

EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

ICRC President in Iran

From 24 to 27 April 1972, Mr. Marcel A. Naville, President of the ICRC, and Mr. Claude Pilloud, ICRC Director, were guests of the Iranian Red Lion and Sun Society.

After being received by National Society leaders, the President of the ICRC was granted an audience by H.I.M. Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi, Shahinshah of Iran.

At government level, Mr. Naville and Mr. Pilloud conferred with H.E. Amir Abbas Hoveida, Prime Minister; H.E. Abbas Ali Khalatbari, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Dr. Manouchehr Shagholi, Minister of Health. In the course of these talks, the President of the ICRC reviewed the different aspects of ICRC activity.

Mr. Naville and Mr. Pilloud called on H.I.H. Princess Chams Pahlavi, Honorary President of the Red Lion and Sun Society. They had long talks with Dr. Hossein Khatibi, Director-General of the National Society, in which they discussed problems of common interest. They also met Mr. Jafar Sharif Emami, President of the Senate, and Mr. Abdollah Riazi, President of Parliament, both of them Vice-Presidents of the Red Lion and Sun Society.

Lastly, accompanied by Dr. Khatibi, Mr. Naville and Mr. Pilloud visited the National Society's headquarters and telecommunication centre in Teheran. They also visited the Senate building, where the XXIInd International Conference of the Red Cross will be held in the autumn of 1973. At Esfahan, the President of the ICRC and Mr. Pilloud visited the headquarters of the local Red Cross Committee and the Red Cross youth group, and the National Society's blood transfusion centre.

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Indian sub-continent

The ICRC is pursuing its duties in the Indian sub-continent.

On 29 April 1972, ICRC delegates in India and Pakistan again met at the border post of Wagah for an exchange of parcels and family messages for prisoners of war in both countries. Some 24,000 parcels, prepared by the Pakistan Red Cross and containing footwear and shorts, were sent to Pakistani prisoners in India, while 650 parcels containing tea and cigarettes were sent by the Indian Red Cross for Indian prisoners of war in Pakistani hands. In addition, more than 120,000 messages were despatched to either country. More than a million messages have been exchanged since the Central Tracing Agency and its local agencies started their activities in that part of the world.

On 8 May 1972, a further operation for the repatriation of wounded prisoners of war took place between India and Pakistan. The ICRC DC-6 aircraft carried thirty-seven Pakistani prisoners of war from New Delhi to Rawalpindi. Thanks to ICRC action, on 7 May a group of 270 tourists from more than twenty countries, who had been held up in India for many weeks, crossed the frontier at Wagah and proceeded to Pakistan.

Visits are still being made to prisoner-of-war camps in India and Pakistan. ICRC delegates have now visited all the Pakistani detention camps which the Indian authorities had brought to the notice of the ICRC. About forty such camps are scattered in the Ganges basin and hold some 91,000 prisoners of war and civilian internees.

In Pakistan, too, ICRC delegates have repeatedly visited Indian prisoners of war in prison camps. The ICRC is continuing to enquire into the living conditions of the Bengali minorities in Pakistan, and noting the registration of those who want to go to Bangladesh.

The ICRC delegates who remained in Bangladesh after the handing over of the relief operation to the National Red Cross

described in our last issue, are continuing their activities for certain categories of the population throughout the country.

The ICRC representatives in the Indian sub-continent are the following:

India (New Delhi): 1 head of delegation, 6 delegates, 1 doctor.

Pakistan (Islamabad): 1 head of delegation, 4 delegates.

Bangladesh (Dacca): 1 head of delegation, 14 delegates, 3 doctors,
4 delegates of the Central Tracing Agency.

Khmer Republic

From 5 to 8 May 1972, the ICRC doctor-delegate was in the province of Kompong Cham and visited the installations of the local Red Cross committee and of refugee centres.

On 14 April, he went to Battambang where he visited three centres for Vietnamese refugees. There are about 4,200 of them.

Laos

On 19 April, the ICRC delegate in Laos, accompanied by members of the Lao Red Cross, went to Paksane to visit refugees. A relief distribution was carried out there, and 265 families (about 1,300 persons) were supplied with clothing.

Malaysia

Early in April 1972, an ICRC delegate visited two places of detention in East Malaysia. At Kota Kinebalu (Sabah State) he saw 180 detainees, and at Kuching (Sarawak State) 1,352. They were detained for reasons or offences of a political nature.

He talked with detainees of his choosing, without any witness. The ICRC reports are sent to the detaining authorities.

Near East

Repatriation of prisoners

Under the auspices of the ICRC, an operation for the repatriation of prisoners took place at the Allenby Bridge, on 17 April 1972.

Four Israeli nationals who had been granted prisoner-of-war status by the Jordanian authorities while under detention were repatriated. Conversely, a Jordanian prisoner of war held in Israel was allowed to return to his country.

During their captivity, all prisoners were regularly visited by ICRC delegates in both countries.

Visits to prisoners of war

ICRC delegates in Arab countries again visited prisoners of war. As usual, they talked with captives without witnesses. The ICRC reports are sent to the detaining powers and to the prisoners' own governments.

