



# REVUE INTERNATIONALE DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

## SUPPLEMENT

### CONTENTS

	Page
<b>Frédéric Siordet : The lesson of Solferino . . . . .</b>	42
Recognition of the Liberian Red Cross Society (Circular-letter No. 423) . . . . .	49
Recognition of the Ghana Red Cross Society (Circular-letter No. 424) . . . . .	51
The ICRC and the Algerian conflict . . . . .	53
Relief Action of the ICRC in Cyprus . . . . .	58
Relief Action of the ICRC in Lebanon and Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 . . . . .	60
A delegate of the Japanese Red Cross visits Geneva . . . . .	62
A member of the ICRC in Latin America . . . . .	63
More French prisoners handed over to the ICRC . . . . .	64

## THE CENTENARY OF THE RED CROSS IDEA

### The lesson of Solferino

The idea of the Red Cross was born on the battlefield of Solferino. More precisely, the spontaneous action of Henry Dunant and the Italian women there foreshadowed the Red Cross, and the idea was expressed for the first time in *A Memory of Solferino* which Dunant wrote three years later.

What was the "memory" which haunted him for three years to such a point that he spent sleepless nights, neglected his own affairs and placed in jeopardy the commercial interests which had been entrusted to him? Not that of the battle itself, which was one of the greatest carnages that had ever taken place. Dunant was not present at the battle, and his narration of its various phases was based on what he had read; he built up his description of the scenes of slaughter and bloodshed on the basis of the marks left on the mutilated bodies of the killed and wounded. "What haunted me" he wrote "was the memory of the terrible condition of the thousands of wounded I saw at Castiglione, brought there from the various theatres of fighting on June 24". It was the picture, the memory of this suffering which is made all the more painful for those who are its victims and those who witness it by the fact that it serves no purpose. Some have termed it "useless suffering", and diplomats have spoken of the "unnecessary evils" of war. We do not like those expressions, for they imply that we recognize the existence in war of useful suffering and necessary

evils. We are among those who hold that war itself is an unnecessary evil; mankind can no longer indulge in war, on pain of rapid annihilation, and it must find other means for the settlement of disputes.

For want of something better, and subject to this reservation, these expressions nevertheless give one a better understanding of the ground on which the Red Cross was built. From the viewpoint of politicians and military commanders, suffering—whether inflicted or received—has a meaning. In order to gain the victory, the enemy war potential of men and equipment must be destroyed at the cost of the fewest losses possible. Thus, in a battle, the death, capture or wounding of a certain number of men—whether friend or foe—is a factor which may be decisive for victory or defeat, and ultimately even for the future of a country. A man no longer has any influence on the course of the war, however, once wounding or capture has rendered him harmless and without defence. Even from the most realistic military point of view, it serves no purpose to prolong his suffering by bad treatment or the lack of care and attention.

This then was the spectacle with which Dunant was suddenly confronted : tens of thousands of wounded, suffering and dying with no-one to tend them, although the outcome of the battle was already determined and they counted for nothing either in the course of military events or in the political upheaval which was to ensue. What could he do? In theory, nothing. Even had he arrived earlier, being a mere tourist and moreover a foreigner he could not have had the slightest influence on the conduct of operations in order to keep their destructive effects to a minimum. He had no hand in this conflict in which his country was not involved. It was none of his concern. He could have gone on his way, returned to his business and perhaps, written some noble pamphlet against war which, once the emotion caused by first reading it had subsided, would have had no more effect than the thousands of appeals, petitions, movements, organizations and pacts which were a feature of the last century. He did better, he took action. And in the light of his own experience then, he made practical proposals.

He discovered something which is within the reach of all those who, like him, have no power over war and peace and no influence on the fighting: to endeavour to mitigate these unnecessary evils to the utmost.

