

SUNDRY ACTIVITIES

News Items

The work of the Red Cross in the Congo. — *Mr. P. Delarue and Dr. P. Kiefer, delegates of the ICRC returned on April 15, 1961 from their mission to Katanga. They were able to obtain the necessary authorization and were granted every facility to visit places of detention : the central prison of Kasapa near Elisabethville and the penitentiary of Buluo near Jadotville, where there were respectively 1095 and 547 persons under detention. The delegates also visited two camps under construction especially reserved for political detainees.*

In addition, Mr. G. Hoffmann, delegate of the ICRC, visited on April 22, 30 foreign members of the Katanga forces who had been arrested, then detained before being repatriated from the air base at Kamina.

The Red Cross medical teams continued their work¹ under more favourable conditions during the past few weeks. Since May 1, they are located as follows :

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| Australia | <i>Oshwe (Leopoldville and Bunia, Oriental Prov.)</i> |
| Austria | <i>Kindu (Kivu)</i> |
| Canada | <i>Gemena (Equator)</i> |
| Czechoslovakia | <i>Banningville (Leopoldville)</i> |
| Denmark | <i>Matadi (Leopoldville) and Boma (Leopoldville)</i> |
| Finland | <i>Luiza (Kasai)</i> |

¹ *Plate.*

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

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| Germany (Fed. Rep.) | <i>Bakwanga (Kasai) and Kikwit (Leopoldville)</i> |
| Iran | <i>Thysville (Leopoldville)</i> |
| Ireland | <i>Beni (Kivu)</i> |
| New Zealand | <i>Luiza (Kasai)</i> |
| Norway | <i>Popokabaka (Leopoldville)</i> |
| Poland | <i>Idiofa (Leopoldville) and Stanleyville (Oriental Prov.)</i> |
| Sweden | <i>Lisala (Equator)</i> |
| Turkey | <i>Kirotshe (Kivu)</i> |
| Yugoslavia | <i>Bukavu (Kivu)</i> |

Visits to places of detention. — *Continuing their visits to Algerians under detention in France, the delegates of the ICRC recently visited several prisons in the Paris area, as well as in the North and the South of the country. At the end of April and at the beginning of May, they visited detention centres at Fresnes, Meaux, Orléans, Douai, Loos-lès-Lille, Marseilles, Avignon and Lyons. The delegates were also given access to the « Centre d'identification judiciaire », Vincennes where, as elsewhere, they were able to speak, without witnesses, to the detainees' representatives.*

Mission to Spain and Portugal. — *Between May 8-13, Mr. P. Gaillard, delegate of the ICRC, spent several days in Spain and Portugal.*

In Madrid our delegate had talks with the Spanish Red Cross and with Mr. Arbenz, the delegate of the ICRC in Spain.

Mr. Gaillard made contact in Lisbon with the President of the Portuguese Red Cross, Dr. Leonardo de Castro Freire.

A variety of problems were discussed during these talks, notably those connected with the recent actions of the Portuguese Red Cross in Angola.

Mission in Rumania. — *During the second part of March, Mr. H. G. Beckh, delegate of the ICRC, once again visited Rumania. He was received by Mr. A. Moisescu, President of the Rumanian Red*



In the hospital at Gemena, where the medical team of the Canadian Red Cross is at work.

CONGO

Foodstuffs and medicaments for the hospital of Gemena being unloaded from a United Nations' aircraft placed at the disposal of the ICRC and accompanied by a delegate.



Cross, Mr. P. Radu, Vice-President, and Mr. T. Patrascu, director, and was able to discuss matters of present mutual interest with that National Society.

The ICRC delegate visited several medical Red Cross posts. He was shown by representatives of the institution the activities of the Dobrudja regional branch, in particular of the medical service which works in the Danube delta on board ships displaying the red cross emblem.

On completion of his mission Mr. Beckh was received by the director of the department for international organizations at the Foreign Ministry in Bucarest. He thus had the opportunity of explaining certain aspects of the International Committee's activities, especially those connected with the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions and the reuniting of families.

