



SUPPLEMENT

VOL. IV

REVUE INTERNATIONALE
DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

ET

BULLETIN INTERNATIONAL
DES SOCIÉTÉS
DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

SUPPLEMENT

Vol. IV, 1951

GENÈVE

1951

REVUE INTERNATIONALE
DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

ET

BULLETIN INTERNATIONAL
DES SOCIÉTÉS
DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

SUPPLEMENT

February, 1951

Vol. IV, No. 2

CONTENTS

	Page
International Committee of the Red Cross Principal Items of Interest in January . . .	22
Jean G. Lossier, <i>Member of the ICRC Secretariat</i> The Red Cross and Peace	26

Published by
Comité international de la Croix-Rouge, Genève
Editor: Louis Demolis

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

PRINCIPAL ITEMS OF INTEREST IN JANUARY

Korea. — In December, 1950, the Delegates in South Korea visited two prisons: Seoul Civilian Prison (West Gate) and Mapo Prison.

Following these visits, the ICRC, on January 4, 1951, addressed a communication to the President of the Republic of Korea, M. Syngman Rhee, supporting the representations made by its Delegates to the South Korean Government in behalf of the imprisoned civilians.

The note emphasized the necessity of improving the living conditions, particularly in regard to food, accommodation and clothing, and of adopting special measures for the women and children. It also asked that Delegates be authorized to visit the prisons and other places of detention regularly, and that they should be allowed to distribute material relief freely to the inmates; also, that they should receive nominal rolls of the prisoners.

On January 14, 1951, the Delegates visited Taegu Prison.

Near East. — Conditions in the Near East are still far from settled—there is as yet no peace treaty between Israel and the Arab States—and the ICRC has accordingly to maintain its Delegations there. A few figures will illustrate the work of the Delegation in Tel Aviv in 1950.

27,930 civilian messages were exchanged between persons in Israel and their relatives in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt.

Of 976 inquiries from different sources in the Near East and from Geneva, replies were given to 712.

Through its intermediary, 301 persons were transferred between Israel and the Arab States.

Arrangements were made for sending monthly consignments of foodstuffs from the Old City of Jerusalem (Arab) to religious and charitable institutions in the New City (Israeli).

The above figures concern the Delegation in Israel in the first place, but also reflect the work of the two Delegates in the Arab countries. Much is the result of the joint action of the Near East Delegates, and illustrates the traditional function of the Committee as neutral intermediary.

Jerusalem. — Arrangements were made with the Jordan and Israeli authorities for a supplementary transfer of supplies from the Old to the New City for New Year's Day. The total for the year 1950 amounted to 28,260 kilos.

Jordan. — On January 30, the Delegate in Jordan visited Ramallah Prison.

Greece. — Continuing his visits to camps and prisons, the Delegate in Greece visited, in January, seven prisons, an agricultural penal colony in Macedonia, and four prisons in Thrace, and distributed relief to the inmates. Four prisons could not be reached owing to snow and bad roads.

Refugees. — At the end of December, the head of the Berlin Delegation visited seven camps for Displaced Persons (non-German refugees) in Bavaria: Rosenheim, Moosach, Valka, Altenstadt and Memmingen (Allgäu), Würzburg, and Kleinkötz. These camps, with a capacity varying from 300 to 1500, are occupied principally by people from the Baltic countries, Ukrainians, Czechs, Poles, and Jugoslavs.

Repatriation of German Prisoners of War. — During the War, a group of sailors from the German Mercantile Marine had been interned in Goa (Portuguese Indies). The Committee's negotiations to facilitate their repatriation were successful, and most of them reached Germany during 1950. Those still

remaining left Goa on January 22, 1951. Twelve of the group decided to settle definitely in the Portuguese Indies, and their families have been authorized to rejoin them there.

