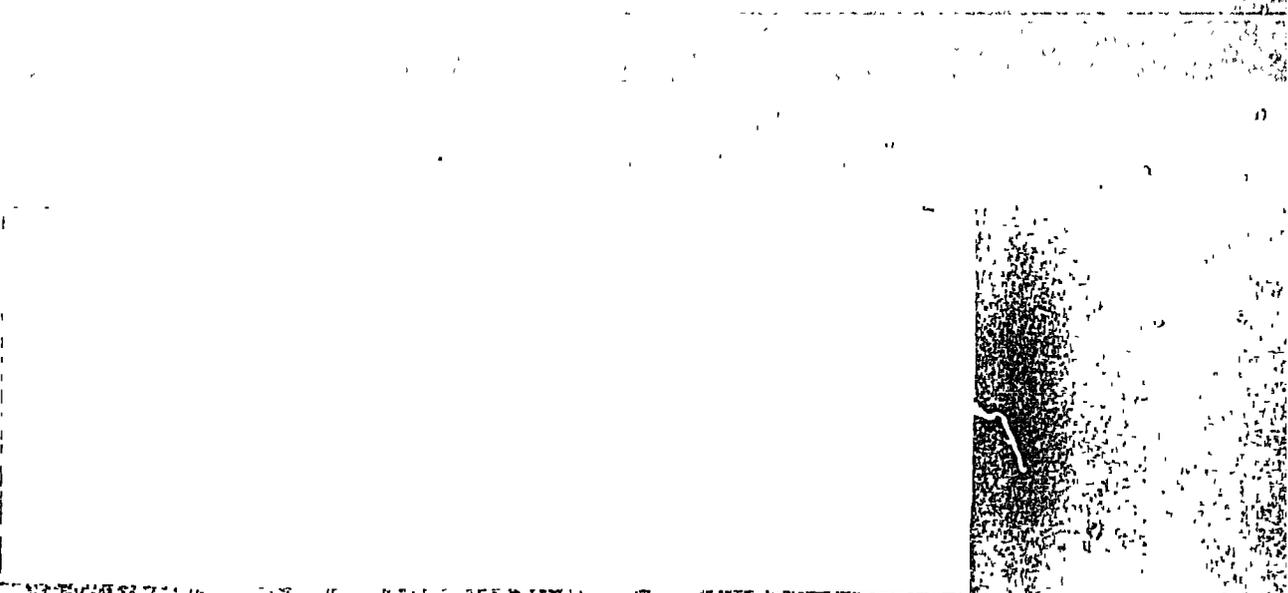


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CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES
Near East



FILE

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INCREASED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY

SEMI ANNUAL REPORT

GRANT NO. NEB - 0159 - 5123 - 00

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I. HISTORICAL REVIEW:

In April of 1985, CRS/JWB was granted \$156,300 to increase agricultural productivity in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In 1986, Two MENA multicroppers were demonstrated and field tested in Gaza during June and July to improve traditional post harvesting methods. Farmer reaction to these machines was good and a demand was observed. Therefore, in 1987, an agricultural specialist was employed as a project manager to manage the multicroppers and further develop the Increased Agricultural Productivity program by determining additional agricultural needs of the area.

II. PROJECT STAFF:

One project manager was employed to direct the Increased Agricultural Productivity component of the Rural Development grant during this period. In addition, a driver from the CRS/JWB VIP program, grant No. AID/NEB-4068 was transferred to the program to serve as an agricultural mechanization field agent. Employment positions for a secretary and extension agent are planned for the next period.

III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES:

III. 1. Agriculture overview of Occupied Territories:

An overview of the agricultural situation describing current farming practices and on going programs by private volunteer organizations (PVO's) was required to define the needs of the area and provide direction for CRS in planning its agricultural activities. For this reason, CRS contacted different sources to discuss the perceived agricultural needs of Palestinian farmers. The sources included:

- Agricultural manufacturers of farming implements.
- Palestinian farmers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
- Carla Maged USAID/W
- Scott Loney US Embassy, Tel Aviv
- Nick Burns US Consulate, Jerusalem
- PVO's, Community Development Foundation - Shenadeh Dajjani, Chris George, Agricultural Cooperative Development International - Donald Hovendick.
- Menonites - Harold Dick.

