

SUNDRY ACTIVITIES

**News Items**

**Prisoners and the Evian agreement**

The provisional Government of the Algerian Republic after having informed the International Committee of the Red Cross, has released three members of the French armed forces. These three men had been captured during the course of operations along the fortified protective zone adjoining the Algero-Tunisian frontier in the spring of 1961. They were part of a group of five prisoners of whom two had been released at the end of December 1961 in Tunis, and handed over to an ICRC representative.

On the other hand, two other French military prisoners captured in February 1961 at Klaa in Kabylie, were released on April 26 by the ALN and placed into the hands of the local armistice Commission at Tizi-Ouzou.

In Morocco the ICRC charged its delegate, Mr. C. Vautier, to investigate the position and eventually obtain the release of a French soldier captured by the ALN on the Algero-Moroccan border in 1959, whose name had been communicated to the delegate. At the end of that year, the FLN had released two of his comrades.

The French Government, for its part, has just sent a further list to the ICRC of detained Algerians taken in arms. This concerns 115 names of persons interned in South Algeria. A total of 3,600 names of Algerian prisoners has thus been communicated to the ICRC by virtue of the Evian agreement. The French authorities also supplied information at the end of April about arrangements for the forthcoming release of these prisoners and for their return home.

**Following the "cease-fire" in Algeria**

The permanent delegate of the ICRC in Algeria has received many requests about the fate of Algerians of European origin arrested or interned as a result of events subsequent to the "cease-fire". The ICRC approached the French authorities during April in order to obtain that this new category of prisoners should benefit from the help of the Red Cross, according to the custom prevailing in such cases.

### **Aid to the regrouped populations**

The two delegates of the ICRC, who arrived in Algeria at the end of March, working in close co-operation with the French Red Cross, have inspected distributions of relief in regroupment centres. Among other areas they have visited Tablat and the southern part of the Oran province.

In view of the importance of the needs of these populations, the permanent delegate of the ICRC in Algeria, Mr. Roger Vust, and one of the field delegates, Mr. J.J. Muralti, have got in touch with the new authorities in Algeria in order to work out, in agreement with them and with the French Red Cross, a programme of distribution which will enable regrouped populations to return gradually to their villages. Mr. Muralti was recalled to Geneva in April in order to help speed up the preparation of the ICRC relief plans. The United States Government has offered the ICRC important quantities of surplus food.

During a recent tour in South Oran, Mr. Jacques de Heller, delegate of the ICRC, visited several resettlement centres accompanied by Miss Tanguy, in charge of mobile teams of the French Red Cross in the departments of Algiers and Oran. His visits in particular included Ain Sefra, Mecheria and Tiarret, and Marnia, further to the north. The delegate was able to see the three mobile teams at work which, besides medico-social tasks, distributed relief sent by the ICRC, consisting chiefly of powdered milk, sugar and ophthalmic drops.

The ICRC delegate then continued his tour in the Grande Kabylie in particular to Fort National and Dra el-Mizan. He also had the opportunity of seeing the two other mobile teams of the French Red Cross at work.

### **The ICRC Delegate in Rhodesia**

Mr. Geoffrey C. Senn, ICRC resident-delegate in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland interrupted his special mission in Katanga to return to Salisbury in Southern Rhodesia early in March.

He was received by the Secretary of State for Justice of the Federal Government and discussed with him the activities in favour of persons arrested during disturbances. Mr. Senn, later, visited the Salisbury prison where he was able to converse with a number of detained persons.

The ICRC delegate will later resume his regular visits to penal establishments in Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

Following an appeal made previously to a U.S. charitable institution, the delegate will shortly receive a relief shipment for

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detainees, including several thousand books, specially text-books for study.

### **Baluba refugees**

At the request of the United Nations administration in the Congo, Mr. G. C. Senn, Delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross took part in the work of the Investigation Commission set up to study the possible repatriation of Baluba refugees from the Elisabethville region, and their resettlement in Kasai. These refugees number about 25,000. Mr. Senn took the opportunity of the Commission's visit to Bakwanga, in Kasai, to see over the town prison, following which he had a meeting with the authorities over the application of detention conditions.