Travel Documents. — At the cessation of hostilities, the ICRC created a Travel Document which would allow persons without identity papers to return to their home country or emigrate. It had been decided that the Documents would be issued only until the Governments concerned had provided official identity papers.

The ICRC continued to press that official documents should be substituted for its own. Issue of ICRC Documents is now limited to refugees going to, or passing in transit, countries which recognize only the Committee's Documents, or to refugees in places where they are unable to obtain official papers. Documents are still being issued or renewed in the following: Italy, Trieste, France, Austria, Spain, Egypt, Syria, China, Thailand, Japan and India.

Greek Children. — The Swedish mission working at present in Jugoslavia on the repatriation of Greek children has sent the Committee a list of 173 children who have been identified and can be repatriated. The ICRC has sent the list to the Greek Red Cross, which will collect and forward the identity papers required by the Jugoslav Red Cross.

The Greek Red Cross has sent the Committee 170 citizenship papers relating to Greek children in Jugoslavia.

War Invalids. — The War Invalid Section continues its collective and individual relief. Mention may be made of a finishing machine for cobblers sent to the Bamberg Section of the Bavarian Red Cross. The Bamberg Section already possesses several workshops for War Invalids, and the machine will be a useful addition to their equipment.

Relations with the United Nations. — During his brief visit to Geneva, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, M. Trygve Lie, had a discussion on January 14 with the

President of the ICRC, M. Ruegger, principally in connection with Resolutions of the General Assembly of direct interest to the Committee.

* * *

Visitors. — During the month of January, the Committee was visited by :

Dr. E. Sandström, President, League of Red Cross Societies ;
Mr. B. P. F. Laubscher, President, Eastern Cape Region of the South African Red Cross ;

Mr. Trygve Lie, accompanied by M. Aghnides, Messrs. Owen and Lall, Assistant Secretaries-General, and Mr. Cordier, Personal Assistant to the Secretary-General ;

Mr. Mohanlal Gautam, Member of the Indian Parliament and Secretary-General of the Congress Party ;

Herr Karl Wildmann, Austrian Minister to Switzerland, accompanied by Counsellor Filz, Austrian observer to the European Office of the United Nations, Geneva ;

M. Nicolas Korioukine, Soviet Chargé d'Affaires at Berne ;

Mr. P. S. Scrivener, British Minister at Berne, accompanied by Mr. Lambert, Consul-General at Geneva, and Mr. J. Beith, Representative at the European Office of the United Nations ;

Countess von Waldерsee, Vice-President, and Herr Hartmann Secretary-General of the German Red Cross ;

M. Domori, Member of the Chamber of Counsellors, and M. Oka, Member of the Chamber of Deputies, Tokyo ;

Dr. Pietro Merlo, former President of the Piedmontese Section of the Italian Red Cross.

JEAN G. LOSSIER

Member of the ICRC Secretariat

THE RED CROSS AND PEACE

TRENDS AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT

The first objective of the Red Cross—of both the International Committee and the National Societies—was relief for the victims of war; experience in succeeding years extended its scope to take in human suffering under all its aspects. But there is no provision in the Statutes either of the Committee or of the League, or in those (adopted in 1928) of the International Red Cross, that the Red Cross should work for peace.

Up to the first World War, the Red Cross was fully occupied with the physical wounds of war, and scarcely even considered it might work for peace as a conscious aim in itself. When the Red Cross was founded in 1863, Florence Nightingale had already thought of this possibility, asking if systematic efforts on the part of all nations to diminish the horrors of war would not ultimately lead to its complete disappearance.

The Red Cross came into existence on the battlefield; its first task was to aid the military wounded. Thus, from the start, it limited its ambitions. Anxious at all costs to achieve this initial purpose, the International Committee acted with great prudence; so long as Red Cross work was restricted, and not universally recognized, the Committee took care that its aims were clearly defined and its limits respected. The first Geneva Convention had laid down the main functions of the Red Cross, and for a long period this agreement offered a foundation, limited in scope but firmly established in treaty law, which

gave the International Committee uncontested authority at precisely the time when its work began to expand.

