

REVUE INTERNATIONALE
DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

ET

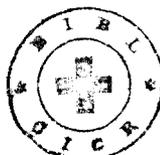
BULLETIN DES SOCIÉTÉS
DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

SUPPLEMENT

First Year, 1948

GENÈVE

1948



SUPPLEMENT

VOL. I

REVUE INTERNATIONALE
DE LA CROIX-ROUGE
ET
BULLETIN DES SOCIÉTÉS
DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

SUPPLEMENT

May, 1948

No. 5

CONTENTS

	Page
“Heiden, May 8, 1948” : An Appeal of the Swiss Red Cross	78
The International Committee of the Red Cross in Palestine (December 1947 to May 1, 1948)	81
The Conflict in Palestine : An Appeal of the International Committee of the Red Cross. .	94

Published by
Comité international de la Croix-Rouge, Genève
Editor : Louis Demolis

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

APPEAL OF THE SWISS RED CROSS

With the title "*Heiden - May 8, 1948*" the Swiss Red Cross issued the following Appeal :

Today, May 8, 1948, marks the hundred and twentieth anniversary of Henry Dunant, the founder of the Red Cross. On this same day, three years ago, the hostilities of the second World War came to an end in Europe. On this memorable day the Swiss Red Cross sends a call to meditation upon the spiritual forces which have imbued the work of the Red Cross since the battle of Solferino, to all the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies, and through them, to men, women and children of all nations, as well as to their governments. Today, the spirit and work of the Red Cross are more than ever in danger. The sinister aspect of this peril lies in the fact that until today the foundation of a veritable peace, so sadly needed by humanity, has not yet been laid.

The spiritual force of which the Red Cross was born, is the feeling of kinship of all men ; in our fellow-man we see ourselves, our value and dignity, our longing for justice and love, but also our weaknesses and shortcomings. The feeling of kinship of all mankind is the feeling of common origin and destiny, of common task and fate.

When we face suffering and death, our pride vanishes and racial, religious and social discrimination lose all importance. In its place there comes into focus the community of mankind, the responsibility of man towards man, irrespective of his position in life.

The Red Cross was created in order to alleviate suffering inflicted upon men through sickness and neglect caused by war. Red Cross aid means aid to all, a practical application of man's responsibility toward man. The Red Cross breaks down walls which are blinding people to the reality of their mutual bonds. In the final analysis, it means love for each individual who suffers, even for the enemy. The Red Cross has the task of finding, in the darkness of hate and destruction, the human being in need, to be truly charitable to the neighbour, whoever he may be.

We all owe allegiance to the history and to the requirements of the State to which we belong. It is not always easy to carry out impartially

the Red Cross mandate of being one's brother's keeper. This is particularly true with regard to those who, in the pursuit of their enemies, have cast aside all human feeling. However, in what other way can we manifest our *own* humanitarianism, than in the attempt to free our fellow-men from the bonds and guilt which darken their existence? We must look upon them, as did Henry Dunant, as being all brothers. The Red Cross must first of all be the servant and helper of the *individual*, before it can be the servant and helper of peoples, states and armies.

Responsibility towards the individual and neighbour is not limited to the battlefield, to suffering and death; it enters into human relations as a whole.

It is not enough to assist the weak and helpless; the strong and independent, too, must learn to bridge the gaps which divide men, to break down barriers, to overcome suspicion and strife. For the millions everywhere, who believe in the spirit and work of the Red Cross, it must be a sacred duty to foster unity among men, to enhance the spirit of understanding, to strive for the suppression of brute force. It must become our avowed task to serve humanity not only in time of war, after all semblance of order has broken down, but to work with all their might for the *prevention* of war.

The spirit of the Red Cross is the spirit of peace. Therefore the plea goes out to everyone. Let us take this spirit into our hearts and carry it into our families, schools, professions, parliaments, governments and into the relations between States.

Looking back over the past tragic years of world history, it is to be hoped that many will become inspired—like Dunant on the battlefield of Solferino—to help free mankind from fear and misery and to spare no sacrifice to help create a humane and peaceful world.

