



REVUE INTERNATIONALE DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

SUPPLEMENT

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INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

RECOGNITION OF THE RED CROSS OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM

GENEVA, May 23, 1957.

*415th 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 Red Cross of the Republic of Viet Nam by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The new Society was founded in Saïgon in 1951. Formerly the French Red Cross carried out its work throughout the whole of Indo-China.

In 1953 the Republic of Viet Nam acceded to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, and the Red Cross of the Republic of Viet Nam applied for recognition; unfortunately, the military operations in progress at the time, and the political situation, prevented the International Committee from complying with its request.

In accordance with the policy set forth in its Circular Letter to National Societies, No. 365, of September 17, 1941, which was approved by the XVIIth International Red Cross Conference (Resolution No. XII), the International Committee postpones the recognition of the Society of a country engaged in a conflict or involved in civil war.

The cessation of hostilities following the Geneva Convention

of 1954 did not, however, result in a return to normal conditions. The Viet Nam territory continued to be divided into two parts by a temporary military demarcation line. The measures foreseen for the re-uniting of the country (general election in 1956) did not take place, and there is no reason to suppose that the present situation will change in the near future. A further application for recognition having recently been made by the Red Cross of the Republic of Viet Nam, the International Committee considered that it was not possible to keep the Society outside the International Red Cross any longer.

The President of the Society applied for its recognition by letter on March 27, 1957, and supplied all the documents and information required.

A study of these documents in conjunction with the Secretariat of the League of Red Cross Societies showed that the ten conditions which govern the recognition of a new Society by the International Committee of the Red Cross had been fulfilled.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has much pleasure in according this recognition. It wishes to recall that its decision concerns the Red Cross only and that, with the sole aim of helping the extension of humanitarian action among all peoples, it does not take account divergences which might arise as to the international status of States. Moreover, its decision will not in any way be prejudicial to the recognition of a Red Cross Society of the Democratic People's Republic of Viet Nam—which the International Committee would be prepared to accord as soon as the Society has made an application and fulfilled the necessary conditions—or, possibly, the recognition of a society whose activity would extend to the whole of the Viet Nam territory.

Since its foundation the new Society has been busily engaged in assisting the victims of conflicts and natural disasters, and refugees. It has organised and directs dispensaries, trains nursing personnel, first-aid and social workers, and carries on its work over the whole of the territory of the Republic of Viet Nam, thanks to the generous co-operation of the people. Dr. Nguyen-van-Kieu is the President of the Society; the headquarters of the Central Committee are in Saïgon.

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

I have the honour to remain,
Yours obediently

FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
OF THE RED CROSS :

L. BOISSIER, *President*

RECOGNITION OF THE LAOTIAN RED CROSS

GENEVA, May 23, 1957.

*416th 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 Red Cross of the Kingdom of Laos by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The French Red Cross carried on its work in Laos until the country became independent in 1949.

The new Society, founded on January 1, 1955 under the name of the Laotian Red Cross, applied for recognition in a letter dated February 13, 1957. In support of its request it attached a copy of the Society's recognition by the Government, and a copy of the Statutes.

A study of these documents in conjunction with the Secretariat of the League of Red Cross Societies showed that the ten conditions which govern the recognition of a new Society by the International Committee of the Red Cross had been fulfilled.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has now much pleasure in according this recognition which marks an important step towards the universality of the Red Cross movement.

The Kingdom of Laos acceded in 1956, as an independent State, to the Geneva Conventions of 1949; according to the Presidential Decree of March 26, 1956, the Laotian Red Cross

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is recognised as an auxiliary to the public authorities and, in particular, the army and civilian medical services of the Kingdom. Its work has so far been concerned with assistance to the victims of internal disturbances and the war disabled.

The President of the Society is Dr. Oudom Souvanna Vong; the Central Committee has its headquarters at Vientiane.

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

I have the honour to remain,
Yours obediently

FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
OF THE RED CROSS :

L. BOISSIER, *President*

THE ACTION OF THE ICRC IN HUNGARY

The International Committee's relief action on behalf of the Hungarian people was continued during May and the following press release on the subject was published by the ICRC Delegation in Vienna :

As part of its action on behalf of the Hungarian people, the International Committee of the Red Cross sent in April to Budapest and towns in the provinces 3,278 tons of commodities, consisting mainly of foodstuffs, medicaments, textiles and coal.

