



REVUE
INTERNATIONALE
DE LA
CROIX-ROUGE

SUPPLEMENT

CONTENTS

	Page
Two missions of the International Committee in Asia, Australia and and New Zealand	55
News Items	69
Re-uniting of families	79
The action of the ICRC in Algeria	80

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

IN ASIA, AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

Two Missions of the International Committee of the Red Cross

We publish below an account of the missions undertaken by Mr. M. Bodmer, Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and Mr. W. Michel, Delegate, in various countries of Asia, in New Zealand and in Australia.

As is known, Mr. F. Siordet, Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, together with Mr. M. Borsinger, a member of the Secretariat, visited China, the USSR and Poland after the New Delhi Conference. We shall devote an article in our next number to this important mission, which helped to draw closer the bonds between the Red Cross Societies of those countries and the International Committee.

The Editor.

After the close of the XIXth International Conference of the Red Cross, several members of the International Committee's delegation took advantage of their presence in Asia to visit certain National Red Cross Societies in that continent and the Societies of Australia and New Zealand. It was important, indeed, that the International Committee of the Red Cross should take the opportunity thus offered of coming into direct contact with Societies separated by many thousands of miles from Geneva.

Mr. BODMER'S MISSION

Mr. Martin Bodmer visited Nepal, Thailand, New Zealand and Australia. In Nepal, he had the task, in agreement with the League, of approaching eminent persons in the Government of that country and giving them all the explanations required concerning the possible formation of a National Red Cross Society.

In the case of the three other countries visited, Thailand, New Zealand and Australia, our Delegate proposed to make courtesy visits to their National Societies in order to give new strength to their relations with the Committee in Geneva and naturally to see for himself their achievements in carrying out Red Cross programmes.

This article is designed to inform our readers of the essential facts marking the various stages of this mission. It is drawn from the very interesting report drafted by Mr. Bodmer on this subject and will describe essentially the activities of the Red Cross Societies in the countries visited. Sometimes, however, it will go beyond the usual scope of our *Revue Internationale*, since we should like our readers to partake of the pleasure and interest which Mr. Bodmer took in the whole of his long journey.

Nepal. — As stated above, the object of this visit was to make first contacts with persons responsible for public health and safety and, by a personal visit, to stimulate their interest in problems relating to the recognition of a National Society by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Our Delegate arrived in Katmandu, the capital, on 10 November 1957. During his stay, he was first of all accorded an interview with the First Secretary of the King, a courtesy visit, during which there was an exchange of views concerning the aims of Mr. Bodmer's mission.

In the case of the Government, Mr. Bodmer was received first by the Minister of Health and then by the Prime Minister

and Minister for Foreign Affairs. Mr. Bodmer explained the object of his mission to the two Ministers and handed over documents concerning the establishment and recognition of a Red Cross Society.

Finally, before his departure, he had the pleasure of meeting the leading members of the "Paro Pakar" philanthropic society. In view of the nature of its activities, this Society might possibly one day be transformed into a National Red Cross Society. This subject was discussed and there are hopes that the representations to be made by the leading members of « Paro Pakar » to the Government authorities concerned will achieve their purpose. It is to be hoped that the spirit of charity which already finds expression in Nepal through « Paro Pakar » will one day be expressed fully and even more effectively under the emblem of the Red Cross.

Thailand. — The remarkable activities of the Thai Red Cross in the medical sphere and in matters of international relief are well known to the ICRC. The *Revue Internationale* has on several occasions dealt with some aspects of those activities, and our Delegate was particularly glad to visit the Red Cross Society, which has always shown to the ICRC and its Honorary Delegate in Bangkok, Mr. Salzmänn, an interest and understanding based on a true humanitarian spirit.

On the morning of 15 November, Mr. Bodmer arrived at Bangkok, where he was awaited by Mr. Salzmänn, who had drawn up, in co-operation with the Thai Red Cross Society, a detailed programme for a week's visit.

The first visit was to Prince Chumbhot, Vice-President of the Thai Red Cross Society, who received our Delegate with true oriental courtesy, in his palace, built in the old Siamese style. Mr. Bodmer was then received by the Queen, who is traditionally President of the Red Cross Society. Her Majesty also gave him a gracious and simple welcome.

