



**REVUE
INTERNATIONALE
DE LA
CROIX-ROUGE**

SUPPLEMENT

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HISTORY OF THE LAWS AND CUSTOMS
OF WAR
UP TO THE MIDDLE AGES

II

Greece and Rome

In *The Republic* of Plato we find in Chapter XVII several rules mitigating the usages of war which, according to the commentator Cornford, were chiefly inspired by a feeling for the unity of the Greek race and the wish to unite the Greek republics against the Persians¹.

In the same sense Ballis says—

It was to the category “beyond the pale of the law” that the non-Greeks or barbarians were allocated. Consequently, the laws regulating war were not applicable to barbarians².

In Plato we read³—

Next, is it well to strip the dead, after a victory, of anything but their arms? It only gives cowards an excuse for not facing the living enemy, as if they were usefully employed in poking about over a dead body. Many an army has been lost through this pillaging. There is something mean and greedy in plundering a corpse, and a sort of womanish pettiness in treating the body as an enemy, when the spirit, the real enemy, has flown, leaving behind only the instrument with which he fought. It is to behave no better than a dog which growls at the stone that has hit him and leaves alone the man who threw it. So we will have no stripping of the slain and we shall not prevent their comrades from burying them.

(Compare with Article 3 of the First Geneva Convention of 1929.)

¹ Francis MacDONALD CORNFORD, *The Republic of Plato*, Oxford, 1942, p. 165.

² William BALLIS *The Legal Position of War, Changes in its practice and theory from Plato to Vattel*, The Hague, 1937, p. 13.

³ CORNFORD, *op. cit.*, pp. 168-169.

Plato goes on to say—

Observe then that what is commonly known as civil strife, that is to say, when one of our Greek states is divided against itself, it is thought an abominable outrage for either party to ravage the lands or burn the houses of the other.

Ballis makes the following remarks about Greece and Rome—

In Rome, as in ancient Greece, there were instances where the waging of war was limited by time and place. The time limitation is illustrated by the various truces and armistices which were freely granted for different periods of time. It was the purpose of these truces, among other things, to allow for the necessary time to conduct negotiations and to bury the dead. The place limitation was manifested, as it was in ancient Greece, in the neutralization of temples, sanctuaries, cities and even territories¹.

and cites Wilson's *International Law*—

A very characteristic Greek limitation on war with respect to place is evidenced in the oath of the Amphictyonic League: "We will not destroy an amphictyonic town nor cut it off from running water, in war or peace; if any one shall do this we will march against him and destroy his city. If any one shall plunder the property of the god, or shall take treacherous counsel against the things in this temple at Delphi, we will punish him with foot and hand and voice, and by every means in our power".

Here we see a rule with a sanction attached to it and as far as I was able to find this is the earliest place where a war crime is threatened with punishment. The punishment of Achan (Joshua 7,25) had rather a disciplinary character and did not follow a preceding penal provision.

Grotius often cites Greek and Roman authors, from which clearly appears the roughness of the conduct of war in that epoch². Sometimes however, for practical as well as for ethical reasons, a mitigating of the usages of war took place or was recommended. Grotius mentions that prisoners would be enslaved and even put to death³ but, on the other hand, more

¹ BALLIS, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-27 and p. 16.

² GROTIUS *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, Libri tres, 1625, Oxford, 1925-1927; (quotations from Chapters XI, XIII, XV, XXIII, XIV, IV, XIX).

³ See William E. S. FLORY, *Prisoners of War. A Study in the Development of International Law*, Washington, 1942, pp. 11-12.

human opinions existed too in those early days; he says for instance—

In Diodorus Siculus the Byzantines and Chalcedonians, because they had put to death a large number of prisoners, are branded with this characterisation: "They perpetrated crimes of extraordinary cruelty".

Elsewhere he says—

To spare prisoners ¹ is commanded by the nature of goodness and justice, as we just now heard Seneca say in his philosophical treatise. We see that in history those are praised who, when they might have been burdened or endangered by an excessive number of prisoners, preferred to release all rather than kill them.