In view of the population's special needs of a medico-social nature, the deliveries of medicaments, surgical instruments and dressings have again been increased. In particular, there have been distributed to hospitals in Budapest 13 truck loads of hospital equipment donated by the Comité interministériel français pour les sinistrés. Mention should also be made of deliveries of a greater number of food parcels, mostly of American origin, which is of special importance since the packing of food parcels by the ICRC at Budapest has been discontinued.

As regards clothing, the German Red Cross has given the ICRC about 100 tons for the Hungarian people, and the League of Red Cross Societies has also supplied large quantities drawn from its stocks in Vienna. A further gift of coal has been made from the CARE organisation consisting of several tens of thousands of 25 kg. parcels for family use.

Since the start of its relief action on behalf of the Hungarian people, the ICRC has despatched 23,765 tons of commodities to Hungary, as well as 9,600 tons of seeds supplied to Hungarian farmers through the FAO.

Considerable deliveries took place during May, including several thousand tons of foodstuffs; flour, powdered milk and cheese, donated by the United States Government.

ANOTHER ICRC MISSION TO ALGERIA

The French authorities have just acceded to the International Committee's request to be authorised to send another mission to Algeria, for the purpose of visiting the various detention centres where persons under prosecution or interned as a result of events are held.

This mission, the fourth since the spring of 1955, is composed of Mr. P. Gaillard, Delegate, and Dr. L. A. Gailland, Medical Adviser, who have both taken part in former missions.

As on previous occasions, the delegates of the ICRC have been authorised to speak with the detained persons without witnesses.

The two representatives of the ICRC arrived May 15 in Algiers where Mr. R. Vust, resident-delegate of the ICRC in that city, joined them for the duration of the mission.

A MISSION OF THE ICRC TO THE GERMAN FEDERAL REPUBLIC

As part of its activities in various countries to ascertain the conditions of detention of persons detained for political reasons, the ICRC sent to West Germany its delegate, Mr. H. G. Beckh, who has just returned to Geneva.

During two missions in April and one in the present month, Mr. Beckh accompanied by Mr. Leusch of the Red Cross of the German Federal Republic, visited about a dozen prisons and places of detention. He was able to speak with some fifty persons and to form an idea of the general conditions of detention and the needs of the detainees.

These missions were given every facility by the judicial authorities of the countries concerned who gave careful consideration to the suggestions of the ICRC concerning the detained persons' requirements.

At Karlsruhe the Attorney General of the German Federal Republic showed a very understanding attitude towards the International Committee's views as to the advisability of separating, in so far as possible, political detainees from common criminals.

SUNDRY ACTIVITIES

News Items

The President of the ICRC at the Rotary International Convention. — *On May 22 last, during the Rotary International Convention in Lucerne, Mr. Léopold Boissier gave a general outline of the history of the ICRC. After referring to the tasks performed during the Second World War by the institution of which he is President, he summed up the essential provisions of the Geneva Conventions, and analysed the "Draft Rules for the Limitation of the Dangers incurred by the Civilian Population in Time of War". As is known, the ICRC will shortly be submitting these Draft Rules to the Governments and National Red Cross Societies represented at the International Conference in New Delhi. Mr. Léopold Boissier stressed the importance of these rules which are based on the principle that war should not expose the population to dangers out of all proportion to the military advantage sought.*

Visits to the ICRC headquarters. — *On May 20 the ICRC received some of the Arab delegates to the Xth World Health Assembly. The visitors included Dr. B. El Roumi, Under Secretary of State to the Ministry of Health, Saudi Arabia; Dr. A. Hafez-Amin, Deputy Under Secretary of State to the Ministry of Health, Egypt; Dr. S. Al-Wahbi, President of the World Health Assembly, Head of the Iraqi Delegation and Medical Adviser to the Iraqi Red Crescent Society; Dr. Sa'ad Nasrallah, Head of the Jordan Delegation to the WHO; Dr. J. Anouti, Director-General of the*

Ministry of Health, Lebanon; Dr. A. A. Zaki, Director of the Sudan Medical Service; Dr. Assad Haroum, Minister of Health, Syria; Dr. M. Materi, Minister of Health, Tunisia; Dr. C. Toffolon, personal physician to H. M. the King of the Yemen and Dr. Raif Bellama, Assistant Secretary-General to the League of Arab States. Dr. A. Faraj, the Minister of Health in Morocco, who was unable to take part in the visit, made a point, nevertheless, before leaving Geneva, of visiting the ICRC headquarters, where he had a long conversation with Mr. Léopold Boissier.