"The next few days", writes our Delegate "were filled by visits to hospitals, dispensaries, nurses' training schools, homes for blind children, etc., with intervals of sight-seeing. It is the gilded and many-coloured temples, the richest in

Asia, which first attract the visitor, and then the palaces, the museums, the picturesque parts of the city and finally the famous morning trip along the Bangkok rivers and canals, with their floating market. Of all that I saw, I will mention here only two things: the Chulalongkorn Hospital and the Saovabha Institute. The Hospital, an immense block of wards and buildings for medical care of every kind (except the treatment of the insane), is the property of the Red Cross and is run in an exemplary manner. The Director of this hospital-city received us and the head of each of the departments explained its work. As I was suffering from a very bad cold, I said jokingly that the ear, nose and throat department might perhaps be able to do something for me. The words were hardly out of my mouth when I was taken into a very well equipped consulting room where a specialist examined me, painted my throat and gave me some medicine. It was thus that I had my own personal experience of this magnificent Red Cross Hospital, which cares for several hundreds of people a day, free of charge.

The second remarkable thing is the Saovabha Institute, the Pasteur institute of Siam, directed by Dr. Chaloe Purananda. This institute is divided into two sections, a blood transfusion centre and a toxicological laboratory, which is the most important producer of rabies vaccine and anti-snakebite serum. We saw hundreds of cobras of different species and knots of other venomous snakes—I have never in my life seen such horrible tangled masses of serpents, each of them capable of causing a terrible death. However, men perform miracles with them and thereby save thousands of lives every year... ».

After the farewell dinner given by Prince Chumbhot in honour of our Delegate, two colour films were shown. The first was an excellent documentary on the activities of the Thai Red Cross; the second was of the cremation of the late Queen, the great-aunt of the present King; it had been made on the King's orders in order to establish once and for all the complex ceremonial of royal funerals. The film was not intended for exhibition and special permission from the King was required before it could be shown at the farewell dinner. The Vice-

President of the ICRC was particularly touched by this gracious attention and remarked that it would hardly be possible to imagine a more striking contrast than that between the two films they had just seen: the first realistic, modern, human, the second a sort of dream of the Thousand and One Nights, the one evoking the past, the other the future. The past and the future were brought together by one symbol only, the emblem of the Red Cross. "Indeed, the only link between these two aspects of Thai life were the teams of Red Cross girls, with their blue blouses and black ties, who marched in the immense funeral procession, since the dead Queen had been President of the Red Cross. It was on this note that our evening finished and we took leave of our hosts very much moved by all we had seen and experienced".

The International Committee is happy indeed to have had the opportunity, through its Vice-President, of bearing witness to its interest in the manifold activities of the Thai Red Cross Society, which can be rightly proud of its achievements.

New Zealand. — Welcomed at the airport in Auckland by Mr. L. Bossard, ICRC Delegate in New Zealand and the President of the Auckland District of the New Zealand Red Cross, Mr. Bodmer, after an interview with the Chairman of the District, left the same day for Wellington. He was met at the airport by Mr. Pierre H. Aubaret, Swiss Consul General and Mrs. Aubaret. The Secretary General of the Red Cross, although it was midnight, was waiting for our Delegate at his hotel with a bouquet of flowers and drew up a very full programme for the following days.

Before dealing with the substance of his visit and speaking of his mission proper, Mr. Bodmer in his report makes a few comments of an ethnographic and social nature which we print below, since they throw light on some uncommon aspects of New Zealand life, which may possibly influence Red Cross activities. "One comment which must be made and which is open to no doubt is the integration of the Maori population in New Zealand life. The Maoris are of Polynesian origin and seemed to have colonised the island about five centuries ago.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

At the beginning of British domination in the 19th century, they fought back desperately; in 1868, an agreement was signed by both sides and since then there has been, if not assimilation, at least complete equality. They have the right to vote and to elect members of Parliament, in short there is no discrimination and rightly so. New Zealand is therefore an example for the whole world of the way totally different races can live together».

On the morning after his arrival, our Delegate visited first the Honourable J. R. Marshall, former Deputy Prime Minister, and then the Secretary for External Affairs, Mr. McIntosh, who were both particularly interested in the New Delhi Conference. Mr. Bodmer gave them all the details they asked for on the discussions and the results of the Conference. Other eminent persons, well known to the ICRC, met Mr. Bodmer and showed a lively interest in the Committee's work, including Mr. Parry, a specialist on the Geneva Conventions in the Ministry of External Affairs, and Mr. C. G. White, former Chairman of the New Zealand Red Cross Society; numerous other members of the Red Cross and persons connected with the Press, and the radio and television services wished for information about the International Committee's work. This general interest, this wish to know, to understand and to study thoroughly the meaning of the humanitarian spirit in a direct way, man to man, not through a book or the printed word, deeply impressed our Delegate.

Finally, Mr. Bodmer visited the headquarters of the Red Cross, where the staff was introduced to him at a short ceremony. A speech containing some appreciative remarks on the International Committee was replied to by the Vice-President, who expressed his joy at having been able to see for himself, and not as always before through reports or magazines, the fine and effective work carried out by the New Zealand Red Cross Society.

The second day was spent in visiting hospitals and Red Cross establishments. Everywhere our Delegate found perfect organization and a remarkable sense of cooperation.

