

# INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

---

## THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE IN ALGERIA

### Work in the medical field

The ICRC actively developed its relief operation in Algeria in June. Acute medical and sanitary problems are facing its delegates, especially in Oran. As reported earlier the ICRC has sent a medical team of three to the Moslem city of Oran, where medicines, surgical instruments and equipment, and dietetic milk for new-born children, are most urgently needed. Following urgent requests by its delegates on the spot the ICRC immediately despatched by air two tons of dietetic powdered milk : Two further shipments were also sent by the French Red Cross, one of eight crates of sugared concentrated milk, the other of one and a half tons of standardised milk.

Dr. J.-L. de Chastonay, medical adviser of the ICRC delegation in Algeria, sent a first shipment of medicines to Oran. This was shortly followed by a large quantity of medicines sent from Paris on June 5th by the French Red Cross including antibiotics, opthalmic ointment and special medicines. Others shipments are now on their way to Oran. On June 14th, a special plane took off from Geneva for Algiers with a cargo of medicines and medical equipment valued at 40,000 Swiss Francs.

From Geneva, the ICRC has now sent to Algiers four different shipments of medicines, vaccines and equipment for blood transfusion, totalling 1,400 kilograms (about 3,000 lb.) and valued at 45,000 Swiss francs.

It will be recalled that four doctors and a male nurse are now engaged in the ICRC relief action in Algeria : they are Dr. J.-L. de Chastonay (Algiers) and Dr. A. Foletti (Relizane Hospital), and Dr. R. A. Egli, Dr. U. Denzler and Mr. P. Frey (male nurse) in the Moslem city of Oran.

As a result of a second plane leaving to repatriate Swiss nationals from Algeria, the International Committee of the Red Cross has been able to send out a further cargo of relief supplies comprising 2,500 kilos of semi-skimmed milk and laboratory equipment for the blood transfusion centres. The value of this consignment was 21,000 Swiss francs.

The French Red Cross has also sent a further supply of milk and medical supplies to Dr. Robert-André EGLI, the ICRC doctor working in Oran. These relief supplies, however, are still far from meeting all the needs.

Dr. Jean-Louis de Chastonay, head of the ICRC medical mission in Algeria, recently returned to Geneva where he reported on the work which is being carried out principally in the Moslem quarters of Algiers and Oran. The ICRC doctors are working in frequently difficult conditions but have rendered services to the populations of the two towns which have been greatly appreciated. They have carried out over a hundred blood transfusions and organized a blood bank in Oran. Dr. de Chastonay has also distributed large quantities of medical supplies, antibiotics, vaccines and equipment valued at 85,000 Swiss francs.

Another ICRC doctor, Dr. Aurelio Foletti, has been working for a month at the hospital at Relizane in Oranie, where he had to treat a number of people wounded during disturbances there. Most frequently performed operations were extractions of bullets and grenade splinters. He also did thirteen laparotomies for bullet wounds and a number of skin grafts for the treatment of burns. Dr. Foletti has also just returned to Geneva.

### **Help to regrouped populations**

The ICRC has now taken steps in a new direction, in favour of regrouped populations in Algeria, estimated at more than 2 millions persons. Its action started in the Bougie area, where a shipment of 30 tons of powdered milk and 4 tons of cheese, a gift of the Swiss Confederation, arrived on June 12. It is now being distributed in the Setif and Tizi Ouzou areas.

In addition, a specialist in international transport, Mr. P. Borgognon, has visited Bougie in order to prepare a new and

important move in the ICRC feeding operation in favour of regrouped populations. It is hoped that a cargo of 5,000 tons of American surplus food will shortly reach this port.

ICRC delegate Jacques de Heller has taken delivery at the port of Bougie of 30 tons of powdered milk and 4 tons of cheese for the regrouped populations. He directed the supplies to the Setif and Tizi-Ouzou regions where they are being distributed under ICRC supervision.

The French Red Cross mobile nursing teams which work in co-operation with the ICRC and distribute relief supplies forwarded by the latter, are continuing their activity in the regroupment centres. The ICRC has received a report from one of these teams working in the Tenes sector. This document shows that the work of the Red Cross is greatly appreciated by the population and it finishes in these words :

“ In spite of the pressure of work and the inevitable dissatisfaction that lack of endless resources and time make it impossible for us ever to do enough to help everybody, our enthusiasm knows no bounds and equal attention is paid to every camp. We constantly marvel at the people's confidence in and friendship for the Red Cross and this we gratefully accept.”

### **Tracing missing persons**

The ICRC has received and is still receiving daily requests to try and find missing persons in Algeria, chiefly Europeans. The ICRC has made several requests for information to the Provisional Executive at Rocher-Noir. So far no favourable results have been attained, although M. Roger Vust, ICRC delegate, personally visited the Baraki and Mouzaiaville area, in the Algiers Department, for the same purpose. His enquiries have yielded no results.

On the other hand, in the Bougie area a Swiss serving in the French Foreign Legion recently captured by the ALN was freed on June 8th and handed over to Mr. Jacques de Heller, ICRC delegate.

The ICRC is continuing its efforts to find missing persons who are presumed to be victims of kidnapping. It has broadcast further appeals on Radio-Alger on behalf of these people, who are mostly Europeans, but so far it has received no positive reply. The ICRC

delegate in Algiers, Mr. Roger Vust, has still not obtained a meeting with Si Azzeddine, the FLN official responsible for the autonomous zone of Algiers, with whom he wished to study this problem.

### **Help to detainees**

The ICRC has also continued its action in favour of detained persons, chiefly Europeans. Representatives of the ICRC have visited nine places of detention, in particular the Camps of Beni Messous, the Police School of Hussein-Dey and Tefeschoun, the Tizi-Ouzou, Maison Carrée and Rouiba hospital in the Algiers area, and in the Oran area, the transit centre of Ardaillon College and Arcole Camp.

The military internment centre of Ksar Thir where about one thousand Moslems captured in combat are still detained was also visited by the ICRC delegate.

### **Mission to Rocher-Noir**

Mr. Pierre Gaillard, delegate, has returned to Algeria where he has carried out countless missions since the beginning of 1955. He contacted the authorities at Rocher-Noir to define the activity of the ICRC after self-determination.

### **An ICRC Appeal**

On June 16, 1962, the ICRC transmitted the following radio appeal :

« Profoundly moved by the distressful acts of cruelty taking place in Algeria and by the violence which accompanies them, the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva makes a most serious and pressing appeal on behalf at least of the wounded and sick. These must at all costs be spared. The Geneva Conventions and even more than these, the elementary principles of humanity, confer upon hospitals and all other similar establishments an inviolable and sacred character. To do harm to these is to condemn defenceless human beings to increased suffering and even to death. The International Committee of the Red Cross therefore solemnly calls upon those resorting to force in Algeria rigorously to refrain from making such attacks, for which there can be no excuse. »