

**PALESTINE  
REFUGEES  
TODAY**

**NEWSLETTER No. 80**



**UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY  
FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST**

NEWSLETTER NO. 80  
Issued: December 1974

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*Cover photo: The second elementary class at Falah Boys' School in Gaza shown in a typical sponsorship photograph. (See story on page 22.)*

# COMMENTARY

## ISRAEL CONTRIBUTES FLOUR

Flour, an important ingredient in UNRWA's basic ration programme, has become increasingly expensive on the world market, rising from \$70 a ton (delivered to Beirut) in 1971 to more than \$260 a ton in mid-1974, and now takes up 27 percent of the Agency's budget.

In September 1974, the Government of Israel in effect made a contribution in kind to UNRWA when the Food Import Department of the Israeli Ministry of Commerce offered the Agency flour at below market price. An agreement was reached whereby UNRWA purchased from Israel 8,000 tons of wheat flour at a total cost of \$1,735,000 of which 1,500 tons represented a Government contribution valued at \$400,500 (\$267 a ton).

## SUMMER COURSE SAVED

Mrs. Eleanor Aitken, founder and Honorary Secretary of the Cambridge (U.K.) Fund for the Education of Palestinian Refugees, is no stranger to the work of UNRWA. Long a supporter of humanitarian causes, Mrs. Aitken's association with UNRWA began in 1967 when she and her husband, British nationals, donated funds to the Agency to cover the cost of a refugee shelter. She later sponsored a refugee girl through the two-year course at an UNRWA teacher training centre, and early in 1973 founded the Cambridge Fund to raise funds for the education of refugee students.

Earlier this year, Mrs. Aitken's dedication proved vital to one aspect of UNRWA's education programme. Two advanced-level summer courses, designed to increase the proficiency in English of teacher-trainees and teachers of English in UNRWA/Unesco schools, had been scheduled to take place in July at Ramallah Men's Training Centre in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Mrs. Aitken had already volunteered her services as an instructor for the courses when she learned in May that one of the courses would have to be abandoned because UNRWA was faced with an acute shortage of funds. Determined to help, Mrs. Aitken

saved the course with a personal contribution of 550 pounds sterling and then participated in both courses as planned.

#### LIBRARY BOOKS FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN

Whether motivated by curiosity, a desire to further their knowledge or simply the pleasure of reading, Palestine refugee boys and girls love to read about subjects not normally found in their school textbooks, and they have an appreciation of the educational benefit of reading beyond textbooks. Usually their families are too poor to afford books, and the children have to rely on the books available in the libraries of the 562 UNRWA/Unesco schools.

However, because the Agency lacks funds for library facilities, these libraries are desperately short of books. The average is only one or two books per pupil, whereas the minimum world-wide standard prescribed by Unesco is 10 books per pupil. Often even these few books are bought from the meagre funds that can be collected from the pupils themselves, or from money that dedicated teachers give from their salaries.

Other books have been bought through special cash contributions, such as the one made early this year by the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), as part of its "Books for All" programme. The IFLA had received a donation of Unesco Gift Coupons to the value of 200 Unums (\$1,000) from the Canadian Commission for Unesco. This donation was then given to UNRWA for the purchase of library books for schools in the Baqaa camp in Jordan, where there are over 10,000 school children, and New Amman Camp (Wahdat), where there are over 14,000 school children, as part of the IFLA's total pledge of \$5,000 for the purchase of 10 collections of library books for UNRWA/Unesco schools in east Jordan. A further \$500 in Unums toward this pledge was received from the IFLA in June.

Persons or organizations interested in providing books for libraries in UNRWA/Unesco schools in all Fields may make



*Library books for Baqaa camp.*

special contributions directly to UNRWA, or purchase for this purpose Unesco Gift coupons, a form of international cheque or money order issued by Unesco. The coupons are issued in Unums (equivalent to \$5), and their purpose is to enable donors in one country to send money for contributions of educational or scientific equipment and supplies to Unesco-approved projects in another country.

#### STAFF CHANGES

In September 1974, a number of UNRWA's senior staff were given new posts and one senior staff member retired. Particularly affected were Lebanon and the Agency's office in Geneva.

Mr. Marcel Emile Béroutiaux, Director of UNRWA Affairs in Lebanon since 1959, was appointed UNRWA's Representative in Europe at Geneva. Mr. Béroutiaux, a Belgian national, joined UNRWA in 1952, after serving with the International Refugee Organization in Germany.

Mr. Robert Joseph Prévot was appointed to the post of Director of UNRWA Affairs, Lebanon, where he is responsible for the Agency's services to 190,000 of the 1.5







*Library books for Baqaa camp.*

million registered Palestine refugees. Mr. Prévot, a French national who joined UNRWA in 1951, was Chief of the Press, Publications and Languages Division at UNRWA Headquarters in Beirut until his appointment as Deputy Director of the Agency's Lebanon Field Office in April 1974.

Mr. Ralph Frederick Owren, a Norwegian national, retired from the Agency. Mr. Owren began his service with UNRWA in 1959 and was Director of UNRWA Affairs in Jordan before being appointed UNRWA Representative in Europe in 1971, the post he held until his retirement.

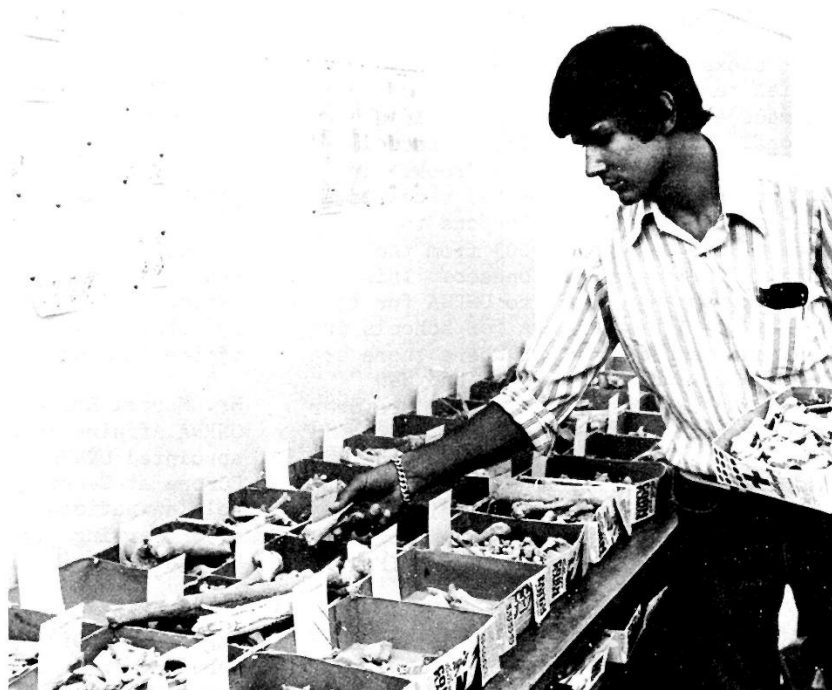
#### UNRWA AIDS ARCHAEOLOGISTS

The best preserved Mameluke bath in Jordan, a Roman temple dating back to the third century A.D. and the fortifications of a 12th century B.C. city were among the treasures unearthed last summer at Tel Hesban by an expedition of archaeologists from Andrews University and other American universities.

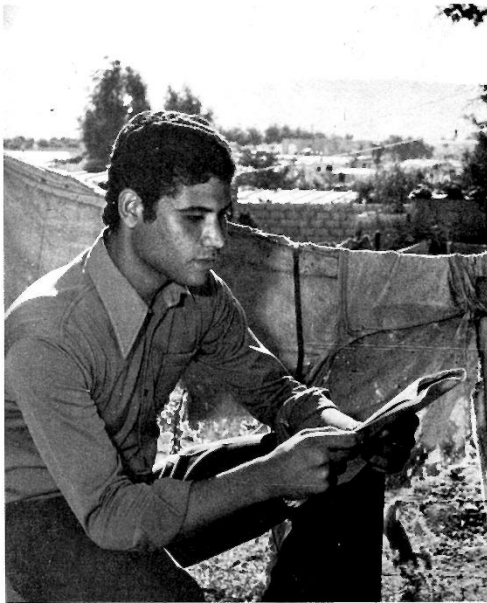
Led by Dr. Lawrence T. Geraty of Andrews University, the 75 staff from nine countries stayed at UNRWA's Amman Training Centre, where UNRWA made the Centre's facilities, including the laboratories, photographic and recording rooms, available to the group. Beside aiding the expedition, the use of the training centre enabled refugee students to attend archaeological lectures and gave the archaeologists an opportunity to learn about the problems of the Palestine refugees and the services UNRWA provides. Visitors to the Centre and the expedition site included His Highness Prince Ra'ad Ben Zeid, Director-General of Jordan's Youth Welfare and Sports Organization, U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering and Mr. Ya'coub Owais, Under-Secretary for the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities.

At Tel Hesban, 16 miles from Amman, more than 400 archaeological items were discovered, including an Ammonite ostrakon bearing a four-line inscription, coins, whole pots, a 3000-year old iron needle with the eye preserved, and a flogging head from the Roman period.

*Sorting  
bones at  
Amman  
Training  
Centre.*



# PURSUING THE DREAM



*First-prize-winner Ass'ad el Ghaliz*

"My ambition is to become a professor," states Ass'ad Mohammed Hussein el Ghaliz.

