



# PALESTINE REFUGEES TODAY

## An UNRWA Newsletter

No. 14

February – March 1962



The Augusta Victoria Hospital, Jerusalem, Jordan, where refugee nurses are being trained thanks to a Swedish World Refugee Year donation.

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The photograph on our front cover, and other photographs of Arab refugees, may be obtained from the Public Information Office, UNRWA, UNESCO Building, Beirut, Lebanon, or from the UNRWA Liaison Office, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland.

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS RESOLUTION  
ON PALESTINE REFUGEES

On 20 December, just before the United Nations General Assembly adjourned for its Christmas recess, it adopted by 62 votes in favour, none against and 37 abstentions, a resolution on assistance to Palestine refugees.

The resolution was adopted after more than two weeks of a debate which ranged over the Palestine refugee problem in all its aspects. Virtually all Government representatives praised UNRWA's work and commended particularly its efforts to provide increased vocational training opportunities for refugee youth.

We publish below the full text of the resolution (No. 1725(XVI)):-

"The General Assembly.

Recalling its resolutions 194(III) of 11 December 1948, 302(IV) of 8 December 1949, 393(V) and 394(V) of 2 and 14 December 1950, 512(VI) and 513(VI) of 26 January 1952, 614(VII) of 6 November 1952, 720(VIII) of 27 November 1953, 818(IX) of 4 December 1954, 916(X) of 3 December 1955, 1018(XI) of 28 February 1957, 1191(XII) of 12 December 1957, 1315(XIII) of 12 December 1958, 1456(XIV) of 9 December 1959, and 1604(XV) of 21 April 1961,

Noting the annual report of the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, covering the period 1 July 1960 - 30 June 1961,

Noting with deep regret that repatriation or compensation of the refugees as provided for in paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194(III) has not been effected, that no substantial progress has been made in the programme endorsed in paragraph 2 of resolution 513(VI) for the reintegration of refugees either by repatriation or resettlement and that, therefore, the situation of the refugees continues to be a matter of serious concern,

1. Takes note of the efforts of the Conciliation Commission for Palestine pursuant to the request contained in General Assembly resolutions 1456(XIV) and 1604(XV), to secure the implementation of paragraph 11 of resolution 194(III); and

(a) Requests the Commission to intensify its efforts for the implementation of paragraph 11 of resolution 194(III) and urges the Arab host Governments and Israel to co-operate with the Commission in this regard;

(b) Further requests the Commission to intensify its work on the identification and evaluation of Arab refugee immoveable properties in Palestine as of 15 May 1948, and to make every effort to complete this work by 1 September 1962;

(c) Requests the Secretary-General to make available to the Commission such additional staff and administrative facilities as may be required;

2. Directs attention to the precarious financial position of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and urges non-contributing Governments to contribute, and contributing Governments to consider increasing their contributions, so that the Agency can carry out its essential programmes;

3. Expresses its thanks to the Director and the staff of the Agency for their continued faithful efforts to provide essential services for the Palestine refugees, and to the specialized agencies and private organizations for their valuable work in assisting the refugees."

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#### IN BRIEF

##### Swiss Government Donates 300 Tons of Dried Milk to Palestine Refugees

The Swiss Government has offered, and the Director of UNRWA has gratefully accepted, a donation of 300 tons of powdered whole milk. The milk will be reconstituted in the Agency's milk centres and given to babies under one year of age.

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##### Vocational Scholarships

Offers to donate scholarships for trainees at the Agency's vocational and teacher training centres continue to reach UNRWA at an encouraging rate.

The Oxford Committee for Famine Relief has given £12,000, which will provide scholarships for a year for a total of 66 boys at UNRWA's Damascus vocational training centre. The OXFAM scholarships are for four entire classes -- the carpenters, plumbers, radio-television mechanics and auto mechanics -- a total of 59 boys, and for a further seven trainees in the fitter machinists class.

The Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco) has donated \$10,000 for vocational scholarships, to be awarded to refugees in the Gaza Strip. Twenty trainees will benefit - ten in the class of fitter machinists at UNRWA's Gaza Vocational Training Centre and another ten in the blacksmith welders' class.

