

been killed in the war, but that the two other brothers as well as his sisters were alive. They had left the village. As a result of further enquiries, the ICRC received a letter from one of the brothers.

Searches undertaken in March 1964 were thus satisfactorily completed on June 24 of the same year.

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An inhabitant of Kharkov, in the USSR, addressed a request to the Central Tracing Agency in Geneva to find her daughter by her first marriage who, born on March 8, 1922, left her native village in August 1943.

The Agency immediately contacted the International Tracing Service in Arolsen, an institution which is also administered by the ICRC. The ITS found that according to its records, the person sought had emigrated to the United States in 1949.

The American Red Cross was then consulted and it was able to trace the young woman. On December 15, 1964, it informed the ICRC of her present name (she had married in the meantime) and of her address. The American Red Cross added that she was extremely surprised and delighted to learn that her mother was still alive and she was eager to correspond with her. The mother has just thanked the ICRC for its intervention.

To make known the Geneva Conventions

The ICRC has drawn up a very brief summary of these Conventions, in addition to its various publications to promote their dissemination and which have been mentioned in earlier issues of the International Review. This summary is proposed as a basic minimum of instruction to the armed forces and is applicable in certain circumstances. The authorities concerned, none the less, have still a duty, in general, to give more detailed and complete instruction, in order to spread as widely as possible the knowledge of these humanitarian statutes to which 104 States are now signatory.

Essential Provisions of the Geneva Conventions

General rules

The object of the Geneva Conventions is to have the individual respected. They are based on a great principle, namely that persons placed *hors de combat* and those taking no active part in hostilities shall have their lives spared and in all circumstances be treated humanely.

The taking of hostages, executions without regular judgment, torture, and cruel or degrading treatment are prohibited acts against military personnel as well as civilians (Art. 3 ; III, 13 ; IV, 32, 34).

Also prohibited are reprisals against persons protected by the Conventions (I, 46 ; III, 13 ; IV, 33).

Protected persons must always be able to benefit from the activity of a Protecting Power or of the International Committee of the Red Cross (I-III, 8 to 10 ; IV, 9 to 11).

Wounded and Sick

The wounded and sick, both military and civilian, must be protected (I, 12, 15). This will also apply to medical personnel (doctors, nurses, etc.) and to chaplains, who for their part are bound to observe strict military neutrality (I, 24 to 27).

Protection also covers hospitals sheltering the wounded and sick, vehicles transporting them and the medical equipment allotted to them (I, 19, 32 to 36 ; IV, 16 to 22).

The emblem of the red cross (or of the red crescent) on a white ground is the sign of this protection. It can be employed for no other purpose whatsoever and must always be respected. (I, 38 to 44).

Prisoners of war

Military personnel and auxiliaries who are captured or who surrender must have their lives spared and at all times be treated humanely (III, 4, 13, 14).

They must in particular receive the necessary food, clothing and medical care (III, 15 to 30).

They must be able to correspond with their families.

The names of prisoners of war will be communicated by the capturing authority to the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva (Central Tracing Agency) which will be allowed to visit them and arrange for them to receive relief (III, 70, 72, 78, 123, 126).

If penal sanctions are taken against prisoners for offences committed before their capture, the International Committee of the Red Cross (in the absence of the Protecting Power) will be so informed. It will be authorized to follow the proceedings and assist them in their defence.

In the event of a death penalty being pronounced, the sentence shall not be executed before the expiration of a period of six months from the date on which notification of the sentence has been made to the International Committee of the Red Cross (III, 101).

Civilians

Civilian wounded and sick, civilian hospitals and their personnel, shall be the object of particular respect and may be placed under the protection of the red cross or the red crescent emblem (IV, 16 to 22).

The civilian population in occupied territory must, in so far as circumstances permit, be enabled to live in a normal manner. Deportations are prohibited (IV, 49).

Civilians may only be interned for imperative reasons of security. In such case camps will benefit from conditions at least of the same standard as those prevailing in prisoner of war camps (IV, 41 to 43).

In occupied territory, pillage is prohibited, as is the indiscriminate destruction of property (IV, 33, 53)