



REVUE INTERNATIONALE DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

SUPPLEMENT

CONTENTS

	Page
Jean-G. Lossier: <i>Suffering is a way</i>	173
The Red Cross in the Congo	179
News Items	185
The ICRC continues its activities in West Germany .	192

Suffering is a way...

The average person of today is aware that the State gives an ever-growing amount of assistance to those in need, and he therefore tends to consider himself less responsible for the well-being of his fellowmen. It is also sometimes said that the weakening of active interest in mutual aid is partly due to the fact that, in practice, opportunities to act occur less frequently in this modern world.

Three particularly striking examples of voluntary work show that this is not so, and that there is still enormous scope for individual contributions for the public good. These examples are taken from recent activities in hospitals and sanatoria in the Anglo-Saxon countries, under the auspices of one of the few organizations which still carries on mutual aid on a voluntary basis: the Red Cross.

An English painter recently had the idea of trying the following experiment in a sanatorium: in the wards, he hung reproductions of works of great masters, which were changed regularly. Many patients soon showed a keen interest; they asked questions, spoke of the works before them, and some even expressed a desire to paint. Really valuable results were achieved by this experiment, which had beneficial effects not only on the patients' morale, but also on their physical condition. Pleasant surroundings are conducive to recovery; the feeling of happiness which beauty arouses acts as a tonic on the nerves and body of the patient.

At the present time, the experiment is being continued on a larger scale. Reproductions of works are being circulated more and more among British hospitals and the results are often miraculous. Patients who had never taken any interest in painting become enthusiastic about a particular picture. They discuss it among themselves, and read books about it. Lectures by experts are arranged on questions of art and aesthetics. Some patients have taken up drawing or painting; when they show real talent, their works are also placed on show.

In this way the empty hours, those endless hours spent in hospital, become a source of spiritual wealth because those who are obliged to endure them have access to a higher life. And this spiritual interest, which is a veritable awakening for some people, hastens their recovery.

* * *

In Australia, when flowers are plentiful, Red Cross voluntary helpers visit hospital wards to throw away withered flowers and arrange the fresh ones which they bring. Sick people are very sensitive to beauty around them and to this daily renewal of life which encourages them to return to their own everyday life. The second purpose of this activity is to assist the nurses who, in Australia as in every other country, are overburdened with work and can only devote their attention to the physical recovery of the sick and not to the improvement of their morale.

It is, however, well known that morale has a great influence on physical health, and what affects one affects the other. Many illnesses can be traced to a psychological cause and modern medicine strives to effect a complete cure. Initiatives of this kind—as well as the establishment of circulating libraries for civilian hospitals which has given conclusive results—have immediately been highly successful and the medical profession is very much in favour of them.

Music is also given in hospitals. One branch of the Australian Red Cross arranged for symphony concerts to be given in a

number of psychiatric clinics, with very beneficial results. Under the auspices of the Red Cross, music has also been introduced in the United States into hospitals for war disabled, ex-servicemen and military personnel. The musicians perform works chosen according to the directives of the doctors in attendance and with their approval. The works are carefully chosen and, to some extent, form part of the general plan of treatment. The aim is, of course, to create beauty, while at the same time contributing to the re-integration of the patient in the life of the community.

The musicians present the instruments which each of them plays and comment on the works performed. Like painting, the time devoted to the arts is definitely valuable from the therapeutic point of view and, moreover, a sick person who spends endless days alone is much more receptive and appreciative than the normal concert audience. Here again, the patients sometimes decide to study music and become enthusiastic over everything which concerns the life of the composers and the origin and structure of the works played to them.

* * *

An intense artistic and cultural activity is growing up in these hospitals and sanatoria. The patients who are surrounded by the atmosphere of harmony and spiritual emulation gain a lifelong benefit. This leads us to stress the great human and even social interest of experiments of this kind.

