

EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

Near East

Exchange of prisoners of war.—On 31 January 1971, the 37 Saudi and 24 South Yemeni prisoners of war captured during border incidents in November 1969 were repatriated under the auspices of the ICRC.

Two aircraft took the former prisoners, accompanied by ICRC delegates, from Riyadh and Aden to Cairo where the exchange took place.¹

Re-uniting of families.—On 27 January 1971, an operation for the re-uniting of families took place under the auspices of the ICRC at El Qantara, on the Suez Canal. 209 persons were thus able to go to the United Arab Republic and 38 others to the occupied territory of Gaza-Sinaï.

Israel and the occupied territories

Food relief supplies.—The ICRC made available to the competent Israeli authorities, for distribution to needy civilian inhabitants of Sinai, 300 tons of flour donated by the Swiss Confederation. More than 50,000 Bedouin inhabitants of the central and northern parts of Sinai have so far received of this aid at distributions carried out in the presence of ICRC delegates.

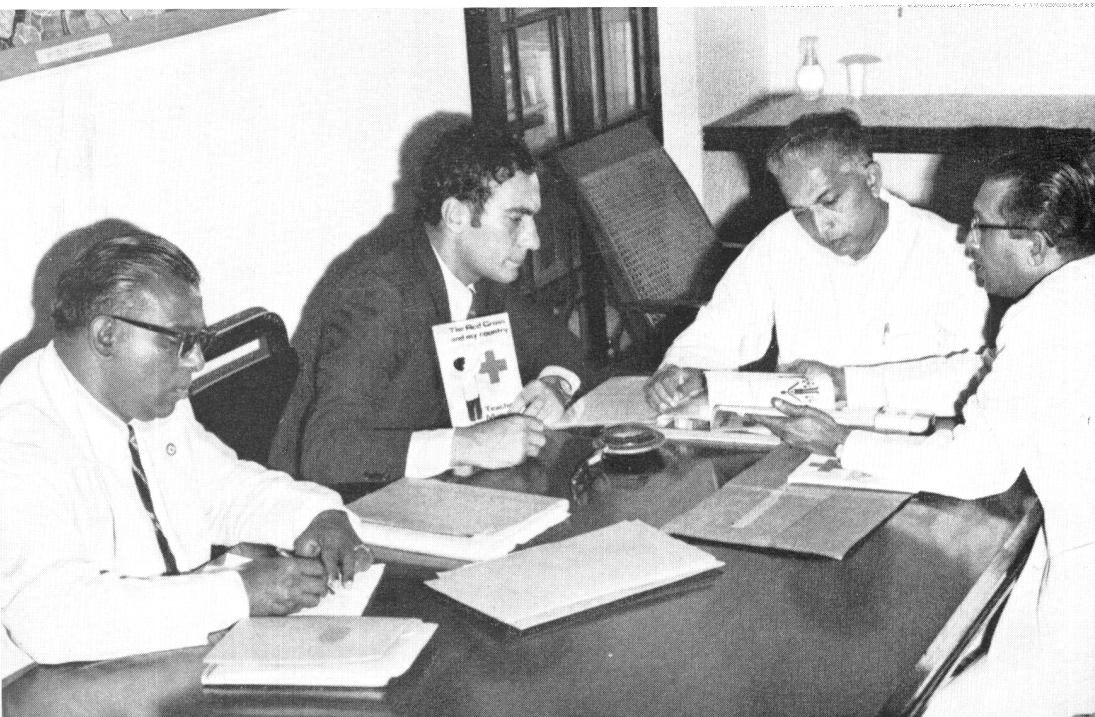
Distribution of parcels.—In January 1971, ICRC delegates distributed standard parcels containing fruit, biscuits, cigarettes and soap in 10 prisons in Israel and the occupied territories. In all, 458 Arab detainees who had not been visited by their families for three months enjoyed this aid.

¹ *Plate.*



Caracas: Mrs. Alvarez (*right*), President of the Venezuelan Red Cross, and Mr. Nessi (*left*), Delegate-General of the ICRC for Latin America, received by the President of the Republic of Venezuela, H. E. Mr. R. Caldera (*centre*).

