

*EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES***People's Republic of the Congo**

At the end of December 1973, an ICRC delegate was in the People's Republic of the Congo, where he met Government authorities and members of the "Congolese Red Cross". He presented the Society with a donation of 4,300 Swiss francs towards the development of its activities. A similar donation was made for the purchase of medicaments, mattresses, beds and kitchen utensils for detainees in the Brazzaville central prison.

During his stay, the ICRC delegate also had contacts with representatives of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and visited the Dolisia dispensary. Medicaments to the value of 4,000 Swiss francs were handed over by the delegate.

**Zaire**

In December, two ICRC delegates went to Zaire, where they met Government authorities and members of the Red Cross Society.

The delegates visited two Portuguese prisoners in the hands of the Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile (GRAE), with whom they were, as usual, able to talk freely. The delegates had contacts with GRAE leaders and visited the Franchetti hospital centre run by the Angola Refugee Assistance Service (SARA).

**Chile**

Continuing the action started in September 1973, ICRC delegates in Chile carried out twenty visits to places of detention in that country, and saw more than 1,700 persons detained owing to the events. As usual, they were able to talk with detainees of their choice without any witnesses.

Concomitantly, the programme of material assistance was pursued with the active co-operation of the Chilean Red Cross relief service. Articles distributed to the prisoners included blankets, mattresses and medicaments. At Christmas time, the ICRC delegates in Santiago, Temuco and Antofagasta handed out parcels to approximately 1,000 detainees who were particularly in need.

Delegates of the Central Tracing Agency who had come from Geneva carried out vital work during the same period. In December, some sixty ICRC travel documents were issued to persons who had permission to leave Chile. Every day the Agency delegates received, both from Chile and from abroad, dozens of enquiries about detainees.

Owing to the volume of humanitarian work to be done, the ICRC delegation in Chile was increased. It is now staffed by twelve persons, including three doctors and two Agency experts. As mentioned in a previous issue, two sub-delegations were opened, one at Antofagasta in the north, and the other at Temuco in the south, each having a delegate and a doctor.

## **Laos**

On 28 December, ICRC delegates provided 162 prisoners of war in Vientiane with relief supplies. As usual, they were able to talk in private with prisoners of their choice.

## **Asian sub-continent**

The registration of applicants for repatriation was concluded by the ICRC in December 1973. It had started in September 1973, under the New Delhi Agreement of 28 August. A total of 470,000 persons were registered, namely 400,000 non-locals in Bangladesh and 70,000 Bengali civilians in Pakistan. The ICRC provides special travel documents and attends to departure formalities. In Pakistan, the Government authorities themselves carried out the registration of Bengali servicemen and their families (52,000 persons), while in Bangladesh ICRC delegates were allowed to register further non-locals held in some seventy civil prisons. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees dealt with transport formalities and established an air lift between the two countries.

The ICRC is co-operating with the Indian authorities in the repatriation of Pakistani prisoners of war and civilian internees in India, providing escorts aboard the trains from the Indian camps to the frontier station and there supervising the crossing into Pakistan.

On 15 January 1974, the number of persons repatriated in the sub-continent was as follows: 81,389 Bengalis from Pakistan to Bangladesh; 38,301 non-locals from Bangladesh to Pakistan; 36,433 Pakistani prisoners of war and 13,181 civilian internees from India to Pakistan.

In the three countries, there are fifty ICRC delegates and more than 350 local employees.

## **Middle East**

### **Prisoners of war**

Since 22 November 1973, when repatriation operations between the Arab Republic of Egypt and Israel ended, the ICRC has continued its activities and its approaches to the Governments concerned on behalf of prisoners of war.

*In Israel*, ICRC delegates made several visits to some 400 Syrian, Iraqi and Moroccan prisoners of war and to about eighty Egyptian prisoners of war captured since 22 November.

