



# PALESTINE REFUGEES TODAY

## An UNRWA Newsletter

No. 45 January-February 1966



THE FIRST REFUGEE TO BE ASSISTED BY NEW FINNISH ORGANIZATION (page 6)

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CONTENTS

Pledging Conference Reveals Critical Deficit .....	1
General Assembly Adopts Resolution on Palestine Refugees .....	3
Belgian Donations Announced .....	4
Finnish Association for Aid to Refugees Established .....	6
In Brief .....	10
King Hussein Visits Kalandia United Nations Day 1966 Dedicated to Refugees UNRWA Graduates Assist on Saudi Arabia Telephone Project Donations	
Year-end Registration Figures .....	12

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The cover photo shows Therese Asfour, the first refugee to receive assistance through the new Finnish Association for Aid to Refugees, with UNRWA's Ramallah Girls' Training Center in the background (see article on page 6).

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

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## PLEDGING CONFERENCE REVEALS CRITICAL DEFICIT

A worldwide appeal for funds to continue assistance to the Palestine refugees has been made by the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, Mr. Laurence Michelmore. The appeal was made following a pledging conference at which the total of contributions announced by governments to UNRWA for 1966 fell far short of the amount needed to maintain the Agency's programs of assistance to the refugees.

At the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of the General Assembly for the Announcement of Voluntary Contributions to UNRWA, held in December at United Nations Headquarters in New York, 26 governments either pledged or indicated contributions totalling \$30.8 million. Although part of this sum relates to 1965, it is presumed that similar amounts will be forthcoming for the latter part of 1966. Other expected income from governmental sources, including services provided by the host governments, brought the estimated income from governments to approximately \$33.2 million. Non-governmental and private contributions and miscellaneous income would raise the total to 34.3 million.

In a statement following the announcement of the pledges, the Commissioner-General said that UNRWA would be "far short of its goal", even when possible contributions from governments which had not announced pledges were taken into consideration. UNRWA has budgeted for \$38.5 million to continue its existing services in 1966.

"In order to carry on the services now being provided to the refugees, some \$4.5 to \$5 million more is required than is now in sight," said Mr. Michelmore. "The services are already at a bare minimum, and any reduction would mean additional sacrifice and hardship for the refugees.

"Therefore we must appeal again to all countries to give the most serious consideration to the needs of the refugees, to ask those countries who are contributing to see if they can find the means to increase their help, and to ask other countries, which have not contributed in the past, to add their support," he concluded.

In January, the nine-member Advisory Commission of UNRWA, meeting in Beirut, endorsed proposals made by UNRWA for a special appeal for funds. (The Advisory Commission consists of representatives of the Governments of Belgium, France, Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, the United Arab Republic, the United Kingdom and the United States). The Commissioner-General told the Commission that unless the appeal were wholly successful in raising \$4.2 million in 1966, there would unavoidably be program cuts which would inflict fresh hardship on the needy Arab refugees "who, for the last 17 years, have led tragically insecure and poverty-stricken lives."

Commissioner-General's Statement to Pledging Conference

Before the announcement of government contributions at the pledging conference, the Commissioner-General made a statement in which he told members of the Ad Hoc Committee that for most of the Palestine refugees and their families UNRWA's program was the mainstay of their existence.

"There is nothing lavish or extravagant in the services which UNRWA provides," stated Mr. Michelmore. "The elimination or curtailment of any of the present activities will cause suffering or hardship to some of the persons who are now being helped."

The Commissioner-General said that because of the increasing financial pressure, efforts to reduce expenditures had been intensified, by seeking additional savings in administrative and operational costs, and even by further limiting some services to the refugees. "Such reductions will reach a total in 1966 of \$1.5 million compared to the situation a few years ago," he added.

Although these reductions had been appreciable, continued the Commissioner-General, they had not been sufficient to offset the increased costs, due to higher prices for foodstuffs, some increases in staff wages to meet higher living costs, and, most important of all, the striking growth in the number of children seeking an education. He reported that there had been an increase of 13,000 in the number of refugee children in UNRWA schools when they re-opened in the fall of 1965 compared with the previous year, and said that such increases added about \$700,000 each year to the Agency's expenses.

