

*EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES***Syria**

In response to pressing appeals from the Syrian Red Crescent and the ICRC delegate in Syria, the International Committee has just despatched to that country a consignment of 50 tons of powdered milk, 10 tons of preserved meat and 4,000 blankets. This will contribute to the winter assistance programme for 100,000 persons displaced from the Golan territory by the war of June 1967 and now living in the interior of Syria. Distribution will be effected by the Syrian Red Crescent in agreement with the ICRC delegate in Damascus.

After 18 months exile, the plight of these displaced persons is still one of hardship and they are in need of assistance to survive the winter.

The ICRC is also carrying on its work in the occupied Kuneitra region, where its delegates go regularly.

True to the spirit of the Fourth Geneva Convention, the ICRC delegates endeavour to maintain contact with the civilian population, to obtain authority from the occupying Power for family reunions, and to recover and forward personal documents left behind by the 100,000 Syrian civilians who took the road into exile.

Yemen

North Yemen.—The work of the ICRC medical mission at an advance field post in North Yemen has continued unabated over the last few weeks. The team is carrying on under trying conditions, performing field surgery and providing a number of cases with in-patient treatment, with only emergency surgical equipment and medical supplies. It has been handling 60 to 80 surgical and 20 to 30 medical cases a day, and performing several major operations daily.

There is no other medical service in the region, and were it not for the ICRC team the wounded and sick would have no medical treatment at all.

The team, which is entirely Swiss, arrived in the Yemen on 22 September 1968 and has finished its assignment. Four of its members returned to Najran on 4 December. Dr. James Paramore, who led the mission, and nurse Bernard Conus, have stayed behind to await the arrival of the relief team due to reach Jeddah on 12 December. The new team comprises a surgeon, Mr. Edwin Erb, Dr. Dominique Meyer, two male nurses, Mr. Adolphe Hess and Mr. Hans Baumgartner, and the radio operator Mr. Willy Bauhofer to take over from his colleague Mr. Alfred Kohler to maintain radio contact with the delegation at base and with the ICRC in Geneva.

On arrival the fresh team was briefed by Mr. André Rochat, head of the ICRC delegation in the Arabian peninsula.

In addition, with the agreement of the local authorities, the ICRC field team recently visited some Republican captives held by the Royalists. Three of them are receiving in-patient treatment at the ICRC advance field post.

Sanaa.—In view of prevailing needs in Sanaa, the International Committee has decided to undertake quick action to help the civilian population.

The ICRC having received a donation of large quantities of milk and cheese from the Swiss government, it despatched a 9 ton consignment to Sanaa in a Norwegian aircraft specially chartered for that purpose. This DC-6B, which was previously one of the fleet on the Biafra airlift, left Geneva on 11 November.

The following day the two ICRC delegates at Aden, Alfred Isler and Robert Tissot, saw to the unloading and storage of the consignment on its arrival at Sanaa. They will maintain a check on the goods and supervise their distribution.

A further consignment of 30 tons of milk powder and 10 of cheese was sent by sea to Aden and will be used to expand and continue throughout the winter the distribution programme drawn up in cooperation with the Yemen Republic Ministers of Health and Education.

These relief foodstuffs will be distributed in various hospital establishments and schools in Sanaa, namely the 32 bed maternity ward, the TB section of the main hospital (150 beds), the children's hospital (45 beds), primary schools (including an orphanage with some 2,000 children), a boarding school with some 2,000 children and a school for 200 Bedouin children. The first distributions were welcomed by both the authorities and the population.

Food and clothing are sorely needed in Sanaa, especially with the approach of winter. The medical situation is also critical, medical supplies having almost been exhausted. Particularly urgent is the need to provide for the treatment of 500 tuberculosis patients over a period of six months. Many of the wounded who could be saved by blood transfusion die because of the lack of blood plasma.

A pressing appeal has been launched to a dozen National Red Cross Societies with a view to remedying the serious shortages reported by the ICRC's delegate to Sanaa. National Societies have been informed of the medical supplies most urgently required.

Aden

The new surgical team made available to the ICRC by the Rumanian Red Cross is practically alone in providing surgical services in Aden. It has been running the operating theatres of the 500 bed Al Gamhurian hospital since 31 October. This is the only civilian hospital still in service for the 1.5 million or so inhabitants. Lack of staff has forced the other hospitals to close down.

The Rumanian team, consisting of Dr. Nicolai Ionesco, Dr. Clement Baciu and the anaesthetist Dr. Tudor Criveanu, is able to meet the capital's most urgent needs. In the North of the country eight fully equipped hospitals are idle due to lack of staff.

The ICRC has provided the Aden hospital with the urgently required equipment and medical supplies it was lacking.

Luxembourg

At the end of November 1968 Mr. Samuel A. Gonard, President of the International Committee, went to Luxembourg on an official visit to the Luxembourg Red Cross.

He was received by Grand Duke Jean of Luxembourg and by Prince Felix of Luxembourg, who is President of the National Red Cross Society. He also had discussions with members of the government.

Accompanied by Mrs. Gonard, he saw several Luxembourg Red Cross institutions, such as a convalescent home at Colpach (*Fondation Emile Mayerisch*), a kindergarten at Rédange (*Fondation Félix Schroeder*) and a children's home at Bertrange (*Fondation Colnet d'Huart*).

Germany

In December 1968, Mr. E. G. Beckh, ICRC delegate, went to the Federal Republic of Germany. He visited political detainees in prisons in Bonn, Stuttgart, Karlsruhe-Durlach and the prison hospital at Hohenasperg. He also visited two prisons in West Berlin. He was thus able to talk, without witnesses, with 24 detainees of whom twelve were on charges and passed on to the prison directors, then to the appropriate authorities, the wishes they had expressed which were duly considered.

The delegate of the ICRC examined with the Head of the Prosecution Department of the German Federal Republic various problems following on the visits he made to places of detention. These visits were everywhere facilitated by the authorities concerned.