A donation of vaseline, solicited by American Middle East Relief (AMER) has been given to UNRWA by Chesebrough-Pond's Inc. The vaseline will be used by UNRWA doctors to treat refugee patients with eye and skin ailments. With the agreement of the donors and AMER, the money that UNRWA would otherwise have spent in purchasing vaseline is being used to finance a year's training as radio-television mechanics for three young refugees at Kalandia Vocational Training Centre, near Jerusalem.

Other individual scholarships have been donated by the Ottinger Foundation (U.S.A.), Mr. Leslie Colls (U.K.) and Dr. Joseph E. Johnson, President of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, who last fall visited the Middle East as Special Representative of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine.

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#### Danish World Refugee Year Gift

The Danish Refugee Council has given UNRWA the first instalment of its 1,000,000 kroner donation (\$145,000). The Danish gift, reported in our Newsletter No.9, is being used for the expansion of the Agency's Teacher Training Centre for Men in Ramallah, near Jerusalem, Jordan. The expanded centre will have a capacity of 400 trainees.

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#### Belgian Caritas Helps Programme for Refugee Women

Caritas in Belgium has given UNRWA a donation of \$900 for a novel venture: the adaptation and equipment of two of the existing Agency sewing centres, in camps in Jordan and Lebanon, for a new afternoon programme of women's activities. In particular the girls and women are to be given cookery lessons and taught how to cook simple but tasty Arab meals, based primarily on the food rations distributed by the Agency.

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#### Pontifical Mission Field Director Leaves UNRWA Area

UNRWA has lost a valued friend and the refugees a great benefactor with the departure of the Very Reverend Monsignor Stephen J. Kelleher, for the last two years Field Director of the Pontifical Mission for Palestine. Monsignor Kelleher left Beirut on 18 January to return to the United States.

The Pontifical Mission, set up by His Holiness the Pope to minister to the spiritual needs of the refugees and to give them material aid, has worked with UNRWA since the Agency's inception.

During Monsignor Kelleher's stay in the Middle East, the Pontifical Mission donated \$60,000 through UNRWA for a centre for the blind in the Gaza Strip, and has made available \$9,000 for a clinic, community centres and assistance in a flood programme in Agency camps.

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World Council of Churches Representative visits  
UNRWA Installations

Dr. Leslie Cooke, Director of the Division of Inter-Church Aid and Services to Refugees of the World Council of Churches, visited a refugee camp and UNRWA's Siblin Vocational Training Centre during a brief visit to Lebanon in mid-December.

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U.A.R. Embassy in Rome helps Palestine Refugee Children

The Embassy in Rome of the United Arab Republic organised at the end of the year a bazaar in aid of Palestine refugee children, which is reported to have been very successful. UNRWA sent exhibition material and a film to be shown at the bazaar.

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UNRWA Exhibition in New York

An exhibition of photographs of Palestine Arab refugees is on view at United Nations Headquarters in New York. Over a million people, the average annual number of visitors to the U.N. building, will see the exhibition.

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GOVERNMENTS PLEDGE SUPPORT  
OF UNRWA'S PROGRAMME

Thirty-three Governments have recently announced pledges of financial support of UNRWA's programme. Their pledges, totalling \$32.7 million, were made public at a meeting of the Pledging Conference for Extra-Budgetary Funds held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 6 December 1961.

Of the \$32.7 million, \$12,450,800 was pledged for UNRWA's 1961 programme and \$20,279,667 for its 1962 programme, as against total estimated requirements that year of \$38.2 million. However, at the

time of the Pledging Conference several countries were not able to announce pledges for 1962 or for the last half of that year. On the assumption that these countries will ultimately make pledges at the same rate as they have done in the past, UNRWA Director John H. Davis estimates that 1962 Government contributions to UNRWA will reach approximately the same total as in 1961, namely about \$34 million. Dr. Davis warned the conference that unless additional Governmental contributions are received in 1962 and 1963, the Agency will face a financial crisis, and particularly its expanded vocational training programme will be in jeopardy.

As in previous years, the three Governments pledging the largest sums to UNRWA were the United States (\$24.7 million, provided that this sum does not exceed 70 percent of UNRWA's total governmental income), the United Kingdom (\$5,400,000) and Canada (\$1,000,000).