There was no question of condoning war, or considering it as a necessary evil; the idea was to make it more humane. Dr. Louis Appia, one of the founders of the Red Cross, reporting on his mission during the war of Schleswig-Holstein wrote: "We must proclaim our regret, our sorrow that we cannot do more; we must protest against this great collective iniquity which is called war—an iniquity which is nothing other than a manifestation of evil in the world."

The Committee, reporting on its work in 1870, said that there is every reason to fear that peace, so stable in appearance, is no more than a truce. But the authors added: "Although war is the natural field of our activities, we see it from so close up that it can only be an object of horror to us, and our ideals, far from depending on war, must necessarily be pacific."

In the following years, the Red Cross had to look after victims of war in ever-increasing numbers, and fresh categories were constantly being added. Responsibilities multiplied: co-operation with the Medical Services of the armed forces, care for prisoners and the shipwrecked, and, later, civilians. Finally, the ravages of war continuing to extend, the Red Cross, as yet very hesitantly, began to aim at working for peace as an end in itself.

The founders were conscious, even while limiting the growing organization, that their work on the battlefield was reminding men they were not only enemies, and preparing for the later growth of a like spirit of charity. What is possible during war should be so, all the more, in peacetime.

In one of his first articles on the Red Cross, Gustave Moynier wrote: "Our efforts to give aid on the battlefields have indirectly served those Societies working for peace, whose object it is to spread the idea of brotherhood amongst nations, and destroy by all possible means the opposition, and even hate, which separates peoples".

In 1884, the Committee's invitation to National Societies to attend the Third International Red Cross Conference, pointed out that the members of relief societies could thus form friend-

ships which "in the day of action, will appear to them as the source of that general fellowship which they will endeavour to inspire". The reference here to the "day of action" is to possible future battles, but, as Henry Dunant had already indicated ¹, there is included the idea of the moral relationship which it is the duty of the Red Cross to instil into all whom it can reach and who believe in it.

It is true that many years were to elapse before it was generally agreed, in the Red Cross itself, that humanitarian work is as effective in peacetime as during war, and that, intervening on behalf of the individual man, the Red Cross greatly increases the hope of peace. At the Rome Conference (1892), the Chairman expressed the hope that, peace being finally established over the entire earth, the Red Cross would become "a fraternal union of the disempowered".

Four years later, the Committee recalled to the National Societies ² that their training should include practical peacetime work and an organization capable, in the future, of meeting wartime needs.

* * *

It is only in 1919 that, in the appeals and resolutions of International Conferences, we begin to find allusions and texts referring exclusively to the part of the Red Cross in establishing a lasting peace. Nevertheless, an isolated voice, here and there, gave evidence that the question was present in the public mind. Thus, the American Senator, Elihu Root, in the opening address to the Washington Conference (1912), said there had been a feeling in the United States for many years that, although the aim of the Red Cross was to lessen the horrors of war and to alleviate suffering, its ideal was necessarily antagonistic to the idea of war; the programs of the Red Cross, its powerful organization, its compassion, its charity, its love

¹ In his pamphlet *Les débuts de la Croix-Rouge en France* (The beginnings of the Red Cross in France).

² In its Circular No. 91.

of others, would not cease to turn men from the spirit of revenge and cruelty which causes war.

At the end of the first World War, the Red Cross took a decided stand in regard to the problem of peace. The League of Red Cross Societies, set up as a federation of National Societies for peacetime work, tends, as is stated in an initial announcement, to the realization of "that principle of moral fellowship and international help which is one of the fundamental ideas and a characteristic and generous feature of the Red Cross". From then on, under pressure of circumstances, and owing to the fact that the Societies then more clearly appreciated that their moral obligation extended beyond wartime, the whole movement took up the idea of working for peace, and defined its part in this work. All succeeding Conferences came back to the same subject, and adopted resolutions with reference to it.