The International Committee is very pleased to note the interest shown in its work and services by these distinguished representatives of Arab opinion. During the meeting a general description was given of the humanitarian work of the ICRC in the Near East.

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Mr. P. Garcia, Secretary of State to the Ministry of Health and President of the Philippine Red Cross Society, together with Dr. A. C. Regala, Special Assistant to the Ministry of Health, were received on May 29 at the ICRC headquarters by Mr. M. Bodmer, Vice-President of the ICRC, and Miss L. Odier and Mr. R. Olgiate, Members of the Committee. Mr. Garcia and Dr. Regala represented the Philippines at the Xth World Health Assembly, and the ICRC was pleased to take advantage of their presence in Geneva to discuss with them various questions concerned with the humanitarian work of the Red Cross.

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On May 28, the ICRC received a visit from Mr. W. Gibson-Parker, Director of the Information Department of the European Office of the United Nations, Geneva, who visited the Central Prisoners of War Agency and met the President, Mr. Boissier and various members of the ICRC staff. Mr. Gibson-Parker had just taken up his new post and wished to pay a first visit to the International Committee.

Distribution of relief. — *In Egypt the ICRC recently made a gift of medicaments to hospitals in the Gaza area.*

In Japan the Committee has lately supplied sports equipment, of about a thousand Swiss francs in value, to Koreans interned in the Omura and Hamamatsu Centres (Japan). These gifts, distributed by Mr. H. A. Angst, Delegate of the ICRC, were received with satisfaction by the beneficiaries.

In Morocco the ICRC has started a relief action on behalf of Moslem Algerian refugees in the eastern areas adjoining Algeria. Foodstuffs and medicaments have already been distributed valued at ten million Algerian francs.

International Tracing Service, Arolsen. — *The drawing up of an inventory of the documents concerning concentration camps is now finished. The Archives Section, which dealt with this work, is now arranging a programme for checking the ITS documents, with a view to having photostat copies made and thus to ensure their safe-keeping.*

During the first quarter of 1957, the activity of the ITS was greater than it has ever been since it came into existence. This increased work concerned both the number of requests received and the replies despatched, that is to say, the reports sent out and the cases dealt with.

Among the documents recently received mention should first be made (and this represented the last consignment) of those sent by the World Jewish Congress, in London and New York, including over 90,000 names. Further, the French Ministry of Ex-Servicemen and War Victims was good enough to send the ITS, through its General Delegate for Germany and Austria, a considerable number of documents concerning the Mauthausen concentration camp. The Comitato Ricerche Deportati Ebrei, Rome, has also supplied the ITS with a particularly useful alphabetical list of Italian jews and those of other nationalities deported from Italy from 1943 to 1944.

Compensation for former prisoners of war in Japanese hands. — *The distribution of compensation to former prisoners of war in Japanese hands, under Article 16 of the San Francisco Peace*

Treaty is following a normal course. At the present time the share due to 12 out of the 14 beneficiary countries (i.e. 1 1,945, 584.16.6 and 1 5,442,515.01) has been handed over to the national agencies concerned. This remittance represents the amount due to a total number of 157,617 former prisoners of war. Reserves have been set aside to cover doubtful cases or those still being examined.

The census of former Philippine prisoners of war has proved to be difficult owing to the absence of relevant official documents. The Philippine Red Cross recently undertook the registration of former prisoners of the Japanese in that country. It is estimated that this work will be finished within a period of two months, so that verification operations and the drawing up of the lists of beneficiaries could be done within six months from the start of registration.

Refugees. — *It will be remembered that the ICRC started an action on behalf of a group of tuberculous refugees from Trieste and members of their families, to which reference has been made on several occasions in the Revue internationale during the past years. When the International Committee brought this action to a close, after the resettlement of all the refugees to which it had accorded its assistance, it undertook to continue its negotiations to obtain visas for those who wished to emigrate overseas.*

The legislation in force in Anglo-Saxon countries concerning immigration was a cause of great difficulty in obtaining visas for former tuberculous patients. Nevertheless, thanks to the understanding attitude adopted by the authorities of some of the countries, who were good enough to simplify the legal regulations concerning immigrants' state of health, the ICRC had the satisfaction of bringing its negotiations to a favourable issue as soon as the patients were cured. Thus, little by little, the last refugees who, although already resettled in a European country, still hoped to join parents or friends already resident in overseas countries, have at last seen their wishes fulfilled.

