



**REVUE
INTERNATIONALE
DE LA
CROIX-ROUGE**

SUPPLEMENT

CONTENTS

	Page
Report on the ICRC Relief action in Hungary	205
News Items	222
The activities of the International Tracing Service	231

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

REPORT ON THE ICRC RELIEF ACTION IN HUNGARY

At the very beginning of the events in October 1956 the International Committee went to the assistance of the Hungarian civilian population. Thanks to the movement of solidarity throughout the world and particularly among the National Red Cross Societies, the ICRC has been able to carry out one of the most important relief actions of the post-war years. Readers of the Revue internationale have been able to follow the development of this relief action in the articles we have published every month on this subject, and an article in our February issue gave details of the work undertaken on behalf of Hungarian refugees by the League of Red Cross Societies.

The International Committee thought it would be useful to summarize in a report the main features of its activities in Hungary, which ended just a few days ago with the closing of its delegation in Budapest. The Report has just been printed and has also been translated in English, German and Spanish. It gives a survey of the relief action as it developed, recalls the circumstances in which it was undertaken, and pays tribute to the devotion and generosity of all those persons and institutions which made it possible. It describes the written agreements on which the action was based and outlines the principles which governed the drawing up and implementation of the programmes. It was circumstances which dictated the methods of distribution and obliged the ICRC

to make long-term arrangements in order to render its assistance as effective and as economical as possible.

A few figures are enough to show the magnitude of the gifts. Firstly the ICRC received contributions from 40 countries in 5 continents; 36 National Red Cross Societies and 11 Governments responded to its appeal, either direct or through the United Nations. Many unofficial and private organizations sent contributions of their own accord. The amount received in cash by the end of June 1957 was about 7 million Swiss francs. This figure includes the gifts received in Vienna and Geneva, and to it should be added the sum produced by the sale of certain relief supplies and paid into the blocked account of the Hungarian Red Cross (35 million forints).

The total value of gifts in kind and in cash received by June 25, 1957, amounted to more than 80 million Swiss francs and the total weight of the gifts in kind exceeded 48,000 tons. The value of the gifts is calculated on world market prices.

The last part of the Report is devoted to the comments and proposals which the experience of the last few months has led the ICRC to make and which give a useful indication of the practical problems faced today in relief actions of any size. For that reason we think it of interest to reproduce the chapter concerned, followed by tables showing the gifts in kind and in cash, and a list of donors. These details constitute the best possible evidence of the universality of the efforts on behalf of Hungary and the Hungarian refugees, and of the generosity of those who took part.

* * *

REMARKS AND SUGGESTIONS

At the close of the relief action undertaken in Hungary from October 1956 to June 1957, it would seem advisable to try to draw useful lessons from the experience gained. In an undertaking of this description, where unforeseen circumstances, and hence the adoption of improvised methods, are likely to play a large part in spite of any precautions taken, it would certainly be useless to try to eliminate such contingencies by previous planning. Nevertheless, armed conflicts, whatever they may be, have certain unchanging or at least similar features from which general conclusions may be drawn. It is on this basis that the following comments are made.

1. STANDARDISATION OF RELIEF SUPPLIES

(a) The relief action of the ICRC took the form of traditional aid to people of whom the majority (not including the homeless) were already provided with the bare necessities (housing, basic food, cooking facilities, essential clothing), as compared to the complete maintenance given to refugees who had to be provided with lodging, food, upkeep, clothing, etc. Relief programmes applicable in one case could not, therefore, be applied in the other.

(b) The clearest example of this difference is to be found in the relief given in the form of food parcels, not advisable in the case of complete maintenance but very suitable for use as additional food supplies. The programme for the distribution of food parcels of 4 kgs. in Budapest and the provinces was certainly one of the most popular.

(c) Although the packing of parcels of food drawn from bulk supplies, as organised at Budapest, gave satisfactory

results, the sending of parcels already prepared by the donor countries is preferable. It takes the burden of making arrangements for packing off the shoulders of the receiving organisation and enables it to devote itself entirely to its technical work (clearance through Customs, drawing up programmes, distribution, supervision, etc.).

(d) A study could be made of the standardisation of food parcels. Experience has shown, nevertheless, that in spite of the difference in food habits between the donor country and the beneficiaries, it is possible to vary the composition of the parcels in order to take into account the possibilities and needs of each recipient.

(e) Special mention should be made of the food parcels sent by the Norwegian Red Cross. The food in these parcels could be heated in the containers which, when empty, provided a watertight utensil.

(f) As regards clothing, the particulars noted during the relief action in Hungary, or in the refugee camps, were the same; the sending of used clothing, often in rags, obliged the receiving organisations to organise the sorting and matching of clothing which caused a considerable loss of time and money. For a future relief action it would therefore be advisable for the donor Societies to consider providing new, or almost new, clothing, duly sorted and classified by size before its despatch, even if they have to sell the used clothing they receive to obtain new stocks. A study could also be made of certain methods of standardisation in the preparation of sets of clothing ready to be despatched.

(g) The above remarks also apply to medicaments; it is highly important that the quality should give no cause for criticism. The ICRC received antibiotics in Vienna for which the date for use expired in 1956. Further, the sorting of the consignments received took three months and cost 18,000 Swiss francs.

