

## **The International Committee and the League receive the Nobel Peace Prize**

It was through a telegram sent to it on October 10, 1963 by Mr. Gunnar Jahn, President of the Nobel Committee of the Norwegian Parliament and published by the *International Review* in a previous number, that the International Committee learnt that it had been chosen, together with the League of Red Cross Societies, for the award of the Nobel Peace Prize for 1963. This was a great distinction which had for these two international institutions a special significance in the year of the Centenary of the founding of the universal movement of the Red Cross.

In fact, if the International Committee was being thus honoured for the third time, having received the Prize in 1917 and in 1944 for its humanitarian work during the two world wars, the League was receiving it for the first time in its existence, and this was greeted with delight by the whole Red Cross movement. It was in fact recognition of the work carried out by the federation of the National Societies, since its founding in 1919. The League, by the very ends which it pursues, has contributed to forging the unity of our movement on the universal level, by bringing the National Societies of the Red Cross, of the Red Crescent and of the Red Lion and Sun, ever closer together.

If the International Red Cross, for its part, acts essentially on behalf of the victims of international conflicts or during internal disturbances, its work is primarily a gesture of peace on the battlefield.

These were certainly the reasons which decided the Nobel Committee of the Norwegian Parliament in its choice.

Such a distinction is a great encouragement for the two international institutions to continue their humanitarian tasks with increased vigour and to develop their practical action ever more effectively on behalf of the victims of disasters of all descriptions.

Having been asked to send representatives to Oslo to receive the Prize, the two institutions delegated their respective Presidents, Mr. Léopold Boissier of the ICRC and Mr. John A. MacAulay of the Board of Governors of the League. They were accompanied by Mr. Henrik Beer, Secretary-General of the League, and by Mr. Melchior Borsinger, Secretary to the Presidency of the ICRC.

On arrival at the capital on the eve of the ceremonies, the two Presidents were welcomed by the representatives of the Nobel Committee and by Mr. Ulf Styren, President of the Norwegian Red Cross, and they were accorded every courtesy by the Government, the Norwegian Parliament and the City Council of Oslo.

The official ceremony for the awarding of the Prizes took place at Oslo University on December 10 at 1 p.m. in the presence of King Olaf of Norway and Crown Prince Harald, as well as of members of the Norwegian Government and the diplomatic corps.<sup>1</sup>

After the playing of an overture by Mozart by the orchestra of the Norwegian Broadcasting and Television Service, Mr. Gunnar Jahn, President of the Nobel Committee of the Norwegian Parliament, and Mr. C. J. Hambro, a member of that Committee, delivered speeches recalling the services rendered to the cause of peace by the recipients of the award. Mr. Jahn presented Professor Linus Pauling, prize-winner for 1962, then Mr. Boissier and Mr. MacAulay with the gold Medal and the Diploma of the Nobel Peace Prize.<sup>1</sup> The orchestra then gave a rendering by Grieg which was followed by expressions of thanks to King Olaf and to the Nobel Committee by Mr. Boissier and Mr. MacAulay.

Mr. Boissier spoke as follows :

*It is my great privilege to express, to the Nobel Committee of the Norwegian Parliament, the deep gratitude of the International Committee of the Red Cross, in Geneva, for the high distinction it has received.*

*All my colleagues, on the International Committee, have asked me to tell you that the award of the Nobel Peace Prize is for them, and for*

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<sup>1</sup> Plate.

*all those who work with them, a powerful incentive to pursue their difficult, though stimulating, task.*

*Allow me to add that, since my youth I have been a witness to the support given by the Nobel Foundation to the cause of peace. Having entered the service of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, already in 1921, I knew those unselfish, courageous, apostles of peace, who often braved the distrust of governments, and who were chosen for honour by your illustrious Committee: the Frenchman Frédéric Passy—who shared the first Nobel Peace Prize with Henry Dunant—the Swiss Ducommun and Gobat; the Dane Frédéric Bajer; the Swede Branting; the Norwegian Christian Lange and others also. Behind these leaders, the great masses of the people were also encouraged to pursue the same path and the same ideal.*