The remarkable thing, which can never be over emphasized, is that from the outset, by his gesture and his book, Dunant went to the heart of the matter. He had his own definite political preferences and made no attempt to hide them. He was in a friendly country and was interested in its fate. By virtue of his mother tongue, education and family relationships, his sympathies tended more to one of the opposing armies than to its adversary. He might therefore have done as the voluntary helpers were naturally inclined to do at first, and merely have given assistance to soldiers of the national army or the "liberating" forces. As many men would have been saved. Similarly, he might have presented his suggestions in the form of an invitation requesting each State to develop its health services and to promote action by relief societies in behalf of its own nationals. Despite his personal sympathies for one of the parties, however, he did not confuse human beings with the cause which it was their loyal duty to defend. For Dunant, a wounded soldier did not suffer differently according to the flag under which he fought, nor did he deserve to suffer more or less because of the policies of his native land. And, following his example, the women of Castiglione understood this too. Better still, his concern was not limited to the physical suffering of men; he thought also of the mental anguish of their mothers and felt that by assuaging the first, he would ease the second. Before the heartbreaking spectacle at Solferino, his thoughts winged their way to the farthest corners of Germany, Austria or Hungary, as well as to the villages of France or Italy.

Another remarkable thing is the lucidity with which Dunant envisaged the future. His action at Solferino would have sufficed to gain him an immense debt of gratitude and he would have gone down in history as "the man in white". Yet he nurtured and cultivated the memory which tormented him,

not so much in order to condemn the past evils of war or to praise the unstinting efforts of rescue workers as to enable the preparation, with a view to future wars, of new methods of assistance which would be faster, more extensive and more effective. "If an international relief society had existed at the time of Solferino, and if there had been volunteer helpers at Castiglione on June 24, 25 and 26... If there had been enough assistance to collect the wounded... If there had been available for the wounded improved means of transport better than those now existing..." All these if's scattered throughout Dunant's book are not mere lamentations after the event, or well-deserved criticism of the poor standard of the military medical services. They were to pave the way for the two proposals from which grew up the Red Cross institution and the Geneva Conventions. Looking back on his memory of the aftermath of Solferino, Dunant conjured up a vivid image of the immense amount of fresh suffering to be caused by the future wars which seemed all too likely, given the state of mind prevailing in Europe. And he also had a clear vision of what might be accomplished by the millions of future volunteers if they were more numerous, better organized, better prepared and supported by the public authorities; they would have no influence over the course of politics or war but they could at least, as he had done, mitigate or heal useless suffering.

All the fears which Dunant expressed in his book were realized. Wars followed upon wars, weapons have become increasingly effective, making battles ever more deadly. He was only mistaken on one point: he believed that the development of weapons of destruction would abridge the duration of future wars. After Solferino, it was still possible to count the victims of useless suffering, that is to say, those who can no longer influence the course of operations; they numbered several tens of thousands. One cannot estimate the number of such victims of the First World War, still less those of the Second. Even those experts who are most firmly convinced that war involves necessary evils are forced to admit that these two world conflicts have shown that the ever-increasing power of destructive weapons and the indiscriminate way in which they

have been used have caused an incalculable amount of ruin and suffering which was without any justification, even from the military point of view and as compared with the objective and the result ultimately achieved.

In this year which marks the centenary of the Red Cross idea, not only is the problem which inspired Henry Dunant to act still a current one, but it has developed in both quality and quantity. For at the sight of so much suffering, what was it that made Dunant forget the purpose of his journey and filled him with an irresistible desire—an urge—to give assistance to as many victims as possible; what gave him the strength to carry out that superhuman task? He himself provides the answer, it was “the moral sense of the importance of human life”.

