

# INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

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## EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

### Middle East

#### Israel and the Occupied Territories

*The Mission of the Delegate General for the Middle East.*—Mr. André Rochat, Delegate General of the ICRC for the Middle East, travelled to Israel on 15 April for a one-month stay.

On his arrival in Tel-Aviv, the Delegate General, accompanied by Mr. F. Payot, in charge in Geneva of the Middle East theatre of operations, was welcomed by an official delegation including members of the Israeli Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence. Mr. Rochat, Mr. Payot and Mr. Moreillon, Head of the ICRC delegation in Israel, were then received by Mr. Zalman Shazar, the Head of State.

On 30 April, Mr. Rochat met the Israeli Prime Minister, Mrs. Golda Meir, and on 3 May, the Minister of Defence, General Moshé Dayan. They also had interviews with Mr. Abba Eban, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Schlomo Hillel, Minister of Police.

Several days were devoted by the Delegate General to visiting the various ICRC sub-delegations in Israeli and in the occupied territories, as well as to working sessions with the delegates.

*Visit to prisoners of war.*—Whilst in Israel, Mr. F. Payot visited, on 19 April, 69 Egyptian and 10 Lebanese prisoners of war at the Sarafand military camp.

*Relief to Prisoners.*—The eighth series of prison visits in Israel and the occupied territories was carried out from 11 March to 15 April 1970.

The ICRC delegates visited 14 prisons, namely: the Gaza prison, the prisons on the West bank of the Jordan at Nablus,

Tulkarem, Jenin, Ramallah and Hebron; the Israeli prisons of Damoun, Remleh, Chattah, Neve-Tirza, Kfar-Yona, Ashkelon, Beer-Sheba and the Maasiahu camp. They saw 3,526 Arab detainees and interviewed those of their choice without witnesses.

Standard ICRC parcels containing clothing, fruit and biscuits, were handed to those detainees who had not received family visits for three months.

As customary, reports on these visits are sent to the Detaining Power and to the prisoners' own government.

*Repatriation and Family Reunion.*—On 6 May 1970, the ICRC carried out a repatriation and family reunion operation across the Suez Canal with the help of the ICRC Delegate General for the Middle East.

124 persons crossed the canal from West to East to be reunited with their families in the occupied territory of Gaza, while 60 people from the occupied territory of Gaza-Sinai were reunited with their families on the West bank of the canal.

37 Egyptian seamen and one civilian, interned for several months in Israel, were set free and repatriated under the auspices of the ICRC.

Finally, the bodies of two Egyptian pilots and three soldiers were handed over to the authorities of the United Arab Republic.

*Liberation of Prisoners.*—As a result of the steps taken by the ICRC Delegate General in the Middle East, 55 Arab prisoners, of Palestinian origin, captured by the Israeli armed forces on 21 March 1968 at Karameh, on the East bank of the Jordan, were freed and repatriated on 13 May 1970 under the auspices of the ICRC delegates in Israel and Jordan.

A number of other Palestinian combatants, captured during the same operation, had already been freed through the intervention of the ICRC. The ICRC had requested the Israeli authorities to grant these detainees, who had been captured during a battle, treatment similar to that of prisoners of war, in conformity with the humanitarian provisions of the IIIrd Geneva Convention.

While in captivity, these prisoners were visited many times by the ICRC delegates.

**United Arab Republic**

*Visit to prisoners of war.*—On 3 and 4 May 1970, the four Israeli prisoners of war (an officer, a pilot and two civilians attached to the Israeli armed forces) were visited for the fourth time by the ICRC delegate in Cairo.

*Repatriation of the dead.*—The ICRC delegates on 26 April repatriated the mortal remains of three Egyptian soldiers who had been killed in recent fighting near the Suez Canal. This operation took place at Ismailia on the Canal.

**Lebanon**

*Repatriation of Prisoners.*—On 9 May, an Arab civilian of Israeli nationality was captured by Palestinian fighters who handed him over to the Lebanese authorities. After being visited by the ICRC delegate at Beirut, this civilian was repatriated on 14 May 1970 through the International Committee at Roshanikra.

After an Israeli military operation on 12 May, five Lebanese civilians were taken prisoner by the Israeli armed forces. These detainees were visited by the delegates of the ICRC in Israel and were repatriated at Roshanikra on 19 May. A Lebanese soldier, captured at the same time as the civilians, was also visited by representatives of the International Committee on 21 May.

Finally, during this operation, about ten Palestinian fighters were taken prisoner. The ICRC took immediate steps to visit them.

