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Palestine refugees in Jordan 1950-1955

Fay Kathleen Noyes

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PALESTINE REFUGEES IN JORDAN, 1950-1955

by

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INTRODUCTION

In June 1955, six years after the cessation of hostilities in the Arab-Israeli War of 1948-1949, the problem of the Palestine refugees had not yet been solved. Over 800,000 people were still on the relief rolls of UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. In other parts of the world, refugee problems which would appear less easily soluble had long since been solved while the Palestine problem remained as a sore festering in the crucial Near East area. Solution either by repatriation to Israel or by resettlement in the host Arab country was essential to peace and stability in the area. Repatriation was unacceptable to Israel and resettlement was unacceptable to the Arab countries.

Israel opposed repatriation, not without good reason. The refugees had been nourished on one single theme—hatred of Israel; they refused to recognize Israel's sovereignty and resented Israel's existence. The Arab dream was to secure Israel's extinction. If this group were to be repatriated, it would constitute a definite threat to the sovereignty of the state of Israel. The

inevitable political minority would provide a foundation for possible fifth-column moves by the Arabs in their program for expulsion of the Jews from the Near East. The refugees were all Arabs in Arab countries.

Resettlement of a refugee in Israel would be not repatriation, but alienation from Arab society; a true repatriation of an Arab refugee would be a process which brought him into union with people who share his conditions of language and heritage, his impulses of national loyalty and cultural identity.

It was also pointed out by Israel that more than fifty per cent of these Arab refugees were under 15 years of age. This means that at the time of Israel's establishment many of those, if born at all at that time, were under 5 years of age. We thus reach the striking fact that a majority of the refugee population can have no memory of Israel at all.  

Another factor which had to be considered was the influx of Jews into Israel from all parts of the world, filling the vacuum left by the exodus of the Arabs. At the end of the mandatory regime, on May 15, 1948, there were approximately 660,000 Jews in Palestine, the greater majority of whom had been immigrants. Between May 15, 1948, and the end of 1951, 684,000 Jewish

\[^2\text{Ibid.}, 15.\]

\[^3\text{Ibid.}, 16.\]
immigrants had come into Israel. In little more than three years, the Jewish population had increased by one hundred per cent. These people were put in abandoned Arab towns and villages. Therefore, the return of the refugees to their homes in Israel was impossible. An entirely different social, economic and cultural situation existed from that which they had left. Part of the Jewish immigrants (approximately 350,000) came from Arab countries. Israel, as a partial solution to the problem, suggested that the Arab refugees be allowed to integrate in the Arab countries in place of these Jewish immigrants. The Jewish State also pointed to the vast amounts of land in the Arab States with resources and conditions which "would enable them to liberate the refugees from their plight, in full dignity and freedom." 

In a study made by the Research Group for European Migration, the following conclusion was made:

The official attitude of the (Arab) host countries is well known. It is one of seeking to prevent any sort of adaptation and integration because the refugees are seen as a political means of pressure to get Israel wiped off the map or to get the greatest possible number of concessions. 

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5 Ibid., op. cit., 7.
6 Ibid., 9-10.
The Arab States, as represented by their statesmen and by the Arab League, reject on principle any solution other than the return of the refugees to their original places of residence.

Their principal contention is that the Palestinian Arabs were driven from their homes against their will and consequently have a right to go back. They feel that historical rights, national sentiments and the 'rights of men' point to this 'simple' solution as the only proper one. 7

The feeling was that the refugee must be allowed to return if he wished; this was only just.

Repatriation is the absolute right of all the refugees—and must be made a practical possibility for every refugee willing to return home. Only those refugees who choose to stay in their lands of enforced exile must be resettled; and it is the responsibility of the international community to devise reasonable plans for, and to facilitate, their resettlement, upon agreement with the countries concerned. To such refugees, adequate compensation for their homes, property, furniture, business, must be given by Israel, on an individual basis, and in measure determined by an international agency. Those who are to be repatriated, as well as those Arabs who have remained in Israel, must be guaranteed full rights and freedoms—in fact, and not merely in proclamations. 8

There have been charges and counter-charges concerning

8 Sayegh, op. cit., 47.
the responsibility for the Arab-Israeli War and the resulting refugee problem. The Arab invasion of Israel in May of 1948 cannot be denied. The question is this: was the flight of the Palestine Arabs from Israel due to Jewish terrorism or were the Arabs simply obeying orders of the Arab League to evacuate the disputed area temporarily?

Evidence has been put forth on both sides. As early as the first months of 1948 the Arab League issued orders exhorting the people to seek temporary refuge in neighboring countries, later to return to their homes with the victorious Arab armies and obtain their share of abandoned Jewish property. 9

The exodus was not due wholly to this cause. There was guilt to be shouldered on the Israeli side also. Evidence of this stood in the form of the abandoned shambles of bombarded Arab villages in Jewish sectors of Palestine.

The Zionist tactics for enforcing the displacement of the Palestinian Arabs consisted mainly of raids on isolated and defenseless villages, terrorization of their inhabitants—with a view of prompting the inhabitants of other villages and cities to flee their homes at the approach of Zionist forces so as to escape a similar fate. Conspicuous among the incidents which followed this pattern is the case

9 Beijer, op. cit., 8.
of Dair Yaseen. It is conspicuous not because it was unique, but because of the magnitude of the crime and the degree of barbarism involved. For the whole population of that village—women and children, the aged and infirm, as well as the able-bodied men—were massacred in cold blood. The incident is well known, since it aroused indignation and received wide coverage in the press all over the civilized world. 10

It must also be recognized that the stream of refugees did not stop with the end of hostilities. Palestine Arabs began evacuation before the war and continued during and after the war. Practices by the Jews of economic boycott of Arabs remaining in Israel forced continuing numbers to give up the fight and leave Israel in the postwar years. The responsibility for the refugee situation and for its solution belonged neither to the Jews nor to the Arabs, but would have to be shared by both sides. Neither is willing to accept this, each insisting on the alternative which will place the burden of refugee support and permanent settlement on the other.

The plight of the refugee is not an isolated fact in the Near East situation.

The problem of the Palestine refugees is one aspect of the problem of Palestine. In view of its dimensions and urgency, the former has come to be the most prominent aspect of the latter. The occupation by Israel of vast parts of Palestine beyond the territory originally earmarked for the Jewish State; the occupation of the greater part of Jerusalem

10Sayegh, op.cit., 9.
(which was to be internationalized), and the declaration thereof as virtual capital of the state; the confiscation and exploitation of Arab property, estimated at over 500% of Jewish property in Israel; the discrimination against the 165,000 Arab inhabitants; and, finally, the refusal of Israel to repatriate the one million refugees—all these are inseparable, \(^\text{11}\) integral parts of one and the same problem.

The Arabs insisted that negotiations on all of these other problems must be prefaced by Israel's acceptance of the principle of repatriation of refugees who wished to return to their homes, which Israel refused to do. And so a deadlock continued while the refugees were detained in temporary relief camps over the years. The proposed purpose of this study is to examine the refugee situation in Jordan, a member of the Arab League, where the greatest concentration of refugees is located, during the years 1950-1955. This concentration of refugees is due to the fact that the Arab part of Palestine was annexed by Jordan following the war.