"I want to do something better than carry concrete on my shoulder," says Mohammed Ibrahim Mahmoud Ayeshe.

Both boys live in Baqaa emergency camp in east Jordan, and like most children of Palestine refugees they dream of a better future for themselves, free from the constricting environment of refugee camps, able to find well-paying jobs, to help support their families, and one day to have children of their own who can be proud of their parent's achievements. They know that the key to their dream is education and training, which will enable them to compete for jobs or follow a chosen profession.

UNRWA, in co-operation with Unesco, provides elementary and preparatory education for most Palestine refugee boys and girls, but the Agency has no secondary schools and pupils wishing to have secondary school education must attend government or private schools. University studies depend on a pupil's ability to pass the government Tawjihi examination which determines whether or not he receives his secondary school graduation certificate.

High marks can mean certain admission to universities in the Middle East. In Jordan, those who place in the top ten in either the humanities or scientific sections of the Tawjihi examination are guaranteed university places and scholarships.

At the end of the 1973/74 school year, Ass'ad el-Ghaliz and Mohammed Ayeshe, who had attended the government secondary school situated in Baqaa camp, sat for the humanities stream of the Tawjihi competition. In competition with all other refugee and non-refugee pupils taking the country-wide examination, they finished first and fourth respectively, while another refugee pupil from Baqaa, Yussef Abou Addus, took tenth place. Along with others of the top ten from all across Jordan, they were received by Princess Alia and presented gifts by Crown Prince Ra'ad Ben Zeid.

It was a remarkable achievement, accomplished under adverse circumstances. Born in Aqabat Jabr camp, near Jericho, Ass'ad's early schooling was interrupted by the June 1967 Arab-Israeli hostilities. His family fled to a temporary camp in east Jordan and a year later they were forced to move again, to Baqaa. Through perseverance Ass'ad caught up on his studies, despite his family's cramped living conditions, first in a tent and later in a one-room shelter shared with his parents, his four brothers and five sisters. Now, with his university en-

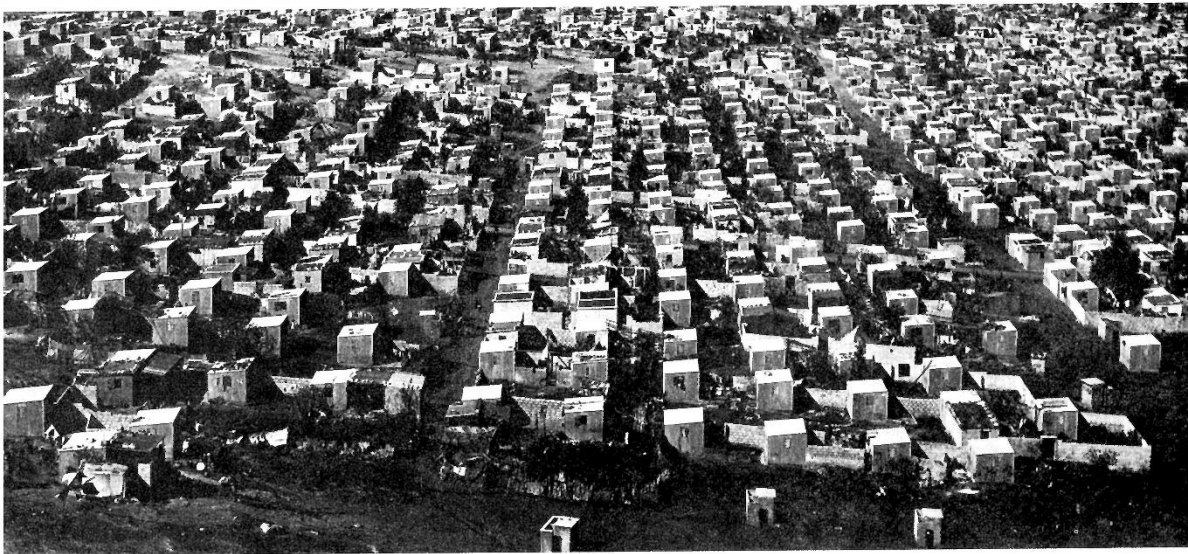
trance assured, Ass'ad plans to become a professor, "hopefully", he says, "at a university in my own country."

As with Ass'ad, studying conditions were tough for Mohammed Ayesh, with three major upheavals as his family moved from one camp to another after hostilities and finally with only an all-purpose family room to study in. His father attempts to support an 18-member family by carrying concrete when he can find work. For Mohammed the future is brighter. He looks forward to "experiencing something different from the miserable refugee conditions I was born in," and, after completing his university studies, hopes to become a journalist.



*Princess Alia presenting a gift to fourth-prize-winner Mohammed Ayesh.*

*A view of Baqaa camp in east Jordan, where over 53,000 persons now reside.*







# ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY

*Each year the Commissioner-General reports on UNRWA's activities to the General Assembly. Below is a summary of the report for the 12 months ending 30 June 1974. More recent financial figures may be found in the article "Outlook on Finances" on page 14.*

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) "has now entered a critical year" - the 25th year of its operational existence - in which, according to Sir John Rennie, Commissioner-General of UNRWA, in his annual report issued in October, "there are serious grounds for anxiety about the Agency's viability".

The Commissioner-General states that the year is critical because the situation in the Middle East, at least so far as the Palestine refugees are concerned, is "more fluid and volatile than for many years". It is critical because in 1975 the Agency faces a budget deficit of "unprecedented magnitude" - \$39 million in a budget of \$109 million - with which it is "extremely doubtful if traditional methods and sources of financing" through voluntary contributions can deal adequately. It is critical, too, because a decision by the United Nations General Assembly on the extension of the Agency's mandate beyond 30 June 1975" must be made during the period of a few months which may determine whether there is any hope of an early solution, acceptable to the United Nations, of the Arab-Israeli conflict and with it of the Palestinian and Palestine refugee problem or whether there is to be again deadlock with all that would imply."

The report covers the period 1 July 1973 to 30 June 1974. At the latter date there were 1,583,646 persons registered with the Agency - an increase of 2.8 per cent in 12 months. Over 1.3 million of these refugees were eligible for UNRWA's health and education services and 827,000 among them were also in receipt of food rations. There were some 268,000 children - an increase of 12,000 - in 562 UNRWA/Unesco schools at the end of the 1973/74 school year.

UNRWA, which began operations in May 1950, provides relief, health and education services for refugees who fled in 1948 from that part of Palestine which became Israel, who are in need and who reside in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, east Jordan and the Israeli-occupied West Bank of Jordan and the Gaza Strip. UNRWA also provides limited assistance in the case of many non-refugees displaced as a result of the June 1967 Arab-Israeli hostilities; the burden is otherwise borne exclusively by the Governments of Egypt, Syria and Jordan.

## FINANCIAL CRISIS

In recent years, financing by voluntary contributions from governments, non-governmental organizations, corporations and individuals has failed to keep pace with the Agency's rising costs, and there has been a series of financial crises. This year, the report states, cuts in the Agency's services were barely averted at the last moment when a deficit of about \$10 million in the Agency's \$86 million budget for 1974 was covered in June by additional, emergency contributions from the European Economic Community and the United States Government.

According to the Commissioner-General's report, adverse economic factors have radically changed the dimensions of the budgetary problem. These adverse factors include the rise in prices of all supplies, especially flour; the continued appreciation of three of the local currencies against the United States dollar and other currencies of major importance in the Agency's income; and local increases in the cost of living, which, for the period of the report, ranged from 11 per cent in the Syrian Arab Republic to 47 per cent in the Gaza Strip. As a result,



the Agency is faced with a deficit of \$39.2 million in 1975 which is only \$1 million less than UNRWA's total expenditure in 1967.

The report also draws attention to the scale and complexity of UNRWA's problems of staff relations. UNRWA employs 15,000 local employees, virtually all of whom are themselves Palestine refugees.

### GENERAL OPERATIONS

Refugees are eligible for UNRWA's programmes whether or not they reside in camps, and only 577,921 (36 per cent) of the refugees and 44,184 displaced persons live in the 63 camps in UNRWA's area of operations. The report recalls that the Agency is not responsible for the administration or policing of the 53 camps established before June 1967 and the 10 emergency camps set up after the hostilities of that year, and that they remain the responsibility of the Governments involved. In Lebanon, however, Government officials and police were withdrawn from the refugee camps in October 1969 and did not return during the period under report.

The report states that the expression "UNRWA refugee camps" or "United Nations refugee camps" is misleading if taken to mean more now than that these camps are inhabited by some of the refugees for whom UNRWA provides services and that UNRWA has installations in them for this purpose, such as distribution centres for rations, feeding centres for small children, clinics and some schools. The Agency also has facilities outside of camps.

The report states that there was again "remarkable development" in refugee self-help projects for camp improvements, such as the construction of roads and pathways, drains, sewers and school boundary walls, and the paving of school playgrounds. According to the report, operations were affected in various ways by the Arab-Israeli hostilities of October 1973 and their aftermath, but there was no such widespread displacement of population as occurred in 1967. An acute shortage of supplies resulted from the disruption of

shipping to the Middle East caused by the hostilities and the Agency was compelled temporarily to vary or reduce the components of basic rations.

