

IN GENEVA

VICE-PRESIDENCY OF THE ICRC

Mr. Hans BACHMANN will remain Vice-President of the International Committee in 1965, whilst Mr. Jacques FREYMOND has been appointed Vice-President for 1965 and 1966.

PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL

The International Committee of the Red Cross has constituted its Presidential Council for 1965 as follows : President : Mr. Samuel A. GONARD ; Vice-Presidents : Mr. Hans BACHMANN and Mr. Jacques FREYMOND ; Members : Mr. Martin BODMER, Mr. Léopold BOISSIER, Mr. Guillaume BORDIER and Mr. Frédéric SIORDET.

Delegates at the Disposal of the ICRC

The large-scale actions which the International Committee of the Red Cross undertakes in conflicts have always raised the difficult problem of recruitment. Under pressure as a result of unexpected situations, these have necessitated the immediate but temporary intervention of personnel sometimes very numerous and experienced in dealing with special and delicate tasks. Now, it is obviously impossible for the ICRC to retain large numbers of delegates permanently in its service who would remain inactive in periods of calm.

How, under these conditions, can a rapid collection be made of personnel with the necessary experience for such missions ? This problem is by way of being solved, thanks to a new body which was formed two years ago by the ICRC at the instigation of its present President, Mr. Samuel A. Gonard. This is known as the " Groupe pour missions internationales (GMI) ", a sort of reserve for delegates. Members of this group, under the direction of Mr. René de Watteville, are recruited from university circles, the medical profession and public and private undertakings. They place themselves at the disposal of the ICRC for a period of two years and are

prepared to carry out a mission for a period not exceeding six weeks.

A knowledge of languages and experience of travel are not the only requirements. No branch of instruction which can be made use of in the field has been overlooked. Amongst the members of the GMI one can in fact find, distributed over various sections, not only doctors and lawyers, but also specialists in most varied branches, such as transportation, administration, mechanical, wireless etc. . . Courses of instruction which include numerous practical exercises take place in Geneva.

Several delegates who have come from the GMI have already given much valued help to the ICRC's work in Algeria, Cyprus and the Congo.

The Arab League welcomes the President of the ICRC

On November 24, 1964, the delegation of the Arab League in Geneva gave a reception at the Arabic Information and Cultural Centre in honour of Mr. Samuel A. Gonard, the new President of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Several members and some of the ICRC's directing staff were invited, including Mr. Léopold Boissier, former President, Mr. Martin Bodmer, Vice-President, Mr. Frédéric Siordet and Mr. Max Petitpierre, members. On the Arab side, most of the chiefs of diplomatic missions accredited in Switzerland were present.

The permanent delegate of the Arab League, H. E. Moukhtar El-Wakil, Minister, delivered an address to the President of the ICRC, in which he paid glowing tribute to the work of the founder institution of the Red Cross. Some of the main passages of this speech were as follows :

The past is a guarantee for the future. The International Committee of the Red Cross has behind it a past rich with humanitarian action in which the Arab world holds high place. Your Committee, under the Presidency of your illustrious predecessor, Mr. Léopold Boissier, intervened unceasingly and in the most effective manner on behalf of the wounded and the civilian population who knew suffering in the Arab countries. From 1948, the ICRC dispensed aid during the Palestine conflict, sending relief and medical supplies, setting up hospitals. This sequence of devoted action remains moreover strong in