

# INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

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## EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

### Viet Nam

*Handing over of a list of prisoners.*—The Government of the Republic of Vietnam in Saigon has handed over to the International Committee of the Red Cross a further list of prisoners who had fought for the NLF (Vietcong). This list comprises 41 new names which brings the total number of prisoners' names notified to the ICRC by the South Vietnamese authorities to over 200.

*American prisoners in North Vietnam.*—The ICRC is continuing to transmit, through the intermediary of the Red Cross Society of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in Hanoi, correspondence for American prisoners. This mail reaches an average of 50 items each week.

*Relief distributions.*—The ICRC delegation in South Vietnam has taken delivery of a first consignment from a contribution made by a number of West Berlin editors for the victims of the Vietnam conflict. This relief, which arrived by air, consists of medicines of which the ICRC delegates immediately drew up a distribution plan in the following establishments : hospitals at Quang Ngai, Baclien, Binh Duong and Kontum (where the medical team of the Swiss Red Cross is in position) and the leper-colony at Nha Trang. The second consignment offered by the same donors is expected by boat in several weeks.

*Hospital needs.*—A member of the delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Saigon, Mr. Jacques Moreillon, has

just completed a tour of Central Vietnam to examine various hospitals and their needs. The chief places he visited were Kontum, Da Nang, Hué and Nha Trang.

The ICRC representative first visited the hospital at Kontum on the high plateau where the Swiss Red Cross medical team is working. In this area, the state of health of the population is deplorable, 90 per cent of patients treated at the hospital suffering from tuberculosis. Malaria is also very frequent, especially amongst the children. The other most common diseases are bacterial and amoebic dysentery, typhus, typhoid and many forms of infection. In addition the entire population appears to suffer from malnutrition. Mr. Moreillon, who also visited a leper colony run by one of the religious and a Catholic orphanage, has made different proposals concerning material relief required by this part of Vietnam.

In Da Nang, the delegate informed himself of the treatment given the victims of the recent events at the military and also at the civilian hospital. He had a distribution made of a quantity of blankets from a stock recently handed over by the ICRC to the local Red Cross. He also paid visits to Buddhist and Christian orphanages, in which there were a certain number of war orphans, as well as homes for the destitute and the aged. He noted their extreme need, especially of medicines and vitamin products, food items such as powdered milk, clothing, blankets and mosquito nets.

The representative of the ICRC then went to Nha Trang where he visited the civilian hospital and other hospital establishments such as a leper colony, an aged persons' home, orphanages and dispensaries. He ended his tour by visiting four mountain villages in the area.

At each stage, the delegate collected information confirming the extent of the needs. Furthermore, he made arrangements to ensure fair distribution and effective control of the relief which the ICRC delegation in Saigon has been entrusted to distribute.

## The President of the ICRC in the Balkans

Mr. S. A. Gonard, accompanied by Mrs. Gonard and Mr. H. G. Beckh, delegate, visited three Balkan countries where he was warmly received by the leaders of the National Red Cross Societies.

*Rumania.*—First of all in Bucharest he had numerous contacts with officials of the Rumanian Red Cross, particularly with Mr. Moiescu, the President, and several members of the Central Committee. He met representatives of the authorities and leaders of the provincial Red Cross committees in various towns and villages which he visited. Wherever he went he observed the effective work undertaken by the National Society in factories, fields, schools and hospitals.

He attended a first-aid exercise in Brasov, in Transylvania, in one of the large tractor factories which has a number of first-aid posts<sup>1</sup>. There are doctors and dentists in constant attendance in a policlinic with two operating theatres. Mr. Gonard then visited an agricultural co-operative which has its own medical service. There are first-aid posts in the stables and the green-houses and first-aid teams are ready to go into action in the fields at harvest time.

The ICRC President visited a Bucharest high school where the medical service for the 1600 pupils is operated by first-aiders fully equipped and ready to give immediate assistance. Hygiene courses are planned for all classes, for pupils from 11 to 16 years of age.