As a result of the hostilities, the Agency's schools were disrupted for varying periods in Lebanon, Syria and east Jordan, while there was a drop in attendance in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In Syria, eight refugees are known to have been killed and 37 injured; there was also some damage from air raids to Agency property.

In Lebanon, the Israeli raids in May and June 1974 resulted in heavy loss of life and extensive damage to refugee shelters and UNRWA installations at Nabatieh, Ein el-Hilweh, Rashidieh and Burj el-Shemali camps. In all, 37 refugees were killed and 206 injured in the raids. Loss of life and damage to property were particularly severe at Nabatieh camp, where 17 refugees were killed and only 70 of the 400 families escaped destruction of or damage to their dwellings.

The report states that it would have been possible to establish a temporary tented camp for evacuees from Nabatieh, but they preferred to remain dispersed among the local population for fear of further raids. Immediate emergency assistance such as blankets, clothing, medical aid and construction materials were provided by the Agency for refugees in need in all camps affected. Depending on the availability of funds, the Agency has made plans for reconstruction or repair of the damages, estimated to cost from \$900,000 to \$1 million if refugee shelters are provided with concrete roofs.

Despite repeated calls by the General Assembly, of the hundreds of thousands of refugees and other persons displaced in 1967, "comparatively few" have been allowed to return to the occupied territories.

Some 17,000 of the refugees registered in Syria left the Golan Heights area in June 1967 and so far as is known none has been allowed to return by the Israeli authorities. The Syrian-Israeli disengagement

had little effect on Agency operations, but almost all those displaced from the former Sasa salient have returned.

Of those displaced refugees in east Jordan, about 260,500 were registered in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip before 1967. The Agency believes no more than 40,000 to 50,000 of them may have moved to east Jordan from the West Bank before June 1967, the remainder fleeing during or in the aftermath of the fighting. From the Agency's records of requests for re-registration on return to their original place of refuge, only about 8,000 have been allowed to return to the West Bank and to the Gaza Strip.

In the Gaza Strip, no progress was made in the provision of housing for the 706 families who, in 1973, were found to be still inadequately housed as a result of demolition of their shelters by the military authorities in July and August 1971. The Agency continued to press for action by the authorities, who recognized the need, and by the end of the period under report there were indications that action to deal with the most pressing cases would shortly be taken.

#### RELIEF SERVICES

The Agency was able to maintain its relief programme throughout 1973/74, although shortages and delays in the arriv-

al of supplies and the effects of the October 1973 hostilities and of Israeli raids affecting refugee camps in south Lebanon in May and June 1974 caused temporary interruptions in some programmes. These include the basic ration, supplementary feeding and milk distribution programmes. In June 1974, only 52.4 per cent (about 827,000) of the refugees were in receipt of basic rations, which consist of flour, sugar, rice and cooking oil providing 1,500 calories a day (1,600 in winter months).

The Agency, as requested by the Government of Jordan in 1967, has also continued to distribute rations on the Government's behalf to displaced persons in east Jordan who are not registered with the Agency as Palestine refugees of 1948. In the month of June 1974, 204,958 such persons were issued rations.

#### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The year was marked by continued growth in the UNRWA/Unesco education programme. There were 268,324 pupils in UNRWA/Unesco elementary and preparatory schools, an increase of 12,340 over last year, with an increase of 283 teachers to 7,662 and the formation of 16 new schools (total 562) by double-shifting, now approaching 90 per cent in Jordan and Syria. Twenty-two prefabricated classrooms, 114 standard type classrooms and administrative

*Constructing a school playground in a self-help project in Husn camp, east Jordan.*





*Weighing-in at the clinic in New  
Amman Camp (Wahdat), east Jordan.*

rooms, four science laboratories and two multi-purpose rooms were completed in 1973/74, while 16 more classrooms and one science laboratory were still under construction.

The capacity of the Agency's eight training centres rose by nearly 350 places to 4,312 (1,240 in teacher training and 3,072 in vocational and technical education). During 1973/74, UNRWA awarded 370 scholarships to Palestine refugees for study at universities in the Middle East.

With most of the Agency's teachers now possessing basic professional qualifications, the emphasis in in-service teacher training by the UNRWA/Unesco Institute of Education has shifted to refresher and ad hoc courses to meet special needs of key personnel. The UNRWA/Unesco Institute of Education provided a "notable example of inter-Agency co-operation". Most of the cost of the Institute was met by UNDP because of its developmental value to the region, while Unesco provided staff and covered part of the Institute's cost, UNICEF met the cost of extension services for government educationalists engaged in in-service training of teachers in the region and UNRWA met the residual cost of the Institute and provided supporting services.

## HEALTH

During the year under report, the Agency maintained in full its health programme. With the professional guidance of the World Health Organization, the Agency offered clinical and preventive medical services for refugees inside and outside of camps at the level of those made available by the host governments to their populations. This comprehensive medical care programme was provided through 97 Agency health units and, by arrangement, at 11 government and 15 voluntary agency units.

Some modest improvements were made in services, facilities and equipment, and in the environment of camps in some cases with the active participation of the refugees in self-help schemes.



*Weighing-in at the clinic in New Amman Camp (Wahdat), east Jordan.*

## EXTENSION OF MANDATE

In discussing the possible extension of the Agency's mandate beyond 30 June 1975, the Commissioner-General calls attention to the fact that, at the end of April 1975, UNRWA will have completed 25 years of service to the Palestine refugees. He also reviews the development of the Agency in relation to the significant resolutions which have been passed by the General Assembly since 1948. He adds that, given the prospect of negotiations, an extension of the mandate ought to be accompanied by recognition that the political situation "may develop in such a way as to require a reassessment and re-orientation of the Agency's responsibilities in order to ensure their continuing relevance to the needs of the Palestine refugees and the Agency's ability to respond adequately... to the requirements of a new situation".

# GIVEN A CHANCE AT JABAL JOFFEH SCHOOL

Rising above an impressive Roman amphitheatre in Amman, east Jordan, is the hill called Jabal Joffeh which may well be the poorest section of the city. Covered with dark little mud-brick huts, Jabal Joffeh is the home of some 60,000 people, the majority of them Palestine refugees.

When the first refugees came to live there in 1948, Amman proper was some distance away. As the city grew out to embrace its surrounding hills, so did the population on Jabal Joffeh grow and, after another influx of refugees as a result of the June 1967 hostilities, the over-crowded hillside gradually became an integral but impoverished part of the city.

Whether by choice or circumstance, the Palestine refugees there had not moved into a camp but they were still in need of UNRWA's services, particularly the UNRWA/Unesco education programme for their children. Until 1970 UNRWA was only able to provide this education in several small, dimly-lit buildings, crowded so closely together that they allowed no recreational space.

But Radda Barnen, the Swedish Save the Children Federation, recognized the desperate need for a new school and, largely through its financial aid, in 1970 UNRWA was able to build modern facilities on the other side of the hill. Although the new school, like 90 per cent of UNRWA's schools in east Jordan, is forced to run on a double-shift basis with girls attending in the morning and boys in the afternoon, the educational and recreational facilities are a decided improvement. Besides its 31 classrooms (with more being added to cope with an increasing school population), the Jabal Joffeh school has a library, a science laboratory and a multi-purpose room. Outside are flower gardens and playgrounds for ball games, where basketball is played so well that the school's girls team has won the Amman area cup for the past two years.

The curriculum follows the one prescribed for Jordanian Government schools, and here the sons and daughters of refugees study such subjects as Arabic, English, Islamic religion, mathematics, science, commercial courses, the arts, history, geography, handicrafts and home economics. In the final year of the preparatory cycle (grades 7 - 9), the pupils also take a course in current affairs which exposes them to the parliamentary system, the courts and other areas of public life which may affect them in the future.

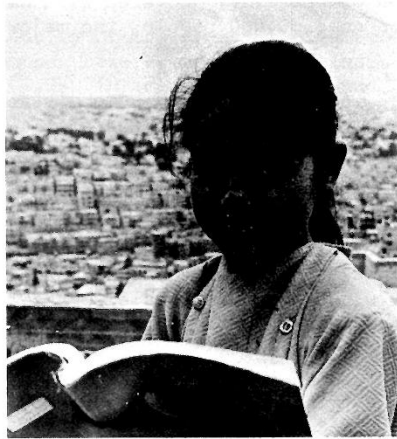
At the end of the 1973-74 school year, the school's 1,387 boys and 1,370 girls took pride in the fact that a higher percentage of pupils graduated from Jabal Joffeh's preparatory cycle than from any other school in Amman. Furthermore, 86 per cent of the graduating boys and 94 per cent of the girls (reflecting the increasing recognition of the value of education for girls in the Arab world) were accepted in government secondary schools.

A typical student is Oumaymeh Abdel Fateh Rashid, aged 10. The daughter of a Palestine refugee from the Jerusalem district, Oumaymeh was born in Aqabat Jabr camp, near Jericho in the West Bank, and moved to Jabal Joffeh in 1967 with her family. She works hard in school, is always at the top of her class, and would like to become a doctor if she has the chance.