Mission to the Far East, Australia, New Zealand. — Continuing her mission, whose successive stages the *Revue internationale* has already described on a number of occasions, Miss A. Pfirter, delegate of the ICRC, arrived in Rangoon on March 8. She had discussions there with the directors of the Burma Red Cross and visited the military hospitals as well as those of Mandalay and Kaymyo, where she gave a series of lectures to nurses.

She then visited Thailand, where she arrived on March 18. The opportunity was given to her to visit the Red Cross hospital, the centre for scientific research and the laboratory of vaccines against snake bites and she was also able to have numerous meetings with representatives of the National Red Cross, the Army medical adviser and the Ministry of Health.

A few days later Miss Pfirter was received at Kuala Lumpur by the Red Cross of the Federation of Malaya, and met personalities of the Army medical Service, of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and also visited hospitals and local Red Cross branches.

Miss Pfirter then went to Australia, where she attended the XIIth Quadrennial Congress of the International Council of Nurses held from April 17-22, to whose work we will refer later.

Finally, she went to New Zealand, where she had discussions with members of that country's Red Cross Society, as well as with Civil

Defence and Ministry of Health personalities. She was also able to visit several local branches of the National Society.

Relief consignments. — Nepal: *The ICRC delegation in Kathmandu is continuing its relief action. It has transported foodstuffs by air to the upper valleys of Nepal, in which Tibetan refugees are concentrated, so that their supplies may be assured during the monsoon period.*

Two medical outposts have been set up, one at Thangboche (Khumbu) and the other at Jomosom (Thakkhola). Anti-cholera vaccines were parachuted at Walungchung to prevent an epidemic from breaking out in that valley.

At Kathmandu a handicraft centre consisting of a weaving workshop, a carpenter's shop, a tailor's shop and a school have been established with a view to giving professional training to Tibetan refugees in this area.

Greece. — *Another relief consignment consisting of 350 blankets, 350 sets of track suits and 1500 pieces of soap was despatched by the ICRC from Trieste to the Piraeus. This consignment was a gift of the Hungarian Red Cross to the political exiles at Aghios Efstratios.*

Compensation to victims of pseudo-medical experiments. — *The International Committee of the Red Cross agreed to act as an intermediary for transmitting financial assistance which the Government of Bonn has decided to allocate to certain victims of pseudo-medical experiments inflicted on them in German concentration camps under the Nazi regime. This concerns those survivors who are at present residing in countries with which the German Federal Republic does not maintain diplomatic relations, chiefly in Hungary and Poland.*

Missions of the International Committee went to Warsaw and Budapest in order to collect, in agreement with the National Red Cross Societies, the necessary documentation in support of claims for compensation which have so far been submitted.

A neutral commission, consisting of three Swiss personalities, selected by the ICRC from outside that institution, will then have the task of making pronouncements on those claims and of determining the amount of compensation to be allocated individually in each case.

International Museum of the Castiglione delle Stiviere Red Cross.

— *The directing Committee of the International Museum of the Castiglione delle Stiviere Red Cross met on May 5 at the headquarters of the Italian Red Cross in Rome, for the purpose of examining the statutes and the internal regulations of the museum. This meeting was presided over by Dr. Guido Ferri, President of the Italian Red Cross, at which were also present, Mr. Henrik Beer, Secretary-General of the League, Mr. R. Du Pasquier, representing Mr. J. S. Pictet, Director for General Affairs of the ICRC, who was unable to proceed to Rome, Mr. Bernard Gagnebin, Assistant Director of the public and university library of Geneva, as well as several other leading Italian personalities. The directing committee approved the drafts which were submitted with some minor alterations. It had the satisfaction of being informed by Mr. Enzo Boletti, Mayor of Castiglione, that large numbers of people visit the International Museum of the Red Cross daily and that it is now included on the itinerary of certain travel agencies.*

International Commission of Fire-brigades. — *During the course of last winter, the ICRC had the opportunity of getting in touch with the International Commission of Fire-brigades, a body which consists of national associations of fire-brigades in a large number of countries and which is itself a part of the International Technical Committee for the Prevention and Extinction of Fire (ITCF). At recent congresses this Commission in fact laid stress on the humanitarian nature of the activities carried out by fire-brigades and expressed the wish that such activities could be pursued in all circumstances, especially in cases of armed conflict and could benefit by protection from international law strengthened accordingly.*

With a view to examining the methods which could be employed to put this wish into effect, it requested Mr. Müller, President of the Swiss Society of Fire-brigades, to submit the problem to the ICRC, as it affected fire-brigades and to seek its advice.