This notion of the value of man was apparently widespread among nations and their governments, for in 1863 within a few months after the book was published, the first relief societies were established, and a year later the principles on which the Red Cross is based were embodied in a diplomatic convention which was binding upon governments and armed forces. Not only, as Dunant had requested, did the 1864 Convention constitute a legal basis for relief societies, thus contributing to the fight against “useless” suffering, but it also helped to prevent such suffering by giving neutral status to hospitals and ambulances and their personnel. This was the first victory of the Red Cross, and a great one; for it thus entered into the laws of war by obliging the belligerents to refrain from attacking certain enemy objectives. The introduction of the provisions contained in Article 5 was also a victory: “Inhabitants of the country who bring help to the wounded shall be respected and shall remain free”, and “the presence of any wounded combatant receiving shelter and care in a house shall ensure its protection”. It was not the charitable associations, but conferences of military experts or diplomats which drew up the St. Petersburg Declaration of 1868 and the Hague Regulations of 1907 and succeeded in having them adopted; all the prohibitions contained in those two instruments are based on the idea that the belligerents do not have an unlimited right to choose

means of harming the enemy, and they all have a common purpose : to avoid unnecessary evils.

What is the situation today? In the most recent world conflicts, the tremendous disasters, at first accidental, caused by the increased destructive power of weapons have become so frequent that people have come to regard them as inevitable, if not lawful. The reaction of horror to useless suffering is less intense, and the victims as well as those who inflict such suffering have come to regard it as something which is inherent in war. From there it is only a short step to the use of excessive suffering or legally unwarranted destruction—that is to say, attacks on those who take no part in the fighting—as a means of weakening the adversary. This step has already been taken more than once by means of mass indiscriminate bombing or in certain concentration camps, and one section of opinion seems prepared to take it yet again by condoning in advance the total weapons. According to some, this is a consequence of the inexorable development of modern weapons, and nothing can hinder the “progress” of science. One might as well declare that man must be the slave of his inventions instead of remaining master of them. For others, any inhabitant of a country is—directly or indirectly, and whether he agrees or not—part of the war potential or else a possible combatant, and whatever is on the territory of the adversary may therefore be destroyed. Such an attitude seems to subordinate the otherwise more difficult problem of a stable future to the interests of immediate but transitory success. Lastly, there are those who believe that the mere threat of total war is the ultimate means of maintaining peace. They believe that no-one would dare to embark on an adventure which might bring immediate reprisals such as would wipe whole countries off the face of the earth. In these various schools of thought, whether they be justified or not, what becomes of the concept of the value of the human being? It is purely and simply denied.

Thanks be to God, this concept still exists. The millions of members of the Red Cross, the Red Crescent, and the Red

## THE LESSON OF SOLFERINO

Lion and Sun proclaim this by supporting the movement. And every day, throughout the world, it is proved by the countless nurses, relief workers and voluntary helpers who bend over hospital sick-beds, take action—often at the risk of their lives—when natural disasters occur, spread health education, take relief supplies and moral solace into places of detention, and undergo training as auxiliaries to the medical services of the armed forces. All this they do in behalf of strangers who may be nameless, foreigners, and even enemies.

In celebrating the centenary of Solferino, we commemorate the gesture and idea of Henry Dunant in which the whole Red Cross movement lay latent. This commemoration would be but an empty display if it did not inspire us to repeat each day the same process of thought as our founder, by strengthening, disseminating and, if need be, restoring that “moral sense of the importance of human life” without which the Red Cross would have no meaning and there would be no reason for living.

FREDERIC SIORDET  
Vice-President of the  
International Committee of the  
Red Cross

---

# INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

---

## RECOGNITION OF THE LIBERIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY

GENEVA, February 11, 1959.

*423rd Circular*  
*to the Central Committees of the National Red Cross*  
*(Red Crescent, Red Lion and Sun) Societies*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

We have the honour to inform you of the official recognition of the Liberian Red Cross by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The President of this Society applied for its recognition by the International Committee by a letter dated September 3, 1958. That letter stated that the Liberian Red Cross accepted the ten conditions laid down for the recognition of new National Societies and would abide by them.

The application was accompanied by the text of the Society's Statutes and a copy of the Act of January 22, 1919, which accorded it official recognition. The study of these documents in conjunction with the League of Red Cross Societies has shown that the ten conditions for recognition have been fulfilled. The International Committee has pleasure, therefore, in announcing the recognition of this Society, which brings the number of member Societies of the International Red Cross to eighty-three.