*Did Alfred Nobel foresee, in his generosity, that his admirable gesture would have such remarkable results? I cannot say! But in any case we can now pay to his memory a proper tribute of admiration and gratitude. I wish to associate—in this tribute—the Nobel Institute, whose publications are of the very greatest historical, social and legal value. I shall only mention one of these numerous publications: “The History of Internationalism”, the first volume of which was written by my predecessor, at the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Christian Lange, an outstanding representative of Norwegian democracy.*

*That the International Committee of the Red Cross—already twice distinguished by your Committee—has been called upon to share, with its sister organization, the League of Red Cross Societies, the Nobel Peace Prize for the year 1963, is highly significant. Indeed, in 1917 and 1944, the immense task accomplished by the International Committee of the Red Cross and—let us not forget it—by the National Societies also, during the two Great Wars, was known throughout the world. The Nobel Peace Prize symbolized the gratitude of untold millions.*

*Now, the Prize awarded this year, in 1963, comes as a reward for the task accomplished by the International Committee since the end of the last World War. It is a task of which the public is hardly aware; its significance is, however, considerable. Indeed, the International Committee has been called upon to help the victims no longer of major international conflicts but of civil wars which are often crueller still. In order to carry out this task, the International Committee had to intervene between the legitimate governments—or those who considered themselves such—and those who had rebelled against the estab-*

lished order. No government opposed the International Committee on the ground of the sovereignty of the State, none contested the Red Cross the right to go to the relief of the victims of armed conflicts.

Thus, the principles of our movement have penetrated into fresh fields, where previously only might was right. New barriers have been erected against the resort to violence and new prospects opened to the mission for peace.

I venture to say, without false modesty, that in awarding the Nobel Peace Prize for 1963 to the International Committee and to the League, the Nobel Committee of the Norwegian Parliament is well deserving of peace.

Mr. MacAulay then said the following words :

*This is a very important day in the history of the League of Red Cross Societies. By deciding to award the Nobel Peace Prize to the International Red Cross, the Nobel Peace Committee has paid tribute to and honoured the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies ; in fact the entire Organization which works on behalf of suffering humanity.*

*The League of Red Cross Societies in its Constitution is described as the International Federation of National Red Cross Societies, an Association of unlimited duration, having the legal status of a corporate body.*

*Henry Dunant, the Founder of the Red Cross, raised his voice more than 100 years ago against barbaric suffering and misery. National Societies emerged and developed as a direct consequence of his attitude and philosophy. In the realization of his dreams, he proposed the formation of Relief Societies which would always be available for the performance of an ever increasing number of new tasks. The year 1863 saw the birth of the first of these Relief Societies. As a result of this call to service, the League has today 102 recognized National Societies with approximately 175 million Members, all working according to the principles laid down in Geneva by the Founding Fathers 100 years ago.*

*The first Peace Prize was given to that noble man, Henry Dunant, Founder of the Red Cross. By awarding the 1963 Peace Prize to the International Red Cross, we believe it is your intention to praise the daily work of those brave men and women who take care of the victim of natural disasters, the patient who needs blood, the child who lacks*

*milk, the refugee in search of asylum and all of those other people who are alone in the world.*

*In this spirit, our Delegation receives this Nobel Prize not only on behalf of the League, but also on behalf of the National Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion & Sun Societies and all their Members without whom the League would not exist. Indeed, without these millions of Red Cross workers, without their support, without the spirit of solidarity and devotion which they have always given, the League could never have fulfilled its co-ordinating Mission in all the fields where man has need of man. Throughout the world, volunteers of different nationalities, races and ideologies unite, in one and the same impulse, to serve the same cause and thereby create a vast network of international agreement, a climate of understanding conducive to the establishment of a lasting peace.*

*We would like to pay tribute to the Norwegian Red Cross, one of the pillars of our Organization. This country, after having suffered in its flesh and soul during the last war, has rapidly become a nation the generosity of which is admired by all. On every occasion, it shows its extreme interest in bringing comfort to the underprivileged of the world, thereby following the example given by that great Norwegian, Fridtjof Nansen, the administrator of many Red Cross actions after World War I.*