(h) In many cases pharmaceutical specialities reached the ICRC without any indications of their formula. It would be

desirable, in future relief actions, for the formula to be stated, if possible in a language known to the doctors of beneficiary countries.

(i) The standardisation of medical supplies could be studied, not only to determine the required assortment of first aid medicaments, but also in making up first aid kits. In disasters or conflicts, the needs of the wounded are the same: blood plasma, blood transfusion equipment, dressings, medicaments for emergency treatment, and possibly surgical equipment. It should be possible to plan a model first aid kit for use in any circumstances.

2. STANDARDISATION OF INTERNATIONAL APPEALS

(a) Experience has shown that, whereas action must be rapid to be effective, too much haste causes confusion and loss. The ICRC Delegation in Vienna saw considerable quantities of gift supplies arrive, thanks to the rapid action and generosity of the donor Societies. However, in view of the confused situation in Hungary at the time, and the interruption of all means of communication, it was impossible to forward the badly needed goods to their destination. The result was great congestion which once again caused a great loss of work and time, and it took eight weeks to unload some of them.

(b) It seems necessary, therefore, in so far as it is possible to forecast needs at all, to draw up, first of all, general relief programmes which could be applied with appropriate changes in each specific case, according to the season of the year, geographical position, standard of living and customs of the beneficiaries.

(c) At the moment when the relief action is put in motion, the first appeal to the National Societies should request them to send immediately the emergency relief supplies found to be necessary (dressings, blood plasma, etc.), but to wait until they receive detailed information before sending other relief supplies (clothing, textiles, less urgent medicaments, etc.).

(d) In the meantime, the receiving organisation would make a rapid survey of the position, and a brief list of the kinds and quantities of relief supplies required. Only then should another appeal be made to the National Societies, stating the relative urgency of requirements, to enable the consignments to be spaced and avoid, as far as possible, the cost of warehousing and demurrage.

(e) The Red Cross Societies should also be invited to adjust their consignments to the general information given in the appeal, and to keep the receiving organisation informed of the despatch of each consignment. It happened on several occasions that varied gift supplies reached Vienna without previous notice from the sender. In such cases the ICRC had then to decide (in conjunction with the beneficiary Society) what use could be made of the gift supplies. In future relief actions it would be most advisable for donor Societies to abstain from sending supplies before assuring themselves, beforehand, that they meet the requirements noted on the spot.

(f) Some confusion arose at the beginning of the relief action, owing to consignments being wrongly addressed. The first appeal should therefore inform National Societies of the address (as short as possible) of the recipients, and the name of the railway station. In addition, the contents of the trucks should be correctly stated on the way-bills; the description "gift supplies" is not sufficient.

(g) Particulars of the sender and the indication of the country of origin should, in any case, be given for each consignment. These essential details were lacking for numerous gifts which arrived without any indication as to their origin, or merely that of the country of transit, so that, on several occasions, the donor could not be identified.

3. FINANCING OF THE RELIEF ACTION

(a) The comparison of the contributions in cash and in kind towards the International Committee's relief action show that

the majority of donors prefer, for various reasons, to send commodities rather than to place funds at the disposal of the receiving organisation. In addition, while the outbreak of a conflict promotes a movement of solidarity which results in a flow of contributions in cash, the funds immediately available for the purchase of relief supplies come in very gradually.

(b) It therefore seems necessary to take steps to dispose of sufficient reserve funds in the event of a conflict, to make purchases of emergency relief supplies on the spot when the sending of supplies would be too costly on account of the distance, or at least to enable the relief action to be started. It might be advisable to study the possibility of obtaining a loan in the event of a conflict from an international bank under pre-arranged conditions.

(c) The establishment of a vast distribution system and the organisation of road convoys from Vienna to Budapest led to heavy operating costs being incurred from November onward, and especially in December 1956. As the ICRC had not at its disposal the financial means necessary to meet the situation, it was obliged to appeal to the National Red Cross Societies and other donors for funds.

(d) The ICRC gave up the idea of asking each National Red Cross to make a contribution based on the proportionate tonnage handled by its Vienna and Budapest Delegations. It preferred to make an appeal, in the hope that each Society would contribute towards the overhead expenses according to its means.

(e) Judging by the results of this special appeal for funds, and the fact that it has been possible to refund part of the contributions received, this procedure seems to have met with the approval of the National Societies.

Would it not be advisable, however, to have the means of raising a loan in the conditions referred to above, if only to permit the launching of the relief action, for instance by acquiring the means of transport required, and for putting the distribution programme in motion?

4. TRANSPORTS

(a) The ICRC cannot maintain a fleet of vehicles to meet, at any time, a crisis resulting from a conflict. In the event of a conflict breaking out, it would have to find means of transport immediately, which in a crisis would be all the more difficult. To send relief supplies to Hungary it had available vehicles lent by certain National Red Cross Societies, and borrowed vehicles from Swiss firms, in most cases free of charge. With the funds immediately placed at its disposal it was able, but not without difficulty, to purchase a few vehicles to build up its first road convoys.

