

**OCTOBER 1977**

**SEVENTEENTH YEAR — No. 199**

# **international review of the red cross**



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**REVUE INTERNATIONALE  
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**REVISTA INTERNACIONAL  
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**EXTRACTS FROM  
THE REVIEW**

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**INTERNATIONAL  
REVIEW OF  
THE RED CROSS**

The French and Spanish editions, also issued every month, may be obtained at the same price.

Diplomatische Konferenz über die Neubestätigung und die Weiterentwicklung des in bewaffneten Konflikten anwendbaren humanitären Völkerrechts. (September-Oktober.)

*The International Review is published each month by the  
International Committee of the Red Cross*

17, avenue de la Paix, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland  
Postal Cheque No. 12 - 1767.

Annual subscription: Sw. Fr. 30.— (\$12.—)  
Single copy Sw. Fr. 3.— (\$1.—)

**EDITOR: Michel TESTUZ**

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# New aspects of international humanitarian law

by J. S. Pictet

Vice-President of the  
International Committee  
of the Red Cross

*The International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo held its fourth Round Table on Present Problems of International Humanitarian Law from 30 August to 4 September 1977.*

*The meeting was opened by Mr. Jean Pictet, Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross; some extracts from his address are given below.*

On 10 June 1977, an event of far-reaching importance took place: the plenipotentiaries of a hundred States approved and initialled the text of two Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions. This was a memorable date, for the representatives of a majority of nations from all corners of the earth, men who in our troubled times do not often find it easy to come to agreement, set their stamp to a document which I would not hesitate to call a Charter for Mankind. This Charter constitutes a significant step forward in the evolution of a movement whose aims from its inception have been to ensure respect, protection and humane treatment for all those who are not able to fight.

We have now added some 150 new provisions to the 450 articles of law which were already in existence. It is an achievement comparable to the recasting of the Geneva Conventions in 1949. This time, there was no mention of revision. The declared purpose of the Conference was to "reaffirm and develop" humanitarian law, and that was indeed what

the Conference did, for what was necessary was to adapt the law in force to the conditions of modern conflicts. It should be recognized, all the same, that on certain points — in particular the protection of the civilian population against bombing attacks — changes have been introduced in the law as it stood, rules governed by custom have been codified and even new norms have been created.

The Geneva Conventions, in their improved form, now contain 600 articles, an imposing monument of law representing the fullest and newest expression of the rules affecting the human person in the event of armed conflict. This body of law may be considered to stand for the very ideal of the Red Cross; for the whole movement, as much for the National Societies as for its international organs, it is a splendid working instrument, contributing moreover to the spread of the spirit of mutual assistance and of peace among the nations.

I would like to hail the important part played by the Third World in the Conference. It can no longer be said that humanitarian law was enacted by Europeans for Europeans. It is progressing thus not only towards universality in its outward form, but towards a genuine, deep-rooted universality, built on solidarity. It is significant that nearly all the articles in both Protocols were adopted by consensus without having been put to a vote, which unquestionably is a quite remarkable thing.

There is still much to be done to make sure that the results achieved by the Conference take full effect and bear the most fruit.

We must remember, first of all, that the Protocols have not yet come into force. Only the process of legislation has been completed so far, but the Conference, in fact, decided on a six-month moratorium before any signatures would be accepted. When at least two States have ratified the Protocols, a further six-month period will elapse before they come into force. From that time on, the Protocols will be applicable.

The primary task, therefore, is to encourage signatures, ratification and accession, to ensure that these new additions to humanitarian law become universal, a condition that has always been, for the law of Geneva, essential to its strength and authority. Each and every individual and body in what I would call the “humanitarian world” should combine to promote rapid signature and ratification of the Protocols.

Parallel with these efforts, and equally important, is the work of spreading knowledge of the texts. These rules of civilized and humane conduct worked out in Geneva would be in danger of being lost to the

world if they remained in obscurity. If they are to have full effect, their maximum impact, they must be known to everyone: their application must flow from natural and automatic reflexes, they must form an integral part of customary behaviour. In this context, I would like to mention a historic precedent which may be instructive. During the war of 1870, the first Geneva Convention remained so little known that it was not applied; when peace was made, there was serious talk of annulling the Convention and abolishing the Red Cross. And this arose because of lack of knowledge of the Convention.

The texts adopted this year by the Diplomatic Conference are often subtle and complex: there is a need for them to be explained, summarized and made known among all people throughout the world. The ICRC has decided to produce a comprehensive article-by-article Commentary on the two Protocols, as it did for the 1949 Conventions. It will also publish teaching manuals and organize seminars on the subject.

The present Round Table has on its agenda a draft summary of the fundamental principles of humanitarian law. There is no doubt that it would be one of the best ways to make known the substance of this law in the armed forces and among large numbers of the population.

It remains for me to hope that the discussions at this Round Table will be, as in past years, of great value to the common cause which we serve and to which we are devoted. This cause I cannot describe better than by quoting, in conclusion, the words of the great philosopher Louis Pasteur:

*There are today two opposing laws: a law of blood and death, which daily invents new methods of combat and thus forces nations to be ever ready for the field of battle, and a law of peace, of labour, of salvation, which aims only at delivering mankind from the evils by which it is assailed.*

*One law seeks only violent conquest, the other, the relief of human suffering. The one jeopardizes thousands of lives for the sake of one man's ambition, the other places a single human life above all the military victories ever won.*

Jean S. PICTET

# Human rights and armed conflicts

On the 500th anniversary of the birth of Las Casas  
(1474-1874-1974)

by Paul de Geouffre de La Pradelle

*The author of the article printed below is Vice-President of the Institute of International Law and had attended the 1949 Diplomatic Conference in Geneva as a delegate. In October 1974 he organized at the Institut d'Etudes politiques d'Aix-en-Provence a colloquium on Las Casas and Human Rights. The article is reproduced, with the author's permission, from a paper presented at the colloquium.*

## Introduction

With the theological jurists of the Middle Ages, universally recognized as the founders of public international law, Las Casas, on his definitive return from the colonies to Spain and until he died, strove to obtain from Charles V and Philip II a law of nations that would promote and guarantee the freedom of peoples and of individuals in the world community.

In the view of present-day publicists and other writers on international affairs, Las Casas is the man who had the merit, shared with the Salamanca theologians, of opposing to the arguments of the legists, and in particular of their common adversary Sepúlveda, the perfect compatibility between the sovereignty of the world empire and the recognition, under its indispensable protection, of the autonomy of native "Indian seignorial domains". He appears as the eminent precursor and exponent of the right of peoples to self-determination, which the codification treaties concluded under United Nations auspices in 1966 have set out proudly at the head of a systematic enumeration and definition of international human rights.

Las Casas, with the Salamanca theologians, was also the exponent of a *humanitarian law* to protect, in times of armed conflict, wounded or captured combatants, non-combatants (personnel of the medical armed services) and civilians. It is expressed today in the positive law of the Geneva Conventions, revised in 1949 and whose twenty-fifth anniversary in 1974 coincides with the quincentenary of the year of Las Casas' birth.

While throughout the world Latin humanists paid tribute to the man who was—and is still—the example of an international mediator for human rights, Belgium was celebrating the hundredth anniversary of an otherwise forgotten document in the history of the laws of war: the Declaration of Brussels of 27 August 1874, which had served as a preliminary draft for the Regulations drawn up and revised in 1899 and 1907 by the Peace Conferences at the Hague.

The factor common to those three dates, 1474, 1874 and 1974, may constitute a starting-point for our considerations, within our own disciplines of research and instruction, on the origins and evolution, in the international relations of different human societies, of a law of war which has been formulated and developed from two angles: on the one hand the right to war—i.e. the right to wage war and, on the other hand, the laws of war, which, once hostilities have broken out, lay down rules for the conduct of operations.

This law of war, first laid down around 1474,<sup>1</sup> the year of Las Casas' birth—though the exact date has not been scientifically established—was the subject of a laborious attempt at reaffirmation by a diplomatic conference in 1974. For the first time, representatives of liberation movements were admitted for discussions with the representatives of one hundred and twenty-six States, the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August, 1949.

The law of war, born at the time when the New World was being colonized, is being re-examined today during the final phase of the decolonization of the Third World. In the meantime, in 1874, it was closely linked, in the first attempt to codify it, to the demand by « powers of limited interests » that the great military powers should accept that the law of war be extended to units set up to make up for the lack of permanent armies.

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<sup>1</sup> By the Spanish theologians, founders of the school of the law of nations.

At each of these stages, it was put forward that the doctrine had a particular role and a special mission to fulfil: to help humanitarian law—the natural law of respect and protection of the human person—to find expression and effective application in the positive law of armed conflicts.

In each of the three examples under consideration, humanitarian law appears to be an objective which positive law finds difficult to achieve and define. The elusiveness of humanitarian law is due to the penetration into the *laws of war* of the *right to war* which, at the level of the individual, comes within the purview of international human rights. The two systems must be separated; bringing them together is liable to cause obstruction and even destruction.

### I. 1474-1566 — Affirmation and application

The claim of Las Casas, based on the doctrine of the *padres*, presented the two elements of a law of war mentioned above in an original perspective of application:

1. The liberation of the Indian peoples and the restitution of their property came under international human rights; these included the right to war which had to be drawn up and accepted on both the Indian and Spanish sides.

2. The barbarous cruelties witnessed by Las Casas as a « cleric » and colonist, were the deciding factor which led him to protest and to state his policy of a humanitarian law to the central authority, whose support he gained, and to the local colonial authorities, with whom he had to negotiate.

Its formulation was fully grounded on the dialectic of the Gospels, source of the “golden rules” of the laws of war (*jus in bello*).

The laws of war advocated by Las Casas and his brethren, the *padres* of America, were favourably received by the Catholic monarchs. Their essential elements were to be found in the “*leyes nuevas*”, inspired by natural law as applied to the law of nations, in accordance with Vitoria’s definition (*quod naturalis ratio inter omnes gentes instituit vocatur jus gentium*).

Las Casas’ special merit lay more particularly in his efforts to obtain the effective application of the established norms. The threats uttered by the chaplain of the conquerors, his fierce expostulations were supplemented by a policy of negotiated agreements, which foreshadowed the safety

zones and non-defended localities of the 1949 Geneva Conventions and of the additional protocols which have been under discussion in 1974, 1975 and 1976. Those authors who have made a special study of Las Casas' work have appropriately pointed to the contract, concluded on 2 May 1537 between Las Casas and Maldonado, which forbade Spaniards for a period of five years to enter territory where a mission was being undertaken. This agreement was secret.<sup>1</sup> Its aim, to protect and safeguard, was in line with the ultimate goal, which was to substitute conquest by the Gospels for conquest by war.

## II. 1874 — Stalemate

From 27 July to 27 August 1874, a diplomatic conference was held at Brussels, on the initiative and at the invitation of the Tzar of Russia. It sought to introduce, in the positive law of international armed conflicts, some rules of the laws of war on land going beyond the scope of the humanitarian law elaborated in Geneva in 1864, which, although threatened, remained fortunately outside the discussions.<sup>2</sup>

The development of the laws of war, the subject of political negotiations just after the Franco-Prussian war, was eclipsed by a discussion of the greatest importance concerning the scope of the law of war (*jus ad bellum*). The central question discussed at the conference, which was dominated by the German delegation, was whether an enemy population could be allowed to take up arms. A compromise was worked out, based on the distinction between *invasion* and *occupation*.

