



PALESTINE REFUGEES TODAY

An UNRWA Newsletter

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HER FIRST DOLL

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The cover illustration shows Fatmeh admiring her first doll (See article on page 8).

All photographs in this Newsletter, and other pictures of Arab refugees and of UNRWA's work, may be obtained from the Public Information Office, UNRWA, Museitbeh Quarter, Beirut, Lebanon.

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UNRWA'S MANDATE EXTENDED

Following consideration of the Annual Report of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the following Resolution (1856 (XVII)) on 20 December, with 100 votes in favour, none against, and two abstentions :

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, 1604 (XV) of 21 April 1961 and 1725 (XVI) of 20 December 1961,

Noting the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, covering the period 1 July 1961 - 30 June 1962,

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. Expresses its thanks to the Commissioner-General 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;

2. Expresses its thanks to the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine for its efforts to find a way to progress on the Palestine Arab refugee problem pursuant to paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III), and requests the Commission to continue its endeavours with the Member States directly concerned;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to provide the staff and facilities that the Commission may require in carrying on its work;

4. Decides to extend the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency until 30 June 1965;

5. 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.

The adoption of the resolution was preceded by more than two weeks of discussion and debate on the Palestine refugee problem in the Assembly's Special Political Committee. Delegates from 32 Member States spoke on the item, and the speeches ranged over the whole Palestine problem. Most of the speakers paid tribute to the work of UNRWA, and many singled out the Agency's vocational training programme for particular praise.

Commissioner-General's Statement

The discussion was opened with a statement by Dr. John H. Davis, the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, in which he reviewed the Agency's progress in its three-year programme, launched in 1960, and commented on the Agency's critical financial situation.

The main emphasis in the three-year programme is on the education and training of young refugees, particularly those reaching maturity. Most of these young people have been denied the opportunity to learn a skill by working alongside their fathers, themselves unemployed. The programme has necessitated holding relief expenditures to the 1960 per capita level in order to maximize funds available for vocational training, general education and university scholarships.

Reviewing the progress of the programme, Dr. Davis said that by the end of the three-year period (mid-1963) the Agency would have "extensively increased" its vocational training and teacher training programme.

There were already eleven training centres either in operation or under construction and, taking into account arrangements for training at UNRWA expense in governmental centres, the Agency was within reach of a target of a total capacity of 4,400 trainees; the Agency had also increased its total of university scholarships to 500 per year. With regard to general education, the Agency would have "almost kept pace" with the "host" countries (Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Gaza Strip) in meeting the "soaring need and demand for education".

Dr. Davis said UNRWA had redoubled its efforts to raise money from extra-budgetary sources, because regular government contributions had remained at about \$34 million a year, while education and training costs had risen. The Agency would have a cumulative deficit of \$4 million over the three years ending on 30 June 1963, which would be made up from its working reserves, he added.

The Commissioner-General warned that UNRWA could not continue to finance its operations from its working reserve. Dr. Davis said there had to be an increase of \$3 million a year in regular contributions for UNRWA to carry on its present programmes after 30 June 1963. He added that this sum would just about equal the cost of running the Agency's 11 training centres at capacity for one year and maintaining university scholarships at the current level.

"If the Agency is short of total funds by this amount, the impact on these activities will be severely crippling -- bringing them partially, if not totally, to a halt. This, in my opinion would be tragic," Dr. Davis declared.

IN BRIEF

Dr. Davis Returns to Beirut

Dr. John H. Davis, UNRWA's Commissioner-General, returned to Beirut on 13 January from the United States. The main purpose of Dr. Davis' three-month trip was to present his Annual Report to the General Assembly of the United Nations, and to attend the subsequent discussions on the refugee problem. While in New York, he also held talks with many United Nations delegates. During visits to Washington and Ottawa, Dr. Davis discussed UNRWA's financial situation with American and Canadian Government officials and with representatives of voluntary agencies.

Visitors

A group of 14 Swiss personalities, comprising a member of the Federal Council, a Government official, journalists and radio and TV reporters, spent 10 days in the UNRWA area of operations, learning at first hand about the Agency's work. Their visit was made possible by Swissair, which provided return air transportation from Geneva. The group included Mr. Mathias Eggenberger, a National Councillor and a Member of the Council of State, Mr. Ernest Andres, Chief of the International Relief Section of the Political Department, Miss Elisabeth Feller, Chairman of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women's Committee on Rehabilitation and Refugee Relief, and Mr. Walter von Kaenel, Chairman of the Parliamentary Correspondents' Association.