For many patients—for instance those from modest walk of life who had to start work very young and never had the time to enlarge their culture or knowledge—this is a real discovery of beauty. The hours spent in hospital, the first really empty hours of forced inactivity will in future be devoted by most of these patients to something else than worrying about everyday matters. They discover new horizons; through the marvels of art, they find a new confidence in the splendour of the world and of nature and thus a new confidence in man who has succeeded in capturing and immortalizing these wonders. Thus suffering is no longer a prison, it becomes a way...

* * *

As a result of this fruitful idea that art and beauty can be a source of consolation and strength, suffering can also be a way for those who are afflicted for life with illness or infirmity. Think of the blind and all that has been done by many National Societies in order to bring them the joys of literature. In the United States, for example, the Junior Red Cross arranges the publication in Braille of the periodicals *Red Cross Journal* and *Junior Red Cross*. A small group of devoted volunteers perform this work; for nine days each month, each of them assists in preparing the publications. 125 are published each month and are sent to special classes and schools for the blind. Among many other examples, one may mention the Brazilian Red Cross which has started courses in "assistance to the blind" for nurses, auxiliaries and voluntary first aid workers trained by it. They are taught Braille transcription in order to meet the growing demand in Brazil for books and publications for the Foundation for the Blind.

An important contribution has also been made in Pakistan, at the Red Cross Home, at Sialkot. This home is for the seriously disabled and everything possible has been done to make their life as pleasant as possible: by way of distraction, much attention is paid to music and reading and the recreation room has been arranged with great care, particularly from the aesthetic point of view.

To the same end, holiday camps, rest homes for convalescents, overworked mothers, delicate children etc., are established in places chosen according to considerations of both health and beauty. An example in the USSR is the camp at Kodjori in Georgia, where some 200 orphans and children of war disabled can spend holidays, thanks to the joint efforts of the Ministry concerned and the Central Committee of the Red Cross of the Republic of Georgia. The review of the Venezuelan Red Cross (July-August, 1957) devoted several articles to holiday camps for young people. From these articles and from the accompanying photographs, it is obvious that, here too, natural beauty was taken into account in the choice of sites.

This search for beauty is an essential factor for the moral and physical well-being of those who are cared for by the National Societies, and it is also considered in the case of rest camps for tired mothers. In the Scandinavian countries, particularly in Denmark, in West Germany, in East Germany—in fact, wherever such camps exist—they are located in places which meet not only the requirements of health, but also the need for beauty, which is so essential for human beings who are exhausted by the cares and tasks of everyday life.

* * *

Before concluding this brief survey one must also mention the activity of volunteers of many Red Cross Societies in behalf of the aged. In the "Old People's Clubs" of the Finnish Red Cross, music and literature are very much appreciated. In the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and other countries, the Red Cross has given particular attention to the problem of old age and loneliness and has frequently resorted to certain forms of art as a source of interest to enliven and occupy the time of people.

Whatever the medium proposed—music, painting, literature, or the beauties of nature—the purpose is to bring some of the joys of life to those who are deprived of it; Doctor Delhez, of the Netherlands Red Cross, spoke of this with great eloquence a few years ago, when he put forward a proposal for special cruises for the disabled and the chronically ill who are bedridden for long years with no hope of seeing any view other than that visible from their bed.

One can imagine the joy of these victims of fate to see new landscapes unfold before them, while comfortably installed in a specially chartered hospital ship¹.

This experiment is one more example of the beneficial effects which intelligent solicitude can have on those who suffer if it makes the best use of our spiritual and practical

¹ An illustrated article on this subject appeared in the *Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, May 1956.

resources. It demonstrates once more the universal desire for fellowship which is expressed in so many ways and of which the Red Cross is, at the present time, one of the greatest and most effective instruments. To achieve a positive result with apparently negative material, to enable suffering to transcend itself—surely that is one of the noblest tasks that can be undertaken in the ever-shrinking world in which we live.

J.-G. LOSSIER

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

THE RED CROSS IN THE CONGO

During the past month the work of the Red Cross in the Congo was continued and extended over a wider field, as will be seen from the various press releases issued following those published in the English Supplement to the *Revue Internationale* for August.