Government Contributions Announced

As in previous years, the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom pledged the largest sums. The United States pledged \$11,450,000 as half of its 1965-66 pledge. With a similar contribution for the second half of the fiscal year, the total United States contribution would be \$22,900,000. This would be a reduction of \$1,800,000 from the amount provided in 1964-65. The United States pledge carried the stipulation that its contribution should not exceed 70 per cent of the contributions from all governments.

The United Kingdom pledged \$5 million, plus an additional \$400,000 if "substantial progress" is made in rectifying the ration rolls by August 1966. The United Kingdom's 1965 contribution was \$5.4 million.

At mid-January, pledges from other governments, including pledges not announced at the pledging conference, were as follows (in the equivalent of U.S. dollars) :

Australia, \$100,800 (half of 1965-66 pledge); Austria, \$10,000; Belgium, \$30,000; Canada, \$1,111,111; Ceylon, \$1,000; China, \$5,000; Denmark, \$36,200 (half of 1965-66 pledge); the Federal Republic of Germany, \$503,145; France, \$218,983; Ghana, \$3,000; Greece, \$15,000; India, \$21,008; Ireland, \$25,000; Italy, \$80,000 for the first six months of 1966; Japan,

\$30,000; Kuwait, \$220,000; Libya, \$20,000; Luxembourg, \$3,000; Malaysia, \$1,500; Morocco, \$20,000; the Netherlands, \$110,497; Norway, \$77,000 (an increase of 10 per cent over the previous year); Pakistan, \$20,000; Philippines, \$1,250; Sweden, \$145,000 as its regular contribution (an increase of 25 per cent) and \$138,240 as a special pledge for vocational training; Switzerland, \$58,140 in cash, \$100,000 in dairy products and \$180,350 as a special pledge for in-service teacher training; Tunisia, \$4,000; Turkey, 8,000; and Yugoslavia, \$20,000.

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS RESOLUTION ON  
PALESTINE REFUGEES

On 15 December, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution on the subject of Assistance to the Palestine Refugees. The resolution, which, inter alia, extended the mandate of UNRWA for a further three years, was passed by a vote of 91 in favour, one against and seven abstentions. The text of the resolution is as follows:

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, 1725 (XVI) of 20 December 1961, 1856 (XVII) of 20 December 1962, 1912 (XVIII) of 3 December 1963 and 2002 (XIX) of 10 February 1965,

Noting the annual reports of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, covering the periods from 1 July 1963 to 30 June 1964 and from 1 July 1964 to 30 June 1965,

1. Notes 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, and 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,

2. Expresses its thanks to the Commissioner-General and the staff of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East 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;

3. Directs attention to the critical financial position of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, as outlined in the Commissioner-General's report;

4. Notes with regret that contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East have not thus far been sufficient to enable the Agency to cover its essential budget requirements;

5. Calls upon all Governments as a matter of urgency to make the most generous efforts possible to meet the anticipated needs of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, particularly in the light of the budgetary deficit projected in the Commissioner-General's report;

6. Directs the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to take such measures, including rectification of the relief rolls, a problem which has been and continues to be of major concern to the General Assembly, to assure, in cooperation with the Governments concerned, the most equitable distribution of relief based on need;

7. Calls upon the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine to intensify its efforts for the implementation of Paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III) and to report thereon as appropriate and not later than 1 October 1966;

8. Decides to extend, without prejudice to the provisions of Paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III), the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East until 30 June 1969.

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#### BELGIAN DONATIONS ANNOUNCED

Donations and pledges totalling \$75,000 have been received recently from Belgium. They will be used to establish a new health center in Gaza, to aid handicapped children and to provide training for 20 refugee girls.

The bulk of the funds was raised through the sale of a special issue of postage stamps in Belgium in 1965, which resulted in a donation of \$70,000 to UNRWA from the Belgian Ministry of Posts, Telegraph and Telephones. The success of the postage stamp campaign was due largely to the efforts of two Belgian voluntary organizations: l'Entraide Socialiste Belge, and Belgian Caritas Catholica.

