



PALESTINE REFUGEES TODAY

An UNRWA Newsletter

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FOR WALEED: A NEW LIFE (page 11)

FINANCIAL CRISIS EASES, BUT SERIOUS DEFICIT REMAINS

The financial crisis which had threatened to disrupt UNRWA's services to the refugees has eased, as a result of the Agency's emergency fund-raising efforts. However, UNRWA still faces a serious deficit in its budget for 1966, and is continuing its appeal for additional contributions.

The Agency began 1966 with a deficit of \$4.2 million. Following an appeal by the United Nations General Assembly, and missions by senior UNRWA officials to some 23 states, the deficit has been reduced to about \$1.1 million. There are indications that contributions yet to be announced may further reduce the deficit. As a result, the Agency will not be forced to curtail its assistance to the refugees substantially in 1966, as had once been feared. But until the deficit is totally covered, UNRWA's financial position remains a matter of serious concern. The deficit is due mainly to increased commodity and other costs and particularly to the rising cost of education resulting from the continued increase in school enrolment, coupled with decreases in the regular contributions of some governments.

The turning point in averting a collapse of UNRWA's services in 1966 was a special contribution of \$2 million from the Government of Sweden, which was reported more fully in Newsletter No. 46.

The Government of Denmark has made a special donation of \$200,000 through its Secretariat for Technical Cooperation with Developing Countries. The funds, contributed in addition to Denmark's regular annual contribution of \$72,400, will be used mainly to meet the operating costs of UNRWA's Teacher Training Centre for Men in Ramallah, Jordan. Denmark also contributed \$100,000 towards this in 1965.

The Government of Iraq, which had not made a pledge to UNRWA for 1966, has made a special contribution of \$100,000. The Government of Libya announced in June that it was increasing its contribution for 1966 from \$20,000, as had been pledged, to \$100,000. The Government of Pakistan made a special donation to UNRWA of £3,744 (approximately \$10,483) in July,

in addition to its regular annual contribution of \$20,000. A special contribution of \$10,000 was also received from the Ruler of Qatar, His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Ben-Ali Al Thani. The Republic of China announced in July that its contribution to UNRWA for 1966 would be doubled, from \$5,000 to \$10,000. The Holy See has made a special contribution of \$2,500 for 1966, more than twice its usual annual contribution, and the Government of Tunisia has added \$1,000 to its regular contribution of \$4,000. Saudi Arabia, by contributing \$297,000 not previously pledged with respect to an earlier year, as well as \$297,000 for 1966, has in effect doubled its contribution.

In addition to these contributions, consultations with other governments have indicated that further special donations may be forthcoming.

Senior UNRWA officials personally brought the critical financial situation of the Agency to the attention of many governments in a series of missions undertaken in the spring. The Commissioner-General of UNRWA, Mr. Laurence Michelmore, visited Algeria, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Tunisia and the United Kingdom in a series of visits. The Deputy Commissioner-General, Mr. John Reddaway, called at 12 European capitals during a five-week mission in March and April, accompanied by the Director of UNRWA's Liaison Office in Europe, Mr. Raymond Courvoisier (see Newsletter No. 46). A representative of the Commissioner-General, Mr. Munir Kreidie, visited Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Qatar and the Sudan. Discussions were also held with a number of governmental representatives in Amman, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus and Geneva.

Mr. Michelmore has stated that the response to UNRWA's appeal for additional funds has been gratifying, and reflects the deep concern that is felt in many nations over the plight of the Palestine refugees. He added, however, that the financial position of the Agency was still serious, and that further contributions were still urgently needed to ensure that needy refugees continued to receive essential assistance.

RECORD NUMBER OF TRAINEES GRADUATE

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This will bring the total number of graduates from UNRWA centres since the training programme was launched in 1954 to almost 7,500. Last year there were 1,507 graduates from the 10 training centres.

