

*EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES***The ICRC President in the Federal Republic of Germany**

Dr. Eric Martin, President of the ICRC, accompanied by Mr. Melchior Borsinger, Delegate-General for Europe and North America, visited the Federal Republic of Germany from 19 to 25 June, at the invitation of the National Red Cross.

At Kiel, the ICRC President took part in the annual meeting of the presidium and in the Society's triennial general assembly. On that occasion, he presented the Florence Nightingale Medal to Schwester Isa Gräfin von der Goltz, former chief nurse in Korea and now director of one of the National Society's nursing schools.¹

Dr. Martin and Mr. Borsinger were also received by the heads of the Red Cross of the Province of Schleswig-Holstein, after which they visited the International Tracing Service at Arolsen, under the escort of its director, Mr. Albert de Cocatrix. The activities of the Service, thirty years after the end of the Second World War, continue intensively, with 10,000 certificates of various kinds being delivered every month to persons who had been detained in concentration camps.

The president and Mr. Borsinger concluded their visit at Cologne, where they had further talks with Dr. Walter Bargatzky, President of the National Society.

Africa**Angola**

After the June survey mission in Angola, the ICRC appealed to seventeen National Red Cross Societies to provide material support for its assistance operations in that country. The amount requested in the appeal was two million Swiss francs.

¹ *Plate.*

The five ICRC delegates in Angola, who have already obtained from the authorities every facility to carry out their mission, were reinforced on 10 July by a surgico-medical team of a surgeon, a general practitioner, an anaesthetist and two female nurses. Part of the team went to Carmona in the north of the country. The surgeon and the anaesthetist stayed until 18 July in the Maria Pia hospital in Luanda to operate on the many wounded brought in from various districts of the town by the ambulances of the Angola regional Red Cross. They then joined the other members of the team in Carmona.

The ICRC has sent to Angola, by air, 39 tons of foodstuffs, 2 tons of medicaments, 1,000 blankets and 5 vehicles, to a value of 390,000 Swiss francs. These will be used mainly for the benefit of the more than 5,000 displaced persons in Luanda, and for infants.

The emergency needs include powdered milk, baby food, blankets and medical material. It is planned to send shortly two further medical teams which will be made available by the National Societies of Denmark and France. The Swiss Red Cross has undertaken to provide a relief team in September to take over from the one now working in Carmona.

By 25 July, contributions promised or received amounted to 1,163,050 Swiss francs, namely 988,750 Swiss francs from the governments of Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland and the United States, and 174,300 Swiss francs from the National Societies of Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Norway, Poland, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

People's Republic of the Congo

A regional delegate spent the first fortnight of July in the People's Republic of the Congo. On 10 July he visited the Maison d'Arrêt in Brazzaville where he talked in private with detainees of his choice. A few days later he sent them 250 blankets, school material for the teaching of reading and writing in four classes, kitchen utensils and gardening tools. He also provided the prison infirmary with a stock of medicaments. The delegate then met the Director of Public Security, to whom he conveyed his comments and suggestions.

In addition, he conferred with Red Cross officials at the National Society headquarters and met the Assistant Chief of Staff for Political Affairs with whom he discussed the dissemination of knowledge of the Geneva Conventions among the armed forces.

North Africa

On 10 July 1975, an ICRC delegate went to Algiers, when the People's Movement for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro (Polisario Front) released two Spanish prisoners who had been wounded when captured. The two prisoners were entrusted to the custody of a Spanish Government representative in the presence of the President of the Spanish Red Cross, the President of the Algerian Red Crescent and the ICRC representative.

Latin America

New regional delegation in Argentina

The ICRC has opened a regional delegation in Buenos Aires for the countries of the Cono Sur (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay). An agreement to that effect was signed on 7 July in Buenos Aires by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Alberto Juan Vignes, and by the ICRC delegate general for Latin America, Mr Sergio Nessi.

The first ICRC regional delegation in Latin America was opened in August 1971 in Caracas (Venezuela) staffed by two delegates. One was concerned for the countries of Central America and the Caribbean; the other for the countries of South America.

ICRC activities in the Latin American continent having developed over the past four years, reorganization and decentralization were necessary, hence the opening of a new delegation in Argentina. The Caracas delegation continues to cover Central America, the Caribbean and the countries of the Andes.

The Santiago delegation, which was opened in September 1973, is being maintained for the moment by the ICRC in view of the importance of its activities in Chile. The new regional delegation for the "Cono Sur" might later be required to include Chile in its area of action.