(b) In this field also, it would no doubt be advisable, with a view to reducing overhead expenses in peace-time, and preventing loss of time in a crisis, to have vehicles in reserve, in a state of readiness at all times, if possible lent free of charge or at a low cost. A fleet of reserve vehicles could be built up, not only in Switzerland where the ICRC has its headquarters, but also in all countries where the National Societies might have the means of supplying vehicles, either from those belonging to them, or through the principal business houses, by agreement. The vehicles chosen could be a few well-known types, in order to avoid difficulties in obtaining spare parts in case of need.

(c) A similar problem arises for air transport. It might be necessary for the ICRC to have aircraft at its disposal, over some particular route, or it might require to have the services, over a certain period and a definite route, of one or several commercial planes. Thanks to the understanding attitude of the air lines and their cordial relations with the ICRC, it has been possible, so far, to find improvised solutions to the problems which have arisen in this connection. It would obviously be preferable, with the help of the National Red Cross Societies, to have the immediate benefit, in case of need, of arrangements made beforehand with the air lines concerned.

(d) When, however, a relief action grows to such proportions as that undertaken in Hungary, the ICRC would be more

likely to have recourse to rail and, possibly, river transport. The essential problem would then reside in the facilities required for forwarding relief supplies over all the railroads concerned. Up to March 1957 the majority of the European railways granted free transport and exemption from demurrage charges on railway trucks, whereby heavy costs were spared.

(e) It may be wondered, in this connection, whether it should be agreed, in order to increase the volume of relief, to transport under the red cross emblem gift supplies other than those from Red Cross sources, or whether it would be preferable to waive those supplementary supplies to avoid the risk of losing the benefit of the free transport granted to Red Cross consignments.

(f) The free transport of Red Cross consignments is not a right. Consequently, recourse to facilities granted as a favour should be limited to Red Cross gift supplies only. Organisations which do not work under the auspices of the Red Cross could therefore be invited to take the necessary steps to obtain similar facilities for their own consignments, or to entrust the forwarding of their gift supplies to the National Society of the country, or to defray transport costs.

(g) The stoppage of free transport, as from March 1957, caused considerable expenditure, of which only part could be covered by the cash donations received by the ICRC for its overhead expenses. The balance was paid by the donors themselves, who in some cases paid, or refunded, the transport cost of their relief supplies to the Hungaro-Austrian frontier. Which procedure should be put into general use? The first leaves the ICRC free to decide how to use the funds received to the best advantage; the second enables gifts to be supplied carriage free.

5. STAFF

(a) As, in normal times, the ICRC is not in a position to employ a staff large enough for setting up one or several delega-

tions immediately in the event of a crisis, it is obliged to recruit, at short notice, the technicians required to deal with organisation, supplies and transport services.

Part of this qualified staff was lent free of charge by employers in Switzerland, so that, in spite of the inconvenience of drawing up staff change schedules for relatively short periods, this solution proved to be satisfactory.

The ICRC is fully aware, however, that for these missions to retain their official character as the representatives of the ICRC, they must be directed or guided by members of its permanent staff. Moreover, the traditional activities of the ICRC, and in particular those resulting from the Geneva Conventions, can thus be pursued jointly with the relief action in progress.

(b) On the outbreak of the events in October 1956, several National Societies sent medico-social missions to Vienna, with instructions to proceed immediately to Hungary, to escort relief convoys and, if necessary, to give medical care to the population. During the confusion which then reigned in Hungary, several columns crossed the frontier of their own accord. Some were able to return quickly to Austria; others were stopped by the Soviet and Hungarian troops and held up for several days in Hungary, in particularly difficult circumstances, before being finally expelled.

This experience shows that the sending of separate National Red Cross teams to a country in a state of conflict or internal disturbance is not to be recommended. As in the case of relief supplies, the sending of relief columns, however qualified they may be, should be planned beforehand with the competent organisation (i.e. in the event of a conflict, the ICRC) on the basis of the information collected on the spot, or the requirements notified by the beneficiary Society. Better still, as was the case for the first road convoys which crossed the Austro-Hungarian frontiers on November 11, 1956, these national convoys should be "internationalized", for instance, by the wearing of a common uniform and badges. Thus, the difficulties arising from the presence of miscellaneous teams, obviously well-

intentioned but composed of persons of greatly differing degrees of suitability, could partly be avoided.

6. TRACING SERVICE

(a) The creation by the ICRC in Geneva of a Central Card Index for Hungarian refugees met with difficulties caused by the lack of systematic registration, not only in the first or second country of asylum but also in the country of final resettlement. In addition, the movements of the refugees in those countries, and the places of residence to which they were sent on leaving the reception centres were not, in most cases, placed on record or notified. The result was that, up to the end of June, the ICRC was still not in a position to deal with several hundreds of requests for enquiries to be opened.

(b) It is most desirable, therefore, that the authorities of the countries of asylum should undertake, either directly or with the help of their National Red Cross Society, the immediate and systematic registration of refugees immediately on their arrival in the country, or on their arrival at the first reception centres. This registration could also include a record of the refugees' changes of residence inside the country and these particulars could be placed on ordinary index-cards. All the cards, when filled in, could be filed in the card-index, which would enable information to be sent immediately to the enquirers. The refugees should be informed that no information concerning them would be given without their previous consent.

As this matter concerns the direct effects of a conflict or internal disturbance, it would be advisable for the registration to be carried out under the auspices of the ICRC.