The vocational training centres will close in mid-August, when the graduates will receive their diplomas. The teacher training courses were completed in June or July. In addition to the trainees graduating from UNRWA training centres, another 113 young refugees will graduate from government or private institutions, which they are attending with the help of grants from UNRWA.

The provision of some 1,500 trained workers represents a significant technical assistance contribution to the Middle East, as was pointed out by a senior Government official at the graduation ceremony held in June for the teacher training section of UNRWA's Sibliin Technical and Teacher Training Institute in Lebanon. Mr. Abdur-Ra'ouf Fadlallah, the Director of Cultural Affairs and Fine Arts in the Lebanese Ministry of Education, said that the Arab countries were at the beginning of the stage of industrialization and of the exploitation of their resources. "But they lack the class of technicians and skilled workers that comprise the technical army and the essential link between the class of engineers and the class of labourers," he said. "In the light of this need," he added, "Sibliin and similar UNRWA centres are taking part in the progress and development of the Arab countries."

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REFUGEES RETURN FROM ON-THE-JOB TRAINING IN EUROPE

Two groups of young refugees returned to the Middle East recently after completing a year of on-the-job training in Europe. Forty-one young men came back from Sweden, where they had been working and training in industry, and six returned after a year of agricultural experience in Switzerland.

The group that returned from Sweden was the fourth group of young men to spend a year there as part of a programme financed by the Government of Sweden. They are all graduates of UNRWA vocational training centres, and most will study for a final year at UNRWA's Sibliin Technical and Teacher Training Institute in Lebanon to qualify as industrial foremen or vocational instructors. The Sibliin Institute was established with a technical assistance grant from the Swedish Government. A fifth group is scheduled to fly to Sweden in August.

The six young men who spent a year in Switzerland are graduates of UNRWA's Beit Hanoun Agricultural Training Centre in the Gaza Strip. They spent the year gaining practical experience of modern farming methods by working on large Swiss farms.

Fifty-two young refugees are due to return from the Federal Republic of Germany in September, after a year working and training in industry, together with another twenty-two who will have spent two years there.

These programmes of on-the-job training in Europe are valuable both to the refugees selected and to the Arab world. The young men return to the Middle East with experience in the most modern industrial methods, which, together with their training at the UNRWA training centres, enables them to make a significant contribution to the development of the area.



FLIGHT TO THE FUTURE

That morning, for the first time in his life, Raymond woke up at five o'clock. The day of departure had come at last; his suitcase was strapped, and his new clothes for the journey were carefully folded on the bed — a white shirt, a grey suit and a dark red tie. Raymond had never seen such magnificent clothes. The suit was far too thick for a hot day under the blazing Jordan sun, but it would be right for the journey and for the arrival in England.

For Raymond Kari, just 12 years old, was flying that morning to London with 12 other Arab refugee boys — the oldest 14, the youngest 11. Nine of the 13 children were orphans; all came from desperately poor families; seven of them had been born in UNRWA camps. The boys had been invited by the Pestalozzi Children's Village Trust, a British voluntary organization, to spend five years in England in a house specially built for them by the Trust in its "Children's Village" in Sedlescombe in Sussex. There, together with 300 children from 15 different countries, they will follow the normal British secondary school course. In accordance with the principles of the great Swiss educationalist, Pestalozzi, the children are grouped in separate hou-

LEFT: Raymond Kari says goodbye to his father.

ses, each "family" in the charge of a woman who looks after them like a mother and forms a link with the children's own cultural background.

They will also do practical work on the farm, go on visits to neighbouring towns and places of interest, learn to swim, to play games, to dance and to sing. The most gifted pupils in the "Children's Village" go on to university study or vocational training. Once their education is over, all the children return to the countries from which they came. All expenses of the Arab refugee children, as of all the boys and girls at Sedlescombe, are borne by the Trust.