The refugee, a pawn in the political interplay between the two contending factions, nevertheless is a human being worthy of consideration as such. A victim of circumstances, he left his home and property because of a war with the idea of an early return. Now he finds he cannot go back. And there is no place to turn. No one

\(^{11}\text{Ibid., 46.}\)
wants him. UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, was established in May of 1950 when it became apparent that the refugee problem was not a temporary one which could be solved shortly. Its main function was the resettlement of the refugee, to see to it that he was gainfully employed, enabling him to become self-sufficient. Direct relief was to be temporary and subsidiary to resettlement. As the material result of the conflict between the Arabs and the Jews for control of one of the most, if not the most, vital areas in the world, a prefatory examination of the refugees will ensue.
THE REFUGEES

The dilemma of the refugee did not end in 1955. Success by UNRWA in cutting out direct relief had not been attained and the refugees were not resettled. The problem has persisted to the present in spite of the efforts of the United Nations, UNRWA and the various United Nations Specialized Agencies. Due to the continuation of the situation, the date for the termination of UNRWA's mandate, which had been June 1955, was extended by the General Assembly of the United Nations to June 1960. Therefore the conditions herein described are not merely descriptions of historical episodes, but also describe present-day conditions.

In setting up UNRWA, the definition of the refugee, the individual eligible for aid, was almost impossible without leaving out deserving groups and including others who should not be on the relief rolls. For working purposes, UNRWA decided that a refugee was "a needy person, who, as a result of the war in Palestine, had lost his home and his means of livelihood." ¹ The chief district officers

had to have a great deal of flexibility in interpretation of this definition in order to meet the many border-line cases. For example, families might have lost part or all of the land from which they had obtained their livelihood, but they still had houses to live in. Others lived on the Arab side of the demarcation line and had their work in Israel. Still others, for example, the Bedouins, normally moved from one part of the country to another. Some of these nomads escaped with some or all of their goods, but could not return to the area where they resided the greater part of the year. The fringe group of indigent people, who had remained in their homes, but had lost their means of livelihood because of the war and post-war conditions, though often in a more acute position than the refugees, did not fall under the jurisdiction of UNRWA and so could not be considered part of the refugee group even by the most liberal interpretation of the chief district officers.

Using a much broader definition of refugees than has been possible for UNRWA, there are seven basic categories. First on the list comes the village peasants, the fellahin, who comprise the vast majority of the refugees. Most of the refugee camps contain these people, whose only thought is to return to their land. Very few have entered the life of host villages, though some of
them have found seasonal work on neighboring farms.

The second class, which contains only a few thousand at the most, includes the people who had already been driven off their land before the end of the mandate. Originally as industrious as the others, they had become resigned to a life away from home when the great exodus started. It is a tragedy that these few thousand should be regarded as typical of the vast majority. Propaganda along this line is simply not true. 2

The third group consists of the townspeople who have been government officials, physicians, lawyers, merchants, and retired folk. Some of these still live on what they had managed to save. Some of the younger men in this group have been able to find jobs, thus helping their families and some of their fellow countrymen. Many still are without work, with more like them every year as they finish their education.

Fourth are the Bedouins or nomads.

The fifth covers the "economic" refugee class which is not eligible for UNRWA rations because its members live in their own houses. They too are at the end of their resources. In some cases, these people have housed "official" refugees, that is, people regarded as refugees by UNRWA. 2

The sixth, connected with the 'economic' refugees, is comprised of the inhabitants of the border villages.

These people too still live in their own houses, and in full view of their own land. When they cross the border to pick their own fruit and other products they are accused of 'infiltration' by Israeli authorities, thus provoking 'border incidents.' Kibya, with its memories of the massacre in October 1953, is one of these villages, but they are strung along the whole length of the arbitrary Jordan-Israel frontier—as impossible a frontier as was ever drawn in the entire history of the land. 3

Those who have been integrated in the village life of the country in which they were exiled and have attained a new life for themselves form the seventh class.

Out of the seven groups, the problems of one, the last, only have been solved. These people have taken up their lives again by resettlement. The fifth and sixth groups have places to live. Their primary problem is of an economic nature. This is not too unusual in Jordan which is a poor country. The nomads, though they have lost the rights to much of their land, still are not completely desolate. They have been able to salvage some belongings. If prejudice and obstinacy do not stand in the way, the townspeople present unlimited potential for the host countries with their invaluable education and experience. In the case of the few thousand who no longer care, it is necessary certainly, if not mandatory, to

3 Ibid., 13.
instill the desire to become self-supporting again. Lastly, the village peasants must be made to realize that the probability of their returning to the land of their ancestors is next to nothing; they will have to face that fact and plan their futures accordingly.

The refugees in Jordan constitute a substantial proportion of the total population. The original population of Transjordan was about 300,000, although the country was three times the size of Belgium. By annexing Arab Palestine, an additional 300,000 people were added. This doubled population has then been redoubled with the addition of nearly half a million refugees who have left their former homes.

The refugees are located both in and outside of the temporary relief camps set up by UNRWA. The refugees outside the camps, scattered in towns and villages, are often worse off than those in the tented and other camps. Both in and out of the camps, the story is one of progressive demoralization. Resettlement still seems impossible and is hardly ever mentioned.

Most of the refugees do not live in camps. As of June 1955, the figure for those in the camps was 333,487, or about 37 per cent of the refugee population in the four host countries. UNRWA’s fifty-eight camps range in size from the ninety-two refugees in the old Citadel
of Lattakieh, to the sprawling camp at Aqaba Jabar, where
30,353 live in barracks-like shelters in the Jordan Valley.  

In 1949, Bayard Dodge, a former faculty member of
the American University at Beirut, Lebanon, described
camp conditions:

In one camp I found over eight thousand people
in five hundred tents—an average of sixteen
persons to each round army tent (about twelve
feet in diameter). A hundred and fifty were
living in caves. There were no latrines, and
heavy rains had washed all the filth into a
canal which served as both laundry, and drinking
water. The World Health Organization was
starting to deal with this situation.

Dysentery, malaria, typhoid, dengue, and other
diseases were a constant danger. Smallpox had
broken out in the mountain villages.

The tents leaked, the blankets were inadequate,
clothing was already wearing out, thread and
needles were lacking, there was no light at
night and no fire for warmth.  

From the diary of a traveler comes a 1952 description
which depicts the tents as nearly four years old,
wrinkled, torn and patched, standing in "untidy rows
packed like chessmen in a box." Some of the tents had
low walls around them; but there was no permanence anywhere.

4"How the United Nations Helps the Palestinian Refugees,"

5Bayard Dodge, "Problem of the Palestinian Refugees,"
Yale Review, XXXIX(September, 1949), 62.

6Owen Tweedy, "Arab Refugees: Report on a Middle
A 1953 observation describes a situation in which a camp named Karameh is situated in a sandy, treeless waste, unendurably hot for much of the year. The people, ignorant, fanatical and often violent, were living in such misery and insecurity that political propagandists and agitators gained a ready hearing. No senior official of UNRWA was permitted to enter the camp without police protection. 7 The type of camp varies as widely as the type of refugees living there, from the few groups satisfied to remain idle to those who hold as their primary objective getting started again somewhere, anywhere, just so they are no longer on relief.

In spite of the fact that less than half of the refugees live in relief camps, new applications to live there are received each month. Families which have previously been able to support themselves have come to the end of their resources. Refugees continued to arrive from Israel after the cessation of hostilities. And there are those who have lived in host villages but have been evicted by the villagers because of some incident.

The most pressing need of the refugee, naturally is survival. UNRWA supplies a daily ration of approximately 1,550 calories in the summer and 1,600 in winter.

Only a subsistence ration, it consists primarily of flour, pulses, oils and fats, sugar, rice and burghol. In addition, there are milk rations and supplementary hot meals for selected needy groups.