SUMMARY OF GIFT SUPPLIES

received for the relief action of the International Committee of the Red Cross on behalf of the Hungarian people, from November 1, 1956 to June 25, 1957

I. GIFTS IN KIND

1. Gift supplies received at Vienna and carried to Budapest :

	Kg.	Sw. Fr.
(a) <i>Foodstuffs</i>		
Condensed and powdered milk	6,155,681	13,782,675
Tinned meat and fish	684,601	3,717,631
Tinned fruit and vegetables	115,548	316,621
Infant foods	121,745	316,537
Fats, oil and butter	1,961,124	4,082,289
Cheese	1,220,543	4,112,456
Sugar	443,486	388,463
Coffee and tea	27,866	295,292
Chocolate and cocoa-powder	152,857	735,813
Rice	646,895	582,205
Flour	7,513,563	4,508,137
Other cereals	34,505	25,313
Pulse	79,550	66,026
Pasta	59,395	65,334
Salt	10,100	5,858
Sundry foodstuffs (bread, biscuits, etc.)	224,491	317,013
Fruits	92,833	117,838
Potatoes	30,470	3,351
Food parcels	5,551,750	13,747,274
Total	25,307,003	47,186,131
(b) <i>Textiles and leather goods :</i>		
Clothing and underwear	2,131,889	6,929,939
Footwear	244,812	1,224,060
Blankets	354,415	1,127,321
Sheets	36,423	91,057
Sundry bedding	21,140	52,850
Sundry textiles	10,498	76,976
Leather bags	2,393	11,965
Total	2,801,570	9,514,168
(c) <i>Various supplies :</i>		
Toilet requisites (soap, razors)	67,441	113,670
Kitchen utensils and household goods	50,546	106,101
Bed-frames and mattresses	73,117	197,003

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

	Kg.	Sw. Fr.
(c) <i>Various supplies</i> (continued) :		
Window-glass	105,515	131,894
Coal	9,223,370	1,106,804
Seeds (through the FAO)	9,600,000	4,308,500
Vehicles (ambulances, cars and lorries)	—	258,000
Sundry articles	212,696	94,200
Total	19,332,685	6,316,172
<i>Total of gifts in kind</i> (medicaments and medical equipment not included) . . .	47,441,258	63,016,471

*Medicaments and medical equipment . . (these particulars are given separately as the weight and value of the bulk consignments of medicaments received at the beginning of the relief action had to be estimated)	445,701	10,651,416
*Up to June 25, 1957, the following relief supplies were purchased and sent to Hungary by means of the cash donations received by the ICRC :		
Sugar	100,000	73,500
Chocolate	7,000	43,400
Tinned meat	60,000	119,463
Sundry textiles	20,900	244,414
Medicaments and medical equipment . .	29,710	397,384
Total	217,610	878,161

2. List of donors.

	Kg.
(a) <i>National Red Cross Societies</i> :	
Argentine Republic	1,800
Austria	89,973
Belgium	142,914
Canada	16,928
Denmark	490,789
Finland	89,763
France	26,060
German Federal Republic	6,914,615
Greece	22,122
Italy	115,768
Liechtenstein	1,792
Luxemburg	8,900
Mexico	3,080

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

	Kg.
(a) <i>National Red Cross Societies</i> (continued):	
Netherlands	1,136,945
Norway	331,676
Portugal	2,971
Spain	8,763
Sweden	902,011
Switzerland	1,068,750
Thailand	22,360
United Kingdom	1,435,272
United States	707,936
Uruguay	4,460
Total	13,545,729

N.B. — * Some gifts of governmental and non-governmental origin were sent to the ICRC through the National Red Cross which, in such cases, is listed as the donor of the supplies.

* All the gifts mentioned above were sent through the ICRC. In addition, the Polish Red Cross sent directly to the Hungarian Red Cross 1,200,000 kg. of gift supplies (foodstuffs, clothing, medicaments, window-glass and cement), which were distributed in part according to the programmes drawn up by the ICRC in conjunction with the Hungarian Red Cross. Further, the Turkish Red Crescent sent 15,400 kg. of fruits directly to the Hungarian Red Cross, which were also distributed according to a joint programme.

(b) <i>Governments</i> :	
German Federal Republic (including FAO seeds)	10,961,335
Greece	33,478
France	1,248,784
Israel	3,870
Luxemburg (FAO seeds)	100,000
Netherlands (FAO seeds)	2,500,000
Spain	480,000
United States	12,374,742
Total	27,702,209

N.B. — The relief supplies furnished by the Governments were, in many cases, purchased with the product of public collections.