The reason for which prisoners, according to the "Law of Nations", could be enslaved was, as Grotius says, to protect them. Those who kept prisoners would renounce the right to kill them by having the benefit of their services or their selling price. By escaping during war-time to his home-country a prisoner could, according to the *jus postliminii*, regain liberty. Under the influence of Christianity the procedure of ransoming prisoners arose. Women and children were taken as hostages and sometimes hostages were killed. At the time the use of poison was already prohibited; Grotius states in this connection—

And it is easy to believe that this agreement originated with kings, whose lives are better defended by arms than those of other men, but are less safe from poison unless they are protected by some respect for law and by fear of disgrace.

Poisoning of weapons or water was thus not allowed (see the Hague Regulations, Article 23a). Some authors considered that rape was allowed, others denied this. Grotius cites some examples of punishment for offending against a prohibition of rape, for instance in Plutarch where one Torquatus was banished to Corsica for having assaulted a daughter of the enemy.

Grotius mentions several examples of divergent views of Greek and Roman authors about plundering and confiscation,

¹ Capitulinus said in his *Marcus (Aurelius) Antonius* (XXIV) "He observed the rules of Justice even in regard to prisoners taken from the enemy".

although in practice these were certainly not rare. It is remarkable that a rejection of plundering is not based on ethical motives but on the fact that the lower elements of the army should profit by their greed for loot more than the brave soldiers who had suffered for them.

Temples were sometimes still subject to confiscation, but Grotius cites Thucydides and Livy who state that sacred buildings were spared (in Greece this was an established rule; see Article 56 of the Hague Regulations). He relates the story of Scipio who, after the capture of Carthage, rewarded his soldiers except those who had plundered the temple of Apollo.

Grotius refers to some Greek and Roman authors with whom moral considerations prevailed above the pure law of those days. They condemned slavery of prisoners and plunder. Diodorus Siculus in his *Bibliotheca historica* mentions with praise the Indian custom of not attacking farmers¹.

The surrender of an enemy had to be accepted. The massacre of the Campsari by Marius to whom they had surrendered is considered by Sallustius as an offence against the laws of war. Nowadays we should call it a war crime. In this connection Grotius quotes Livy ("Ab urbe condita" XXXVI)—

In Polybius and Livy there is a famous story about Phanaeas, the Ambassador of the Aetolians, who in his speech to the Consul Manius yielded as far as to say: "Therefore the Aetolians have resolved to surrender themselves and their possessions" as Livy states "to the good faith of the Roman people". Then the Consul demanded that certain persons who had stirred up the war should be surrendered to him without delay (see Charter for the Major War Criminals, Article 6a). Phanaeas took exception to this and said: "we have surrendered ourselves to your good faith and not to slavery", adding that what was ordered was not consistent with Greek custom. The Consul replied that he did not care what the custom of the Greeks was, that according to Roman custom he had power over those who had surrendered to his discretion and he gave orders that the ambassadors be put in chains.

There are two more remarkable points in the laws of war during the Roman epoch; First of all, the definition of the *combatant* (see Article 1 of the Hague Regulations). From

¹ GROTIUS, *op. cit.*, Chapter XI.

Cicero we know the advice of Cato to his son, who was demobilised, not to take part in the war because it was not right to fight against the enemy when he was no longer a soldier. According to Grotius however this was a rule of military discipline rather than one of the law of nations. In Cicero we also find that Roman soldiers had to take a military oath without which they were not allowed to take part in the fight. Sailors of the navy and in short all those who had taken the oath were considered as combatants (Justiniani Digesta) ¹.

Secondly, the practice of a solemn declaration of war (see the Convention on the subject concluded during the second Hague Peace Conference, 1907). Cicero (De Officiis) says that no war can be legitimate without previous declaration of war. The *jus fetiale* of the Romans gives detailed elaboration of this practice.

Islam

The following information concerning the laws of war in the Islamic countries is chiefly taken from the work of Mr. Khadduri ².