### **Mission in West Africa**

The International Committee was invited by the Togolese Red Cross to take part in the celebrations the latter organised in Lomé for World Red Cross Day on May 8, and was represented by Mr. François de Reynold, Head of the Liaison Service. This was the first time that the Togolese Red Cross, recognised by the ICRC on September 7th, 1961, had celebrated May 8. The celebrations organised for the occasion included the setting-up of 3 new local Red Cross Committees, first-aid and nursing demonstrations, a Fair, a football match, a torchlight procession, a dance and a Red Cross film show. At the same time, there was a relief action on behalf of the needy of the capital, Lomé, and layettes were distributed to newly born babies. The man behind these celebrations is Mr. Boniface T. Dovi, Secretary-General of the Togolese Red Cross, who in October, 1961, came to Geneva for a study visit to the ICRC and the League.

Mr. de Reynold stopped at Dakar en route for Togo, where he was warmly received by representatives of the Government of Senegal and persons interested in setting up a National Red Cross Society. He then went to Abidjan, capital of the Ivory Coast, where he was given an equally warm welcome.

### **Visits to Indonesians interned in new Guinea**

During his visit to New Guinea, where he organized the repatriation of Indonesians captured following the clash on January 15 between Indonesian and Dutch forces, Mr. André Durand, Chief delegate of the ICRC in Asia, was able to visit other Indonesians

interned in that country. They had infiltrated in New Guinea individually or in groups in 1960 and 1961 and had been captured by the Dutch, in some cases after fighting had taken place.

### **Thanks from the Indonesian Government**

Following the repatriation of 51 Indonesian military personnel, captured by Dutch forces in New Guinea after the naval engagement of January 15, the International Committee of the Red Cross received from the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs a telegram of thanks, which reads in part as follows: "Djakarta-wish on behalf of Indonesian Government and people to express to you and your staff my warm feeling of gratitude for your invaluable assistance in returning fifty-one members of Indonesian matjantutul from westirian stop on March 11, they arrived safely at Djakarta and have since joined their families."

The repatriation of the 51 Indonesians was arranged mainly through the intervention of Mr. André Durand, Chief delegate of the ICRC in Asia.

### **Family messages**

As earlier stated<sup>1</sup> the Central Agency organised an exchange of family messages between Indonesia and Holland after the interruption of postal relations between the two countries.

It will be recalled that these messages are written on standard forms established by the ICRC and put at the disposal of the public by National Societies. These forms, on the back of which space is provided for reply, are transmitted through the channel of National Societies.

From January 15 to the end of March, the Central Tracing Agency transmitted 1,842 messages from Holland to the Indonesian Red Cross and sent the Netherlands Red Cross 269 messages received from Indonesia.

### **Cooperation between the ICRC and the Indonesian Red Cross**

Mr. Pierre Vibert, ICRC delegate, arrived in Djakarta in March. He was able to discuss with the Indonesian Red Cross the procedure for sending pensions and allowances paid by the Netherlands Government to some Dutch nationals in Indonesia. A first payment was made in December 1961 and a new distribution is now in progress. Funds given for this purpose by the Netherlands

<sup>1</sup> *International Review*, February 1962

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Government were transmitted at the beginning of April to the Indonesian Red Cross which will transmit them to the beneficiaries. The amount of the second payment is about 125,000 dollars.

### **Moves by the ICRC in India**

In April 1962, the International Committee of the Red Cross handed over to the Indian and Portuguese Governments the reports on the visits made by its Delegate in Goa, and requested repatriation of Portuguese military prisoners still detained by the Indian authorities.

In taking this step, the ICRC refers to Article 118 of the Third Geneva Convention of 1949. Under the terms of this Article, prisoners of war shall be released and repatriated without delay after the cessation of active hostilities.

Several wounded or sick prisoners have already returned to Portugal.

### **Repatriation of Koreans**

The 90th convoy of Koreans residing in Japan who have asked to return to their homes in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has now left Niigata for Chonjin with 233 persons. The total number of Koreans who have left Japan since December 1959 to return to their homeland is now 75,290.

### **Successful ICRC inquiries**

The Chinese Red Cross in Peking requested the ICRC to investigate the fate of 20 fishermen from Hainan, of which no news had been received for some time. The ICRC investigations have now given some results. The fishermen are in Da Nang, in Central Vietnam and Mr. Werner Müller, ICRC delegate, has been authorized to visit them. The ICRC is now trying to arrange their return to China. The ICRC delegate has reported that the 20 men were in good health.

### **Relief to Laos**

The International Committee of the Red Cross has recently supplied fishing nets to the Laotian refugees from the fighting areas who have settled on the banks of the Mekong which will enable them to provide for their own needs. Dr. Jurg Baer, ICRC doctor delegate in Laos, has also handed over further relief supplies comprising textiles, medicines (particularly multivitamins), foodstuffs and soap.