(c) <i>Sundry donors</i> :	Kg.
UNICEF	90,347
CARE	2,300,000
ICRC	36,478
Various individual donors	3,766,495
Total	6,193,320
(d) <i>Total of gifts in kind</i> (not including medicaments and medical equipment)	47,441,258

II. CASH DONATIONS

	Sw. Fr.
1. <i>National Red Cross (Red Crescent, Red Lion and Sun) Societies</i> (these donations include all sums remitted up to June 25, 1957, either for purchases or for covering operational costs) :	
Australia	255,500.33
Belgium	174,650.00
Brazil	12,987.20
Canada	447,250.00
Chile	707.90
Colombia	1,071.00
Ecuador	13,672.85
Finland	2,666.70
France	244,401.31
German Federal Republic	463,500.00
Guatemala	3,097.45
India	6,386.25
Iran	27,932.50
Italy	12,096.30
Japan	174,365.05
Lebanon	667.55
Liechtenstein	20,000.00
Luxemburg	35,129.75
Monaco	15,528.13
Netherlands	150,000.00
New Zealand	262,160.00
Pakistan	2,253.12
Sweden	194,026.00
Switzerland	1,000,000.00*
Thailand	10,710.52
Union of South Africa	646,867.65
United Kingdom	1,049,600.20
United States	527,846.15
Uruguay	64,256.25
Viet Nam	2,140.00
Total	5,821,470.16
* (Including Sw. Fr. 700,000 to cover operational expenses.)	
2. <i>Governments</i> (through the United Nations) :	
Australia	191,670.35
Ceylon	13,803.00
United Kingdom	180,231.00
Total	385,704.35

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

	Sw. Fr.
3. <i>Sundry gifts:</i>	
ICRC Fund for Relief Action	30,000.00
Donation P. Nenni — G. Giorgini	28,000.00
American Joint Distribution Committee	20,000.00
Other non-governmental organisations (through the United Nations)	43,143.10
Private donors	427,562.81
Total	548,705.91
Total of cash donations	6,755,880.42

N.B. — (The above total of Sw. Fr. 6,755,880.42 does not include the sum of Sw. Fr. 54,000 representing the donations of persons residing in Switzerland, handed over to the Swiss Red Cross to cover the costs of its participation in the ICRC relief action in Hungary (purchase of relief supplies and operational expenses.)

III. FINAL SUMMARY

List of the gifts in kind (not including medicaments and medical equipment) and cash donations contributed by the various countries:

Country	Gifts in kind	Cash donations	Total
	Sw. Fr.	Sw. Fr.	Sw. Fr.
Argentine Republic	4,509	—	4,509
Australia	—	447,171	447,171
Austria	192,049	—	192,049
Belgium	307,592	174,650	482,242
Brazil	—	12,987	12,987
Canada	69,280	447,250	516,530
Ceylon	—	13,803	13,803
Chile	—	708	708
Colombia	—	1,071	1,071
Denmark	1,148,767	—	1,148,767
Ecuador	—	13,673	13,673
Finland	534,359	2,667	537,026
France	971,751	244,401	1,215,152
German Federal Republic	12,320,629	463,500	12,784,129
Greece	60,608	—	60,608
Guatemala	—	3,097	3,097
India	—	6,386	6,386
Iran	—	27,932	27,932
Israel	5,225	—	5,225
Italy	565,171	40,096	605,267
Japan	—	174,365	174,365
Lebanon	—	668	668
Liechtenstein	5,850	20,000	25,850

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

Country	Gifts in Kind	Cash donations	Total
	Sw. Fr.	Sw. Fr.	Sw. Fr.
Luxemburg	27,281	35,130	62,411
Mexico	10,164	—	10,164
Monaco	—	15,528	15,528
Netherlands	2,799,246	150,000	2,949,246
New Zealand	—	262,160	262,160
Norway	1,054,642	—	1,054,642
Pakistan	—	2,253	2,253
Portugal	10,489	—	10,489
Spain	492,022	—	492,022
Sweden	2,447,205	194,026	2,641,231
Switzerland	3,805,963	1,000,000	4,805,963
Thailand	20,249	10,711	30,960
Union of South Africa	—	646,868	646,868
United Kingdom	4,286,671	1,229,831	5,516,502
United States	26,463,289	547,846	27,011,135
Uruguay	8,066	64,256	72,322
Viet Nam	—	2,140	2,140
FAO (seeds from the German Federal Republic, Luxem- burg and the Netherlands)	4,308,500	—	4,308,500
UNICEF	195,915	—	195,915
ICRC	—	30,000	30,000
Various donors	900,979	470,706	1,371,685
Total (not including medica- ments and medical equip- ment)	63,016,471	6,755,880	69,772,351

N.B. — * The total value of gifts in kind and cash donations received up to June 25, 1957 (including medicaments and medical equipment) amounts to Sw. Fr. 80,423,767 (i.e. 69,772,351 plus 10,651,415 Swiss francs).

* The total weight of gift supplies received up to June 25, 1957, amounted to 48,104,569 kg. i.e.

Gifts in kind (not including medicaments and medical equipment)	47,441,258 kg.
Medicaments and medical equipment	445,701 kg.
Supplies purchased with cash donations	217,610 kg.
Total	<u>48,104,569 kg.</u>

SUNDRY ACTIVITIES

News Items

XIXth International Red Cross Conference. — *By the time these lines appear, the governmental delegations and the delegations of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies will have taken part at New Delhi in the XIXth International Red Cross Conference, where countries large and small were represented. The coming issues of the Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge will give accounts of this important meeting and of the sessions of the Standing Commission, the Executive Committee and the Board of Governors of the League (24th session), held in India on this occasion. These latter meetings are attended only by delegates of the National Societies.*

The ICRC Delegation consisted of the President, Mr. Léopold Boissier, the Vice-Presidents, Mr. M. Bodmer and Mr. F. Siordet, Dr. M. Junod, a member of the Committee, Mr. R. Gallopin, Executive Director, Mr. J. Pictet, Director for General Affairs, Mr. C. Pilloud, Assistant Director for General Affairs, and Mr. W. Michel, Mr. P. Gaillard, Mr. M. Borsinger, Mr. R. J. Wilhelm, Mr. G. A. Fiechter and Miss A. Pfirter, members of the ICRC staff. Mr. R. Ferrazino and Mr. K. Henderson attended the Conference on behalf of Radio Geneva and the Swiss Short Wave Services and gave valuable assistance to the ICRC delegation.

