

SUNDRY ACTIVITIES

News Items

Sino-Indian conflict

As we already briefly mentioned in our previous bulletin, Mr. Durand, delegate general of the ICRC in the Far East, went to New Delhi on November 15 in order to discuss with the Indian authorities and Red Cross the various humanitarian problems arising from the Sino-Indian conflict.

On the day after his arrival he was received, in company with the Secretary-General of the Indian Red Cross, by Mr. Nargolwala of the Ministry of Defence. The latter informed him that the Indian Government, whilst continuing to maintain diplomatic relations with the Chinese Government, nevertheless considered that the situation existing in the frontier regions justified the application of the four Geneva Conventions for the protection of the victims of war, Conventions to which China is also a Party.

Consequently, the Indian Government has given the necessary instructions to the military command and has taken various measures of a practical nature deriving from the Geneva Conventions. It has thus decided to set up a National Information Bureau, which will transmit to the Central Tracing Agency all information relative to military personnel, captured, missing or deceased. In accordance with custom, the ICRC has been charged with the centralization and the transmission of this information. The Government in New Delhi has also requested the ICRC to carry out its traditional humanitarian mission on behalf of prisoners: visits to camps, despatching of relief, etc.

Afterwards, the authorities having proceeded to intern Chinese nationals or those of Chinese origin resident in Assam and the five frontier districts of West Bengal, Mr. Durand made further representations in order to visit them.

Following on a request made by the Indian Red Cross, the ICRC placed warm clothing for the war wounded at its disposal. It also made contact with various other National Societies to inform them of the Indian request and requested them to respond to this within the bounds of their possibilities. The Indian Red Cross, on the other hand, asked the League of Red Cross Societies and the ICRC for their aid on behalf of 18,000 Indians evacuated from the North-East frontier regions and who had taken refuge in Assam. The two international Red Cross institutions reached

agreement to appeal to the generosity of National Red Cross Societies on behalf of the wounded and sick, refugees and interned persons.

At the same time, the ICRC has continued to make representations to the Chinese authorities and the Red Cross, in order to obtain news of recently captured Indian troops. On November 16, the Chinese Red Cross confirmed the capture of 927 prisoners, several of whom were allowed to telegraph to their families. Furthermore, 53 wounded prisoners are shortly to be released and handed over to the Indian Red Cross. On the other hand, a nominal roll of Indian prisoners in Chinese hands is still awaited.

On December 12, Mr. Durand visited Deoli camp near Kota, between Delhi and Bombay, in which there were about 2000 interned Chinese ¹.

On December 19, the Chinese forces released 360 Indian wounded prisoners and sick at Dirang Dzong, in the extreme North East region of India. At this release, the Indian Red Cross handed to the representatives of the Chinese Red Cross 2000 relief parcels destined for Indian prisoners in Chinese hands. The Chinese Red Cross for its part has reported the despatch of 2000 parcels of food and clothing for interned Chinese in India.

Finally, in response to an appeal launched on December 4 and 5 by the League of Red Cross Societies in co-operation with the ICRC on behalf of civilians evacuated from the North East frontier regions, of Chinese interned civilians, as well as of wounded and sick of the armed forces, the Canadian Red Cross announced a donation in kind of 5,000 dollars. The Australian Red Cross has decided to despatch a consignment of powdered milk and multi-vitamins to a total value of 500 pounds sterling. For its part the New Zealand Red Cross is contributing a sum of 200 pounds.

Laos

The ICRC delegate in Laos, Mr. Jacques Ruff, is continuing relief distributions to refugees and disaster victims. He recently went to an isolated village in the north of the country to distribute foodstuffs and medical supplies ¹.

This action is the first stage of a tour which he is undertaking in different areas of the northern zone and which will take him successively to Muong Kheung, Tha Thom, Nhommarat and the Jarres Plain.

Mr. Ruff, also announced in Geneva that he has been authorized to make a further visit to civilian and military detainees in the camp of Savannakhet, during the last days of the year. The

¹ *Plate.*



LAOS : *Distribution of relief to Loatian refugees, in the province of Luang Prabang. (On the right, Mr. J. Ruff, ICRC Delegate.)*



INDIA :

Visit to a camp of Chinese civilian internees, at Deoli. (In the centre, ICRC delegate, Mr. A. Durand, wearing an armband, talks with internees' representatives.)



7th Inter American Red Cross Conference at Puerto Rico: *The representatives of the ICRC speaking during the opening session (Mr. Jequier, above) and during one of the plenary sessions (Mr. Coursier).*



resolution formulated by all those taking part in the Expert Commission which met at the ICRC in Geneva at the end of last September, served as a basis for the representations which had been made for this visit.

Between Indonesia and the Netherlands

The resumption of postal relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands will put an end to the exchange of family messages which the Central Tracing Agency had to organize at the beginning of 1962. The termination of this action is a good movement to recall that from January to November of this year the Central Agency forwarded 3,125 messages to Indonesia and 1,272 to the Netherlands.

It should be remembered in this respect that when circumstances require, particularly following the suspension of postal services between two countries, the ICRC offers to forward family messages. Forms to be filled in, the model for which has been drawn up by the International Committee, are placed at the disposal of those concerned by the National Societies, which then send them to the Central Agency which, in turn, forwards them to the National Society of the receiving country. The replies, written on the back of the forms in question, travel the same route in the opposite direction.

In this way, families can avoid any anxiety which they might be caused by the interruption of postal services as a result of events.