Mr. Maurice Thudichum, who has already undertaken many Red Cross missions, has been appointed by the International Committee to lead the Congo Delegation in place of Mr. Pierre Gaillard who will return to his post in Geneva. Mr. Thudichum left for Leopoldville on August 31, accompanied by Dr. Pierre Fasel (who will replace Dr. Jean-Louis de Chastonay).

Mr. J.-P. Schoenholzer and Mr. E. Jaquet are also members of the Congo Delegation of the ICRC.

August 5, 1960. — (Joint communication League-ICRC). *Red Cross medical teams arriving in the Congo from around the world are contributing effectively to the refunctioning of civilian hospitals and clinics during the present emergency in that country, it was reported here today by the International Red Cross.*

Teams already in the Congo from nearly a dozen countries are aiding the operation of hospitals and institutions from the Atlantic Coast port of Matadi to Leopoldville and the interior cities of Luluabourg and Coquilhatville. Need for medical personnel of different categories is being met through an emergency appeal

launched by the International Red Cross on 22 July in response to an urgent request of UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold, made through the World Health Organization.

The International Red Cross was told today by Dr. M.G. Candau WHO Director-General, just returned from a rapid visit to the Congo, that provision of the Red Cross medical teams is invaluable in the present Congo situation. Dr. Candau, who saw different teams during his mission, said that they were making possible the solving of many health problems.

The WHO Director-General has congratulated the International Red Cross on the rapidity with which teams have been recruited by National Red Cross Societies and made available for duty in the Congo. The National Societies of Norway, The Netherlands, Denmark, Canada, Yugoslavia, Finland and Sweden have each sent one or two teams to the Congo already. These units are variously composed, of up to five members each, including surgeons, tropical medicine experts, nurses and other specialized personnel. As UN planes are available to fly from European airports, further Red Cross teams are being rushed to these points. In a few days, approximately 100 Red Cross-recruited medical personnel will be in the Congo. Their placement and the assignment of additional medical teams is being carefully coordinated under the Minister of Health of the Congo, Mr. Gregoire Kamanga, with the assistance of the International Red Cross and the World Health Organization.

A number of National Societies, the International Red Cross said, together with various non-Red Cross organisations, including pharmaceutical firms, have offered medical equipment and supplies for Congo hospitals. The WHO has informed the International Red Cross, and this has been confirmed by the Red Cross team in the Congo, that institutions are well-equipped and there are sufficient stocks of medical supplies at present in the Congo. Red Cross teams arriving to work in hospitals have reported that they have been able to provide needed medical care to patients without delay.

Red Cross staff are being assigned to Congo duty for a minimum period of three months. During this time, Dr. Candau has informed the International Red Cross, the Congo Ministry of Health will,

with the assistance of the WHO, develop a programme for the employment of foreign medical personnel to ensure the maintenance of the health services during the next years until sufficient Congolese doctors can be trained.

The International Red Cross has informed the WHO that it stands ready to appeal to the National Societies for additional medical personnel to meet any specific needs as and when required. Meantime the immediate emergency must be met through International Red Cross medical teams coming from all parts of the globe to help this newly independent nation.

* * *

August 9, 1960. — *The first emergency action carried out by the ICRC in the Congo under the direction of Mr. Charles Ammann, was aimed in the first place at implanting respect by all concerned of the Red Cross emblem protecting neutral hospital zones set up on the initiative of the ICRC Delegation. These zones included in particular hospitals at Léopoldville and Stanleyville. The establishment of these zones, respect for which was agreed to by all parties present, ensured the rendering of the great services which were to be expected but more important still they formed small safety areas which contributed towards an easing of tension.*

The ICRC also dealt with the evacuation of some civilians wishing to leave the country and who, living for some time in the bush, had been completely cut off from the outside world. Based on Léopoldville, ambulance convoys made contact over a wide area with those persons who were to be evacuated by taking them to assembly centres. An aircraft of Sabena with Red Cross markings carried out similar operations in the Stanleyville area.

