

closely than previously. The Committee is also happy to be able to count henceforth on Mr. Jucker who has agreed to place his profound knowledge on social realities at the service of the Red Cross in the pursuit of its humanitarian cause.

New Year Message

As in previous years, the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross sent a message to many countries as follows :

On the threshold of the New Year, as President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, I send you my greetings and best wishes; I share with you the hope that 1968 may at last see an atmosphere of peace prevailing in the world.

The events of the past year have, once again, shown that Red Cross action is increasingly necessary in a world in which each one of us is constantly haunted by the spectre of war.

Conflicts, in particular in Vietnam, the Near and Middle East, in the Yemen and Nigeria, have caused untold suffering and brought in their train sometimes dramatic consequences. If the events in Greece and in the Congo are also taken into consideration, it can be seen that the ICRC has been called upon, during the past twelve months, to undertake many varied tasks of considerable scope.

In the Middle East where the application of the Geneva Conventions was generally speaking ensured and the victims of war protected, the ICRC continues to carry out its role as a neutral intermediary.

In Nigeria, Vietnam and the Yemen, though these wars are not officially recognized as such, the ICRC has ceaselessly worked at having the provisions of humanitarian law respected and is concerning itself especially in the distressful plight of the civilian

populations. In fact, the Nigerian conflict alone has caused 500,000 refugees, whilst in the Yemen and in Vietnam war has struck and continues to inflict grave suffering both on civilians and the military without distinction. In these theatres of hostilities, the ICRC has shown itself active, often with success, after having sometimes to overcome almost insurmountable obstacles.

If the ICRC brought its assistance to the Congo at the express wish of the parties concerned, it did so essentially on the basis of resolutions of the International Conference of the Red Cross, on the principle that "prevention is better than cure" and it was finally the ICRC which ensured the subsistence of some 2,500 refugees from Bukavu when they found themselves deprived of all other resources.

There are moreover many prisoners of war absent from their homes during these holidays and countless refugees who have to face a long hard winter. The Red Cross continues to give them its aid and appeals to the public's generosity on their behalf.

May I express the hope that States and Governments, institutions and organizations as well as all men of goodwill throughout the world will continue to support the Red Cross ideal in their hearts and to provide it with the means enabling it to fulfil its mission of mercy.