Finally, on the third day, came the culminating point of the programme, the meeting of leading members of Red Cross

Centres throughout the country, at which Mr. Bodmer and Mr. Bossard were guests of honour. Mr. Bodmer gave a talk on various subjects of interest to the audience and in the evening a reception was given by the New Zealand Red Cross, attended by numerous guests, at which our Delegate, in accordance with the programme, spoke once more, touching on various aspects of the tasks and duties of humanitarian organizations in the world today.

The last day was marked by a visit to the Governor General, Lord Cobham. Numerous subjects were reviewed during this most interesting and far-ranging interview.

Thus ended a mission marked by the cordial welcome given to Mr. Bodmer wherever he went : our Delegate was received with great courtesy by all those with whom he came in contact, and special thanks are due to the Swiss Consul General for his unflinching and valuable assistance.

Australia. — On the evening of the 29 November, the Vice-President arrived in Melbourne the headquarters of the Australian Red Cross Society. He was met at the airport by Mrs. Scantlebury, Vice-Chairman, Mr. Brown, National Commissioner and Mr. Stubbings, Secretary General of the Society, accompanied by several members of their staff. Our permanent Delegate, Mr. Schweitzer, was also present.

Mr. Bodmer, in his report, stressed the generous and cordial welcome which he received, which, taken in conjunction with many other indications, showed how much a visit from the International Red Cross is appreciated. That very evening, Sir Peter McCallum, Chairman of the Australian Red Cross Society, gave a dinner for twelve guests in honour of our Delegate.

The following days were devoted to visits to hospitals, rehabilitation centres for ex-service men and homes for paralysed children, all of them under the supervision and patronage of the Red Cross. He also visited Red Cross branches in the smaller cities, such as Geelong and Albury, where he was received by the Branch Chairman and introduced to Red Cross staff who are all voluntary workers.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

“ It made a deep impression on us, he said, to be present at the other end of the earth, when Red Cross tasks were done; and to note that these tasks, large and small, are carried out day after day with the same devotion as in Henry Dunant's native city. At Albury, for example, a ceremony had been organized on the evening of our arrival and after a short lecture I was bombarded with questions concerning the International Committee. The press was always present and interviews formed part of the programme, even in the smallest places.”

Visits to official personages were numerous and interesting. In Melbourne our Delegate met the Minister for External Affairs and at different stages of his mission the Governors of Victoria and New South Wales; at Canberra, Mr. Bodmer was present a reception held in his honour by the Governor General, Field-Marshal Lord Slim and Lady Slim; Lord Slim showed great interest in the present work of the International Committee throughout the world; Lady Slim is the President of the Australian Red Cross Society and is well acquainted with its manifold activities.

In the same city, a happy surprise was awaiting the Vice-President. On his arrival, he learned that he was awaited at the Ministry for External Affairs, which had been kindly advised of his visit by the Secretary General of the Australian Red Cross in Melbourne. He was received by two senior officials of the Ministry, who handed over to him the bill for the act of ratification of the Convention, which had been endorsed the day before in Parliament. Thus, by happy chance, our Delegate had the pleasure of learning at first hand that one of the greatest desires of the International Committee, the ratification of the Conventions by Australia, had been met.

Mr. Bodmer naturally visited the Red Cross organization in Canberra which, despite its small size, forms an independent and well equipped division—the Australian Capital Territory Division. Then he left for Sydney and the final stage of his mission. At the airport, he was met by Mr. J. F. Clack, Chairman of the New South Wales Division, and the Swiss Consul General, Mr. Hedinger.

Visits to Red Cross establishments in Sydney were also

extremely interesting. Perfectly organized, the Red Cross branches enjoy very wide autonomy. They collect their own funds and organize their practical work as they wish. Thus, for example, the Blood Transfusion Service in Sydney has become, through the talents of its Director and the generosity of the Red Cross Division which finances it, one of the leading research institutes in the world.

“ From our arrival to our departure ”, said Mr. Bodmer “ we were looked after by members of the Red Cross and treated with the utmost friendship. On the very last evening, we attended a very fine Christmas party with four hundred girls belonging to the Red Cross auxiliary services; some of them had just returned from the forests which had been ravaged by forest fires, which are one of the greatest scourges of this country. They had worked as volunteers ”.

The following day, Mr. Bodmer took the plane which, after a short stop in Djakarta, brought him two days later to Geneva. The Vice-President ended his report by paying tribute to all the leaders and ordinary members of the Red Cross who everywhere received him with the utmost generosity and courtesy. He saw for himself the spirit of devotion which animates them and enables them to accomplish their magnificent task under the Red Cross emblem.