The written rules which were proposed regarding the conduct of hostilities (*jus in bello*), were discredited by this great controversy and were not adopted. The Declaration of Brussels, which remained incomplete and was not accepted, constituted the basis for discussion at the Hague Conference of 1899, which adopted the famous Regulations respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The full text is reproduced in Saint-Lu, *La Vera Paz, esprit évangélique et colonisation*, p. 16 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> On the proceedings and consequences of the Brussels Conference, see T. de Breucker, *La déclaration de Bruxelles de 1874 concernant les lois et coutumes de la guerre*, in *Chronique de Politique étrangère*, vol. XXVII, No. 1; Danièle Bujard, the *Geneva Convention of 1864 and the Brussels Conference of 1874*, *International Review of the Red Cross*, No. 163, Oct. 1974 and No. 164, Nov. 1974; A. Bouekassa, *Un centenaire, la Conférence de Bruxelles de 1874 sur les lois de la guerre*, an unpublished paper presented at the *Institut d'études politiques d'Aix* in 1974.

<sup>3</sup> See the articles by Albert de La Pradelle, in *Revue générale de droit international public*, 1899, tome VI.

### III. 1974 — Reaffirmation and crisis

*Humanitarian law*, which is in the process of “reaffirmation and development” (to supplement the four Geneva Conventions of 1949), is once again faced with a claim for the *right to war*, extrapolated from the framework of international wars into that of wars of national liberation.

The right of resistance fighters *in occupied territory* to wage war against the great powers with standing armies—a right demanded in the name of patriotism by the small States at Brussels in 1874—was embodied in the 1949 Geneva Convention after considerable difficulty and discussion.

In 1974, at the Diplomatic Conference in Geneva, this demand regarding the right to war was made anew in favour of “freedom fighters” struggling for decolonization. This development was bound to cause new and extensive discussions.

### IV. Conclusion

The future of the right to war and also of the laws of war, periodically challenged, is dependent on a natural law transcending political claims, which are unceasingly multiplied and wild, and which ignore the individual obligations that are a necessary counterpart to the rights demanded. It is not enough to acclaim and proclaim human rights to justify granting them without thought of requital. International law and order is here the necessary yardstick with which the claims for rights and the boundaries for such demands may be measured.

It is for the international relations experts in all countries to examine, in the common cause of peace, communications and development and, following the example of Las Casas, what influence and action humanitarian institutions might still have in spite of a regrettable politization of human rights in a changing world in which the sovereign powers multiply and swell, as they come into a dangerous contact with the widespread powers which attack them, compete with them and bring about their downfall.

**Paul DE GEOUFFRE DE LA PRADELLE**

Vice-President of the Institute of  
International Law, delegate to the 1949  
Diplomatic Conference in Geneva

# The Central Tracing Agency of the ICRC

by Monique Katz

The Central Tracing Agency is a permanent and integral part of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Yet it retains an autonomous character during conflicts, as laid down in the four Geneva Conventions.

It is the duty of the Central Tracing Agency to carry out the mandate entrusted in time of war to the two central information agencies mentioned in Article 123 of the Third Convention and Article 140 of the Fourth Convention, namely: the central information agency for prisoners of war, and the central information agency for civilian internees and other protected persons. The Geneva Conventions contain about twenty-five articles relating to the role of these agencies, their relations with the Detaining Power, with the "Power of origin", with the captives and with their families.

In practice, the work assigned to the two agencies by the Conventions is performed by the Central Tracing Agency, to which the singular noun "Agency" refers in the rest of this article.

In short, the role laid down by the Conventions for the Agency consists essentially in obtaining, centralizing and transmitting information relating to military or civilian personnel (living or dead) who have fallen into the hands of an enemy.

## **Obtaining information**

According to the First and Second Geneva Conventions, the Agency should be given the following information about the wounded, the sick, the shipwrecked and the dead taken by an enemy Power:

- identity;
- nature of the wound or sickness;
- death;
- burial.

In addition, under the Third and Fourth Conventions, the Agency must obtain the following information about captives (prisoners of war, civilian internees, arrested persons, persons under house arrest):

- identity;
- state of health at time of capture or internment;
- transfers (from one place of detention or internment to another);
- hospitalization;
- escape;
- release;
- repatriation;
- death during captivity (with details concerning burial);
- births.

What are the sources of information for the Central Agency?

First, there is the capture or internment card, (Conv. III, Art. 70, and Conv. IV, Art. 106), which the captive must complete in duplicate as soon as he or she is made prisoner or interned. The card, the dual purpose of which is to inform the Agency and to reassure the person's family, is not an official document.

The *official* notification of capture, internment, transfer, death, etc., must be provided by the Detaining Power as rapidly as possible. Under the provisions of the Geneva Conventions, notification must be double; once for the Central Agency, once to the Protecting Power.

The official information bureau that must be set up by the Detaining Power, in conformity with Art. 122 of the Third Convention and Art. 136 of the Fourth Convention, is responsible for conveying such official notification to the Agency.

To obtain the data to be sent to the Agency, the official information bureau must be able to rely on various State services. For prisoners of war, civilian internees, persons under house arrest, etc., these are:

- the unit that captured them;

- the authorities of the prisoner-of-war camp or the internment camp;
- civilian and military hospitals;
- police authorities;
- law courts;
- municipal authorities;
- the Graves Registration Service (see Conv. III, Art. 120).

For details of the dead and dying of the adverse party, recovered from the combat zone, the official information bureau will refer to:

- the unit that recovered them;
- field hospitals;
- municipal authorities.

There cannot be too much insistence on the duty of the military and civil authorities to provide, with the utmost speed, complete and exact particulars to the official information bureau, so that the bureau may communicate them without delay to the Central Agency.

While strictly observing the reservations set out in Article 17 of the Third Convention, it is important to record accurately the identity of the captive, especially if the person is wounded or sick and incapable of giving appropriate proof of identity.

In recording the enemy dead found in the battle zone, it is extremely important for the obligations under Articles 16 and 17 of Convention I and Articles 19 and 20 of Convention II to be brought to the attention of those in charge at all levels of the military and civil administrations. There must be a kind of news network reaching every man in the army. Everyone must know that no body may be buried without attempts being made to establish the identity of the dead person (if there is no identity disc, the contents of the pockets should be examined) and without noting the place of burial. Too many people are reported missing during wars, when elementary precautions to identify bodies would have made it possible to find out what had happened to them.

The Geneva Conventions include a number of provisions relating to the forwarding of correspondence between captives (military and civilian) and their families; dispatch of relief supplies, both individual and collective, and gifts of money; and the drawing up and forwarding of legal documents (wills, authorizations, powers of attorney, etc.).

These provisions ought likewise to be well known at all levels of the military and civil administrations of the parties to the conflict.

### **Centralizing of information**

The Agency must bring together all the information it receives, which means that it must record and catalogue all the documents received and enter the data into individual index cards. The index cards are then filed in the Agency's archives, where they are matched with the cards recording inquiries received by the Agency.

This bringing together of all the information received, on the one hand, and all the inquiries made, on the other, makes of the Agency a truly operational clearing-house.

### **Transmitting information**

For prisoners of war, the Central Agency acts as an intermediary between parties to conflict. It sends official notification from the detaining Power to the Power whose nationals have been captured.

For civilians (covered by the Fourth Convention), information has to be sent to the countries whose nationals they are or in whose territory they have set up residence, except in cases where sending such information might harm them or their families (see Art. 140, Conv. IV). The official information bureau, on the other hand, is not allowed to refuse to supply any information of this kind to the Central Agency (Art. 137/IV), which will itself observe the necessary precautions.

Although the Central Agency acts in an official capacity in sending to one party the information received from the opposing party, it cannot limit its role to that of simple intermediary. Whenever fighting breaks out, the Central Agency receives a flood of inquiries about the fate of missing persons, both military and civilian, about the health of captives who have stopped sending news, and so on. The inquiries come from families, from the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and from authorities in the persons' own countries. Precisely because of the humanitarian character of its work, the Agency should not wait beyond a reasonable period for information nor limit itself to sending incomplete or out-of-date information to the inquirers. For this reason, the Agency initiates inquiries of its own with the parties to the conflict, to try to obtain any information lacking. Consequently, all levels of the military and

civil administrations should be aware of the need to co-operate effectively with the Central Agency on these matters.

It should be pointed out at this juncture that the obligation to do everything possible to try to find out the fate of persons reported missing is strengthened by the provisions of Articles 32, 33 and 34 of Protocol I.

Moreover, according to Article 25 of the Fourth Convention, the Central Agency must try to re-establish contact between persons residing in the territory of a party to the conflict or in occupied territory and members of families from whom they are separated. Any news between them is usually exchanged on family message forms.

In addition, bearing in mind the recommendations contained in Article 26 of the Fourth Convention and the three resolutions adopted by the 18th, 19th and 20th International Conferences of the Red Cross, the Central Agency co-operates in reuniting separated families. The provisions relating to this activity are reinforced by Article 74 of Protocol I.

Having examined the specific role assigned to the two Central Information Agencies under the Geneva Conventions, a role performed by the ICRC Central Tracing Agency in time of war, it should be added that long after the end of each conflict the ICRC Central Tracing Agency, custodian of all the documentation it has assembled, continues to give help to former captives and their families. In fact, thanks to its huge collection of index cards (more than 50 million cards), the Agency is able to provide certificates attesting to capture, sickness, wounds or death. Such certificates enable those concerned to claim war pensions, compensation, increased old-age pensions, etc.

Although it might appear paradoxical, the Central Tracing Agency has for some years been decentralizing some of its activities. For example, it often finds it necessary to set up advance posts in the field, to permit closer contact with the detaining authorities, thereby enabling the Agency to speed up the gathering of information on captives and the dead; to be immediately available to worried families; and to arrange for the transmission of family messages.

Since the operation of such field bureaux imposes on the Central Tracing Agency a heavy burden which it cannot support indefinitely, their temporary establishment has two objectives: one which is short term, namely to provide the Agency in Geneva as quickly as possible with the information it must have to carry out its obligations; and the other, inter-

mediate or long term, to train local personnel, particularly members of the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, to take over the work.

The field bureaux of the Agency must be able to count on the co-operation of the military and civil administrations and upon that of the National Societies. Such co-operation will be all the more effective if the role of the Agency under the terms of the Conventions, and the humanitarian requirements involved, have been made widely known during peacetime.

**Monique KATZ**

Assistant Director, Central Tracing Agency.

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# INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

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## SWISS NATIONAL COUNCIL AT THE ICRC

The finance commission of the Swiss National Council visited ICRC headquarters in Geneva on 18 August. Mr. Jean Pictet, Vice-President of the ICRC, Mr. Victor Umbricht, Vice-President of the Executive Board, and Mr. Richard Pestalozzi, Special Assistant to the President, with senior officials of various ICRC departments, received the International Committee's guests.

For the visit the ICRC had proposed a programme based on the theme "The ICRC: what it is and what it does", to give the visitors as complete and as up-to-date a picture as possible of the varied activities involved in ICRC operations, tracing of missing persons, development and teaching of humanitarian law, and public relations. A short multi-vision projection and a film illustrated the talks. The visitors were also taken on a commented tour of the Central Tracing Agency.

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## ICRC PRESIDENT VISITS INTERNATIONAL TRACING SERVICE

Mr. Alexandre Hay, President of the ICRC, paid a visit to the International Tracing Service, at Arolsen (Federal Republic of Germany), from 24 to 26 July. The Service, operated for many years by the ICRC, which is the body responsible for its activities, is the central depository for all existing documentation on prisoners of war, deportees, migrant workers, etc., during the Second World War. Its work is to make searches and to deliver certificates, in the very numerous cases where problems arise in connection with the categories of people described.