The Liberian Red Cross was founded in 1919, but for a long while circumstances prevented its full development. In the past few years, however, the active efforts of a number of persons have enabled the Society gradually to expand its activity, and it is now in a position to enter into the international life of the Red Cross movement.

## INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

Liberia acceded to the 1949 Geneva Conventions on March 29, 1954.

By the terms of its Statutes, the Liberian Red Cross is recognized by its Government as a voluntary aid society, auxiliary to the public authorities, in particular the medical service of the armed forces. Moreover, its mission is to take action in the event of public disasters, to assist in campaigns against epidemics and to train nursing personnel. Its activities now cover the capital and a number of other centres in the country, especially mines and plantations. A Junior Red Cross is in existence and two hundred nurses have already been trained. Under the patronage of the President of the Republic, the President of the Society is Mrs. Jeannette L. King, and its Secretary-General is Mr. E. C. K. Ugboma. The headquarters of the Society's Board of Directors and Managing Committee are at Monrovia.

The International Committee has great pleasure in admitting this new National Society into the International Red Cross, accrediting it by the present notice to all other National Societies and recommending it to their kind attention. It expresses its best wishes for the Society's future and the success of its charitable work.

FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE RED CROSS

**Léopold BOISSIER**  
*President*

**RECOGNITION OF THE GHANA RED CROSS SOCIETY**

GENEVA, February 11, 1959.

*424th Circular  
to the Central Committees of the National Red Cross  
(Red Crescent, Red Lion and Sun) Societies*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

We have the honour to inform you of the official recognition of the Ghana Red Cross Society by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

This Society applied for recognition by the International Committee by a letter dated September 25, 1958. The application was accompanied by a copy of the Act of June 30, 1958, which accorded the Society official recognition, together with the text of the Society's Charter and Rules.

The study of these documents in conjunction with the League of Red Cross Societies has shown that the ten conditions for recognition of a new Society by the International Committee have been fulfilled.

The International Committee has pleasure, therefore, in announcing the recognition of this Society, which brings the number of member Societies of the International Red Cross to eighty-four. Thus the institution continues to develop steadily and is on the way to achieving universality.

Until Ghana acceded to independence, the Gold Coast Branch of the British Red Cross Society carried out much successful work in the country. It was succeeded by the new Society, founded on October 1, 1958. Under its Statutes and the Act of June 30, 1958, it is recognized by the Ghana authorities

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

as a voluntary and autonomous relief society, auxiliary to the public authorities, in accordance with the provisions of the Geneva Convention. Moreover, it has the special mission to alleviate suffering and to fight against disease, without discrimination of any kind.

Ghana acceded to the 1949 Geneva Conventions on August 2, 1958.

The new Society's activities are very varied and cover every region of the country, as the Gold Coast Branch of the British Red Cross Society previously did : training of nursing personnel, blood transfusion, first aid, mother and child welfare, Junior Red Cross, etc. Its patron is H. M. Queen Elizabeth II; the President of the Central Council is H. E. the Right Hon. the Earl of Listowel, the Director of Red Cross Services is Dr. E. Akwei, and the Secretary General is Mr Justice Nii Amaa Ollonnu. The Society's headquarters are at Accra.

The International Committee has great pleasure in admitting this new National Society into the International Red Cross, accrediting it by the present notice to all other National Societies, and recommending it to their kind attention. It expresses its best wishes for the Society's future and the success of its charitable work.

FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE RED CROSS

**Léopold BOISSIER**

*President*

---

## THE ICRC AND THE ALGERIAN CONFLICT

*In August, 1958, the Revue internationale published an article which gave a general survey of the relief action undertaken by the International Committee of the Red Cross in behalf of the various victims of events in Algeria. This work has been continued since then and we are now publishing, under the same title, an account of the International Committee's aid from the summer, 1958, until early in 1959.*

### I. ASSISTANCE TO PERSONS UNDER DETENTION IN ALGERIA

Since August, 1958, the International Committee's work in behalf of prisoners and persons under detention in French hands has been actively pursued.