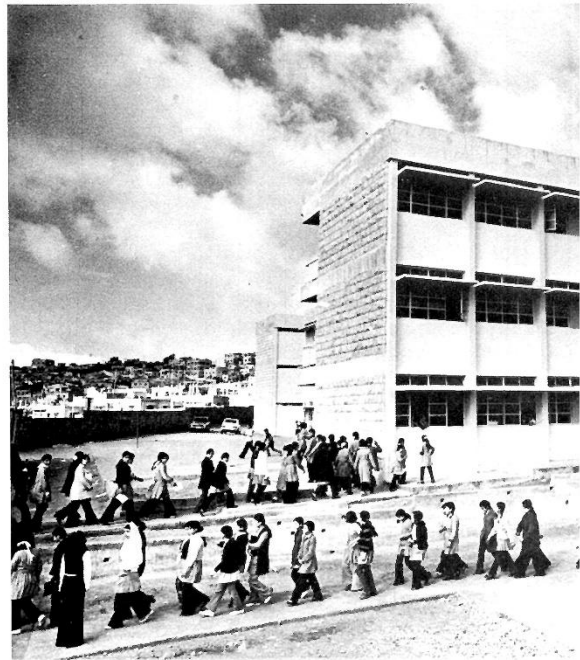
Radda Barnen, which in 1970 helped UNRWA provide better facilities to make the future brighter for children like Oumaymeh, in 1974 made a contribution of \$142,436 to the Agency, \$109,000 of which was earmarked to cover the operating costs of Jabal Joffeh school for the 1974-75 school year. They want to make sure Oumaymeh has the chance.



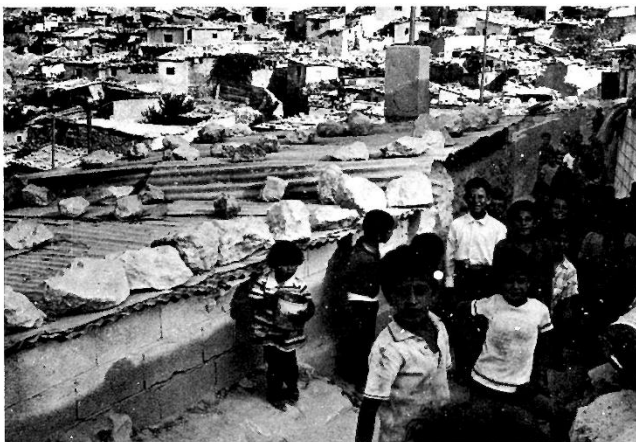
# OUMAYMEH RASHID OF JABAL JOFFEH



*Ten-year-old Oumaymeh Rashid, the daughter of a Palestine refugee, hopes to become a doctor one day. She is from a large family residing in Jabal Joffeh, a poor quarter of Amman, Jordan, and attends an UNRWA/Unesco school to help fulfil her ambition.*



*The school, built and operated (in 1974/75) with the aid of the Save the Children Federation, accommodates about 1,000 children.*



*Although life in Jabal Joffeh (above) is hard, a warm family life (right) and aid from her teacher have helped make Oumaymeh the top student in her class.*



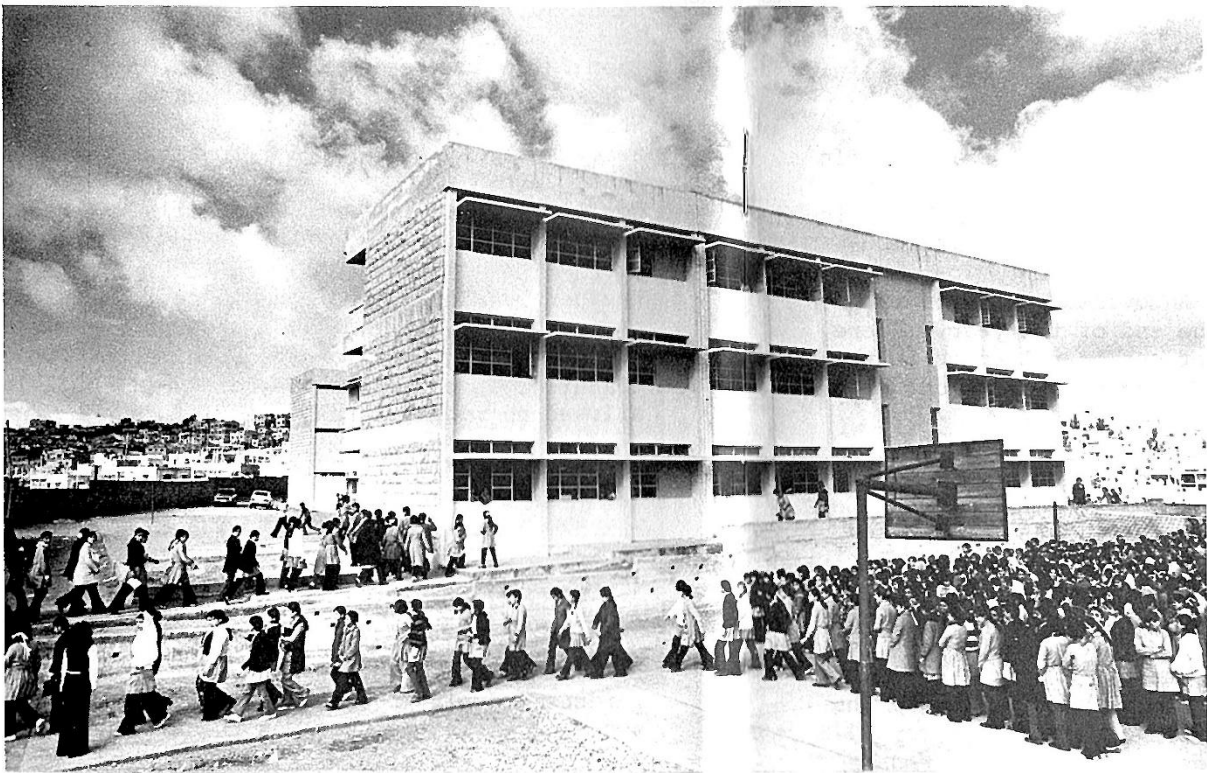




*Ten-year-old Oumaymeh Rashid, the daughter of a Palestine refugee, hopes to become a doctor one day. She is from a large family residing in Jabal Joffeh, a poor quarter of Amman, Jordan, and attends an UNRWA/Unesco school to help fulfil her ambition.*



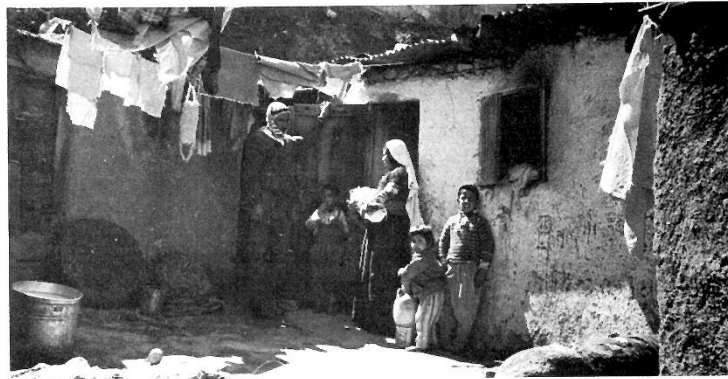
*Although life in Jabal Joffeh (above) is hard, a warm family life (right) and aid from her teacher have helped make Oumaymeh the top student in her class.*



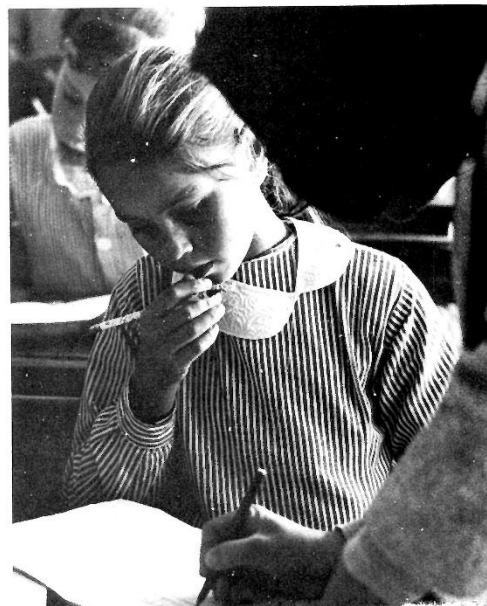
*The school, built and operated (in 1974/75) with funds from Rådda Barnen, the Swedish Save the Children Federation, accommodates about 2,800 refugee boys and girls.*

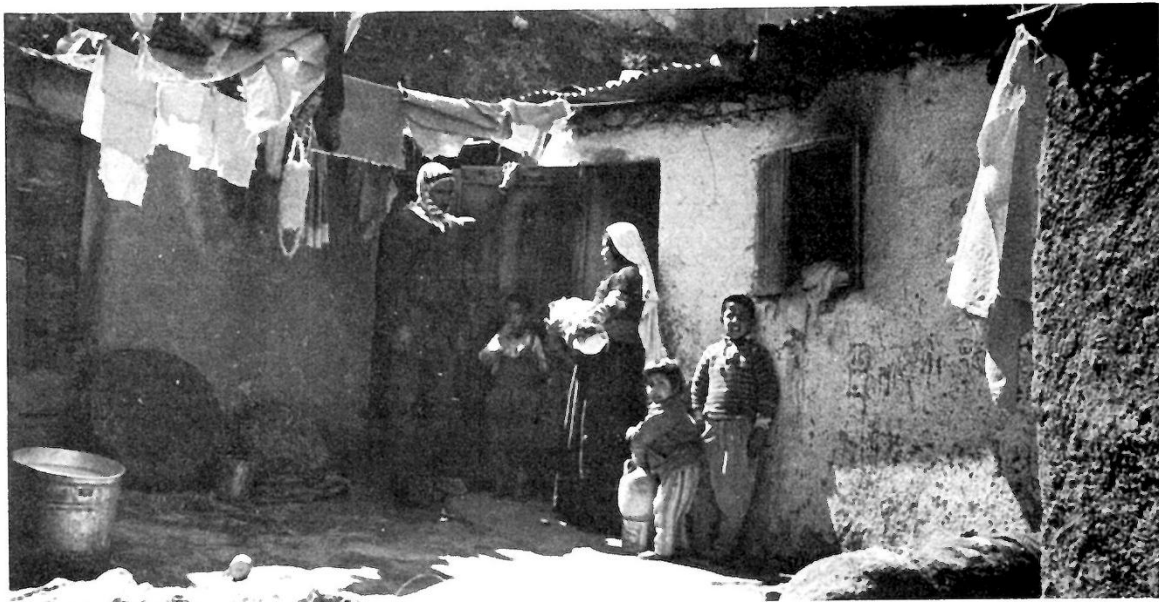


from Rådda Barnen, the Swedish  
refugee boys and girls.