* * *

The moving Appeal just quoted was read out on May 8, 1948 in the three national languages of Switzerland by members of the Central Committee of the Swiss Red Cross, and broadcast by the Swiss Radio. At the same time the General Secretariat of the League of Red Cross Societies sent records of the broadcast in many different languages to all the National Red Cross Societies. The Swiss Red Cross had chosen for this Address, a significant date: May 8 is the birthday of Henry Dunant, founder of the Red Cross and it is also the date on which fighting in the Second World War came to an end in Europe. In due

commemoration of this anniversary, the Swiss Red Cross invited to the little town of Heiden, where Henry Dunant spent the last eighteen years of his life, representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross and of the General Secretariat of the League of Red Cross Societies, as well as those of many national Red Cross Societies. These guests were received by Dr. G.A. Bohny, President of the Swiss Red Cross, who had with him many of his colleagues on the Central Committee, as well as representatives of the Swiss Federal Council and of the Council of State of the Canton of Appenzell (Outer Rhodes) and the Municipality of Heiden. The message of the Swiss Red Cross was read aloud in the service of commemoration in the Church of Heiden. Later an address on Henry Dunant was delivered in front of the hospital of Heiden, where he passed his last days. The Swiss Red Cross entertained its guests to luncheon and the International Committee of the Red Cross used that occasion to pay tribute by the founder who inspires it swork. The International Committee was represented by M. Martin Bodmer, Vice-President, MM. R. Gallopin and G. Dunand, Director-Delegates and M. J. von der Mühl, head of the Information Division.

*THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
OF THE RED CROSS IN PALESTINE*

(December 1947 to May 1, 1948.)

On November 29, 1947, the General Assembly of the United Nations declared itself in favour of a plan for the partition of Palestine into two States, the one Arab, the other Jewish, a distinct status being reserved to the City of Jerusalem. This decision was received in different ways by those affected and, as soon as it became known, gave rise to incidents which constituted a danger to the safety and lives of a certain part of the population. Sporadic fighting and regular engagements soon began to develop: there were dead and wounded, prisoners and hostages, and helpless victims amongst disarmed civilians.

Faced with these facts, the International Committee at Geneva could not remain indifferent. It decided to consider to what extent it could proffer its good offices in bringing aid to the victims of the struggle which was beginning; the basis for any action to be taken was Art. VII, Sec. 2 of the Statutes of the International Red Cross which provides that "It (the ICRC) remains a neutral intermediary, the intervention of which is recognized to be necessary, especially in time of war, of civil war or of internal disturbances". Before taking any steps however, the Committee had to be more fully informed, and its delegation in Cairo was instructed to carry out a mission of enquiry on the spot.

A new circumstance arose at this juncture. On January 3, 1948, the Committee was informed, through the British Colonial Office and its own delegation in London, of a telegram from the British High Commissioner in Palestine, asking for the despatch of doctors, nurses and medical supplies, since the hospitals were overcrowded and the Arab and Jewish medical personnel had announced their intention of leaving their duties after the departure of the Mandatory Power. The Committee was therefore requested to assume a definite task, within the framework of its customary part as neutral intermediary. In order to

determine the possible scope of such action, a mission left Geneva on January 20, with instructions to study the situation in Palestine with regard to hospitals and medical aid, and at the same time to get in touch with the British, Arab and Jewish authorities, in order to consider to what extent it might be possible to expand the terms of reference of the task proposed. Before beginning to set on foot a scheme for medical aid, such as it had been asked to do, might it not be possible for the Committee to invite both parties to apply the Geneva Conventions for the relief of the sick and wounded and for the treatment of prisoners of war, and to extend the terms to cover civilian non-combatants ? The Committee holds that, since it is the originator of the Conventions, its fundamental task is to request their application on each occasion that this is required by the circumstances ; this duty takes precedence over any other action concerned with medical care of health.