Its action took the form of representations made from Geneva to Paris or Algiers concerning matters of principle or individual cases and, in addition, by approaches made by the delegate of the ICRC in Paris, Mr. W. Michel, to the authorities and the French Red Cross, as well as another special mission to Algeria.

Mr. Pierre Gaillard, Delegate, made a sixth series of visits to camps in Algeria accompanied by Mr. Roger Vust, Honorary-Delegate of the ICRC.

From December 5 to 23, 1958, they visited two prisons in Algiers (Alger-Barberousse and Maison-Carrée), two assembly

centres (Douera and Tefeschoun), four screening centres (Benis-Messous, Camp-du-Maréchal, Bordj Menaiel and Rio-Salado,) and eight internment centres under military control (Tigzirt, Boghar, Ksar-Thir, Bône, Tiaret, Lamoricière, Hammam-Bou-Hadjjar and Point Zéro near Mostaganem); sixteen visits were thus made.

The visits to internment centres under military control were the first made by the ICRC to these camps which had been set up recently, and subsequent to the fifth series of visits of the ICRC in the spring, 1958.

As in the case of previous missions the International Committee's delegates were accorded every facility for visiting the camps and were able to speak without witnesses with detained persons of their choice. Relief supplies and comforts were distributed in several detention centres.

The customary approaches were made by the delegates to the person responsible for each camp and the local authorities. The remarks and suggestions relative to this mission were set forth in a detailed report submitted to the French Government.

During the visits of the International Committee's representatives to the two military internment centres at Ksar-Thir (near Sétif) on December 15 and the Ferme des Anglais (Bône) on December 16, the French military authorities released 10 Algerian prisoners who had been captured while bearing arms.

An official report on this sixth series of visits was submitted to the French Government on January 15, 1959. In addition, meetings of the delegates who took part in the mission and the French authorities were held in Paris early in February in order to make a careful study of the principal points raised in the report.

As a result of the various items noted by the sixth mission the ICRC decided to make available to its delegation in Algeria a sum of 15,000 Swiss francs for sending relief supplies to Algerian prisoners.

During the mission of the ICRC in Algeria, the delegates distributed books and games in various prisoners' camps in December, and Christmas parcels to women under detention in

Algiers. Dentures were also supplied for inmates of Arcole assembly centre.

Mention should be made, in connection with the general assistance to prisoners in French hands, of special representations made by the ICRC in behalf of some doctors under prosecution or sentenced by the courts.

The internment centre for Algerians at Vadenay (Seine-et-Marne) was visited on December 19, 1958, by two delegates of the ICRC, Mr. W. Michel and Mr. J.-P. Maunoir; a report on their visit was submitted to the French Government on January 15.

A request has been submitted to the French authorities for permission to visit other internment centres for Algerians in France.

To date the total number of visits of delegates of the ICRC to camps and prisons in Algeria or in France since spring, 1955, has reached 289 (including the visit mentioned above).

## 2. ASSISTANCE TO FRENCH PRISONERS HELD BY ALN FORCES

During this same period the ICRC continued to make active approaches to the FLN, and the Provisional Government of the Arab Republic, to obtain permission to lend its assistance to French prisoners held by the ALN.

In spite of numerous and pressing representations by the ICRC it has unfortunately not been possible so far to obtain a nominal list of the French prisoners held by the ALN.

In 1958 it was nevertheless able to transmit through the Central Prisoners of War Agency, 159 letters from French prisoners held by the ALN, or sent to them by their families, and 10 messages on tape-recordings.

At the end of October, 1958, following a decision of the PGAR to release, unconditionally, some French military prisoners held by the ALN, and in response to a special appeal received in this connection the ICRC sent a mission composed of Mr. P. Gaillard and Mr. J. de Preux to Tunis.

On October 20, at the headquarters of the Tunisian Red Crescent, four members of the French forces captured on

January 11 during a combat at Sakiat Sidi Youssef—Jean Jacob, Vincent Morales, Henri Relea and Jean Vialaron—were handed over to the delegates of the ICRC by the representatives of the “ Algerian Red Crescent ”.