They visited all four host countries, and saw many of the Agency's camps, schools and vocational training centres. During their visit, they were received by King Hussein of Jordan, President Chehab of Lebanon, President Kudsi of the Syrian Arab Republic and the Governor-General of Gaza.

Mr. Anders J. Guldvik, Secretary-General of the Norwegian United Nations Association, visited UNRWA installations in Lebanon and Jordan.

Rev. Addison Eastman, Executive Secretary of the Near East Office of the Division of Foreign Missions of the National Council of the Churches of Christ (U.S.A.), paid visits to Lebanon and Jordan, where he saw the work of the Agency.

Rev. Ralph Hoffman, Superintendent and Minister of the Congregational Conference of South Dakota, inspected the Joint Christian Committee's facilities for training young refugees in Beirut, in addition to visiting UNRWA installations.

Dr. Kenneth Carmichael, newly appointed Director of the Fine Arts Department of the Near East Christian Council, visited various UNRWA facilities with Mrs. Carmichael on their arrival in the Middle East.

Donations

The Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO) has contributed a total of \$50,000 to provide vocational training and university scholarships during the current academic year. The donation comprises \$40,000 for university scholarships, an increase of \$10,000 over last year's contribution from ARAMCO, and \$10,000 for vocational training scholarships. The increased university scholarship funds will enable UNRWA to allocate scholarships to young refugees who would otherwise not have received them, in addition to the 36 scholarships which will be given, as in the past two years, with ARAMCO funds. The \$10,000 for vocational training will provide 20 one-year scholarships for refugee trainees in UNRWA's Gaza Vocational Training Centre. Twenty trainees sponsored by ARAMCO last year graduated from the Centre in June 1962.

The Canadian Save the Children Fund has donated \$11,000 for additions to the clinic in Khan Yunis camp in the Gaza Strip. The clinic was established with a donation from the Canadian contingent of the UN Emergency Force in the Strip, and extensions were added with the proceeds of the Alice Lalande Memorial Fund, honoring a Canadian who died in the plane crash that killed UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold. The latest additions to the Canadian-donated clinic include a small dental unit, and extensions to the general medical facilities.

The International Union of the United Automobile Workers (U.S.A. and Canada) will sponsor trainees in auto mechanics courses at UNRWA training centres with its donation of \$10,000. The sum provides 20 one-year scholarships of \$500 each.

The Primate's World Relief Fund of the Anglican Church of Canada has contributed \$5,000, which will provide 10 vocational training scholarships. They will be allocated to young refugees attending the Siblin Vocational Training Centre in Lebanon, which was established with Canadian donations.

The first four of a series of scholarships has been received from Zonta International, for girls attending UNRWA's combined Teacher and Vocational Training Centre for Girls in Ramallah, Jordan. At its recent meeting in New Orleans, Zonta International adopted the girls' centre as its international project for two years.

The Coventry Freedom from Hunger Campaign Committee (UK) has pledged to provide two-year scholarships for 32 trainees enrolled in diesel plant site mechanics courses. The contribution will cover the entire classes of 16 trainees at Kalandia and Siblin Vocational Training Centres. This amounts to a donation of £11,520 (\$32,250 approx.).

The Eastbourne Freedom from Hunger Campaign Committee (UK) has agreed to sponsor the entire class of 23 refugees at the Beit Hanoun Agricultural Training Centre in the Gaza Strip for the complete three-year course (1961-64). The total donation will amount to £6,155 (\$17,230 approx.). Scholarships at the Beit Hanoun Centre are \$200 (£70) for the first year of training, which is non-residential, and \$350 (£125) for the second and third years, when the trainees live at the centre. The dormitories and added facilities to make the centre residential will be completed by 1963, in time for the final year of training of the "Eastbourne class."

The National Conference of Businesses and Professional Women (UK) decided at its recent meeting in Scarborough to sponsor six girls at the Ramallah Training Centre for Girls for their entire two-year courses. The six will be in the "International Federation of Business and Professional Women class" at the Ramallah centre. Seven other trainees in the class are being sponsored by Canadian Business and Professional Women's clubs (six of them for two years), and another has received a two-year scholarship from Miss Elisabeth Feller, Chairman of the IFBPW's Committee on Rehabilitation and Refugee Relief.