*The relief actions of the League are as many testimonials of its solidarity. It assists in the development of new Societies, it trains young people in a climate of friendship and service. The League will continue to serve men, to persuade them to extend a helping hand, to show—in the words of Sophocles—that “ they are born to love and not to hate each other ”.*

*We are deeply indebted to the Nobel Prize Committee for recognizing the contribution of the League towards Peace. We wish to pay tribute in the most eloquent terms to that great Swedish chemist and engineer, Alfred Nobel, who bequeathed his enormous fortune to the creation of Prizes in so many scientific and literary fields, and to the promotion of the fraternity of nations and the abolition or reduction of standing armies.*

*Deeply moved, the League of Red Cross Societies wishes to express to you, at this solemn moment, its warmest gratitude to the Nobel Committee for this great tribute to its work which is at the same time an invaluable encouragement to it in the pursuit of its “ Mission ”.*

The ceremony ended at 3.30 p.m. with the playing of an orchestral work by Handel.

The prize-winners attended a banquet in the evening given in their honour by the Nobel Committee.

On December 11, King Olaf accorded an audience to Mr. Boissier and Mr. MacAulay, who were then officially received at the City Hall of Oslo by the Mayor, Mr. Brynjulf Bull, and members of the Oslo City Council. They were also the guests of the Municipality. In the evening, another ceremony took place at Oslo University, during which the three prize-winners gave lectures, as prescribed in the statutes of the Nobel Foundation, in front of an audience consisting of Norway's leading intellectual personalities. Following on Mr. Pauling, Mr. Boissier then spoke. His words were most appreciated and we give some extracts of these below, with the kind permission, as was the case with Mr. MacAulay's speech, of the said Foundation :

The practical activities of the International Committee are threefold : protection of war victims, information on missing persons, relief in countries afflicted by war.

To discharge its first function of giving protection, the International Committee sends out delegates, who are all Swiss also, to the countries at war, particularly in order to visit prisoner-of-war camps and ensure humane treatment to those who are held captive. These delegates watch over the situation in the detention quarters, diet, medical care, working and living conditions.

They interview prisoners without witness. Detailed reports are then sent to the Detaining Power and to the Government of the prisoner's country of origin. The delegates submit on the spot requests for any necessary improvements. If need be, the International Committee itself takes the matter up with the higher authorities, using the principle of reciprocity as a lever to achieve its aim.

During the Second World War the International Committee's delegates carried out some eleven thousand camp visits.

The Geneva Conventions of 1949 added strength to the International Committee in its rôle as the protector of prisoners of war.

These Conventions extended its field of activity to all civilians who might be interned, in time of war, for any reason whatsoever. Now the camps—I mean the concentration camps—where they are interned are also open to inspection.

To carry out its second function of supplying information on missing persons, the International Committee has been entrusted with setting up and running the Central Tracing Agency for prisoners of war and civilians.

This Agency communicates to anxious families news of their kin, held captive or who are missing. During the last World War, the Agency assembled some forty million information cards.