During his stay in the capital, Mr. Gonard was received by the first Vice-President of the State, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Health.

*Bulgaria.*—In Sofia, the ICRC President met Mr. Gospodinov and Mr. Nitzov, Vice-Presidents of the Bulgarian Red Cross<sup>2</sup>. They accompanied him to several places in the country so that he could obtain a picture of the National Society's activities which are as varied as they are useful. Among the National Society's objectives we might mention health education in factories and schools, the

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<sup>1</sup> *Plate* : The President of the ICRC watching a first-aid exercise.

<sup>2</sup> *Plate* : In Sofia, working meeting with the Vice-Presidents of the Bulgarian Red Cross.



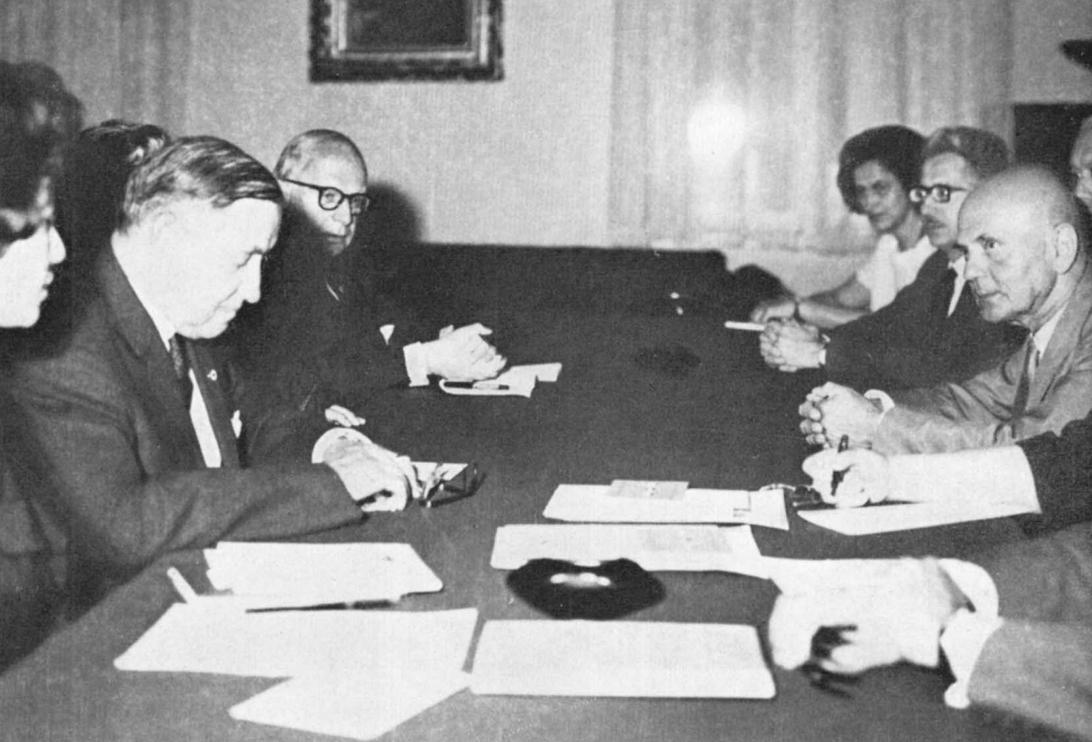
## RUMANIA

The President of the ICRC and Mrs. Gonard watching a first-aid exercise (**behind them, on left, Mr. Moisescu, President of the Rumanian Red Cross**).

## BULGARIA

In Sofia, working meeting with Mr. Gonard and the Vice-Presidents of the Red Cross Society (**extreme right, Mr. Gospodinov, for left, Mr. Nitzov**).





**YUGOSLAVIA** In Belgrade, the ICRC President with leading members of the Red Cross Society (on right, Dr. Gregoric, President).

