

*EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES***Africa****South Africa**

Presidential mission. — Mr. Alexandre Hay, President of the ICRC, visited South Africa from 19 to 26 April, in the company of Mr. Frank Schmidt, Delegate General for Africa. On 21 April, Mr. Hay met Mr. John Vorster, Prime Minister, Mr. R. F. Botha, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. J. Kruger, Minister of Justice, Mr. P. W. Botha, Minister of Defence, and Mr. S. van der Merwe, Minister of Health. The talks dealt mainly with humanitarian problems in southern African and in particular with the subject of detention. In this connection, the ICRC, which visits sentenced political detainees, expressed the wish to extend such visits to other categories of detainees, especially those arrested under the "Terrorism Act" and the "General Law Amendment Act".

The ICRC President, on 22 April, visited the prison on Robben Island to observe the conditions of detention of sentenced prisoners and the work of the ICRC delegates. In Johannesburg, Mr. Hay had talks with leaders of the South Africa Red Cross, who invited him to attend a meeting of their National Council. He also paid a visit to the Red Cross section in Cape Province.

Visits to places of detention. — As mentioned in the April issue of the International Review, a team of three delegates and a medical delegate had begun at the end of March a series of visits to South African places of detention. Up to 6 April, they had visited four prisons, on Robben Island, at Pretoria and Kroonstad, where they saw 373 prisoners sentenced for offences against State security.

Visit to prisoners of war. — On 26 April, the ICRC delegates visited three Cuban prisoners of war held by South Africa at Pretoria. The previous visit had been in February.

Rhodesia

Mission of Delegate General. — As reported in the last issue of *International Review*, Mr. Frank Schmidt, ICRC Delegate General for Africa, went to Rhodesia in April. He had meetings at Salisbury with the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Justice.

The ICRC, which has access to administrative detainees, asked to have this authorization extended to other categories—sentenced prisoners and those awaiting trial. This was refused by the Rhodesian authorities.

The Delegate General also had contacts with several leaders of national liberation movements, with whom he discussed themes contained in the appeal launched by President Hay at the beginning of the year, dealing with the code of conduct of parties to the conflict, the treatment of prisoners and assistance to civilian victims of the fighting. Lastly, Mr. Schmidt visited the northern region of Rhodesia, where several relief actions have been carried out by the ICRC and the local Red Cross for the inhabitants of “protected villages”.¹

Zaire

Mr. U. Bédert, regional delegate, made two visits to Zaire in April. In connection with the events taking place in Shaba province, he offered the ICRC's services for the benefit of civilian and military victims of the fighting. While thanking the ICRC for its offer, the authorities told Mr. Bédert that the situation did not require foreign humanitarian assistance. Mr. Bédert left Kinshasa on 7 April.

Botswana

After a visit to Botswana in March, referred to in the April issue of *International Review*, Mr. H. Schmid de Grüneck, ICRC regional delegate, returned to that country at the end of April. He visited refugee camps at Francistown and Selibe Pkwe and observed the distribution of relief organized by the National Red Cross and financed by 30,000 Swiss francs allocated by the ICRC.

Latin America

Chile

ICRC delegates and doctors, in April, visited 17 places of detention in Chile, seeing 86 detainees. Relief was given to them to a value of

¹ *Plate.*

3,452 dollars consisting mainly of food, toilet articles, cleaning material, sports equipment, etc. In addition, 18 parcels of medicines were sent to the prisons.

The ICRC continued to assist the families of detainees, giving relief worth 74,149 dollars to 340 families in Santiago and 815 families in the provinces.

Argentina

Visits to places of detention throughout Argentina continued during April. The ICRC also continued giving relief to detainees, in particular medicines, eyeglasses and milk in some prisons. Assistance was also given to some of the families of detainees, especially food and clothing for children.

Paraguay

On 23 April, Mr. R. Jenny, regional delegate for the southern part of South America, visited Asuncion, capital of Paraguay, to arrange for a new series of visits to places of detention.

Asia

Thailand

To assist the Thai Red Cross in its relief programme for Indo-Chinese refugees, the ICRC in April sent to Bangkok 50 tons of powdered milk donated by the European Economic Community.

Philippines

The ICRC sent to Manila 150 tons of powdered milk contributed by the EEC to help the Philippine Red Cross in its relief action for the benefit of displaced persons on Mindanao. Other shipments are planned for the months ahead.