Pledges of funds came from Australia, Austria, Cambodia, Canada, Ceylon, Cyprus, Denmark, Federation of Malaya, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Ghana, Greece, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Liberia, Luxembourg, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States, Viet-Nam and Yugoslavia. The representatives of the Holy See, New Zealand and Pakistan explained that they were not yet able to announce their Government's contributions to UNRWA.

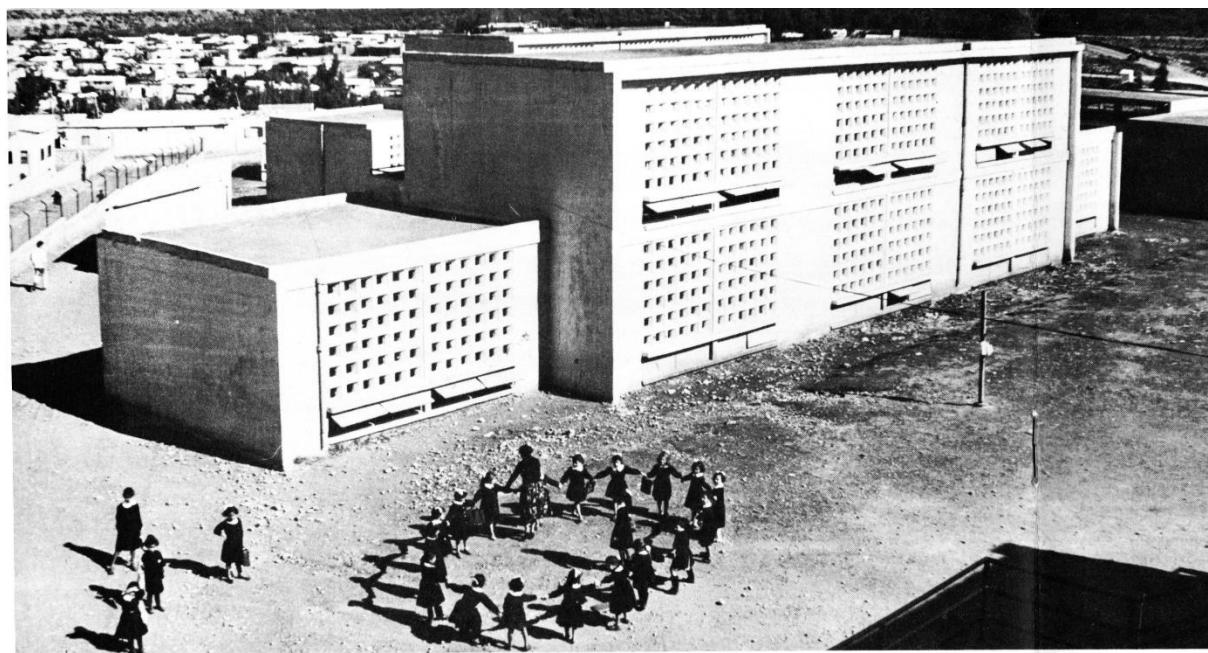
The Governments of Finland and Monaco also recently pledged contributions to UNRWA's 1962 budget, although they did not announce them at the Pledging Conference.

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#### AN ORPHANAGE IN DAMASCUS

In a courtyard of a large house in Damascus, where a fountain used to play and lemon trees still grow, a group of robust looking young schoolgirls, many with knitting in hand, assembles daily during the recess from classes.

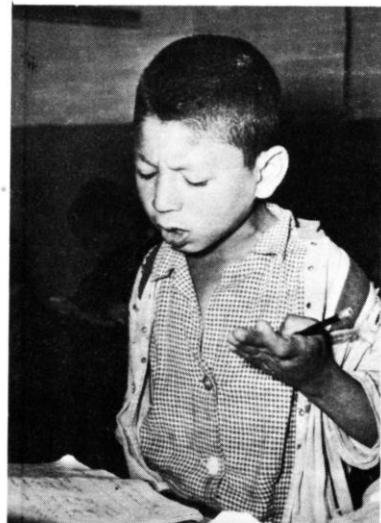
The old house is rented by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic for use by Palestine refugee orphans.