25 GOVERNMENTS PLEDGE FUNDS FOR 1963

The governments of 25 countries pledged \$32 million towards UNRWA's 1963 budget at the Pledging Conference for Extra-Budgetary Funds held at United Nations Headquarters, New York, in December. The Agency's total operating budget for 1963 is \$38.8 million.

At last year's Pledging Conference, 33 nations pledged a total of \$32.7 million. During 1962, a total of \$33.9 million was received from 45 governments.

The indications, on the basis of the recent Pledging Conference, are that the Agency will receive approximately the same amount from governments as last year. Therefore, the substantial gap between governmental contributions and Agency expenditure will remain, subject to the extent to which the Agency is successful in raising funds from other sources, particularly for its Vocational Training Programme.

In addition to the 25 nations which made pledges, the representatives of three other countries announced their Governments' intention to contribute, but were unable to specify the amount at that time.

As in previous years, the three Governments pledging the largest sums were those of the United States (\$24.7 million, providing that this sum did not exceed 70 per cent of the total contributions from governments), the United Kingdom (\$5.4 million) and Canada (\$930,000). The U.S. delegate stipulated that at least \$1.7 million of his Government's contribution should be used for UNRWA's "promising" programme of vocational training. Similarly, \$1,728,000 of the British contribution was earmarked for education, vocational training and individual assistance.

Pledges (the amount is given in the equivalent of U.S. dollars) were also made by : Australia (\$201,600), Austria (\$3,000), Belgium (\$30,000), Cambodia (\$571), Denmark (\$43,500), France (\$180,000), Federal Republic of Germany (\$625,000), Ghana (\$3,000), India (\$21,000), Iran (\$6,000), Ireland (\$20,000), Japan (\$10,000), Federation of Malaya (\$1,500), The Netherlands (\$110,000), Norway (56,000), Pakistan (\$21,000), Sweden (\$58,000, in addition to a technical assistance grant of approximately \$750,000 over the next three years), Switzerland (\$34,900), Tunisia (\$2,000), Turkey (\$8,000), Viet-Nam (\$2,500) and Yugoslavia (\$20,000).

The representatives of Greece, New Zealand and Nigeria said their Governments would announce the amount of their contributions later.

HER FIRST DOLL

Fatmeh Abdallah is a little girl who has large, dark eyes, a ready smile, and the most beautiful doll in the world.

Like her younger brother and sister, she also has tuberculosis, a penniless, despairing father, and a home which was nothing more than a crowded, dark, damp hut.

Her doll is a cheap plastic toy. But to Fatmeh, it is the most beautiful doll in the world, because it is her first doll.

Fatmeh, aged seven, and her sister Amineh, six, and brother Abdallah, five, are among the 80 refugee patients in the Bhannes TB Sanatorium in Lebanon, receiving treatment in a wing reserved by UNRWA.

Children at the play-centre at Dekwaneh Camp were thrilled with the small gifts provided from the funds raised by the staff of the Lebanon Field Office.



Shortly after Christmas, each refugee patient received a small gift, and the UNRWA wing was presented with a television set -- all bought with funds raised by the staff of the UNRWA Lebanon Field Office. The appeal for money was made when it was discovered that the refugee wing was the only one without a television set to help fill the long months of treatment and convalescence. The Lebanon Field Office staff, almost all of them refugees themselves, gave so generously that money was left over to buy gifts for each patient, as well as small presents for 175 refugee children at play-centres in three UNRWA camps in Lebanon.

Fatmeh will long remember the day she got her first doll. For it was a high point in a life which has seldom risen above the level of bare existence.

Her father was a young farm hand when he abandoned his home and his livelihood in Haifa to take refuge in Lebanon during the conflict in 1948. Today Ahmad Abdallah, his wife and his four children, live in a tiny two-roomed hut in UNRWA's Dekwaneh camp near Beirut, along with his sister and her family. Ahmad does seasonal work during the citrus harvest, but has been unable to find regular employment.

Not long ago, one of his sister's children contracted tuberculosis. The child was admitted to the Bhannes Sanatorium -- but not before his mother and Ahmad's three little children had been infected. Fatmeh and her brother and sister have spent two months in the sanatorium, and will probably stay for another three or four months.

When Fatmeh leaves the sanatorium, healthier and better-nourished, she will hardly recognise her home. On the recommendation of the UNRWA Health Officer, a new roof has been put on the hut, and a new room added to relieve the over-crowding.

As with all cases of TB, health workers visited the home to try to pin-point the source of the disease. In Fatmeh's case, poor living conditions were found to be a factor, and immediate improvements were recommended.