Before the foundation of Islam, the fight between two or more Arab tribes amounted to marauding expeditions and even friendly or neighbouring tribes were not spared when a hostile tribe was not available for robbing. The object of the holy war (*Jihad*) was the propagation of Islam and the conquest of the whole world into one Islamic State. Although, in this sense, there was a permanent state of war between Islam and the outside world, hostilities, as such, were generally speaking preceded by negotiations.

If future enemies were renegades, a warning inviting them to revert to Islam preceded the attack. The same applied to the unfaithful who were first invited to join Islam or to pay a tribute : Allah has said : " We never punish until we have first sent an Apostle ". Although this means, according to Ibn Rushd, that the coming of Mohammed and his invitation to

¹ GROTIUS, *op. cit.*, Book III, Chapter III.

² Majid KHADDURI, *The Law of War and Peace in Islam. A Study in Muslim International Law*, London, 1940. We refer to pages 24, 31, 47, 48, 49, 57 and 59 of this work.

Islam and warning against polytheism was a sufficient reason for obeying this command, the authors agreed that the sending of a summons preceding a war was a fixed rule. Opinion only differed as to whether such summons had to be repeated when the tribe concerned was going to be attacked for a second time.

In certain official correspondence preserved at At-Tabari, the Prophet is reported to have ordered Khalid Ibn-ul-Walid, the Sword of Allah, to invite the tribe of Banu-Barith to join Islam before fighting it. In his reply to Mohammed, Khalid said : " In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate. To Mahommed, the Apostle of Allah, from Khalid Ibn-ul-Walid... you sent me... and ordered me to invite them to Islam... and to wait for three days before I should fight them... I have invited them to Islam... and they have consented to accept the faith..."¹.

Official invitation, oral or written, was taken to the enemy commander by a commission consisting of leading officers (see the Roman *jus fetiale*).

Concerning the methods of warfare, Kaddhuri remarks that the chivalrous spirit which prevailed in the Arab army was lost when the Caliphs of the house of Abbasid began to recruit foreign soldiers. Quincy Wright makes a similar remark when pointing out that compulsory service caused a weakening of conceptions of military honour and with it less strict observance of the laws of war. In his celebrated address to the first expedition sent to the Syrian borders, the aged first Caliph cited in the work at At-Tabari said, on the subject of the " Status of Persons and Property in War " :

Stop, O people, that I may give you ten rules to keep by heart !
Do not commit treachery nor depart from the right path. You must not mutilate, neither kill a child or aged man or woman. Do not destroy a palm-tree, nor burn it with fire and do not cut any fruitful trees. You must not slay any of the flock or the herds or the camels, save for your subsistence. You are likely to pass by people who have devoted their lives to monastic services; leave them to that to which they have devoted their lives. You are likely, likewise, to find people who will present to you meals of many kinds. You may eat but do not forget to mention the name of Allah...

¹ De AT-TABARI, *Abu-Ja'far Mohammed Ibn-Jarir. Tarikh-ul-Rusul wa-J. Muluk (A book on the History of Islam)*, edited by M. J. de Goeje, Leiden, 1879-1901.

Here we see the two groups of rules we mentioned before : moral and practical rules. Those of the first group we find in the modern laws and customs of war. The second group (the sparing of palm and fruit trees for instance) corresponds with the rule in Deuteronomy (Chapter XX, v. 19). With regard to the protection of palm-trees (so essential to Arab life) there is a remarkable exception in the Koran. In an introduction to a work concerning the life of Mohammed, it is said ¹ :

As he (Mohammed) was so imprudent that he, contrary to old Arab international law, had part of their palm-trees cut which were rightly considered essential for the life of the population, he caused great dissatisfaction amongst his own followers and had to justify himself by a special Revelation.

The translation of the 59th Sura of the Koran, which refers to the punishment of the unfaithful, reads as follows in verse 5 :

Whatsoever palm-trees ye cut down or left standing on their roots it was by Allah's leave, in order that he might confound the evil-doers.