The Delegates to the Geneva Conference of 1921 discussed the role of the Red Cross in the greatly changed post-war conditions. The Bulgarian Delegate asked if the National Societies should not endeavour to aid in the elimination of war itself, if they "should not undertake the great and noble mission of working, by addresses, pamphlets, and other means, against international enmities, against the hatred between peoples which has recently unleashed the worst disaster that humanity has known".

The Conference requested the International Committee and the League to appeal to all nations to combat the spirit of war rife in the world.

The Appeal was sent out on July 19, 1921, and is particularly significant. It is couched in such strong terms that it could almost be said to reverse the cautious policy adopted in 1863 and justified by events. It is not only said that the Red Cross should fight against the evil of war, but that it was the duty of the organization, to itself and to all who believed in it, to contribute by "disinterested action and universal assistance, towards making war itself disappear". The Appeal furthermore invites all men of good-will, whatever their nationality, religion, profession or condition, to undertake a general and sustained

propaganda campaign against the spirit of war; it is finally set forth that "the Red Cross, not satisfied only to work in peacetime, wishes also to work for peace".

One can hardly go further in affirming what there is in common between the Red Cross and peace, which, to many writers of the nineteenth century, appeared contradictory terms.

Again, the Geneva Conference of 1923 adopted a similar resolution, expressing the desire to see the Red Cross "affirm itself on every occasion as a symbol of peace, believing that this conception is in no way contradictory to the idea of the founders of the Red Cross, but in complete harmony with the spirit and the tradition of the organization".

At every meeting, Delegates emphasized the practical pacifism of the Red Cross. In 1925, the German Delegate affirmed: "Besides its fundamental task in peace and wartime, and so long as politics are not guided by humanitarian considerations, it will be the duty of the Red Cross to proclaim, to men and to nations, the message of reconciliation which its emblem expresses".

The Hague Conference (1928) invited National Societies to consider the moral condemnation of war, and propaganda against it, as one of their first duties.

The most significant steps, however, were taken at the Brussels Conference in 1930. Not only did it adopt a resolution recalling the part which the Red Cross could and should play in bringing peoples together, but several Delegations continued to insist that the Red Cross should intervene specifically—at least unofficially, as, for example, through the Press—in domains in which it had not until then penetrated. According to the declaration drawn up by Prince Carl, President of the Swedish Red Cross, the object was to influence the Press, which, "instead of using the language of nationalism in a tone that is scarcely moderated by a sense of its responsibility, should undertake, as a principal mission, to call for peace and reflexion in days of crisis, and, in calmer days, to promote the spirit of peace, in present and future generations". Because, as the President of the Swedish Red Cross added: "It is clear that the realization

of the Red Cross ideal, which would have charity always triumph, places the Red Cross in the front rank of those who are striving for conciliation amongst the nations and working for peace."

The Norwegian Delegate warmly supported the declaration and emphasized the effective part the Junior Red Cross could play in this connection, by creating links of friendship between the children of all countries.

Finally, we may mention the report of the Czechoslovak Red Cross on the "Red Cross Truce"—which should be compared with the idea of the "Red Cross Day"—and on the peace activity it had already been carrying on. "We have the courage to declare war—war against sickness, against discord, against calumny. This war is manifest in daily acts which are both real and positive".

Other delegates spoke in the same strain, and the Conference, in its XXVth Resolution, expressed the opinion that the Red Cross should "take active steps to discover how the weight of its moral authority and its prestige might be brought in support of the world movement for understanding and conciliation—both essential for the maintenance of peace—and oppose war by all means in its power, thus preventing that suffering, the alleviation of which was its primary motive".

