

**Activities of the International Committee
in Indochina
from 1965 to 1972**

During the last seven years, the ICRC has been actively working for the victims of the conflict in Indochina at two different levels: protection and assistance. Already in 1965, it had for these purposes opened a permanent delegation in Saigon, and later in both Phnom-Penh and Vientiane.

For the protection of victims, the ICRC launched several appeals to the parties to the conflict, urging them to respect, in the conduct of hostilities, the humanitarian provisions laid down in the Geneva Conventions of 1949 concerning the wounded and sick, prisoners of war and civilian populations. ICRC delegates sent to Indochina have carried out some 650 visits to about fifty places of detention.

The assistance provided by the ICRC to various categories of victims in all parts of the area has amounted to more than 6 million Swiss francs. This sum includes consignments or purchases of relief supplies made by the ICRC itself as well as those sent as a result of appeals directed to National Red Cross Societies.

Republic of Vietnam.—From 1965 to 1972 the ICRC delegates in the Republic of Vietnam made 400 visits to the six prisoner-of-war camps, military hospitals and other places of internment. The number of prisoners of war in 1972 amounted to about 40,000.

During their visits, the delegates distributed various comforts to prisoners of war.

From the outset, the distress engendered by the war impelled the ICRC to assist the civilian population. Its delegates, co-operating with the Red Cross of the Republic of Vietnam, distributed food-stuffs, clothing and blankets in reception camps for displaced

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

persons. A number of operations were undertaken for the benefit of the wounded, the sick and the war-disabled. In November 1966, following an appeal from the Red Cross of the Republic of Vietnam to the National Societies represented at the meeting of the Executive Committee of the League of Red Cross Societies, the whole relief programme was taken over by the League, in agreement with the ICRC. From that time onwards, the ICRC's work has been mainly to provide medical assistance, particularly for children. The ICRC delegates in Saigon have regularly visited various orphanages in and around the capital to examine and treat the children.

Total ICRC assistance in the Republic of Vietnam was valued at about 2 million Swiss francs.

Democratic Republic of Vietnam.—The ICRC sent the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam more than 2.5 million francs worth of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies. The equipment despatched, thanks to contributions made by a great many National Societies and welfare organizations, included two field hospitals consisting of an operating theatre, a container for supplies convertible into a dispensary, and a mobile electric generator.

Provisional Republican Government.—The ICRC has forwarded supplies to a value of 150,000 francs for the relief of distressed persons in territories under the control of the Provisional Republican Government.

Laos.—Since 1967, ICRC delegates in Laos have made fifteen visits to prisoners of war in four places of detention. In 1972 they also made four visits to three prisons where " persons detained owing to the events " were being held.

ICRC delegates in Laos have over the past seven years come to the aid of persons displaced in that country. The assistance rendered has been designed to complement Government relief action, in co-operation with the Lao Red Cross, through the distribution of mosquito nets, mats, blankets, rice, dried fish, pimento, clothing, kitchen utensils and medicaments. In 1968, the ICRC purchased four houses at Paksé. They were converted into reception centres for displaced persons.

This aid amounted to more than 600,000 francs.

Neo Lao Haksat.—The ICRC despatched various batches of medicaments, medical and surgical supplies, to a value of 330,000 francs, for the relief of distressed persons in territory controlled by the Neo Lao Haksat (Pathet Lao).

Khmer Republic.—From 1969 to 1972, ICRC delegates in the Khmer Republic made ten visits to five camps and hospitals holding prisoners of war, without however being authorized to talk to them.

As a result of the events in March 1970 and the ensuing hostilities, the ICRC intensified its activities in the Khmer Republic, particularly for the relief of the wounded and the sick and of displaced persons. It sent various emergency consignments of medicaments and medical supplies for hospitals. In co-operation with the Khmer Red Cross. It distributed relief at reception centres for displaced persons in Phnom-Penh and the provinces. A doctor-delegate was sent out who, supported by a mobile medical team made available by the municipal authorities, regularly visited the 32 reception centres in Phnom-Penh for medical consultations.

Besides the displaced persons, the ICRC delegates were also concerned with the Vietnamese residents accommodated in various camps in Phnom-Penh, in the province of Battambang and elsewhere.

ICRC assistance to this country, from 1965 to 1972, amounted to about 500,000 francs.

GRUNC (*Royal Government of National Union of Kampuchea*).—The ICRC despatched medicaments to the value of 120,000 francs for the relief of distressed persons in GRUNC-controlled territory.