Colombo: The delegate of the ICRC presents the Ceylon Minister of Education with a copy of the textbook "The Red Cross and My Country". (*From right to left*: Mr. Samaranayaka, Chairman of the Ceylon Red Cross, Mr. Badi-ud-din Mahmud, Minister of Education, Mr. Laverrière, ICRC delegate, and Mr. Mallawaratchie, Honorary Secretary of the National Red Cross Society).



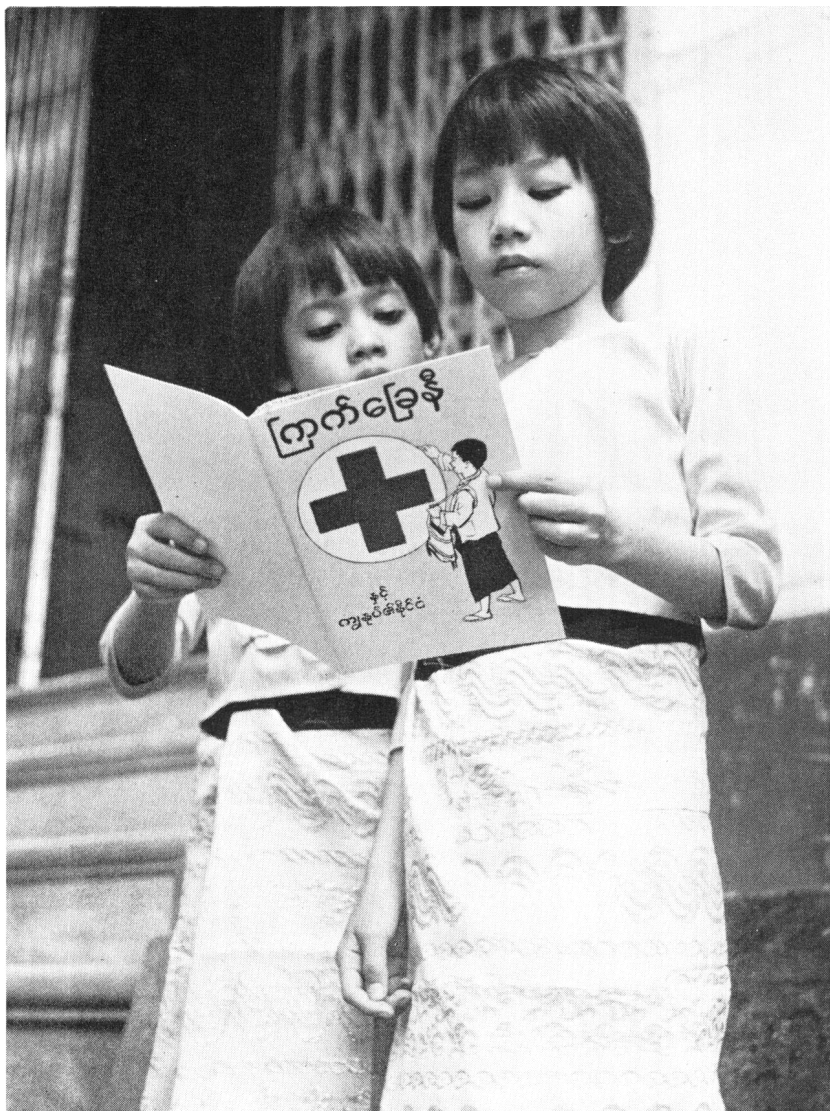


Photo J.-M. Laverrière

Rangoon: Burmese girls reading the textbook " The Red Cross and My Country ", translated by the Burmese Red Cross, which will also distribute copies to schools.



Cairo: Prisoners of war arriving for an exchange of prisoners operation under ICRC auspices.



Photo J. Zbinden, Genève.

Geneva: The Central Tracing Agency's card indexes on the first floor.

