

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

Malaysia

Although the Malaysian Government does not accept the Geneva Conventions as being applicable to the armed conflict in which Indonesia is opposing it, the International Committee of the Red Cross has been authorized to carry out its humanitarian activity on behalf of the Indonesian victims of that conflict. Its general delegate for Asia, Mr. André Durand, visited in December 1964 and January 1965, a number of Indonesians who had fallen into the hands of the Malaysian authorities.

During his stay in Kuala Lumpur, Mr. Durand was received by Tunku Abdul Rahman, the Prime Minister, and by other government representatives who promised him all facilities to visit the Indonesian prisoners and transmit their mail. These are not considered to be prisoners of war within the meaning of the Geneva Conventions. However, on the intervention of the ICRC delegate, two Indonesian nationals under sentence of death have had an indefinite stay of execution.

The prisoners visited by the delegate were at Saremban, Johore Bahru and Singapore, as well as in Sarawak and Sabah in North Borneo. They are all detained in prison following on sentences by the courts or by reason of the legal provisions relative to national security. During the course of his visit, Mr. Durand collected some 200 letters for the prisoners' families. Thanks to the intermediary of the Red Cross Society of the Federation of Malaya, this mail was despatched, via Bangkok, to the Indonesian Red Cross which will forward it to the families concerned.

Before going to Kuala Lumpur, the delegate of the ICRC had stopped in Djakarta where he was cordially welcomed by the leading members of the Indonesian Red Cross. He noted that that Society had been called upon to give instruction in the Geneva Conventions to several groups of volunteers engaged in the fighting against Malaysia.

The ICRC remains at the disposal of both sides to pursue its humanitarian task on behalf of all victims of the conflict.

Viet Nam

As part of its activity on behalf of the victims of the conflict in South Viet Nam, the International Committee attempted over Christmas to send parcels destined to several American military held in the jungle by the Vietcong. The ICRC is trying to assure itself that these despatches really reached their destination.

This is the second Christmas running that some of these Americans had passed in captivity.

The ICRC has already made repeated approaches on behalf of military and civilians captured by the forces of the "National Liberation Front of South Viet Nam". So far it has received no official reply.

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In October 1964, Mr. Werner Muller, ICRC delegate in Saigon, visited various places of detention at Côn-Son¹. He was accompanied by leading members of the National Red Cross.

During these visits, Mr. Muller distributed ICRC relief in the camps and infirmaries. This consisted of soap, cigarettes and also mosquito nets for the infirmaries.

Yemen

Whilst Mr. André Rochat, head of the ICRC delegation in the Yemen, returned to Geneva in January 1965 to report on his activi-

¹ *Plate* : 1) At the Côn-Son Centre, distribution of ICRC relief to the internees. 2) Mr. Muller, ICRC delegate, visiting sick internees at the infirmary of the Tân-Hiêp Centre.

YEMEN



Under the protection of the Red Cross flag, a wounded Egyptian prisoner of war being transported across the desert.

YEMEN



Sanaa. — A child learning to use crutches given to him by the ICRC.



At the Côn-Son Centre: Distribution of ICRC relief to internees.

SOUTH VIET NAM



Mr. Muller, ICRC delegate, visiting sick internees at the infirmary of the Tân-Hiệp Centre.

LAOS



Accompanied by a representative of the Laotian Red Cross, Mr. Baer, delegate of the ICRC, distributing school equipment to children at Ban Pha Ma.

ties and to discuss the future of the Yemen mission with the International Committee, the delegates continued to visit prisoners held on both sides, Republican and Royalist. The delegation has continued to take steps with a view to their exchange and repatriation.

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Twice within a month the doctor delegates and male nurses of the Uqhd hospital went to areas close to the fighting in order to bring aid to prisoners of war, supply the local Yemeni population with medical material and investigate the condition of the sick and wounded who could not be moved. They were able to speak with prisoners and hand them mail. On the other hand, an ICRC delegation, coming from Sanaa, passed through desert regions, often crossing the firing lines, in order to discuss with the tribal chiefs exchanges of prisoners, which the ICRC always attempts to achieve. They also reviewed problems concerning the International Committee's humanitarian action with several leading Royalist personalities.

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Having learnt that an Egyptian prisoner of war had, in December 1964, had an accident in which a leg and an arm had been fractured, Mr. Rochat and Mr. Boisard, ICRC delegates, obtained the release by the Yemeni chief of the wounded prisoner.

He was then handed over to the Red Cross delegation under certain conditions and transported by stretcher over the mountains to Sanaa where he received the necessary treatment. The difficulties involved in crossing the firing lines and over long stretches across the desert can be imagined¹.

At Sanaa, the International Committee donated appliances and crutches for civilian amputated cases.

This is being undertaken in conjunction with the ICRC's action on behalf of Yemeni war disabled. Crutches were thus able to be given to children as well as to adults.²

¹ *Plate* : A wounded Egyptian prisoner of war being transported across the desert, under the protection of the Red Cross flag.

² *Plate* : Sanaa. A child learning to use crutches given to him by the ICRC.

Congo

Visits to detainees. Mrs. Jeanne Egger, ICRC delegate in Leopoldville, accompanied by a member of the Swiss medical unit in the Congo, visited the Ndolo and Makala prisons, not far from the capital. Relief supplies were distributed to the detainees, thanks to the "Entr'aide protestante".

Assistance to the Stanleyville population. — The value of relief supplies delivered to Stanleyville by the ICRC delegates before and for several days after the taking of the town by the Congolese National Army, amounted to Sw. Frs. 47,889.—. The main consignment (medical, surgical and hospital supplies for the most part) worth Sw. Frs. 28,450.—, arrived on September 25 by air in a plane chartered by the ICRC, when the rebels were still in possession of the town.

The courage of the Congolese Red Cross. — In difficult and often dangerous circumstances, the Congolese Red Cross first-aiders displayed admirable devotion to their task, frequently intervening courageously to check brutality during the strife afflicting their country. Several Congolese first-aid workers have lost their lives while carrying out their work. In the Bunia region, three of them were killed and eight have been posted as missing.

In Stanleyville and the troubled Kindu province, the Congolese first-aiders, according to reports from the ICRC delegation in the Congo, have been carrying out a magnificent job, tending the wounded and sick and assisting the population.

Apart from its other tasks, the Stanleyville team helped in parcel distribution at Christmas.

Ceylon

Mr. Samuel A. Gonard, President of the ICRC, when in Ceylon, visited that country's Red Cross Society in January 1965. He was received by Mr. Gunawardena, Chairman of the Council, and Mr. Samaranayake, Chairman of its Finance Committee. He also

visited Mr. Gopallawa, President of the Society and Governor-General of the island. With them he discussed various problems with which the Society is being faced and he expressed to them the ICRC's sympathy for the victims of the recent cyclone.

Laos

The *International Review* has already referred on a number of occasions to the relief action being undertaken by Dr. Jurg Baer, delegate of the ICRC, on behalf of the victims of events in Laos.

In the framework of this action and in co-operation with the Laotian Red Cross, Dr. Baer has been able to give educational equipment to school children at Ban Pha Ma, donated by the American Junior Red Cross.¹ This distribution was made in January 1965. Dr. Baer was then accompanied by Mrs. Oudom Souvannavong, wife of the President of the Laotian Red Cross, and Mrs. Musa, member of the Women's Committee of that National Society.

¹ *Plate* : Dr. Baer distributing school equipment to children at Ban Pha Ma, accompanied by a representative of the Laotian Red Cross.