

relief rolls, the Agency has been unable to care for eligible refugee children born in Jordan since February 1951. We appreciate the difficulties of the Jordan Government, but nevertheless hope that it will soon see fit to implement the agreement reached between the Government of Jordan and the Agency in October 1955 on procedures for rectifying the relief rolls and for resolving the difficulties which impede the granting of rations to all qualified children in Jordan.

Rehabilitation Programme

Turning to the Agency's programme of rehabilitation, Mr. Chairman, I must again express our disappointment that political considerations have prevented steps being taken to implement the Yarmuk-Jordan and Sinai projects which, if undertaken, would make a significant contribution toward a solution of the refugee problem and would be of great economic benefit to the area. In addition to the political obstacles to rehabilitation schemes, the Agency now faces financial obstacles to carrying out any extensive programme of self-help projects. My Delegation welcomes the suggestion that the Agency contribute to plans for the general economic development of Jordan, but until such time as the Agency finds itself with more funds at its disposal, we do not think the Assembly should enlarge the Agency's mandate to permit expenditures by it upon general economic development programmes with which the immediate employment or self-support of refugees might not be directly connected. In our view, the Agency should undertake projects only where the money so spent will result in a proportionate reduction in the funds now required for the Agency's relief programme.

In regard to the Agency's educational facilities -- financed out of rehabilitation funds -- the Director's report has mentioned requests for an expansion of the programme. We attach great importance to the provision of greater educational opportunities to refugee children, but we fail to see how UNRWA can be directed to expand its educational programme at a time when its finances are shrinking.

It is, of course, our hope that the Agency will be able to pursue its present programmes of education and self-help projects, but we urge that this be done without prejudice to the Agency's primary responsibility for the feeding, shelter and health of the refugees. We, of course, concur in the assumption made by the Director in his report that if the Agency should find itself without sufficient funds to carry on all its present programmes, there should be no reduction in basic rations. We also believe that the Agency should endeavour to maintain the essentials of medical care. Indeed, it seems to us that health care is so necessary that it should be maintained in preference to any of the items, including education, now part of the rehabilitation programme.