The Swiss Government delegation was headed by the former President of the International Committee, Mr. Paul Ruegger.

In the simultaneous absence of the President and the directors, the duties of the presidency, from 20 October onwards, devolved upon Mr. J. Chenevière, Dr. E. Gloor and Mr. R. Olgiati, members of the Committee.

Action on behalf of Hungary. — *The relief action on behalf of the victims of events in Hungary, which commenced on 26 October 1956, will have lasted for almost one year. 680 persons recruited by the Swiss Red Cross to carry out the programme drawn up by the ICRC were sent in rotation to Vienna or Budapest to serve under the direction of Mr. G. Rutishauser, the General Delegate of the International Committee. By air, rail and river barge, the ICRC carried more than 50,000 tons of foodstuffs, clothing, medicaments and hospital equipment, valued at more than 80 million Swiss francs and given by thirty-six National Societies and eleven Governments, as well as the United Nations and various charitable organisations.*

ICRC Delegation in Budapest. — *Dr. E. Fischer, head of the ICRC Delegation in Budapest, has travelled to Geneva several times during the last few months to give the latest details of this action. In response to a wish expressed by the Hungarian Red Cross, the ICRC maintained a delegation in Budapest until 18 October.*

Detainees and internees. — *Before leaving Budapest, the ICRC delegate examined on the spot the possibility of sending detained or interned persons gifts in kind, such as foodstuffs and vitaminized products.*

Refugees. — *In his interviews with the Hungarian Red Cross, Dr. Fischer discussed the possible holding of a meeting of National Societies of countries which have given asylum to refugees, in order to examine methods of reuniting families either in Hungary or outside that country, whichever is better for the family concerned. In this connection, the Central Card Index of Hungarian refugees can now be said to be an efficient working instrument. Very*

complete information has been collected at Geneva in this index, concerning refugees in countries of asylum (Information with regard to Norway is still inadequate, but more will be received in the near future).

Report on the relief action in Hungary. — *The ICRC report, which has just been published, covers the period from October 1956 to June 1957 and is in the form of an illustrated booklet of some sixty pages. It has been printed in French, English, German and Spanish. The Revue Internationale prints extensive extracts from this document in this issue.*

Delegations and missions. — *During the year, the ICRC has maintained permanent delegations in 28 countries in the Near East, Africa, America, Asia, Australasia and Europe. Most of its representatives are recruited on the spot from the Swiss communities abroad and give their assistance to the ICRC on an honorary basis. In other countries, the activities of the International Red Cross have been maintained, and in many cases extended, by means of special missions sent from Geneva. Finally, ICRC observers have taken part in the more important meetings held in the European Office of the United Nations, in Geneva.*

In the Near East, the General Delegate, Mr. D. de Traz, has remained in close touch with the authorities and National Societies. He has also paid visits to Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Jordan, Cyprus and the Sudan. Further visits are planned to the Yemen and Libya. In Egypt, Mr. Maurice Thudichum was head of the Cairo delegation until 20 October when he returned to Switzerland for health reasons. Mr. E. Muller and Mr. E. Jaquet are continuing to represent the International Committee in Cairo. Their activities, which are continuing, include assistance to Jewish and Christian stateless persons.

Mr. H. P. Junod, resident delegate of the ICRC in the Union of South Africa, carried out a special mission in Kenya, with the assistance of Dr. L. Gaillard from Geneva.

Mr. C. Vautier in Morocco and Mr. R. Vust, in Algeria, prepared the various missions carried out by Mr. C. Pilloud, Mr. J. P. Schoenholzer, Mr. P. Gaillard and Dr. L. Gaillard.

Mr. G. Hoffmann, ICRC delegate in Tunisia, having come to Geneva to discuss matters with the Committee, left again on October 21 to return to his post. During his visit a detailed programme was drawn up for two large relief actions for the provision of clothing to Algerian refugees in Tunisia. One of these actions will be carried out with the help of funds placed at the Committee's disposal by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Assistance to political detainees and victims of internal disturbances. — *Acting on a strictly humanitarian basis, the ICRC has come to the assistance of persons detained for political reasons. During the first half of 1957, 153 places of detention were visited as against 68 in the corresponding period of 1956. On these occasions, the ICRC delegates examined living conditions and the work system in prisons, assembly centres, screening camps, transit camps and the 'rehabilitation villages'. Everywhere the authorities provided them with the necessary facilities for carrying out their tasks. As is the custom, the facts noted during these visits, and suggestions for improving the conditions of detention, were embodied in reports which have been sent to the governments concerned.*

The places of detention visited are as follows: Africa: 121 (Algeria 48, Kenya 73); Near East: 7 (Cyprus 3, Egypt 2, Israel 2); Asia: 1 (Japan); Europe: 24 (Federal Republic of Germany 14, Greece 8, Poland 1, German Democratic Republic 1). Total 153.