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The Central Card-Index for Hungarian Refugees which was set up by the International Committee at the end of last year, with

the help of the National Red Cross Societies, has made it possible—up to the end of April 1957—for 5,000 members of Hungarian refugee families dispersed in various countries of refuge to be traced and placed in contact.

Thus, for April, nearly 2,000 tallies were established which represent an equal number of positive replies to requests for information received by the ICRC. The latter is therefore in a position to give useful assistance to Hungarian refugees who, at one time or another, had lost touch with members of their families.

Broadcasting and the Red Cross. — *Mr. J. J. Gomez de Rueda, Delegate of the Mexican Red Cross to the ICRC, who, since 1952, has carried out the Red Cross broadcasts in Spanish over the Swiss Short-Wave Service, emphasised in a recent broadcast that the action of the Red Cross—by opening up new ground—had helped to stir world conscience and been instrumental in the foundation of a number of international institutions whose headquarters are in Geneva, the home of the Red Cross. These broadcasts, directed exclusively to Spain and Latin American countries, consist of talks on the international Red Cross movement and various important activities of the ICRC. They have aroused the keenest interest everywhere and are frequently reproduced in the publications of National Red Cross Societies in Latin America.*

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The eighth international broadcast for Red Cross Day took place from Radio-Genève on May 8 last, the anniversary of Henry Dunant's birth. It included, as in previous years, a message from the President of the ICRC. As we have already stated, a first audition was given of the work of a Swiss composer dedicated to the universal action of the Red Cross. The following eighteen countries—Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Jugoslavia, Luxemburg, Monaco, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom—contributed to the success of this broadcast which

was accompanied by a television programme showing a film based on documents supplied by several National Red Cross Societies.

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Test broadcasts are to be made on Tuesday, June 25, Thursday, June 27 and Saturday, June 29, on a wave-length of 41 m. 61,7210 kc. in six languages and at the following times:

<i>French</i>	<i>7 a.m.</i>	<i>12.30 p.m.</i>	<i>4 p.m.</i>	<i>9.30 p.m.</i>
<i>German</i>	<i>7.10 a.m.</i>	<i>12.40 p.m.</i>	<i>4.10 p.m.</i>	<i>9.40 p.m.</i>
<i>Italian</i>	<i>7.20 a.m.</i>	<i>12.50 p.m.</i>	<i>4.20 p.m.</i>	<i>9.50 p.m.</i>
<i>English</i>	<i>7.30 a.m.</i>	<i>1 p.m.</i>	<i>4.30 p.m.</i>	<i>10 p.m.</i>
<i>Spanish</i>	<i>7.40 a.m.</i>	<i>1.10 p.m.</i>	<i>4.40 p.m.</i>	<i>10.10 p.m.</i>
<i>Arabic</i>	<i>7.50 a.m.</i>	<i>1.20 p.m.</i>	<i>4.50 p.m.</i>	<i>10.20 p.m.</i>

The ICRC correspondents throughout the world have been notified and it is hoped that, as in previous years, a great many persons will listen to these broadcasts.

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A general report on the work of the Broadcasting Section of the ICRC during the past twelve years will be sent to all the National Red Cross Societies. The report describes the setting up of the Broadcasting Section, the negotiations in connection with the assignment of a wave-length to the ICRC and the test broadcasts made to ascertain the range and audibility of these broadcasts. A list is appended giving very accurate statistics of the listeners' reports received in Geneva.

The ICRC and International Law. — *The Association of Auditors and former Auditors of the Academy of International Law recently held its IXth Congress in Salonika and Athens. A considerable portion of the work was devoted to questions of international law concerning the Red Cross. Professor W. Schätzel of Bonn gave a survey of the legal position of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and, in particular, made a comparison*

between the work of the ICRC and that of the United Nations in the drawing up of rules in humanitarian law. Dr. J. Mrazek of Prague spoke on the provisions in the new Geneva Conventions which strengthen and specify the humanitarian regulations in force since the signature of the Hague Conventions (unconditional application of the Conventions—penal sanctions—medical ethics). Professor Hans Kilsen of Berkley University (USA) alluded to the advisability of recognising the right of the ICRC to plead before the International Court of Justice, The Hague, and Professor Luis Garcia Arias of Saragossa, the author of a work on the concept of "cold war", spoke on the representative principle in international organisations.

Mr. H. Coursier, of the Legal Department of the ICRC in Geneva, informed the Congress of the publication of the "Draft Rules for the Limitation of the Dangers incurred by the Civilian Population in Time of War" which, as we have said, will be discussed at the XIXth International Red Cross Conference to be held in New Delhi in October next.