The ICRC Delegation undertook the distribution of milk in the native quarters of Léopoldville. These relief supplies were made possible by a consignment of 10 tons of powdered milk donated by the Swiss Confederation and transported by Swissair.

The success of these various relief actions was in great part due to the support given by voluntary workers of the Junior Red Cross of the Congo. This organisation, formerly under the control of

the Belgian Red Cross, is composed of young Congolese who are whole-heartedly devoted to the humanitarian aims of the Red Cross. These young people acted as interpreters and intermediaries to the ICRC delegates to whom they rendered invaluable service on account of their knowledge of the country and the local dialects.

Another delegate of the ICRC, Mr. G.C. Senn, proceeded to Usumbura in Ruanda-Urundi, in order to organise the repatriation of former members of the Congolese forces in territory under Belgian rule and who, being subjected to reprisals by local tribesmen, asked for their repatriation into the interior. In small groups and accompanied by their women and children they finally reached their home districts.

Since Mr. Ammann's return to Geneva, the ICRC Delegation has been under the direction of Mr. Pierre Gaillard.

* * *

August 18, 1960. — (Joint communication League-ICR) *Red Cross teams are en route to the Congo today by air from the National Red Cross Societies of Denmark, the German Democratic Republic, the German Federal Republic and the United Arab Republic — providing a further twenty-three medical staff, including surgeons, tropical medicine specialists and nurses for civilian hospitals in the new country, it is announced by the International Red Cross. Already similar teams are in various Congo centres from the National Red Cross Societies of: Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Japan, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden and Yugoslavia.*

The team en route from the Danish Red Cross is comprised of two doctors and is the second from that Society. The German Democratic Republic contingent of 15 medical personnel is organised in three teams of five persons each (two doctors, three nurses per team). The German Federal Republic team consists of three surgeons-physicians, and the United Arab Republic unit, two doctors and one nurse.

Within the next few days, a further four Red Cross teams from Asia and Australasia will join the Red Cross contingents already

on Congo duty. The Australian Red Cross is sending two teams, each composed of one surgeon, a tropical medicine specialist and a male nurse; the Indian Red Cross, a team of one surgeon, two doctors and one male nurse, and the Pakistan Red Cross, two doctors and three male nurses.

The Red Cross medical teams are being sent to the Congo in response to a request to the International Red Cross on 22 July by United Nations Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld, made through the World Health Organisation, and are assigned for a minimum period of three months. Placement of the medical teams in the Congo is coordinated by the Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Minister of Health of the Congo, Mr. Grégoire Kamanga, with the assistance of the World Health Organisation.

* * *

September 1, 1960. — Medical teams sent to the Congo by various National Red Cross Societies subsequent to international appeals launched from Geneva are, in most cases, now working in the hospitals of the former colony. Through the offices of the delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Leopoldville, the teams were posted as follows:

Leopoldville Province: Netherlands and Finland to Leopoldville; Denmark to Matadi; Czechoslovakia to Banningville; Poland to Thysville; Greece and Japan to Inongo. Kasai Province: Norway to Kainda; United Arab Republic to Luluabourg; Australia (two teams) to Bakwanga. Kivu Province: Sweden to Uvira; Yugoslavia and Ireland to Bukafu. Equator Province: Canada (two teams) to Coquilhatville.

The unsettled conditions which still prevail in some areas have delayed the posting of further teams, but the following are however on the point of leaving to take up their posts in the Kivu, Equator and Kasai Provinces: India, Pakistan, Switzerland, Iran and the German Federal Republic (one team from each country), and the German Democratic Republic (three teams).

The teams working in the Congo, each of which include one or two doctors, nurses and male nurses, are entirely independent

in their medical and scientific work, the general programme of activities being co-ordinated by the delegation of the ICRC.

This delegation is also engaged in setting up a tracing service for the purpose of finding civilians missing since the recent events. It also helps the Red Cross of the Congo to deal with its new duties. Furthermore, it continues to lend the International Committee's aid to victims of the conflicts still taking place in some areas in the Congo.