D. Santillana writes as follows ² :

In warfare there is a curious combination of barbarism and high civilisation. The war between the ancient Arabs was a war of extermination. The Islam did temper its ferocity when it prescribed that hostilities should be preceded by an invitation to the pagans to be converted, and prohibited the mutilation of enemies, the killing of women, old persons, children, lunatics, hermits and the sick, and the poisoning of arrows, spears and wells...

(See Article 23 a of the Hague Regulations and Point XXXII of the list of war crimes, 1919).

Kaddhuri says on page 59 :

The commander of the Jihadists was allowed to besiege enemy cities, to use mangonels (throwing machines) for the destruction of houses and killing civilians, provided that they should not be killed treacherously and with mutilation. The Prophet Mohammed was against the practice of treacherous killing and mutilation, but when the

¹ K. V. ZETTERSTÉEN, *Koranen översatt från Arabiskan*, Stockholm 1917.

² DAVID SANTILLANA, *Instituzioni di Diritto Musulmano Malichita*, Rome, 1926 Book III, par. 7, p. 71.

Meccans did not respect this custom he ordered his followers to retaliate¹.

A non-Moslem spy was always killed; one of the faith was severely punished until he was pardoned.

The attitude towards prisoners of war varied from immediate execution, to enslavement or release with or without ransom. According to one of the schools of doctrine, execution was out of the question if the prisoner embraced Islam. Women and children could also be made prisoners of war. According to Khadduri Arabs could not be enslaved :

Umar, the second Caliph, was against the enslavement of Arabs. He is reported to have declared "there is no ownership of an Arab".

Here again we see the more liberal usages of war in respect to people of the same race which we have already found in Plato, also that Jews and Christians enjoyed a more liberal treatment.

Grotius, speaking about the later Middle Age, reports that Christians did not enslave prisoners taken during their wars and that in the Islamic countries the same custom was in force.

After an unjust war there was no point in repenting and fasting if the prisoners were not sent home and the booty restored. This was the conception, not only of Jews and Christians, but also of the Islamites².

Khadduri makes a few comments on the partition of the booty and on hostages taken in order to ensure the observance of a treaty. It is noteworthy that if the treaty was violated the hostages were never killed but were always sent home before the disloyal tribe was attacked³.

M. W. MOUTON

¹ KHADDURI, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

² GROTIUS, *op. cit.*, Book III, Chapters III, VII, X.

³ KHADDURI, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-98.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

SUNDRY ACTIVITIES

News Items

Medicaments for Poland. — *The International Committee continues to send medicaments to Poland. The requests from sick persons or their own doctors, and the prescriptions for the medicaments required, are sent to the ICRC through the Polish Red Cross.*

The medicaments (mainly patent medicines of vital need) are sent by the ICRC as soon as possible to the Polish Red Cross for distribution to the persons concerned.

This relief action, started about two years ago, has been financed in part with funds made available to the ICRC by the British Red Cross.

Visit of the new Chairman of the Board of Governors of the League. — *During a flying visit to Geneva the new Chairman of the Board of Governors of the League paid a visit to the ICRC headquarters on October 16.*

The Committee was very pleased to receive Mr. John A. MacAulay who was accompanied by his wife and daughter and Mr. Henry W. Dunning, Secretary-General to the League.

A mission of the ICRC to East and West Germany. — *During his further visit, in the second fortnight in July, to East and West Germany, Mr. H. G. Beckh, delegate of the ICRC, had several talks with the directorate of the German Red Cross, government and legal authorities, and with eminent jurists in particular on the subject of political detainees and the legal aspect of this problem. In West Berlin Mr. Beckh visited Moabit and Tegel Prisons and*

the Plötzensee Prison Hospital; he spoke without witnesses with some thirty political detainees.