The sum of \$50,000 from the proceeds of the stamp sale has been earmarked for the construction of a new health center at Jabalia refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. The center, due to be opened early next year, will replace the present UNRWA clinic, which is housed in an old pre-fabricated building and is both too small and generally unsatisfactory



Monsignor Cauwe (right) watches a blind refugee boy learning arithmetic in the Pontifical Mission Center for the Blind in Gaza.

crippled and four deaf and dumb children will be placed in institutions in Lebanon, where they will receive education and training and, where necessary, corrective treatment. Twenty refugee girls at UNRWA's Ramallah Girls' Training Center in Jordan have been provided with scholarships, including the entire class of girls in the Institutional Management course. Monsignor Cauwe undertook to add \$3,500 from the funds of Belgian Caritas to cover the cost of these projects.

During his stay in the Middle East, Monsignor Cauwe visited UNRWA's training centers, saw handicapped refugee children receiving education and training with assistance from UNRWA, and visited the site of the new "Belgian" health center in the Gaza Strip.

for continued use as a clinic. In addition to the general clinic facilities, the "Belgian" health center will include a rehydration/nutrition center to treat infants suffering from gastro-enteritis, the severe diarrhoea and vomiting which, if untreated, is often fatal. The donation includes funds for the operating costs of the rehydration/nutrition center until the end of 1968. A further donation of \$1,500 from the Belgian Caisse d'Epargne will also be used in this project.

During the recent visit of Monsignor Albert Cauwe, the Director-General of Belgian Caritas, to UNRWA's area of operation, it was agreed that the balance of \$20,000 from the sale of stamps should be used to assist handicapped children and to provide vocational training scholarships for refugee girls. Seven



FINNISH ASSOCIATION FOR AID TO REFUGEES  
ESTABLISHED

Therese Asfour, the 18-year-old refugee pictured here and on the cover, has the distinction of being the first refugee to be assisted through a newly-established Finnish organization dedicated to aiding the world's refugees.

Therese is a trainee at UNRWA's Ramallah Girls' Training Center in Jordan. Her first year of training in the secretarial course is being financed by a scholarship made available through the Finnish Association for Aid to Refugees, which was established in December 1965.

The inaugural meeting of the Association, which embraces some 25 voluntary agencies and other organizations in Finland, was held in Helsinki, and was attended by senior officials of the Finnish Government, representatives of the member agencies, and, representing the world's refugees, by Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, now the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and by Mr. John Reddaway, the Deputy Commissioner-General of UNRWA.

The first refugee to receive assistance, Therese Asfour, owes her scholarship not only to the new Association, through which it was channeled, but also to a Christmas tree. On the occasion of the inauguration of the Association, Helsinki's largest department store, Stockman's, held a display of handicrafts by Palestine refugees, and an exhibition of photographs depicting United Nations programs of assistance to refugees. The display coincided with the store's annual competition between its departments for the best-decorated Christmas tree, in which shoppers vote for the best tree and have an opportunity to contribute to a charity. The staff of the store decided to devote the proceeds, amounting to some \$1,000, to refugee work. The scholarship given to Therese came from the "Christmas tree" fund.

Addressing the guests at a banquet following the inaugural meeting of the Finnish Association for Aid to Refugees, Mr. Reddaway thanked the

Government and the people of Finland "for their warm and generous feeling of international solidarity which has led them to look far beyond their own country to the victims of a still unresolved conflict in a distant land."

"The most recent expression of this interest is the formation of the Finnish Association for Aid to Refugees," continued Mr. Reddaway. "The Association will give fresh impetus to the humanitarian work for refugees which many devoted people in Finland have undertaken in the past under different auspices."

Mr. Reddaway also paid a personal tribute to Mrs. Helvi Sipilä, the Chairman of the new Association, who, he said, had always been foremost in the efforts in Finland to aid refugees.