**FEDERATION OF MALAYSIA** First-aid exercise by the Junior Red Cross (centre, Mrs. Lee, National Secretary of the Society, right, Mr. Durand, delegate general of the ICRC for Asia).



training of first-aiders, recruitment of blood donors, and assistance on the highway. Along the Black Sea coast a sea rescue service has been in operation for two years.

Mr. Gonard attended a first-aid exercise at Varna ; more than 500 persons took part in practising the transport of casualties, and the dressing of injuries, etc.

In Sofia, Mr. Gonard was received by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, the Head of State and the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs.

*Yugoslavia.*—In Belgrade, Mr. Gonard met the President of the Yugoslav Red Cross, Mr. Gregoric and also other leading members of the National Society<sup>1</sup>. He was received by the Chairman of the Council, two Vice-Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and the Minister of Health.

During his journey in Yugoslavia, the ICRC President visited several Red Cross sections and was shown some of their varied activities, such as the struggle against tuberculosis and against addiction to alcohol, home nursing, assistance to the aged in institutions, domestic care of the sick, the struggle against cancer, disaster relief, dissemination of knowledge on the Geneva Conventions, etc.

In Zagreb, Mr. Gonard visited a reception centre with accommodation for more than a hundred. Voluntary nurses and a doctor work there. At Dubrovnic, he visited a convalescent and holiday centre where a hundred children at a time may spend a month in turn, and in Sarajevo, he went to a milk and bread distribution centre.

During a voyage of lasting interest starting from Geneva on May 9, and returning on June 1, 1966, the President of the ICRC was able to establish useful contacts in the three countries and to observe the growing importance of the tasks accomplished under the sign of the red cross.

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<sup>1</sup> *Plate* : In Belgrade, the ICRC President with leading members of the Red Cross Society.

## Laos

Recent events in Laos have given rise to a new wave of refugees from the insecurity prevailing in several areas. Their sad plight was brought to the attention of Mr. Henrik Beer, Secretary General of the League of Red Cross Societies, during his recent visit to Vientiane. On his return to Geneva, and on behalf of the Laotian Red Cross, he transmitted to the International Committee of the Red Cross a request for assistance.

The ICRC Delegate General for Asia, Mr. André Durand, immediately went to the scene in order to obtain additional information. The ICRC promptly decided to make available for the benefit of these refugees a sum of Sw. Frs. 38,000.—, remaining from contributions received towards its action in favour of Laos in 1964-1965. This emergency assistance will supplement the relief provided by the Laotian Ministry of Social Welfare and by the American Organization USAID. It will be distributed by the Laotian Red Cross in co-operation with the ICRC.

## Federation of Malaysia

Indonesia and the Federation of Malaysia have now put an end to the undeclared conflict which has prevailed between them for the last two years; the efforts which the International Committee of the Red Cross has made throughout that time in order to solve the humanitarian problems facing each of the two countries continue. It is, in particular, concentrating its attention on the plight of Indonesians taken prisoner by the Malaysian authorities. Mr. A. Durand, the ICRC Delegate General in Asia, has applied for authorization to undertake another tour of prison-camps. The previous such tour took place at the beginning of 1965, when Mr. Durand visited some 300 Indonesian prisoners in various places of detention in Borneo and the Malay Peninsula.

The ICRC Delegate General has also undertaken negotiations with a view to repatriating two Indonesians who were seriously wounded in the course of military operations and who are now in hospital in Sarawak in North Borneo. Kuala Lumpur appears willing to facilitate repatriation.

Whilst in the capital, Mr. Durand visited the National Red Cross which is carrying out activities in various fields. In particular Mr. Durand was able to watch first-aid exercises by members of the Junior Red Cross<sup>1</sup>.

## Singapore

The International Committee has had its attention drawn to the case of two Indonesians arrested in Singapore for illegal entry and the carrying of explosives for which they have been sentenced to the death penalty. The defending counsel of one of the accused has pleaded that they should benefit from treatment accorded by the Third Geneva Convention to prisoners of war, or at least from article 5 of that Convention, according to which, should any doubt arise as to their benefitting from it . . . " persons having committed a belligerent act and having fallen into the hands of the enemy . . . shall enjoy the protection of the present Convention until such time as their status has been determined by a competent tribunal ".