The Mission of Enquiry, composed of Dr. Roland Marti, head of the Medical Division of the ICRC, M. Munier, delegate in Egypt, and M. Jacques de Reynier, first made a stay in Cairo, where Dr. Marti took the opportunity of explaining the objects which they hoped to achieve to members of the Government, in particular to H. E. Nokrachy Pacha, Prime Minister of Egypt, to Assam Pacha, Secretary-General of the Arab League and to the Grand Mufti. The Mission then arrived in Palestine, where it had discussions with the British, Arab and Jewish authorities. There it was able to determine the reasons which had moved the High Commissioner to prepare the Internatinal Committee. The disorders were at once seen to be extremely serious, leading to assassinations on both sides, followed by reprisals, passions gradually becoming inflamed to such a pitch that the worst was to be feared when the Mandatory Power left the country. The fact which most disturbed the Palestine Government and which explained the wording of their telegram, was that the Government hospitals were liable to find themselves from one day to the next without any staff ; this, for the Arabs in particular, would have been disastrous, considering the scarcity of medical resources. In order to ward off this danger the only solution had been to appeal to the Committee, as a proved neutral

organization, which was probably alone in a position to be recognized and accepted by the two parties.

Dr. Marti had occasion at this time to define the limits within which the Committee could take action. It was not, for instance, possible for the Committee to assure the operation of a Public Health Service and to act, as it were, in the place of a Government administration. It had neither the necessary experience, nor the requisite means, nor adequate staff to undertake such duties. It was therefore bound to confine itself to its habitual role, and to concern itself in the first place with obtaining that the Geneva Conventions should be applied and respected. The Committee's work would, of course, have to be adapted to local conditions and events, but it could not in any circumstances be extended to include the organization of a Public Health Service, for which large funds would be needed, which the Committee did not possess.

As to the despatch of doctors, nurses, surgical equipment and medicaments, those too must depend on the means available to the Committee, possibly after appeals had been made to Governments and the National Red Cross Societies.

It should be mentioned here that the Committee has no funds of its own available to finance missions which it is asked to undertake. In each case therefore, the question of finance arises : it will be seen below how the problem was solved for the work in Palestine.

After these preliminary contacts the Mission of Enquiry asked the Palestine Government to map out a journey in order that they might reconnoitre the whole of the Palestine territory. This inspection was carried out both in Arab and Jewish areas, and made it feasible to frame a working scheme to be submitted to the British authorities and to the Jewish and Arab leaders.

The Mission drew a schedule of hospital beds available, of medical and surgical installations, and of requirements in medicaments. They found that, in the case of the Arabs, reserve stocks of medicaments were almost nil, and moreover, that they had no reserve supplies either of blood or plasma for transfusions, whilst the Jews appeared to be well equipped, even in the smallest and the most remote of their settlements.

The problem of ambulances was threatening to become acute. The Magen David Adom (a Jewish association similar to a Red Cross Society, although not using the emblem) possessed thirty-one modern ambulances. The Palestine Government had but a few worn-out vehicles : it nearly always had to fall back on the use of army ambulances, which would have to be withdrawn after May 15.

Finally, there was the problem of the Mission Hospitals to be considered, which in many cases wished to be placed under the protection of the Committee, and also expected financial aid

The mission having thus made a rough schedule of requirements, and defined the scope of aid in medical care and health, went on to develop a working plan for placing hospital establishments under the protection of the Committee's emblem, and to enable those who wished to do so, to work there until the time came when the authority taking over power would be able to grant normal protection.

The following working plan was submitted to the parties concerned, who had previously given their consent in principle to the intervention of the International Committee and even keenly desired it.

Activities:— To see that the spirit, if not the letter, of the Geneva Conventions are applied and respected, by combatants and civilians. In practice therefore :

(a) — Endeavour to ensure respect for existing establishments and organizations which have a humanitarian aim and are of general utility, i.e. hospitals, dispensaries, laboratories, ambulances, medical personnel, orderlies and nurses, the emblems of the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Magen David Adom, in order to prevent their destruction and to allow them to work.

(b) — Endeavour to secure the freedom of traffic movement on roads leading to hospitals and burial-grounds, for vehicles displaying any one of the emblems of the Red Cross, Red Crescent, or Magen David Adom. By wider application, to secure respect for any vehicle displaying one of these emblems in any place.

(c) — Allocation and distribution of available means and relief in the form of personnel and supplies already there, such as medical and food supplies, and transport.

(d) — Taking delivery, transport and distribution of relief arriving from abroad.

(e) — Protection of the non-combatant civil populations (women, children and the aged), by finding practical means for their removal to points outside the fighting areas, and by setting up neutral zones, organizing relief, etc.