SUNDRY ACTIVITIES

News Items

A representative of the ICRC at the Academy of International Law, The Hague. — *Mr. H. Coursier, Member of the Legal Department of the ICRC, was invited to give lectures on the development of international humanitarian law at the August meeting of this Association. In addition to the lectures, Mr. Coursier conducted a seminar the subjects of which were the problem of humanitarian aid to political detainees and right of asylum.*

Visits to the ICRC headquarters. — *On July 18 the International Committee had the great honour of receiving the visit of H. R. H. Princess Beatrice of the Netherlands who had expressed the wish to visit various international institutions during her stay in Switzerland, and the ICRC in particular. The Princess heard various talks on the subject of humanitarian law and the activities of the ICRC and visited the Central Tracing Agency in which she took special interest.*

During the past months, the ICRC had the pleasure of receiving visits from the President of the Red Crescent of the United Arab Republic, H.E. Mr. Hussein El Shafei, Minister for Social Affairs and Labour, accompanied by the Secretary-General of this Society, Mr. Hussein M. Asfahany, and the Permanent Delegate in Geneva of the United Arab Republic, H.E. Mr. Abdel Fattah Hassan, as well as Mr. Richard Febreau, Federal Director of Labour and Social Welfare of the Mali Federation.

From late June to early August several members of directorates of National Societies visited the ICRC headquarters. Among them were Dr Kurt Wagner, Head of the Tracing and Reunion of Families Sections of the Red Cross of the German Republic, Mr. Robert C. Edson, National Director of the Disaster Service of the American Red Cross, Mrs. Kafworola A. Pratt, Nursing Superintendent of the British Red Cross, Ibadan, Western Nigeria, Mrs. L.H. Cliff, Assistant Regional Commandant, Midlands and Northern Natal Branch of the South African Red Cross, Count Almeida, delegate of the Austrian Red Cross, Mr. Tanimoto Yosojiro, Vice-President of the Ishikawa Branch of the Japanese Red Cross, the Marquis de Ciadoncha, Treasurer of the Spanish Red Cross, Mr. Yukie Chuco, Assistant Manager Planning and Publicity, Japanese Red Cross, Miss Sarah Jones, Assistant Cadet Officer of the West Lanes Branch, and Miss Patricia R. Green of the Liverpool Branch, of the British Red Cross.

The ICRC also had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Kenneth G. Gimbert of the Norfolk Chapter of the American Red Cross, Mrs. Albertson, Volunteer Consultant of the Personnel Service of the American Red Cross, Washington, Mrs. Leila D. Bloore of the Northern Territory Branch of the Australian Red Cross, Miss Caroline Wilson, American Red Cross, Miss Marcelle Maillé, Canadian Red Cross, Mrs. Alford, Australian Red Cross and Mr. Eric Le Petit, New Zealand Red Cross.

During the same period various groups visited the ICRC, including members of the Society of Friends, nurses of the Canadian Nurses Association, two groups of American students taking a study-course at the Benedict Summer School, Neuchâtal, students attending the ninth study-course on international organisations held under the auspices of the University of Geneva and some American Red Cross juniors making a tour of Europe who came to Geneva to see the work of the Red Cross institutions.

During the summer months many tourists from near or distant countries make a point of visiting the ICRC headquarters while they are in Geneva.

International Study Centre of the British Red Cross. — *From July 18 to 28, the British Red Cross held an International Study*

Centre for the Junior Red Cross at Barnett Hill (Surrey), to which representatives from various European countries, Canada and the United States were invited.

Mr. H. Coursier, Member of the Legal Department, represented the ICRC at this meeting of which the main purpose was to study measures for making the principles of the Geneva Conventions more widely known among young people.