Health conditions among the refugees are surprisingly good. Dysentery and eye diseases, characteristic of the Near East, are the most common. Despite the poor living conditions, there has not been a serious epidemic. And the death rate has been generally comparable to other countries in the area. 9

The refugees are not completely without world possessions. Their holdings still remain in Israel in the form of three major types: personal property—bank accounts, stocks and bonds and other valuables, lost to the invaders when the Arabs fled; personal real-estate holdings of various individuals; and the communal holdings of families, clans and villages. 10

Two-thirds of Israel's arable land is owned by refugees now living in Arab countries, while one-third of the new immigrants to Israel and one-fourth of the total

9 Ibid.
population of Israel live in houses owned by such refugees, over ten thousand Israeli shops and business places are property of the absent Arabs. And almost all of Israel's olive groves and half its citrus groves belong to the Arabs classified as refugees. 11

The problem is how to unfreeze these assets so that the refugees can use them for initial investments in setting themselves up in businesses in the host countries. But opposition comes from all sides. Israel needs the assets for her economy. The Israeli Government is unwilling to agree to let bank holdings be withdrawn in amounts of more than several hundred pounds. The purpose of such a stand is to forestall a run on the banks, but it also prevents withdrawals in sufficient amounts to reestablish the refugees. The host countries do not want the refugees to be compensated for their lands because this would mean a solution of the problem as far as Israel is concerned, leaving the Arab countries without a major basis of contention with Israel. The refugees oppose compensation for the simple reason that if they consented to it, it would mean that they were giving up the right to return home, the hope uppermost in the minds of all refugees.

The Arab concept of loyalty is frequently misunderstood. Arabs are mainly devoted to the interests of their own family, with nepotism and corruption natural. After the family their own religious community, in its narrowest sense, claims some loyalty. When Arab countries unite it is in order that each may take its pickings, not because of a fundamental unity. 12 With this attitude in mind, one of the reasons, not only for the Arab defeat in the war, but also for the lack of a unified attempt on the part of the refugees to solve their common problem, becomes clear.

The refugees have been told repeatedly that their condition is due to the interference of the Western world in their affairs. They blame their plight on four groups:

(1) The British - for selling them out to the Jews in violation of the second proviso of the Balfour Declaration ("... it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine...");

(2) The Americans - for pouring money and political support to the Israelis; Harry Truman is the popular villain;

(3) The Arab League governments - for failing to defend them;

(4) The Jews. 13

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12 Coate, op. cit., 452.

13 James Bell, "Forgotten Arab Refugees," Life, XXXI (September, 1951), 92.
The refugees feel friendless. They do not trust the Arab governments which they feel are being dominated by Western powers, primarily Great Britain and the United States. Only the other Arab people are considered their friends. They differentiate strongly between the Arab people and the Arab governments. The refugees believe that the Arab governments are hopeless and do not wish to help them. To add to the confusion, in Jordan, the refugees and new citizens consider themselves superior to their backward Transjordan hosts. They aspire to leadership in the country, importing ideas (absorbed under the British Mandate of Palestine) which amount to no less than a revolutionary danger to the Jordanian people. And so the feeling of dislike and dissatisfaction is mutual, adding to the complexity of the already difficult situation.

The refugees blame the United Nations for its intervention which prevented the realization of their dreams for an independent Arab Palestine. The British are blamed for allowing the Jewish strength to grow prior to 15 May 1948, and for allegedly preventing the Arab Legion from following up its victories over the armies of Israel. The United States is blamed for its financial

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and political support of Israel. These factors all combine to give the refugees a sense of injustice, frustration and disappointment which make them tired of their conditions and resentful at being forced to live away from their homes with no compensation. They were once proud and self-reliant, now only to become lost, craving a bit of land of their own. Under the British mandate in Palestine, the conditions of these people had been greatly improved. Now they are being subjected to the inferior ways of their less advanced Jordanian hosts.

Objections to resettlement on the part of the refugees are persistent. They do not want to move again unless it is to return to their homes. Settlement outside Palestine is used as an issue in Near East politics poised against repatriation, compensation and final territorial settlement. To the refugees, any effort toward resettlement is recognition of the justice of the creation of Israel and the situation which led to their exile.

Less congested lands are not available for resettlement of additional population until work is done to make the land suitable for cultivation or for industrial development. The obvious step is to have the refugees help in this work. But, to the refugees, accepting employment means foregoing the right to return home. They are also afraid that the settlement schemes might
fail and they will be abandoned, losing their ration cards, their only security. They also oppose resettlement projects because of their possible political implications between the Arab countries and Israel. The refugees have been persuaded that if they lose their status as refugees they will lose their right to compensation and jeopardize the possibility of a satisfactory peace settlement with Israel.

The refugee is not the only source of opposition to resettlement. So strong is the Arab hatred of the United Nations that the Government of Jordan withholds genuine cooperation with UNRWA and insists on having a voice in all appointments.

UNRWA has not had an easy time. The host countries have insisted on principal roles in the execution of UNRWA's functions, but have demanded that the United Nations assume the financial responsibilities.

Despite the efforts of UNRWA, the refugees have not been accepted by the host countries. Still, those refugees in Jordan have been better treated than refugees in other countries, in that in Jordan they are permitted to work if there is work available; and they are granted all the rights of citizenship. This, of course, is the outcome of joining Transjordan and Arab Palestine into the
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on April 24, 1950. But the refugees feel neglected and victimized even so. The atmosphere is one of "stagnation." Of the entire refugee group, only fifteen per cent are potential wage earners; eighty-two per cent are dependents; and three per cent are incapable of supporting themselves and have no one to support them. Over two-thirds are less than thirty years of age, and almost half of this group is under fifteen. In order to provide these young refugees with occupational skills, UNRWA in connection with UNESCO has set up training programs which include agriculture, masonry, carpentry, weaving, and tin-smithing. Also, the host governments have given their consent to visits by technical experts to examine possible local projects.

Complete justice for these war victims will never be possible. Whether they are resettled in other Arab lands or returned to their homes in Israel, the tragic experiences cannot be forgotten. Three alternatives have been proposed. It would be physically possible to bring them back to their homes where these are still standing. This would require the expulsion of the Israelis who now occupy those homes. Also, six years of idleness and frustration have made the refugees different persons with changed laws, customs and way of life. A second possible solution would be the forcible resettlement of
these people in other Arab lands. But the refugees themselves might resist, and there would be the resent-
ment of their new neighbors against them. They would be
unwelcome. A third possibility would be to open the
door of opportunity to the Arab refugee which would assure
the cooperation of the maximum number of persons. The
refugee must be given the financial resources which in
all justice belong to him, not charitable handouts, but
financial credits, on his own holdings or otherwise, in
order to free him from the stigma of being a ward of
society. 15

In February 1951, the Arab host governments all
tentatively pledged their cooperation with UNRWA on
three conditions: they would limit their contributions
to public lands and services; they would expect evidence
of substantial interest from those members of the United
Nations who have been involved in the Palestine problem;
and, any reintegration of refugees into the host countries
must not prejudice their rights to compensation from or
repatriation back to Israel. 16 Jordan, unable to
subsist on her own resources, certainly has not been able
to support half a million refugees in addition to her

15 Reisner, op. cit., 1502.

16 Channing B. Richardson, "Refugee Problem," Academy
Political Science Proceedings, XXIV (January, 1952), 488.
own people. UNRRA and the Specialized Agencies of the United Nations have shouldered the major part of the responsibility. Their work includes not only the distribution of rations, but aid in education, health, technical assistance and other relevant fields.
The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) on 1 May 1950 took over the responsibilities for the relief activities from its forerunner, United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees (UNRFR). The continuing political stalemate between Israel and the Arab States prevented any early solution of the refugee problem by means of repatriation or large-scale resettlement. In its recommendation for the establishment of UNRWA, the Economic Survey Mission proposed that the new agency inaugurate a works program in which the able-bodied refugees could become self-supporting and at the same time create works of lasting benefit to the refugees and the countries concerned. Direct relief for the refugees, the only responsibility of UNRFR, was to be a subsidiary function. The purpose of this new works program was four-fold. It would stop the demoralizing process, an outcome of prolonged pauperization and relief. The opportunity to work would increase the practical alternatives available to the refugees, encouraging a more realistic view of their futures. The new works program, if properly planned, could add to the productive economies of the host countries. And, finally, the chance to earn a living would reduce the need for direct relief and bring the cost of this
relief within the ability of the Near East countries without United Nations assistance. 1 In order to attain the greatest amount of success, the Economic Survey Mission suggested that the program be planned and carried out in the closest possible cooperation with the Near East governments concerned.

