

*EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES***Nigeria**

On his return to Switzerland, Dr. Edwin Spirgi, head of the medical team of the ICRC installed since the beginning of the conflict at the hospital at Achi, reported on the alarming situation prevailing in Biafra on the humanitarian level.¹

In his report to the International Committee, Dr. Spirgi pointed out the considerable amount of work devolving on the ICRC medical team on account of the great number of wounded pouring into that hospital. He also stated that medicines are at present lacking and that the assistance of the ICRC in personnel and medical relief remains extremely necessary, as this totally isolated region receives no other form of humanitarian aid.

On the basis of its delegate's report, the ICRC has decided to continue its action in Biafra by sending a fresh replacement team and despatching emergency medical relief. In view of the fact that no normal landing ground any longer exists in Biafra, the ICRC found itself obliged to charter a special aircraft of "Balair" to transport this personnel and relief to their destination. The flight of this aircraft, with red cross markings, was notified to the two parties in conflict. The ICRC aircraft left Basle on November 11. After landing at Douala to load a stock of medicines awaiting transit, it arrived in Lagos on November 12, where it remained grounded until all arrangements were made between the belligerents for the onward passage to Biafra. When all difficulties had finally been overcome, the special ICRC aircraft was able to leave Lagos

¹ See *International Review*, August, September, October and November 1967.

on November 17 for Santa Isabel (Fernando Po), whence it flew to Port Harcourt in Biafra. From there, the team and the medical relief supplies were transported by road to Achi, some 300 miles to the North.

This new team, accompanied by Dr. Spirgi as far as its place of work, received a moving welcome on its arrival at the hospital.

It should be recalled that on Federal territory a medical team, directed by Dr. Kaare Sandnaes and placed at the ICRC's disposal by the Red Cross of Norway, is still continuing its activity. At first installed in the hospital at Uromi it was, after the incident which took place there, moved to the hospital at Agbor, a locality situated on the road leading from Benin-City to Onitcha.

Near East

Release of civilian prisoners at Atlith camp. — The ICRC delegation in Israel recently intervened on behalf of 40 Egyptian civilian prisoners interned at Atlith, released and repatriated on October 24 to El Arish and Gaza.

On November 15, 80 Egyptian civilian prisoners were then released and repatriated to Egypt, 400 others to El Arish and 81 to Gaza.

On November 17, ICRC delegates accompanied 50 wounded Egyptians released from Atlith camp and conducted them by air to Cairo.

Situation of refugees in Jordan. — According to the ICRC delegation in Amman, the approximate number of refugees and displaced persons in Jordan on October 1 totalled 204,000, of whom 101,000 were former refugees registered with UNRWA, 93,000 new refugees not registered with UNRWA and 10,000 from the Gaza strip.

Most of the camps which were in the Amman area have been moved to the Jordan valley, where the climate is more favourable in winter.

Inhabitants of the Gaza area leaving for Jordan, whose numbers were more than 200 daily in September, decreased to 50 in November.

Repatriation to Egypt. — The ICRC delegations in Gaza and Cairo have set on foot the voluntary repatriation of Egyptians from Sinai and the Gaza strip to Egypt. So far more than 4,000 persons have thus been repatriated.

Aden

In view of the renewed disturbances in Aden, shortly to become independent, the ICRC sent out there another delegate, Mr. R. Troyon, to assist André Rochat, the ICRC's delegate-general for Arabia who was already in Aden.

On November 16 the ICRC delegates co-operated with the British authorities in evacuating to Cairo, for their own safety, a number of FLOSY members who had been in detention. They also escorted outside the British sector the remaining detainees released by the NLF.

On November 7 a large convoy of ambulances and lorries bearing the red cross emblem took supplies to the Salom psychiatric hospital, from which they removed a number of wounded who had not been cared for. On November 13, the ICRC delegate went by ambulance to the scene of heavy fighting, to attend to the casualties.

On November 28, in order to deal with the acute shortage of medical care in Aden, the International Committee sent three doctor-delegates there. These are Dr. A. Narakas, Dr. J. Parramore, and Dr. Bloudanis.

This medical delegation will take charge of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Aden which the British medical services have evacuated.

Greece

The Greek Government has again given permission to a mission of the International Committee to go to Greece to visit internment camps and prisons in which there are persons having been arrested as a result of the events last April. This mission, the fourth of its kind, consisted of Dr. J.-L. de Chastonay and Dr. J. Chatillon.

The ICRC delegates noted that the number of internees on Yioura island had been considerably reduced. Some of these had been released, whilst the majority had been transferred to the island of Leros. Detention conditions have been improved and the authorities have recently sent blankets for the winter months. Arrangements have been made for medical care in the camps and, whenever necessary, internees are transferred to hospitals where they have been seen by the doctor-delegates, who have also concerned themselves in the situation of indigent internees and detainees, families deprived of all means of support and of the health of political personalities detained in Athens or its surroundings. In addition, the ICRC delegates were able to visit detainees in the Korydallos prison after they had been sentenced by courts-martial. After their visits, these delegates were received by Mr. Totomis, Minister of the Interior, to whom they submitted their observations and requests.

Mr. C. Ammann, Assistant Director and Head of the Relief Section of the ICRC, then went to Athens at the beginning of November where he had discussions with the leading members of the Hellenic Red Cross concerning aid which could be brought to detainees and their families in need, thanks to relief entrusted to the ICRC and which is stored in Piraeus.