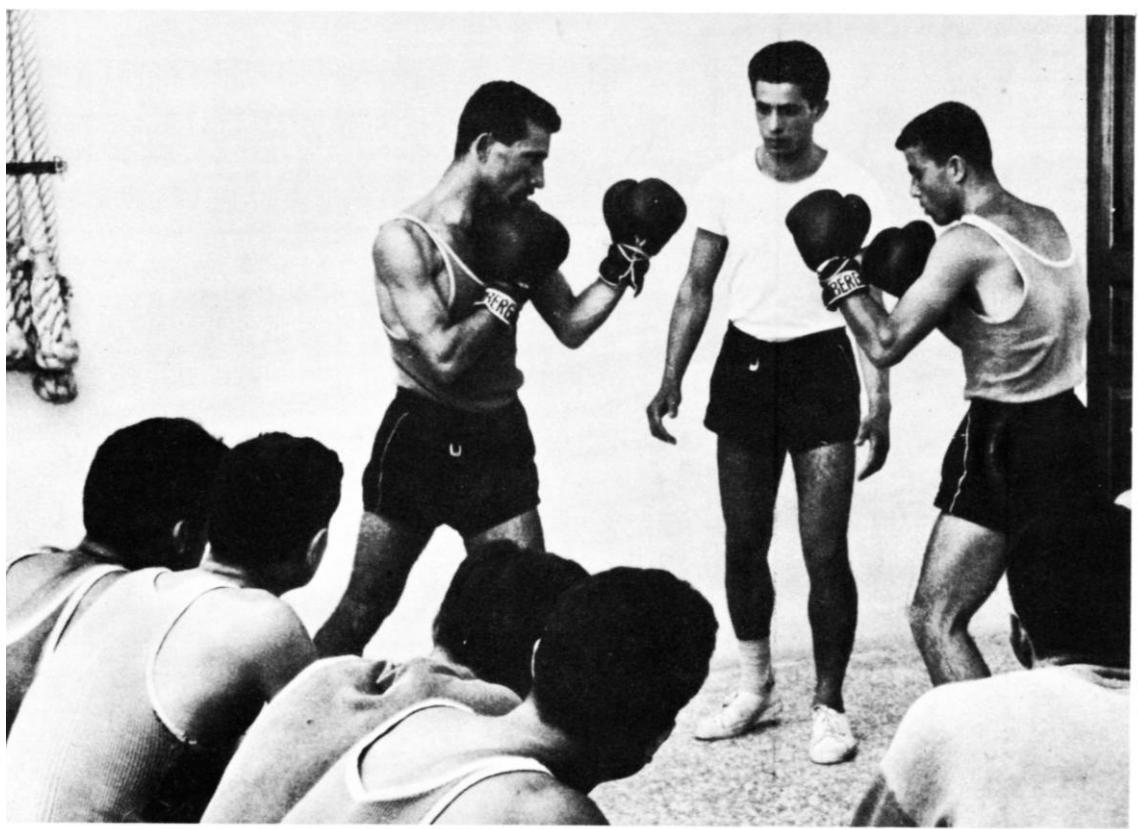
A new UNRWA school building



Schoolchildren visit the UNRWA exhibition at UN Headquarters, New York



Over 142,000 children attend UNRWA schools



A gift from the USA has made boxing possible in UNRWA youth centres

About 80 of the 110 girls resident at the orphanage are fatherless. Already stripped of all their possessions after their 1948 flight from Palestine, the fathers had nothing to leave their families at their deaths. Their wives, unskilled and living in an area which is only lately accepting the idea of working women, find it difficult to earn money enough to supplement UNRWA rations and buy other necessities for their youngsters.

The orphanage is one of three run for refugee children by the Palestine Arab Refugee Institute (PARI), the Government Department which looks after the interests of refugees in Syria and works in daily close co-operation with UNRWA. Over 300 refugee youngsters are taken care of in the three institutions.

The academic approach at the school is novel for girls in the area, for it combines vocational training with the regular curriculum in the Syrian schools. The girls are given five years' schooling, from the fifth to the ninth classes, and during the last three years, they choose to learn either sewing or typing.

Sabha Musa, tanned, with high cheekbones and a long dark braid, decided on typing. Now 16, she graduates this year. When Sabha finds work, it will be a relief for her mother, who up to now has been supporting two other youngsters and her own invalid mother by working as an agricultural labourer in the fields from seven in the morning until late afternoon, six days a week, for about 30 U.S. cents a day.