The ICRC President was welcomed by Mr. A. de Cocatrix, Director of the ITS, and Mr. P. Züger, Deputy Director, surrounded by the

## INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

members of their staff.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Hay, addressing a staff meeting, emphasized the links between the ICRC and the ITS: "The similarity between your work and that of the ICRC in Geneva makes you, directly or indirectly, members of the Red Cross. You belong among us, and we are pleased and proud to have you with us. The work you perform is of the greatest importance, and you accomplish it in the spirit of the Red Cross movement, doing all in your power to redress the horror of the war years and to alleviate the hardships of those still suffering as a result of that time. . . . I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the unsparring hard work, zeal and dedication which you bring to your difficult and noble task."

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<sup>1</sup> Plate.

**Recognition  
of the Mauritius Red Cross Society**

GENEVA, 16 September 1977

*Circular N° 508*

*To the Central Committees of the National Red Cross,  
Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

We have the honour to inform you that the International Committee of the Red Cross, on 15 September 1977, officially recognized the Mauritius Red Cross Society.

This new Society, founded in 1939 as a branch of the British Red Cross, was recognized by Act of Parliament on 18 December 1973. It applied for recognition by the International Committee on 10 December 1976. Its application was supported by various documents, including several reports on its activities, its Statutes and a copy of the Mauritius Red Cross Society Act, 1973. The Society's Statutes, approved by the Government, and the Act of 1973 specify that the objects of the Society are to carry on and assist in the improvement of public health, the prevention of disease and the mitigation of suffering throughout the world in time of peace or war. This provision may be considered to be equivalent to approval of the Society's function as an auxiliary to the public authorities.

The documents, which were examined jointly by the International Committee and the Secretariat of the League of Red Cross Societies,

## INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

show that the ten qualifying conditions for recognition of a new National Society have been fulfilled.

The recognition of the Mauritius Red Cross Society, which the International Committee is pleased to announce, means that the total number of member Societies of the International Red Cross is now 124.

The Mauritius Red Cross, which representatives of the International Committee and of the League of Red Cross Societies have visited on a number of occasions in 1975 and 1976, is active throughout the State, including Rodrigues Island. It works for the improvement of public health through the teaching of hygiene and nursing, nutrition and first-aid. It helps the victims of natural disasters, relieves hardship, and operates several dispensaries which provide free treatment.

On 12 August 1970 the Government confirmed that the State was a party to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, through a declaration of continuity effective as from 12 March 1968, when Mauritius achieved independence.

The Society's President is Mrs. Itala Ghermont Goupille, M.B.E. Its headquarters is at Curepipe.<sup>1</sup>

The International Committee of the Red Cross has pleasure in welcoming the Mauritius Red Cross to membership of the International Red Cross, in accrediting it and commending it, by this circular, to all other National Societies, and in expressing sincere good wishes for its success in the discharge and development of its humanitarian activities.

FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE RED CROSS

*Alexandre Hay*  
*President*

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<sup>1</sup> The new Society's address is : Mauritius Red Cross, Ste. Thérèse Street, Curepipe, Mauritius.

## NEW PRINTING OF ICRC TRAVEL DOCUMENT

The ICRC has recently reprinted its travel document. The new documents differs very little from the one used up to the present; its form, text and general lay-out are substantially the same. On the other hand, certain characteristics of the paper on which it is printed and the addition of a coloured, underprinted lacelike network design should serve in the future to prevent any falsification or counterfeiting.

The new ICRC travel documents are numbered from 310.001 to 410.000.

The former travel documents on deposit with its delegations have been returned to the ICRC to be replaced by the new ones. The travel documents issued before this exchange, however, remain valid for the duration indicated on them at the time they were issued.

### **Description of new travel document**

The new ICRC travel document is printed on a light, pliable but resistant paper, with a wavy vertical watermark. One side of the paper is smooth and the other slightly grainy.

The travel document measures 400 mm in length by 148 mm in width. It may be folded into quarters, 100 mm by 148 mm, thus constituting a booklet with a cover page and seven pages numbered from 1 to 7.

The printing is superimposed on a two-colour wavy lacelike network pattern which has tones ranging from light blue to a grayish pink. Included in this ground pattern are two irregularly disposed motifs: the round ICRC seal with a cross in the centre and the circular inscription, "Comité international de la Croix-Rouge — Genève" and, separately, in three horizontal lines, "Comité international / de la Croix-Rouge / Genève".

The *cover page*, in the upper portion, has in black capital letters, in three lines, the title, "Comité international de la Croix-Rouge Genève".

## INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

In the centre of the page is the round ICRC seal, as described above, but printed in red ink and embossed. These two elements are in French only.

The rest of the text, on the cover page and throughout the document, is printed in black ink in three languages, French, English and Spanish. The text provides all the indications required to draw up the travel document correctly, with essential data on the identity of the bearer. The number of the document, the duration of its validity and the place and date of its issuance are also provided for. A space is reserved for visas and for frontier control stamps.

### **The use of the ICRC travel document.**

Although the *International Review* has frequently referred to the ICRC travel document,<sup>1</sup> it may be useful at the time of its reprinting to recall its purpose and the rules governing its issuance and use.

The travel document of the International Committee of the Red Cross was devised in February, 1945.<sup>2</sup> It is intended for displaced or stateless persons or refugees who, for lack of adequate identification, find it impossible to return to their country of origin or to the country of their former habitual residence or who cannot go to the country of their choice willing to receive them.

The travel document also enables a person to go to a temporary receiving country where he may take the necessary steps to seek a country willing to take him in either permanently or for a prolonged period.

It may be issued as well to persons who are not lawfully staying in the territory of a State where they have sought temporary refuge, in order to legalize their status in that country and prepare their departure for a country of asylum.

The ICRC travel document does not constitute an identity paper. However, if it bears the necessary visas or stamps, its bearer may use it to account for his presence in the territory of the country in which he is temporarily situated, up to the time of his departure, and subsequently in his country of destination, up to expiration of the visa entered in the document.

The ICRC travel document is issued in cases like those above, subject to the following conditions:

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, the *International Review of the Red Cross* of March, 1976, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> See *Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross on its activities during the Second World War*, Vol. 1, p. 669.

- (a) if the applicant has no valid passport or any other document enabling him to travel and if it is impossible for him to obtain or renew any such documents;
- (b) if the applicant has received an undertaking by the diplomatic or consular agents of the country where he wishes to go, and of the countries, if any, which he will cross in transit, that he will obtain the necessary visas;
- (c) if the applicant has been given an undertaking by the country whose territory he wishes to quit that he will be given either the authorization to leave or a safe-conduct.

Applications for ICRC travel documents may be made either direct to the ICRC or any of its delegations, or through a National Red Cross, Red Crescent or Red Lion and Sun Society, or through an international organization dealing with refugees, such as the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Unlike the travel documents issued by the States signatories to the conventions relating to the status of refugees or stateless persons<sup>1</sup> the ICRC travel document is not governed by any convention and is not considered as a national passport.

The status and nationality of holders of ICRC travel documents are not affected or determined by the issue of such documents.

The ICRC travel document is prepared on the basis of the applicant's statements and of any documents which he can produce, enabling visa authorities to verify that the applicant and the bearer are one and the same person.

The travel document contains a description of the bearer and a statement of the documentary evidence he may have furnished (e.g. an identity card or a driver's licence), or statements made by other persons, establishing his identity. Places are provided for the bearer's finger prints and photograph.

The ICRC travel document is free. It must be signed by an ICRC delegate or another properly authorized person. Its validity is limited to the period required to prepare for the voyage and to complete it. Except in very rare cases its validity may not be extended. The document is intended to permit a single voyage to the bearer's country of origin or of habitual residence or to a country of asylum, named on page 4 of the document. It is then a matter for the authorities in the country of des-

<sup>1</sup> See *International Review of the Red Cross*, March 1976, p. 136.

## INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

mination to issue official identity papers. All travel documents whose validity has expired must be returned to the ICRC.

The ICRC created the travel document on the basis of its right of initiative, recognized by the Statutes of the International Red Cross and the Geneva Conventions. The establishment of the document, which meets a real need, has been well received by the many States which have been asked to affix upon it visas for entry or departure.

Thus, since 1945, more than 500,000 displaced or stateless persons or refugees, bearing ICRC travel documents, have been able to reach the countries of their choice, thanks to the good will of the governmental authorities concerned.

### PRINCIPAL COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES WHICH PERSONS HAVE ENTERED OF LEFT WITH THE HELP OF THE ICRC TRAVEL DOCUMENT

#### AFRICA

Algeria  
Angola  
Egypt  
Ethiopia  
Ivory Coast  
Kenya  
Lesotho  
Libya  
Mozambique  
Nigeria  
Senegal  
South Africa  
(South-West Africa)  
Swaziland  
Uganda  
Zambia

#### NORTH AMERICA

Canada  
USA

#### SOUTH AMERICA

Argentina  
Bolivia  
Brazil  
Chile  
Costa Rica  
Cuba  
Dominican Republic  
Ecuador  
Guyana  
Mexico  
Panama  
Paraguay  
Peru  
Venezuela

#### ASIA-OCEANIA

Afghanistan  
Australia  
Bahrain  
Bangladesh

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

Cambodia  
Democratic People's Republic of  
Korea  
Hong Kong  
India  
Israel  
Japan  
Laos  
Lebanon  
Macao  
Malaysia  
New Zealand  
Pakistan  
Philippines  
Republic of Korea  
Syria  
Thailand  
Taiwan  
United Arab Emirates

EUROPE

Austria  
Belgium  
Czechoslovakia  
Denmark  
Finland  
France  
German Democratic Republic  
Germany, Federal Republic of  
Greece  
Hungary  
Italy  
Malta  
Netherlands  
Norway  
Portugal  
Romania  
Spain  
Sweden  
Switzerland  
United Kingdom  
USSR

*EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES***Africa****Southern Africa**

*Plan of action to the end of 1977.*—To deal with the evolving situation in southern Africa, the ICRC has drawn up a plan of action for the last half of 1977, to enable it to co-ordinate and intensify its activities. The plan was approved by the Committee on 9 June.

The budget for the plan amounts to 7,350,000 Swiss francs and covers humanitarian activities in the following countries: Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia/South-West Africa, the Republic of South Africa, Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Zambia.

The plan was drafted on the basis of several evaluation missions and contacts in recent months and on information from ICRC delegates in the area.

The plan and its budget have been sent to governments, National Societies of the Red Cross (Red Crescent, Red Lion and Sun) and to specialized agencies, seeking the financial support and material required to meet its humanitarian objectives.

\* \* \*

In the field, ICRC delegates have continued to work in terms of this plan.

*Medical activities.*—Accordingly, a medical evaluation mission in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe was carried out in August by Dr. Rémi Russbach, head of the ICRC Medical Division. During his two-week visit, Dr. Russbach gathered information on the medical problems of the civilian population, especially in combat zones, and discussed the possibilities for humanitarian action with the Red Cross and public officials.

Visits to several “protected villages”—where Africans from areas of guerrilla warfare are relocated—gave Dr. Russbach a broad view of various disturbing medical and health problems, which it is feared may worsen in the months to come. The crowding together of people, exceptional in these rural areas, brings with it risks of epidemics, especially among children. Signs of malnutrition are already apparent. The problems are complicated by the shortage of health-care personnel and means of transport, due to the prevailing insecurity.

Following Dr. Russbach’s mission, the ICRC therefore plans to send a mobile medical team, consisting of a doctor and a nurse, who will be based in Salisbury, to visit the “protected villages” and to supervise the activities of young first-aid workers at Red Cross posts. The local Red Cross, with encouragement and financial assistance from the ICRC, organized courses in basic health care this summer for these young African volunteers.