* * *

At the time of the Disarmament Conference, a year later, the International Committee ¹ did not hide its alarm at the consequences which might follow the use of new arms and at the idea of total war, which began steadily to gain ground. It emphasized once more that the International Red Cross, resolutely engaged in peace activities, wished to develop and strengthen the Conventions for the limitation and abolition of war. It declared that it was "increasingly necessary to do everything possible to eliminate the recourse to war".

¹ In its Circular Nos 299 and 300, on the legal protection of civilians against the effects of aerial and chemical warfare.

At the Tokyo Conference in 1934, there was a fresh and generally-supported affirmation that the Red Cross should set itself resolutely against the spirit of war and accordingly do everything, within its own terms of reference, to prevent war.

The head of the Soviet Delegation considered the elimination of war as the "great purpose which is fundamental to the very existence of the Red Cross". Referring to the idea put forward at Brussels four years earlier he stated that today, "the distinctions in former Conventions between combatants and non-combatants—distinctions on which part of the activity of the Red Cross in time of war is based—are no more than a fiction". Recalling the resolution of the 1921 Geneva Conference on the necessity of combating the spirit of war, he added: "It is our duty to proclaim that war should be excluded as a means to which the nations can have recourse in settling their differences".

During the same meeting, and to mention only two noteworthy speeches on this question, the Peruvian and Uruguayan Delegates described the position of the Red Cross as a peacemaker, proclaiming and ensuring in practice the equality of races and intervening "as an active factor in the work of human fellowship". The President of the International Committee, M. Max Huber, stated that "the Red Cross has done pioneer work in the field of international co-operation".

The Conference adopted several resolutions dealing with better understanding between the nations, through the Junior Red Cross and the Red Cross itself. Another resolution emphasized the importance of the Press in maintaining good international relations.

Finally, the Conference adopted its very important Resolution No. XXIV: "The Conference, considering that advances in the technique of warfare offer ever-increasing difficulties to traditional Red Cross work, recommends that all National Red Cross Societies, while, as in the past, neglecting no effort which might help to save millions of human lives, protect millions of others from suffering and privation, and prevent catastrophes which threaten to destroy the intellectual and material heritage accumulated over centuries, should, by every means at their

disposal, intensify their efforts to prevent war and encourage better understanding between nations ”.

During the London Conference (1938), the question of the Red Cross and peace was again discussed. Having noted the report of the League on the educative role of the Red Cross and its moral value, the Conference affirmed its conviction that “ the Red Cross is not only a material force in the service of humanity, but also a spiritual force, uniting all its members in the same spirit of honour and generosity which informs their work ”.

During the same meeting, the Chairman of the British Red Cross, dealing with what it is agreed to call the spirit of the Red Cross, asked the Conference whether part at least of the present distress in some countries could not be avoided, by giving practical effect to the principles of good-will and fair play on which the Red Cross is founded. The speaker foresaw the lot of civilians—given the evolution of modern methods of warfare—if a general conflict should ensue ; he besought the Conference to study with the greatest attention the possibility of finding a remedy.

Finally, we recall the Stockholm Conference (1948), of especial importance, if only for the subjects it had to examine and the numbers of people it represented—a hundred million in all countries of the world. The Conference adopted two particularly significant Resolutions.

In the first, the Conference “ recommends that the Junior Red Cross program stress the importance of international friendship as the basis of world peace ”. In the second, the Conference reaffirms “ abhorrence of war ” and “ determination to work constantly for the development of international understanding, which would lead to an enduring peace between the nations ”. It also endorsed the Declaration on Peace, drawn up by the Board of Governors of the League, ¹ stating, *inter alia*, that it is a duty of all who take part in the movement, “ to uphold and support the essential activity of the Red Cross which is mutual help and friendly collaboration between all

¹ In its XXth Session.

men and people, and thus to help lay foundations on which peace can be established ”.

On several occasions, meetings of the League adopted Peace Resolutions. In October, 1950, the Red Cross Societies and their members were invited to work for the establishment and maintenance of enduring peace between all peoples and nations (Board of Governors, XXIst Session).