Visits to prisoners of war.—Delegates of the ICRC visited on 20 January and 4 February 1971 all the prisoners of war held by Israel. These included 72 prisoners from the United Arab Republic, 39 from Syria, 10 from Lebanon and one from Jordan. As was the case with previous visits, the delegates talked in private with detainees of their choice. Their reports are sent to the detaining authorities and the prisoners' own government.

Repatriation of a civilian.—On 15 January 1971, a Lebanese citizen, captured on 13 November 1970 by the Israeli armed forces, was repatriated under ICRC auspices.

United Arab Republic

The ICRC delegates in the United Arab Republic visited, on 24 and 25 January 1971, all Israeli prisoners of war. Two were in a Cairo hospital for treatment whilst the other ten were in the Abassieh military prison.

The delegates talked in private with the prisoners. As customary their report is delivered to the detaining authorities and to the prisoners' own government.

Syria

The ICRC delegate in Syria visited a detained Israeli civilian on 19 January 1971, and three Israeli prisoners of war on 30 January. He interviewed them without witnesses and letters and parcels from the civilian detainee's family were delivered to him. The reports as usual are delivered to the authorities concerned.

Yemen Arab Republic

In December 1970, the ICRC artificial limb workshop in Sana'a continued its operations.

Two local disabled persons were recruited to assist in training the amputees. Some fifty patients were being attended to at the workshop. In addition, five patients regularly attended the centre for physiotherapy.

Laos

Relief distributions.—On 26 and 27 December 1970 and on 5 and 6 January 1971 the ICRC delegates in Laos distributed relief to displaced persons, in co-operation with the Laos Red Cross.

During the first distribution some 11,000 displaced persons, comprising 1,200 families, living in the Vientiane plain, received 1,213 straw mats, 2,042 blankets and 1,335 pieces of material to make clothing. The second distribution of relief took place at Paksong, Paksé and Kong-Sédone. Nearly 1,000 persons, comprising 200 families, received the benefit of ICRC assistance in the form of 150 blankets, 250 straw mats and 280 pieces of material.

Visit to prisoners of war.—Delegates of the ICRC in Laos visited on 20 January 1971 Samkhe Prison in Vientiane. They saw there over 80 prisoners of war and spoke to several of them without witnesses. Their report is sent to the authorities concerned.

Latin America

From 10 November to 20 December 1970, Mr. Serge Nessi, Delegate-General of the ICRC for Latin America, went on a mission to several National Red Cross Societies in the Caribbean area.

On the first stage of his journey, Mr. Nessi went to *Jamaica* where he stayed until 13 November. He saw there Mr. A. D. Sasso, President of the Jamaica Red Cross Society, Mrs. Marjorie E. Miller, Vice-President, and Mrs. Winsome Hawkins, Secretary General. At a meeting of the Central Committee of the National Society, Mr. Nessi gave an account of ICRC activities and projects.

He also visited the Red Cross Committee at Montigo Bay, where he was received by the Director, Dr. Harland C. Hastings.

The Delegate-General had talks with Brigadier General David Smith, Chief of Staff of the Jamaica Defence Force, on the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions and distribution of the "Soldier's Manual" among members of the armed forces.

From 13 to 15 November, Mr. Nessi was in *Haiti*. He there met Dr. Victor Laroche, President of the Haiti Red Cross, and various members of the Society's Central Committee, and visited the new Red Cross blood transfusion centre, under Dr. A. Westerbant.

In the *Dominican Republic*, the ICRC Delegate-General was received by Dr. Manuel Saladin Velez, President of the Dominican Red Cross, and Dr. Rafael Albert, Secretary General. He visited the National Society headquarters and centres in Santo Domingo, and the provincial councils of San Cristobal, Santiago, San Francisco de Macoris and La Vega.

Mr. Nessi also broached the matter of the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions and distribution of the "Soldier's Manual" among members of the Dominican armed forces, in the course of a meeting with the Minister of Defence, Major General Joachin A. Mendez Lara.

On 23 November, the Delegate-General flew to Caracas to meet the President of the ICRC who was on an official visit. He then went with Mr. Naville to Panama and then to Nicaragua, in which place he took part from 1 to 5 December in the Ninth Inter-American Red Cross Conference..