Counsel appealed to the ICRC, which called the attention of the Singapore authorities to the application of the Third Convention and in particular to article 101, in the event of the death penalty being pronounced, stipulates a delay of six months between sentence and execution. Similar steps taken previously by the ICRC with the Malaysian Government were successful in effecting a stay of execution on two Indonesians under sentence of death.

## Uganda

On May 27 the National Red Cross of Uganda requested the ICRC to send out a delegate, in view of the internal troubles which had broken out in the country.

Mr. Geoffrey C. Senn, then in Rhodesia, immediately went to Kampala where he had meetings with various government representatives to examine the possibility of an ICRC action on behalf of victims of the events. These efforts have, however, so far been unsuccessful, so that the ICRC delegate has had to leave Kampala

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<sup>1</sup> *Plate* : Federation of Malaysia : First-aid exercise by the Junior Red Cross.

without being able to visit persons arrested and detained as a result of the troubles which broke out at the end of May.

The country has 135,000 refugees at present of whom about 40,000 are unregistered and are living with relatives or friends. Amongst these there are some 4,000 Congolese.

### **South Arabia**

The delegate-general of the International Committee of the Red Cross in the Arab Peninsula, Mr. André Rochat visited prisons in Aden in which there were persons detained as a result of the events. During these visits, which took place on two occasions since March, he spoke direct and without witnesses with various prisoners and examined the conditions of their detention. He then submitted recommendations to the authorities and in particular to the British High Commission. The latter has agreed to allow the ICRC to pursue its activity in Aden, where the delegate-general will be given permission to make further visits to prisons in July.

Whilst in Aden, Mr. Rochat met representatives of the trades-union movements who had previously made requests to the ICRC concerning the situation in that part of Arabia.

### **Malawi**

Mr. Geoffrey C. Senn, ICRC delegate, recently visited Malawi, where he was able to observe that, generally speaking, conditions for political detainees are satisfactory.

### **Mozambique**

Mr. Georg Hoffmann, ICRC delegate-general for Africa, who had received Portuguese Government authorization to carry on his mission in favour of prisoners held by the Portuguese forces in Mozambique, recently went to Lourenço Marques.

On June 7, after contacting the authorities, the delegate, accompanied by Dr. Pais of the Portuguese Red Cross, visited the Cadeia da Machava prison, where political prisoners are interned. He and Dr. Pais, also visited the Lourenço Marques military hospital.

On June 9, Mr. Hoffmann visited the Nampula military hospital and the prison in that town where detainees are held pending their transfer to the capital. He also called at a reception centre accommodating African civilians (men, women and children) who had fled from their homes because of events. A further visit he made in the same region was to the Vila Cabral hospital.

On June 13, Mr. Hoffmann went to the "Campo de Trabalho Prisional" of Malabane in the Limpopo valley, some 190 miles from Lourenço Marques. He interviewed without witnesses some of the former combatants detained there.

## Gambia

The Ministry of Education has informed the International Committee of the Red Cross that its Government is prepared to introduce courses on the Red Cross and the Geneva Conventions in primary school programmes. This decision follows on Mr. Laurent Marti's recent visit.

He is at present carrying out a tour of West Africa in order to have the principles of the Red Cross and the ICRC's work better known in schools. First results are encouraging.

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## IN GENEVA

### At the Central Tracing Agency

*Investigations into the Plight of Air-Crews.*—The Netherlands Red Cross Society recently informed the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva of the discovery, during land-reclamation work in the Zydersee region, of the remains of British service-men and aircraft. It requested the Central Tracing Agency, at ICRC headquarters, to consult its files on British air-crews who had crashed over the Dutch coast during the Second World War, and whose bodies had never been recovered.