MR. WILLIAM H. MICHEL'S MISSION

Mr. Michel, Delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross, was given the task of visiting the Federation of Malaya, Indonesia, Cambodia and Burma, to discuss the main questions of common interest with Red Cross bodies and the authorities. He also went to Goa, in Portuguese India, to visit political detainees.

This part of the world was not unknown to Mr. Michel, who had already carried out important missions to the Far East and South East Asia, particularly in 1956. He was thus able to examine objectively and thoroughly the nature of the

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

problems facing Societies in these countries, the scope of their plans, their hopes and their achievements.

We give below a summary of our Delegate's impressions of his visits, during which he was given a warm welcome everywhere.

Federation of Malaya. — During a previous mission, in 1956, Mr. Michel had discussed with His Excellency Tengku Abdul Rahman, certain problems concerning the internment of "rebel combatants". This interview had been followed by a visit to an internment centre in Malaya by Mr. Pfrunder, Resident Delegate in Singapore of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Since then, the Federation of Malaya has won complete independence and a National Red Cross Society has been set up. In October 1957, at a solemn ceremony held in Kuala Lumpur, Lady Limerick, Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee of the British Red Cross Society, handed over to this young Red Cross Society the equipment and organization of the British Red Cross, and passed on to it the duty and the privilege of continuing to carry out the traditional mission of the Red Cross.

Mr. Michel, together with Mr. Pfrunder, was invited to attend the first Council meeting of this new Red Cross Society, held on 22 November 1957. He had the opportunity of meeting the eminent persons attending the meeting and of making a statement on the work of the New Delhi Conference and the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross and of the League of Red Cross Societies. During this first Council meeting, the Red Cross of the Federation of Malaya drew up its statutes and nominated its President and Committee members.

In conveying to this new Red Cross Society the best wishes of the International Committee of the Red Cross for its future and its prosperity, Mr. Michel pointed out that it was doubtless the first time that a representative of the International Committee had been so intimately associated with the formation of a National Red Cross Society. This Society will doubtless

be asking for official recognition by the International Committee of the Red Cross in the very near future and for admission to the League of Red Cross Societies.

Indonesia. — During a previous visit, in 1956, Mr. Michel had had the opportunity of making contact with organizations of the Indonesian Red Cross, not only in its central headquarters at Djakarta, but also in Western Java. In November 1957, the Indonesian Red Cross had arranged for Mr. Michel to make a number of visits in Central Java. Our Delegate was thus able to visit Djogjakarta, Solo, Magelang and Semarang.

The Indonesian Red Cross is engaged in numerous, most useful activities, often difficult to carry out, and its leading members allowed our representative to visit most of the places where they were going on. He was able to see for himself the excellent spirit of co-operation which animates the leaders of the Indonesian Red Cross and the fruitful collaboration which has been established between the Indonesian Red Cross and the authorities.

Mr. Michel was able to give several lectures or talks to leading members of the Indonesian Red Cross and various representatives of the authorities, informing them of the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the problems faced by our Committee in various parts of the world. He also gave a general report on the work of the New Delhi Conference.

Mr. Michel was most cordially received everywhere and was able to see for himself the constant interest of people in Indonesia in general Red Cross activities. He also saw convincing proof of the impartiality of Indonesian Red Cross members at a time when the political cross-currents were particularly noticeable.

Mr. Michel noted that the activities of the Indonesian Red Cross are constantly expanding—a very encouraging sign of Red Cross development.

The Indonesian Republic has not yet acceded to the Geneva Conventions of 1949. During his recent visit to Djakarta, Mr. Michel received from the representatives of the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs the assurance that the Indonesian Parliament would discuss this question at its first session in 1958 and that early accession could be anticipated.

Cambodia. — The Cambodian Red Cross, established on 5 August 1955, has had to devote its efforts during the first two years of its existence to gaining membership and establishing resources which will enable it to undertake the traditional duties of a Red Cross Society.

This programme has been indefatigably followed, thanks to its fine leadership, by the Cambodian Red Cross, which was able to organize between 1 and 15 September 1957, a first "Red Cross Fortnight". It consisted of: (1) the sale of badges by school children and scouts; (2) an increase in the price of seats in various places of entertainment in Phnom-Penh; (3) collections in various commercial firms and public administrative offices by Cambodian and foreign ladies; (4) various theatrical performances, meetings, etc.

All the provinces of Cambodia took part in this fortnight and contributed largely to its success. The results obtained are very encouraging and have already enabled the Cambodian Red Cross to look to its future activities with confidence.

Mr. Michel had a long interview concerning these problems with the President of the Cambodian Red Cross, Her Royal Highness the Princess Rasmi Sobhana and its Vice-President, Dr. You Chhin, whom we had the pleasure of welcoming to Geneva in July 1957.