In order to understand the problems facing the host countries in their attempt to absorb the refugee popula-
tion, it is necessary to consider the economy of the Near East which is not as advanced as that of the West. This economic retardation is due to a combination of factors of institutional, financial and technical character. The Near East is one of the potentially richest areas of the world. Apart from the oil resources, it has areas of cultivable land, part of which in previous centuries supported large and prosperous populations. Other parts have never been seriously developed. The fundamental obstacle here has been the lack of capital. Although agriculture is the main source of livelihood for the majority of the population, it is not generally well-developed, either in utilization of the arable land or

in the application of scientific methods. Farm implements are identical to those used centuries ago.

In spite of the good will of certain host countries, their economies simply cannot absorb the numbers of people unexpectedly entering their labor markets. In Jordan, by 1952, every third person in the country was an Agency ration recipient. It has been estimated that the development of the Near East economy will call for a supply of labor of all types, skilled agriculturists, workmen and artisans. The quality of craftsmanship is not as high as it should be, so that skilled workmen and artisans trained to a higher level than the existing average is necessary in order to raise the general standard. This has been partially attained by large-scale technical assistance supplied in the works program by UNRWA, the Technical Assistance Board and the several Specialized Agencies of the United Nations.

The general objective of the works program was to move the refugees in the ration lines to self-supporting employment, and to make them economic assets to the host country. Its purpose was the termination of relief

operations; the Agency was not to intrude in political issues between the Arab States and Israel or between the refugees and Israel. Specifically, it was to be without prejudice to repatriation or compensation. These were under the jurisdiction of the United Nations Conciliation Commission. The need for action aiming at termination of relief was emphasized by the evident development of a professional refugee mentality and by the economic burden, apart from the cost of the care of the individual, placed on the host country. It was assumed that the host Governments would cooperate with the program which would also be a part of their economic development.

No settlement of refugees can take place without the consent of the host Government concerned, which naturally has to bear in mind the interests of its own indigenous population. Relations between the Agency and the Jordan Government have not been the best possible. Some of the difficulties which the Agency encountered in Jordan derived from the fact that Jordan was not a member of the United Nations during the period under consideration. Because of this it was unwilling to recognize fully the obligations which, under international law, are incumbent on a country which accepts the operations of an international organization within its territory. The Agency has had to resist attempts by the Jordanian Government to limit the powers of its Director
in the appointment, employment and termination of its staff, to restrict the right of the Agency to import freely supplies needed for its program and to subject the Agency to the jurisdiction of the local courts. 3 One such case was the attachment of the Agency’s assets in a Jordanian bank in satisfaction of a court judgment in a case where, under international law, the court had no jurisdiction. 4

Jordan wanted no administrative responsibility for the care of the refugees but at the same time feared that any program not administered by it might threaten its sovereignty, which is relatively new and highly guarded. There is something inconsistent in the presence of an alien organization, furnishing the basic necessities for a large proportion of the country’s population, especially since the refugees have been made full citizens of Jordan.


The period of acute emergency was soon past, when the efforts of the international community were gladly accepted. The Agency became something of an embarrassment to the Government. An example of the position taken by the Government of Jordan was the situation in August of 1954. In order to carry out a program of small grants to refugees who were already partially self-supporting, the Agency and the Ministry of Development in the Jordanian Government signed an agreement whereby the Agency set aside $100,000 for the purpose. Agitation against implementation of the agreement appeared in the local Press, even though applications for aid had been made by hundreds of refugees. Shortly, the Government informed the Agency that it did not wish to continue with the agreement. The Agency planned even so to make arrangements for assisting deserving applicants since there had been such a substantial demand.

The Agency's operations in Jordan have been governed by an agreement concluded with the Jordanian Government on 16 March 1951. Difficulties have arisen concerning

5Ibid., 20.

the degree of control the Government could exercise over
the appointment and termination of Agency staff. The
Agency has taken the stand that the appointments and
terminations are matters solely for the Director, but
the views of the Government would receive serious consid-
eration. In 1953, the Government of Jordan indicated
its desire to revise its agreement with the Agency.
Negotiations for revision were begun in February 1954.
Difficulty was encountered as the Government wished
greater control over the Agency’s operations. The Agency,
on the other hand, felt it could do a more effective job
in the interests of the refugees if there were less
interference in its work and that its status as a public
international organisation under international law be
fully recognized. 7 The negotiations for revision
continued through the period under consideration without
success.

Progress toward the goal of making the refugees
self-supporting by June 1955 was slow. Three obstacles
were largely responsible for this. There was no solution
to the problems of repatriation and compensation. Second
was the meagerness of physical resources made available
for development. Last, and most important, came the
attitude of the refugees and, in some cases, of the

Governments of the area. These must be kept in mind in considering the Agency's task. 8

During the first year of its mandate, temporary public works projects were encouraged by the Agency. The Government and the refugees feared resettlement implications and were slow in accepting. Finally, a start was made because refugees wanted wages and the Government wanted public works (afforestation and road building). The Agency began to see the liabilities of this attempted solution. The Government contributed no funds. Full responsibility for the wages fell on the Agency, wages which cost five times as much as simple relief. The projects were selected by the Government out of a backlog of public works needs rather than as aid to reintegration of the refugees into society. When the work was finished the refugees returned to the camps and ration lines. The Agency found itself financing and operating labor camps to build public works. This was no detour around the fundamental obstacles to benefits for the refugees or financial relief for the Agency. The program was brought to a conclusion as funds ran out and was replaced by the three-year program which aimed at making the refugees self-supporting.

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In 1951, a three-year program was proposed by the Agency in which $50,000,000 were to be used for direct relief with $200,000,000 allotted for works projects. Efforts were to be made to transfer the administration of both relief and rehabilitation to the host Governments as soon as possible. The program was to have ended with the termination of the Agency's mandate on 30 June 1954. The period for this program was extended for one year, including the mandate of the Agency, by the General Assembly at its eighth session. The purpose of the program was to prepare the refugees for the time when the Agency would no longer exist to distribute rations. It was to help the refugees find employment where their services were needed, but did not conflict with employment needs of the indigenous population. This took various forms: making loans to refugees to establish themselves in gainful enterprises; creating rural villages in areas where land was available for cultivation; building low-cost houses in and near cities, villages and industries where jobs might be available. The host Governments

were to contribute principally in the form of public lands and services.

Resistance to the new self-support program was particularly evident in the large-scale development projects, since these appeared to the refugees to carry serious political implications. Their cost, size and permanence raised the fear that to accept settlement on them would mean giving up the hope of repatriation. Many of the refugees were already ceasing to believe in a possible return. But this did not prevent them from insisting on it. They felt that consideration of any other solution would mean surrender of their fundamental rights which had been acknowledged even by the General Assembly. For the majority of the refugees, repatriation means returning to the conditions they knew in Palestine prior to 1948. It would be mere speculation to estimate how many of them would accept an opportunity to be repatriated if it would mean something other than returning to their old homes and to their former way of life. The fact still remains that the prevailing sentiment at least of the older refugees is the longing to return to their homes. Barring some other acceptable solution, that feeling will continue to dominate the attitude of the refugees as a group. Instead of recognizing that these rehabilitation projects would prepare them for
re-entry into a normal life, many of the refugees consider them as a means of depriving them of something. Unless some opportunity is given to the refugees to make their choice, or unless some other political settlement can be reached, the demand for repatriation will continue to be an obstacle to the accomplishment of reintegration and self-support. In 1955, at the close of the period under study, there was evidence of slight improvement in the refugee attitude. They began to understand that living in improved shelter did not impede their political rights but was advantageous to them and their children.