To young Fatmeh, who has never lived in anything better than a shack, the improved home may seem palatial. But even with the additions, it will still be a small hut in the midst of a crowded camp, providing shelter, but little more.

However, the problems and hardships of refugee life can not erase the smile from Fatmeh's face.

For she has the most beautiful doll in the world.

SALE OF LP RECORD TO AID REFUGEES

The Palestine refugees, along with other refugees throughout the world, will benefit from a novel fund-raising scheme devised by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

All profits from the sale of a forthcoming long-playing record, entitled "All-Star Festival", will be devoted to refugee work. UNRWA and UNHCR are jointly making distribution arrangements for the sale of the record in 10 countries, mainly Arabic-speaking, and the two United Nations organizations will share the net proceeds from the sale in these countries.

Some of the top stars in the field of light entertainment have contributed previously unpublished songs for the record, including Louis Armstrong, Perry Como, Bing Crosby, Maurice Chevalier, Nat King Cole, Doris Day, Ella Fitzgerald, Mahalia Jackson, Pattie Page, Los Paraguayos and Catherina Valente. UNHCR will have exclusive rights to the songs for two years.

The artists were selected by a panel headed by film actor Yul Brynner, and including Madeleine Carroll, Ingrid Bergman, Maurice Chevalier, Lucho Gatica, Rex Harrison, and Maria Schell. Announcing the selection in Geneva recently, Mr. Brynner paid tribute to "the generosity

of the artists and the record companies to which they are under contract." He said the record will "give entertainment of the highest order while assisting a great humanitarian cause."

"All-Star Festival" will be issued under a United Nations label, and will include printed information on the plight of the refugees. Those sold in the Arabic-speaking countries will include a message from Dr. John H. Davis, the Commissioner-General of UNRWA. The record will be on sale through regular channels throughout the world in early 1963.

FROM CAMP TO CAMPUS

A letter was received recently in the offices of UNRWA's Education Department, which read, in part, thus :

"I have recently graduated from the American University of Beirut, having obtained the degree of Bachelor of Architectural Engineering. All this thanks to UNRWA, without whose assistance I could never have achieved such a high degree of learning.

Henceforth I shall dedicate myself to the service of my profession. And I shall ever cherish the memory that all my accomplishments were made possible by UNRWA."

The writer was a young refugee who had just completed his university studies with the help of an UNRWA scholarship -- one of 379 UNRWA scholarship holders who have graduated from universities in the Middle East since 1956.

The Agency's university scholarship programme dates back to 1950, when 90 one-year scholarships were awarded. Despite severe limitations on the funds available, the number of scholarships awarded

to outstanding refugee students has risen gradually over the years, until 350 one-year scholarships were granted in 1960.

Though a relatively minor item in terms of expenditure, the scholarship programme has always been regarded as an important part of UNRWA's work. Scholarships are, of necessity, granted only to students of outstanding ability, who would otherwise be denied the opportunity to develop their exceptional talents and put them to full use. Among one million refugees it is not difficult to find 125 brilliant students each year; the problem is rather one of rejecting so many others.

The importance of the scholarship programme was recognized by its inclusion in the three-year plan, launched in 1960, to assist the younger generation of refugees, particularly those reaching maturity. While major emphasis was placed on the expansion of vocational training facilities, plans were also made to increase the number of university scholarships to a total of 500 one-year scholarships a year.

The goal has been reached this year. For the 1962/63 academic year, UNRWA has either awarded or set aside a total of 500 scholarships for refugee students in various stages of their university courses; this represents about 125 scholarships for new students.

For the third successive year, UNRWA has been able to provide 36 scholarships from funds donated for that purpose by the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO); an increase of \$10,000 in ARAMCO's contribution of funds for university scholarships will enable UNRWA to allocate an additional number of scholarships this year. Other refugee students are sponsored by the Governments of the host countries, particularly that of the United Arab Republic, and the French Government awards 35 scholarships annually.

But with an increasing number of refugee students completing their secondary education, the number of university scholarships falls far short of the need.

The writer of the letter quoted above was thankful because he knew that the opportunity given him by his UNRWA scholarship is one that is open to very few young refugees.

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: 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 1965.

Further information may be obtained from :

UNRWA Liaison Office
Palais des Nations
Geneva,
Switzerland

UNRWA Public Information Office
Museitbeh Quarter,
Beirut,
Lebanon

(For information purposes - Not an official record)