Conclusions drawn from these discussions confirmed CRS's original thinking to concentrate on improving dryland agricultural production.

III. 2. Machinery:

Multicropper

As previously mentioned, in 1986, CRS/JWB disseminated two MENA multicroppers into the Gaza Strip. Although initial farmer reaction was positive, problems occurred which included:

- Delays in the port by the Government of Israel custom officials.
- Engine problems with the Hatz FG 89 diesel motors.
- Transportation of the machines from location to location in the field.

To resolve these problems, CRS has pursued local manufacture of the machine and is in the final stages of reaching an agreement to produce the multicropper in JWB. The machine will be designed to address the mechanical and logistical problems experienced last season and modifications will be added to adapt it to local conditions.

In addition, the two MENA multicroppers have been improved, by constructing a stronger chassis, increasing the size of the wheels, removing the front wheels and attaching a swivel hitch so that transportation of the machines can be done easily.

Reader Harvester

To complement the use of the multicropper, a small reaper-harvester machine will be disseminated into the Gaza Strip area to assist the farmers in harvesting their crops.

This machine is available through a Palestinian engineering firm and has been proven successful on the West Bank. CRS/JWB plans to purchase and field test the machines to determine farmer demand for this implement. Efforts to coordinate activities between the engineering firm and farmers are planned to achieve the following:

- Improve farmer/agricultural implement dealer linkages to further develop the private sector.
- Determine additional agricultural needs of the farmers and attempt to fulfill these needs.

Rock Picker

To improve local field conditions for planting and harvesting on the West Bank, CRS is planning to support the local manufacture of a rock picker. This rock picker will be used prior to planting and will have the capability of removing rocks 4 cm - 100 cm in diameter. Once the rocks are removed, implements such as planters, disc plows and reaper harvesters can be used with minimal breakage. Coordination activities between the farmers and agricultural manufacturers are scheduled and small to medium size farmers will be the initial target group.

III. 3. Grant Amendment:

Finally, an Amendment to the Increased Agricultural Productivity component of the Rural Development grant No. NEB-0159-G-SS-5123-00 was written and submitted to CRS New York for review with consultation from the US Embassy - Tel Aviv and the US Consulate General - Jerusalem. The amendment is designed to further define CRS/JWB's direction in its planned increased agricultural productivity program and contains five objectives, which include:

- The selection of three agricultural implements to increase dryland production, by improving harvesting and post harvesting methods and field conditions.
- The utilization of agricultural cooperatives and individual farmers, to assist in introducing the Increased Agricultural Productivity program into the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
- The cooperation of agricultural activities with agricultural implement dealers and farmers, through farmer information days and on the farm demonstrations, to further develop the private sector and meet farmers needs.
- The increase of agricultural activity in lesser developed areas in the Gaza Strip, by establishing a CRS agricultural station in Gaza.
- The continuation of assessing current farming practices, to determine additional machinery requirements for the area.

IV. FUTURE FOCUS:

As previously mentioned, CRS will concentrate its efforts on dryland production during this next 6 month period. The rationale for this decision is based on the current situation confronting farmers, which is as follows:

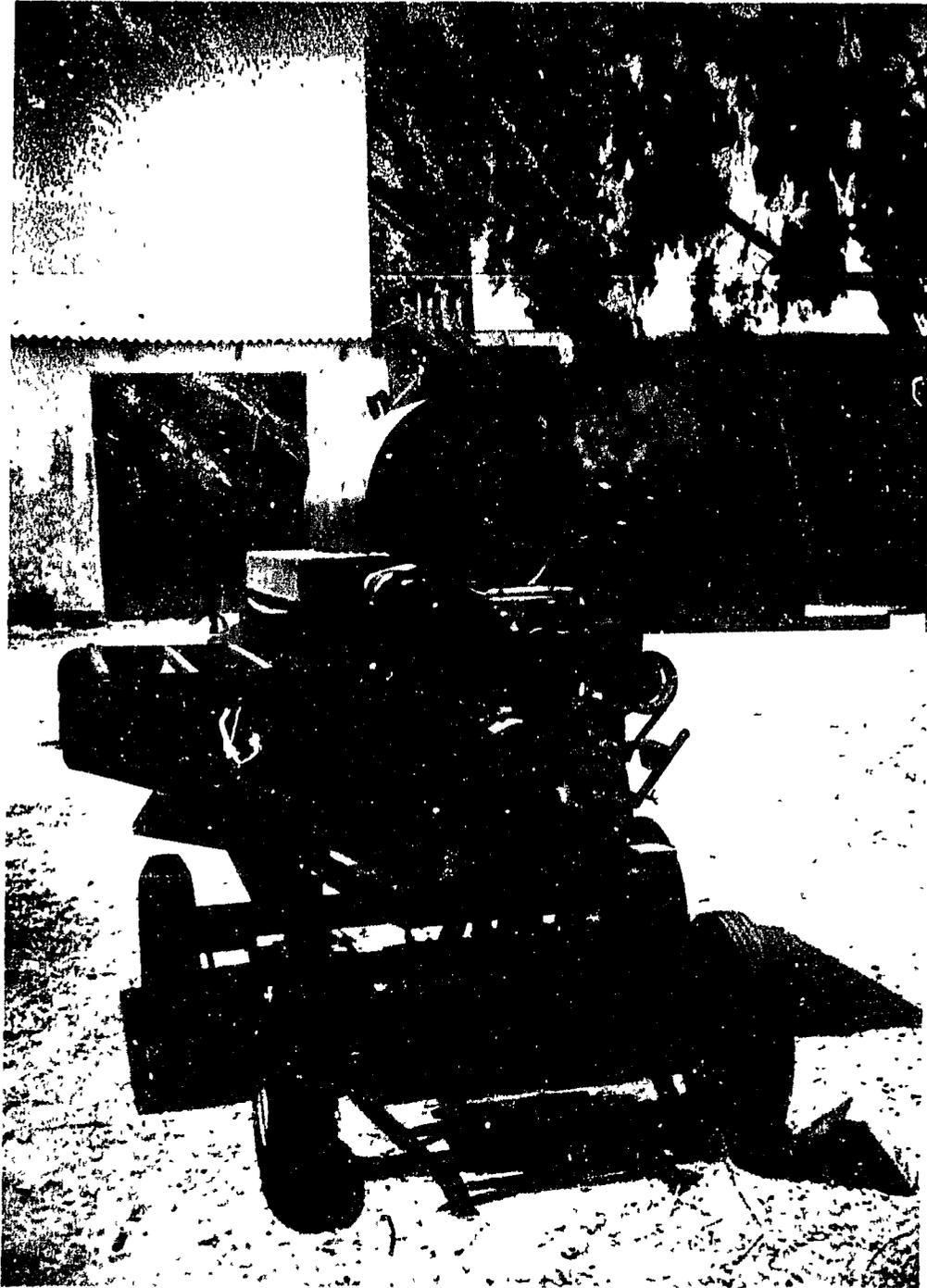
- The demand for dryland products such as wheat, barley, lentils, chickpeas and broadbeans exceed the supply.
- The market for fruits and vegetables is currently experiencing major difficulties and efforts to increase production in this sector may hinder the farmers instead of improve their situation.
- It should be noted, however that vegetable and fruit production will not be disregarded if CRS sees needs that can be addressed in this area of agricultural production. CRS will continue to assess the agricultural situation of the Palestinian farmers by doing extensive field work, holding farmer information days and conducting on the farm demonstrations.