The Congress, extremely well organised by the Greek Section of the Association, was held under the auspices of the Greek Government.

Missions of ICRC delegates — *During the past weeks a few missions were carried out by ICRC delegates and staff members.*

Mr. R. Gallopin, Executive Director carried out two important missions in Bonn and Vienna.

Mr. Guillermet, delegate of the ICRC, was sent on another mission to Budapest to discuss with the Hungarian authorities questions connected with the re-uniting of dispersed families. He returned to Geneva on May 5.

Miss A. Pfirter, Head of the ICRC War Disablement Section, recently carried out a mission in Dresden, Budapest and Vienna, for the purpose of studying, on the spot, various questions concerning the distribution of artificial limbs for Hungarian disabled.

Mr. D. de Traz, General-Delegate of the ICRC for the Middle East, visited Israel and Egypt to renew contacts with the authorities and for information purposes. He discussed with the authorities

in both countries questions connected with the humanitarian work of the International Committee.

Other news items. — *Obituary notice: The Committee deeply regretted to learn of the death last month, in Rome, of Mr. Vaccari, former Attorney-General at the Italian Supreme Court of Appeal and Director of the Assistenza Giuridica agli Stranieri (AGIUS). This institution, founded in 1945 on the initiative of Mr. Aghababian and presided over by Mr. Pilotti, President of the Court of Justice of the European Coal and Steel Community, continues to render great service to thousands of refugees and stateless persons by helping them to deal with legal problems which it is essential for them to solve if they are to resume a normal life.*

*

In conjunction with the United Nations, a great many non-governmental institutions interested in the refugee problem met at the Palais des Nations on May 27 and 28 last. Two associations—the Standard Conference of Voluntary Agencies working for Refugees and the Conference of Non-Governmental Organisations interested in Migration—had taken the initiative of calling the Conference. A full report including certain suggestions made, will shortly be published by the World's Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations.

Although they abstained from voting, on account of the non-political nature of their institutions, the representatives of the International Committee and the League followed the discussions with great interest.

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The annual meeting of the Red Cross of the German Federal Republic was held on May 11 and 12, 1957, at Saarbrücken. Mr. R. Gallopin, Executive Director of the ICRC, was present and gave the numerous participants an account of the present activities of the ICRC, with particular reference to the relief action undertaken in November last on behalf of the Hungarian people.

He mentioned in this connection the very efficient work carried out by the Red Cross of the German Federal Republic, both in the humanitarian relief activities in Hungary and for Hungarian refugees.

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The International Committee is very pleased to report that its Honorary President, Mr. Max Huber, was presented on May 31 with the German Order of Merit, conferred upon him by the Government of the German Federal Republic in recognition of his qualities as a man of action and philosopher. Mr. Theodor Heuss, President of the German Federal Republic, at the presentation ceremony in Bonn, recalled the humanitarian work accomplished by Mr. Huber.

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On May 17, 1957, the Committee for the Award of the Nansen Medal conferred this distinction upon the League of Red Cross Societies; the formal presentation will take place at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on September 16 next.

The special object of the award of the Nansen Medal for 1957 is to mark the esteem and gratitude of the Committee for the celerity, efficiency and humanity shown by the numerous members of the League staff in dealing with the heavy tasks suddenly thrust upon them by the flow of Hungarian refugees.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has great pleasure in reporting this distinction which honours the Red Cross movement as a whole, and offers its sincere congratulations to the League.

A JAPANESE TRANSLATION OF THE COMMENTARY
ON THE FIRST GENEVA CONVENTION OF 1949

In compliance with Article 47 of the First Geneva Convention of 1949 for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field, whereby the Contracting Parties undertake to disseminate the text of the Convention as widely as possible in their respective countries, the Japanese Government has just published a translation in Japanese of the Commentary on that Convention, published in 1952 by the ICRC, in French and English.

Professor Juji Enomoto, Doctor of Laws, was entrusted by the Japanese authorities with the work of translating and editing the Commentary and no man could have been found better qualified than that eminent scholar to bring this tremendous task to a successful conclusion.

The Japanese text comes to us in the form of a volume of about 600 pages, very well printed, which will be distributed not only to the defence and medical units but also to the staffs of Ministries, the Japanese Red Cross, universities, libraries, etc.

We welcome with satisfaction the initiative taken by the Japanese Government and hope that its example will be followed. A full knowledge of the Conventions and their lofty significance is, indeed, the best assurance of their authority throughout the world and a guarantee that they will be respected by all.