On the basis of discussions which the representatives of the ICRC thus had with a delegation of the central Committee of that Society, the ICRC put forward its detailed views on the methods which could be employed to ensure greater protection in international law to the activities of fire-brigades in time of war, in so far as these are not of a

military character. These views were examined for the first time at a meeting held on April 14, 1961 at the headquarters of the ICRC, at which were present representatives of the International Committee on the one hand and on the other, the President and Secretary-General of the ITCF, Mr. Holaubek (from Vienna) and Mr. Collinet (from Paris). Mr. Bürger, President of the International Commission of Fire-brigades (from Rottweil-Zimmern, Germany), and other members of that Commission were also present.

This meeting also enabled the ICRC definitely to clarify the proposals which it had submitted with a view to strengthening the legal protection of fire-brigades in time of war to that Commission, which it will discuss at the next Congress.

International Red Cross broadcast. — *For the eleventh time Radio-Genève arranged the international Red Cross broadcast transmitted under the auspices of the ICRC, the League, the European Broadcasting Union and the International Broadcasting Organization. This took place on May 8, the anniversary of Henry Dunant's birth, which is celebrated in a large number of countries as a tribute to the founder and to the idea of the Red Cross.*

74 countries from the five continents thus associated themselves with this programme of commemoration and hope, which this year included a symphonic work offered to the Red Cross by the Belgian Broadcasting and Television Service. This work was a cantata by Louis de Meester on a poem by Karel Jonckheere. Entitled "This is my blood", it enlarged on the gesture of human fellowship shown by blood donors and its symbolic value.

Guests of the ICRC. — *During the period March to May 1961, various personalities visited the headquarters of the ICRC. Our institution thus had the honour of successively receiving H. E. Dr. José Angel Saviñón, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate of the Dominican Republic in Geneva ; Mr. Gaston Bouthoul, Professor at the Ecole des Sciences politiques of Paris ; H. E. Mr. Paul Grey, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Great Britain, accompanied by Mrs. Grey and Mr. D. Balfour, Consul-General of Great Britain in Geneva and Mrs. Balfour ;*

Mr. G. T. Neary and Mr. Perdur Könz of the International Agency for Atomic Energy in Vienna ; Mr. Jakob Burckhardt, new head of the Division for international organizations in the Political Federal Department at Berne, accompanied by Mr. Georges Bonnant, Counsellor of Legation, head of division of the same department.

The ICRC also had the pleasure of receiving personalities belonging to the Red Cross world. In this connection we make mention of visits made by Dr. Karel Blaha, head of the Foreign Affairs Section of the Czechoslovak Red Cross, Dr. Heinrich Weitz, President of the German Red Cross in the Federal Republic, Mr. Leon L. Baric, director of medical education of the Yugoslav Red Cross, Dr. Abou Qoura, Secretary-General of the Jordan Red Crescent, Mrs. MacVicar, of the British Red Cross, on her return journey from Nigeria and finally by Mrs. Irena Domanska, President of the Polish Red Cross.

The ICRC was also pleased to welcome members of medical teams on their return from the Congo. In March these included Dr. Sixten Haraldson, of the Swedish medical team, members of the medical team of the German Democratic Republic whose head, Dr. Schmauss, was accompanied by Dr. Pittelkov, Dr. Junhans, Dr. Karg and Dr. Schmidt and in May a visit was made by Dr. Djukic, surgeon, of the Yugoslav Red Cross.

In addition, various groups visited the International Committee's headquarters for the purpose of obtaining information on the activities of the institution and of visiting the Tracing Agency. These included two consecutive parties of nurses of the Swiss Red Cross belonging to the "Lindenhof" Schools in Berne and "La Source" in Lausanne, of a group of seventeen pupils of the School of Social Studies in Geneva and of twenty students belonging to the German section of the World University Service.