



REVUE INTERNATIONALE DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

SUPPLEMENT

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INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

THE RELIEF ACTION OF THE ICRC IN HUNGARY

During the past two months the International Committee's delegation in Hungary has continued its relief work.

As is known, June 30 has been fixed as the closing date of the relief action. Since April it has still been possible to distribute, over 8,000 tons of sundry commodities to people in need.

The stoppage of transports by road and the re-organisation of services resulted in a reduction of the ICRC delegation staff from about two hundred members (in December last) to sixty, and then to twenty-five, before operations came to a close. At present, the ICRC Delegation in Vienna is being closed down and the ICRC Delegation in Budapest will be composed of five persons only.

The latter, in accordance with an agreement recently concluded with the Hungarian authorities, will remain in Budapest until the end of September to carry out the medical-social relief action and other general relief programmes which are not yet finished.

The Hungarian Red Cross services co-operating with this work have been similarly re-organised. Distributions, which had been discontinued for a few days while new methods were being installed, were shortly resumed, in accordance with the arrangements made in November, with the agreement of the Hungarian

Government. A new Committee has been appointed; it is presided over by Professor Paul Gegesi Kiss, and his Secretary-General is the Ambassador Joseph Kárpáti. The International Committee wishes to greet the new directorate. It takes this opportunity of thanking, also, for their devoted services, the eminent medical specialists who presided over the work of the Hungarian Red Cross for several months.

During the period from the end of October 1956 to the end of June 1957, without taking into account the medical programmes, the ICRC distributed 50,000 tons of commodities to the people of Hungary.

Thus, 6,000 tons of condensed and powdered milk, 2,000 tons of fats, 500 tons of sugar, 160 tons of chocolate and cocoa-powder, 647 tons of rice, 7,500 tons of flour, 925 tons of tinned meat and fish, 1,200 tons of cheese, 2,100 tons of clothing and underclothing, 9,200 tons of coal, 105 tons of window-glass, 475 tons of medicaments and medical equipment, 201,551 blankets, 1,800,000 food parcels, etc., were distributed through the ICRC.

The statistics concerning the gifts from various countries to the ICRC, and the value of the relief consignments, will be published after the close of the ICRC relief action in Hungary.

TWENTY-FOUR SHIPWRECKED CHINESE REPATRIATED BY THE ICRC

In February last, 24 Chinese fishermen from Hainan, caught in a storm, drifted in their junk to the South Viet Nam coast and took refuge in the port of Tourane (now Da-Nang).

In April, the Chinese Red Cross in Peking asked the ICRC to intervene in order to help the shipwrecked fishermen to return to Hainan.

The International Committee's correspondent in Saigon, Mr. A. Leuenberger, was immediately requested to take the necessary steps in this connection. On June 10, he was informed by the Viet Nam authorities in Saigon that the fishermen who had taken shelter in the port of Tourane were free to leave South Viet Nam. On June 13 the representative of the ICRC went to Tourane to visit these shipwrecked men.

The 24 fishermen left Tourane with their vessel on June 19, duly provided by the authorities with food and a safe-conduct. They arrived safely at Hainan on June 22 and the Chinese Red Cross has since sent its thanks to the ICRC for its assistance.

ERRATUM

A printing error occurred in the March issue of the English Supplement of the Revue internationale, in connection with the date of the XIXth International Red Cross Conference.

Please note that line 7 on page 64 should read "October 24 to November 7, 1957", instead of "October 11 to November 7, 1957".

THE REFUGEE PROBLEM

The events in Hungary have drawn attention once more to the refugee problem.

The principal non-governmental institutions associated with the efforts of Governments and the United Nations in giving aid to the Hungarian people convened a meeting in Geneva, on May 27 and 28 last, in which the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Director of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration took part. The discussions, however, went far beyond the Hungarian question and touched on Arab refugees in Palestine, and Chinese refugees in Hong Kong, as well as the 174,000 refugees from Hungary who entered Austria as a result of the October events. By the end of March, 140,000 of these had been resettled and the number of refugees in Austria is now estimated at some ten thousand, who are unlikely to be resettled by the end of 1957. In spite of everything, this is a reasonably encouraging achievement, and is due to the wave of sympathy for the Hungarian people in their plight and the unstinting efforts of the thousands of persons of goodwill who came to their aid. The Conference expressed its congratulations and thanks to the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies, who took such a great part in this charitable work.