On December 4, 1958, another group of prisoners was released at Rabat in the same circumstances. Eight members of the French forces captured by the ALN were handed over to the delegates of the ICRC (Mr. P. Gaillard and Mr. C. Vautier) by the representatives of the “ Algerian Red Crescent ” in the presence of Princess Lalla Aïcha, Honorary President of the Moroccan Red Crescent.

As the Tunisian Government had done, the Moroccan authorities granted all facilities to the representatives of the ICRC, by whom the released prisoners were immediately taken to the French Embassy which attended to their repatriation.

The Central Prisoners of War Agency in Geneva had previously informed the prisoners' families of their release.

At Christmas the ICRC made funds available to its delegate in Morocco for purchasing supplies locally and sending parcels to French and other prisoners still under detention.

At the present time the ICRC is continuing its efforts in behalf of French prisoners in the hands of the ALN. As a result of the report on its sixth mission to Algeria, the ICRC recently submitted proposals to the “ Algerian Red Crescent ” with a view to the possible release in Algeria into the hands of the delegates of the ICRC of eleven French military prisoners held in the Kabylia mountain area by the ALN. The ICRC hopes to receive a favourable response to its proposals.

In addition, the ICRC was informed that a further group of French prisoners would be released by the ALN at Oujda in Moroccan territory at the end of February 1959. As on the previous occasions the ICRC lent its services for this release. Two of its delegates, Mr. C. Vautier and Mr. P. Gaillard took charge of the prisoners who were then repatriated by air to France.

This was the third group of French prisoners to be released by the ALN since October last.

### 3. ASSISTANCE TO PRISONERS OF OTHER NATIONALITIES IN THE HANDS OF THE ALN

In response to a request submitted some time before to the ICRC by the "Service de rapatriement de l'ALN" in Morocco, a delegate, Mr. J.-P. Maunoir visited Rabat and Tangiers during the spring, 1958.

Following this mission and to date the ICRC has dealt with the cases of 32 legionaries, mostly of Hungarian origin. Sixteen were repatriated to Hungary and three were allowed to emigrate to Switzerland or the Netherlands.

### 4. ASSISTANCE TO ALGERIAN REFUGEES IN MOROCCO

The International Committee's assistance to Algerian refugees in Morocco was actively pursued in 1958.

A first mission, composed of two delegates, stayed in Morocco from January 25 to March 25 and distributed relief supplies valued at 31 million Moroccan francs. These supplies were made available through gifts in cash or in kind from National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Another delegate returned to Geneva at the end of December 1958, after a six weeks's stay in Morocco, where foodstuffs had been distributed to the refugees to meet the approaching winter.

This mission, the sixth since 1957, marked the close of the International Committee's relief action in behalf of Algerian refugees in Morocco, during which relief supplies representing a total value of 93 million Moroccan francs were distributed.

Some months ago a National Society, the Moroccan Red Crescent, was constituted in Morocco, and has taken over—and will continue with the co-operation of the League of Red Cross Societies—the relief action formerly pursued by the ICRC.

Furthermore, in December, a delegate on board a vessel sailing from Alexandria to Casablanca accompanied a shipment of relief supplies (valued at 200 million Moroccan francs) donated by the Red Crescent of the United Arab Republic. These supplies were handed over to the Moroccan Red Crescent for distribution to Algerian refugees.

## RELIEF ACTION OF THE ICRC IN CYPRUS

The disturbances which shook the Island of Cyprus for several years have fortunately come to an end following an agreement between Great Britain, Cyprus and Turkey. From the legal point of view it was a matter of an internal conflict in an island under the sovereignty of Great Britain, but the International Committee of the Red Cross was nevertheless able to intervene on several occasions in behalf of persons detained as a result of the events.