*With regard to relief*, an initial amount of 107,000 Swiss francs was appropriated from the ad hoc budget to set up a programme for the distribution of food and medicine in “protected villages” in the Mtoko and Mudzi districts in the northeastern part of the country where the situation is especially bad.

*Protection.* — Both in Geneva and in Africa, numerous contacts have been made between ICRC delegates and representatives of various parties involved in the conflict in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. These talks form part of the efforts made by the ICRC in recent months to assure respect by all parties for the principles of humanitarian law.

*Information mission.* — Miss Michèle Mercier, ICRC press representative, accompanied Dr Russbach on his evaluation mission. She also traveled to *Botswana*, where she visited two refugee camps to which the ICRC—through the intermediary of the National Red Cross—makes a small contribution as a supplement to the relief action conducted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Information gathered by Miss Mercier will be used as the basis for a memorandum to governments and National Societies which may contribute to the ICRC’s plan of action for southern Africa.

## **Republic of South Africa**

*Visit to South West Africa/Namibia.* — In the second half of July the ICRC delegate in South Africa, Mr. D. Dufour, went to South-West

Africa/Namibia to visit camps of refugees from Angola and study the feasibility of providing them with some relief supplies. Mr Dufour had meetings with the local branch of the South African Red Cross with this purpose in view.

*Visit to prisoners of war.* — On 4 August the ICRC delegate in South Africa visited in Pretoria three Cuban POW's in South African hands. The previous ICRC visit was in April 1977.

## **East Africa**

### **Ogaden conflict**

As a result of the intensification of the fighting in the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, the ICRC, in August, approached the parties to the conflict on behalf of the civilian and military victims. In this connection, the ICRC instructed its two regional delegates based in Nairobi, Mr. J.-F. Borel and Mr. U. Bedert, to take appropriate measures.

Mr. Borel arrived in Addis Ababa on 2 August to offer the ICRC's services to the Ethiopian Government and to request it to apply the Geneva Conventions. Mr. Borel was received on 6 August by Lt.-Col. Atnafu Abate, Vice-President of the Provisional Military Administrative Council, and on 10 August by Mr. Ayalew Mendefro, Minister of Defence, both of whom accepted the offer of ICRC services.

Mr. Bedert went to Mogadishu to meet the other parties to the conflict, to consider the possibilities for protection and assistance.

After their return to Nairobi in mid-August, the two delegates prepared consignments of the most urgently needed medical supplies, for the Ethiopian Red Cross and the Somali Red Crescent respectively. The consignments, consisting of dried plasma, dressings, antibiotics, etc., were worth a total of 30,000 Swiss francs.

At the end of August, Mr. Borel and Mr. Bedert returned to Addis Ababa and Mogadishu respectively and then entered the combat zones to estimate further humanitarian needs.

After the completion of these missions, the ICRC launched an appeal on 9 September to governments, National Societies and specialized agencies, requesting material support for its emergency action on behalf of the civilian and military victims of the Ogaden conflict. The cost of the initial phase of this action was estimated at 3.6 million Swiss francs.

Based on the reports of its delegates, the ICRC drew up a list of the priority requirements for the war wounded and for the tens of thousands of persons displaced by the hostilities on both sides.

On the Ethiopian side, emergency supplies are needed for the hospitals in the Dire Dawa area, which are caring for hundreds of wounded. The cost of a second consignment—the first having been sent on 18 August—is estimated at 110,000 Swiss francs for six tons of supplies. Assistance is needed for an estimated 50,000 displaced persons, now in towns along the Addis Ababa-Dire Dawa-Harrar road in the provinces of Bale and Sidamo. The greatest needs are for blankets, mattresses, tents and protein-enriched foods.

In Ogaden, tens of thousands of displaced persons—especially women, children and old people—are in urgent need of help. It is planned to send them immediately 30,000 blankets, 200 tons of grain, 170 tons of milk and 48 tons of oil. Six tons of supplies worth 110,000 Swiss francs are being prepared for dispatch by air, to follow an initial consignment sent on 20 August.

In view of the magnitude of the needs and the necessity for quick action, the ICRC, which is working in close co-operation with the competent authorities, intends to reinforce its present structure by sending to each side a doctor and a delegate to head relief work. Their task will be to make a detailed evaluation of the needs.

### **Djibouti**

From 13 to 20 July, Mr. J.-F. Borel, the regional delegate for East Africa, was in Djibouti to establish contacts with the new authorities after Djibouti's accession to independence. He was received by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, of the Interior and of Justice, with whom he discussed the accession of the Republic of Djibouti to the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the creation of a National Society. These meetings were held in a most cordial atmosphere.

### **Mauritania**

From 29 August to 1 September 1977, two ICRC delegates, Mr. Jean de Courten and Mr. Fred Isler, were in Nouakchott, Mauritania's capital. They were received in audience by the Head of State, H. E. Mokhtar Ould Daddah, with whom all the humanitarian problems in the region were passed in review.

## **Latin America**

### **Chile**

In June, July and August, the ICRC's delegates and doctors in Chile continued their work in aid of the detainees and their dependents and visited 12, 16 and 8 places of detention, containing 129, 71 and 104 detainees respectively. For the same period, the money spent on aid to the detainees amounted to 6,411 dollars, while aid distributed to about a thousand needy families of detainees came to 87,919 dollars.

### **Argentina**

The ICRC delegation in Argentina continued its material aid programme for detainees and their dependents needing assistance.

From May to September detainees received foodstuffs and medications to a value of 2,112 dollars, while their families received aid to a value of 4,566 dollars.

### **Nicaragua**

From 13 to 31 July 1977 Mr. R. Chevalley, ICRC regional delegate for Central America and the Caribbean, was in Nicaragua. On 18 and 19 July he was received by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and of the Interior and the Chief of National Security, and was granted authorization to visit detainees held at the disposal of the Ministry of the Interior and Security.

However, in the course of his visits on 20 and 21 July to the "Cárcel Modelo de Tititapa" and the "Central de Policía", the ICRC regional delegate, who was accompanied by the Minister of the Interior, was not allowed to talk with the detainees, contrary to customary procedure in the prisons visited by ICRC delegates. Because of this restrictive measure the ICRC could not ascertain the conditions of detention and, consequently, was unable to draw up reports on the visits.

### **Belize**

In August Mr. R. Chevalley went to Belize to get in contact with the authorities and the local Red Cross.

## **Uruguay**

The regional delegate for the southern part ("Cono Sur") of South America, Mr. Rolf Jenny, was in Uruguay from 11 to 13 July. In an interview with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the possibility of the resumption of ICRC activities in Uruguay was among the questions raised.

## **Peru**

Since 20 August, two ICRC delegates, Mr. L. Isler and Dr. A. Cadotsch, have been in Peru on a series of visits to places of detention. They went to three places of detention in and near Lima, where they saw altogether seventy persons imprisoned for political reasons or offences. The mission extended to the provinces, particularly in the north, where the delegates visited on 5, 6 and 7 September the "Colonia penal agricola El Sepa (Copaes)", on the banks of the Urubambo River. In this place, they saw 250 detainees, with whom they spoke without witnesses, as also in the other places of detention visited.

## **Asia**

The departure on 10 September 1977 of 152 foreigners from Viet Nam, on board an aircraft on charter to the ICRC, was the last of the latest series of repatriation flights from Ho Chi Minh City, organized by the ICRC.

This series of flights enabled 469 foreigners, former residents in Viet Nam, to leave and join their families in Taiwan. Since 1975, the ICRC has flown more than 3,600 foreigners from Viet Nam to their own countries (India, Pakistan, Yemen, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan).

Long and complicated negotiations had to be concluded with the authorities in the countries concerned before any of the flights could take place.

## **Thailand**

A gift of 365 tons of powdered milk, which the European Economic Community (EEC) has handed over to the ICRC, is to be distributed in

camps housing Indo-Chinese refugees in Thailand. Various charity organizations in Thailand will distribute this milk which should cover the needs of refugee children for about a year.

*Visits to detainees.* — From 4 to 8 August ICRC delegates in Thailand visited twelve police stations in south-east Thailand, where 37 refugees from Indo-China were being held on charges of entering the country illegally, and distributed relief supplies to them. From 11 to 18 August they also visited eighteen places of detention in the north and east and saw 1,103 refugees arrested for the same reason.

### **Malaysia**

The ICRC regional delegate for South East Asia, Mr. A. Pasquier, and Mr. F. Robadey, delegate, were in July in Malaysia. They visited four places of detention, where they saw 686 detainees imprisoned for political reasons or offences.

### **Afghanistan**

Since 28 August, Mr. Dominique Borel, the ICRC's regional delegate stationed in New Delhi, has been in Afghanistan on a visit to the National Society and the authorities. One of the subjects under discussion concerns the translation and printing of the school textbook adapted to Afghanistan customs.

## **Middle East**

### **Lebanon**

Last summer, two tasks in Lebanon were high on the list of ICRC activities: one was assistance to victims of the fighting in southern Lebanon, the other was the provision of equipment for disabled persons.

The combats in southern Lebanon, of almost daily occurrence, leading to an emergency situation in many villages and causing the flight of several thousand civilians, have obliged the ICRC to step up its relief operations and to increase its staff in Tyre. The ICRC's office, which contained four delegates, now has a staff of ten persons, including a doctor and a female nurse.



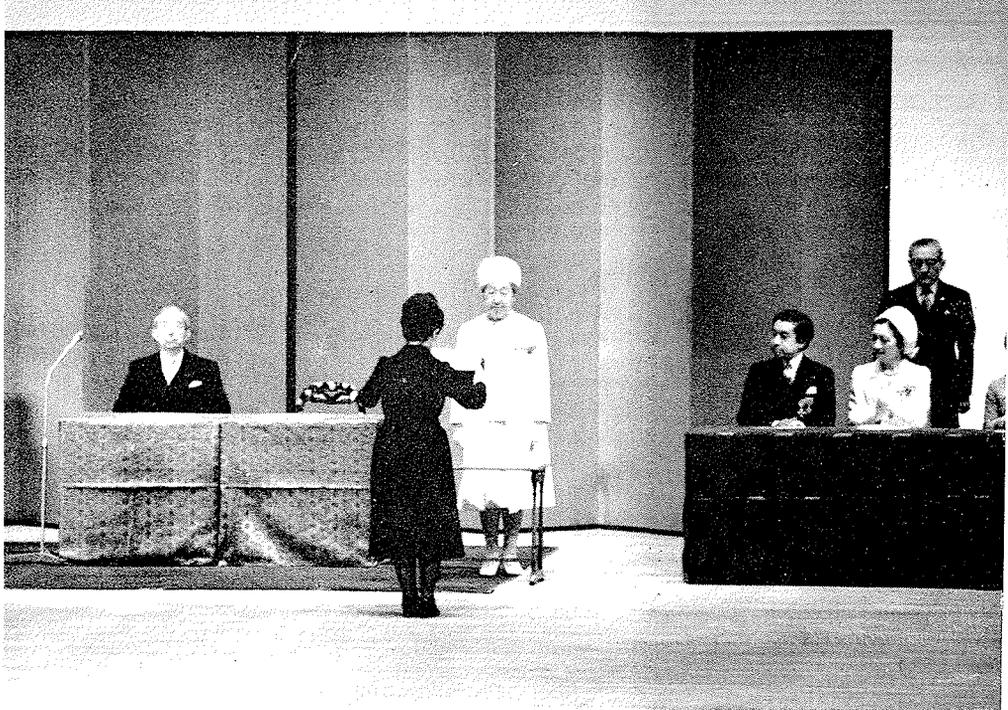
Mr. A. Hay, ICRC President, at the International Tracing Service, Arolsen (centre, Mr. Hay, on his right Mr. A. de Cocatrix, ITS Director; on his left Mr. Ph. Züger, Assistant Director; extreme left, Mr. E. Regenass, Director of Finance and Administration of the ICRC, Geneva).