Assistance to the war-disabled. — *Thanks to the devoted work of Professor Franceschetti of Geneva, the action, to which we have already referred in these pages, on behalf of Italian children with impaired eyesight continues to make good progress.*

Reuniting of families. — *During the first six months of 1957, about 48,000 persons of German stock rejoined their families. The movements have been from Poland to the Federal Republic of Germany in organised convoys (almost 46,000 persons) or individually to the Federal Republic, Austria and other countries, from Yugoslavia (1,642 persons), and from Hungary, Rumania*

and Czechoslovakia (about 300 persons). Thus the number of direct beneficiaries of these measures since the beginning of the action rose between 31 December 1956 and the end of June 1957 from approximately 142,000 to more than 190,000.

The rôle of the ICRC, which instituted this action and has developed it during the last seven years, differs in the various cases. In some countries it takes some of the necessary steps itself, in others the National Red Cross Societies assume responsibility.

Actions of the same kind are continuing in other countries too. By means of joint action by the ICRC, the League and the Red Cross Societies concerned, 22 persons of Greek nationality were enabled to leave Rumania at the beginning of the year to go to Australia.

Non-Governmental Organisations interested in Migration. — *The VIIth Conference of Non-Governmental Organisations interested in Migration met at United Nations headquarters in Geneva from 5 to 9 August. It passed a number of resolutions and elected its officers. Mr. H. Coursier, a member of the Legal Department of the ICRC, was elected Vice-Chairman of the Liaison Committee, which has the task of maintaining relations between the 70 non-governmental organisations which form part of the Conference.*

Relief. — *The forwarding and distribution of relief, especially in cases of conflict, is one of the traditional tasks of the ICRC. The Committee must be ready to act as neutral intermediary at all times. Thus, it enquires into needs, appeals for donations and impresses on all parties the need to observe the principle of fair distribution according to urgency of requirements.*

During the first part of the year, the ICRC was asked to carry out several relief programmes. In the case of Hungary we refer our readers to the report mentioned above. In Egypt, the ICRC acted as intermediary in giving assistance to stateless persons and helping them to leave the country. In Morocco, it has carried out an emergency relief action on behalf of Algerian refugees in the Oujda region, partly out of its own funds and partly with the help of gifts it had collected for this purpose. Furthermore, its traditional action has continued in Greece, on behalf of the civilian

population and political detainees, and in several European countries, particularly on behalf of the war-disabled.

The table below shows the relief given during the first six months of the year, by country and category of beneficiary.

Summary table of relief (in Swiss francs) given
up to 30 June 1957

Algeria	30,000
Cyprus	10,000
Egypt	1,061,000
Greece	210,000
Hungary	59,700,000
Italy	11,000
Korea	58,000
Morocco	260,000
Nepal	3,000
Tunisia	7,000
Various	8,000
Total	<u>61,358,000</u>

Distribution by category of beneficiary

Sick persons, victims of disasters and persons in distress	59,735,000
Refugees and stateless persons	1,291,000
Detainees, internees and persons in assigned residence	308,000
Wounded, disabled and prisoners of war	<u>24,000</u>
Total for the first six months	61,358,000

International Tracing Service. — *The work of the International Tracing Service at Arolsen is not diminishing; on the contrary, the directors have even had to increase the number of staff recently by about twenty, because of the extension by the German authorities of the time limit for the submission to the courts of disputed claims. Persons who suffered from the discriminatory laws enforced by the former National Socialist regime during the Second World War, under a more recent law will have until 1 April 1958 to put in their applications, and not until 1 October 1957, as was stated*

by the *Revue Internationale* on page 166, note No. 1 of the English supplement for September last.

Ratification of the Geneva Conventions. — *Nine further ratifications and accessions have been notified since the beginning of the year. In the order in which the instruments of ratification were deposited, these were as follows: Iran, Haiti, Tunisia, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Brazil, the United Kingdom, the Democratic Republic of Korea and the Sudan. By 31 October 1957, the number of States Parties to the Geneva Conventions had thus risen to 69.*

Dissemination of the Geneva Conventions. — *The ICRC has sent to the French Red Cross at its request, 1000 copies of the pamphlet entitled "Les Conventions de Genève, résumé succinct à l'usage des militaires et civils" (The Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949, Brief Summary for Members of the Armed Forces and the General Public). These booklets are to be distributed during lectures given at the military school of Saint-Maixent to a thousand officer cadets, of whom 100 are Moroccans. A number of photostat copies of documents connected with the activities of the Central Prisoner of War Agency have also been made for display at an exhibition arranged for December next in Niort by the local branch of the French Red Cross.*

News from National Societies. — *During these last few months, the ICRC has recognized the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Laotian Red Cross and the Tunisian Red Crescent, thus bringing the number of Societies recognized up to 79.*

Conferences and Congresses. — *During September and October, Dr. E. Gloor, member of the Committee, and Mr. J. P. Schoenholzer represented the ICRC at the 12th Congress of the International Dental Federation in Rome, and at the International Congress of Military Medicine and Pharmacy in Belgrade.*

Mr. C. Pilloud, Assistant Director for General Affairs, took part in the General Assembly of the World Medical Association held from 29 September to 5 October in Istanbul.