Mr. Nessi returned to *Venezuela* early in December and was received by H. E. Dr. Rafael Caldera, President of the Republic.¹ He then went to *Trinidad and Tobago* where he had talks with Red Cross leaders, including Mrs. H. W. MacNaughton-Jones, Vice-President, and Dr. S. Moosai-Maharaj, Secretary General.

After visiting the Society's premises and centres at Port of Spain, Mr. Nessi went to San Fernando, where he was welcomed by Mr. George Thompson, Director of the Southern Branch of the Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society. He then visited the Children's Convalescent Home under Mrs. L. C. C. Hobson.

On his return to Port of Spain, the Delegate General met Mr. Kamal Udin Mohamed, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. G. Chambers, Minister of National Security, and Mr. Donald Pierre, Minister of Public Services.

During the last stage of his journey, Mr. Nessi stopped in *Guyana* and visited Red Cross premises and centres in Georgetown, including the Thomas Lands School for Handicapped Children and Princess Elizabeth's Convalescent Home. He had talks with Mr. H. B. S. Bollers, President of the National Red Cross Society,

¹ *Plate.*

Mrs. S. Matthews, its Director, and with several Central Committee members at a meeting of the Central Committee of 17 December.

The Delegate-General of the ICRC was received in audience by the President of the Republic, Mr. Arthur Chung, and met Mr. S. Ramphal, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Mr. S. Worrell, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of the Interior. The question of the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions and distribution of the "Soldier's Manual" among members of the armed forces was discussed with Colonel C. A. L. Price, Chief of Staff of the Guyana Defence Force. Mr. Nessi also had talks with the leader of the opposition, Dr. Cheddi Jagan.

Mauritania

From 22 to 26 January 1971, Mr. Georg Hoffmann, ICRC Delegate-General for Africa, and Mr. François Payot, Regional Delegate for North Africa, were in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania. They were received by H.E. Moktar Ould Daddah, President of the Republic, and his wife, President of the future Mauritanian Red Crescent Society; other eminent senior officials they met included Messrs. Ahmed Ould Mohamed Salah, Minister of Social Affairs, Ahmed Ben Amar, Minister of Health, and Abdul Aziz Sall, Minister of the Interior.

This was the first visit by ICRC representatives to this country, which had signed the Geneva Conventions in 1962, and it allowed the delegates to expound to their hosts the structures, activities and aims of the organs of the International Red Cross, to encourage the existence of a National Red Crescent Society, and to broach the question of the spreading of humanitarian principles among youth and within the armed forces.

At a working session with the steering committee of the Mauritanian Red Crescent Society, created on 22 December 1970, the procedure for its subsequent recognition by the ICRC and its admission to membership in the League was defined. Though newly formed, the Mauritanian Red Crescent is none the less active, and the ICRC has high hopes that it will witness the expansion of its various social, health and medical activities among the people of Mauritania.

The question of the dissemination of the textbook for schools and of the accompanying "Teacher's Manual", as well as that of the "Soldier's Manual" among members of the armed forces, was examined at meetings with the ministry officials concerned. The authorities showed much interest in these educational publications and their distribution is already being envisaged.

Mr. Hoffmann and Mr. Payot received a most friendly and positive welcome from the government authorities and from the members of the newly-created Red Crescent Society.

IN GENEVA

Signature of an Agreement with the European Economic Community

On 14 May 1969, the International Committee of the Red Cross, had signed an agreement with the European Economic Community (EEC), under which the latter was to make available various kinds of cereals for the assistance programme in aid of the victims of the Nigeria conflict ¹. After the cessation of hostilities in Nigeria, the relief action was terminated, leaving a surplus of 12,671 tons of cereals.

The EEC and ICRC subsequently agreed to allocate this balance, the value of which was estimated at 6 million Swiss francs, to other aid programmes, and signed a new agreement in Geneva on 20 January 1971. The EEC was represented by Mr. E. Cazimajou, Permanent Deputy Representative of France to the European Communities, and Mr. J. Durieux, Director of the

¹ This was followed by further agreements. See *International Review*, May 1970.