Oumaymeh and her friends are eager in  
class and live in shelters like this one.





*Oumaymeh and her friends are eager in class and live in shelters like this one.*



## OUTLOOK ON FINANCES

As UNRWA's financial problems have mounted in recent years, the possibility of cuts in the Agency's services has appeared more and more alarming. After a deficit of \$3.9 million in 1973, which was covered by "working capital", the Agency began 1974 with an estimated deficit of over \$10 million which later increased to about \$12.5 million. In June, when severe cuts in the education programme seemed unavoidable, UNRWA was saved at the last moment by a special contribution of \$7.9 million from the European Economic Community (see story on page 18) for preparatory education and an emergency contribution of \$4.2 million from the United States Government for elementary education. Made in response to urgent appeals for aid, these two contributions covered the deficit and will enable UNRWA to maintain its programmes in full until the end of the year. There is, however, no indication that this type of emergency support can be relied on in the future, and the outlook for 1975 makes the problems of previous years seem almost minor by comparison.

According to the latest figures available (as at 20 November 1974), UNRWA faces a projected deficit for 1975 of \$44.7 million in a budget of \$115.3 million. The new figures, which supercede those of the Annual Report, also show that UNRWA's estimated expenditure for 1974 has risen to \$88.4 million against an expected income of \$89.1 million. Consequently, the amount of working capital available for the Agency's operations on 1 January 1975 is expected to be no more than \$6.4 million, which is little more than two weeks' expenditure in 1975 and, therefore, of no significance as a source available for meeting even part of the deficit. In the past, budget deficits have been small enough in relation to the rate of expenditure to allow time during the budget year for additional funds to be sought. However, the projected deficit for 1975 is 38.8 per cent of the total budget and services for refugees will have to be reduced early in 1975 unless contributors pledge the necessary financial support by that time.

The sharp increase in the financial needs of the Agency, especially since 1972 when expenditure was \$52 million, can be mostly attributed to inflation and adverse exchange rates. UNRWA has been particularly hard hit by: the rise in the prices of all supplies, especially flour which alone accounts for 26.5 per cent of the total 1975 budget; the continued appreciation of three of the local currencies against the U.S. dollar and other currencies of importance in the Agency's income; and local inflation which is running as high as 40 per cent in the West Bank and 47 per cent in the Gaza Strip, two of the Agency's five fields of operation. In the 1975 budget, inflation and some continued depreciation of the U.S. dollar account for \$21.8 million of the \$26 million increase from 1974 in recurrent costs. By contrast, increased costs other than those resulting from inflation amount to a relatively modest \$4.2 million, including \$1.5 million for normal programme expansion, principally in education services as a result of the growth in the school population through natural increase.

The threat posed to the continuation of the Agency's programmes of assistance in 1975 by an estimated budget deficit of unprecedented magnitude has very serious implications for more than the Palestine refugees likely to be directly affected. UNRWA's services are essential to the refugees, have become part of the social and economic fabric of the host countries and, in the continued absence of a political solution, are an important element of stability in the whole region. At a time when there is the prospect of Middle East peace negotiations which would include consideration of a solution to the Palestine refugee problem, it would be disastrous as well as tragic if UNRWA's relief, health and education programmes were to be drastically reduced or halted.



**WELCOME TO OUR CENTRE  
WE ARE NOT THE BEST,  
BUT WE ARE TRYING TO BE**

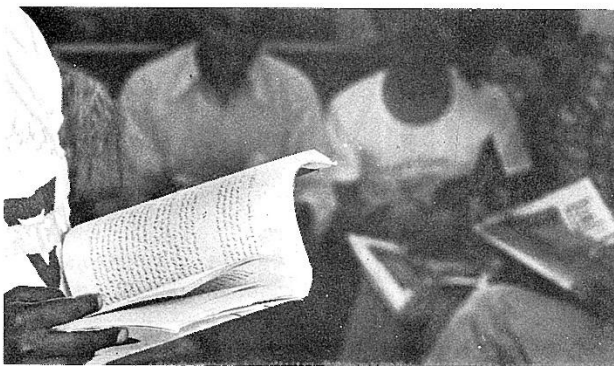


**TRYING  
TO BE  
THE BEST**

In the late 1950s representatives of UNRWA and the World Alliance of YMCAs felt something should be done to improve the lives of Palestine refugee boys growing up in the frustrating atmosphere of refugee camps. They envisioned a programme to relieve the burden of unavoidable idleness which weighed heavily on those among the refugee youth who, through no fault of their own, had been unable to find employment; and to prepare refugee youth to assume their responsibilities as good citizens in their communities, by providing opportunities for the development of character and leadership abilities. It was felt this could be achieved through a YMCA Leadership Training Programme to be channelled through youth activities centres. The centres would be established in refugee camps and run by UNRWA in co-operation with the YMCA.

The forerunners of the Youth Activities Centres were improvised youth clubs established in camps. One was set up in 1954 in a small supplementary feeding centre in Jabal el-Hussein camp on the outskirts of Amman, Jordan. It was a humble beginning, with a handful of boys playing table tennis on the dining tables; but the programme flourished and in 1962 "the club" was rehoused in a modern, concrete complex, with a macadam-surfaced sports area surrounded by gardens. There the boys learn leadership through recreational, cultural and community-service activities. Sports courses include training for instructors; volunteer leaders are taught how to organize small libraries, prepare wall newspapers, produce theatrical performances, and organize debates; and the boys learn skills such as fire-fighting, first-aid, and gardening. A scouting programme was also developed, followed by a recreation programme for younger boys run by the leaders trained at the centres. Today there are 34 centres in refugee camps, with more than 4,000 members. The boys contribute to the development of the facilities, and the pride they take in their centres may be seen in the sign displayed at the Jabal el-Hussein centre, which in 1974 celebrated its 20th anniversary. It said: "Welcome to our centre, We are not the best, but we are trying to be".

The YMCA has also been looking for other ways to help and in 1973 it started a summer camp programme for orphaned boys from families of refugees in east Jordan and Lebanon. In 1974, during July and August at UNRWA's Amman Training Centre (ATC), two-week summer camps were again held, with 180 orphaned boys attending. The boys had competitions over personal cleanliness, engaged in sporting events, learned handicrafts, sang folk songs around the evening campfire and made new friends. Sponsored by Norwegian families, and arranged by the World Alliance of YMCAs with UNRWA providing the facilities, the summer camps, like the youth activities centres, are yet another indication that people continue to care about the plight of Palestine refugee children.



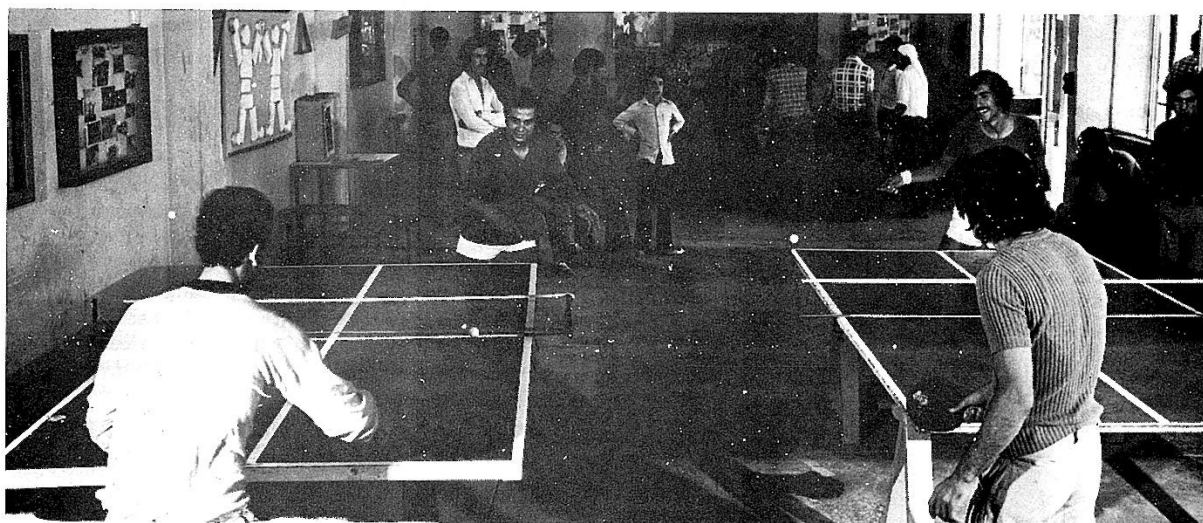
# THE YMCA AND

JABAL EL-HUSSEIN'S

YOUTH ACTIVITIES CENTRE



*n oasis for studying in the library (top), learning team spirit on the centre's court (left), enjoying a play (right), or testing friendly rivalries in the games room, with homemade wall newspapers as a backdrop (below).*