Mr. H. Coursier and Mr. H. G. Beckh were present as observers at the meetings of Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration which began in Geneva on 7 October.

The ICRC was represented by its delegate, Mr. Nicholas Burckhardt, Director of the International Tracing Service, at the Seventh General Assembly of the World Veterans Federation held in West Berlin from 28 October to 1 November.

Publications. — *“Red Cross Principles” by Mr. Jean S. Pictet has just been translated into Japanese.*

Broadcasting, films and television. — *As is known, every week broadcasts in Arabic are made by the ICRC, in order to ensure wide dissemination of knowledge of the humanitarian principles on which the Committee's work is based. The more recent of these broadcasts have taken the form of commentaries on the main items on the agenda of the New Delhi Conference. The next broadcasts will be devoted to consideration of Conference decisions and to talks on humanitarian principles in the East; the principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement; information on the activities of the Red Crescent Societies and the ICRC; and the Geneva Conventions. These programmes are broadcast every Friday in Arabic.*

Talks in English on the New Delhi Conference were also given during September and October.

Two broadcasts in French and German, under the title of “What is an ICRC delegate?” have been made by the Swiss Television Service with the help of Mr. R. Gallopin, Executive Director, Mr. M. Thudichum, Dr. L. Gaillard and Mr. M. Redli, ICRC delegates. The Information Service of the ICRC has made a film on the recent activities of the ICRC in Hungary, Egypt and North Africa. This documentary will be shown in the near future.

Participation of the Red Cross in the Universal Exhibition at Brussels. — *Mr. G. Fiechter, Head of the ICRC Information Department, and Mr. R. Melley, took part in a meeting held on 26 September*

at the headquarters of the Belgian Red Cross in Brussels. The object of this meeting, at which the League was represented by Mr. M. Gazay, Assistant Director of the Information Bureau, was to consider various matters concerning the exhibits illustrating the activities of the two international bodies of the Red Cross in the International Red Cross Pavilion at the Brussels Universal and International Exhibition to be opened next spring.

A gift by the ICRC on behalf of Austrian war-blinded. — *The International Committee has contributed towards the establishment in Vienna of a library of recordings for Austrian war-blinded, which will also be available for the use of other blind persons. Last month, Mr. Joubert, ICRC representative in Austria, handed over the sum of 10,000 Schillings to the Association of Austrian War-Blinded on behalf of the Committee.*

The Association expressed its gratitude to the Committee and underlined the usefulness of the new library. Those who have lost their sight will not only be able to train for a new life by studying, but will be better fitted to endure the harsh trials of blindness through the richer intellectual and spiritual life thus opened up to them.

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRACING SERVICE

The International Tracing Service (ITS), whose headquarters are at Arolsen, has continued its assistance to certain categories of persons suffering as a result of the Second World War and its consequences : persons deported, internees, victims of racial discrimination, displaced persons and refugees.

It will be remembered that since spring 1955, the International Committee has assumed responsibility for the direction and administration of the ITS, in conformity with the international agreements between the German Federal Republic, the former Occupying Powers and the ICRC. Under these agreements, an International Commission was also established. One of its aims was to maintain the existing international cooperation in ITS activities and to supervise the utilization and safekeeping of the ITS archives and documents. This Commission, which at the moment consists of one representative of each of the Governments which signed the 1955 agreement (France, United Kingdom, United States and the German Federal Republic) and representatives of the Governments of Belgium, Greece, Israel, Italy, Luxemburg and the Netherlands, meets every three months. Thus, in 1957, it met in March and June to examine the progress reports of the ITS and the general or technical problems involved in the running of the service.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

In its last issue, the *Revue internationale* reproduced an extract from the Annual Report of the ICRC concerning the work accomplished by the ITS during 1956. We print below a statistical table showing the activities of the ITS during the first six months of this year :

I. Cases dealt with :

(a) Inquiries concerning persons deported, victims of racial persecution and refugees	18,484
(b) Requests for attestations of death	17,954
(c) Requests for certificates to enable compensation to be obtained	66,784
(d) Requests for historical or statistical information	64
Total	<u>103,286</u>

II. Certificates and information transmitted :

(a) Information concerning persons deported, victims of racial persecution and refugees	68,766
(b) Attestations of death	753
(c) Attestations requested for obtaining compensation	93,643
(d) Replies to requests for historical or statistical information	60
Total	<u>163,222</u>

III. Acquisition of new documents :

(documents made available to the ITS during the first six months of 1957)

(a) Concentration camp documents	50,855
(b) Documents concerning war-time	3,481
(c) Post-war documents	155,421
Total	<u>209,757</u>

IV. Central card index :

Index Cards drawn up during the first six months of 1957	151,003
Index Cards filed during the same period	206,503
Cases outstanding on December 31, 1956	46,150
Cases outstanding on June 30, 1957	54,140

The staff of the ITS consisted of 236 persons on June 30, 1957.