With the exception of the Jordan Valley project, all of the schemes for helping the refugees attain independence have been on a comparatively small scale. The Jordan Valley project and the Sinai project for refugees under the jurisdiction of Egypt are the only two major projects which have been attempted by UNRWA.

Development of the Jordan Valley by the use of the waters of the Yarmuk and Jordan rivers offers the best possibility in Jordan for providing support for substantial numbers of refugees in that country. It was estimated that the waters of the two rivers might irrigate 460,000 dunums and that the area might support, through direct or indirect employment, between 100,000 and 150,000 more people than were already living in the Jordan Valley.
The construction work on dams, canals and other works might give additional employment to up to 12,000 persons for several years. Preliminary estimates in 1953 of the stages of the scheme were that the initial surveys would take a year and the construction two years. Another two years would be required for filling the reservoir.

In an agricultural survey conducted by UNRWA in 1954, it was estimated that a family might become self-supporting by the cultivation of an average of twenty irrigated dunums. Also agricultural wage labor and other indirect employment would be generated by the development of the Valley. It appeared, then, that support might be provided for about one-third of the total refugee population of Jordan.

On 30 March 1953, the Agency signed an agreement with the Government of Jordan which set aside $40,000,000 for the possible development of the Jordan Valley. The original termination date for the agreement, 30 December 1953, was extended to 30 June 1955. Specific projects developed from this agreement included malaria control, preliminary engineering surveys, the Irbed-Maqarin approach road, soils analysis, land classification and topographical surveys.

12 Ibid., 10.
13 Ibid., 9.
Jordan and the Agency signed an agreement in November of 1954 under which the Agency made available $25,000 for exploratory drilling in 'West Ghur of the Jordan Valley, which was completed in March 1955. UNRWA recommended that further ground water exploration and development be carried out on the West Ghur by the Agency alone for the drilling of some fourteen wells in the area, providing water for additional agricultural settlements. The surveys and analyses of the Jordan Valley soil were completed in March 1955.

Little further work on the main parts of the project was undertaken by June 1955 because of pending political decisions concerning the division and storage of the Yarmuk and Jordan waters. The Agency did not participate directly in these negotiations, but was kept informed as to their general trends. Even under the most favorable of circumstances, it would be several years before the project could be capable of giving a substantial number of refugees self-support. If so, it would also provide a powerful stimulant to the general economic development of the country.

Suitable projects outside the Jordan Valley have been hard to find. In 1952, UNRWA allotted $11,000,000 from the rehabilitation fund for developing these projects which include the following types: small agricultural
settlements; small grants given directly to individual refugees for opening workshops, acquiring agricultural supplies, etc.; rent-free accommodations in small housing projects for refugees who would be self-supporting if it were not for the burden of rent, especially in and near Amman and Jerusalem. The Agency has also provided educational and training projects designed to produce qualified young people for employment. In order to assist in the financing of these various schemes, the Agency, in cooperation with the Government of Jordan, established the Development Bank in 1951 with a capitalization of $1,400,000. Eighty per cent of this was contributed by the Agency. By June of 1954, 32 projects were in operation in Jordan. Of these, 5 were for research, 14 for vocational training, 7 in agricultural development, 2 in industry and commerce, 2 in loans, and 2 in placement activities.

However useful these small projects may be in themselves, they do not have any great effect on the overall refugee problem. Cost and other factors indicate that the large projects are necessary to cope adequately with the rehabilitation problem. The availability of land and water must be definitely assured in agricultural

settlements or the uncertainty concerning the amount of land available to each settler may jeopardise the entire project. And, a careful selection of the settlers is necessary for a successful settlement.

Although the works program is the primary function of UNRWA, there are the pressing immediate needs of the refugees which must be provided for on a daily basis. These needs, for food, shelter, health and education, are taken care of in the Agency's direct relief program in cooperation with the Specialised Agencies of the United Nations and independent voluntary groups.

Of the needs for direct relief, those for food and shelter are most immediate. The basic diet supplied, composed largely of flour and other dry rations, amounts to approximately 1,500 calories per day in the summer and 1,600 in the winter. Although it is dietetically unbalanced, there are no signs of general malnutrition among the refugee population according to the annual nutritional surveys carried out jointly by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). This is partly because of the additional milk issues and supplementary hot meals for those in need who have doctor's certificates. Part-time work at low wages enables refugees to supplement their diet. Also, it is not unusual for part of the basic issue to
be sold or bartered for protein foods and vegetables which it is impossible for the Agency to distribute economically because of their perishable nature.

In the three years from 1951 to 1954, the proportion of the entire refugee population which was located in camps fell from 87 per cent to only 32 per cent. At first the camp dwellers were better off than those in host towns and villages. They had rent-free shelter and fuel. Constant medical care was available; cases of undernourishment were given supplementary feedings. As the works program progressed, housing projects near towns provided a relief from the expenses of high rent. Many refugees were also settled in agricultural projects with their own homes and land.

The greater part of the camps were tented camps when set up. Many of these were situated in isolated spots because there was a convenient water supply or because no land was obtainable elsewhere. Possibilities of finding employment for these refugees were thus reduced to a minimum. Because of this, the Agency has tried to avoid the establishment of permanent or semi-permanent camps in these areas. The more permanent projects were in areas of economic opportunity. Such camps have taken on the appearance of villages and towns.

\[16\text{Ibid., 2,}\]
with school buildings, small workshops and communal facilities, such as bath houses and recreational centers, as well as small shops opened by enterprising refugees. Because tents have become increasingly impossible to find on world markets in proportions required for the relief camps, the refugees have been encouraged to put up small temporary structures, made of locally available material, such as mud brick in the Jordan Valley. Still the objective of the Agency has been to get the refugees into situations where there are opportunities for return to a normal life.

In providing direct relief for the refugees, UNRWA has been aided by Specialized Agencies of the United Nations and independent voluntary groups.

The voluntary agencies have provided aid for both those benefiting from the Agency and those outside its mandate. The Agency's resources have never been adequate to provide clothing for the refugees under its care. Had it not been for the efforts of the voluntary agencies, the plight of the refugees would have been serious. Even though clothing donations have increased substantially over the years, it has not been sufficient to meet all the minimum needs of the refugees. Other types of aid have also been given. The Lutheran World Federation opened and supported twelve milk mixing and distribution centers, which served about one-fourth of the total
beneficiaries, and supplied matching foods of dried eggs and pulses. The Mennonites appointed a special team to work in the Hebron area which opened and operated two centers for reconstitution and distribution of milk which served both refugees and 'economic' refugees in the area. Other voluntary agencies, including Near East Christian Council, the Church World Service, the National Catholic Welfare Conference, and the WECN, have enlarged their programs particularly in aid for the inhabitants of frontier villages not assisted by UNRWA. Their work in cooperation with UNRWA has been conducted through the Central Coordinating Committee for Voluntary Agencies.

Another source of aid to UNRWA in its work with the refugees in Jordan, the Specialized Agencies of the United Nations are independent organizations, each established by a separate intergovernmental agreement with its own Charter. Not all members of the United Nations are members of the Specialized Agencies; and some of the members of the individual Agencies are not members of the United Nations. Jordan, for example, was not a member of the United Nations, belonged to FAO, WHO and UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization). The Charters of the Agencies specify their autonomous fields of endeavor; but equally important is the interdependence resulting from their common goal of a better
world. This is evident in the cooperation under the United Nations Expanded Program of Technical Assistance which is carried out by a Technical Assistance Board consisting of all the organizations which take part and a Technical Assistance Committee of all the nations who are members of the Economic and Social Council.