**Jordan**

On 30 April 1970, ICRC delegates in Jordan visited for the third time an Israeli detainee captured on 1 January 1970 by Palestinian combatants. They talked with him in private.

**Syria**

On 5 May, at Kuneitra, an operation to reunite families enabled four persons to rejoin their families in the occupied territory of the Golan Heights.



**150<sup>th</sup> anniversary  
of the birth of  
Florence Nightingale :**

On behalf of the International Red Cross, Angela, Countess of Limerick, on 12 May 1970, laid a wreath on the Florence Nightingale memorial in London.

Photo John Warburton, London



**Aden, June 1969, unloading powdered milk.**

Aircraft carry ICRC relief from Geneva to the Arabian Peninsula

**Sana'a March 1970, unloading medical supplies.**



## Arab Republic of the Yemen

*Relief Distribution.*—Continuing a task begun several years ago, the ICRC delegates in the Arab Republic of the Yemen made a series of distributions of cheese and powdered milk in various Yemeni hospitals during March and April 1970. About 4,300 persons received these relief supplies, which, for the above-mentioned period, totalled 6.5 tons of powdered milk and 1,650 kilos of cheese.<sup>1</sup>

*Limb Fitting Workshop.*—The ICRC limb fitting workshop is now almost complete. Young Yemenis are already receiving technical training in the manufacture of apparatus. The workshop will be in a position to commence operations at the beginning of June.

*The Hospital at Khamer.*—The ICRC medical team, which has been operating in the tiny village of Khamer since 9 March 1970, tends an average of 50 patients a day. Each week, two days are devoted to operations. The doctors have noted a significant reduction in the number of war-wounded since hostilities ended.

On 22 May 1970, Dr. C. Frascani, Miss G. Pythoud, anaesthetist, and Mr. B. Kuhn, medical orderly, left Geneva for Khamer to take over from Dr. R. Jakob's team.

## Republic of Vietnam

In March, the ICRC delegates in the Republic of Vietnam visited several places of detention.

They went to three re-education centres run by the South-Vietnamese armed forces at Ham Tan in the Binh Tuy province, at Phuoc-Le in the Phuoc Tuy province and Tan An in the Long-An province. They also visited prisoner-of-war camps at Pleiku and Can-Tho, also run by the armed forces of the Republic of Vietnam.

During April 1970, the ICRC delegates in the Republic of Vietnam visited six places of detention in which they enquired into the prisoners' living conditions.

They were the sorting centres at Nui Dat near Phuoc-Le (administered by the Australian armed forces), at Tay-Ninh

<sup>1</sup> *Plate.*—Aircraft carry ICRC relief from Geneva to the Arabian Peninsula.

(administered by the American armed forces), Bear Cat, near the village of Long Tanh (administered by the royal Thailand armed forces) and the re-education centres of Moc Hoa, capital of the province of Kien-Tuong, of Cao Lanh, capital of the province of Kieng-Phong, and of Go Cong, all three administered by the Vietnamese armed forces.

The reports drawn up after these visits are sent by the ICRC to the detaining authorities.

## **Cambodia**

*Aid for the Victims of the Conflict.*—After the incidents of 18 March 1970, the ICRC received a request for aid from the Cambodian Red Cross in the shape of pharmaceutical products, surgical instruments, clothing, bedding and vehicles.

At the same time, the ICRC general delegation for the Far East was undertaking in Phnom-Penh an initial analysis of the situation and of the urgent requirements, before the arrival in the Cambodian capital of a special mission sent from Geneva.

This special mission included Dr. Roland Marti, senior ICRC medical officer, Dr. Jean-Maurice Rübli, medical adviser, and Mr. André Beaud, Head of the ICRC Relief Service. It reached Cambodia on 13 May.

Two representatives of the League of Red Cross Societies, Mr. Seevaratnam and Mr. Vittani, joined the team sent by the International Committee, in order to decide jointly on the relief requirements of the country and to co-ordinate the activities of the two bodies.

The delegates visited three Cambodian centres for disaster victims, a collection centre for Vietnamese as well as civilian and military hospitals.

*The Application of the Geneva Conventions.*—The ICRC received the necessary assurances from the Phnom-Penh authorities for its delegates to have access to all categories of victims.

At the same time, the ICRC contacted Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Head of the "Front uni national du Kamputch (FUNK)". His Highness informed the ICRC that he would submit the ICRC

letter to the "Gouvernement royal d'Union nationale" presided by Samdech Penn Nouth, whom he requested the ICRC to contact.

