

EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES**Near East****Visits to prisoners of war**

In Israel, all the Arab prisoners of war in the Sarafand military camp prison were visited on 23 January and 11 February 1972. There were 62 Egyptians, 42 Syrians and one Jordanian.

In Jordan, the ICRC delegate went, on 10 January, to visit three Israelis held at the Zerka military prison. They had all been granted prisoner-of-war status by the Amman authorities.

In the Arab Republic of Egypt, the ICRC visited the 10 Israeli prisoners of war held at the Abassieh military prison on 25 January and 14 February.

In Syria, the ICRC delegate visited the three Israeli prisoners of war on 23 February.

Family reuniting operation in the Suez Canal area

An ICRC-sponsored family reuniting operation took place at El Qantara, on the Suez Canal, on 19 January 1972. Sixty-two persons left the territories occupied by Israel for the Arab Republic of Egypt, while fifteen persons crossed the Canal in the opposite direction.

Israel and the occupied territories

Release of Egyptian seamen.—Four Egyptian seamen whose vessel had been stopped and examined by the Israeli armed forces in

July 1971 were released and repatriated on 19 January 1972, under the auspices of the ICRC.

Distribution of parcels in prisons.—In January, the ICRC delegates distributed standard parcels containing fruit, biscuits, cigarettes and soap to 660 Arab civilian detainees, in eleven prisons in Israel and the occupied territories. It should be mentioned that such parcels are for detainees who have not been visited by their families for at least three months.

Jordan

On 11 and 19 January 1972, the ICRC delegate in Jordan visited Mahatta Prison, Amman, and saw fifteen persons who had been expelled from the territories occupied by Israel, and a Palestinian detainee from the Lebanon.

Syria

Distribution of relief supplies.—The ICRC delegation in Syria carried out several distributions of relief supplies during the second half of 1971.

A gift of 564 tons of wheat flour made by the Swiss Confederation to the Kuneitra prefecture enabled 54,600 displaced persons from the Golan Heights to receive 10 kg of rations.

The European Economic Community (EEC) provided 4,428 tons of grain which were distributed to about 10,000 refugees from the Golan Heights between 10 September and 30 November 1971. The EEC also provided 112 tons of powdered milk, distributed to 22,000 families.

A consignment of 750 kg of medicaments supplied by the ICRC was delivered to the Kuneitra prefecture for distribution. Twenty tons of cleaning products donated by the German Red Cross in the Federal Republic of Germany were distributed to the Golan refugees at the same time as the flour rations.

Reuniting of families.—A family reuniting operation took place under ICRC auspices on 9 February. It enabled 10 persons to join their three families on the occupied Golan Heights.

Khmer Republic

The ICRC delegate in the Khmer Republic travelled to the provinces twice in January in order to visit camps and villages sheltering refugees.

Together with members of the Government and the Khmer Red Cross, the delegate went to the Province of Kompong-Speu on 11 January and to the Svay-Rieng region on 24 January. Relief supplies, consisting of cloth, blankets, clothing and foodstuff were distributed during the visit to Kompong-Speu.

In the same month, the ICRC doctor-delegate in the Khmer Republic continued his medical examinations programme in various refugee camps in the capital. As usual, he co-operated with the National Red Cross Society mobile medical teams.

During the month, nearly 6,000 persons in the 30 Phnom-Penh camps were examined. The teams treated some infectious and amoebic diseases, measles, chicken-pox and other cases. At the beginning of February, the doctor-delegate visited the Cao-Dai centre, where he examined more than 600 Vietnamese refugees.

Laos

On 12 January 1972, the ICRC delegate in Laos organized the distribution among 80 displaced families (about 450 people) of a Japanese donation of clothing. Mindful of the renewed fighting in the north of the country, he had stocked blankets, straw mats and mosquito nets for refugees. The first distribution in the northern provinces took place from 17 to 24 January.

During the week 18 to 25 February, the ICRC delegate in Laos was in the Luang-Prabang Province in the north of the country, where, in co-operation with the local Red Cross, he organized the distribution of relief supplies to refugees. In the town of Luang-Prabang, some 600 families, totalling more than 3,000 persons, received clothing: at Houei Sai, a distribution was made among 224 families totalling more than 1,000 persons. In both places, the Red Cross distributed relief supplies to patients in leper colonies, too.

Republic of Vietnam

On 5 January 1972, ICRC delegates and doctors in the Republic of Vietnam visited the Nguyen-Van-Nhut Vietnamese military hospital and the clinic for paraplegics at Vung-Tau, where they saw wounded soldiers being treated. On 14 January, they visited the Vietnamese military hospital at Qui-Nhan, on 17 and 18 January that of Cong-Hoa in Saigon and, on 20 and 21 January, the Pleiku correctional institution.

The ICRC delegates have visited several places of detention, namely the Qui-Nhon prisoner-of-war camp (11–13 January), the correctional institute in the same town (4 February) and the Nha-Trang correctional institute (8 February). During the latter two visits, the delegates issued medical supplies and distributed milk and parcels to the prisoners.

Bolivia

The ICRC mission in Bolivia, since the events there at the end of August 1971, was wound up in mid-January 1972, in agreement with the authorities in La Paz.

Before leaving the country, the ICRC delegate carried out a final visit to the prisons in and near the capital. Until the next prison visits by ICRC delegates, a medical assistance programme will be implemented by doctors who are themselves detainees. For that purpose, those doctors have been given full lists of medical supplies which the ICRC has made available to the National Red Cross Society, in whose headquarters the medicines are stored. Each week the doctor-detainees will draw up lists of the medicines required, and a member of the Bolivian Red Cross will collect the lists and supply the medicines. If necessary, the stock of medicines will be supplemented.

Further visits to places of detention in Bolivia in the months to come will be planned by the ICRC Regional Delegate for South America as part and parcel of the delegation's normal mission.