Under the technical assistance program, the Specialized Agencies finance experts in their fields which have been requested by the governments of the countries in need. This expert advice is generally accompanied by local personnel working with the experts in order that they may be technically prepared to eventually take over the operation of the project. Main trends of assistance are demonstration and training programs for health control; development and strengthening of public health administration; development of training facilities, including the fellowship program, training centers and professional appointments to centers and colleges; training auxiliary workers; improvement of environment conditions; and health education. ¹⁷ Neither the Specialized Agencies nor the Technical Assistance Board can pick out the problems of a country and deal with them.

It is the responsibility and prerogative of the Government to determine the fields in which to seek assistance. The effectiveness of the assistance depends on the efficient functioning of the governmental machinery which will ensure that it is used to develop the economic resources of the country. Above all, the government must be in a position to follow up the work of a technical assistance mission by long term efforts of its own personnel, and by adequate financial support for the project which has been initiated.

Technical assistance provided for Jordan has been largely connected with the integration of former refugees into the social and economic life of the country. A major limiting factor in the provision of technical assistance to Jordan has been the difficulty of the Government in meeting even the local costs of such assistance, which the Governments receiving technical assistance are required to bear. The Board considered the situation and decided that in view of the serious financial difficulties involved, Jordan should be exempted completely from this obligation until the end of 1952.\(^\text{18}\)

Five Specialized Agencies have aided Jordan and UNRWA in their work with the refugees. They are the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and the International Labor Organization (ILO).

Technical assistance from FAO comes in the following areas: national program preparatory missions, rural development, land and water utilization, conservation and development, crop improvement, farm organization and management, nutrition, food management, and rural industries. In Jordan it has assisted in the development of plans which would absorb the refugees in productive employment and increase the food supply by providing an agricultural economist to work with the Ministry of Development and Reconstruction of the Jordanian Government.

With the assistance of UNESCO, which provides technical leadership and some financial support, UNRWA has developed an educational system for the refugees which compares favorably with the government schools on the elementary level. The main concern of the Education Division of UNRWA has been primary education. As more refugee students complete their elementary education, vocational centers are set up for the secondary stages.
Those few students who wish to continue their formal education are financially supported by UNRWA funds, enabling them to go to government schools. Grants and scholarships have been set up for students who wish to go on to college. Careful screening of applicant qualifications has been employed on the secondary and college levels. Due to the fact that Jordan had no universities of its own, they generally went to a neighboring Near East country. A few have attended Western colleges.

Vocational training has proven as important, if not more so, than formal education. Not only UNESCO, but FAO, WHO and ILO have all provided experts in their fields to aid in the training of the refugees for the purpose of becoming self-supporting. The Vocational Training Center at Kalandia provides courses for electricians, radio mechanics, wiremen, blacksmiths, welders, plumbers, carpenters, builders, draughtsmen and automotive engineers. In the vocational training program, it has been necessary to consider the demands of the Jordanian economy in order to prevent an overabundance of qualified persons in any one vocational area.

The Near East area is in the subtropical zone and, for centuries, has been the site of insect-born epidemics (plague, typhus and malaria). As an under-developed country, Jordan has had to face vast health problems.
The headquarters of WHO in Geneva has undertaken the technical direction of the UNRWA health program through the Chief Medical Officer supplied the Agency by WHO. In addition, it has provided two staff members for technical supervision purposes. The WHO program falls into two categories: introduction of improved techniques and materials for the organization of public health services and control of specific diseases; and the training of technical personnel. 19 Experts have been furnished in the fields of venereal disease control, trachoma, nutrition, environmental sanitation, nursing, maternal and child health and health education. 20 It is being increasingly realized by both the refugees and the indigenous population that the health services offered are valuable. Even though the frontier villages and 'economic' refugees are not eligible for rations, UNRWA has made it clear that they are welcome at the health clinics set up for the refugees.

UNICEF was established for the purpose of bringing assistance to children of war-devastated areas and to


raise the level of child health conditions. Since November of 1952, UNICEF has not made contributions to the refugee mothers and children except in contributions in kind. The reason put forth by the Executive Board was that UNRWA had assumed these responsibilities. UNICEF provides the imported supplies and equipment required while WHO, FAO and the United Nations Social Welfare Advisors provide the technical assistance required by the government both in planning and implementing the programs. For example, UNICEF operates no medical programs of its own, but it provides supplies without which such programs could not be started, including vaccines, penicillin, streptomycin and certain equipment not otherwise available. Along with several other of the Specialized Agencies, it has assisted persons in need who are not within UNRWA's mandate. This includes about 50,000 inhabitants of the frontier villages between Israel and Jordan.

ILO helps UNRWA particularly regarding recruitment of staff for its vocational training program. The vocational center at Kalandia, near Jerusalem, was set


up on the advice and with the technical assistance of ILO. Training began in December of 1953. Other areas of ILO assistance have been expert advice in analysis of manpower requirements, training needs, development of placement services and other labor problems relative to the refugees. 23

Notwithstanding the advances made by UNRWA and the Specialized Agencies by June 1955, the objective of the work program, cutting out direct relief, had not been attained. At its ninth session, the General Assembly extended the Agency's mandate for a period of five years ending 30 June 1960. It had become increasingly clear that the economic, political and social obstacles to rehabilitation were more serious than had been anticipated. The need for relief services will continue for a long period of time.

JORDAN

Jordan is unique in that about half the refugees are in its boundaries. Outside Jordan, the greatest concentration of refugees is in Gaza which has about 200,000 as compared to almost 500,000 in Jordan. Because of the unproductive nature of Gaza, there appears no immediate solution concerning resettlement. In the other host countries, the refugees number less than 100,000 per country and have been integrated into the host economy. Most of these refugees are of the professional class rather than the fellahin who are dominant in Jordan.

In order to understand the economic, political and social obstacles facing UNRWA in its rehabilitation work with the refugees in Jordan, it is essential to consider the reasons for the Jordanian policies. Society and tradition explain much about Near Eastern political ideas, such as Jordan’s reactions to Western ideas of government and nationalism; Jordan’s position in the Arab League is another deciding influence. These plus other factors must be understood if one is to comprehend why Jordan does not always agree with UNRWA policies.

Jordan owes its importance, both in Near East politics and in world affairs, to the fact that it is strategically located. The area which today is known as the
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan lies along an important highway connecting Syria in the north with Arabia and Egypt in the south. Through the centuries it has been held by various outside powers not for its own value, but because of the political and strategic advantages which it offers.

The total area of Jordan, estimated from 36,715 to 39,500 square miles, is about the size of the state of Indiana. Previous to the partition of Palestine, it used what are now Israeli ports for access to the sea. Since the Arab-Israeli War, Jordan has been forced to look elsewhere. With the help of the United Nations Technical Assistance Program, the Jordanians have been able to build up the port of Aqaba (on the Red Sea gulf) to the point where it has become a regular port of call for major shipping lines. This coast of a mere few miles is the only Jordanian access to the sea. Geographically, the East Bank of Jordan (formerly Transjordan) is divided into two unequal parts. The smaller part, immediately east of the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, is the home of the sheep and goat nomads with a narrow range of grazing. To the east and south of this area is the region of the camel nomads with large grazing territories. The

West Bank (formerly Arab Palestine) contains only sheep and goat nomads. Farming location is dictated by water resources, either rainfall or irrigation.

The basic division of the land into desert and farming area is reflected in the division of the population into nomads and the settled. The nomads live in the desert while the settled people remain on the cultivated land. The nomad is gradually becoming a thing of the past as he begins to realize that the farmer is better off than he in many ways. Many of the nomads begin by farming their land on the edge of the desert (which has been granted to them by the Government) in the summer only. But someone must stay on the land the year round in order to prevent encroachment by others. Thus the nomads, settling down only for a few months at first, eventually are giving up their wandering life completely.

