

SUNDRY ACTIVITIES

News Items**Congo**

Mr. Geoffrey G. Senn, delegate, and Mr. Laurent Marti, assistant-delegate, are at present in the Congo where the International Committee is faced with urgent problems such as the hardships inflicted on the population as well as on fugitives and refugees from the regions where fighting is going on. The wounded and the sick, the shortage of medical supplies, conditions of detention in various places, all have given rise to innumerable negotiations by the two delegates. In the course of his discussions both with the leaders of the anti-government factions and with the authorities, Mr. Senn insisted that the essential humanitarian principles of the Geneva Conventions should be observed.

At the beginning of August and after visiting Albertville towards the end of July, Mr. Senn went to Bujumbura (Burundi) and Rwanda. He endeavoured to determine ways and means of bringing assistance to the population. He also visited prisons and places of detention, including the central prison at Bujumbura. He also tried to negotiate with the leaders of the rebel forces for the evacuation of civilians from the towns which are under the greatest threat. Bukavu in the Kwilu province was one of the places where Mr. Marti went. He visited a prison camp in which the government forces were holding Mulelist rebels.

Yemen

Some twenty persons constituting the new medical and technical team recruited by the Swiss Red Cross to staff the ICRC field hospital at Uqhd in the north-east of the Yemen, arrived there at the end of July, headed by Dr. Edwin Hofmann from Basle.

For three months the doctors and other personnel have been taking care of the great number of wounded and sick, most of

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them victims of the war which has now been going on in the Yemen for almost two years. In spite of the intense heat, the new team did not find it too difficult to become acclimatized and all its members are in good health.

It has however to meet difficulties which are a constant threat to the proper running of the hospital in the middle of the desert, due to the extremely rapid wear and tear of the equipment. For instance, the tank-waggon, which is essential to ensure water supply, had been out of action for several days. The daily transportation of 1,550 gallons of water had to be carried out with whatever equipment could be improvised. However, the Saudi Arabian Government has made available another tank-waggon. In addition, the technicians working at Uqhd are displaying endless resourcefulness in seeing to the maintenance of the hospital equipment.

The ICRC Offers its Services

Following the air raids on various places along the coast of the Viet Nam Democratic Republic, the ICRC has offered its services to the National Red Cross Society within the framework of the First and Second 1949 Geneva Conventions (For the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field ; and Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea).

This National Society thanked the ICRC but stated that it did not for the moment have any urgent need.

The ICRC has also conveyed to the Red Cross Society of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, enquiries from the families of two American pilots shot down on August 5.

Laos

Dr. Jurg Baer, ICRC delegate, left Geneva on August 13 for Vientiane where he joined Mr. André Durand, ICRC general delegate for Asia.

Part of Dr. Baer's mission in Laos entails distributing relief supplies sent by National Societies following the appeal launched by the League of Red Cross Societies on June 8 at the request of the Lao Red Cross and in agreement with the ICRC.

In addition, Mr. André Durand received from the Polish delegate to the International Armistice Control Commission for Laos, letters written by Lieutenant Charles F. Klusmann to his family. Lieutenant Klusmann was flying in a plane shot down last June by the Pathet Lao forces. Mr. Durand had previously delivered

to the authorities of the Neo-Lao-Hak-Sat capture cards printed in Laotian and English. Lieutenant Klusmann's messages were immediately despatched to his family.

A Film in Arabic

The "Red Cross on White Ground" produced for the International Committee of the Red Cross on the occasion of its centenary last year is now available in Arabic. Copies have already been ordered by six Red Crescent Societies.

The film also exists in French, English, Spanish and German. It has been bought by more than forty National Societies as well as by various other institutions.

It will be recalled that "Red Cross on White Ground" is a colour film lasting for twenty minutes and is the work of the Swiss producer Charles Duvanel. Based on authentic documents, it illustrates the humanitarian ideal which has guided the ICRC for a hundred years.