Det Norske Stortings Nobelkomite

har i Henhold til Reglerne i det af

ALFRED NOBEL

den 27<sup>de</sup> November 1895 oprettede Testamente tildelt

*Comité internationale de la Croix-Rouge*

Nobels Fredspris for 1963

*Oslo, 10. desember 1963.*

*Gunnar Faln  
Helge Røysum  
Martin Thommø*

*L. J. Hørmann  
Oase Liomas*

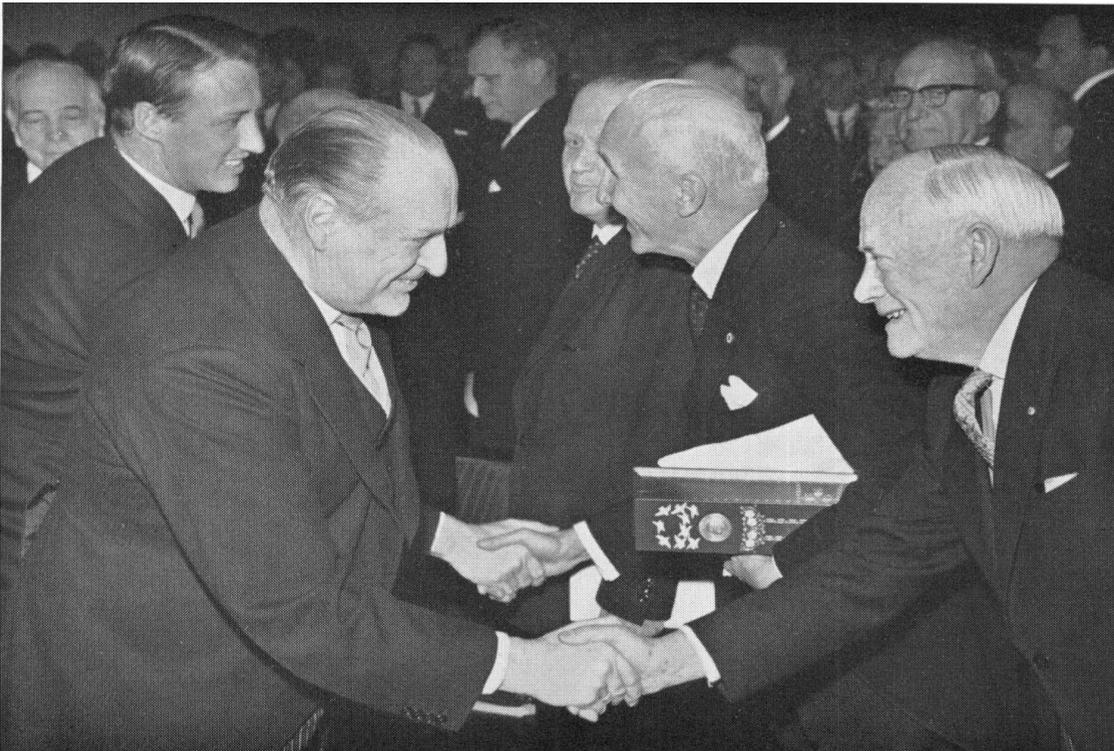
THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

Certificate awarded by the Nobel Committee of the Norwegian Parliament



**Oslo:** Mr. Gunnar Jahn, Chairman of the Nobel Committee of the Norwegian Parliament (*left*) handing the certificate and gold medal to Mr. Leopold Boissier. (*Right*) Mr. MacAulay, representing the League.

**H.M. the King of Norway and H.R.H the Crown Prince (*left*) congratulate Mr. MacAulay and Mr. Boissier. (Behind Mr. MacAulay, Mr. Ulf Styren, President of the Norwegian Red Cross.)**



It brought news to as many as six thousand families a day.

The Agency is now a permanent establishment.

Furthermore, the Committee manages the International Tracing Service at Arolsen, in the Federal Republic of Germany, whose duty it is to supply information on persons missing from concentration camps and, also, to issue certificates of incarceration to those who survived. A staff of over two hundred and fifty persons is necessary for this colossal task.

The third aspect of the Committee's work is to supply material relief.

During the Second World War it distributed, to the camps in which Allied soldiers were detained in Germany for instance, relief in the form of food, clothing, medical supplies and books, to a value of some three and a half billion Swiss francs. In order to transport this material through the blockade, the International Committee had to organize a fleet of fourteen ships which sailed the seas under the red cross flag.

Since the war this activity has continued. Two examples are, the supplies to Hungary at the time of the 1956 uprising and, at the present time, the setting up, in the heart of the Arabian desert, of a field hospital, in order to bring relief to the victims of the cruel war of which the Yemen is the theatre . . .

. . . But there are also tasks of a more general order which the International Committee has to perform.

It is the recognized guardian of the Red Cross ideal. It must, therefore, exercise vigilance to ensure respect for humanitarian principles: non-discrimination, independence and neutrality, which are the common heritage of our universal movement.