Since the end of the Second World War, the International Committee of the Red Cross has been continually faced with conflicts of this nature: Greece, Guatemala, Costa-Rica, Nicaragua, Kenya, Goa, Algeria, Viet Nam. No international convention provides for the Committee's intervention in such cases but, nevertheless, in each of the conflicts referred to above, its delegates were able to visit the persons under detention. In December 1955 the Greek Red Cross asked the International Committee to lend its assistance to detained Cypriots. Mr. David de Traz, General Delegate of the ICRC for the Near East, at once obtained the necessary permission from the British authorities and immediately started his first visits to the camps which he continued at regular intervals until December 1958. Altogether, 18 visits were made to 8 places of detention where, at certain times, up to 2,000 persons were held. The visits were made in the following order:

- December 1955* Kokkino Trimithia and Dekhelia Camps;  
Nicosia Central Prison;
- March 1956* Kokkino Trimithia Camp;
- March 1957* Pyla Camp and Nicosia Central Prison;
- August 1957* Pyroi, Pyla and Kokkino Trimithia Camps;  
Ormophita Centre and Nicosia Central Prison;
- November 1957* Pyla and Kokkino Trimithia Camps and Nicosia  
Central Prison;
- June 1958* Kokkino Trimithia Camp;
- December 1958* Kokkino Trimithia, Pyla, Mammari and Hayos  
Lucas Camps.

After each of these visits the ICRC sent to the British authorities a detailed report on each camp, commenting upon the detention conditions and transmitting when requested the remarks or wishes of the persons under detention. The delegate of the ICRC was always allowed by the local authorities to converse without witnesses either with the Internee Committees (elected by the detained persons) or with the internees themselves. The visits of the ICRC to camps for political detainees are always strictly confined to a survey of the detention conditions and the psychological state of the internees who have sometimes been deprived of their liberty for several years. The ICRC could not in any case adopt a position in regard to the reasons for detention which are entirely outside its province.

In addition to visiting camps and submitting detailed reports thereon, the ICRC, in agreement with the British authorities, supplied the detainees with various comforts and relief, mostly for recreational purposes. It should be mentioned in this connection that the British Government distributed to the families of the persons under detention the subsidies necessary for their maintenance. Following a request from the Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs in June 1958, the ICRC asked the British authorities to allow it to make a study of the living conditions of persons who had been obliged to leave their homes on account of the events. The request having been granted an investigation was made in June and July by a delegate of the ICRC.

Thus the International Committee of the Red Cross was once again allowed to intervene during a conflict which, from a legal standpoint, was not of an international nature but concerned a territory under the sovereignty of a sole Power. Now that this work has come to an end and the inmates of the camps in Cyprus are being released, it hopes to have contributed towards the alleviation of suffering and the allaying of a spirit of unrest.

---

**RELIEF ACTION OF THE ICRC IN LEBANON  
AND ARTICLE 3 OF THE GENEVA CONVENTION OF 1949**

The disturbances which broke out in Lebanon (summer 1958) caused a stir throughout the world. Although more spectacular events have since overshadowed the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross in that country they were, nevertheless, one of the most important relief actions of the ICRC during the past year.

**Legal basis of the relief action.**—The four Geneva Conventions of 1949 have one article in common, i.e. Article 3, which lays down the humanitarian requirements which must be respected by the parties to an armed conflict not of an international character. The article also provides that an impartial humanitarian body, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, may offer its services. This is the legal basis of the Committee's activities in conflicts such as the disturbances in Lebanon.

**Presence of the ICRC.**—On the outbreak of the conflict the General-Delegate of the ICRC in the Middle East, Mr. D. de Traz, took care to recall to the Government forces and the various pro-governmental or opposition movements the principles set forth in Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions, and was assured by all concerned that those principles would be respected.

Another characteristic feature of the International Committee's work consisted of numerous representations with a

view to obtaining the release of hostages, visits to persons under detention and the distribution of relief supplied in Beirut, Tyr, Saida, Tripoli, Hermel, Bekaa, the Chouf mountain area, etc. Prior to its intervention, for instance, a doctor in the Chouf mountain district performed major operations on a kitchen table, without anaesthetics; he was supplied with hospital equipment including an operating-table and X-ray apparatus.