This is only one example, however. The suffering of many other people would justify similar efforts. There are still nearly a million Arab refugees in the Middle East, and for many years over 700,000 Chinese have been dragging out an existence

in Hong Kong, without being able to return to normal life, either locally, in Continental China, Formosa or elsewhere...

As regards the refugees who enjoy protection under the statutes of the High Commissioner's Office, their position was discussed during a recent meeting of the Executive Committee of the United Nations' Relief Emergency Fund, held also in Geneva, from June 3 to 7, 1957. At the present time those refugees number well over a million and include (in spite of all efforts to close the temporary camps) some 145,000 persons who will probably not be resettled by the end of 1958, when the High Commissioner's mandate comes to an end.

For that reason, the Executive Committee of UNREF unanimously recommended, as suggested by the Chairman, Mr. J. Cappelen, the prolongation of the High Commissioner's mandate after December 31, 1958. The delegate of the Holy See even suggested that the mandate should be amended and extended to cover all categories of refugees, and not merely those who come under a statute which may be considered by some as too restrictive. A duly qualified international organisation could thus examine all aspects of the problem with Governments with a view to finding a solution. This solution must take all possible account of human values, and the problem is, therefore, above all, a humanitarian one.

All this is proof of the great concern still felt with regard to the refugee problem, which has become chronic as a result of the social upheavals caused by two world wars, and which calls for a vast movement of international fellowship.

It is in this spirit that the International Committee of the Red Cross has never ceased to be concerned with the refugee problem. It will be recalled that it was the ICRC which first urged that special powers be given to the Nansen Office by the League of Nations between the two wars, and before the establishment of the intergovernmental organisations with similar duties, it had itself already issued temporary Travel Documents which, recognised by a great many States, enabled thousands of persons deprived of normal protection to find countries of refuge.

Today a large number of studies devoted to the refugee problem have spread general knowledge of the methods planned for its solution. The European Association for the Study of the Refugee Problem, whose headquarters are in Strasburg, and which has been joined by a sister association founded in Vaduz last year for assisting non-European refugees, has set up Working Parties in the principal European countries—France, Germany, Italy and Turkey in particular—to study the refugee problem in all domains: juridical, agricultural, social and industrial.

We have, on several occasions, referred to the work of Mr. Paul Weis, Legal Adviser to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; we think it will be of special interest to bring to our readers' notice a remarkable article on the refugee problem by the Medical Inspector-General Jean des Cilleuls, President of the Société de droit international médical. This article, published in the May issue of *Vie et Bonté*, the magazine of the French Red Cross, gives a very clear explanation of the range of the problem and the principal decisions taken to deal with the situation.

A great deal has been done for refugees, but much remains to be done. The task is not hopeless, however, since experience has shown that wherever refugees have been given shelter and drawn into a new community, the latter has been well compensated for its expenditure and trouble by the increase in its national wealth. In Germany, where over nine million refugees have found residence in the west of the country, their labour has accelerated the work of reconstruction, and in Finland 450,000 Karelians, resettled in the centre of the country in the forests they have cleared, today form one-tenth of a hard-working population which, on the whole, has become greater and happier by their presence.

We hope that these examples will encourage those who, in Europe and elsewhere, will thus be able to find a friendly solution of the refugee problem.

