

Missions by the President of the ICRC

Principality of Liechtenstein

The President of the ICRC, Mr. Alexandre Hay, accompanied by Mrs. Hay and Mr. F.-P. Küng, ICRC Delegate General for Europe and North America, spent 7 and 8 June in Liechtenstein. On 8 June, they attended the Annual General Meeting of the Liechtenstein Red Cross, which marked that Society's fortieth anniversary. It was a rather special and not unemotional occasion, as Princess Gina, the President of the National Society, officially resigned her office in favour of Princess Maria-Aglaë.

Mr. Hay gave a speech in which he paid tribute to Princess Gina, who had been President of the National Society since its foundation immediately after the Second World War. He emphasized the importance of the Society within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, attributable not least to its unflagging interest in everything concerning the Movement. He thanked the Society for its important contributions.

On 7 June, Mr. Hay was guest of honour at a dinner given by Liechtenstein's International Press Club. Also present were Prince Franz Josef II and Princess Gina, various prominent Liechtensteiners and National Society members, the Secretary-General of the League, the President of the Austrian Red Cross, and about thirty journalists from Liechtenstein, Austria, Germany and Switzerland. Mr. Hay gave a speech on the ICRC, which went down very well and stimulated a lively discussion.

Apart from these events, the Delegate General for Europe met Mr. Brunhart, the head of the government of the Principality, Prince Nicolas, Liechtenstein's permanent representative at the Council of Europe, and three members of parliament. The discussions were concerned mainly with the ratification by Liechtenstein of the Additional Protocols.

Federal Republic of Germany

Mr. Alexandre Hay, President of the ICRC, carried out a mission to the Federal Republic of Germany from 10 to 14 June. He was accompanied by Mr. J.-P. Hocké, Director for Operational Activities, and Mr. P. Küng, Delegate General for Europe and North America.

The representatives of the ICRC had talks with a considerable number of members of the government and political personalities: the President of the Federal Republic, Mr. von Weizsäcker, Chancellor Kohl, the Minister for Economic Co-operation, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, the President of the Bavarian Council, representatives of political parties and members of parliament.

Various subjects were dealt with in the talks: the Additional Protocols and their ratification, respect for international humanitarian law, the moral support which the ICRC expects from the states party to the Geneva Conventions in the event of infringements thereof, the ICRC's activities in connection with current armed conflicts, etc.

Much of 12 June was devoted to talks with the German Red Cross. In addition to the points discussed with the authorities, subjects specific to the Red Cross world were dealt with.

The few days in the Federal Republic of Germany were very tightly packed; even mealtimes were used for interviews and discussions. There was a breakfast with members of parliament, a lunch with the press, and a dinner given by the Swiss embassy, which was attended by a minister of state, a former minister, and the President of the German Red Cross in the Federal Republic of Germany, Prince Botho zu Sayn-Wittgenstein-Hohenstein, and also by the Vice-President and the Secretary General of the National Society.

Every detail of this visit to the Federal Republic of Germany had been meticulously prepared by the German Red Cross, and the meetings with the government and political circles and the members of the National Society were marked by friendly understanding and indeed warmth.

United States of America

The President of the ICRC, Mr. Alexandre Hay, visited New York and Washington between 17 and 21 June. He was accompanied by Mr. J.-P. Hocke, Director for Operational Activi-

ties, Mr. J. Moreillon, Director for General Affairs, and Mr. M. Veuthey, delegate to the international organizations.

The mission had three principal objectives: the possibility of the United States' ratifying the Additional Protocols, the presentation of the plan for the development and financing of the ICRC in the next five years, and an account of the main ICRC operations in current armed conflicts.

The principal elements of the visit, which had been planned quite a long time ago, were talks with the authorities of the USA: President Reagan, Secretary of State Schulz, Under-Secretary Taft of the Defence Department, plus members of Congress and Senators.

Also in the visit programme were a meeting with the Secretary-General of UNO, Mr. X. Pérez de Cuéllar, discussions with the American Red Cross, and participation in a seminar on international humanitarian law, which had been organized for diplomats by the American University in Washington.

All the subjects on the programme were discussed with the American authorities in a frank, relaxed manner. President Reagan himself was pleasant and indeed friendly. The ICRC's requests for moral, political and financial support for its current operations and future development were well received. Relations with the American Red Cross, based on a constructive approach of mutual trust, were even further improved by the talks.

At the time of the ICRC visit to the USA, a number of American hostages were being held in Beirut following the hijacking of an airliner, and this was the matter of primary concern to the Government, the public and the press. The talks with the President of the ICRC were therefore followed with great attention, and his presence was the object of lively interest on the part of the press.