**Relief supplies.**—These came from the most varied sources. Before the outbreak of the disturbances the Lebanese Red Cross had opened a fund to build a new hospital. This fund was drawn upon for relief purposes and the Society's efforts were supplemented by gifts from the ICRC and from National Societies, transmitted by the Committee. A gift of  $7\frac{1}{2}$  tons of medicaments drawn from the League stocks warehoused in Vienna was also made through the ICRC.

**Co-operation of the ICRC and the National Red Cross Society.**—The ICRC and the National Society worked in close co-operation. In general the relief supplies of both institutions were pooled and when medicaments or powdered milk were required in any particular spot the International Committee's delegates drew supplies from the pool. From their headquarters in Beirut the delegates travelled throughout the country to ascertain the type and quantity of supplies required in each area in order to satisfy the most urgent needs in turn.

As the Lebanon is not a poor country gift supplies were also made available from private sources. Considerable quantities of flour and sugar were placed at the disposal of the Committee's delegates and distributed to the civilian population in the encircled areas. The distribution of supplies was carried out in each case with the consent of the military authorities which supervised the loading of the lorries.

**Release of hostages.**—During the conflict persons of the opposing side were sometimes arrested and held as hostages. This practice, which became very general at times, did nothing to soothe the general state of unrest.

## INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

The delegates of the ICRC lodged strong and unremitting protests against the taking of hostages, which were firmly supported by various leading members of the Lebanese community. The delegates' interventions were based not only on obvious humanitarian reasons but also on the experience gained by the ICRC in other conflicts, since this practice has always led to distressing results without any equivalent political or military advantage whatsoever.

**End of the relief action.** — The relief measures undertaken by the ICRC came to an end in September. After a conflict it is the Committee's duty to hand over to the National Society the tasks for which the Red Cross is responsible, as early as possible. By that time the beautiful country of Lebanon was once again in a state of peace.

---

## A DELEGATE OF THE JAPANESE RED CROSS VISITS GENEVA

In view of the decision taken by the Government in Tokyo to authorise Koreans resident in Japan to return to a home of their choice in the Korean Peninsula, the Japanese Red Cross requested the International Committee of the Red Cross to lend its services for the repatriation operations thus under consideration.

On receiving this request the International Committee reopened the negotiations entered into some years ago with the National Red Cross Societies concerned.

On February 23, therefore, Mr. Masutaro Inoué, Director of the Foreign Affairs Department of the Japanese Red Cross,

paid a visit to the International Committee and informed it of his Society's views on the matter. Mr. Inoué was also the bearer of a request from the Japanese Government concerning the situation of Japanese fishermen interned in the Republic of Korea.

---

### A MEMBER OF THE ICRC IN LATIN AMERICA

Professor A. Franceschetti, a member of the International Committee of the Red Cross, is at present making a tour of Latin America organised by the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology.

He is taking this opportunity of visiting the National Societies of the various countries and of greeting them in behalf of the ICRC. So far he has paid visits to the Red Cross Societies of Guatemala, San Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama and Colombia and was given a most courteous reception everywhere.

Professor Franceschetti has also had the privilege of meeting some of the leading statesmen of these countries.

---

MORE FRENCH PRISONERS HANDED OVER TO THE ICRC

On January 20, at Oujda, a Moroccan town near the Algerian frontier, six French prisoners :

Quartermaster Sergeant François FOURNIER  
Corporal Lucien BOVET  
Gunner Maurice BOREL  
Gunner Gilbert FILLIEUX  
Private Jean COULOS  
Private Yvon JACQUEY

were handed over to the delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr. Pierre Gaillard and Mr. Camille Vautier, by the representatives of the " Algerian Red Crescent " on the premises of the local branch of the Moroccan Red Crescent Society.

The prisoners released were immediately taken by the representatives of the ICRC to Oujda airport and handed over to the French Consul for their subsequent repatriation.

Their families had already been advised through the Central Prisoners of War Agency in Geneva.

To date eighteen military prisoners of French nationality have been released by the ALN under the auspices of the ICRC.