These eminent persons, assisted by a devoted staff, are giving to their Society a stimulus which will, without a shadow of doubt, enable the Cambodian Red Cross in the near future to meet the main tasks incumbent upon a National Red Cross Society.

When the Cambodian Red Cross asks for official recognition by the International Committee of the Red Cross, and when it is admitted to the League of Red Cross Societies, its development will be speeded up, to the greater benefit of the Cambodian people and the international Red Cross movement.

Burma. — In December 1957, Mr. Michel visited Burma for the second time, having already been there in 1950. He was thus able to see for himself the marked development in the last few years of this Society, whose main activities are carried out under the name of the " Burma Ambulance Brigade ".

These activities are carried out by more than thirty regional groups throughout Burma, for the most part with magistrates at their head. Burma has signed the Geneva Conventions of 1949 but not yet ratified them. However, according to information given to our delegate during his stay in Rangoon, ratification should take place in the near future.

The Burma Red Cross Society is at present building new premises in the very centre of Rangoon for its central departments and various auxiliary services.

The leaders of the Burma Red Cross Society, with whom Mr. Michel had long and very interesting interviews, informed our representative of their plans for the future. They also showed a lively interest in the activities of other National Red Cross Societies, especially those of South-East Asia and Australia, and rightly advocated frequent exchanges with their sister societies.

During his mission in South East Asia, our Delegate noted that there is a certain regionalism in Red Cross activities, which is due particularly to local conditions, to the climate, to the relationships between individuals, to the high density of population and to the sanitary and dietary conditions. Nevertheless, the National Red Cross Societies are all inspired by the same humanitarian ideal and all the people of the Red Cross form part of the same family.

Goa. — Mr. Michel had to make a further halt at Goa, in order to carry out a traditional humanitarian task on the initiative of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Our Delegate's object was to obtain information concerning the Indian detainees arrested for " political crimes against the security of the State ", concerning their places of detention and the conditions under which those were living whose cases are still *sub judice*.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

Our Delegate was received with understanding by the Governor General of Portuguese India. He was authorized to visit the prisons and to talk without witnesses to Indian and even Portuguese detainees. On the eve of his departure, he was received for a second time by the Governor, who wished to be informed in person of the facts noted by our Delegate during his visits to the political detainees.

The General Delegation of the Portuguese Red Cross at Goa gave Mr. Michel, during his stay, the warmest of welcomes and promised full assistance in all circumstances.

On 21 December 1957, Mr. Michel left for Geneva after accomplishing a mission which has enabled the International Committee of the Red Cross to establish closer relationships with the Red Cross Societies of South-East Asia and to gain a better knowledge of the remarkable effort they are making, despite all present difficulties, to serve the humanitarian ideal, which is the same throughout the world.

SUNDRY ACTIVITIES

News items

The joint action of the ICRC and the League of Red Cross Societies on behalf of the Algerian refugees in Tunisia was continued in January and February. Considerable distributions of foodstuffs, women's and children's clothing, tents and soap, were made to refugees at Sbeitla, Le Kef, Ain Draham and Ghardimaou.

The Tunisian Red Crescent makes the practical arrangements for the distribution of relief supplies with assistance from the delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League. Distribution programmes, based on the statistics concerning refugees supplied by the Ministry for Internal Affairs, are first approved and signed by the representatives of the three organisations.

During the incident at Sakiet Sidi Youssef, which took place on the day when a distribution of relief supplies had been planned, considerable quantities were placed at the Kef authorities' disposal to help the victims. The supplies consisted, in particular, of new clothing for children, donated by the High Commissioner for Refugees, and blankets, a gift of the League. For the same purpose some foodstuffs were drawn from the stocks in Tunis.

Relief supplies have continued to flow to Tunisia, thus making it possible to meet the refugees' needs. Contributions have been received from Denmark, Australia, the United Kingdom, Luxembourg, Iran, Norway, Ireland, India, the United States, the Sudan,

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

Afghanistan, Finland, South Africa, Haiti, Thailand and Sweden.

In addition, the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR sent the Tunisian Red Crescent foodstuffs, clothing and medicaments, and the Egyptian Red Crescent supplied foodstuffs, blankets, clothing and dressings. The Polish and the Bulgarian Red Cross Societies have already announced the despatch of blankets and clothing.

* * *

Two delegates of the ICRC, Mr. Colladon and Mr. Bron, are now at Oujda where, in close co-operation with the Entraide marocaine, they are distributing the relief supplies entrusted to the ICRC. The supplies consist, in particular, of an important gift of the Egyptian Red Crescent including 5,000 food-parcels, 5,000 blankets and 2,000 items of children's clothing, of a total value of about 250,000 Swiss francs. Other gifts in kind are awaited, in particular condensed milk donated by the Belgian and Irish Red Cross Societies.