# UNRWA

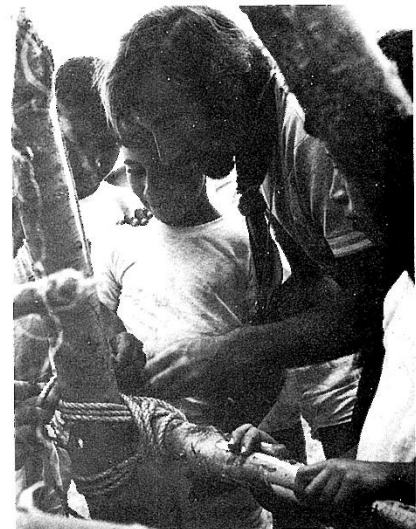
SUMMER CAMP  
FOR ORPHAN  
REFUGEE BOYS



*Camping out in the Amman Training Centre's (ATC) orchard.*

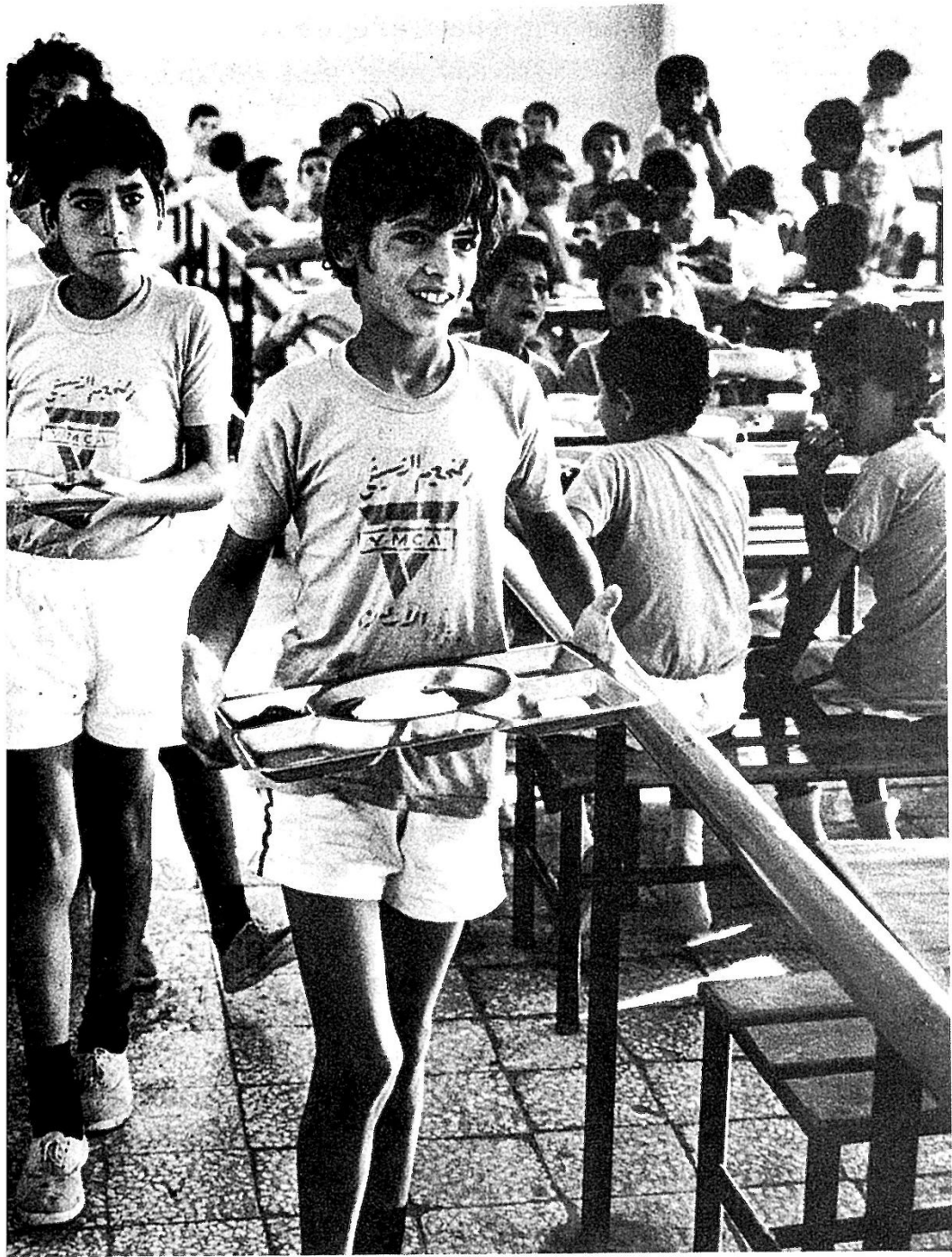


*Receiving a nutritious meal in ATC's dining room (above). Returning home with a new-found comradeship (right).*



*Acquiring new skills.*







# AID FROM

# THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

Outside Zaitoun ration distribution centre in Gaza, a Palestine refugee queues up for his family's monthly allotment of flour, rice, sugar and cooking oil. In a laboratory in the UNRWA/Unesco preparatory school for boys in Dheisheh camp, near Bethlehem (the West Bank), students learn the fundamentals of scientific experimentation. In a supplementary feeding centre in Homs City camp near Homs, Syria, the young child of a refugee family eats the daily hot meal which can make the difference between being healthy and undernourished.

These three aspects of UNRWA's programmes of relief, health and education for Palestine refugees have been greatly aided by the European Economic Community (EEC) and its Member States - Belgium, Denmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

Individually, the EEC Member States have demonstrated their concern for the plight of the Palestine refugees by making generous contributions to the Agency over the nearly 25 years UNRWA has had the task of assisting the needy among the refugees. The direct contributions by the Member States are shown in the following table:

CONTRIBUTIONS OF EEC MEMBER STATES DIRECTLY TO UNRWA  
(in US \$)

	<u>To end 1973</u>	<u>1974 pledges and payments</u>	<u>Total</u>
Belgium	1,800,356	674,335	2,474,691
Denmark	5,918,231	1,000,933	6,919,164
Federal Republic of Germany	24,645,413	2,937,062	27,582,475
France	20,881,551	1,327,677	22,209,228
Ireland	543,876	100,000	643,876
Italy	2,648,158	152,697	2,800,855
Luxembourg	73,560	5,900	79,460
Netherlands	2,068,871	564,574	2,633,445
United Kingdom	128,574,254	4,760,000	133,334,254

Their contributions have not usually been earmarked for specific projects, and the funds have been used by UNRWA to benefit all aspects of the Agency's programmes. Occasionally, projects have been chosen by the contributing government for support with a special contribution in addition to the government's regular contribution for that year. For example, in east Jordan at UNRWA's Wadi Seer Training Centre, near Amman, expansion of vocational training facilities for young Palestine refugee men was made possible by a special contribution from the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany. In south Lebanon, at Siblin Training Centre near Saïda, young refugee men study a language as part of their vocational or teacher training, in a language laboratory paid for by the Government of France. Also at Siblin, the students exercise in the gymnasium built with special funds from the Government of the Netherlands. In Syria, at Dera'a refugee camp, the boys' elementary school was constructed from funds donated by the Government of Denmark. These are but a few of the many projects funded by special contributions over the years from Member States of the EEC.

The nine Member States have also been contributing collectively through the EEC since 1970, when the Community as such began its assistance to UNRWA. That aid has increased every year, and in 1974 the EEC paid or pledged a total of \$24 million in cash or in kind to the Agency, a figure which corresponded to about 30 per cent of the Agency's 1974 budget of \$86 million. Included in the \$24 million was a special emergency contribution of \$7,889,000 for the preparatory cycle of the UNRWA/Unesco education programme. Made in June, along with an emergency contribution of \$4.2 million from the United States Government, this further example of the EEC's generosity has enabled UNRWA to cover its budget deficit for 1974 and to maintain in full its services to the refugees throughout 1974 at a time when serious cuts seemed unavoidable.

Between 1 July 1970 and 30 June 1975, the EEC has contributed the following in cash and kind:

#### EEC Contributions

##### (1) Rations

<u>Quantities</u>	<u>Foodstuff</u>	<u>Dates</u>
31,755 tons	Flour	1970/71 - 1973/74
5,290 tons	Rice	1971/72 and 1972/73
4,000 tons	Butter-oil	1971/72 and 1973/74
17,919 tons	Sugar	1971/72 - 1974/75

The Community has also pledged or paid \$346,561 to UNRWA for covering local transport and distribution costs of butter-oil and sugar.