Iraq

Following on the request addressed to it by the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Command of the insurrectional Kurdish forces in Iraq recently released one of its prisoners, a British employee of the Iraq Petroleum Company, Mr. D. C. Dankworth, who had been captured during the night of 10 to 11 October last by Kurdish elements. Mr. D. C. Dankworth was released at the Iranian frontier and immediately returned to London.

Nepal

In October, the Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross at Kathmandu, which is carrying out an action on behalf of the Tibetan refugees in Nepal, took delivery of a preliminary consignment of foodstuffs supplied by the United States Government. These supplies consisted of 35 tons of wheat, wheat

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flour, powdered milk and vegetable oil, and were forwarded through the Catholic Relief Mission in India, at Bhairawa in Terai. From there, the foodstuffs were flown to Pokhara, where the ICRC has a central depot. These supplies are being used for the transit camp at Hyangya, which houses about 440 refugees, and at the agricultural colony at Dhor Patan, where there are 350 refugees. The Pilatus-Porter aircraft of the ICRC ensure transport from Pakhara to Dhor Patan.

The ICRC Delegation is waiting for further supplies of foodstuffs and will distribute them during the coming months.

The Nepal International Tibetan Refugee Relief Committee, whose headquarters are at Katmandu, has also sent the ICRC a further donation in kind, comprising 3,000 kilos of "Multipurpose food". This protein and vitamin-rich food is greatly appreciated by the refugees.

A gift of 6,000 kilos of powdered milk of the Swedish Red Cross has also arrived at Kathmandu. This milk will be used in a "drop of milk" campaign amongst needy Tibetan school children.

Japan

The members of the special mission of the ICRC in Japan, paid visits in November 1962 and December to local committees of the Japanese Red Cross and the authorities of a certain number of provinces. During the course of this journey, they informed themselves about conditions under which Koreans in Japan can register for repatriation to the People's Democratic Republic of Korea. They assured themselves that all persons concerned were able to make their own decisions in all liberty and without any sort of restraint.

Visit to political detainees

During the course of his brief mission in the German Federal Republic in mid-December, Mr. H. G. Beckh, delegate of the ICRC, visited four prisons, where he spoke freely and without witnesses with sixteen political detainees.

The respective authorities of the Hamburg and North Rhine-Westphalia Länder made everything possible to facilitate these visits.

In Hamburg Mr. Beckh was received by Mr. H. Thomsen, former Minister and President of the Hamburg Regional Committee of the Geneva Red Cross in the Federal Republic. He was thus able to obtain information about that branch's very extensive activities.

Mission in the Middle-East

An ICRC delegate, Mr. Pierre Gaillard, left Geneva on November 14 to visit several capitals in the Middle-East. His special mission was to examine with officials various humanitarian problems raised by the conflict in the Yemen and to take steps relative to the application of the Geneva Conventions by the two parties to the conflict.

Compensation for the Victims of pseudo-medical Experiments

The ICRC has taken the necessary measures for 105 Hungarian nationals who, during the war, were victims of pseudo-medical experiments carried out in the concentration camps to be paid the indemnities fixed by the Commission of neutral experts which met at ICRC headquarters last September. A preliminary group of 62 victims benefited from similar payments in December 1961.

These funds have been placed at the ICRC's disposal by the Government of the German Federal Republic to be distributed to the survivors of pseudo-medical experiments residing in countries with which the Federal Republic does not maintain diplomatic relations.

Visit to the United States

As we have stated in another part of the Review, the ICRC was represented at the Inter-American Conference in Puerto Rico by Mr. Jequier and Mr. Coursier.

Mr. Coursier then went on to the United States, at the request of the American Red Cross, to explain to numerous people and to several important chapters of the American Red Cross (San Francisco, Denver, St. Louis and Washington) the present position of the ICRC and its activities within the framework of the Geneva Conventions.

ICRC Headquarters

More than 1800 people visited the Central Headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross in 1962, and the organization in welcoming these guests took the opportunity of informing them and documenting them on its past and present activities. Numerous meetings were organized for them with ICRC officials specializing in the various fields likely to be of particular interest to them. The groups of visitors had frequent opportunities to hear talks on the history and work of the ICRC and of the Geneva Conventions.

Several National Red Cross Societies took the initiative, this autumn, of sending members of their Central Committees to Geneva for study visits of several days at the ICRC and the League of Red Cross Societies.

Guests of the ICRC

Between November 15 and mid-December, the ICRC received visits in particular from the following at its headquarters: Mr. Abdoulaye Diop, Secretary-General of the provisional Committee of the Senegalese Red Cross; Mr. Herbert Engelberg, chief of the Administrative and Financial Services of the German Red Cross in the German Federal Republic; Mr. Boniface T. Dovi, Secretary-General of the Togolese Red Cross; H. R. H. Prince Peter of Greece and Denmark, accompanied by Mr. John E. Tenneberg, President of the Danish Aid Committee to Tibetans; Mrs. E. von Puttkamer, adviser to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Bonn, accompanied by Dr. Otto Hauber, Consul of the German Federal Republic in Geneva; Mr. Kazuo Koda, permanent delegate of the Japanese Broadcasting and Television Service at Geneva, together with his principal assistants; Mr. Albert Mamboulou, Secretary General of the provisional Committee of the Congolese Red Cross at Leopoldville; two representatives of the German Red Cross in the Federal Republic, Dr. Pasewaldt, head of the Tracing Service at Munich and Mr. Kreisig, head of that Service's Foreign Relations and Information Division; Mr. Onoie Baiko, of the Kabuki Theatre in Tokyo.