Sabha's class will be the second to graduate from the orphanage, which has been run by PARI since 1958. Last year the Syrian Government spent some \$42,000 to run it, part of a total of over \$1½ million which the Government reported it had spent during the year in direct support of the 119,000 Palestine refugees within its borders.

The Damascus Orphanage is an example of the help given by the host countries to the refugees. Jordan, the U.A.R. authorities in the Gaza Strip, Lebanon, and Syria together report that annually they spend more than \$5,000,000 in providing land, water, security, medical assistance, education, and other miscellaneous services for the million and more refugees crowded into their borders, putting

an additional strain on their already pinched resources. Further, they report that over the past 11 years they have spent more than \$20,000,000 in direct assistance to the refugees and contributed \$6,000,000 to UNRWA.

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UNRWA SCHOOLS

Another school year is well underway -- the twelfth for the UNRWA school system -- and statistics are now available to show the number of children attending Agency schools. The total has risen to 142,183, an increase of 7,233 over last year's figure of 134,950.

UNRWA provides schooling for all refugee youngsters for the first six elementary classes, and preparatory and secondary education to a smaller number, roughly proportional to the number receiving it in the host countries. The Agency's schools now number 397, and it employs 3,993 teachers. The following is a breakdown of enrolment at UNRWA schools:-

COUNTRY	ELEMENTARY			PREPARATORY			SECONDARY Boys	TOTAL
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total		
Jordan	24511	19199	43710	6414	2285	8699	888	53297
Gaza	20499	18089	38588	6059	4343	10402	-	48990
Lebanon	10308	7664	17972	2126	737	2863	-	20835
Syria	8738	6097	14835	3071	1155	4226	-	19061
Total	64056	51049	115105	17670	8520	26190	888	142183

In addition, a large number of refugee children receive education in private or government schools, through UNRWA subsidies. The Agency has not yet received final figures for the 1961-1962 school year, but estimates that the number of these pupils is over 65,000.

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GIFT FOR YOUTH ACTIVITIES PROGRAMME

Donations from the American Machine and Foundry Company and from Cooperative for Remittances Everywhere Inc. (CARE) have given a big impetus to UNRWA's Youth Activities programme. The donations are in the form of athletic equipment and will be used in UNRWA's 38 youth activities centres in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the Gaza Strip.

A refugee camp in the Middle East means, at best, long rows of barrack-like hutments - a forlorn place to grow up in. Once school-days are over, opportunities for worth-while work are limited, the chance of continued education is small and the future that stretches before many young Arab refugee boys is a bleak one.

One of the ways in which UNRWA seeks to ameliorate this situation is by helping to channel the young men's interests and energies into constructive activities. The Agency has set up youth activities centres in as many of its camps as possible; the aim is to have one in each of the 58 UNRWA camps. The immediate purpose of these centres is to encourage cultural, sports and recreation activities, carried on by the refugees themselves. The ultimate objective is to help form responsible citizens for the future.

The most popular feature of the youth activities centres is the sports programme, and this will be enormously expanded and improved through the gifts from the American Machine and Foundry Company and CARE.

Two hundred and eighty pairs of boxing gloves have been received, and as a result, boxing training and local competitions are being organized in all countries and an all-Palestinian boxing exhibition is planned for next year.

Interest in softball runs high among the refugees. This is a new sport for the Middle East, where it was introduced in the Gaza Strip by Canadian UNEF troops and in Lebanon at the American University of Beirut. However, because of lack of equipment there was no hope of including it in UNRWA's youth activities programme. Now that equipment has been donated, softball rules in Arabic have been prepared and training in all the "host countries" will start this spring, once the good weather arrives.

Tennis shoes are an essential item for a refugee sports programme, as the boys usually possess only one pair of shoes of their own and cannot risk wearing them out in athletics. The donations include 2,510 pairs of tennis shoes; each Centre can have a supply of the shoes to issue on loan to the boys for training and competitions.

Other items donated include 2,500 pairs of sports socks, 420 footballs, basketballs, and volleyballs, and generous quantities of volleyball nets, table tennis equipment and stopwatches.

Thanks to the two donors, the 1962 sports season promises to be a record one in UNRWA's camps.