Refugees who have not benefited from the Egyptian food-parcels will receive hard wheat and condensed milk. This assistance will be made possible by the cash donations sent to the ICRC by the National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies of Australia, Luxemburg, the United Kingdom, Norway, India, the United States, South Africa, Haiti, the Sudan, Afghanistan and Iran.

* * *

The International Committee of the Red Cross had the pleasure of receiving the visit at its headquarters, on February 27, of Mr. Pier Pasquale Spinelli, the new Director of the European Office of the United Nations.

After meeting Mr. Léopold Boissier, President of the ICRC and Mr. Martin Bodmer and Mr. Frédéric Siordet, Vice-Presidents, Mr. Spinelli visited the Central Prisoners of War Agency.

* * *

A Polish weekly magazine recently published an article by Mr. Olgierd Budrewicz entitled "The Red Cross and Kindheartedness".

The writer describes his visit to the ICRC headquarters; after giving a wide view of the work of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr. Budrewicz describes, with some humour, the austerity (or, in his words, the "monastic severity") of the premises, the patient, unassuming but nevertheless extremely worth-while task of the Agency workers, absorbed in their card-indexes. A filing card is not merely a scrap of cardboard but the reflection of suffering which must be alleviated.

In choosing as his title "The Red Cross and Kindheartedness" the author wished to pay a tribute to the fundamental principles of the Red Cross. We may add that Mr. Budrewicz's description of the work of the ICRC comes from the heart.

* * *

On December 31, 1957, the Governments of Japan and the Republic of Korea signed an agreement whereby Korean nationals interned in Omura Camp (Japan) and Japanese fishermen interned at Pusan (South Korea) will be released and allowed to return to their respective countries.

This agreement is the result of negotiations which have been going on for the past two years. As is known, the ICRC showed a keen interest in this matter, in particular by sending a mission to Japan and Korea in May 1956, and through its note to the Governments concerned of December 3, 1957.

In the course of January, Japan started to free a number of Korean nationals from detention, while a first party of 300 Japanese fishermen reached their own country on January 31.

* * *

The past year showed a considerable increase in the work of the Central Prisoners of War Agency.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

A comparison of the figures for the mail and cases dealt with shows that the amount of work done in 1957 was more than double the figures recorded at the end of the previous year, i.e.—

	in 1956	in 1957
<i>Postal items received . . .</i>	75,003	148,985
<i>Postal items despatched . .</i>	77,522	160,339
<i>Cases dealt with</i>	88,146	187,429

The events in Hungary and the Middle East were not the only cause of this considerable increase in the work. The figures for the Hungarian Section in 1957 were—

<i>Postal items received</i>	55,303
<i>Postal items despatched</i>	61,588

There was a notable increase in the work of other Sections of the Agency, for instance the Polish and German Sections, for which a few figures are given below as an example—

	in 1956	in 1957
<i>Polish Section</i>		
<i>Postal items received . .</i>	9,483	18,587
<i>Postal items despatched .</i>	11,386	22,884
<i>German Section</i>		
<i>Postal items received . .</i>	31,412	43,746
<i>Postal items despatched .</i>	29,208	38,460

The Agency receives an ever-increasing number of enquiries from Central and East European countries. They come from persons wishing to know what has happened to near relatives from whom they were separated, either during the hostilities or the events which occurred immediately after the war.

In these cases searches meet with considerable difficulty. It is by no means easy to find the trace of civilians who have, in most cases, changed their places of residence several times and of whom some, in fact, have emigrated to overseas countries. No

effort is spared to enable these dispersed families to renew contacts which were broken off over 12 years ago.

To meet this heavy task the Agency was obliged to increase its staff which numbered on December, 1956, 31 salaried staff members and 7 voluntary workers.

In the course of 1957 the Agency engaged 87 new salaried staff members, i.e. 47 in Geneva and 40 at Vienna to set up a card-index of Hungarian refugees.

After the discharge of part of this temporary personnel, engaged for the most urgent work, the Agency still has 53 salaried staff members and 7 voluntary workers.

It will be remembered that the *Revue internationale* had the privilege of publishing (in the September, October, November and December issues, 1956) a remarkable study of the eminent Japanese jurist, Professor Juji Enomoto, entitled "The Birth of Humanitarian Ideas". The author has been good enough to present the ICRC with a booklet, published in Tokyo, which contains the original text in Japanese and the French and English translations.

* * *

The six members of the crew of the Israeli fishing boat "Doron", captured on September 24, 1957, by the Egyptian forces, were released on January 27 last. During their detention the delegates of the ICRC in Egypt visited these fishermen on two occasions and provided them with a few relief supplies.

