

*EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES***Africa****Angola**

Operations Director's mission. — From 25 February to 7 March 1976, Mr. J.-P. Hocké, Director of the Operations Department, was in Luanda. The purpose of his visit was to discuss with the authorities of the People's Republic of Angola what would be the activities of the ICRC in the post-war situation. Mr. Hocké had talks with the Prime Minister, Mr. Lopo di Nascimento, and with the Minister for Health and the Director of Information and Security. He also met leaders of the Angolan Red Cross, a Society which is in process of formation.

All the problems relating to the Geneva Conventions were raised in the course of those meetings, in particular those concerning prisoners who were still in the hands of one or the other of the parties. A new operational plan prepared by the ICRC for a period of six months—including plans for sending nearly a dozen mobile medical teams—was also submitted to the Government of the People's Republic of Angola for approval.

The Director of the Operations Department was accompanied by Mrs. J. Egger, who is in charge of the Angola action in Geneva, and who had various meetings with officials at the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence.

Delegation activities. — In the course of the last few weeks, the ICRC delegation continued its action in the fields of protection (visiting prisoners, forwarding family messages, recording names of missing persons) and of assistance (giving medical and surgical treatment, distributing food to needy persons). In the *People's Republic of Angola*, the delegation consisted on 15 March of 26 persons: 8 delegates in Luanda, 8 delegates in Huambo, and three medico-surgical teams made available by the Red

Cross Societies of Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, at the hospitals at Dalatando, Huambo and Vouga.

The 142 detainees held in Grafanil Camp in Luanda, who were visited regularly by the ICRC delegates, have now been released.

The ICRC has despatched to Angola, since it started its action, over 830 tons of relief supplies—consisting of medical supplies, food and 20,000 blankets—to a value of 3.1 million Swiss francs. These supplies were distributed, either by the ICRC delegates themselves or by the ICRC in co-operation with the authorities and local Red Cross branches, to prisoners, displaced persons, orphaned children and to many hospitals and dispensaries in various parts of Angola.

Zaire

The ICRC despatched one of its delegates and a mobile medical team to Zaire, where emergency aid was given to some 20,000 Angolan refugees who had newly arrived in the south of Zaire. The aid consisted in distributing relief material and organizing, in conjunction with local missionary bodies, dispensaries in refugee centres.

Namibia

In mid-March the ICRC delegation at Windhoek was composed of five delegates. Their work was essentially to distribute relief to displaced persons in four camps in the south of Angola. Fifty tons of material—tents, clothing, medicaments and food—were distributed by them to those displaced persons. A large part of the material consisted of donations from National Societies, governments and various organizations.

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The ICRC delegate in Southern Africa, Mr. N. de Rougemont, visited three wounded Cubans in a Pretoria hospital.

Negotiations are in progress between the ICRC and all the parties with a view to allowing the ICRC to discharge its tasks under the Conventions for the benefit of all persons who are still detained.

The Republic of Cape Verde

For the first time since the Republic of Cape Verde became independent in July 1975, a mission was undertaken in that country by Mr. M. Schroeder, ICRC regional delegate for West Africa, from 22 to 29 February 1976. He was received in audience by the Prime Minister, Mr. Pedro

Pines, and by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Health, Defence and Education. Various topics of mutual concern were discussed, including Cape Verde's accession to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the ICRC's activities throughout the world.

The ICRC delegate also met members of the Cape Verde Red Cross Society, founded in July 1975, and two delegates of the League of Red Cross Societies. This new Society is taking part in relief operations organized by the Government for the benefit of several thousand persons repatriated from Angola and of victims of the drought. Assistance is being furnished by the League and by several National Societies which are sending money and various articles such as tents, blankets, clothing, medicaments and food.

Latin America

ICRC delegate general's mission

In February, Mr. S. Nessi, ICRC delegate general for Latin America, went to Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, Haiti, Uruguay and Chile.

In *Guatemala* and *Panama* Mr. Nessi stayed a short time during which he met leaders of each National Society and a number of government officials with whom he discussed subjects of mutual concern. In *Nicaragua*, which he visited together with Mr. C. du Plessis, the regional delegate for Central America and the Caribbean, Mr. Nessi conferred with the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the Interior, with a view to obtaining further facilities for the ICRC's work of protection and assistance for persons detained in connection with events affecting that country.

In *Haiti*, Mr. Nessi was received in audience by Mr. J.-C. Duvalier, Life President of the Republic of Haiti. He also met the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, the Interior and Justice, and the President of the Haiti Red Cross, Dr. Victor Laroche. The talks centered on the ICRC's role and activities and resulted in Mr. Nessi's obtaining authorization for the ICRC to visit all civilian places of detention in the country. He then paid a visit to the national penitentiary in Port-au-Prince; this will be followed by further visits by the ICRC regional delegate for Latin America and the Caribbean. The last time the ICRC had made such visits was in 1974.

In *Uruguay*, Mr. Nessi had talks with the Commanders in Chief of the Armed Forces, concerning ICRC visits to places of detention, which were suspended in 1974. He was given the assurance that the ICRC would be allowed to visit both civilian and military places of detention whenever it wished to do so. Other topics, in particular concerning assistance, were also discussed.

Before returning to Switzerland, Mr. Nessi went to Chile, in order to meet the staff of the ICRC delegation in Santiago and to confer with the authorities, particularly with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, about various questions concerning current ICRC activities.

Chile

During the six months from 1 July to 31 December 1975, the ICRC delegation in Chile, numbering about ten delegates, made a total of 107 visits to 80 places of detention, containing about 3,500 detainees.