Photo ITS

Distribution by Botswana Red Cross in a "protected village" of milk donated by ICRC.

Photo Mercier / ICRC





**Japan:** In the presence of H.M. the Emperor and members of the Imperial Family, H.M. the Empress, President of Honour of the Japanese Red Cross, presenting the Florence Nightingale Medal to Japanese medalists during a ceremony on 26 May 1977.

Photo Japanese Red Cross

#### FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE MEDALS



**Federal Republic of Germany:** Frau Oberin H. Stoltenhoff receives the Florence Nightingale Medal in the presence of Mr. Bargatzky, President of the National Red Cross Society.

Photo H. Bode, Bonn

Although the Lebanese Office for Social Development (ODS) has been operational in southern Lebanon from 1 August, the ICRC is still the only organization active in the southernmost sector. Its relief convoys bring supplies regularly to some forty-five villages along the border, cut off from the rest of the country because of the fighting. The ICRC also brings medicines and minor surgical material to eighty-six dispensaries in the area.

After the latest fighting, about 14,000 displaced persons moved into the area around Tyre during the last few weeks. The ICRC at once collaborated with the ODS in making emergency distributions to them.

Programmes started last spring by the ICRC to equip the disabled are being continued. The team of Swiss Red Cross specialists, who went to Lebanon at the beginning of July, is now working in the paraplegics centre at Beit Chebab, and will stay for a year re-educating patients. It will also take over the centre's artificial limb workshop. Dutch prosthetists are continuing their work equipping amputees in West Beirut and are going to the Tripoli area in September to fit about a hundred recently registered patients. A British Red Cross team, consisting of a physiotherapist, four prosthetists and a co-ordinator, will be going to Lebanon in September to equip a further 253 amputees (estimated cost, 400,000 Swiss francs). Plans are under consideration for the specialist who provided 267 persons with artificial eyes in March 1977 to return to Lebanon for a second session.

The head of the ICRC Medical Division, Dr. Rémi Russbach, went to Lebanon in June to ascertain what was the position regarding the various programmes for disabled persons and to transmit the case-files to the Lebanese Government or to other bodies, which will resume in a few months, or which have already resumed, the work begun by the ICRC. The Lebanese Medical Aid Sub-Commission has requested the ICRC to send a specialist to draw up a full report on paraplegics in Lebanon.

In Geneva the ICRC has prepared an estimate of the costs for its Lebanon operations from the beginning of September to the end of December 1977, amounting to 3.1 million Swiss francs. During the first six months of 1977, the ICRC sent to Lebanon 6,121 tons of relief supplies to a value of 26.8 million Swiss francs.

### **Arab Republic of Egypt**

*Repatriation of mortal remains.* — On the initiative of the Egyptian authorities, the mortal remains of 19 Israeli soldiers killed in action

during the 1973 war and recently discovered on the east bank of the Suez Canal were repatriated on 19 July.

This operation was conducted under the auspices of the ICRC at El Khirba (Sinai) in the United Nations buffer zone.

### **Israel and occupied territories**

*Students go home for their holidays.* — As in previous years, in the summer, the ICRC this year again made arrangements for students from Gaza and Sinai studying in Cairo and those from the occupied territory of Golan studying in Damascus to return to their homes for the summer vacation.

Fourteen transfer operations were organized in the United Nations buffer zone between 22 June and 27 July enabling a total of 6,260 students registered in Cairo universities to visit their families. In August, 2,931 students returned to Cairo in seven similar operations, to continue their studies. The return of students to Cairo universities was pursued throughout September.

At Quneitra, twelve Syrian students from the occupied Golan Heights crossed the border on 16 June, on their way to Damascus to commence their university studies. This was the first time that a party of Syrian students in occupied territory were authorized by the Israel authorities to go to a Syrian university. On 21 July, thirteen students from Gaza, registered at Damascus University, went home to see their families during the summer. They returned to the University on 30 August.

*Medical mission.* — A medical survey of the occupied territories was begun on 14 March by Dr. Franz Altherr, ICRC medical delegate, and concluded at the end of July. Dr. Altherr went to the Gaza Strip, Sinai and the West Bank to investigate the health and medical conditions of the civilian Arab population, as he had done in previous years.

### **Jordan**

In June, July and August, the ICRC delegates in Jordan had to deal with several cases of civilians to be transferred between Jordan and Israel-occupied territories. In June, the ICRC transferred to Jordan a detainee who had been released by the Israeli authorities and repatriated an Israeli civilian who had been arrested in April in Aqaba.

In July, two nationals of the occupied territories were transferred to Jordan by the ICRC, and in August an Arab civilian released by the Israeli authorities was transferred to Amman.

### **Syrian Arab Republic**

On 9 August two Arab detainees, released by the Israeli authorities, crossed the border into the Syrian Arab Republic, under ICRC auspices. The crossing took place at Quneitra.

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# IN THE RED CROSS WORLD

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## THE PRESIDENT OF THE ICRC AND THE NATIONAL RED CROSS SOCIETIES AN ENLIGHTENING THREE-YEAR EPISODE

by **Eric Martin**

Former President of the ICRC

Towards the end of my academic career, during which I was for a time Rector of the University of Geneva and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, I was invited by the ICRC in 1973 to become its President for a period which I was told would last three years. In taking up this appointment, I was to perform my duties in close co-operation with Mr. Roger Gallopin, who became President of the Executive Board. The system of having two presidents, which was introduced in 1973, was discontinued after 1976. The three-year period and the conditions attached to my function imposed a limit on what I could do and on any ambitions I might have nourished. As I had never worked with the ICRC, I had to get acquainted without delay with its tasks and its organization, its position in the world and the immediate problems which had to be solved. On the credit side I had had some experience of Red Cross work, though on a fairly small scale, as President of the Geneva Section of the Red Cross and as a member for a number of years of the Swiss Red Cross Central Committee, which meant that I knew just a little about the National Societies and their activities. Moreover, being the first member of the medical profession to become President of the ICRC, I was determined to build up again a medical division within the ICRC, to accentuate the importance of the training of its medical delegates and to organize medical logistics in support of its activities in the field.

### **The National Societies' contribution**

One of my first aims was to get in contact with the senior officials of the various National Societies. I very much enjoyed their visits to the ICRC in Geneva, as well as my visits to them.

My concern to get to know well the National Societies was derived from something which I had not forgotten, and that was the lack of interest shown by the ICRC in the Swiss Red Cross when I was on the latter's Central Committee. I had thought at the time that such disregard was regrettable and hard to understand. Having received numerous invitations from various National Societies to attend their annual general meeting or to be present on some important occasion, my travels took me to Europe, west and east, to South America and on a few occasions to African and Asian countries.

An ICRC president can learn a great deal by watching National Societies at work on their own ground, performing their specific Red Cross activities. The first thing I found was that in every country there were men and women who were very much motivated and were deeply imbued with the genuine Red Cross spirit. It is a fact that wherever one goes one will find people who put themselves wholeheartedly at the service of their neighbours; surrounded by the rampant selfishness of our world, they are the salt of the earth.

The second thing I learnt was how diverse were the activities of the National Societies. In every country they differ and are wide in range: health education, various types of health services, dispensaries, training nurses or volunteer workers, running hospitals, setting up blood transfusion services, helping old persons, and so on. The comments by Mr. Tansley and Dr. Dorolle<sup>1</sup> on this wide range of activities are not too commendatory. True, their efficiency in quantitative terms may appear inadequate according to WHO standards, but these criteria should not be unreservedly applied to them. The spirit with which Red Cross units are imbued, the importance of unpaid work, the readiness of "activists" to come forward, the quality of their commitment, the human contact, all these are assets which do not lend themselves to "quantification" by means of productivity studies. At a time when so much stress is laid on human relations and their lack is bewailed, it seems to me that very often there is nothing that can take the place of Red Cross intervention.

A third thing which struck me was how different were the National Societies: in size, in their impact on the people, and in the place they occupied within their own community. Some are omnipresent, active in every medical sphere, with branches extending to every corner of their country; others are less ambitious, in need of renewed encouragement

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<sup>1</sup> *Re-appraisal of the Role of the Red Cross*, study directed by D. D. Tansley. Background Paper No. 4: *National Red Cross Societies and Health and Welfare*, by Dr. Pierre M. Dorolle, Geneva, 1975 (Ed.).

and perhaps restricting too much their recruitment campaigns to a certain social class; still other Societies find themselves facing real incomprehension on the part of their government and have to struggle to keep alive. The charm and value of the visits which an ICRC President makes to National Societies lies in the direct contacts that may be established not only with their leaders but also with the active members of the local branches. I have often taken part in formal sessions and have been asked to speak at those meetings, but my warmest recollections are those of pleasant informal meals, deep in the countryside in Hungary, for instance, or under a desert tent in Mauritania; or again on a farm co-operative in the USSR, or in the town hall of a Bulgarian commune. It was in such surroundings, free from officialdom and in all simplicity, that valuable contacts were established and conversations ran easily without any mental reservations.

Still a fourth impression should be mentioned: it was gratifying to see in what high esteem the ICRC was held, and which was reflected on its President. As a newcomer to the International Red Cross world, I was most cordially received wherever I went by the members of the National Societies who may not have had at all times a perfectly clear idea of the tasks of the institution whose President I was, but who knew enough to nourish sentiments of respect towards the ICRC, of which they had heard a great deal and which represented for them the ideal of the Red Cross.

### **The ICRC President's message**

While my first aim was to get to know the National Societies and establish personal ties with their leaders, I also had a keen desire to show them the character and activity of the ICRC, to set before them the problems which were daily raised, the successes with which it could be credited and the failures which it could not avoid. I had to explain why the ICRC did not more often make public its protests in the newspapers and state openly its stand whenever the Geneva Conventions were violated. I had to stress its duty to do nothing which would prevent its reaching those in need. Although seldom referred to in official statements and in the press, the representations and protests which we addressed to governments were constant, vehement and persuasive.

I told them that those who had not worked at the headquarters of the ICRC could not have the slightest idea of the importance of its work throughout the world and the reality of the ICRC's presence in all the

regions of the globe where political tension was high and conflicts threatened to break out; they could never imagine the extent and gravity of the problems and the urgency of the decisions that had to be taken. When an unforeseeable crisis suddenly erupted and the ICRC had to despatch some of its staff to the scene, the time in which obstacles had to be overcome was always terribly short. That was why the ICRC was devoting special attention to the recruitment and training of delegates. I also stressed the fact that the exclusively Swiss membership of the ICRC was justified by the urgency of the decisions to be taken, the unity of the doctrine to be kept up and the setting aside of any political considerations.

Wherever there are conflicts or threats of conflicts, the ICRC's delegates are there, watchful and active, in contact with ICRC headquarters but also, at times, alone and obliged to take important decisions on their own. Tremendous responsibilities rest on their shoulders. If mistakes are committed, the conditions in which they work must be taken into account.

The ICRC works to ensure the observance of the humanitarian conventions, but at the same time its action is developing in spheres where its right of initiative has to be invoked, in particular where assistance to political detainees is concerned. I believe that this aspect of the ICRC's task will continue to grow but, here, the Committee very often has to overcome the resistance of States and governments, which do not accept what they consider an encroachment upon their national sovereignty, even by a humanitarian organization.