From reports reaching the ICRC, recent months have seen a big increase in the number of "river-side" refugees. In August 1961, when the ICRC began its action, there were about 6,000. By the end of the year, the figure had risen to 10,000, and it is estimated that it now stands between 30,000 and 35,000. To date about 17,000 Laotian refugees have received emergency relief supplies from the Red Cross.

The ICRC delegate has also visited the camp at Savannakhet, where he talked freely with several detainees. Since his previous visit, certain improvements have been made in the treatment of internees, who have been given permission to receive newspapers and parcels. The prisoners' situation has also improved with regard to medical care. The delegate distributed blankets, mats, soap, medicines and cigarettes. He has continued his visits to camps where troops are detained as a result of the events.

### **Return of Georges Olivet's mortal remains**

At the end of April, the Institute of Forensic Medicine in Vienna finished examining the bodies of the victims of the Elisabethville tragedy in December 1961, where three servants of the Red Cross lost their lives, Mr. Georges Olivet, delegate of the International Committee, Mrs. Vroonen and Mr. Smeding of the Katanga Red Cross. Two of the bodies have been repatriated, those of Mr. Olivet to Geneva, and of Mr. Smeding, who was of Dutch nationality, to the Netherlands. The body of Mrs. Vroonen, who was Belgian, was transported to Elisabethville, where it was buried.

Brief and simple ceremonies marked the return of Mr. Olivet's coffin to Geneva on April 27. Mr. Léopold Boissier, President of the ICRC, together with some of his chief colleagues paid respects to the coffin draped in the Red Cross flag on its arrival at Geneva airport. On the following day a religious ceremony took place in one of the Geneva churches, the body then being buried at Jussy, Georges Olivet's birthplace. Beside the grave, the President of the ICRC spoke a few words to the family of the deceased whose sacrifice the Red Cross will never forget.

### **The Commission of Inquiry into the death of G. Olivet**

The Commission entrusted with inquiring into the circumstances in which Georges Olivet and his two companions died, met once more in Vienna, after examinations had been made by Professor Leopold Breitenecker, Director of the Institute of Forensic Medicine. It should be recalled that the two other members of the Commission are Judge Björn Kjellin (Sweden) and Colonel Hans Roost (Switzerland).

### **Meeting of the three Presidents**

The President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, M. Léopold Boissier, Mr. John MacAulay, Chairman of the League and the President of the Standing Commission, Mr. André François-Poncet, met on April 9, 1962, at the ICRC headquarters in Geneva. The meeting was presided by Mr. François-Poncet.

The three presidents discussed relief actions in Algeria, preparatory work for the 20th International Conference of the Red Cross, due to take place in Geneva in 1963, and the Centenary of the Red Cross which will be celebrated the same year.

### **Guests of the ICRC**

During the second half of March and beginning of April, the ICRC received several personalities at its headquarters amongst them Dr. Sécaud, Director of UNICEF in Paris; Mr. Manuel Tello, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Head of the Mexican Delegation to the Disarmament Conference, accompanied by Mr. E. Calderon Puig, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Mexico in Geneva, Mr. de Werra, Mexican Consul in Geneva and Mr. J. J. de Rueda, Mexican Red Cross Delegate in Europe; Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Epstein, writers, from New York; Mr. P. S. Champa, interpreter to the group of Tibetan refugees who have immigrated to Switzerland; Mrs. MacKenzie, Assistant County Director in charge of Youth and Junior Red Cross in Fife, Scottish branch of the British Red Cross; Miss Alice Clamageran, President of the International Council of Nurses; Princess Caroline of Liechtenstein, a member of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (dealing with migrants and refugees); Mr. Ramone S. Eaton, Vice President of the American Red Cross; Mrs. Margrit Berglund, of the Swedish Red Cross, accompanied by Mrs. G.A. Westling, wife of the Military Adviser to the Swedish Delegation to the Disarmament Conference; Miss Zackari, Chief Nurse of the Indonesian Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service; Miss Pat Seater and Miss Marilyn Hopkins of the Australian Red Cross.

During the same period, the ICRC was also visited by several groups: 20 student nurses from "La Source", a Swiss Red Cross Nursing School in Lausanne, accompanied by their Director, Miss G. Augsburg; 30 students from the "Lindenhof", a Swiss Red Cross Nursing School in Berne, accompanied by an instructor, Miss Bachmann; a group of nurses from Zurich; Members of the American Red Cross working in Europe, and 20 young men, belonging to the German Association of the YMCA, from the Federal Republic of Germany.