

## INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE DELEGATES IN THE YEMEN<sup>1</sup>

In the Yemen the ICRC is continuing the relief work which the *International Review* has often mentioned, and which, since it began four years ago, has been of invaluable assistance to the victims of the conflict which divides the country. It will be recalled that a complete hospital was set up at Uqhd, in the heart of the desert; that more than sixty thousand people were given treatment there; and that more than two thousand surgical operations were carried out in the hospital clinobox. The dedication of the ICRC delegates and the trying conditions under which they had to work can only be imagined. The very climate was a hardship and their technical equipment was limited.

Today this work has assumed another form. The ICRC medical teams are continuing their work in the North and the East of the Yemen. They operate in places difficult of access and have often to put up with harsh conditions. Apart from this medical work, which sometimes requires interminable journeys on foot in the desert, relief operations for the benefit of the needy or the victims of the war, and missions to make contact and maintain liaison, add to the difficulties.

The International Committee delegates to the Yemen have certainly no easy task, and danger is ever present as they cross deserts and mountains to bring relief to those in need. One of them had a fall; he fractured his spine and it was only with great difficulty that he could be conveyed to a place where he could be given medical attention. Three months ago ICRC doctors on their way to a village in the North of the Yemen were attacked by aircraft.<sup>2</sup>

Now another accident has recently occurred in the Yemen to a delegate. Laurent Vust left Najran by plane, bound for Gizan

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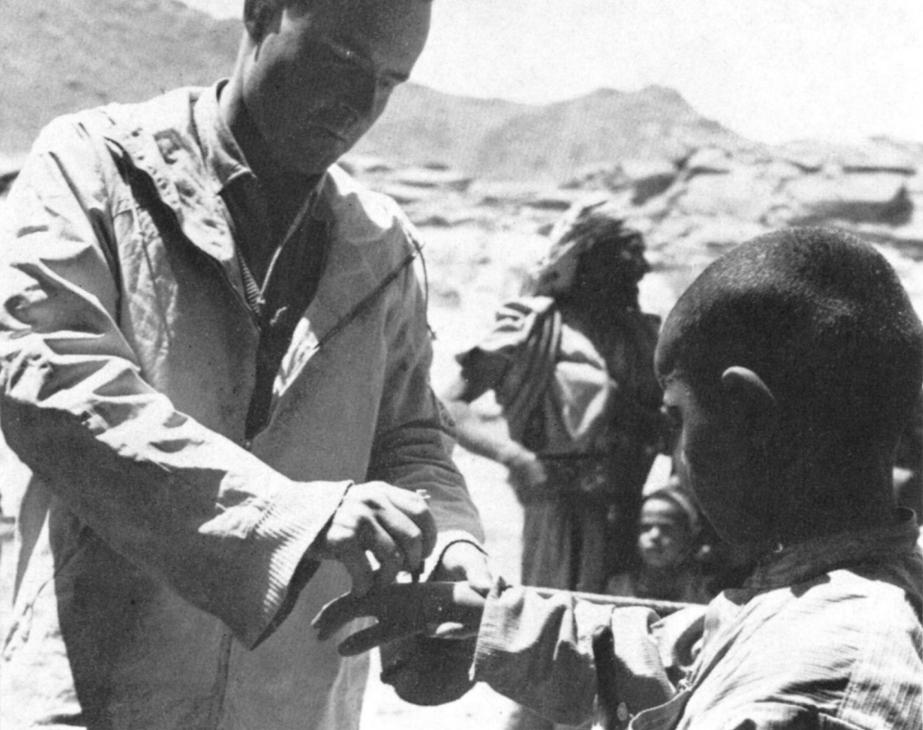
<sup>1</sup> *Plate.* Yemen: ICRC delegates and doctors giving aid to the victims of the war.

<sup>2</sup> See *International Review*, June 1967.

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where he was awaited by the head of the ICRC delegation. The aircraft crashed in the mountains and all aboard were killed except Mr. Vust who miraculously escaped from the burning plane. He was extremely badly burnt and had to wait almost twenty hours for help. He was taken to a local hospital and then transferred to Geneva where he is now undergoing treatment.

We have made a point of mentioning these facts for they illustrate the risk which ICRC delegates run and the courage with which, throughout the world, many of them face the danger involved in humanitarian missions in countries where communications are difficult and where war is waged.

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