I have often had to explain how and under what conditions certain decisions of the ICRC, which were at times criticized, were reached. I have tried to dispel misunderstandings and justify the stand of the ICRC which, since it is in the service of the victims, cannot allow itself to be swayed by political considerations.

It is often difficult to get this kind of talk understood by leaders of National Societies, who are full of goodwill, but who despite their attempt to show impartiality, are involved in an action and cannot free themselves completely from a political assessment of the situation.

I also believe it was very necessary to show that the ICRC was not a kind of workshop where impracticable legal texts were formulated; that it was composed of men who, on the basis of their experience in the field, sought to apply their knowledge for the benefit of the victims of conflicts. The dramatic circumstances in which decisions had to be taken often accounted sufficiently for any errors which might have been made.

### **The responsibility of National Societies**

The President of the ICRC also has to advise the National Societies where their responsibilities lie in the event of war or internal strife and on the co-operation which should be established between ICRC delegates and National Societies. On many occasions, the National Societies' contributions to a joint action constituted a substantial aid for the ICRC, which would have been unable to fulfil its task without their support. It is necessary to express here the gratitude of the ICRC towards the National Societies which have come forward every time an appeal was launched.

When the President of the ICRC turns to the National Societies, he must assume the mantle of the advocate of humanitarian law. His cause, which anyway is not easy to plead, sometimes finds little favour among National Societies whose interests lie in practical activities. But the ICRC is the champion of the Geneva Conventions; often a thankless task. The Conventions will remain a dead letter if they are not well known to the authorities and the members of the armed forces, and if the Red Cross Societies themselves do not know what the Conventions require them to do.

### **The ICRC and the League**

In my relations with the National Societies, I had the privilege to be on very friendly terms with Mr. Henrik Beer, Secretary General of the League, and with the League's senior officials. Throughout my term in office I made a point of keeping in close contact with the League and its Chairman and to brush away any small difficulties that might arise. It is simply out of the question that, to the National Societies, the ICRC and League representatives should appear not to be perfectly united in their common action, and in their equal respect for the Red Cross ideal.

Three years constitute a very short term for a new President of the ICRC, but it is long enough for him to realize the loftiness of the Red Cross idea and to appreciate the vast amount of goodwill of all those working for that idea throughout the world.

**Eric MARTIN**  
Former President of the ICRC

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## CONFERENCE OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES IN JAKARTA

The second conference of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the Asean countries met in Jakarta from 15 to 18 July under the chairmanship of Dr. Satrio, President of the Indonesian Red Cross. At the opening ceremony the conference was honoured by an address by His Excellency General Suharto, President of the Republic of Indonesia.

After welcoming the participants, General Suharto stated: « I am indeed happy to observe that with the existing co-operation among the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies within Asean our joint efforts will certainly bring about greater results than what we can accomplish if we work individually. . . Co-operation based on humanism for humanitarian purposes will grow closer, and hopefully this would serve as a good example for co-operation among nations in other fields. . . »

The conference was attended by representatives from the National Societies of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. The Japanese Red Cross sent an observer. The League was represented by Mr. Kai Warras, its Vice-President, and the ICRC by Mr. Richard Pestalozzi, a member of the Committee.

The purpose of the meeting was to strengthen the ties uniting National Societies of the region and to prepare for the International Red Cross Conference being held this month at Bucharest. This aim, according to participants, was fully achieved.

The National Societies of the Asean countries have similar problems and intend to strengthen their co-operation, particularly in disaster relief. They are also mindful of the problems facing the world Red Cross movement as a whole and they intend to play their part in solving them.

The third conference of National Societies of the Asean countries is scheduled for 1979 and will be held in the Philippines.

### **JUNIOR RED CROSS MEETING IN BELGRADE**

The International Junior Red Cross Meeting, organized by the Red Cross of Yugoslavia, took place in Belgrade between 4 and 9 September, and was attended by 49 delegations. Of these, forty had been sent by recognized National Societies, and two by Societies not yet recognized. Four delegations represented liberation movements or the Red Cross group of such a movement. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the League of Red Cross Societies, the Henry Dunant Institute and the ICRC. Discussions at the Meeting followed the general theme: "Youth and the growth of the Red Cross, contribution to peace and progress in the world".

After the inaugural ceremony, which included an address by Dr. B. Raspopović, President of the Assembly of Vice-Presidents of the Red Cross of Yugoslavia, the participants gathered several times in plenary session to hear the delegations' reports on the activities of their own youth groups within the National Societies. The resulting discussion, which was thorough and wide-ranging, lasted for over a day. A drafting committee then drew up a final report in which the delegates clearly affirmed their respect for and attachment to the fundamental principles of the Red Cross.

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### **THE RED CROSS AND RADIOCOMMUNICATIONS**

The need for the ICRC to have its own radio system to guarantee the speed and effectiveness of its operations had long been obvious. In 1959, the Administrative Conference on Radiocommunications in Geneva recommended that the Red Cross should have an autonomous radio

system. In 1965, at Vienna, the Twentieth International Conference of the Red Cross passed a resolution encouraging the development of Red Cross telecommunications.

Since the establishment in 1963 of the ICRC's radio station with the call signal HBC-88 and the first exchange of messages between ICRC headquarters and its delegation in Yemen (1963-1964), there has been continual progress.<sup>1</sup> The ICRC is now in regular daily contact with its delegations in many parts of the world. Following this example, 43 National Red Cross Societies have set up their own radio systems, either for communications with other Societies or for their own domestic purposes.

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In Geneva, the ICRC has its main sending and receiving station at Versoix, in the countryside about 10 kilometres from headquarters, to which it is linked by telex and telephone. Another station, at headquarters, can be used when the Versoix station is overloaded.

The ICRC also has a workshop for minor repairs and a storehouse with equipment ready for shipment. Material on hand is worth some 500,000 francs. The ICRC is thus in a position to provide material at short notice to departing emergency delegations or to replace equipment in the field which is out of order. In 1976, seven fully equipped radio stations and about 200 shipments of spare parts were sent from Geneva to ICRC delegations abroad.

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In the world as a whole, at the end of 1976, the ICRC had 18 transmitter-receiver stations, 12 of which were in direct contact with headquarters, while the others were in touch through relay stations.

The events in Lebanon have entailed the transmission of a great number of messages. From Geneva, there are from 4 to 7 communications daily with the ICRC delegation in Beirut, 3 with Tripoli and 2 with Jounieh. There are also 2 daily contacts with Cairo and 3 with Amman, the latter relaying messages to Damascus. All these stations communi-

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<sup>1</sup> *International Review* has published several articles on developments in this field, in January 1971, March and November 1972 and March 1975, for example.

cate messages as well between one another. They can also exchange messages with the ICRC stations at Nicosia and Jerusalem, which have no direct contact with Geneva.

Farther east, the ICRC has a station at Rawalpindi, which relays messages to and from stations in New Delhi and Dacca, and another at Vientiane, serving as a relay station for Bangkok. The Vientiane station can also transmit messages to the ICRC delegation at Hanoi, but only by telex. It is hoped shortly to open a station at Kuala Lumpur for the regional delegation in Malaysia.

In Africa, the ICRC has three stations, in Lusaka, Salisbury and Nairobi. It has two in Latin America, at Caracas and Santiago. A third station is planned for Guatemala, where a regional delegation has its headquarters.

In 1976, there were 11,871 messages exchanged between Geneva and stations in the field, amounting to a total of 768,197 words. These figures do not include radio voice conversations, which take place exceptionally.

Exchanges between delegations were even more voluminous: 23,739 messages and a total of 800,418 words.

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To add to the foregoing, it should be noted that the ICRC also makes great use of telex, particularly with delegations which, for a variety of technical reasons, do not have radio stations, such as those in Tel Aviv, New York and elsewhere. About 6,200 messages were sent from Geneva and a like number were received.

Relatively few people are employed to operate the ICRC's radio network. In Geneva and Versoix, for the two sending and receiving stations, storehouse, repairs shop, telex service and technical maintenance, it has seven full-time staff members, with temporary personnel filling in as required, especially on weekends. Every radio operator can also operate the telex—and if necessary function as an accountant or administrator.

For service with delegations abroad, the ICRC must often send operators from Switzerland. There were 19 such assignments in 1976. For the most part, these are persons who are willing to give up their regular work for a few months to serve the ICRC. Among them are often radio amateurs, whose day-to-day work is entirely different from that performed with the overseas delegations. Through their devotion to a humanitarian cause and their enthusiasm for radio, they make excellent operators on short-term assignments lasting for a few months. In

addition, since radio transmissions do not take all their time, they also turn their hands to work as bookkeepers, administrators, relief distributors or photographers.

The ICRC radio service also tries to recruit operators in the countries where they are to work. Thus, it has local radio operators in Cairo, Jerusalem, Rawalpindi and elsewhere. But it is often difficult for these locally engaged operators to work in other languages than their own, which creates a problem for such recruitment.

When traffic with a station is relatively sparse, it is often a delegate who is responsible for his own communications.

For all people who are not regular staff members of the ICRC, special preparatory courses must be given, dealing with a number of subjects. In addition to basic teaching about the Red Cross and the ICRC, they must learn about the specific purposes of the missions of which they are a part; how to act under a variety of circumstances, often dangerous, which may arise. Finally, they must learn the rules for ICRC messages—for it is obvious that the wavelengths assigned to the Red Cross by the International Telecommunication Union must not be used for frivolous messages or to “pass the time of day”. Messages of a commercial or political nature are also forbidden, for the messages of the Red Cross are exclusively of a humanitarian character.

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The next Worldwide Administrative Radio Conference of the ITU will open in Geneva on 24 September 1979.

Since the Red Cross set up its own emergency radiocommunications network, it has been amply demonstrated that Red Cross action of any significance must be able to rely on a direct, swift and independent telecommunications system.

Point 3 of Recommendation No. 34 relating to the use of radio-telegraph and radiotelephone links by Red Cross organizations, which was approved by the previous Administrative Radio Conference, held in 1959, recommended that the next Conference should consider whether any further action was necessary.

In 1963, the Swiss Telecommunications Administration authorized the ICRC to broadcast on five frequencies. Some years later, five further frequencies were granted, a single channel in each band having become inadequate, especially as channels had to be shared at times with commercial, military and consular services.

## IN THE RED CROSS WORLD

On the grounds that the low power of its transmitters does not interfere with other transmissions and that its broadcasts are of a strictly humanitarian character, the Red Cross intends to ask the 1979 Conference to agree that ten frequencies be exclusively allocated to the Red Cross and that Recommendation 34 be supplemented by a new resolution.

With this objective in mind, National Red Cross Societies are urged to bring this project to the attention of the various authorities concerned in their respective countries, stressing how important it is for the Red Cross to have an emergency radio network to ensure maximum efficiency in its humanitarian operations.

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## THE VADUZ GROUP AND ITS ACTIVITIES

The difficult situation relating to human rights in international relations gave rise to the idea of bringing together, in a completely non-governmental context, experts in various fields to study certain problems presented by this situation. This was the origin of the Vaduz Group.

Being aware of the existence in humanitarian law, in its widest sense, of two distinct branches—humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts, which is the subject of the Geneva and Hague Conventions, and human rights, which constitute the basis of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—the Vaduz Group chose to devote itself to the many problems in the latter field.

Whereas the governments which signed and ratified the Geneva Conventions agreed to be bound by their provisions and hence to renounce a part of their sovereignty, the situation is quite different with regard to human rights. In some parts of the world, in this connection, one finds an excessively rigid and often poorly understood concept of national sovereignty and thus a badly balanced relationship between the power of the State and the basic rights of man.