For children whose homes have so far been mud-brick huts in the midst of a vast refugee camp, or small dark rooms in tumbledown shacks, for boys who have worked hard at school but whose parents are mostly illiterate, the invitation is "a golden opportunity", as Raymond's father put it. Mr. Kari is a cook at UNRWA's Vocational Training Centre at Kalandia, near Jerusalem.

"Five years is a long time for a child", says Mr. Kari. "But Raymond has always been one of the best pupils in his class. He could go far. Besides, he will be with his friends, who are all refugees too, and I am sure that Mrs. Bishouty will look after them as if they were her own boys."

Mrs. Asma Sabagh Bishouty is the "house-mother" of the group, carefully selected from among 12 candidates. A widow with four children, she is a school-teacher and in England she will take charge of the boys' Arabic studies. Mrs. Bishouty's assistant is Miss Nouha Hanhan, a nineteen-year-old refugee who was trained as a kindergarten teacher at UNRWA's Women's Training Centre in Ramallah. Nouha will be a big sister to "her boys", who are already devoted to this cheerful, kind and patient girl. She needed all her patience on the morning of the departure from Jordan.

For the families of the children all accompanied them to the airport. From Hebron in the south, from Irbed in the north, from Nablus and Jerusalem, buses brought to Amman anxious fathers, mothers in tears, small brothers and sisters eager to see the fabulous bird that was going to carry the boys away — the huge jet airliner whose departing roar filled the smallest members of the party with fear and excitement.

The UNRWA officials who had made careful preparations for the project, the British Council representative in Amman who had done so much to make it a success, and the families of the boys all stood craning their necks to see, high in the blue sky, the small silhouette disappearing into the distance.

And Raymond, sitting quietly in his seat, watched all that he had known in his short life growing further and further away and thought of the new life that lay ahead of him.

BELOW: The boys, seen in the bus at Amman airport, were accompanied by an Arab housemother.



IN BRIEF

Five refugees fly to France for on-the-job training.

Five refugees flew to France in July for eight months, most of which will be spent in on-the-job training in industry. The five young men, all graduates from UNRWA's Sibliin Vocational Training Centre in Lebanon, will have two months of language training and will then be placed in electrical equipment factories to work and to gain experience. The scheme is being financed almost entirely by the French Government, with UNRWA paying half of the travel expenses.

Chairman of AMER appointed Honourary Consultant to UNRWA.

Dr. Emmett Holt, the Chairman of American Middle East Rehabilitation (AMER) and a leading figure in the American medical profession, has been appointed Honourary Consultant to the Commissioner-General of UNRWA. AMER is active in obtaining donations of supplies, mainly for use in UNRWA's health programme. Since 1960, AMER has obtained donations valued at more than \$170,000. Under AMER's "Pills for Skills" programme, the savings to UNRWA, which would otherwise have to purchase these supplies, are credited to the vocational training programme.

Recent contributions from AMER include some \$43,000 worth of medical supplies and almost \$30,000 worth of other supplies, including office equipment and books for use in UNRWA's training centres. The medical supplies include a donation valued at \$25,000 from McKesson Laboratories. These contributions provided scholarships for 133 young refugees attending UNRWA training centres.

Visitors

Mr. Joseph Sisco, Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs of the U.S. State Department, had talks in July with senior UNRWA officials at the Agency's Headquarters in Beirut, and visited refugee camps, schools, clinics, feeding centres and other UNRWA installations in Jordan, Lebanon and the Gaza Strip. On some of these visits he was accompanied by the Commissioner-General of UNRWA and by Mr. Theodore A. Wahl, Alternate Representative of the United States on UNRWA's Advisory Commission.

A group of ambassadors and diplomats representing 30 nations, and officials of the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs flew from Cairo in June to spend one day in the Gaza Strip, where they saw at first hand the plight of the refugees and the work of UNRWA. The group included 55 ambassadors, diplomats and their wives, 45 Egyptian Foreign Ministry officials and four correspondents. The party travelled the 25-mile length of the Gaza Strip, visited two refugee camps, where they saw various aspects of UNRWA's assistance to the refugees, and had talks with officials of UNRWA and of the Gaza Administration.