H. C.

The papers of Henry Dunant ¹⁾

On 2 May, 1910 Henry Dunant, who had not touched one penny of the capital or interest of his Nobel Peace Prize, drew up his last will and testament. He left legacies to the people who had sheltered him, the Director, Mother Superior, and cook of Heiden Hospital, Appenzell, Switzerland, and to several charitable institutions. He forgot neither Professor Rudolf Müller of Stuttgart, author of a book about the Red Cross, which appeared in 1897, nor Colonel Daae of Christiania, nor Colonel Murset, Chief medical officer of the Swiss Army. One bequest endowed a hospital bed for the benefit of the poor and sick of the district of Heiden and another was to his nephew Maurice Dunant, of Geneva: "I bequeath to my nephew... my books, papers, documents, medals, etc." The rest of his worldly possessions were to be equally divided between Swiss and Norwegian charities in order to show his gratitude both to his native land and to that of Alfred Nobel.

Six months later Henry Dunant died. The manuscripts and books, which filled his small room at Heiden District Hospital to overflowing, were transferred to Geneva and religiously preserved by Maurice Dunant, who himself died, childless, on 14 September, 1931. By his will (or, to use legal language, by a holograph codicil, dated 13 May, 1925, he gave :

¹ The French version of this article appeared in the May 1956 number of the *Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge*.

To the Geneva Public and University Library, all documents, manuscripts and diplomas left by Henry Dunant, founder of the Red Cross, except the seven original copies of the seven editions of "Memories of Solferino".

Transferred in the first place to the State Archives, the documents relating to the history of the Red Cross were not handed over to the Geneva Public and University Library until January, 1933. Even then, no immediate inventory was taken. It was not until 1942 that I undertook the classification of these records, and very quickly realized their value and interest. I found not only the rough drafts and fair copies of Henry Dunant's *Memoirs*, but also most of the original letters received by him from 1859, (the date of the battle of Solferino) up to his death in 1910.

Mrs. Maurice Dunant realized the importance of assembling in one place all documents pertaining to Henry Dunant, and during the period 1939-1945 was kind enough to hand to the Geneva Public and University Library a whole series of other manuscripts. There were, first of all, ten large-size notebooks containing a copy of *Memories of Solferino*; the report on the Preparatory Conference of 1863 and the Diplomatic Conference of 1864; the history of the origin and the international development of the Red Cross; then Henry Dunant's correspondence with his family, more especially letters sent by balloon post to his mother and sister Marie during the siege of Paris in 1870-1871; and finally, the files on the Algerian projects, access to which was immediately restricted in view of the violent controversy they aroused. Apart from these extremely valuable manuscripts, the Geneva Public and University Library received a large number of printed brochures, newspaper cuttings and photographs.

Thanks to this collection of documents, a detailed biography of Henry Dunant could at last be built up. Not only does he appear as the true originator of the idea of the Red Cross, but also as a prophet, who in turn put forward proposals for international arbitration, universal disarmament, the extension of Red Cross activities to cover prisoners of war and seamen,

the return of the Jews to Palestine, and the creation of a " World Library " of all literary masterpieces, a branch of which he would have liked to have seen established in every city and town for the purpose of enlightening humanity on its duties and responsibilities.

The most recent biographers of Dunant, Alexis François, Martin Gumpert, Fernand Gigon, Stefan Markus and Ellen Hart, have all drawn from this source, although their works are somewhat romanticized. We do not ourselves believe that J. Henry Dunant's life needs such treatment. Life for him was so bitter, so cruel, so pitiless, that it surpassed fiction.

Rejected by Society, and incidentally by the Red Cross Committee of the day for having sacrificed his business to his humanitarian ideals, abandoned by his friends, forgotten by the Heads of States and diplomats who had decorated him a few months earlier, wandering from city to city, as is shown by one of the few remaining documents covering the years 1875-1877, Henry Dunant was taken in and looked after at the District Hospital, Heiden, Appenzell, at the end of a veritable calvary.

Wounded to the very core—for he was only fifty-nine when he arrived at Heiden Hospital—Henry Dunant spent his last twenty-three years collecting material to help him prove the vital role he had played in the foundation of the Red Cross. Today this may appear incredible. But his role was contested, particularly at Geneva, where they took pains to erase all trace of the man who had been so misguided as to direct an international organization for the help of the wounded by side with a large agricultural development company in Algeria. The oblivion into which Henri Dunant was cast was so complete that one of the principal historians of the Red Cross was able to write an entire volume about this organization without once mentioning Dunant's name.