Annual Report of the ICRC. — *The Annual Report for 1959, published on July 22, of which extracts were given in the August issue of the Revue internationale, has been translated into English and Spanish; a German translation (mimeographed) is also available.*

Participants in the first Red Cross/Red Crescent International Study Centre take part in ICRC broadcasts in Arabic. — *Reference was made in our July issue to the visit of participants in the Study Centre (organised by the League of Red Cross Societies and held at the Signal de Bougy from June 10 to 30) to the ICRC and the Central Tracing Agency on June 17.*

Some leading members of National Societies in Africa and Asia, attending the Study Centre, were good enough to take part in the ICRC broadcasts in Arabic. During the interviews the speakers drew a very interesting picture of the development and activities of their respective Societies and laid emphasis on their relations with the League and the International Committee.

On being invited to give their impressions of the Study Centre at the Signal de Bougy the participants stressed how rewarding these contacts—in an atmosphere of cordial understanding—had been, and their appreciation of the study in common of some particularly delicate problems with which heads of National Societies are sometimes confronted.

Two young prize-winners visit the home of the Red Cross. — *The "Ligue des droits du religieux ancien combattant" (DRAC) which awards each year a prize for oratory to competitors from non-State schools in France (Matriculation Class) chose the theme "La Croix-Rouge internationale" for the competition this year.*

The prize—a trip to Geneva—was won by Miss Dominique Lamotte d'Incamps and Mr. Patrick de Belloy who, accompanied by Mr. Georges Leeman, President of the DRAC, were in Geneva from June 4 to 6. They paid visits to the International Committee and the League and saw various places connected with the foundation of the Red Cross movement.

Movements of delegates. — *Mr. A. Durand, Head of the ICRC Special Mission for the supervision of the repatriation of Koreans from Japan, came to Geneva early in July to submit a report on his work and then returned to his post in Tokyo.*

In July and August Mr. E. Haegler, Mr. C. Vautier and Mr. R. Vust, delegates of the ICRC in Brazil, Morocco and Algeria came to Switzerland for holidays. When passing through Geneva they paid visits to the International Committee and gave reports on their activities.

Mr. H. Huber, a member of the ICRC Delegation in Cairo since November 1956, returned to Switzerland at the end of July for health reasons.

Compensation for former prisoners of war in Japanese hands. — *At the beginning of August the ICRC paid to the Philippines the share due to this country (about 13,000,000 Swiss francs) for the first distribution of compensation to 44,000 Philippine ex-prisoners of war.*

It will be recalled that this distribution of funds represents the compensation provided under Article 16 of the Peace Treaty with Japan in behalf of the Powers parties to the Treaty of San Francisco.

Repatriation of Koreans from Japan. — *The repatriation operations, under the supervision of members of the ICRC mission, are being continued. From mid-December until the end of July, 32,298 Korean nationals left Japan for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.*

Mission to Hungary. — *In July Dr. Marcus Redli, delegate of the International Committee, went to Budapest for the purpose of*

discussing with the Hungarian Red Cross various financial questions in connection with funds made available by the ICRC to this Society during the relief action in Hungary following the events of 1956.

Freedom from Hunger Campaign. — *One-third of the countries of the world dispose of three-quarters of the world's wealth while two-thirds of the population of the earth are underfed; a remedy must be found to this situation before it is too late. Thus, the FAO has just launched a "Freedom from Hunger Campaign", an initiative which cannot leave the Red Cross indifferent since it is inspired by humanitarian motives similar to its own.*

In connection with the campaign the "Association mondiale de la Lutte contre la Faim" (World Association for Freedom from Hunger) presented on July 1 a remarkable film entitled "Tonnerre sur le Monde" (Thunder over the World), at which two representatives of the ICRC were present, Mr. H. Coursier, of the Legal Department, and Mr. E. J. Logoz of the Information Department.