While the wholesome exercise of State sovereignty is in the interest of all concerned, a rigid concept of the power of the State often has negative consequences, both for the population and for the leaders.

Many people have lost hope for restoration of the balance. They believe that the United Nations Charter (Article 2, No. 7) has permanently fixed the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of member States. They also observe with regret that two United Nations covenants on human rights, achieved through the efforts of the Human Rights Commission, and even their legal validation in 1976, changed virtually nothing, except for provisions against discriminatory measures based on differences of race.

The author, formerly an ICRC delegate, and his colleagues in the Vaduz Group have found by experience that strictly non-political initia-

tives can overcome difficulties resulting from an erroneous concept of national sovereignty. He has considered it possible to use the same methods of work in another field, that of human rights.

The completely neutral and non-political character of the Vaduz Group will undoubtedly lead it to study the provisions of human rights covenants, which it would seem possible to do while avoiding political problems. The experiences referred to above demonstrate that by following such a work programme, one may exert favorable influences upon governments espousing any ideology by offering them the possibility of engaging in practical work. The author believes it may be useful to try to open up a path in this direction and that it may in so doing be possible to enter areas covered by national sovereignty. This approach might gradually clear away the obstacles to real international detente.

Such an approach aroused the interest of qualified experts and a series of studies were initiated in 1973 in Liechtenstein, a country just as neutral and non-political as Switzerland, under the patronage of H.R.H. the Reigning Prince.

The immediate programme of this group, deliberately limited in number, was to organize round tables at which experts could express their views on two matters: 1) the concept of State sovereignty under present circumstances; 2) the possibilities for organizing international humanitarian and non-political actions without infringing upon State sovereignty.

After careful preparation, these two questions were submitted to experts at round table and other meetings in the past four years at Vaduz, Florence, Turin and San Remo, in which members of the Group participated.

To mention some of the results of this activity:

At Turin, in June 1975, two resolutions were adopted by consensus. The first stated that it is possible to carry out international relief actions, of a humanitarian and non-political character, without infringing upon national sovereignty in the countries concerned or in bordering countries. The second resolution, relating to the reuniting of families, put forward a proposal for submission to the International Conference in Geneva on the development of humanitarian law. These two resolutions were adopted by 40 experts from 10 countries.<sup>1</sup>

The exchange of views at Vienna in February 1977 was especially fruitful. Minister E. Kussbach presided, in his personal capacity, over this

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<sup>1</sup> *International Review* referred to these resolutions in its issues of August and November 1975.

seminar, with Prof. A. Verdross as honorary chairman. Highly qualified experts took part, to present reports and discuss the question of national sovereignty, particularly with regard to human rights, in relation to international law and national law. The meeting aroused great interest in Austrian scientific and governmental circles.<sup>1</sup>

On the occasion of this very successful meeting at Vienna, the subject chosen as the concrete basis for discussion was the action of reuniting families after the Second World War. This action, organized by the ICRC and carried out in close co-operation with the National Red Cross Societies concerned, took place without intrusion of any political consideration, at a time when there was no rule of positive law on the matter. Yet it was a great success, with nearly 700,000 persons being re-united with their families in Europe alone. It contributed substantially to détente and was considered to be a work of peace.

This example will continue to inspire the Vaduz Group in its programme of future activities, in which it will certainly be studying closely related problems.

The good result obtained through the good will of governments are in line with the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and with Article 23 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which states: "The family is the natural and fundamental unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State."

What government today would question this affirmation? It is certain that other provisions in these covenants, presented in an impartial and strictly humanitarian manner, will find the desired response and the generous understanding of governments.

H. G. BECKH

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<sup>1</sup> A complete report is to be published at Strasbourg in *Europäische Grundrechte-Zeitschrift*.

### ROUND TABLE AT SAN REMO

The International Institute of Humanitarian Law organized a Round Table on current problems in international humanitarian law, which took place in San Remo from 30 August to 4 September. There were numerous participants, from all parts of the world, representing those bodies (Governments, Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the League of Red Cross Societies, the ICRC, international associations and agencies, law institutes and universities) concerned with the development of international humanitarian law and with the problems arising out of the recent adoption by the Diplomatic Conference, which ended in June, of the two Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions.

The Round Table, under the direction of Ambassador P. P. Spinelli, President of the Institute, spent the five days in a consideration of the following subjects: How to ensure that all States became Parties to the Additional Protocols; How to disseminate knowledge of the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols, nationally and internationally; The relief actions envisaged under the additional Protocols; The prohibition of torture.

Special committees were set up to discuss the development of humanitarian law and human rights, the teaching of humanitarian law to members of the armed forces, protection for refugees and for victims of natural disasters, and international medical law.

Mr. Jean Pictet, Vice-President of the ICRC, gave an inaugural address, excerpts from which appear in the first pages of this issue of the *International Review*.

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## BOOKS AND REVIEWS

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### ARMAMENTS AND DISARMAMENT IN THE NUCLEAR AGE <sup>1</sup>

This work, edited by Dr. Marek Thee and published in October 1976 by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, is a valuable source of information for those concerned with the increasingly vital problem of the spread of armaments.

The first chapter gives statistics on the present state of world armaments. Figures here tell us a great deal about the sums spent on arms throughout the world, the total explosive power of existing nuclear weapons (estimated at 15 tons of TNT for each inhabitant of the globe), stockpiles of chemical weapons, and the turnover of world arms trading. Some of the comparisons made by the author—for example, of arms expenditure with the sums spent on health or education, or with the gross national product of some poorer countries—supply further food for thought.

The second chapter deals with various aspects of nuclear weapons: historical (thirty years of nuclear arms), philosophical (absurdity of the nuclear arms race), technical and military (theory of the first use of atomic weapons), political (balance of nuclear terror in Europe) and legal.

Chapter Three deals with chemical and biological warfare, with special attention to the practical consequences of the Convention prohibiting the use of biological weapons, which came into effect on 26 March 1975, and of the Geneva Protocol of 17 June 1925. Part of the chapter is devoted to refuting the argument that the use of biochemical weapons could be justified as being “less inhuman” than other types of arms.

The following chapter, the fourth, deals with the effects of war, and particularly of certain types of weapon, on the environment. It discusses the draft Convention presented jointly by the USSR and the USA to the Committee on Disarmament and aimed at prohibiting the use, for military or other hostile purposes, of techniques for modifying the environment and it reviews the draft Convention on the crime of “eco-

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<sup>1</sup> Published by Almqvist Wiksell International, Stockholm, 1976, 308 pp.

## BOOKS AND REVIEWS

cide", put forward in an individual capacity by the American legal expert Richard A. Falk.

Conventional weapons and trade in them are the subject of Chapter Five. The sixth deals with the dynamics of the arms race (pressures arising from opportunities created by technological advances; reactions and counter-reactions caused by the arsenals of potential enemies) and with military research and development. The seventh outlines the economic and social consequences of arms deals.

The eighth and last chapter of this well-documented study looks at the fundamental question of arms control and disarmament. Efforts being made in this field are carefully weighed and analysed. The final part of the chapter examines the laws of war prohibiting or limiting the use of "dubious" weapons—"dubious" being the word used to describe those weapons which might belong in the categories prohibited by the laws of humanity. Any improvement in the law of war will consist mainly in the reaffirmation and clearer definition of laws derived from existing principles, and this the authors attempt to do. It must also take into account principles whose importance has become manifest only recently, for example, the principle that the survival of the human race must take priority over national interests, and the principle that the environment must be protected.

The many tables add to the value of this work, which will certainly become an indispensable aid to all those studying the problems of disarmament and its associated subjects.

Y. S.

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### **International Instrument for Nurses, *International Nursing Review, Geneva, No 5.***

Official preparation of an international instrument on the conditions of work and life of nursing personnel began at the ILO's International Labour Conference held in Geneva, June 2-23.

48 nurses from 34 countries attended the conference as delegates or advisers to government, worker or employer groups, or as observers.

"The nurses made outstanding contributions to the discussions of the Committee on Nursing Personnel and had a tremendous impact on the meeting", says ICN Executive Director Adele Herwitz.

“Nurses expressed their opinions very clearly and were able to bring other delegates to a clearer understanding of the special problems facing the nursing profession. This conference was a perfect illustration of the need for nurses to attend such meetings in order to speak authoritatively for their profession and to defend their rights.”

The proposed conclusions adopted in June will be sent by ILO to governments for their comments. A report will then go to the 1977 International Labour Conference, which will hold a second and final discussion on the whole subject.

The preliminary conclusions drawn by this year's conference include the statement that nurses should be able to refuse to perform specific duties where performance would conflict with their religious, moral or ethical convictions, provided they inform their supervisor in good time and are satisfied that nursing care is ensured. If this clause is adopted by next year's conference, says ILO, it will be the first time that such a conscience clause has featured in an ILO standard.

Other significant recommendations include two relating to career development and remuneration. It was agreed that measures should be taken to give nursing personnel reasonable career prospects by providing for a sufficiently varied and open range of possibilities of professional advancement, leadership positions in administration, education and research, and that remuneration should be commensurate with nurses' "needs, qualifications, responsibilities, duties and experience". Remuneration should take account of the constraints and hazards inherent in the profession and should be fixed at levels likely to attract persons to and retain them in the profession.

The proposed conclusions adopted this year cover the following specific subjects: policy concerning nursing services and nursing personnel; education and training; practice of the nursing profession; participation; career development; remuneration; working time and rest periods; occupational health protection; social security; special employment arrangements; nursing students and international cooperation.

ICN is asking its member associations to contact government authorities in their respective countries to voice the nursing profession's support of the proposed conclusions, with a view to ensuring adoption of an international instrument next year by ILO Member States. National associations will also seek to have nurses included in government, worker and employer delegations again next year.

**RECENT ICRC PUBLICATIONS  
ISSUED FOR THE DIPLOMATIC  
CONFERENCE  
ON THE REAFFIRMATION AND  
DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL  
HUMANITARIAN LAW  
APPLICABLE IN ARMED CONFLICTS**

	Sw. Fr.
<b>The Emblem of the Red Cross, A brief history</b> (F. Bugnion), Geneva 1977 . . . . .	10.—
<b>Conference of Government Experts on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons, Geneva,</b> ( <i>first session</i> ) 1975, 106 pp. . . . .	15.—
<b>Conference of Government Experts on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons, Geneva,</b> ( <i>second session</i> ) 1976, 231 pp. . . . .	22.—
<b>Reservations to the Geneva Conventions of 1949,</b> (C. Pilloud) Geneva 1976, 44 pp. . . . .	4.—
<b>States Parties to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 (List drawn up on 30 June 1977) . . . . .</b>	2.—
<b>Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, Geneva 1977, X + 124 pp.</b>	12.—

EXTRACT FROM THE STATUTES OF  
THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

ADOPTED 21 JUNE 1973

ART. 1. — *International Committee of the Red Cross*

1. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), founded in Geneva in 1863 and formally recognized in the Geneva Conventions and by International Conferences of the Red Cross, shall be an independent organization having its own Statutes.

2. It shall be a constituent part of the International Red Cross.<sup>1</sup>

ART. 2. — *Legal Status*

As an association governed by Articles 60 and following of the Swiss Civil Code, the ICRC shall have legal personality.

ART. 3. — *Headquarters and Emblem*

The headquarters of the ICRC shall be in Geneva.

Its emblem shall be a red cross on a white ground. Its motto shall be *Inter arma caritas*.