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#### EXHIBITION OPENS ENGINEER'S EYES

A 22-year-old machine shop engineer was putting in his time as a British Army national serviceman when, one day last year, he visited an exhibition. Presented by the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (OXFAM), the display told of refugees throughout the world, among them the Palestine Arab refugees. Young Robin Lamb had a thought -- perhaps he personally could do something to help these unfortunate people.

Today, Robin Lamb is a new arrival in the Gaza Strip, and his talents are being put to use to instruct young refugee men on the lathe at a burgeoning Near East Christian Council (NECC) project, supported by voluntary contributions mostly from Church World Service. He will be right-hand man to Munir Hunein, NECC Gaza Representative, who, starting from scratch, has developed a busy project including carpentry, cane-work, basket-work for the blind, an automobile greasing station, metal and machine work for men, and knitting, sewing and weaving for women.

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#### SWEDISH GIFT HELPS TO TRAIN REFUGEE NURSES

Eighteen young Palestine Arab refugees, all at the start of a nursing training course made possible through a Swedish donation, were asked to write an essay on the happiest event of their lives.

"What happiest event?" they queried, for most remembered a life only of hardship and poverty.

Some impressed their German instructress by writing: "The day a member of our family got well ... or the time when one of our relatives returned."

"We in the West," commented instructress Louice Van Buch, "would have chosen our first dance ... or the day we bought our first radio. These youngsters have so little, they appreciate the basic values."

Zeinab Mahmoud Nassif, a Moslem girl who grew up in a refugee camp, wrote that her happiest event was yet to come: "The day I graduate from nursing training and show that in Jordan, with determination, it is possible for a girl to become a nurse."

Zeinab wanted to be a nurse from the day that she saw her father regain his health after an illness, thanks to medical care. But when she put it to her family that she wished to follow this profession, they would not hear of it. Many people in Jordan today still consider that nursing is not a respectable profession for women. But Zeinab was determined. She refused to eat for three days until she finally won the permission of her family to follow the course.

These 18 young people are being given the training as a result of a World Refugee Year contribution from the Swedish Broadcasting Relief Committee, through the Swedish Save the Children Fund and the Swedish Red Cross. The donation was given to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) as part of a total World Refugee Year donation of 133,000 Swedish crowns. Other refugee training projects being financed through Swedish generosity are a course for assistant pharmacists in Gaza and nursing education in Lebanon and possibly elsewhere.

The nursing training course, which will provide three years' training for 60 young refugees, is being run by the Lutheran World Federation and conducted at the Augusta Victoria Hospital on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem, Jordan. This imposing structure was built as a hostel in 1910 at the request of Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany and bears the name of his wife, the Kaiserin Augusta Victoria. It was later converted into a hospital and has been run since 1950 by

the Lutheran World Federation, with support from Lutherans in Sweden as well as in other countries. Of the hospital's 315 beds, 284 are reserved for refugees and UNRWA makes a substantial annual financial grant.

The nursing students board at the hospital. In addition to academic courses, they have begun practical nursing - using each other as patients - and after six months they will begin to do simple tasks in the hospital.

Hospital Matron Karis Hensen of Denmark is one of the three instructresses teaching the Palestinian trainees.

"Nurses are badly needed in Jordan," she said, "as they are everywhere in the world." The problem here is compounded by the attitude in many families such as Zeinab's, that their daughters should not be nurses, she added. "But we have been noticing a change lately, and some fathers have even come to us to tell us that they welcomed this opportunity for their daughters to learn a career which would be valuable to their people and community."

The refugee nursing students will have no worries after they finish the course, for Jordan needs them. And so for all -- like Zeinab -- graduation day will mean not only a happy event, but -- thanks to Swedish generosity -- the promise of a life made happy with the security and fulfilment of a worth-while career.

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The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is a special, temporary, non-political body established by the General Assembly of the United Nations in December 1949. In co-operation with the host governments (Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Republic) it carries out its two-fold task: immediate: to provide food, health services, education, training and shelter for the refugees; long-term: to assist the refugees to become self-supporting.

UNRWA began work in May 1950 and its present mandate expires on 30 June 1963.

Further information may be obtained from:

UNRWA Liaison Office  
Palais des Nations  
Geneva  
Switzerland

UNRWA Public Information Office  
UNESCO Building  
Beirut  
Lebanon

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(For information purposes - Not an official record)