Mission of the regional delegate for the countries of the Andes

The ICRC regional delegate for the countries of the Andes was in Bolivia from 20 June to 13 July. After conferring with the leaders of the Bolivian Red Cross he had interviews with the Minister of the Interior, the Minister for Education and other government officials.

The delegate visited 5 places of detention in La Paz and the provinces. In all, he saw some 80 persons detained for political reasons and talked with them without witnesses. Relief supplies, particularly medical, to a value of nearly 2,000 US dollars, were delivered for the benefit of the detainees.

The delegate also visited the Cochabamba and Sucre branches of the National Red Cross. He took part in the Bolivian Red Cross National seminar at La Paz from 27 to 29 June.

Whilst in Peru on 14 and 15 July, he attended a meeting of the Peruvian Red Cross Reorganizing Committee. He also discussed the dissemination of knowledge of Red Cross principles in schools with the Vice-Minister for Education.

In Colombia, on 16 and 17 July, the delegate, the Director of Prisons and the Colombian Red Cross Director of Relief drew up a plan of distribution of medicaments in prisons which had been visited towards the end of last year by the ICRC. Finally, with the Director of the Junior Red Cross, he broached the subject of teaching humanitarian principles in schools.

Brazil

In June, the ICRC delegate general for Latin America, Sergio Nessi, went to Brazil to arrange, in co-operation with the National Red Cross, the programme of visits by ICRC regional delegates to places of detention. The visits were to start on 8 July. Since then, the regional delegates have been to 13 places of detention in the States of Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and Parana. In all, they saw some 3,900 detainees.

Chile

The ICRC delegations in Chile continued their work for detainees held by the military authorities, and for their families.

In June they visited 17 places of detention and saw almost 1,200 detainees. During that month they provided material assistance to prisoners to a value of 6,500 US dollars, in addition to 17 consignments of medicaments which were sent to 13 places of detention.

Some 800 needy families of detainees in Santiago, and nearly 2,000 families in the provinces, received aid to a value of more than 90,000 US dollars.

Asia

Activities of the International Red Cross in Indo-China

Tracing Agency. — A great many people from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos who left their countries during the events which took place last spring are now dispersed throughout the world, and are often separated from other members of their families. To help locate them and bring families together again, the International Red Cross has begun a large-scale census operation.

In South East Asia, the registration started in Bangkok and will continue in Malaysia, Hong Kong and Singapore. The ICRC's Central Tracing Agency has asked all the National Red Cross Societies concerned to carry out their own censuses and to send the resulting lists to Geneva. From this information a central card index register will be compiled to facilitate tracing.

In the countries involved and in Geneva, delegates of the International Red Cross have kept in close touch with representatives of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

In addition, assistance has been given to National Red Cross Societies in countries which have had to set up camps due the influx of refugees (Thailand and Malaysia in particular).

Logistics. — At the request of the authorities and Red Cross of the Republic of South Vietnam, relief supplies are now being delivered by sea. Accordingly the logistics base of the International Red Cross has been transferred from Bangkok to Singapore, where two delegates are responsible for co-ordinating and accompanying shipments to Saigon and Danang.

By 23 July, the International Red Cross had delivered to South Vietnam more than 8,200 tons of basic and high-protein foodstuffs, powdered milk, medical supplies, chemical products and miscellaneous goods, worth 15.6 million Swiss francs. Other material, valued at 22.2 million francs, is on the way. It includes 2,000 tons of raw cotton from Shanghai and 670 tons of foodstuffs, medicines and chemical products from Singapore.

Field Personnel. — As of mid-July, the International Red Cross had 14 delegates in the area, namely:

- Democratic Republic of Vietnam: one delegate;
- Republic of South Vietnam: four delegates, including a doctor and a radio operator;

- Thailand: four delegates, including tracing agency, relief and radio specialists;
- Singapore: two relief specialists;
- Laos: three delegates, one of them a radio operator.

Financial Situation. — As of 20 July 1975, the financial position was as follows: of the 87.5 million Swiss francs required for the International Red Cross programme, contributions received and pledged amounted to 65.2 million Swiss francs, i.e. 46.5 million in cash and 18.7 million in kind, leaving a little more than 22 million francs needed to cover the budget.

Contributions have come from 19 Governments, 37 National Societies and some private donors.

Government contributions were from: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States of America.

The National Societies of the following countries made contributions: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Federal Republic of Germany, German Democratic Republic, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States of America and USSR.