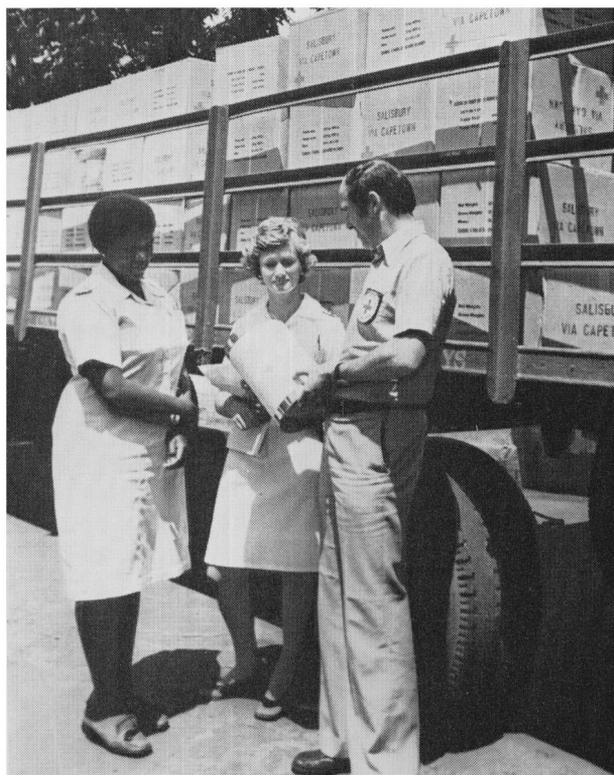
Burma

Mr. Dominique Borel, ICRC regional delegate for the Asian sub-continent, visited Burma from 14 to 23 April, on the invitation of the Burma Red Cross. After being welcomed by the leaders of the National Society, Mr. Borel visited the 6th model Red Cross Camp at Popa, east



Geneva: The Chairman and a Delegation of the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of USSR visit ICRC.

Photo J. J. Kurz/ICRC



Rhodesia: 20 tons milk powder donated by Swiss Confederation presented to Health officers by ICRC delegate.

Photo D. B. MacLennan/Salisbury



1877 — Field hospital of the Finnish Red Cross at Yerevan (Caucasus) during the Russo-Turkish War.

FINNISH RED CROSS CENTENARY

1976 — Finnish Red Cross surgical team at the ICRC field hospital in Lebanon.

Photo C. Gluntz/ICRC



of Pagan. Nearly 120 boys and girls, with a score of instructors, from 14 divisions and provinces in Burma, took part in the event. In discussions on the International Red Cross, they showed great interest in the movement begun by Henry Dunant.

The regional delegate also took up with his hosts questions concerning the dissemination of knowledge of the Geneva Conventions and Red Cross principles, and problems relating to relief.

Europe

Spain

Between 14 March and 5 May, an ICRC delegate and a doctor made a series of visits to places of detention in Spain. They entered 24 prisons and saw a total of 5,760 prisoners, of whom 212 were held for political reasons. A large number of persons in that category have since been released. In all places of detention, the ICRC delegates had talks without witnesses with detainees of their choice.

Middle East

Lebanon

The situation in Lebanon remained tense during April, both in the southern part of the country, where intermittent fighting took place, and in the capital, where numerous victims died in violent outbreaks.

The ICRC followed developments closely, especially through its delegates at Tyre in southern Lebanon, who entered the fighting zones repeatedly to judge the situation and estimate relief needs.

The programme for fitting amputees with prostheses continued, with a second visit by a team of Dutch specialists in the last half of April. Following their first visit in March to take measurements, the 18 technicians fitted the prostheses, which had meanwhile been made in Europe, to 380 handicapped persons in four centres, the American University Hospital of Beirut, the Akka centre of the "Palestinian Red Crescent" in western Beirut, the Beit Chebab centre at Jounieh and the Abu Samra centre at Tripoli. The team included eight physiotherapists and two occupational therapists who will remain for three months to retrain patients and facilitate their rehabilitation. The entire action is financed by the Netherlands Government.

Relief supplies. — The ICRC during the first quarter of 1977 delivered a total of 6,000 tons of supplies, worth 25 million Swiss francs.

Every week, the ICRC-chartered ship, the MS Kalliopi, carries several hundred tons of supplies, mainly originating in Europe, from Cyprus to Lebanese ports. In its four voyages in April, the Kalliopi delivered 2,836 tons of miscellaneous supplies, mainly food, worth 6.4 million Swiss francs.

Israel and the occupied territories

On 14 and 21 April, two transfer operations between the occupied territories of Gaza and Sinai and Cairo took place under ICRC auspices at El Khirba in the United Nations buffer zone. Forty-eight Egyptian civilians, liberated by the Israeli authorities, and 38 members of their families, went to Cairo. In the opposite direction, the bodies of 11 Israelis, including those of nine soldiers killed in the fighting in 1973, were repatriated.

On 27 April, another transfer operation was carried out at the same place. This enabled 115 visitors and 10 students to go to Cairo and, in the opposite direction, 74 visitors and 20 students to enter the occupied territories. One body was repatriated at this time from Egypt.

Syrian Arab Republic

An ICRC delegate in the Syrian Arab Republic made a tour of the northwestern part of the country from 8 to 14 April, visiting Homs, Tartus, Hama and Aleppo, to observe the assistance action for refugees from Lebanon by the Syrian Red Crescent with the co-operation of the ICRC. The delegate reported that the distribution by the National Society of mattresses, blankets, food and milk for children was perfectly organized. The "Palestinian Red Crescent", with bases at Homs and Hama, also distributed relief from the ICRC to Palestinian refugees. Reserve supplies were left with local committees of the National Society and the "Palestinian Red Crescent" to provide for possible needs in the next few weeks.

Arab Republic of Yemen

On 28 April, a new series of visits to places of detention started at Sana'a. The previous mission of the ICRC was in December 1976.