Patiently, the real founder of the Red Cross began to reconstruct its history. Fortunately he had saved the circulars he had sent out in 1863 to the four corners of Europe, as well as letters exchanged during this period with Florence Nightingale, General Dufour, Countess de Gasparin, Adolphe de

Circourt; and later, Father Gratry and Father Hyacinthe, Prince Jerome and Emperor Napoleon III, William Gladstone and Baron de Suttner.

This material permitted him to collaborate with Professor Rudolf Müller in writing the first serious work about his great undertaking: *Entstehungsgeschichte des Roten Kreuzes und der Genfer Konvention*¹, published in Suttugart in 1897. Today, this material constitutes the essential part of Henry Dunant's personal records, which we have classed into five great categories:

I. MEMOIRS

Thirty large-size, blue notebooks, containing in Henry Dunant's own handwriting material of various descriptions (rough drafts, copies, notes) for his *Memoirs*², to wit:

a) An account of his appeals to the sovereigns and statesmen of Europe to send delegates to Geneva in 1863 and 1864, the story of the Geneva Conferences, and the expansion of the Red Cross' activities in France and Germany.

b) An account of Dunant's efforts at Paris during the Franco-Prussian War and the siege of Paris, 1870-1871, to have the Red Cross recognized.

c) Numerous isolated extracts containing in particular his recollections of Madame de Gasparin, Dr. Basting, Gustave Moynier, General Dufour, Field Marshal von Moltke, Prince Napoleon, etc.

d) Sundry notes on *Résultats du militarisme à outrance*, on *Barbarie de notre civilisation tant vantée*, on destitution, socialism, hypocrisy, etc.

¹ Origin of the Red Cross and Geneva Convention.

² Most of this material probably derives from the time of Dunant's stay at Heiden Hospital.

2. CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence of Henry Dunant has been classified and bound into six volumes, each containing about 200 letters. This correspondence covers the years from 1851 to 1910 with a lapse of twelve years, 1878-1889. This is the period when Dunant was travelling through Europe on behalf of the *Alliance universelle pour l'ordre et la civilisation*. After returning to Heiden Hospital, Dunant devoted himself to his memoirs and took heart again. One volume contains his correspondence with Professor Rudolf Müller, the Baroness de Suttner, General Hans Daae, Prince and Princess Wiszniewski. Another volume contains letters received when he won the Nobel Prize in 1901, and on the occasion of his eightieth birthday, which may be said to mark his apotheosis. Apart from this so to speak correspondence, the Geneva Public and University Library contains the letters of Dunant to his family, notably those sent to his sister Marie "by balloon post" during the siege of Paris, 1870-1871.

3. DIPLOMAS

A portfolio containing his diplomas, orders, and decorations : he received the French Legion of Honour in France, the Order of Saint Maurice and Lazarus in Italy, the Orders of the Crown of Prussia, of Albert the Valiant of Saxony, of Ludwig of Hesse, of the Lion of Zaehringen, etc., etc., as well as the letters of admission or appointment to the numerous Societies to which he belonged. (We counted no less than sixty-five.)

4. PHOTOGRAPHS

Other portfolios contain photographs of Henry Dunant, ranging from those showing him at the age of twenty with the features of a young dandy, seated with Mr. and Mrs. Jean-Gabriel Eynard and Mr. and Mrs. Ernest de Traz to the moving

photograph taken on his eightieth birthday by Princess Marie-Thérèse of Bavaria, where he looks like a kindly, white-haired, old patriarch.

5. BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS

Four boxes containing numerous pamphlets from Dunant's fertile pen and dealing with all sorts of subjects : slavery among the Mohammedans, and in the United States; the revival of the East and international charity on the battlefield; all illuminated by the humanitarian spirit of Henry Dunant.

BERNARD GAGNEBIN
Curator of manuscripts
at the Public and University Library
of Geneva.