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A P P E N D I C I E S

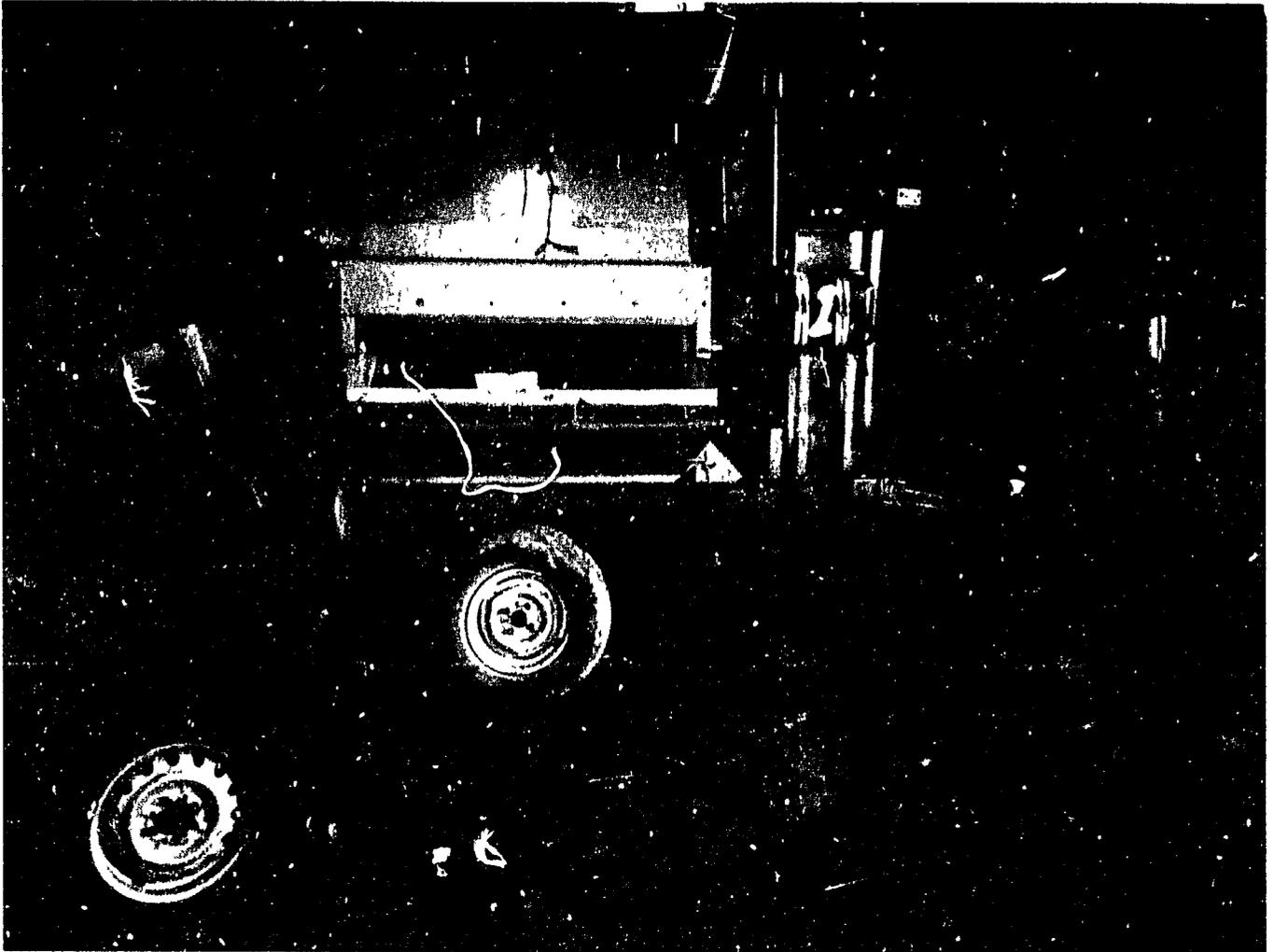
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APPENDIX A: Multicropper Photographs



The CRS/MENA multicropper: In the 1986 harvest season, this machine worked 120 hours in the Gaza Strip and improved winnowing and threshing post harvest operations considerably.

APPENDIX A: (Cont.)



The CRS/MENA multicropper modified for JWB's field conditions. The modifications were made primarily, to improve the transportation of the machine and include:

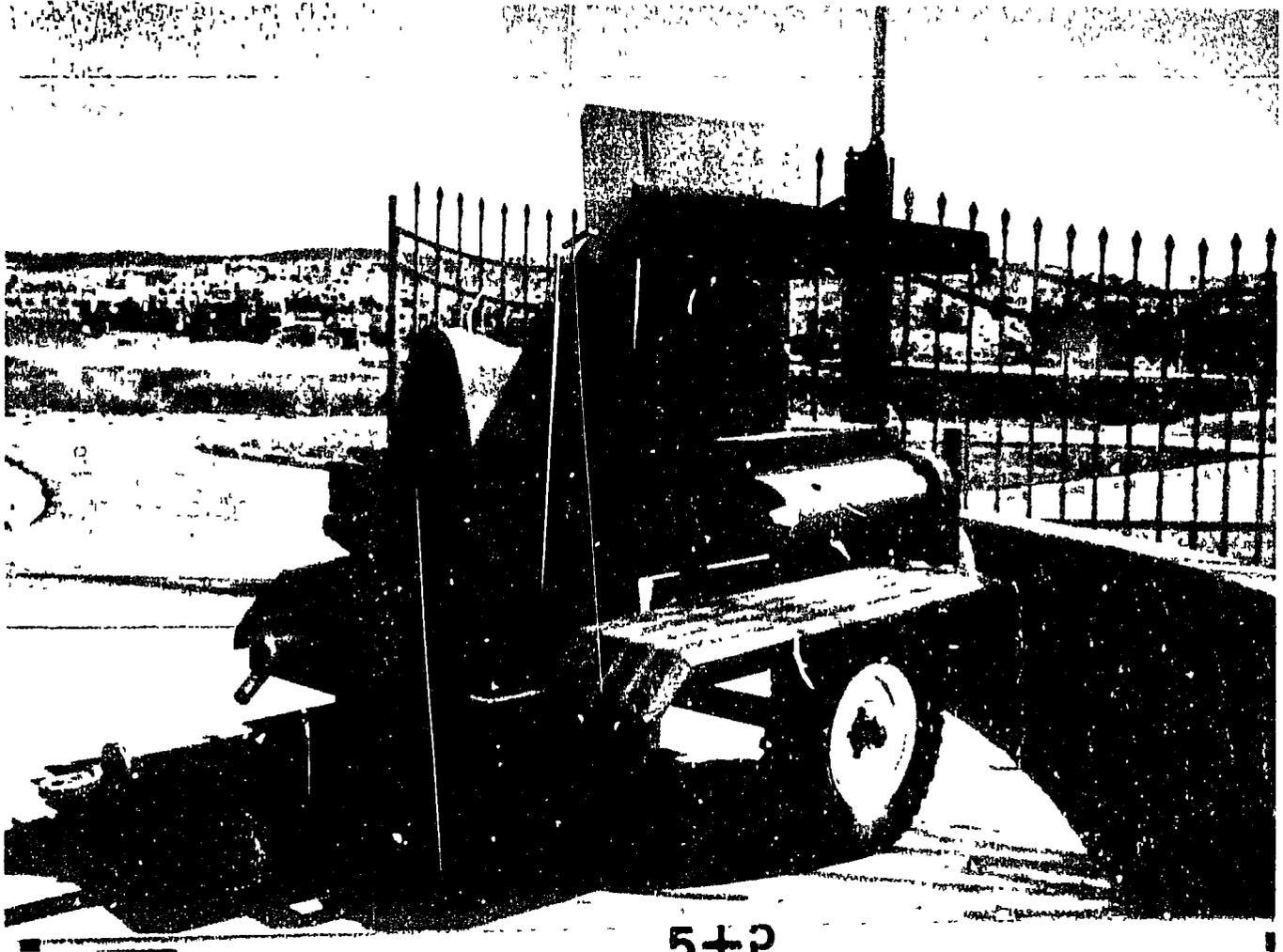
- A stronger chassis
- A wider wheel base
- A swivel-hitch for a tractor attachment

APPENDIX A: (Cont.)



The Ibrahim Haddad prototype multicropper of CRS/JWB. Haddad manufactures a variety of agricultural machinery and CRS intends to assist him in distributing the machinery in Gaza. In addition, the small business program of CRS/JWB is examining the feasibility of supporting Haddad by opening additional dealerships to better serve the farming community.

APPENDIX A: (Cont.)



Another angle of the Haddad prototype multicropper. Additional modifications have been made on the machine which include:

- Stronger Knivies
- Power Take off (PTO) attachment for tractor use
- Belt covers as an added safty feature

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APPENDIX B: Reaper Harvester Photographs



The flax 400 Reaper Harvester Binder from Transjordan Engineering, a Palestinian agricultural machinery distributor.



A farmer checking the binding efficiency of the Reaper Harvester binder. The Average output production is 2 dunums /hours (0.2 Hectares)

APPENDIX B: (Cont.)



A freshly harvested field by the flax 400. The binding unit enables CRS to obtain yield data by counting the bales and weighing a 10% sample. These bales will also allow CRS to determine yield data with the multicropper.



Issa Sa'id, CRS' field agent and some satisfied customers. Planned activity with Transjordan engineering to further disseminate additional agricultural implements into the field to increase farmer satisfaction are scheduled.

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