* * *

After a short journey to Israel, from December 6 to 11, 1957, Mr. D. de Traz, General-Delegate of the ICRC for the Near East, visited Amman, in order to present to the Jordan Red Crescent a gift of first-aid equipment from the ICRC. Mr. de Traz passed the last week of January in Cairo, to examine various matters in connection with the coming reduction of the activities of the ICRC Delegation in Egypt.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

Interesting contacts were made with several leading officials of the countries concerned during these visits.

* * *

Mr. J. de Chambrier, Delegate for Latin America, has come from Buenos Aires to Geneva to visit the International Committee.

Mr. de Chambrier endeavours to make the work of the International Red Cross known in Latin America and to encourage the dissemination of the Convention, a task for which he well suited through his constant contact with the authorities and National Red Cross Societies of the countries concerned.

* * *

Mrs. T. Mathez, Head of Section, Executive Division, will be visiting Madrid to make a general survey of the work of the ICRC Delegation in Spain and to arrange programmes of future activities.

* * *

For the information of the eminent persons from various countries who took part in the two Commissions of Experts organized by the ICRC in 1954 and 1955 for the study of the question of the application of humanitarian principles in the event of internal disturbances, the Legal Department has sent them the texts of the resolutions adopted by the XIXth International Red Cross Conference (New Delhi, November 1957) and drawn their attention to—

Resolution XVII—which provides, in particular, that doctors should in no way be hindered when giving the care which they are called upon to provide in these circumstances,

Resolution XIX—concerning the distribution of relief supplies in the event of internal disturbances.

* * *

As it has already been announced, since July 12, 1957, the ICRC has been making broadcasts in Arabic, every Friday at 5.30 p.m. GMT over the Swiss Short Wave Service (Schwarzenburg, 16 m 93—17,720 kc., (25 m 28-11,865 kc.).

These broadcasts are devoted partly to the study of Red Cross principles and the Geneva Conventions, and partly to news concerning the work of the ICRC and its delegations. In addition, the programmes include interviews with leading people in Arabic-speaking countries on subjects concerned with the spirit and work of the Red Cross, and accounts of the activities of the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the Near East and North Africa. During the past few weeks a series of items have been broadcast concerning the relief action on behalf of the Algerian refugees.

With the co-operation of the broadcasting stations of the various Arabic-speaking countries, the broadcast bulletins of the ICRC will henceforth be picked up by a greater number of listeners. In future, magnetic tape recordings of the most interesting programmes will be made in Geneva, which the broadcasting stations have agreed to re-transmit over their own wave-lengths.

* * *

The representatives of the broadcasting services and the National Red Cross Societies of various European countries met in Geneva on February 15 last, with a view to preparing, as customary, the International Red Cross Broadcast which will take place, as it does each year, on May 8, 1958.

This broadcast will, as usual, be made by Radio-Genève with the co-operation and under the auspices of the European Broadcasting Union and the ICRC.

* * *

During a very short visit to Geneva by Miss Agnes Ohlson, President of the International Council of Nurses (I.C.N.), the International Committee invited her, on February 17, to a meeting

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

at which Miss Elsa Kunkel, President of the Association suisse des Infirmières et Infirmiers diplômés, and various members of the International Red Cross organisations were present. Numerous problems were found to be of common interest, and closer co-operation with the International Council of Nurses is planned for the future.

* * *

In connection with its work on behalf of the war-disabled, the ICRC has given assistance to crippled Austrian youths, of whom the majority are victims of accidents due to the explosion of abandoned war material. The most needy cases were brought to the International Committee's notice by the regional branches of the Austrian Social Service, which also drew up a list of the victims' requirements.

The ICRC devoted to this assistance, which came to its close at the end of December 1957, a sum of 10,000 Swiss francs used for the purchase of clothing, Braille watches, school books and contributions towards school fees and holiday programmes for the worst handicapped. The assistance given to the young cripples, to supplement their education and professional training will enable them to start out with a stock of knowledge sufficient for them to earn an independent living.

Acting through its Vienna Delegation, the ICRC was helped in bringing this task to a successful conclusion by the active co-operation of the Austrian Social Service.

The International Tracing Service (ITS) has recently made out a summary of its activities for 1957. In comparison with the figures for 1956, the number of enquiries received increased by 30% and the number of certificates issued by 50%, i.e.

	in 1956	in 1957
Postal items received . . .	158,439	203,801
Postal items despatched . .	236,523	358,842

In order to deal with the extra work the ITS was obliged to increase its staff, which amounted to 228 persons on December 31, 1956, and 248 persons on December 31, 1957.

During the past year the ITS continued to add to the vast number of documents in its possession by means of new lists sent to it from various sources.