In the Arab Republic of Egypt, on 12 April and 2 May 1972, they visited the ten Israeli prisoners of war interned in the Abasieh military prison, and in Syria, on 24 April, the three Israeli prisoners of war.

Reuniting of families

On 3 May 1972, a family reuniting operation took place at El Qantara, under the auspices of the ICRC. Forty-nine persons crossed over to the west bank of the Suez Canal, and thirty-nine to the east bank.

Israel and Occupied Territories

There were some incidents in the prison of the Sarafand military camp, where all Arab prisoners of war held by the Israelis are interned.

On 16 April 1972, three Syrian prisoners of war escaped from prison. One of them was recaptured on the same day. The ICRC delegates visited thirty-nine Syrian prisoners on the following day. On 18 April, the Israeli authorities informed the ICRC that they had decided to make a search following the escape. The Egyptian prisoners of war refused to comply, and a riot broke out, in the course of which a prisoner was killed.

The ICRC delegates again went to the camp to see the detainees and made a further visit on 23 April.

Under the auspices of the ICRC, the remains of the Egyptian prisoner of war who had been killed was repatriated across the Suez Canal on 22 April.

In accordance with Article 121 of the Third Geneva Convention, the detaining Power enquired into the circumstances surrounding the incident. The report will be sent to the prisoners' own government through the ICRC.

Jordan

On 24 April 1972, the head of the ICRC delegation in Jordan, accompanied by Dr. Ahmed Abu Goura, President of the Jordan Red Crescent Society, visited for the first time the Jafr prison in which several hundred people are detained for reasons connected with the events.

Southern Africa

Mr. Georg Hoffmann, ICRC Delegate-General for Africa, went on a mission to southern Africa in April.

First he visited the Ovambo Bantu Homeland in South-West Africa, the purpose of the visit being the development of the local Red Cross and, above all, first-aid training for Africans. He then proceeded to Rhodesia, where he was joined by an ICRC doctor-delegate and visited five places of detention holding some sixty persons detained under the emergency regulations.

Rwanda

The ICRC Regional Delegate for East Africa arrived in Kigali on 30 April 1972. There he called at the different Rwandese ministries and introduced the Regional Delegate who was to succeed him.

Accompanied by his successor and an ICRC doctor, he then visited the Ruhengeri prison, where he saw persons detained for reasons or offences of a political nature. A distribution of toilet articles and medicaments was made.

Burundi

Owing to the serious disturbances in Burundi, at the end of May, the International Committee sent out two delegates and a doctor, who were joined by a liaison officer from the League of Red Cross Societies. In addition to its traditional duties, the ICRC is carrying out a relief operation for the civilian population, in close co-operation with the Red Cross Society of Burundi.

A first emergency batch of medicaments has been sent to Bujumbura, and an appeal has been made to a number of National Societies to give support in the form of funds and relief supplies.

The Delegates in Latin America

The ICRC Regional Delegate for Latin America and the Caribbean is continuing the mission started on 7 February. From El Salvador he went to Guatemala, where he obtained from the Minister of the Interior a general authorization to visit places of detention. He visited six in the capital and in the provinces and saw several hundred detainees, about twenty of whom were being held for reasons or offences of a political nature, and distributed medicaments.¹

The Director of the Guatemalan Military Academy told him he agreed that a course on the Geneva Conventions be introduced in that institute. The Director of Red Cross Youth said that the school textbook *The Red Cross and My Country* was already being used in about a hundred schools in Guatemala City.

The ICRC Regional Delegate then proceeded to Honduras, where he met the Director-General of Health and a number of National Society leaders. On returning to El Salvador he again visited places of detention.

The ICRC Regional Delegate for South America started, on 8 April, a mission that was to take him to several countries.

In Bolivia, the delegate was granted general permission to visit places of detention. He visited six in La Paz and the surrounding area, saw several hundred detainees and distributed supplies. He

¹ *Plate.*

had already made stop-overs in Ecuador and Peru. In Quito, he conferred with the Ministers of Defence, the Interior, Production, Education and Health, and with the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs. In Lima, he met the Prime Minister and several senior officials of the Ministries of War and Foreign Affairs.

Honduras

In the campaign undertaken by the Ministry of Health in towns and in the countryside, the National Red Cross Society took an active part in vaccination against measles.¹ The campaign was conducted more particularly in the outskirts of Tegucigalpa, thanks to an ICRC donation of 1,500 doses of vaccine to the Honduran Red Cross.

Northern Ireland

ICRC delegates have made a further visit with the full concurrence of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

On 24 and 25 May, the Red Cross team composed of a delegate and a doctor-delegate, visited the Long Kesh centre, now the only establishment in Northern Ireland in which internees and detainees are housed. During their visit, the delegates were able freely to carry out their task and to converse privately with internees and detainees of their own choosing. As is the normal practice, the report of the ICRC is sent direct to the Government, represented by the Secretary of State.

USSR

On a private trip to the USSR, Mr. Max Petitpierre, member of the ICRC, visited the seat of the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Moscow, on 18 May. He was received by Dr Nadejda V. Troyan, President, and other Red Cross leaders.

¹ *Plate.*