Yet a further, primary duty is to work for the development of international humanitarian law, which protects the human person in time of armed conflict. As early as 1864, the International Committee persuaded Governments to conclude the first Geneva Convention for—as its title indicates—the Amelioration of the Condition of the Sick and Wounded in the Field.

This treaty was strengthened in 1929 by a second Convention, relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War. This Convention affected the lives of millions of captives during the Second World War. In order to demonstrate its usefulness, let me say that wherever it was applied the mortality rate did not exceed ten per cent.

In the concentration camps for civil prisoners—where the Committee's delegates never penetrated, despite repeated appeals to Hitler himself—the mortality rate was as high as ninety per cent!

That is why it was absolutely necessary to revise and extend these Conventions. This was done in 1949, when two new Conventions were also drawn up.

The first of these brought humanitarian protection to the victims of war at sea, whilst the second—of capital importance—extended it to civilians. In fact, despite all the efforts of the International Committee, no complete, up-to-date Convention to protect civilians was in force when the Second World War broke out. Civilians were, therefore, in some countries, subject to deportation and even to extermination!

This tragic gap has now been bridged. Civilians have been given the status and the guarantees which were previously so cruelly lacking. They are now entitled to treatment of at least the same standard as that which is given to prisoners of war.

What is even more important is that this fourth Convention, as well as the three others, contains a common article, which is revolutionary in international law.

This is article three.

It gives certain guarantees to combatants in civil wars. It prohibits the taking of hostages and summary executions without fair trial. It lays down humane conditions of internment and the right to protection by the International Committee.

Article three has enabled the International Committee to intervene in the civil wars which have ravaged various countries during the past fifteen years. I am thinking, more particularly, of the subcontinent of India, at the time of its division into two great countries : India and Pakistan. Also Latin America, Algeria, Vietnam, Laos and recently again, in the Congo...

Mr. Boissier recalled the problem of the application of the Geneva Conventions by the military forces placed at the disposal of the United Nations and the approaches made to the latter by the ICRC in 1956, and again in 1960 during the intervention in the Congo. This matter was brought up recently at the Centenary congress of the International Red Cross, the Council of Delegates passing a resolution on the subject.

Mr. Boissier then mentioned under what conditions the ICRC was requested to intervene during the Cuban crisis. The tension having been eased, it did not however have to do this. " But ", he added, " the Committee's co-operative attitude facilitated the easing of tension. By contributing to the maintenance of peace, it remained faithful to its mission ". Mr. Boissier concluded :

...The achievements of the Red Cross have a symbolic value and stand out as an example. Its actions at the height of battle are acts of peace.

When war creates its tragic gap between nations, the Red Cross remains the last link. Its struggle against suffering is a vivid reproach to those who inflict it. The Red Cross, therefore, makes a powerful appeal, to all men, in favour of peace.

Mr. MacAulay, who followed, then stressed the rôle of the National Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies with a view to promoting friendship and lasting peace between

peoples. He paid a moving tribute to the work accomplished over the past hundred years by the founder body of the movement, the International Committee. He then recalled the League's various interventions and their significance as follows :

... Red Cross members, unified in their own National Societies and federated in the League, belong to something more significant than a series of benevolent societies. These individuals are guided by international agreements and basic humanitarian principles which gives their work a special significance. The League represents millions of voluntary workers, to whom the movement owes an extreme debt of gratitude. The officers of the League have the honour of representing these volunteer members on this very important occasion.

The League of Red Cross Societies, the National Societies of Red Cross, and the members of all National Societies regard with pride the history of the Red Cross, and anticipate with confidence and humility the great new tasks which are ahead. They remember with thankful respect the founding fathers of the International Red Cross.

What does the future hold for the Red Cross ? Whatever the developments may be in the world in the coming decades, there will be a tremendous opportunity for this humanitarian organization. Without changing its principles, it must adapt itself to a changing world. There will be a great responsibility for the League and for the National Societies.

