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

Note by the Secretary-General

Since the publication, on 2 October 1970, of the special report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East on operations of the Agency in Jordan (A/8084), the Secretary-General has received from the Commissioner-General a further report on the subject. This report is transmitted herewith to the Members of the General Assembly.

Additional report of the Commissioner-General of the
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine
Refugees in the Near East on operations of the Agency
in Jordan

1. The Commissioner-General reports with regret that eleven local staff members of UNRWA were killed in the fighting which took place in east Jordan in the last half of September. The total number of deaths among the refugees registered with UNRWA is not known, but it is now believed to be lower than estimates reported in the press at the time of the hostilities. The lower casualty rate was due in part to the fact that many refugee families left the congested camp areas in Amman before or in the early stages of the fighting.
2. Emergency arrangements for medical care for the wounded and the provision of food-stuffs and water to those in urgent need, which had begun in September, were continued in October while normal facilities were being restored. The International Committee of the Red Cross had a leading role in these arrangements and many Governments and non-governmental organizations participated generously. UNICEF was an early and effective contributor. The Agency gave supply and transport assistance to these efforts and UNRWA and its staff, working also as individual volunteers, helped organize food convoys from the West Bank. In addition, UNRWA sent ambulances, water tankers, trucks and other vehicles into Jordan east of the Jordan River from other areas.
3. The restoration of regular UNRWA services in Jordan east of the Jordan River, which had begun at the time of the Commissioner-General's earlier report of 30 September 1970, made rapid progress in the early days of October. Health and sanitation services were already functioning, water was being distributed to the most needy areas, and regular food distribution was resumed from 1 October onwards. Over 5,000 tons of food-stuffs were distributed during October; full distribution was made to all authorized recipients for that month, as well as for a large part of the backlog for the last half of September. By 13 October, all UNRWA relief and health services, including supplementary feeding and milk distribution were operating fully.

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4. Schools operated by UNRWA and UNESCO will be reopened at the same time as government schools, hopefully by mid-November. Schoolbuildings, especially in the Amman area, were badly damaged. Until repairs can be carried out, many classrooms will be unusable. Some 30,000 schoolchildren will be affected. The only way in which classes can be arranged for many of them will be in large (marquee) tents. An appeal for such tents has been launched, and there are hopes that at least a good part of the number required will be forthcoming.
5. The cost of repairing UNRWA schools, training centres, clinics and other installations (but excluding shelter) will be about \$200,000, and the cost of replacing furniture, equipment, supplies and vehicles will require a further \$200,000. If it should be necessary to purchase large marquee tents for classrooms, this could amount to as much as \$300,000 more. As mentioned above, it is hoped that this need will be met, at least to a large extent, by contributions of tents. Other costs may have to be met, possibly including compensation if the injury or death of any staff member is found to be attributable to UNRWA service.
6. The Commissioner-General's earlier report estimated that the cost of repairing and reconstructing refugee shelters and of providing family tents in the meantime "might be in the order of \$2 million". Since then, the refugees themselves have been very active in clearing away the debris and repairing their damaged shelters. They are being assisted by a self-help project operated by one of the non-governmental organizations. Some family-sized tents have been donated by other organizations and further contributions are expected.
7. It is hoped that the efforts of the refugees themselves and the assistance being provided by other organizations will go far to meet the need for shelters. So far UNRWA has not committed any funds for this purpose, and would be unable to do so from its existing resources.
8. Even though some of the requirements foreseen in the Commissioner-General's previous report are now being met in other ways - by the refugees themselves or by other organizations - the financial impact on UNRWA of the events in Jordan will still be very considerable, and additional contributions for this purpose are required.

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9. The Agency is already facing a deficit of \$5 million during 1970, and faces an estimated shortfall of some \$6.5 million in 1971. Therefore, unless adequate additional funds are made available now, UNRWA will be unable to maintain its programme during 1971 at the present level. As the Secretary-General has warned Member States (A/8040), reductions in UNRWA's programme would inevitably, in the disturbed conditions of the area, have a profoundly unsettling effect.