(f) — Endeavour to co-ordinate relief schemes abroad for Palestine.

Means and Plan of Action. — The delegation does not assume any kind of managing responsibility. It gives its support and protection to the humanitarian work carried out by existing organizations, and offers suggestions or advice. In order to do this, the delegations must :

(a) — Establish and actively maintain permanent and confident liaison with all existing organizations, such as the Red Cross, Red Crescent, Magen David Adom, Medical Associations, Women's Association, Missions and representatives of the various faiths, and local authorities. A network of good relations covering the whole country must be created as speedily as possible.

(b) — Establish and maintain relations of confidence with the military and civil government authorities, who at the time effectively hold power. This is the only means of obtaining agreements necessary for the protection of the work of the Red Cross, the Red Crescent and the Magen David Adom.

(c) — By the presence and activity of its delegates amongst those who are suffering, as well as amongst those who are doing welfare work, the Committee must create a feeling of confidence, calculated to ensure respect for the work which it defends and protects.

By co-ordinating the activities of its various delegations throughout the world, the Committee directs, from Geneva, the task of regulating the financial questions, purchases and transport of relief supplies for Palestine.

To carry this plan into action would involve the despatch of eight delegates and ten senior nurses of the ICRC to Palestine. The work of this delegation for the space of a year would mean an expenditure of roughly a million Swiss francs. The financial aspect of the problem seems to have been solved fairly quickly, the expenditure being underwritten, in shares of varying size by the mandatory Power, the Jewish and Arab organizations from whom the ICRC had formal assurances on the matter.

Even so this plan as a whole would have remained only one of intention without practical effect, if this preliminary and

essential condition failed of fulfilment : that is, the formal undertaking of both parties in the conflict to apply in all circumstances during the struggle in Palestine, the principles of the Geneva Conventions of 1929.

The application of these principles would have the effect (1) of keeping within limits the number of victims ; (2) of providing protection for the sick and wounded, prisoners taken in the fighting and also, by extending its terms, for non-combatant civilians ; (3) of making possible the despatch of relief of all kinds. The paramount aim of the Committee must be, then, to secure the pledge of both parties that they would observe these principles. On March 12, the Committee put out an Appeal from Geneva to awaken the attention of the Authorities concerned in the events, and to inform public opinion. The Appeal took this form :—

In spite of the fact that the present incidents in Palestine are not an armed conflict between two sovereign States, the International Committee of the Red Cross holds it to be its duty, in the interests of these who are the victims, to invite the parties—if they decline to give up the resort to force—to observe the traditional terms of the law of nations and to apply as from this day, the principles of the two Geneva Conventions of July 27, 1929.

The first of these Conventions provides for the relief of the wounded and sick, and the second bears on the treatment of prisoners.

In accordance with the true purpose of these Conventions, the International Committee draws particular attention to the following humanitarian principles :—

(1) — Protection shall be given to the wounded and sick, and without distinction they shall be treated with humanity and shall be given the care which their condition requires. The vehicles for the transport of the wounded and sick, the mobile medical units and the fixed establishments of the medical service, the medical personnel as well as the medical equipment and stores, shall be respected and be accorded protection in all circumstances.

(2) — Respect for the dead, that is for the bodies of the fallen and for the funeral convoys for their burial.

(3) — Safety for all who take no part in the fighting, especially women, children and the aged.

(4) — Right of every combatant who falls into the hands of the adverse party to be treated as a prisoner of war.

The International Committee, invoking the proclamations already made by the Magen David Adom and by the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Societies of Palestine affirming these principles, makes its own especial appeal to the responsible Authorities, to the Arab and Jewish people, and to those who are their representatives and spokesmen. It exhorts them to abide by the minimum conditions set out above and awaits the formal agreement of both parties that they will observe them. In the view of the Committee such an agreement is necessary before it can achieve, in accordance with the principles it is bound to defend, a work of humanitarian service in behalf of those who are stricken in the present grievous struggle.

On April 5, the Committee's delegate in Jerusalem had in his hand the written response of both the Arabs and the Jews. Both sides gave their word to respect and to observe the essential principles of the cited Conventions¹. There was now no longer any obstacle to the formal intervention of the International Committee. Within a month the stipulations were in force, the delegates and the nurses were at their posts.