Thus, more and more often, and always more firmly, the Red Cross has stated its position in regard to peace.

War becomes total; the insufficient barriers of International Law are pushed aside, and the moral values on which humanitarian action is founded are threatened. Should a new world war take place, the situation would probably be still worse; total warfare has also made war more brutal and murderous. The Red Cross, in the nature of things and in obedience to its ideal, affirms always more strongly its duty for the future to intervene in behalf of peace. We must still know how, and to what extent, it can do so, because it has a traditional mission in regard to which it cannot be found wanting, and a principle of impartial humanity which it must observe. Suffering is, however, the one field in which it can never remain indifferent.

* * *

The development of arms, the lassitude which makes so many people fatalistic, the frightful devastations and crimes of the last War—all cause the gravest disquiet, especially amongst those who would be called upon under the sign of the Red Cross to defend the inviolability of the human person.

On September 5, 1945, the Committee drew the attention of National Societies to the future tasks which await the movement as a whole. ¹ A period was opening in which it was advisable—even indispensable—to review Red Cross principles. The Committee, above all, emphasized its anxiety at the creation and development of new techniques of war.

¹ See Circular No. 370.

The mobilisation of all the forces of a nation against an enemy State, and the consequent impossibility in practice of making distinctions between combatants and non-combatants, call for thought. For the Red Cross and for mankind, grave moral decisions are involved. Is the individual henceforth to be no more than a mechanical component in the struggle? This, as the Committee pointed out, would mean that the principles of International Law which tend to the physical and moral protection of the individual, had failed. Denying to the individual his value and dignity as a human being, war must end irresistibly in unlimited destruction; mankind, entering into possession of the forces of the universe, seems to use its creations only to feed a destructive mania.

This is a warning: war, rising in our times to a paroxysm, is destroying what for each of us is most sacred in life—a scourge spreading out without limit and gone beyond the possibility of limitation. But if the individual ceases to have legal protection and is considered merely as a mechanical element, what becomes of the law of nations and the laws of war? What value can International Law still have?

The appeal to moral values remains. The ideal of the Red Cross, the Committee affirms in conclusion, by far surpasses International Law and the laws of war. It is precisely because the Committee knows that this ideal is unquenchable, and strong enough to give new life to International Law, that it undertook in 1945 the task of revising the existing International Conventions and preparing a new Civilian Convention. Examined and approved by the Stockholm Conference in 1948, they were, a year later, modified and signed by the Geneva Diplomatic Conference.

Meanwhile, international tension continued to increase. The Committee could not ignore the menace which loomed on the horizon; as its first duty, it recalled to States signatory to the Conventions, that the very foundations of its mission would be swept away and the intervention of the Red Cross rendered nugatory, if it were allowable to attack those who, it had been claimed in signing the Conventions, would be spared and protected. Thus the absolute prohibition of the atomic arm and,

in a general way, unguided missiles, was to be sought, and it was in this sense that the Committee drew up its Appeal of April 5, 1950—an Appeal which has met with a wide response.

This second Appeal, more urgent than its predecessor because of prevailing circumstances and the existing political situation, is also to some extent an appeal for peace. It does not hide the Committee's alarm: war, by very reason of the horror and fury which now characterise it, because of the terrifying arms which modern science has invented, must at all costs be avoided.

The Red Cross has, today, a heightened tone of protest against war. It is striving for peace, for in pointing to the unforeseeable consequences of fresh wars, it helps to deepen the general craving for peace, to sharpen men's consciousness of their danger, and fortify their determination to live at peace in a peaceful world.

It is clear also that the Red Cross, recalling to men the suffering of their fellow-man, and demanding their aid in assisting him, helps to create a spirit which is fundamentally opposed to war. It makes men feel responsible one for the other—a moral conception which, apart from all questions of law and politics, can only serve to foster the spirit of mutual aid and of peace.