The delegation continued making visits at regular intervals during this period to a place of detention controlled by a security organization. It was impossible, however, despite numerous requests, to obtain permission to interview the detainees without witness and to gain access to any of the other places of detention under the authority of this security body.

Some places of detention in the provinces, under the control of military intelligence services, were also visited, and the ICRC delegates distributed medicaments and various relief items to the detainees. The relief materials, to a value of about 30,000 dollars, consisted in large part of gifts from National Societies and Governments.

Through 47 distribution centres throughout the country, the ICRC pursued its assistance programme to families of detainees. About 2,000 families received food every month, and some of them also received financial assistance. The total value of such aid was approximately 140,000 dollars.

During this six-month period, the Central Tracing Agency continued its efforts to locate missing persons, whose names it communicated to the Chilean authorities. Each case, containing a description of the circumstances leading to the person's detention as related by the family, was submitted separately. Confirmation of detention was obtained in about half the cases, while the remainder were still being investigated at the end of the year.

Colombia

In the course of a mission to Colombia from 4 to 22 February 1976, Mr. E. Leemann, ICRC regional delegate for countries of the Andes, visited seven places of detention containing some 13,000 detainees, including about twenty persons detained for reasons of a political nature. He was able to check on the use made of the medicines sent by the ICRC for detainees and distributed jointly with the National Society.

Asia

Further repatriations

From 26 to 29 February 1976, a number of aliens living in Saigon were repatriated under the auspices of the ICRC, which had chartered an aircraft for that purpose. This operation followed close upon that reported by *International Review* in its February issue.

Two flights, on 26 and 27 February, carried 489 Yemenites to their homeland. A third flight took place on 29 February via Madras to Karachi, when 224 Indians and 22 Pakistanis were flown back to their country.

The repatriates were all welcomed on their arrival by their respective National Societies. Mention should be made of the special effort made by the emergent Red Crescent Society of the Yemen Arab Republic, which has taken upon itself the duty of looking after those persons who could not be reintegrated immediately into Yemenite society.

Thailand

The International Red Cross delegation in Bangkok, composed of seven persons and a number of local staff, continued its work in aid of Indo-Chinese refugees sheltering in camps. The main jobs are to record new arrivals, observe general living conditions in the 35 camps, take note of emergency cases requiring immediate attention by the Government or the Thai Red Cross, and visit and provide necessary relief to the refugees detained in provincial police stations for illegal entry into Thailand.

International Red Cross material assistance to the refugees, who number about 65,000 persons, is now restricted to medical aid, through the Thai Red Cross. For this purpose, the National Society has received since 1 January 1976 the following contributions:

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| (1) Relief fund of the International Red Cross
(INDSEC) | 117,000 US \$ |
| (2) First instalment of UNHCR-Government
aid programme | 100,000 US \$ |
| (3) Canadian Government | 200,000 US \$ |

These contributions should permit the National Society to continue its action until October 1976.

Timor

Having failed for the present to obtain authorization to send a mission to East Timor despite repeated approaches to the authorities concerned, the ICRC closed down its office in Darwin, in the Northern Territory of Australia. The two delegates who were stationed there returned to Geneva at the end of February.

The ICRC also recalled to Geneva its delegate in Djakarta, after it had instructed him to hand the Indonesian authorities a memorandum on the ICRC's efforts to perform its duties in East Timor and a request for Indonesian Government support for the resumption of its activities in aid of the victims of the events.

Middle East

Lebanon

Opened on 13 February 1976, before representatives of the Ministry of Health, the Lebanese Red Cross and the "Palestinian Red Crescent", the field hospital set up by the ICRC south of Beirut treated about seventy cases a day during its first few weeks of activity.¹ The hospital was made possible by the Red Cross Societies of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, which also provided the medical personnel of three doctors, five nurses and a technician.

From late September 1975 to the beginning of March 1976, the ICRC despatched to Beirut 145 tons of relief—mainly medicaments and food—to a value of 2.7 million Swiss francs, in aid of the victims of the events. The ICRC relief supplies were delivered to the Ministry of Health in Lebanon, the Lebanese Red Cross, the "Palestinian Red Crescent", various hospitals in Beirut and different local organizations. ICRC delegates also made some distributions direct to the population of the Akkhar region in the north of Lebanon.

This action was made possible by donations reaching the ICRC from a number of National Red Cross Societies, Governments and international organizations.

Europe

Portugal

Mr. F. Payot, ICRC delegate, was again in Portugal from 23 February to 5 March 1976, when he visited all the 431 political detainees in that

¹ *Plate.*

country. Mr. Payot went to the prisons at Caxias, Coimbra, Alcoentre, Porto, Trafaria, Santarem and Penisce, and to the hospital of the penitentiary of Sao Joao de Deus. He was granted authorization to speak without witness with the detainees, most of whom were members of the ex-PIDE and servicemen arrested in connection with the events of 11 March and 25 November 1975. Previous visits to Portuguese political detainees were carried out by Mr. Payot in November and December 1975.

With the support of the authorities and the co-operation of the Portuguese Red Cross, the ICRC provided financial assistance to families of political detainees who were in particularly distressful circumstances.

Mr. Payot was received by several members of the Government, including Mr. Medeiros Ferreira, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Captain Souza Castro, member of the Revolution Council. He also had several meetings with the Portuguese Red Cross, presided over by Colonel Tender, a doctor in the Armed Forces Medical Services.