Also present at the banquet was an unexpected guest -- a reindeer named Kuhkescoarvi, or "Long Horn". Long Horn was presented to the Finnish Association for Aid to Refugees as a symbolic gift from the people of Lapland, in Northern Finland, as a token of appreciation for the international assistance that they had received following World War II, when their land was so badly destroyed and when many of them were refugees. Long Horn, a magnificently antlered stag, made a

BELOW: "Long Horn" the reindeer makes an unexpected appearance at the banquet following the inaugural meeting of the Finnish Association for Aid to Refugees. Behind him are Mr. Reddaway and Prince Sadruddin. In the foreground is Mr. Ivar Gudmundsson, Director of the United Nations Information Center in Copenhagen.



surprise appearance at the banquet, and was won in a lottery by a company director. A good home was found for Long Horn in a reindeer farm run as a hobby by a leading Finnish industrialist, Mr. Rudolf Hellberg. As a contribution to the Association, Mr. Hellberg paid \$150 for Long Horn, about five times the market value of a reindeer.

A few weeks after the inauguration of the Finnish Association for Aid to Refugees, Mrs. Sipilä visited UNRWA's area of operations, had further discussions with the Commissioner-General and with senior officials of UNRWA, and revisited UNRWA training centers and refugee camps in the field. Mrs. Sipilä was accompanied in the Middle East by the representatives of two-member-agencies of the Association, Miss Hilja Aalto and Mrs. Irja Vehnamaki.

The new Association provides a focus for the efforts of the voluntary agencies, unions and other organizations and individuals who have over the past four years been increasingly active in their efforts on behalf of refugees. The Palestine refugees have received substantial assistance, for since mid-1962,

RIGHT: Mrs. Helvi Sipilä, Chairman of the new Association, chats with a Finnish-sponsored trainee at UNRWA's Siblin Vocational Training Center in Lebanon, during her recent visit to the Middle East.



more than \$35,000 has been contributed to UNRWA from non-governmental sources in Finland. The funds have come from such diverse groups and organizations as the Finnish Defence Forces, the Red Cross, the Boy Scouts, the Girl Guides, Zonta and other women's organizations, the Finnish Radio Company, the Frontier Guards of Finland, teachers' federations, church groups and student unions. Contributions have also been made by individuals.

All of these donations have been for UNRWA's vocational training program, and have provided scholarships, many of them for two years, for 46 young refugees in UNRWA training centers. During her recent visit, Mrs. Sipilä announced that another five scholarships would be forthcoming through the Finnish Association for Aid to Refugees.

In addition to the non-governmental donations, the Government of Finland made a contribution of \$10,000 to UNRWA in 1962, and has made similar contributions each year since.

Refugees throughout the world, including the Palestine refugees, will benefit from the greater understanding and greater assistance from Finland as a result of the establishment of the Finnish Association for Aid to Refugees.

Therese Asfour, the Ramallah trainee who was awarded the "Christmas tree" scholarship, can already vouch for that.

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#### IN BRIEF

##### King Hussein Visits Kalandia Training Center

His Majesty King Hussein of Jordan visited UNRWA's Kalandia Vocational Training Center near Jerusalem at the beginning of December. In the center's assembly hall, the King heard an address of welcome by an UNRWA school principal on behalf of the refugees, then gave a brief informal talk to the gathered mukhtars and elders from nearby Kalandia and Amari refugee camps, and to senior UNRWA officials in Jordan.

##### United Nations Day 1966 Dedicated to Refugees

The United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution in December dedicating United Nations Day 1966 to the cause of refugees.

The General Assembly's resolution refers to the decision taken by a group of voluntary agencies to promote a fund-raising campaign from 24 to 31 October to benefit refugees mainly in Africa and Asia, and "expresses its keen satisfaction" for this action.

United Nations Day is 24 October, the launching date of the campaign.

UNRWA Graduates Assist In Saudi Arabia Telephone Project

Almost 60 graduates of UNRWA training centers are at work in Saudi Arabia on a major communications project. The young refugees are assisting in the installation of the country's first automatic telephone equipment in Riyad, the capital, and in other large cities. A group of 12 graduates from the telecommunications technicians' course at UNRWA's Siblin Technical and Teacher Training Institute in Lebanon flew to Saudi Arabia in mid-January, two weeks after another group had left from Amman, Jordan. Others had preceded them last year. The young men working on the project include graduates from UNRWA's Damascus, Kalandia and Wadi Seer Vocational Training Centers, who have been trained as electricians, wiremen and telecommunications mechanics.