##### (2) Supplementary feeding

7,291 tons	Flour	(	
512 tons	Rice	(	1972/73 - 1974/75
306 tons	Sugar	(	
3,000 tons	Powdered skim-milk	(	

The Community has also pledged or contributed \$2,316,221 for buying foodstuffs for the hot meal programme, \$4,540,399 for staff costs, etc., pertaining to this programme and \$67,000 for the construction of three supplementary feeding centres to replace unserviceable centres in Syria.

##### (3) Education

\$7,889,000 in 1974 for the UNRWA/Unesco preparatory education cycle.

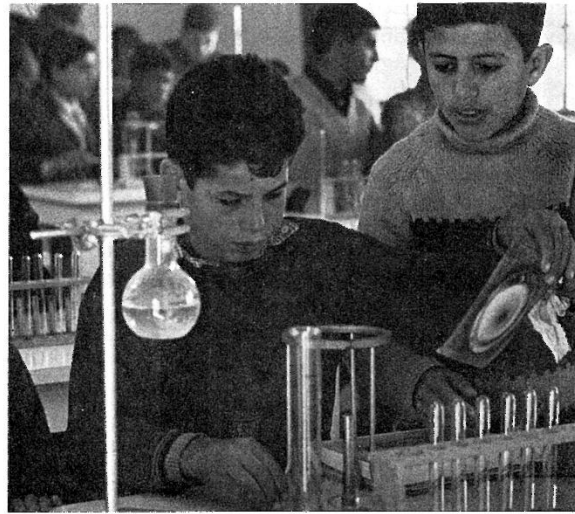
To understand their impact in human terms, these contributions should be seen in the context of the rations, supplementary feeding and education programmes they have benefited:

#### RATIONS

In June 1974, 1,583,646 refugees were registered with UNRWA, of whom 830,068 (52.4 per cent) received basic rations of flour, rice, sugar and cooking oil which provide 1,500 calories a day (1,600 in the winter months). These rations are distributed once a month from UNRWA's distribution centres which are open from 7 in the morning until 2 in the afternoon. In front of a centre, refugees queue up to await the opening hour.



*Ration distribution in Baqaa camp.*



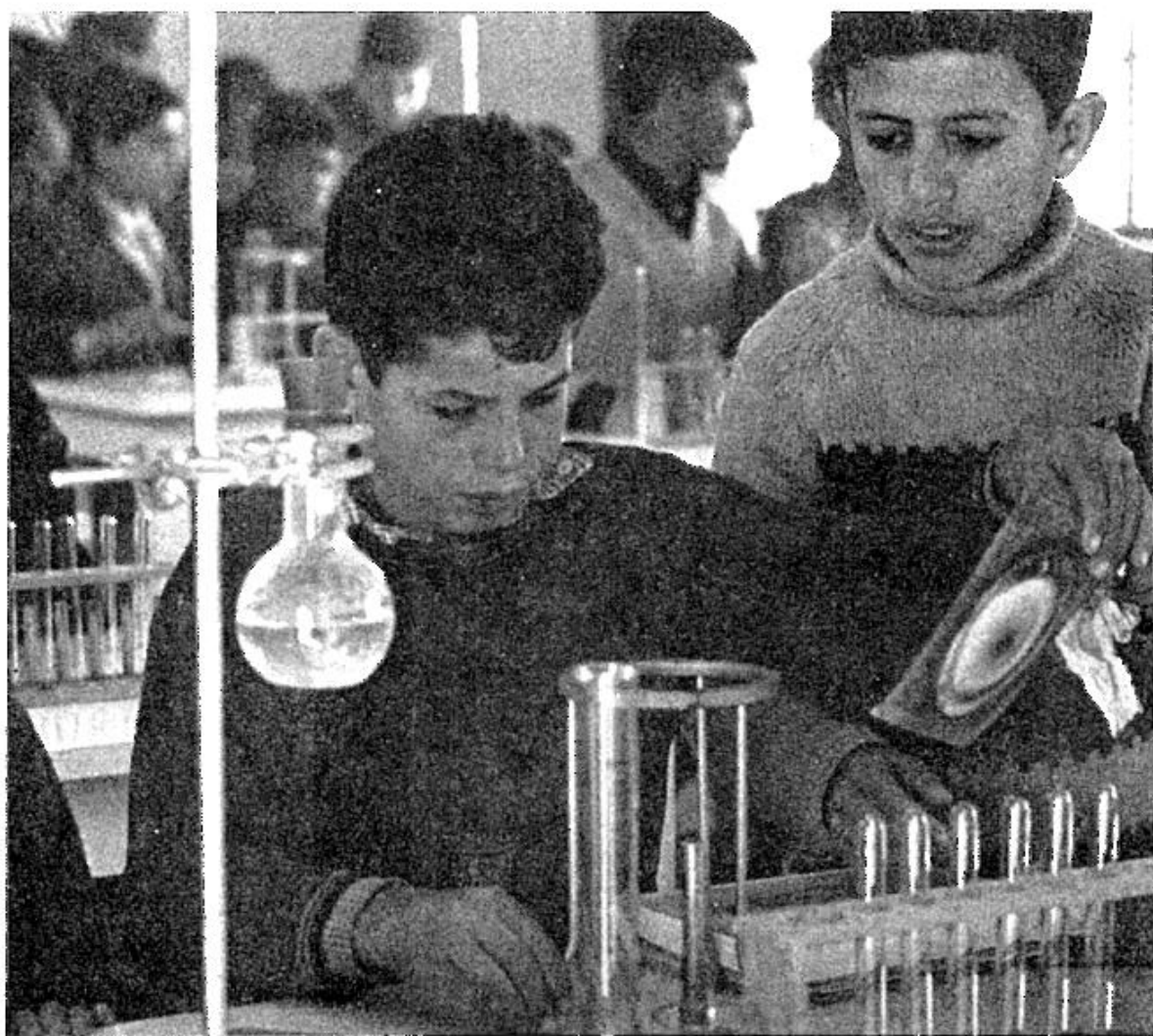
*Preparatory school in Dheisheh camp.*

Then each person comes up to the desk and presents the UNRWA ration card, showing the number of individual rations to which the family is entitled. The card is checked and clipped by a clerk, who announces the number of rations to the attendants, each of whom is weighing one foodstuff. The recipients have brought one or more jute bags for the flour, cotton or plastic bags for sugar and rice, a container for the oil. These are filled and carried out. Refugees living in camps may not have far to go with the rations, but they form only 36 per cent of UNRWA-registered refugees. The others who have found accommodation elsewhere - not necessarily better than in one of the 63 camps - take the cheap collective "service" taxis, or even a small truck if half a dozen families have lodgings near each other, for a month's rations for a family of four eligible persons weighs nearly 50 kilos.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY FEEDING

At 10 o'clock, several dozen young children are standing in front of a small building in a refugee camp. Each girl or boy, as he comes up to the supervisor, shows a card, which is checked and clipped, and then goes into a long room filled with tables and benches. At each place, there is a tin plate filled with a good, nourishing meal: rice, potatoes or macaroni, some meat or an egg, fresh vegetables or fruit, and a sweet: a handful of dates or a pudding. Each child also gets one loaf of round Arabic bread and a vitamin tablet.

Hot meals, from menus drawn up by a nutritionist, are served daily (six days a week) in 106 supplementary feeding centres to an average of 39,690 children. All refugee children up to and including the age of six are eligible, older children on medical recommendation. A glass of milk is served to 157,449 children, pregnant or nursing women and TB patients. People who are nutritionally vulnerable also receive diet supplements; among them are 27,050 pregnant or nursing women, 1,152 non-hospitalized tuberculosis patients and 169,349 children from six to 10 years of age. This programme has been established because the basic rations alone, containing neither fresh food nor animal protein, are dietetically unbalanced and inadequate. Many refugee families manage to get some eggs, cheese, vegetable and fruit, which they produce themselves or buy with the money they earn. But the supplementary feeding programme is a valuable precautionary measure taken on medical grounds because it serves those categories of refugees who would otherwise be most endangered by undernutrition or malnutrition.