The President of the ICRC at the Académie des Sciences morales et politiques. — *On October 19, in Paris, Mr. Léopold Boissier, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, gave a talk on "The action of the ICRC in internal disturbances" at a meeting of the Académie des Sciences morales et politiques of which he is a corresponding member.*

The meeting was attended by members of the Académie; Mr. Pierre Micheli, Ambassador of Switzerland, and Mr. André François-Poncet, President of the French Red Cross, were also present.

Repatriation of Vietnamese refugees. — *Following the negotiations which were pursued from June 20 to August 14 in Rangoon, the representatives of the Thai Red Cross and the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam concluded an agreement on the conditions of the repatriation of Vietnamese refugees in Thailand who had expressed the wish to go to North Viet Nam. The delegate of the ICRC, Mr. A. Durand, assisted in the discussions in an advisory capacity. The repatriation ships are expected to be available in January 1960.*

Visits to places of detention. — *Towards the end of October a further mission of the ICRC, composed of Mr. M. Martin and Dr. L. A. Gaillard, continued the series of visits to Algerians detained or interned in France; several places of detention in metropolitan France were visited.*

World Federation of United Nations Associations. — *The International Committee was represented by Mr. H. Coursier, Member of the Legal Department, at the XIVth Plenary Assembly of the World Federation of United Nations Associations, held in Geneva at the headquarters of the International Labour Office from August 31 to September 5, under the chairmanship of Mr. Roberto Ago.*

A number of recommendations — relating in particular to the dissemination and a still broader application of the humanitarian

principles set forth in the United Nations Charter — were adopted by the Assembly and communicated to member organisations by the Secretary-General of the World Federation, Mr. A. Pelt.

Members of the League staff visit the ICRC headquarters. — *Under the auspices of the League Staff Association, two groups of staff members paid visits to the ICRC headquarters on July 16 and 22 to see the film “ Blood is still being shed...” and to visit the Central Prisoners of War Agency.*

It was a great pleasure to the ICRC to receive these visits which will help to strengthen the bond between staff members of the two organisations in their work for a common ideal.

A donation to the ICRC. — *The firm of Suchard S. A. in Lausanne has made a donation of ten thousand francs to the International Committee of the Red Cross for the purpose of assisting delegates of the ICRC who have suffered disablement in the performance of their duties.*

This generous gesture was made in honour of the founder of the firm, Mr. Philippe Suchard who, like Henry Dunant, gave assistance to the wounded of the Battle of Solferino for several days.

The end of a mission. — *Mr. A. Durand, delegate of the ICRC, returned to Geneva in September at the close of a mission of eight months' duration. In the course of his mission Mr. Durand visited Indonesia, Thailand, the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and Burma.*

Distribution of cigarettes. — *As stated in the June Supplement, some time ago the ICRC sent a million gift cigarettes to the Red Cross of the German Federal Republic for distribution to refugees in various assembly centres.*

The gift was highly appreciated by the beneficiaries many of whom have expressed their gratitude, either directly to the International Committee or through the German Red Cross.

Visits to the ICRC. — *During the past four months numerous visitors were received at the ICRC headquarters, including H. E.*

Mr. Lothar Bolz, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic, accompanied by Mr. Schmidt (Protocol) and Mr. Zimmering, Permanent Delegate in Geneva, Baron C. H. von Platen, the new Permanent Representative of Sweden to international organisations in Geneva, Mr. Luigi Meda, former Under-Secretary of State for Defence, Italian delegate to the United Nations Ad hoc Commission on Prisoners of War, accompanied by Colonel C. Di Crescenzo, Mr. Michel Potulicki, Executive Director of the International Committee of the World Refugee Year, and Mr. Walter Pauly and Mr. Otto Hauber, Assistant Permanent Delegates in Geneva of the German Federal Republic.