Celebration of the Red Cross Centenary. — *During the past months considerable progress has been made in the preparation of the Centenary celebrations in 1963. The Committee for the Commemoration of the Red Cross Centenary met on June 14 and was presided by Mr. F. Siordet, member of the ICRC. It placed Mr. E. J. Logoz in charge of the General Secretariat and the discussions mainly concerned the exhibition premises, a commemorative medal and the sending of a questionnaire to National Societies to ascertain the interest taken by them in the Centenary celebrations. In addition, the Sub-Committee on the Centenary Exhibition, presided over by Mr. M. Bodmer, Vice-President of the ICRC, held a meeting on July 6 to discuss various matters such as dates, premises, national pavilions and publicity stalls. The group for the study of the Commemoration Day Programme, under Professor A. von Albertini, President of the Swiss Red Cross, held meetings on the subject on July 15 and 16.*

Meetings in Tokyo. — *As already stated, Mr. R.-J. Wilhelm, Member of the Legal Department, was appointed in March to*

take part for a few months in the special mission of the ICRC for the supervision of the repatriation of Korean nationals. Mr. Wilhelm has taken advantage of his stay in Japan to discuss with the directorate of the Japanese Red Cross and representatives of various ministries questions relating to the application of the Geneva Conventions and the development of international humanitarian law.

Reuniting of families. — During a short visit to West Germany in the first fortnight in August, Mr. H.C. Beckh, delegate of the ICRC, had further discussions with the directors of the German Red Cross on the subject of the reunion in Germany of families of German origin (“*Volksdeutsche*”).

“Commission médico-juridique de Monaco”. — In response to an invitation to send an observer to the 4th meeting of this body, which took place from June 9 to 11, the International Committee appointed as its representative Mr. C.P. Pilloud, Assistant Director.

The main points of the agenda of the meeting concerned the training and status of personnel engaged in the supervision of the application of the Geneva Conventions and the creation of international medical relief in times of disasters and conflicts.

Distribution of relief supplies in Nepal. — When returning from a mission in Japan, Mr. Ch. Ammann, delegate of the ICRC, visited Nepal at the end of June. He had interviews with the authorities and representatives in Kathmandu of various organisations, in particular the “*Aide suisse aux régions extra-européennes*”.

Mr. Ammann took advantage of his visit to examine the situation of Tibetan refugees in Nepal who require to be assisted. He was present during the first distributions of foodstuffs to these refugees; the funds for this purpose had been made available by the ICRC.

This relief action is being continued¹; up to the present a sum

¹ See *Revue internationale*, July 1960.

of 15,000 Swiss francs has already been expended for the purchase of foodstuffs in this connection.

Broadcasts in Spanish. — For some ten years past the ICRC Broadcasting and Television Office has made fortnightly broadcasts in Spanish¹ with the active co-operation of Mr. J. J. G. de Rueda, Delegate in Europe of the Mexican Red Cross.

In his recent talks, which aroused great interest, and will be retransmitted by the three networks in Latin America, Mr. de Rueda placed particular emphasis on the concepts of humanity and non-discrimination on which Red Cross principles are founded and which require to be disseminated over a still wider field. After defining the relations of the Red Cross, firstly with governments and, secondly, with the public, he laid stress on the scope of the mission entrusted to directors and staffs of international and national Red Cross institutions. The privilege of serving under the Red Cross flag implies for every one, whatever his station in life, an increasingly greater awareness of his moral obligations.

¹ See *Revue internationale*. May 1958.

ASSISTANCE TO POLITICAL DETAINEES

**THE ICRC CONTINUES ITS ACTIVITIES
IN WEST GERMANY**

As is known, the government and judiciary authorities in the German Federal Republic have authorised the International Committee of the Red Cross to visit political detainees imprisoned in West Germany.

Since the beginning of the year Mr. H.G. Beckh, delegate of the ICRC, has visited various prison establishments where all facilities were granted for the inspection of detention conditions for persons serving sentences or awaiting trial. He also saw sick detainees under treatment in prison infirmaries and hospitals.

Mr. Beckh went to Karlsruhe, Mannheim, Bruchsal, Frankfurt-on-Main, Nuremberg, Munich and West Berlin ; in each of these cities he visited political detainees in prisons.

The delegate was able to speak without witnesses with some sixty political prisoners, following interviews with leading legal personalities and senior prison officials to whom, after his visits, the delegate conveyed the requests of a number of detained persons. The authorities took an understanding view of his comments on the visits and endeavoured to meet requests whenever possible.