj Sabouni, Treasurer.

In addition to their fund raising activities, U.S. OMEN Chapters hold monthly meetings which serve as both business meetings and as forums for speakers.

ANERA's AMER Division will be cooperating with U.S. OMEN by helping them to arrange shipping for gifts in kind from the east coast. U.S. OMEN will help AMER on the west coast.

(continued from page 1, col. 3)

Office in 1956. He is presently Advisor, Public Affairs Office, Esso Middle East. Mr. Duff is married and lives in Port Washington, New York.

The fourth new member of the ANERA Board is Dr. Gerald Dorman. Dr. Dorman is an Occupational Medicine Consultant. He is married and lives in New York City.

Arabic Cooking in America:

Compiled and edited by Yvonne Homys, Mary Maloof, Evelyn Menconi. Illustrated by Mary Maloof. Typed by Rosemarie Berube. Reviewed by Mr. Bertram Cooper.

To the admirers of cookbooks as a literary genre as well as to the more practical practitioner of the culinary arts this book is a delight. Informal but well-organized with explicit directions for each recipe or variation, it has the additional advantage of living up to its title. With very few exceptions (misk, tahini and mahleb) everything here can be readily obtained at the American supermarket — eggplant, pine nuts, sesame, squash, lamb, cracked wheat, walnuts.

A further recommendation — the proceeds from the sale of this book go to the Musa Alami Foundation to help Musa Bey feed those who well know the tart sauce of hunger.

It may be ordered from P.O. Box 146, Cambridge, Mass. 02138.

notes

ANERA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TRAVELS TO MIDDLE EAST

ANERA's Executive Director, Mr. John P. Richardson has left on a three-week trip to the Middle East. He will visit Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Jordan, Israel and the Occupied Territories during his stay.

The purpose of the trip is to assess the Palestinian refugee situation as summer approaches and to make a first-hand evaluation of the effectiveness of ANERA grants to date. Mr. Richardson will visit most of the ANERA grant recipients for this purpose. He will report his findings to ANERA Board of Directors upon returning. A report of his trip will also be carried in the next ANERA Newsletter.

LATEST ANERA GRANTS

ANERA has made fourteen new grants in the past three months totaling \$27,100. This brings the total of ANERA grants in cash and kind to \$195,166.

The largest of the new grants is \$5,000 to the World Alliance of YMCA's Youth Activities Centers in UNRWA camps on the East Bank of the Jordan. The Four Homes of Mercy was granted \$1,000 to support their work with invalids, crippled children, orphans and expectant mothers. The Four Homes are located in the Occupied Territories.

Two grants, totaling \$1,500 have been approved for Rawdat El-Zuhur, an educational project for girls in Jerusalem. These are the second and third ANERA grants to Rawdat El-Zuhur.

(continued on page 4, col. 2)

(continued from page 2, col. 2)

incorporated as a non-profit organization in Washington, D.C. Its goals are: to develop and foster through exhibits and related activities a sustained interest by the American people in the cultural, artistic, and economic values of the Middle East; to assist in the revival of arts and crafts expressing the cultural heritage of the nations in the Middle East; to establish a bond of people-to-people team work between Americans and people in the Middle East.

MEET is an entirely voluntary organization, financed through membership dues and the proceeds of an annual Arab fashion show. This past fall the show was held at the Embassy of Morocco here in Washington under the honorary patronage of H.R.H. Princess Lalla Nezha. Persons interested in becoming members of MEET should write to: MEET, Inc. 1761 N, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Other officers and board members of MEET are: Mrs. Alma Kerr, President; Mrs. Kepler Lewis, Second Vice President; Mrs. Lee Dinsmore, Treasurer; Mrs. Pierre el-Ris, Chairman of the Membership Committee; Miss Eileen Donlin, Recording Secretary, Mrs. Gordon Torrey, Liaison with craft and Arab groups; Mrs. Michael Malouf, and Mrs. Esther Lawton.

We are very grateful to MEET for supplying us with the portable exhibit of Palestinian crafts. It will be put to good use.

(continued from page 2, col. 3)

the continuing Arab-Israeli crisis. It is readable, and valuable particularly for its treatment of the Israeli-Jordanian crisis. Often we seem to forget this part of the problem during discussions of the Middle East situation. It would be a mistake to forget that Jordan, and Jerusalem, will

play an important part in any overall settlement, particularly as the settlement concerns the Palestinian refugees.

The book is available from: The Middle East Institute, 1761 N Street, N.W., Washington D.C. 20035.

(continued from page 3, col. 3)

A grant of \$600 was made to a highly qualified Palestinian student to cover his expenses at the American University of Beirut. The money is being administered by a trustee.

Dar el-Tifl, an educational project in Jerusalem, was granted \$1,000 for scientific and audio-visual equipment. This is the second ANERA grant to the organization.

Dar El-Awlad, another educational project in Jerusalem, was also granted \$1,000 for expanded educational facilities. This is also their second ANERA grant.

The Jerusalem Neurosurgical Unit was granted \$5,000 toward the purchase of neurosurgical x-ray equipment to help residents in the Occupied Territories, particularly on the West Bank and in Jerusalem.

The National Alliance of YMCA's in Lebanon was granted \$1,000 for an estimated 30 "camperships" for Palestinian boys this summer. It was their second ANERA grant.

The Jerusalem YMCA was granted \$4,000 to help them to maintain a high quality sports and recreation program in East Jerusalem. ANERA grants to the Jerusalem YMCA now total \$8,000.

The Greek Orthodox Charitable Society was granted \$1,000 to help them in meeting teacher salaries and paying building rent for the school.

Birzeit College in Birzeit on the West Bank was granted \$5,000 for scholarships for additional students from the Occupied Territories.

Adla Jabra, a two-year-old Palestinian girl, was granted a pledge of \$1,000 if needed for orthopedic surgery at AUB hospital.

PROJECT RYAIAT FROM AMARA

The American Arabic Association of Boston (AMARA) has announced a program of speakers and displays entitled "Project Ryaiaat (Loving Care) from AMARA." The program is interesting and informative and will be presented to groups in the New England area without charge. For further information write Miss Martha Jane Ekstrand, Project Ryaiaat from AMARA, American Arabic Association, P.O. Box 18217, Boston, Massachusetts 02118. Groups outside New England wishing information about setting up similar projects are invited to write for information.

REHABILITATION CENTER PROPOSED

ANERA board member Dr. M. Hadi Salem of Los Angeles, a prominent thoracic surgeon, has unveiled plans for a proposed Rehabilitation Center in the Middle East. The Center, to be constructed in the United Arab Republic, would provide primarily outpatient services in physical rehabilitation, including physio-therapy, speech therapy, and occupational therapy. In addition, the Center would serve as an instruction center for technicians and para-medical personnel in the specialized field of rehabilitation. Funding, both in dollars and in Egyptian pounds, is being sought at this time. Commenting on the importance of the project, Dr. Salem commented that if completed, the Center "will represent a permanent monument of understanding and cooperation between the U.S.A. and the Arab World." A special committee has been formed in this country to explore the feasibility of going ahead with the planning of the Center.



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