Members of Red Cross Societies took advantage of tours in Switzerland to pay visits to the International Committee, which had the pleasure of receiving during the summer the Duke d'Hernani, a member of the Supreme Assembly of the Spanish Red Cross, Mrs. P. Tiruchelvan, Assistant-Director of the Ceylon Junior Red Cross, the new Director-General of the Belgian Red Cross, Mr. Daniel Godfrind and his wife, Dr. Mohi El Din Mehdi, Medical Adviser of the Sudanese Red Crescent, Mr. E. van Emden, Director of the Netherlands Red Cross and Chairman of the Commission for the Financing of the ICRC, Mr. Sevcik, Secretary-General of the Austrian Red Cross, Mrs. R. Schwarz, President of the Briarcliff (N. Y.) Junior Red Cross Section, the Chairman of the Australian Red Cross, Dr. G. Newman Morris, the son of the deeply regretted Sir John Newman Morris, former Chairman of this Society, Mr. Kornilios Ch. Anglélidis, Director of the Press Department of the Greek Red Cross, and Dr. T. Agata, Professor of Sociology at the Faculty of Medicine, Tokyo University, and Adviser to the Japanese Red Cross.

In September and October visits were received from Mr. L. Brett, Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Nigerian Branch of the British Red Cross, Mr. L. G. Stubbings, Secretary-General of the Australian Red Cross, Mr. Ruben Aguirre, Member of the Paraguayan Red Cross, Mr. Georg Pasewaldt, Head of the Munich Tracing Bureau of the German Red Cross, Miss Jeannette King, President of the Liberian Red Cross, Mr. Shunsuke Honjo, Head of the Japanese Junior Red Cross and Mr. L. Kraft, Head of the Foreign Relations Department of the South African Red Cross.

On October 8, Mr. Henrik Beer, Secretary-General of the Swedish Red Cross and future Secretary-General of the League of Red Cross Societies, paid a visit to the International Committee.

The groups of students and nurses who came to visit the ICRC and the Central Prisoners of War Agency included students from the " Rheinische Friedrich Wilhelm " University in Bonn and others attending summer courses on the international institutions organised by the Geneva University and summer courses of the Benedict School, Neuchâtel, « Bon Secours » Nursing School, Geneva, and the French Red Cross Nursing School, Colmar. Visits were also received from nurses attending courses at the WHO and home-nursing courses at the Geneva Maternity Hospital, also student-nurses taking part in a study course of the International Labour Office under the auspices of the World Federation of United Nations Associations. As in previous years the ICRC had the pleasure of receiving another group of Juniors of the American Red Cross.

From July to October some 500 tourists from various countries (Germany, America, Canada, Spain, USSR, Sweden, etc.) visited the ICRC headquarters when passing through Geneva.

The International Meeting of former prisoners of war. — *Mr. Frederic Siordet, Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, went to Metz on September 6 to represent the ICRC at the first international meeting of former prisoners of war organised by the International Confederation of Former Prisoners of War.*

During his address to the meeting, Mr. Siordet laid stress on the value of the Geneva Conventions and the need for their dissemination.

Presentation of the Nansen Medal to Mr. Oskar Helmer. — *The ICRC was represented at the official ceremony held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on October 13, for the presentation of the Nansen Medal to Mr. Oskar Helmer, former Minister of the Interior in Austria.*

This distinction was awarded in recognition of Mr. Helmer's great interest in refugees and the unfailing efforts made by him over the past fifteen years to improve their conditions.

Missions in Greece and Great Britain. — *Miss A. Pfirter, Head of the Medical Personnel and the War Disablement Sections, represented the ICRC at the 14th Meeting of the Advisory Nursing Committee of the League, held in Athens from September 21 to 23. During her visit she was in contact with the Greek Red Cross, the Ministry of Health and the Director of the Medical Service.*

Miss Pfirter left Athens on September 28 for Great Britain where she had been invited to attend an Army Medical Exercise in connection with the evacuation and treatment of casualties following a mass attack.

During her brief stay in Great Britain Miss Pfirter had interviews with members of the British Red Cross, the Ministry of Health, the International Council of Nurses and the National Council of Nurses. She was also present at competitions organised by the Casualty Union in which teams of the British Red Cross and the St. John Ambulance Association, the Civil Defence Service, Blood Transfusion Service, National Hospital Reserve Service, Women's Voluntary Service, the Police and Fire Services, etc, took part.