" We are a civilization which knows how to make War, but no longer knows how to make Peace " the Italian, Guglielmo Ferrero, wrote in his book, " The Problem of Peace ". During the past ten years this provocative declaration has been tested by partial and localized conflicts in many parts of the world. There is a condition of continuous tension arising from the antagonism of ideologies and the fear of a World War. And yet, there is not a person in the world who does not yearn for Peace. What then, in the 20th century, in this world which is a prey to the most violent convulsions and to the most unexpected upheavals, are the ways to create a climate of understanding and fraternity between men ? How do we learn to make Peace ?

As the XVIIth International Conference of the Red Cross affirmed in Stockholm in 1948 : " The history of mankind shows that the campaign against the terrible scourge of war cannot achieve success if it is limited to the political sphere." The Red Cross, to which quite special appeals have been made in these last ten years, has demonstrated that it is one of the rare institutions capable of marshalling great numbers of men and women, and the necessary material resources, to action for peaceful purposes. It has made a contribution to development of a climate of agreement over and above all ideological, racial and religious considerations. The Red Cross has always devoted itself to ignoring the antagonisms, whatever they may be, in order to unite all men in one and the same movement of solidarity.

Since its founding in 1919, the League has sent out 168 appeals for international help. The response has not been only from a few prosperous societies. Every Society, large or small, young or old, rich or poor, responds to the call for help with eagerness and generosity. After the recent Agadir disaster, where 17,000 people were killed and 1,700 injured, 61 Red Cross Societies participated in relief work. From all corners of the globe teams of surgeons, doctors and nurses made every effort to bring relief to the victims. Foodstuffs and medicaments were provided to a total value of millions of Swiss francs. Following the disaster emergency, the reconstruction of a hospital complex in Agadir remains as a memorial of Red Cross co-operation.

The list of disasters in the last ten years is impressive. It illustrates the distress of populations who require continuous relief in many instances for several months. To a greater extent than any other body, the League has been called upon to devote its attention to the fate of needy populations and to draw-up long-term programs, often at the request of specialized agencies, and even Governments. Within the broad plan each victim is considered as a separate entity and assisted in his individual suffering, from which it is necessary to save him by stretching out a helping hand.

... These examples illustrate this vast movement of solidarity, which the League always tries to promote and develop between nations. The generosity of National Societies, which between 1950 and 1960 contributed to 88 relief actions to the extent of some 60 million dollars, is certainly not a negligible factor in the search for Peace. In Austria, Chile, the Congo and Viet-Nam, men of all races and different ideologies have united their efforts, here to build a dispensary, there to set up a milk station, and everywhere to alleviate suffering. A great philosopher has said: "Force them to build a tower together and you will change them into brothers." This is the most important aspect. Specialists from all corners of the globe have studied together a rare illness. They have taken the measure of human suffering to find a remedy.

Even more than the thousands of cases of clothing and foodstuffs with labels from many nations, which lie together in the holds of ships, these human contacts which the League does not cease to encourage are those that best contribute to the justification of its motto: "Per humanitatem ad pacem". Such is the great, the noble task, which the League never ceases to pursue...

Mr. MacAulay pointed out that international mutual aid is not moreover limited to the field of relief and he quoted as examples, the Red Cross development programme and the Junior Red Cross. He enumerated the profound reasons which can give rise to hope that the last years of our century will see the world accomplishing great progress on the path of better understanding between men. He concluded by affirming that the forces of good will can thrust

back those of destruction and that one day, as a famous poet once enquired : "...where are the snows of yesteryear ? ", perhaps we shall live to the day when men will ask : "...where are the hates of yesteryear ? "

During the course of these important events, the Presidents of the ICRC and of the League had a number of most friendly meetings with the President and with other leading personalities of the Norwegian Red Cross. For all those who had the privilege of being present at Oslo at these stirring ceremonies, the important place occupied by the Red Cross in the world today, the unity of the movement and the spirit of solidarity and co-operation animating the two international institutions, were once again demonstrated in the Centenary Year of the Red Cross.