* * *

After the events which occurred in Indonesia in November and December 1957, the ICRC sent a delegate, Mr. André Durand, to Djakarta, to see what arrangements had been made for Dutch nationals obliged to leave Indonesia to return to the Netherlands and, in conjunction with the Indonesian Red Cross to take the necessary steps to assist them if required.

On his arrival at Djakarta on December 31, Mr. Durand was received by Dr. Subandrio, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Mr. Atwi Sutan Osman, head of the Immigration Department of the Ministry of Justice, who granted him every facility for carrying out his mission.

In close co-operation with the Indonesian Red Cross, the International Committee's delegate visited various ports and was present at the embarkation of several parties of Dutch nationals. In this connection, Mr. Durand noted the very useful part played by the Indonesian Junior Red Cross units which served refreshments, helped the disabled and looked after young children during the Customs formalities. The help given by these young voluntary workers was highly appreciated by the Dutch representatives present at the embarkation, who expressed their thanks to the Secretary-General of the Indonesian Red Cross Society, Miss Paramita Abdoerachman.

Mr. Durand's mission took him also to assembly centres in Java and Macassar.

These repatriated persons are given help at each stage of their journey. Some of them disembark at Singapore where they are accommodated in assembly centres before leaving for Europe. The representative of the Netherlands Red Cross and members of the British Red Cross in Singapore supplied them with clothing, medicaments, etc.

The Italian Red Cross also looks after Netherlands nationals arriving at Genoa by sea, or at Rome or Naples by air. They

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

are given hot drinks and clothing, and helped with their luggage and Customs formalities so that they can continue their journey.

On their arrival in the Netherlands the repatriated persons are met at the station or port by staff members of the Netherlands Red Cross who do everything possible to assist them; they are then taken to Budel Assembly Centre where they are given accommodation for a few days until they leave for their final destination.

* * *

Forty years have gone by since the end of the First World War, but the card-indexes and archives concerning the 1914-1918 conflict, which have been carefully preserved by the Central Prisoners of War Agency, still prove to be a valuable source of information.

A great many former combatants still apply to Geneva to obtain certificates of captivity required in support of claims for war pensions. The majority of these applications come from persons living in Germany who are entitled to an increased old age pension if they can still provide proof of their captivity during the First World War, or disease contracted during internment, etc. This applies also for the widows of former prisoners of war who can obtain the same advantages if they are able to supply the required proof. The majority of the applicants, usually displaced persons, lost their personal documents during the events, and the German authorities cannot issue duplicates, the Wehrmacht archives for 1914-1918 having been destroyed during the last war. The documents filed in the Agency enable the necessary information to be given to the applicants.

RE-UNITING OF FAMILIES

One of the actions undertaken by the International Committee of the Red Cross after the end of the Second World War, is the reuniting of dispersed families. As part of this action more than 200,000 persons of German stock coming from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union, Rumania and Hungary, have been enabled to rejoin their families in Germany Austria, France, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Switzerland and overseas countries.

This action is carried out in close co-operation with the National Red Cross Societies concerned. On 25 February 1958, Mr. Herbert G. Beckh, Delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross and representatives of the Red Cross Societies of the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria, took charge of a group of 37 children of German stock, or, as they are called, "Volksdeutsche", brought to Piding near the Austro-Bavarian frontier by the Yugoslav Red Cross. 35 of these children are to join their families in the German Federal Republic, in the German Democratic Republic and 1 in Canada. In addition, 2 children in the same group had already rejoined their families in Austria.

This is the twelfth party of children to leave Yugoslavia under the auspices of the Yugoslav Red Cross as part of the action for reuniting "Volksdeutsche" families. To date, 2,370 "Volksdeutsche" children coming from Yugoslavia have

been able to rejoin their families in 7 European and 5 overseas countries. This figure includes only unaccompanied children; an infinitely greater number have left Yugoslavia with a member of their family.

THE ACTION OF THE ICRC IN ALGERIA

The fifth mission of the International Committee of the Red Cross to Algeria, composed of Mr. Pierre Gaillard and Dr. Louis-A. Gaillard, returned to Geneva at the end of February after two and a half months' stay in Algeria.

During this last mission the two delegates of the ICRC covered over 15,000 km. and made 104 visits to internment camps, as well as to transit and screening centres under military authority. Ten hospitals where prisoners wounded during the fighting are receiving treatment were also visited.

In the course of their visits the delegates of the ICRC distributed relief supplies to the prisoners valued at three million French francs, donated by the ICRC.

The French authorities granted every facility to the International Committee's representatives who were able, during their visits, to converse without witnesses with detainees of their choice.

The points noted and the delegates' suggestions concerning their visits were communicated to the Camp Commanders concerned and to the civil and military authorities.

As customary a detailed report on each of the centres visited will be sent to the French Government by the ICRC.