In the meantime, the representatives of the United Nations in Palestine were kept informed of the projects, and they gave

¹ *Jewish reply:*

April 4, 1948.

We wish to give you formal assurance that the responsible Jewish Authorities in Palestine will, during the present conflict, respect the Geneva Conventions of 1929, in relation to armed forces and also to civilians, in so far as the said Conventions apply to civil populations.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd) Iddie MYERSON.

D. BEN-ZEVIE.

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the Jewish Agency of Palestine and of the Vaad Leumi (General Council of the Jewish Community of Palestine).

Arab reply:

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the Appeal of the International Committee of the Red Cross from Geneva on March 12 and in reply to inform you that the Arab Higher Committee, representing the Arab population of Palestine has noted this Appeal, and in accordance with the Arab and Muslim traditions and customs of humanitarian conduct, agrees to abide by the minimum conditions set out in the above-mentioned Appeal and to do all that is humanly possible to that end.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd) Dr. H.F. KHALIDI.

(Secretary A.H.C.)

Stamp of the Arab Higher Committee.

them their entire approval. When the plan for the partition of the country was given up, the Committee made no change in its purpose and in its work to be done, since the state of the whole country remained as disturbed as ever, and even deteriorated as the day of May 15 approached.

* * *

Even before the decision was made to start on a fairly extensive undertaking, the delegate of the ICRC, stationed in Jerusalem, M. de Reynier, who later became Head of the Delegation in Palestine, received a large number of requests from the representatives of the Mandatory Power, and from the Arabs and Jews. His intervention was also often sought for the settling of particular points. The delegate had some gratifying success in this limited field of practical service; he was able, for instance, to see that certain medical stores held up at Tel-Aviv were sent off to Jerusalem, and to persuade the combatants on several occasions to cease fire for a time, in order that the wounded might have attention, or while the women, aged people and children were removed to less dangerous zones. At the same time, he carried out a plan of what might be called instruction and information, explaining the principles of the Red Cross and the spirit of absolute neutrality in which it serves in behalf of all victims, without reference to race or religion.

Proceeding in this way, he laid great stress on the unqualified obligation to respect, in all circumstances, the protective symbols of the Red Cross, and also on the duty incumbent on all who display the emblem, to refrain from any kind of action which might have the slightest connection, direct or indirect, with the fighting. He thus set out to win the trust of both sides in the struggle, a confidence without which he could not accomplish any service to them.

The request was made of him, for example, that the Committee take various hospitals and mental asylums under its protection. Particular mention was made of the government hospital of Bat Yam between Jaffa and Tel-Aviv. Built on high ground, it is an important strategic point, for the possession

of which the contest went on without pause. In the end, Arabs and Jews fell back on an agreement to respect this hospital and to keep it clear of the fighting, on condition that the Committee would take over its protection. A hospital in Jerusalem and a home in Bethlehem were in a like situation with regard to the fighting. The whole of the staff threatened to leave on account of the danger unless the Committee gave assurance that it would guarantee that the hospitals would not be used for military purposes. No formal undertaking of that kind could be given by the Committee, since every measure in Palestine was dependent on the word of Arabs and Jews that they would observe the principles of the Geneva Conventions. M. de Reynier, however, made it clear that the Committee would accept duties of that nature, on condition that the emphasis be placed on the moral character of the protection it gave and that it were not involved in administrative or financial matters in the running of these hospitals.

The discussion of such problems as these meant that the representatives of the Committee had to make journeys throughout the length and breadth of the country. In this connection, note should be made of the dangers which beset the head of the Delegation and later, his colleagues and the nurses who had joined him, as they went about their work. The roads were far from safe; frequently the journey had to be made under escort. Much suspicion had to be overcome and persuasion had to be practised. There was also the risk of falling into an ambush and of being shot at by snipers. It fell to them too, to arrange truces and local agreements with combatants who did not always respond to strict discipline and whose passions ran high.