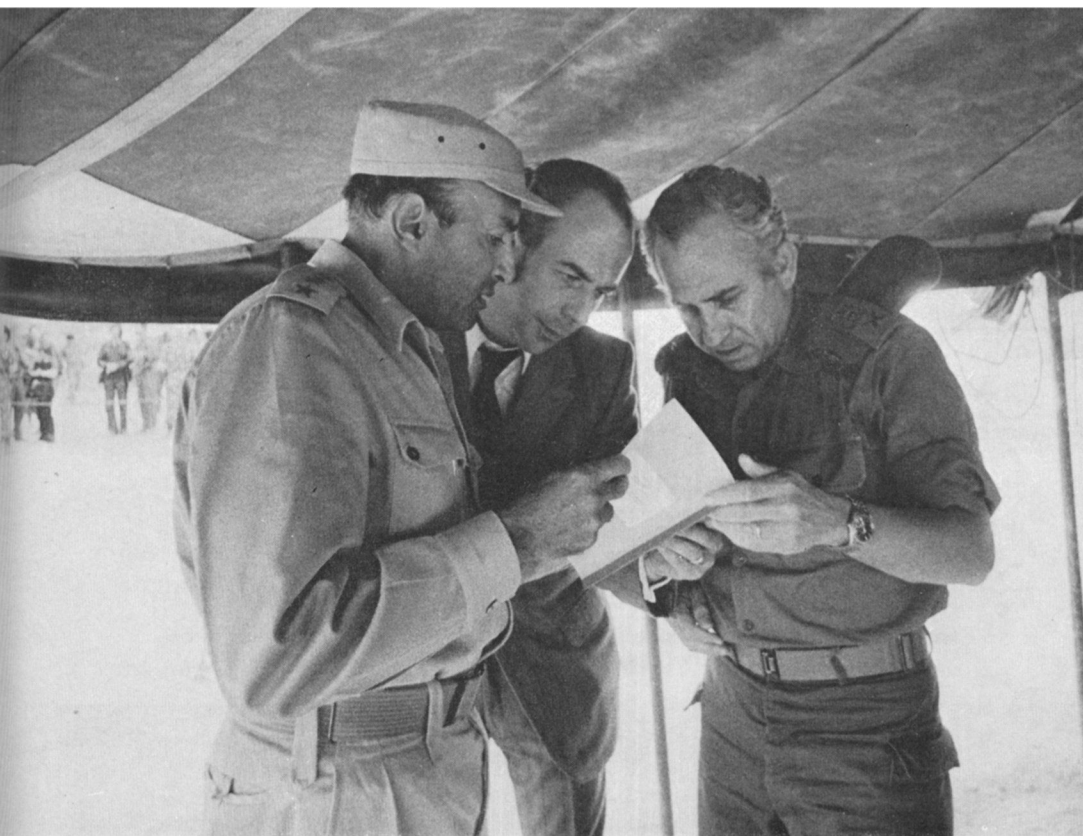
### **Evacuation of the wounded**

Owing to the critical situation in the Suez hospital, the evacuation of the wounded and the sick is still one of the more urgent problems facing the ICRC. Another question which causes concern is the supply of medicaments and medical equipment to the hospital. During the week from 7 to 13 January, ICRC delegates were able to evacuate two serious cases to Cairo. They furnished the hospital with further relief items: medicaments, oxygen cylinders, blankets and warm clothing.

On 16 January, the ICRC evacuated four wounded Egyptian servicemen from the Kabrit area to Cairo.

On Wednesday, 23 January, 250 wounded and sick persons, on

## MIDDLE EAST — NOVEMBER 1973



**Kilometre 101:** The head of the ICRC delegation in Egypt (centre) studies a list of Israeli prisoners of war with an Egyptian general (left) and an Israeli general (right).