The International Committee therefore made the same requests to the "Gouvernement royal d'Union nationale" as it had already made to Prince Norodom Sihanouk.

It also took advantage of this opportunity to transmit to Samdech Penn Nouth the list of 19 persons who disappeared at the beginning of April and about whom the Central Tracing Agency of the ICRC had received pressing requests for news.

## **Central America**

### **Nicaragua**

From 2 to 8 April 1970, Mr. E. Leemann, ICRC delegate, visited several places of detention in Nicaragua: the air-force prison at Managua, the social rehabilitation penal centre at Tipitapa, the Polvora prison, the prison for women, the rehabilitation centre for minors at Granada, and two prisons at Leon, "La 21" prison of the 5th Battalion and the National Guard departmental command.

In these various places of detention, he saw 34 persons detained for political reasons or offences.

### **Costa Rica**

The delegate went to the prison for women and the central penitentiary at San José where there were imprisoned, apart from six guerilleros, dozens of persons who had been arrested during the events of 24th April last and since released.

During the last thirteen months, therefore, ICRC representatives have visited places of detention in all Central American countries.

### **Panama**

From 30 April to 6 May 1970, Mr. E. Leemann was in Panama where he met members of the Government and the leaders of the National Red Cross Society.

The representative of the ICRC also visited the "Cárcel modelo

de Panama " and spoke in private with 29 detainees jailed for political reasons.

The report on the visit is transmitted by the ICRC to the detaining authorities.

## **Brazil**

The International Red Cross medical mission to the Amazon, led by Mr. Serge Nessi, Delegate General of the ICRC for Latin America, is composed of three doctors, B. Aakerren, S. Bakker and R. Habersang, and a Swiss ethnologist, Mr. R. Fürst. They first spent some days in Rio de Janeiro to complete preparations for the expedition, mainly concerning their means of transport.

On 16 May, the team started off on the first stage of its journey, which would take them to the Ilhado Bananal reservation, on the northern frontier of the States of Mato Grosso and Goias. This "open" reservation, with an area of 22,000 square kilometres, is freely accessible. The area is inhabited by up to 2,000 Indians, who live in contact with civilization.

## **Cameroun**

With the approval of the Cameroun authorities, the International Committee opened its regional delegation for West Africa at Yaoundé.

The arrival of the ICRC permanent delegate in the capital coincided with the festivities organized by the Cameroun Red Cross for World Red Cross Day. After visiting the headquarters of the National Society Mr. André Tschiffeli was received in audience by Dr. Tchoungui, Prime Minister of East Cameroun and President of the Red Cross.

## **Lesotho**

On 23 April 1970, Mr. Georges Hoffmann, Delegate General of the ICRC for Africa, visited the central prison of Maseru, capital of Lesotho.

The representative of the International Committee saw 144 prisoners jailed during the recent disturbances. The report drawn

up after this visit has, as is customary, been transmitted to the detaining Power.

## Greece

The International Committee of the Red Cross publishes its communications periodically. Under the terms of the agreement signed in Athens on 3 November 1969, these press releases contain no opinions on delegates' findings in Greece. Those findings, as customary, are conveyed immediately to the Greek Government.

In April the International Committee of the Red Cross continued the mission it began on 24 November 1969, consistent with the agreement concluded with the Greek Government.

Its delegates visited the Egine prison (Gendarmerie, 1 April), the Aghios Pavlos and Aghios Savas hospitals (Athens police, 8 and 10 April), the Trikala prison (Gendarmerie, 9 and 28 April), the Drossia and Varibopi Hotels (Gendarmerie militaire, 13 April), the Police Commissariat in Bouboulinas Street in Athens (Athens police, 14 April), the penitentiary section of the Athens General Hospital (Athens police, 15 April), the Corfu Prison (police, 16 April) the Alikarnassos camp in Crete (Gendarmerie, 17 April), the Korydalos Prison (Athens police, 21 April), the Sotiria Sanatorium (Athens police, 22 April), and the men's section of the Averof Prison (Athens police, 23 April).

In all these places of detention the ICRC delegates were able to move about freely and talk in private with detainees of their own choice.

On the other hand, they were not given access in April to the Military Commissariats of ESA Vassilissis Sophias and ESA Aghios Ioannis Rentis.

In April, 112 persons visited the ICRC Delegation in Athens seeking family news. In addition, 610 needy families from Attica and 420 from Salonica were given material assistance by the ICRC in co-operation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Hellenic Red Cross.

The Delegation, which has been led since 14 March by Mr. Max Stalder, comprises two delegates and a doctor-delegate; all are Swiss.