One of the biggest problems which had to be tackled was that of Safety Zones. The idea has long been contemplated; it has not yet, however, reached the point of being put into practice. With the agreement of all the authorities and the approval of the International Committee in Geneva, the delegate considered plans for the establishment of three of such zones within the city of Jerusalem. Under the protection of the emblem of the Committee, they would have to take in all clas-

ses of non-combatants, (women with their children, expectant mothers, old people, disabled, wounded, and sick persons), on the invariable condition of absolute neutrality. No one would be permitted to carry in arms. The provisioning and maintenance of order would be the part of the usual authorities, whilst the Committee would endeavour to bring in relief supplies. The representatives of the Committee would have the duty of ensuring respect for accepted regulations, and would guarantee by their presence and by the supervision they provided that these zones should be neutral places of asylum established for the sole benefit of non-combatants. All concerned accepted the condition thus laid down.

Later, the proposal was made to extend the area of the Safety Zones to cover the whole of Jerusalem, and the city would then in a double sense have merited the description the "Holy Places". At the moment of writing no decision had been reached in this regard.

Since its primary object, that of the formal agreement of both to respect and to apply the principles of the Geneva Conventions, had been won, the ICRC was now free to give its attention to relief for those who had fallen victims in the struggle. It is understood that, as a general rule, the Committee proffers its services in this field whenever it believes it can serve as the *required neutral intermediary*, just as it has so often done in the course of the recent World War, and during the last three years. But if it wishes to remain true to its constant policy, it can only act equally in behalf of all parties involved. It has, too, of set purpose, laid the emphasis on its role of giving moral protection. Nevertheless, it was also clear from the outset in Palestine that the Committee must take on the task of supplying relief in kind to the victims in the struggle. It is anxious to bring this material help in two ways :

(1) — By sending nurses who form part of the delegation, and whose duty is to recruit a nursing staff, rather than to tend the sick and wounded.

(2) — By the despatch of relief in kind, with priority for medical equipment and stores.

The Committee has especially to seek relief stocks entrusted to it without conditions, which it can use for the benefit of Arabs as well as Jews. In the present state of the world, is it warranted in looking beyond Jews and Arabs to the charitable organizations to shew in a substantial way, their sympathy for the victims of what is happening in Palestine? Whilst taking care not to raise too many hopes, it has to pursue its search for relief supplies with the greatest determination. In so doing, the Committee relies most on the National Red Cross Societies. At the beginning of May, it sent an appeal direct to some of those National Societies who had shewn most concern about the conflict in Palestine.

What kind of help would be most useful? Whilst the Appeal was being drafted, the American Red Cross had, of its own accord, offered a large supply of dressings for distribution, at the discretion of the Committee, where the need was greatest. On the other hand, several organizations offered gifts, specifying how they wished them to be allocated. The Committee accepted these contributions too, on condition that it be allowed to retain a quarter for use as it thought best, it being understood that it would be devoted to Palestine.

The Committee holds it essential that it should be able to give relief to all victims in a conflict, without any discrimination. It is natural that donors wish their gifts to be handed preferably to those in whom they feel some special interest; it would, however, be contrary to the idea of the Red Cross that only certain categories of victims should benefit and that others, being unknown to the donors, should be excluded from the ministrations of the Committee, the agent through whom the gifts reach their destination. The Committee therefore asks these donors to grant it the liberty of distributing some part at least of their gifts according to its judgment, the sole criterion being the urgent character of the needs.

The donors themselves will be responsible for the transport to Palestine of these contributions, since up to that stage no intervention of a neutral intermediary is required, as it was during the War and the blockade. They will be unloaded as far as possible in Palestine itself. Probably the intervention of

the Committee will, equally, not be needed for distribution if the gifts are for Arabs in Arab zones, or for Jews in Jewish zones. However, the situation in the various regions develops and changes so rapidly that the Committee may be obliged, perhaps, to take over all distribution, unless it were to hand over each consignment to the Society called the Palestine Red Cross and Red Crescent (Arab) for example, or to the Shield of David (Magen David Adom).

In addition, the Committee ensures the protection of certain Hospitals. It has no responsibility for their supplies, but in all probability the delegation will be called on to receive subscriptions of money for financing their maintenance. These hospitals will, moreover, be included when an allocation is made of general relief stores.