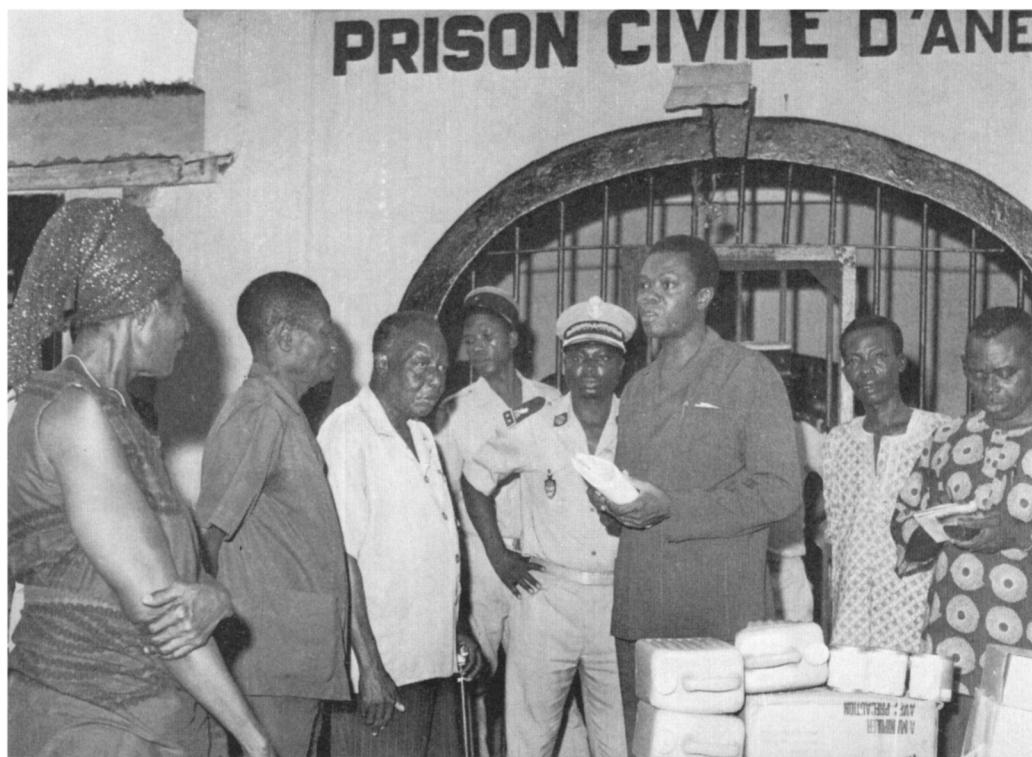
Photo Nations Unies/Y. Nagata



**Sierra Leone:** Members of the Red Cross distributing flour, an ICRC gift, to the needy.

## RELIEF IN AFRICA

**Togo:** ICRC relief supplies being distributed by the Togolese Red Cross in one of the six prisons visited by the ICRC regional delegate.



whose behalf the International Committee of the Red Cross had been negotiating for some time, were evacuated from the Suez hospital under ICRC auspices. A score of buses fitted out as ambulances and driven in convoy by United Nations drivers conveyed the patients to Cairo.

The search for the dead of Egyptian and Israeli armies, which had been called off at the end of November, was resumed on 23 January in the region of Ismailia, with ICRC delegates in attendance.

### **ICRC activity in occupied territories**

In the territories occupied by Israel since 1967, the ICRC continued to fulfil its duties to the Arab civilian population. It made several approaches to the Israeli authorities regarding the territories which had been occupied following the October 1973 hostilities. So far the ICRC delegates have been authorized to proceed to newly occupied Egyptian territory (on the west bank of the Suez Canal), but have not been allowed to carry out their activities in newly occupied Syrian territory.

*West Bank of the Suez Canal:* Three delegates, including a doctor, visited this newly occupied territory. They met the inhabitants of various villages and were able to talk privately with them about their situation. The doctor-delegate enquired regarding the health of the population.

*Territories occupied since 1967:* In the course of their twenty-seventh round of visits to places of detention in Israel and territories occupied since 1967, the ICRC delegates saw about 2,400 Arab civilian detainees in about a dozen prisons. As usual, they were able to talk to detainees of their choice without witnesses.

The ICRC continued to provide free bus transport for detainees' families (a facility enjoyed by more than 2,000 persons a month), and a monthly distribution of parcels containing supplementary food to about 500 detainees who had received no family visit for over three months.