Appointment of a new permanent delegate to the ICRC. — *The Republic of San Marino has appointed a new permanent delegate to the ICRC, Baron Lanni della Quara, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, resident in Milan, who paid a visit to our President on July 20.*

Study-visits to the ICRC. — *Members of National Societies took advantage of missions to Geneva to make short study-visits in the International Committee's various sections. They included Mrs. P. Sheppard, Volunteer Field Consultant of the American Red Cross, who acts as observer for the League with the United Nations, Mrs. Nelly Caranica, Head of the Tracing Service of the Greek Red Cross, Miss Amal El Khudairi of the Secretariat of the Ladies Committee of the Iraqi Red Crescent and Mrs. Rachel Malka, member of the Sudanese Red Crescent.*

The ICRC and telecommunication. — *The ICRC sent an observer to the Administrative Conference of the International Telecommuni-*

cation Union which opened on August 17 in Geneva and will continue until December. Some of the numerous matters dealt with by this Conference present an interest for the Red Cross.

Greece. — In August the International Committee sent a gift to the Greek Red Cross consisting of twelve cases of relief supplies (in particular medicaments) for a total value of 10,000 Swiss francs to be distributed to persons under detention or exiled for political reasons.

Nicaragua. — The Central Agency for Prisoners of War in Geneva has noted with satisfaction the close contact established between the National Societies of Costa Rica and Nicaragua for the purpose of transmitting news concerning persons arrested or missing in Nicaragua, as a result of the events of the past months, whose families are resident in Costa Rica. News of detained persons and information concerning the missing are collected by the Nicaraguan Red Cross and sent to the Costarican Red Cross which, in turn, duly informs the Central Agency.

The ICRC in the Middle East. — Mr. D. de Traz, General-Delegate of the ICRC for the Middle East visited Damascus on several occasions during August.

He also went to Israel and Cairo where the ICRC continues its work in behalf of stateless persons. Early in October Mr. de Traz returned to Switzerland for a holiday.

Mr. E. Muller, delegate of the ICRC in Egypt was in Switzerland during August and September. He returned to his post at the head of the Cairo Delegation early in October.

Relief parcels for interned Japanese fishermen. — The ICRC requested Mr. H. Angst, its delegate in Tokyo, to have parcels containing clothing, vitamin products and cigarettes made up and despatched to the Red Cross of the Republic of Korea for distribution to interned Japanese fishermen. These parcels, valued at 5,500 Swiss francs, arrived at Pusan early in October and the distribution will be dealt with by this National Society.

Swiss nurses visit the ICRC. — *On October 23 the ICRC had the pleasure of receiving some fifty sister-tutors, nurses and student nurses (representing eighteen Swiss nursing schools) who had visited Solferino and Castiglione under the auspices of the Swiss Red Cross. The tour was conducted by Mr. J. Pascalis, Assistant Secretary-General of the Swiss Red Cross and Miss M. Duwillard, Matron of the "Bon Secours" Nursing School in Geneva.*

The visitors were received at the ICRC headquarters by Miss A. Pfirter, Head of the Medical Personnel Section, who spoke to them of the problem of the recruiting and training of voluntary medical personnel. Mr. Du Pasquier gave a talk on the origin, principles and activities of the ICRC. After seeing the film "Blood is still being shed...", the visitors were shown round the Central Agency and then went on to the League headquarters.

Management of the International Tracing Service. — *As is known, on May 5, 1955 the ICRC took over the direction and administration of the International Tracing Service for a period of five years.*

According to present estimates, the work of the ITS is likely to be continued for some years to come; it has in fact to deal with a considerable amount of work which shows no sign of decreasing at the present time. As already stated, one particular feature of the work consists of the issue of certificates of internment or deaths to former inmates of concentration camps or their near relatives to enable them to make claims for compensation.