*Preparatory school in Dheisheh camp.*

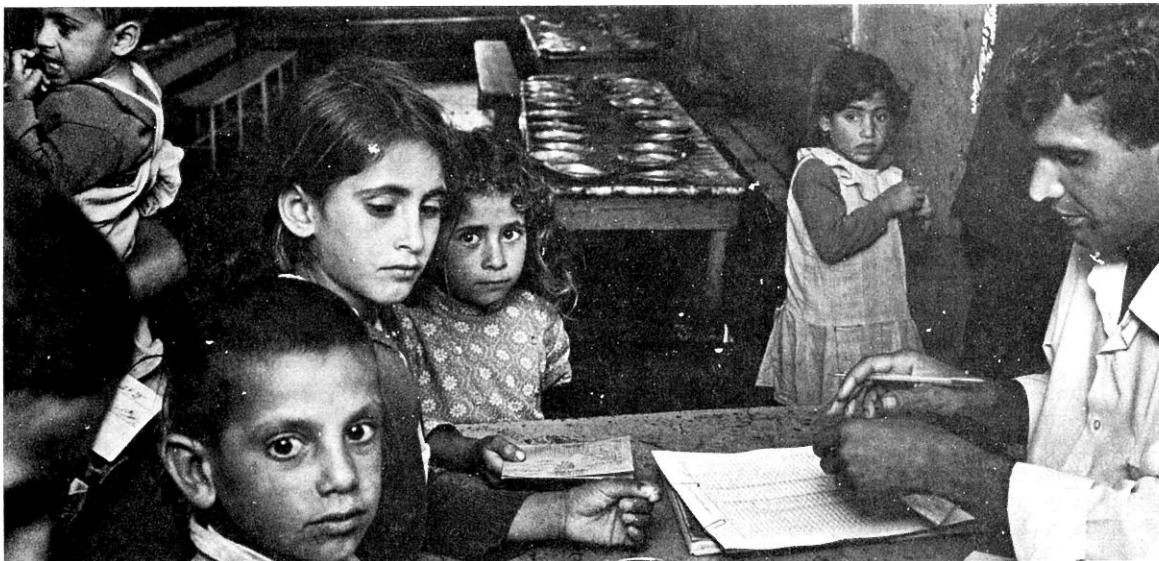
## EDUCATION

Education for Palestine refugee children started even before UNRWA's inception: the voluntary organizations which, after the 1948 exodus, provided the first relief, saw the urgent necessity also of providing education for children who, because of their circumstances, otherwise seemed unlikely to receive it. Even when deprived of adequate shelter, food and clothing, the refugee children were eager to learn. When UNRWA started its operations in May 1950, it took over this responsibility and the number of children enrolled in its schools was then about 43,000, of whom about 23 per cent were girls. The education programme is jointly operated by UNRWA and Unesco, with the professional aspects of the programme falling within the competence of Unesco, while its administration and financing are the responsibility of UNRWA. Gradually, the education programme has played a greater and greater part in UNRWA's activities. At the beginning, the first priority was the elementary cycle (grades 1-6); later, preparatory classes (grades 7-9; 7-10 in Lebanon) were established.

Preparatory schools are at the heart of the UNRWA/Unesco education system. They take in refugee children who have successfully completed the primary grades and advance them to the point where they can enter government or private secondary schools (the Agency does not operate schools of the secondary cycle) or seek admission to one of UNRWA's vocational training centres, where they can learn a technical trade. During the 1973/74 scholastic year, a total of 268,324 boys and girls (nearly 50 per cent were girls) were in UNRWA/Unesco schools, including 59,123 in the preparatory cycle. In addition, about 4,300 attended the eight vocational and teacher training centres and 370 received scholarships from the Agency for study at universities in the Middle East.

Educating young people is a task that governments consider to be one of their principal duties. Educating young refugees, whose start in life is handicapped by their poverty, their status and the absence of normal surroundings which other children take for granted, is perhaps one of the most constructive ways in which the United Nations can help the Palestine refugees rise above their present circumstances, pending a just settlement of the refugee problem. In this undertaking, as in its other programmes, UNRWA has been decisively helped by the Member States of the European Economic Community, both individually and collectively.

*A supplementary feeding centre in Fawwar camp in the West Bank.*





## A CONTRIBUTION WITH A SPECIAL MEANING

Last April a young Palestine refugee boy clutched the hand of a white-haired, bespectacled, American gentleman as they said goodbye to each other at Beirut's airport. In October a young English girl played with a Palestine refugee girl on the grounds outside UNRWA Headquarters in Beirut. The link between these seemingly isolated events was UNRWA's elementary school sponsorship programme, through which any person or organization contributing \$60 to the Agency may sponsor a Palestine refugee child's education for a year in an UNRWA/Unesco elementary school.

It is a contribution with a special meaning. For the contributor, there is the satisfaction of personally being able to aid a refugee child's intellectual growth. For the child, it assures the opportunity to acquire an education and, with it, the skills which may enable him to find future employment. For UNRWA, it means that funds the Agency would otherwise have to devote to elementary education may be diverted to the expansion or improvement of the services it provides to the Palestine refugees.

The UNRWA/Unesco education programme has expanded since its beginnings in 1950 until it is now as complex and wide-ranging as a national education system, with elementary and preparatory schools, vocational and teacher-training centres and scholarships for study at universities. The growth of the programme, which took up 43 per cent of UNRWA's \$86 million budget in 1974, has been an important factor in the Agency's financial difficulties in recent years; with 268,324 pupils in the Agency's 562 elementary and preparatory schools in the 1973/74 school year, the education programme must expand further to accommodate an additional 12,000 pupils each year.

As a consequence of its financial crises and in an effort to prevent cuts in the education programme, in 1972 UNRWA began the elementary school sponsorship scheme. Under the scheme, a single child could be sponsored for \$50 a year, while an entire

50-pupil elementary class could be sponsored for \$2,500 a year. Rising costs have since obliged UNRWA to increase these amounts to \$60 and \$3,000 a year. As a result of the sponsorship scheme, in 1972/73 about \$109,000 was contributed by individual and group sponsors, and about \$85,000 was contributed for the 1973/74 school year. In return, UNRWA provided sponsors with information about the school attended by the sponsored class or child, a photo of the class with the sponsored child indicated, and a report from the Head Teacher describing the highlights of the school year. Occasionally, a contributor also meets and becomes friends with a sponsored child. This happened in the cases of Mr. Raymond P. Barnes, the elderly gentleman from Roanoke, Virginia, U.S.A., and five-and-one-half-year-old Antonia-Clara (the youngest sponsor), an English girl who lives with her parents in Beirut.

*Ahmed with Mr. Barnes at the airport.*





*Antonia-Clara with Mouna outside UNRWA's Headquarters.*

Mr. Barnes, who had lived in Lebanon many years ago, wanted to sponsor a Palestine refugee child residing in the country he had known so well. Consequently, he sponsored Ahmad Abdul Hadi, who was then in the first grade at the Galilee Boys' School in Shatila camp in Beirut. When Mr. Barnes saw Ahmad's photo, he decided to meet the boy and his family. In the Spring of 1974, Mr. Barnes journeyed to Beirut and was introduced to the small, shy six-year-old Ahmad who, through the help of his teacher acting as an interpreter, showed Mr. Barnes his life in school and in Shatila camp, where some 4,000 people live. Then Mr. Barnes took Ahmad sightseeing. They saw the 18th century palace of Beit Eddine, the grotto at Jeita and the ancient town of Byblos. By the time Mr. Barnes was ready to leave for home, he and Ahmad had become fast friends and Mr. Barnes had undertaken to continue sponsoring Ahmad's education for the full six years of the elementary cycle.

For young Antonia-Clara, the idea of sponsoring a refugee child came as a result of seeing illustrated brochures about UNRWA's education programme and the plight of Palestine refugee children. Antonia-Clara began saving her pocket

money and one day she came to the Agency to choose a young girl to sponsor, a girl whom she hoped would be like a sister to her. Antonia-Clara picked six-and-a-half-year-old Mouna Yasser, a pupil in the 2nd elementary class at Ramallah school in Beirut. Mouna had attracted her because Mouna's photograph showed she wore a ponytail, a hair style much favoured by Antonia-Clara. On one sunny day last October they were brought together outside UNRWA's Headquarters. Antonia-Clara speaks fluent Arabic, and soon the two girls were chattering away, telling each other about themselves and thoroughly having a good time.

Like Mouna and Ahmad, the other children in the UNRWA/Unesco education programme are eager to make the most of any opportunity to learn. Often they do so under difficult circumstances, attending schools that are frequently over-crowded and on a double-shift basis and doing their homework in the cramped quarters of a refugee shelter. Their determination to conquer adversity is bolstered by the knowledge that there are those like Mr. Raymond Barnes and Antonia-Clara who are concerned enough to help by sponsoring their education.

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Further information, copies of UNRWA publications and audio-visual materials, including prints of photographs appearing in this issue of the Newsletter, may be obtained from :

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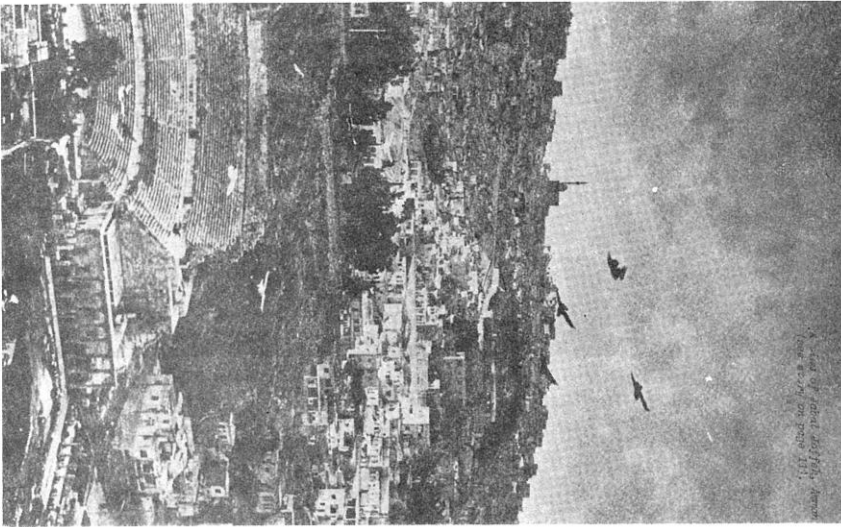
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*Antonia-Clara with Mouna outside UNRWA's Headquarters.*

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