Donations

The Ford Motor Company (United States) has donated \$25,000 to sponsor the training of 50 young refugees in UNRWA training centers. The contribution has provided one-year vocational training scholarships for 16 trainees in the radio/TV mechanics course and 18 in the electricians' course at Siblin Vocational Training Center in Lebanon, and for 16 young men training to be builders at Kalandia Vocational Training Center in Jordan.

A contribution of \$6,250 from Misereor, the Catholic Bishops' Relief Agency in the Federal Republic of Germany, will go towards providing training scholarships for 25 young refugees at UNRWA's Siblin Vocational Training Center. The donation represents half of Misereor's pledge of \$12,500 for scholarships this year.

The Gulbenkian Foundation has decided to donate \$5,000 to provide one-year scholarships for 10 trainees. The Foundation has indicated that a further donation may follow to cover the second year of their training.

A further donation of \$3,000 has been received from the Swedish Radio Broadcasting Committee through the Swedish Red Cross to assist refugee girls to train as nurses. The donation, part of a World Refugee Year pledge of \$15,000 spread over five years, represents a subsidy to Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem, Jordan, which is operated by the Lutheran World Federation, and where 23 refugee girls are presently receiving nursing training.

The Women's Auxiliary of UNRWA, a voluntary group consisting mainly of wives of UNRWA staff and others interested in the welfare of the refugees, has donated \$2,725 towards two UNRWA welfare projects: the Women's Activities Program and the operation of play centers for refugee children. Both these programs are financed entirely from special donations.

Another donation to support the Women's Activities Program has come from the New Zealand Council of Relief Services Overseas (CORSO), which has contributed \$2,000.

Further donations of vocational training scholarships for refugee girls at UNRWA's Ramallah Girls' Training Center in Jordan have come from three branches of the Business and Professional Women's Organization. The Donaghadee Club in Northern Ireland has donated \$1,000 through the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to sponsor a teacher trainee for the two years of her course. One-year scholarships to "adopt" girls in the business education course have come from Miss Helen Irwin, Past President of the International Federation, and from the New Zealand Federation.

The Daimler-Benz Company of Stuttgart, Federal Republic of Germany, has donated \$1,000 to sponsor two trainees in the auto mechanics course at the Siblin Vocational Training Center (Lebanon). The Company had also given scholarships for two young men who graduated last summer, and has provided training engines and other equipment for the five centers which offer auto mechanics courses.

Donations of \$1,000 to provide scholarships have been received from Mrs. Helvi Sipilä, the Chairman of the new Finnish Association for Aid to Refugees (see article on page 6), and from Mrs. Dorothea Pickerl, of San Francisco, and the Ottinger Foundation in the United States.

One-year scholarships of \$500 have been donated by Dr. R.P. Baird (Canada), the firm of Index-Werke Hahn u. Tessky, of Esslingen, and Dr. Wilhelm Paulus, the Director of an insurance company in Stuttgart (Federal Republic of Germany), the Inner Wheel Club of Hobart (Tasmania), and U.S. Omen (United States).

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#### YEAR-END REGISTRATION FIGURES

Year-end registration figures showed that there was an increase of 37,468 during 1965 in the number of refugees registered with UNRWA. At 31 December, there were 1,300,117 refugees registered, compared with 1,262,649 at the end of 1964. During the same period, there was a decrease of 3,174 in the number of refugees registered for UNRWA rations.

By country, the registration figures at 31 December 1965 were as follows:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Registered refugees</u>	<u>Registered for rations</u>
Jordan	697,658	428,745 =
Gaza Strip	301,879	239,901
Lebanon	162,499	106,424
Syria	138,081	98,053
<hr/> Total :	<hr/> 1,300,117	<hr/> 873,123

<sup>#</sup> (A number of frontier villagers receiving half-rations are included in the figure for ration recipients in Jordan).

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The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is a special, temporary, nonpolitical body established by the General Assembly of the United Nations in December 1949.

In cooperation 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; its current mandate expires on 30 June 1969.

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Further information may be obtained from

UNRWA Liaison Office  
United Nations  
New York

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In the United States, the United States Committee for Refugees and American Middle East Rehabilitation, Inc., are organizations cooperating with

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