In view of these circumstances the four Powers (France, the United Kingdom, the United States and the German Federal Republic) which handed over the management of the ITS in 1955 have approached the International Committee to ascertain whether it would be prepared in principle to continue to carry this responsibility for a further period. A preliminary exchange of views on the subject took place in Geneva on August 3 and 4 between the representatives of the Powers concerned and the directorate of the ICRC.

A MISSION OF THE ICRC IN THE BALKANS

At the invitation of the Rumanian Red Cross, Mr. R. Gallopin, Executive Director of the ICRC, visited Bucharest during September, accompanied by Mr. H. Beckh, Delegate of the ICRC. He had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Octavian Béléa, President, Mrs. A. Mesaros, Dr. F. Bagdasar and General R. Rusesco, Vice-Presidents, and other leading members of the Society.

During his stay in Bucharest, Mr. Gallopin was received by the Deputy-Minister for Foreign Affairs.

His visit afforded Mr. Gallopin the opportunity of giving the leaders of the Rumanian Red Cross a survey of the present activities of the International Committee. In turn, the Rumanian Red Cross informed him of the various steps taken for the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions in Rumania and its work in connection with hygiene and first-aid.

With the representatives of the Rumanian Red Cross, Mr. Gallopin and Mr. Beckh made a close study of the problem of the reuniting of families.

On his way to Rumania Mr. Gallopin stopped at Belgrade and Sofia, following invitations to visit the Yugoslav and Bulgarian Red Cross Societies. He was received in Belgrade by Dr. Gregoric, President, and saw Mrs. Milosevic, Secretary-General, and other members of the Yugoslav Red Cross. Various questions of common interest were discussed, in particular the reuniting of families.

Mr. Gallopin took the opportunity of thanking the Yugoslav Red Cross for the kind assistance it has invariably given to representatives of the ICRC during their missions in Jugoslavia.

In Sofia, Mr. Gallopin discussed several matters of mutual interest with members of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Red Cross. He was received by Mrs. T. Rajdovska and Mr. G. Gospodinov, Vice-Presidents, Mr. P. Iordanov, Head of the

Foreign Relations Department, and other members of this Society.

Later, while Mr. Beckh was visiting a number of cities in Bulgaria, he was able to see some of the efficient work which is being done by the Red Cross, of which membership is very large in Bulgaria.

THE ICRC VISITS PLACES OF DETENTION
IN ALGERIA AND FRANCE

October 16, 1959. — The International Committee of the Red Cross has just sent a further mission to Algeria, which will visit internment camps and prisons during a period of six to eight weeks. This mission is composed of Mr. P. Gaillard, Mr. Roger Vust, Dr. Jean-Louis de Chastonay and Mr. Laurent Vust. This is the seventh mission sent to Algeria by the ICRC since 1955.

With the agreement of the authorities the ICRC has also made further visits to places of detention for Algerians in France. Since the winter (1958-1959), its delegates have visited 18 camps and prisons; in particular, a delegate was allowed to visit Mr. Ben Bella and the other detainees in Aix Island. These visits (duly authorised by the French authorities on each occasion) will be continued during the autumn. A few comforts, mostly educational supplies and clothing, have been distributed to the persons under detention.

THE NEW HEAD OF THE ICRC DELEGATION
IN JAPAN

November 6, 1959. Mr. André Durand, delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross, has just left for Tokyo where, at the head of the ICRC Delegation, he will replace Dr. Otto Lehner, who has now returned to Geneva after a stay of over two months in Japan.

Dr. Lehner, who was for many years a delegate of the ICRC in various parts of the world, especially in the Far East, is at present at the head of the UNICEF mission in Teheran. His duties in this connection prevented him from accepting a mission of the ICRC in Japan for a longer period.

The ICRC Delegation in Japan is at present composed of some 20 persons; its purpose is to lend the assistance of the ICRC to the operations being carried out by the Japanese Red Cross for the repatriation of Koreans resident in Japan who wish to go to a place of their choice in their country of origin.