Three groups of members of the Christian Democratic Party (Federal Republic of Germany), totalling more than 100 persons, visited UNRWA vocational training centres and refugee camps in Lebanon or Jordan during their recent trip to the Middle East made for the purpose of becoming better acquainted with the refugee problem.

Mr. George Abrams, Counsel of the United States Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Refugees and Escapees, and Mr. Dale Dehaan, staff assistant to Senator Edward Kennedy, the Chairman of the Subcommittee, undertook a mission to UNRWA's area of operations recently.

The Austrian Ambassador to Lebanon, Mr. Alfred Breycha-Vauthier, visited UNRWA's Sibling Technical and Teacher Training Institute in Lebanon in July.

Donations.

The Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO) has made further contributions amounting to \$55,000. Of this sum, \$40,000 is for UNRWA's university scholarship programme, and \$15,000 for vocational training scholarships. ARAMCO made a similar donation last year.

An additional donation of \$6,289 has been received from Misereor (Germany), to complete the sponsorship of 25 trainees in the instrument mechanics and fitter machinist courses at UNRWA's Sibling Vocational Training Centre in Lebanon.

Caritas Catholica (Belgium) has donated \$3,500 as part of the funds necessary to give special training to 11 handicapped refugee children. The bulk of the funds for this project, and for the provision of scholarships for 20 refugee girls at the Ramallah centre, has come from Belgium as a result of the sale of a special set of postage stamps (Newsletter No. 46). Other donations amounting to \$1,200 will be used to operate an UNRWA play centre for refugee children for two years. Such play centres, all supported with special donations, provide an opportunity for children living in the crowded camps to take part in constructive and healthy recreation and to receive the elements of kindergarten training. Austrian Caritas has contributed another vocational training scholarship.

A number of donations have been received recently from Finland. The Finnish Association for Aid to Refugees has made a contribution of \$2,500 to provide scholarships for two young men and three girls at UNRWA training centres. Individual scholarships of \$500 each have also been donated by the Finnish Association of Folk High Schools and Folk Academies, the Finnish Elementary School Teachers' Association, the Finnish Association of Kindergarten Teachers, and jointly by four Finns who recently visited the Middle East, Miss Hilja Aalto, Mrs. Irja Vehnamaki, Mr. Eero Julin and Mrs. Helvi Sipilä, who is Chairman of the Finnish Association for Aid to Refugees.

A number of national federations of the Business and Professional Women's organization have made further contributions of scholarships for refugee girls at the Ramallah Women's Training Centre. The Canadian Federation has contributed \$3,240 to provide second-year scholarships for seven girls in the business education course. The girls were also sponsored by the Canadian Federation in their first year. The United States Federation has sponsored three girls in the same class with its contribution of \$1,500, and the Swiss Federation has provided a scholarship for another girl.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the Netherlands has made a contribution of \$5,550 for sports facilities at UNRWA's Kalandia Vocational Training Centre, near Jerusalem, Jordan.

A nine-year-old refugee girl in the Gaza Strip, who has had a paralysed hand since she fell from her mother's shoulder when she was three months old, will receive special treatment and rehabilitation, thanks to a donation of 160 Egyptian pounds (approximately \$370) from the Danish and Norwegian troops serving with the United Nations Emergency Force in Gaza.

After reading an article about the Palestine refugees in a Norwegian newspaper, girls in Rothaugen School, Bergen, decided to do something to help the refugees. The girls obtained cloth, provided partly by the school and partly from a donation by a Bergen textile factory, from which they sewed 250 pairs of trousers. The trousers were delivered to two schools in Gaza by members of the Norwegian Battalion of UNEF, after being forwarded through the Norwegian Refugee Council.

Donations of \$1,500 to provide three training scholarships have been received from the Lutheran World Federation and from the German firm of Robert Bosch GmbH.