Thailand

On 1 July, an ICRC delegate visited the Bang Wang prison near Bangkok. He saw a half-dozen detainees who were confined for reasons of a political character. As previously, the delegate talked without witnesses with the detainees.

Europe

Cyprus

The ICRC delegation in Cyprus continued its work of protection for isolated communities on the island—in villages inhabited by Greek Cypriots in the North and in villages and urban districts inhabited by

Turkish Cypriots in the South. The delegates make regular visits to all the communities, enquiring into living conditions and occasionally distributing relief supplies. Subsequently, the ICRC makes such representations to the authorities as the particular circumstances of the protected persons may indicate.

The Red Cross mobile teams having completed their mission at the end of May (and not at the end of June as indicated in a previous issue) one medical delegate remains in Cyprus, working in close co-operation with the authorities in the co-ordination and supervision of medical activities.

Exchanges of messages between separated families continue, at the rate of about 6,000 messages a day.

Middle East

Release of detainees. — In our previous issue we mentioned the first release of Arab civilian detainees following the return by Egypt of the bodies of 39 Israeli soldiers killed in the October 1973 war.

A further release operation took place on 25 June 1975 on the El-Qantara road under ICRC auspices, when twenty Egyptian civilian detainees, released by the Israeli authorities, returned to the Valley of the Nile. Prior to their release, the detainees talked to the ICRC delegates, to whom they freely expressed their desire to cross to the western bank of the Suez Canal.

In the opposite direction, the mortal remains of the two Jews executed in Cairo in 1945 were returned by the Egyptian authorities to Israel.

On the same day, eleven notables of El Arish, who had been invited by the Egyptian Government to the Suez Canal reopening ceremonies, went back to occupied Egyptian territory in Sinai.

Transfer operations. — A good part of the work of the ICRC delegations in the Middle East has consisted in arranging for the transfer of persons between Israel-occupied territories and the Arab countries. The greatest number of people involved were Gaza Palestinian students in Egyptian and Syrian Universities going home for the holidays. Other operations were for the reuniting of families, and for family visits. All those operations took place either in the United Nations buffer zone or at Quneitra on the Golan Heights.

On the El Qantara-Balouza road, six operations were carried out between 1 and 22 July 1975. Altogether, 2,334 Palestinian students from

Gaza returned from Cairo to spend the summer at home. During the same period, 461 persons crossed the Suez Canal from east to west to visit relatives. In the opposite direction, 288 persons went to Gaza for the same reason.

At Quneitra, on 2 July, 81 Palestinian students coming from Damascus went to their homes for holidays. On 10 July, four Arab women, two of them living in occupied territory and two in Israel, went to join their families in the Syrian Arab Republic. One Arab civilian detainee released by Israel went to Damascus.

Relief supplies for southern Sinai. — On 7 July 1975, nearly a hundred tons of relief supplies given by the Egyptian Government for the population of southern Sinai (78 tons) and for St. Catherine's Monastery (21 tons) were forwarded by the ICRC from the west to the east bank of the Suez Canal.

Syrian Arab Republic

An ICRC delegate in the Syrian Arab Republic recently attended at Aleppo a distribution of milk to 1,600 infants by a local branch of the Syrian Red Crescent Society. This was part of an allocation of twelve tons of powdered milk donated by the Swiss Confederation.

On that occasion, the ICRC delegate was able to see the work carried out by the local branch of the National Society when he visited its new dispensary at Tell Rafaat village, 35 km west of Aleppo. The dispensary, which serves 24 villages inhabited by about 40,000 persons, is run by a group of volunteers led by Red Crescent Society members. Milk is distributed once a week and lectures on hygiene and feeding are periodically given to young mothers.



Hungary: The President of the ICRC, Mr. Eric Martin, presenting the Florence Nightingale Medal and citation to Mrs. Roza Almássy...



...and to Miss Zsofia Marosközi.



Kiel: During his visit to the German Red Cross in the Federal Republic of Germany, the President of the ICRC, Mr. Eric Martin, presents the Florence Nightingale Medal to Schwester Isa Gräfin von der Goltz.

Photo Renard, Kiel

Geneva: The head of the Italian service explaining the work of the Central Tracing Agency to visitors from the Italian Red Cross (**centre:** Mrs. Leone, President of Honour of the Italian Red Cross, **right:** Mrs. de Gasperi, President of the National Women's Committee, **left:** Mr. Masini, President-General).

Photo J.-J. Kurz / ICRC