Jordan society in its present state came into being when King Abdullah annexed Arab Palestine to form the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on April 24, 1950.² It must be kept in mind that Jordan's society is one which is in a transition from traditional patterns to modern ones. The West Bank (Arab Palestine) ² under the British mandate

²Ibid., 448-9.
since World War I, underwent different cultural and social experiences than the East Bank (Transjordan), which was proclaimed an Emirate in 1923. As such, the East Bank was independent in practically all matters, under British control only in foreign relations, financial policy and jurisdiction over foreigners. Transjordan continued primarily as an agricultural society in which one was either very rich or very poor, there being no middle class. In contrast, by the end of the mandatory period, a considerable percentage of the Palestinian Arabs had become urbanized; a middle class as well as an urban proletariat had begun to emerge. With urbanization came literacy and blending of the various classes, in contrast to the closed village society, fostering conditions for success of the democratic system of government. As a result, the attitudes of the Palestinians and the Transjordanians toward each other resembled those of the Middle East as a whole to the Western world, admiration coupled with resentment and the wish to reject.

Nationalism and the democratic system of government are new and strange to the Near East area. For four centuries preceding World War I, Jordan and her neighbors were under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. After the war, Britain became the new master under the mandate

\[5\text{Ibid.}, 50.\]
system of the League of Nations. Up to a generation ago, the idea of nationhood in the Western sense was completely unknown in Jordan. In fact, many people today feel that the state of Jordan was created artificially in order to satisfy the interests of the imperialistic foreign power, Great Britain. The foreigner, the focal point of opposition, is an important factor in the feelings of nationhood. Opposition to external power is a more accepted basis for nationalism than support of a cause of internal importance. As a result of centuries under foreign control (Ottoman Turks, then Britain), political action means negative opposition to governmental policies rather than positive action. This is evident even today in the internal politics of Jordan. Street demonstrations and mob disturbances are a favorite modern day evidence of this negative attitude toward government which has been carried down to today. Jordan, with no past history of independent statehood, possesses no traditional, sentimental basis upon which to build nationalism. Present-day independence and territorial boundaries are so new that the people have not yet had time to become used to the idea of nationalism.

Tradition in Jordan is interwoven with religion, one indistinguishable from the other. Virtually all tradition is religious and all religion is surrounded
by tradition. Islam is more than a religion; it is a
way of life with a complete manual for behavior. As
such it touches every facet of life, including politics
and government. Islam teaches that all Muslims are equal;
whatever a person's race or color, he must not be judged
by that but rather by the fact of his being a member of
Islam. Descent is by the paternal line only. A person
is counted as a descendant of his father, not of his
mother or her ancestors. With this practice in mind,
there is little difficulty in recognizing the cause for
resentment by the people of the Near East at being consid-
ered by the West as inferior because of not being white.

Kinship and blood-relationship form the basis for
social organization in the village, which is the social
unit. Many small villages are inhabited by families
who regard themselves as related, being the descendants
of one common patrilineal ancestor. Even political forma-
tions along party lines have started as quasi-familial
associations with the kin-group character. Loyalty to
the family ties still takes precedence in most cases over
loyalty to any other larger social group, including the
state. In-group coherence means closed ranks against the
out-group. This closed society is a great impediment to
the attempt to integrate the refugees into native Jordanian
villages. The refugees themselves have lived in the same
type of village in Arab Palestine and are not eager to associate with those outside their own clan. In the larger towns, such as the capital Amman, the process of urbanization is more encouraging to the settlement and acceptance of the refugees. Even so, there are still many urban clans which live in their own section in the towns.

The Arabs are proud and touchy, ready to suspect an insult. To hate one's enemy is not only natural but considered one's duty. When someone claims to forgive an enemy, his sincerity is doubted and a trap is suspected. Hate for Israel is natural. To forgive Israel would be insincerity personified. Since Abdullah's death (July 20, 1949), government declarations and speeches have included mention either of intention of attack on Israel or determination not to make peace or negotiate with the Jews. On the West Bank especially, there is also distrust of Britain and the United States who are held responsible for the creation and continued existence of the State of Israel.

In Jordan, as in the other Arab countries, there is no tradition of public service. Citizens do not engage in political activity in order to serve their country alone; anyone who enters politics does so with the aim of personal advancement. The Arabs see nothing dishon-
erable about this. In fact they accept nepotism and corruption as part of political life.

Jordan's present Constitution was promulgated on January 8, 1952 under the brief reign of King Talal. As set up under it, the state of Jordan is a hereditary monarchy with a representative government. The King, with wide powers over the executive, legislative and judicial branches, appoints the Prime Minister, and may dismiss individual ministers or the entire cabinet. He also appoints the members of the Upper Chamber of the legislature, the Council of Notables. The Lower Chamber, the Council of Representatives, is elected; but the King may dissolve it in which case general elections must be held in order that a new council may convene within four months. All laws must be confirmed by the King; however, his vote may be overridden by two-thirds vote of both chambers. The King is commander-in-chief of the armed forces. All Cabinet decisions are issued in his name. He is immune from all liability for his acts. No citizen may be discriminated against on grounds of race, religion or language. It follows that the Kingdom of Jordan does not recognize the existence of minorities. Press censorship may only be imposed in a

period of martial law or a state of emergency. In case of an emergency, the National Defense Law goes into effect which provides for all necessary steps to secure the defense of Jordan. If necessary ordinary laws may be suspended in order to attain that end. The National Defense Law comes into force only by decision of the Council of Ministers and a declaration issued by royal decree. 5

On August 11, 1952, the bicameral Parliament deposed Talal because of mental disabilities and proclaimed his minor son, Crown Prince Hussein, King of Jordan. It has been up to this young man, who took over his duties on his eighteenth birthday, to face opposition both from inside and outside Jordan in an attempt to prevent complete dissolution of his state. One method which he has used is the granting of tracts of state land to the Bedouin nomads. In doing this, he has gained their loyalty which proved helpful in preventing an attempted military coup de stat.

Jordan almost alone endured the material damages on the Arab side of the war in 1948-1949 with the Jordanian Arab Legion as the main force of the Arab military effort. Other members of the Arab League contributed only token forces. Yet Jordan is by far the poorest of the major

5Ibid., 91.
Arab countries and possesses the smallest population. Half the refugees fled to Jordanian soil. Still the larger Arab countries, who only had their pride injured, have denounced Jordan as lukewarm. If Jordan had attempted peace with Israel, the other Arab countries would have turned on her, urging the refugees in Jordan to rebel. The truth is that the Egyptian government led the Arab League to war in May of 1948 against the advice of Jordan. 6 Egyptian leadership failed, but the Arab Legion gained prestige and even saved a considerable portion of Palestine. Egypt, thereafter, needed an excuse for her failure and was also jealous of the victories of the Arab Legion. The fact that the Legion had been trained and led by British officers was intolerable to the dignity of Egypt and was in conflict with the anti-British trend of Egyptian policy. The Egyptian government made many efforts to create incidents on the Jordanian front. Agents visited refugee camps in Jordan, offering money and weapons to those who would carry out sabotage raids into Israel. Egypt wants to destroy Jordan and is willing to use Israel as the instrument of destruction if necessary. 7 Israel, aware of this, sees an opportunity to advance to


7 Ibid., 250.
the Jordan River or beyond in the event of Jordan's demise, Headmen of frontier villages were sent for by the Egyptian Embassy in Amman and offered money for raiding in Israel. Some of these people have given sworn statements to the Jordan police as to what happened between them and the Egyptian Embassy. Jordan passed a special law making mere crossing of the demarcation line an offense punishable by six months in prison, even without a connected criminal offense. 8 Not satisfied with accusing the King of Jordan and his Cabinet of secretly negotiating with Israel, Egypt has even openly incited the refugees to assassinate the King and his family.