Contributions of two vocational training scholarships, amounting to \$1,000, have been made by Bayerische Vereinsbank (Federal Republic of Germany), NAJDA and Mrs. Dorothea Pickerl (United States).

Vocational training scholarships of \$500 each have been donated by Mrs. D.M. Nowell, Miss M. Rogers and Miss Catherine Symonds (United Kingdom), Mrs. D.C. Henderson (Canada), and by Glenview Community Church, Illinois, and the American Friends of the Middle East (United States).

ZONTA "ADOPTS" THE RAMALLAH CENTRE FOR ANOTHER TWO YEARS

Zonta, the world-wide women's organization, has "adopted" UNRWA's Ramallah Women's Training Centre in Jordan for the third time. At the Zonta International Convention in Miami (United States) in July, the delegates voted to support the centre as its international project for a further two-year period. During the four years that Zonta International has been assisting the centre, more than \$100,000 has been received in vocational training scholarships to enable refugee girls to attend Ramallah.

A highlight of the Miami convention was the appearance of the Principal of the Ramallah centre, Mrs. In'am Mufti, as one of the main speakers. She told the delegates of the success of many of the Zonta-sponsored girls who had already graduated and found employment, and conveyed the gratitude of the Agency and of the girls to Zonta for its generous assistance. During her mission to the United States, made at the invitation of Zonta, Mrs. Mufti also held discussions with the representatives of other voluntary organizations in New York and Washington.

Further contributions amounting to more than \$17,000 have been received recently from Zonta International, including \$2,000 from Zonta District XIII. The funds will provide training scholarships for 36 refugee girls at Ramallah, many of whom were also sponsored by Zonta last year.

* * *

A NEW LIFE FOR WALEED

(See picture on front cover)

Three years ago, the future was bleak for Waleed Ali Abdul Raheem, a crippled, destitute refugee in the crowded Gaza Strip.

But, with the help of his fellow refugees and of UNRWA, things have changed. Today, Waleed is a trained radio mechanic with work, self-respect and hope for the future.

In 1963, Waleed was admitted to UNRWA's Gaza Vocational Training Centre. He was enrolled in the radio mechanics course, where he would not be hindered by his crippled feet, a birth deformity which made it difficult to walk or even to stand. Two years later he was presented with his diploma. But his happiness gradually turned into despair as the months went by and he failed to find anyone who would employ a cripple.

In his distress, he returned to the principal of the training centre for advice. The principal discussed it with his staff, and they immediately agreed to contribute part of their salaries to help Waleed. The staff are themselves refugees, most of them supporting large families on their modest income. They raised \$45, which was enough to buy tools, a test meter and to pay one month's rent for a small room in which Waleed could open a radio repair shop.

But soon after Waleed had opened his little shop, his hopes were again crushed — this time by a bulldozer that levelled his shop to widen the road on which it was situated. Fortunately, he was able to find a small hut in Bureij refugee camp — just enough room for a workbench, a cupboard and a couple of chairs — where he now works.

Recently, the principal of the Gaza training centre received a letter from Waleed, which read, in part :

"On graduation I realised that it was difficult to find work, I simply had crippled feet and nobody will employ me; this I very well know. Thus I approached you, sir, and immediately found a hope for the future. ... I shall be grateful if you and the staff kindly pay a visit to my shop to observe the result of your help to a son of yours who can never forget your great human kindness.

Yours truly,

Your son,
Waleed Ali Abdul Raheem."

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is a subsidiary organ of the United Nations, established by the General Assembly 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: first: to provide food, health and welfare services, and shelter for the refugees; second: to provide education and training to refugee children and young adults including general education, vocational and teacher training, and university scholarships.

UNRWA began work in May 1950 and its mandate expires on 30 June 1969.

Further information may be obtained from :

UNRWA Liaison Office,
United Nations,
New York, N.Y.

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