Turning to the Safety Zones, the Committee is unable to see to the whole of their necessary supplies. At the same time, it accepts wide responsibilities in the moral, and probable the material field. A moderate estimate puts the sum necessary for maintaining the three zones in Jerusalem at 200,000 Swiss francs a month. The Committee is endeavouring to make sure of covering this expenditure by an appeal to the national Red Cross Societies. In order, however, to avoid delay in carrying out its plans, the Committee has not hesitated to make a preliminary advance of funds, even before receiving any assurances of backing for such action. The humanitarian purpose came before all other considerations. Nevertheless, the fact remains that such expenditure must necessarily be guaranteed, since the Committee has no funds of its own for undertaking, even for a short period, an enterprise of such dimensions.

Finally, the Committee, as it has always done on similar occasions will request the donors to make contributions to overhead expenses incurred in relief work, and to meet all the actual invoice charges. It is impossible to make forward estimates of those expenses ; the Committee has therefore arranged a "Palestine levy", similar in intention to that which was collected during the recent War for prisoner of war relief. It will ask the donors to make a contribution equal to ten per cent of the insurance value of their gifts. This ten per cent should be suffi-

cient, since the deliveries will be made at the port of transit free of charge. At the end of six months, a balance will be made and the Committees hopes to be able to make some refund to the donors.

* * *

Such, at the beginning of May, was the scope of the Palestine problem, as it appeared to the Committee. The definite achievements were then as follows :

(a) — Application of the principles of the Geneva Conventions of 1929 by both parties, to combatants and non-combatants ;

(b) — Presence of a delegation of eight members responsible for carrying out the customary duties of neutral intermediary and of supervising the methods of applying the Conventions ;

(c) — Presence of ten Hospital Sisters responsible for ensuring the proper management of a few hospitals, and to recruit medical staff ;

(d) — Planning of one or several Safety Zones in Jerusalem ;

(e) — Organization or relief measures for the benefit of victims of the conflict, without discrimination of any kind and solely in the measure of actual needs.

THE CONFLICT IN PALESTINE

AN APPEAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS TO THE FORCES ENGAGED

Geneva, May 21, 1948.

In its anxiety to give the greatest possible safeguards to the principles of humanitarian conduct in the serious conflict in Palestine, the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva makes an appeal to the Governments of Egypt, Irak, the Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Transjordan, as well as to the Government of Israel.

Here is the text of this appeal :

" The International Committee of the Red Cross, in Geneva, painfully impressed by the gravity of events in Palestine and moved solely by the anxiety to protect the greatest number possible of human lives, convey to the Governments the following earnest appeal, which is based on the principles of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent.

" From April onwards the International Committee, acting in agreement with the Arab and Jewish civil and military authorities and with the approval of the Palestine Government, were on the point of establishing security zones in Jerusalem itself, for the reception of the non-combatant population, and to protect it against the effects of military operations. At the beginning of May, the plan was also under consideration to neutralize the whole of Jerusalem, subject to the consent of all the authorities.

" Negotiations not having been concluded in time and since fighting is now going on in Jerusalem, the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva appeal to the Governments and beg them earnestly to take all necessary measures that at least the security zones be respected which the International Committee's Delegation is making every endeavour to establish within the town itself, as it had first planned. The same applies to the security zones which the delegation

may attempt to set up in other towns in Palestine. The object of these security zones is to receive, under the supervision of the International Committee of the Red Cross, first and foremost Arab and Jewish non-combatants, and thus to save the largest possible number of human lives.

"The International Committee of the Red Cross venture to remind the Governments of the first successful results of their intervention in Palestine :

- (1) agreement of the Arab and Jewish authorities to observe the fundamental principles of the Geneva Conventions ;
- (2) the placing under the protection of the International Committee of various hospitals ;
- (3) the dispatch of medicaments and other relief supplies intended for both parties ;
- (4) individual and constant interventions by their delegates, who have thus been able to save Arab and Jewish wounded during previous fighting.

"The International Committee are fully convinced that, in the spirit of the present appeal, all Governments to whom they now address themselves will participate in their endeavours to limit the sufferings due to the conflict in Palestine.

(signed) : The President of the International
Committee of the Red Cross"
Paul RUEGGER

It is to be hoped that this appeal will be heard and that all the responsible Authorities will give support to the International Committee of the Red Cross in its efforts to mitigate the effects of the struggle and to protect or succour the innocent victims.