Jordan is faced with hostility and adverse conditions on all sides. The Egypt-Syrian clique, on the Arab side, and Israel would welcome a collapse of the Jordanian government. To add to the situation, Jordan is so poor that British aid has been necessary to prevent bankruptcy. The Jordanian balance of trade has an over-all yearly deficit usually covered by foreign aid contributions. The country relies heavily on Western foreign aid not only to support the refugee population but to meet needs in other fields. The unfavorable economic position is due to the underdevelopment of Jordanian economy, limited productive powers, and the recently added refugees.

8 Ibid., 285-6.
Industry has been unimportant as a basis for livelihood. Although its significance is on the increase, it plays only a minor role in the national economy. Because of the presence of the refugees, the lack of natural resources, and the slow rate of economic development, unemployment is high. Jordan is able to survive only because of international aid, part of which has been from UNRWA which spent $10,453,000 during the period 1950-1956. With nomads and villagers constituting seventy per cent of Jordan’s population it is not difficult to understand why industry makes little headway. On 13 March 1957, the treaty between Britain and Jordan ended, cutting off all military and economic links between the two countries. On January 19 Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria had signed in Cairo a joint ten-year pact with Jordan, promising $36,000,000 annually in replacement of the British subsidy.

In spite of the feeling of relatedness to the Arab culture and the other Arab Near East countries, Pan-Arab endeavors run counter to the interest of Jordanian nationalism and in reality constitute a challenge to Jordan’s very political existence. The creation of the Arab League recognized common interest and aspirations, the better-

\(^9\) Patai, op. cit., 112.

\(^{10}\) Ibid., 63-4.
ment of the Arab world. But Egypt seeks the position of leader and feels that Jordan is a threat to the achievement of that end. The threat must be eliminated.

Israel is considered a threat not only to Jordan but to the whole Arab world. A hostile culture has been imposed and supported by the Western world. The greatest fear of the Arabs is that Israel will not only survive but expand and eventually take over the whole Near East. Evidence to support this fear has already been seen in the extra territory beyond that originally delegated in the partition of Palestine which Israel retained at the end of the Arab-Israeli War.

Last, but certainly not least, is the threat of the United Nations and the Western powers. True, UNRWA supports one-third of Jordan's population; but the Jordanians consider this as highly dangerous and a menace to the new, rigidly guarded Jordanian sovereignty. Although aid is accepted from the Western powers, they (especially Great Britain and the United States) are viewed with much suspicion because they also support Israel which, like Jordan, is unable to exist without outside aid.
CONCLUSION

The Palestine problem still existed in 1955. UNRWA's mandate was to have expired in June 1954. Surely a solution would be found by then, in four years. No solution was found, or has been found. No permanent peace settlement has been made. The Arab States, including Jordan, insist that the refugee problems of repatriation and resettlement must be settled before other phases of the Palestine problem are considered. Israel counters that the issue of the refugees and their claims is an integral part of the whole Palestine question and can only be considered at the same time and along with other phases of the controversy. Meanwhile half a million refugees remain on United Nations relief in Jordan, half a million citizens of Jordan who demand either repatriation to the hostile Jewish state of Israel or compensation for their abandoned property. They are ceasing to believe in the possibility of return to Israel, but this does not prevent them from insisting on it because consideration of any other solution would mean surrender of their rights.

It is no wonder that Israel refuses to repatriate the now Jordanian citizens who would constitute a hostile minority. Added to the political objections by Israel is the fact that the new Jewish immigrants since the
Arab-Israeli War have been placed in abandoned Arab homes. There actually is no place for the refugees to come back to even if there were no other obstacle to their return.

Charges and counter-charges as to the responsibility for the war are of secondary importance when compared to the problem of the future of the refugees. Thus far they have been a political issue, used by the Arab world in what it sincerely believes is a fight for its life against the infidel Jew.

In 1954, there was an attitude survey carried out among the refugees. A considerable minority still wanted a war of liberation, convinced that the Arabs and Jews could never live together in peace. The majority seemed willing to accept the existence of Israel or an Arab-Jewish state. Qualifications attached by the refugees were that, first, territorial adjustment be made at Israel's expense and, second, that the Arab-Jewish state be established on either a federal or cantonal basis, similar to Switzerland. 1

The refugees object to permanent resettlement outside Israel. In this stand they are supported by the host states. Propaganda by the Arab governments points to the assertion that the Palestine affair still has not been

1Fatai, op. cit., 83-4.
finally settled. Most of the refugees are willing to consider migration as a temporary economic solution while awaiting the outcome of the conflict. This group comes primarily from the young, those with few dependents, the educated refugees, the privileged few with some economic security, those with professional status in society, and the element who do not want war of liberation. In contrast, deterrents to the temporary migration include age, large number of dependents, poor living level, lack of higher education, weak economic motivation, hate and vengeance resulting in a desire for political war. 2

The United Nations has participated in every phase of the problem: partition, war, truce, relief and economic aid. Through UNRWA and the Specialized Agencies, the Western world has attempted to provide temporary relief to the refugees while aiding Jordan, and others, to progress technologically and economically from its medieval phase to present-day standards.

The United Nations, the Western world and Jordan's neighbors must learn that the new Hashemite Kingdom is highly conscious of her position in world affairs. Strategic location in the crossroads of the world is Jordan's only claim to importance. Economically, the parliamentary monarchy is not even self-supporting.

2Ibid., 84-5.
Perhaps, largely because of these two facts, strategic location and economic dependence, Jordan must guard her newly found sovereignty with the greatest of care. UNRWA is required to tread carefully in its duty of supporting one-third of the Jordanian citizens. Financial aid is accepted from the Western world and from Near Eastern neighbors with the understanding that Jordan's sovereignty is not to be infringed upon.

John Glubb, former British officer in charge of the Arab Legion, in his book *A Soldier with the Arabs*, proposed a solution which would have consisted of decentralization. Every industry, with agriculture naturally in the lead, which promised success would be encouraged and expanded. These would be industries already existing, which were paying their way and possessed experienced staff. They would receive aid to extend their operations and hire more labor. "No mention whatever of the refugees need have been made—if Jordan becomes prosperous, the refugees would gradually disappear." 3 This of course must be done without a hint of infringement on Jordanian sovereignty.

But economics is not the only problem to be solved. The political situation with its high state of tension, not only between the Arabs and the Jews but among the Arabs themselves, cannot be ignored. Neither solution

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solely of Jordan's economic problems nor solely of her political dilemma will eliminate the refugees. Both are integral facets of the crisis. Perhaps with continued sincere effort, the political situation may become at least tolerable. In addition, Jordan must advance to self-support through technological aid from the Western world. In accepting this aid, Jordan may come to understand that the United Nations and the Western world are also interested in maintaining Jordanian sovereignty.

The Agency continues its work within the limits imposed by the political aspects of the Palestine problem. In spite of political crises, it continues providing essential supplies and services. In Jordan, the failure of negotiations for revision of the agreement between the Agency and the Government of Jordan was stated in the Agency's Annual Report covering the period 1 July 1957 to 30 June 1958. Since its establishment in 1950, UNRWA has spent $241,442 on relief and $49,475 on rehabilitation, totaling $290,917. In a statistical account, UNRWA listed 586,706 registered refugees in Jordan as of 31 December 1958. There were still 25 camps in Jordan


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with a camp population of 189,898 (as compared with 110,655 in 1950). 6 These Palestine refugees continue being used today as a political issue by the Arab Governments in their attempt to eject the Jewish State of Israel from the Near East, claiming the area as theirs politically and, more important, culturally.

6 Ibid., 4.
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