ART. 4. — *Role*

1. The special role of the ICRC shall be :

- (a) to maintain the fundamental principles of the Red Cross as proclaimed by the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross ;
- (b) to recognize any newly established or reconstituted National Red Cross Society which fulfils the conditions for recognition in force, and to notify other National Societies of such recognition ;
- (c) to undertake the tasks incumbent on it under the Geneva Conventions, to work for the faithful application of these Conventions and to take cognizance of any complaints regarding alleged breaches of the humanitarian Conventions ;

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<sup>1</sup> The International Red Cross comprises the National Red Cross Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies. The term " National Red Cross Societies " includes the Red Crescent Societies and the Red Lion and Sun Society.

- (d) to take action in its capacity as a neutral institution, especially in case of war, civil war or internal strife ; to endeavour to ensure at all times that the military and civilian victims of such conflicts and of their direct results receive protection and assistance, and to serve in humanitarian matters, as an intermediary between the parties ;
- (e) to ensure the operation of the Central Information Agencies provided for in the Geneva Conventions ;
- (f) to contribute, in view of such conflicts, to the preparation and development of medical personnel and medical equipment, in co-operation with the Red Cross organizations, the medical services of the armed forces, and other competent authorities ;
- (g) to work for the continual improvement of humanitarian international law and for the better understanding and diffusion of the Geneva Conventions and to prepare for their possible extension ;
- (h) to accept the mandates entrusted to it by the International Conferences of the Red Cross.

2. The ICRC may also take any humanitarian initiative which comes within its role as a specifically neutral and independent institution and consider any question requiring examination by such an institution.

ART. 6 (first paragraph). — *Membership of the ICRC*

The ICRC shall co-opt its members from among Swiss citizens. It shall comprise fifteen to twenty-five members.

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## ADDRESSES OF NATIONAL SOCIETIES

- AFGHANISTAN — Afghan Red Crescent, Puli Artan, *Kabul*.
- PEOPLE'S SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA — Albanian Red Cross, 35, Rruga e Barrikadavet, *Tirana*.
- ALGERIA (Democratic and People's Republic) — Algerian Red Crescent Society, 15 bis, Boulevard Mohamed V, *Algiers*.
- ARGENTINA — Argentine Red Cross, H. Yrigoyen 2068, *1089 Buenos Aires*.
- AUSTRALIA — Australian Red Cross, 122 Flinders Street, *Melbourne 3000*.
- AUSTRIA — Austrian Red Cross, 3 Gusshausstrasse, Postfach 39, *Vienna 4*.
- BAHAMAS — Bahamas Red Cross Society, P.O. Box N 91, *Nassau*.
- BAHRAIN — Bahrain Red Crescent Society, P.O. Box 882, *Manama*.
- BANGLADESH — Bangladesh Red Cross Society, 34, Bangabandhu Avenue, *Dacca 2*.
- PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BENIN — Red Cross of Benin, B.P. 1, *Porto Novo*.
- BELGIUM — Belgian Red Cross, 98 Chaussée de Vleurgat, *1050 Brussels*.
- BOLIVIA — Bolivian Red Cross, Avenida Simón Bolívar, 1515, *La Paz*.
- BOTSWANA — Botswana Red Cross Society, Independence Avenue, P.O. Box 485, *Gaborone*.
- BRAZIL — Brazilian Red Cross, Praça Cruz Vermelha 10-12, *Rio de Janeiro*.
- BULGARIA — Bulgarian Red Cross, 1, Boul. Biruzov, *Sofia 27*.
- BURMA (Socialist Republic of the Union of) — Burma Red Cross, 42 Strand Road, Red Cross Building, *Rangoon*.
- BURUNDI — Red Cross Society of Burundi, rue du Marché 3, P.O. Box 324, *Bujumbura*.
- CAMEROON — Cameroon Red Cross Society, rue Henry-Dunant, P.O.B. 631, *Yaoundé*.
- CANADA — Canadian Red Cross, 95 Wellesley Street East, *Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 1H6*.
- CENTRAL AFRICAN EMPIRE — Central African Red Cross, B.P. 1428, *Bangui*.
- CHILE — Chilean Red Cross, Avenida Santa María 0150, Correo 21, Casilla 246V., *Santiago*.
- CHINA — Red Cross Society of China, 22 Kanmien Hutung, *Peking, E*.
- COLOMBIA — Colombian Red Cross, Carrera 7a, 34-65, Apartado nacional 1110, *Bogotá D.E*.
- CONGO, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF THE — Croix-Rouge Congolaise, place de la Paix, *Brazzaville*.
- COSTA RICA — Costa Rican Red Cross, Calle 14, Avenida 8, Apartado 1025, *San José*.
- CUBA — Cuban Red Cross, Calle 23 201 esq. N. Vedado, *Havana*.
- CZECHOSLOVAKIA — Czechoslovak Red Cross, Thunovska 18, 118 04 *Prague 1*.
- DENMARK — Danish Red Cross, Ny Vestergade 17, DK-1741 *Copenhagen K*.
- DOMINICAN REPUBLIC — Dominican Red Cross, Apartado Postal 1293, *Santo Domingo*.
- ECUADOR — Ecuadorian Red Cross, Calle de la Cruz Roja y Avenida Colombia, 118, *Quito*.
- EGYPT (Arab Republic of) — Egyptian Red Crescent Society, 34 rue Ramses, *Cairo*.
- EL SALVADOR — El Salvador Red Cross, 3a Avenida Norte y 3a Calle Poniente, *San Salvador, C.A.*
- ETHIOPIA — Ethiopian Red Cross, Ras Desta Damtew Avenue, *Addis Ababa*.
- FIJI — Fiji Red Cross Society, 193 Rodwell Road. P.O. Box 569, *Suva*.
- FINLAND — Finnish Red Cross, Tehtaankatu 1 A, Box 168, *00141 Helsinki 14/15*.
- FRANCE — French Red Cross, 17 rue Quentin Bauchart, F-75384 *Paris CEDEX 08*.
- GAMBIA — The Gambia Red Cross Society, P.O. Box 472, *Banjul*.
- GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC — German Red Cross in the German Democratic Republic, Kaitzerstrasse 2, DDR 801 *Dresden 1*.
- GERMANY, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF — German Red Cross in the Federal Republic of Germany, Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 71, 5300, *Bonn 1*, Postfach (D.B.R.).
- GHANA — Ghana Red Cross, National Headquarters, Ministries Annex A3, P.O. Box 835, *Accra*.
- GREECE — Hellenic Red Cross, rue Lycavittou 1, *Athens 135*.
- GUATEMALA — Guatemalan Red Cross, 3ª Calle 8-40, Zona 1, *Ciudad de Guatemala*.
- GUYANA — Guyana Red Cross, P.O. Box 351, Eve Leary, *Georgetown*.
- HAITI — Haiti Red Cross, Place des Nations Unies, B.P. 1337, *Port-au-Prince*.
- HONDURAS — Honduran Red Cross, 1ª Avenida entre 3a y 4a Calles, N° 313, *Comayagüela, D.C.*
- HUNGARY — Hungarian Red Cross, V. Arany János utca 31, *Budapest V*. Mail Add.: *1367 Budapest 5, Pf. 249*.
- ICELAND — Icelandic Red Cross, Nóatúni 21, *Reykjavik*.
- INDIA — Indian Red Cross, 1 Red Cross Road, *New Delhi 110001*.
- INDONESIA — Indonesian Red Cross, Jalan Abdul Muis 66, P.O. Box 2009, *Djakarta*.
- IRAN — Iranian Red Lion and Sun Society, Av. Villa, Carrefour Takhté Djamchid, *Teheran*.
- IRAQ — Iraqi Red Crescent, Al-Mansour, *Baghdad*.
- IRELAND — Irish Red Cross, 16 Merrion Square, *Dublin 2*.
- ITALY — Italian Red Cross, 12 via Toscana, *Rome*.
- IVORY COAST — Ivory Coast Red Cross Society, B.P. 1244, *Abidjan*.
- JAMAICA — Jamaica Red Cross Society, 76 Arnold Road, *Kingston 5*.
- JAPAN — Japanese Red Cross, 1-3 Shiba-Daimon 1-chome, Minato-Ku, *Tokyo 105*.
- JORDAN — Jordan National Red Crescent Society, P.O. Box 10 001, *Amman*.
- KENYA — Kenya Red Cross Society, St. John's Gate, P.O. Box 40712, *Nairobi*.
- KOREA, DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF — Red Cross Society of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, *Pyongyang*.
- KOREA, REPUBLIC OF — The Republic of Korea National Red Cross, 32-3Ka Nam San-Dong, *Seoul*.
- KUWAIT — Kuwait Red Crescent Society, P.O. Box 1350, *Kuwait*.
- LAO PEOPLES' DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC — Lao Red Cross, P.B. 650, *Vientiane*.
- LEBANON — Lebanese Red Cross, rue Spears, *Beirut*.
- LESOTHO — Lesotho Red Cross Society, P.O. Box 366, *Maseru*.

- LIBERIA** — Liberian National Red Cross, National Headquarters, 107 Lynch Street, P.O. Box 226, *Monrovia*.
- LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA** — Libyan Arab Red Crescent, P.O. Box 541, *Benghazi*.
- LIECHTENSTEIN** — Liechtenstein Red Cross, *Vaduz*.
- LUXEMBOURG** — Luxembourg Red Cross, Parc de la Ville, C.P. 404, *Luxembourg*.
- MALAGASY REPUBLIC** — Red Cross Society of the Malagasy Republic, rue Clémenceau, P.O. Box 1168, *Antananarivo*.
- MALAWI** — Malawi Red Cross, Hall Road, *Blantyre* (P.O. Box 30080, Chichiri, *Blantyre* 3).
- MALAYSIA** — Malaysian Red Crescent Society, 519 Jalan Belfield, *Kuala Lumpur* 08-03.
- MALI** — Mali Red Cross, B.P. 280, *Bamako*.
- MAURITANIA** — Mauritanian Red Crescent Society, B.P. 344, Avenue Gamal Abdel Nasser, *Nouakchott*.
- MAURITIUS** — Mauritius Red Cross, Ste Thérèse Street, *Curepipe*.
- MEXICO** — Mexican Red Cross, Avenida Ejército Nacional n° 1032, *México 10 D.F.*
- MONACO** — Red Cross of Monaco, 27 boul. de Suisse, *Monte Carlo*.
- MONGOLIA** — Red Cross Society of the Mongolian People's Republic, Central Post Office, Post Box 537, *Ulan Bator*.
- MOROCCO** — Moroccan Red Crescent, B.P. 189, *Rabat*.
- NEPAL** — Nepal Red Cross Society, Tahachal, P.B. 217, *Kathmandu*.
- NETHERLANDS** — Netherlands Red Cross, 27 Prinsessegracht, *The Hague*.
- NEW ZEALAND** — New Zealand Red Cross, Red Cross House, 14 Hill Street, *Wellington 1*. (P.O. Box 12-140, *Wellington North*.)
- NICARAGUA** — Nicaraguan Red Cross, D.N. Apartado 3279, *Managua*.
- NIGER** — Red Cross Society of Niger, B.P. 386, *Niamey*.
- NIGERIA** — Nigerian Red Cross Society, Eko Aketa Close, off St. Gregory Rd., P.O. Box 764, *Lagos*.
- NORWAY** — Norwegian Red Cross, Parkveien 33b, *Oslo*. Mail Add.: *Postboks 7034 H-Oslo 3*.
- PAKISTAN** — Pakistan Red Crescent Society, National Headquarters, 169, Sarwar Road, *Rawalpindi*.
- PANAMA** — Panamanian Red Cross, Apartado Postal 668, *Zona 1, Panamá*.
- PARAGUAY** — Paraguayan Red Cross, Brasil 216, *Asunción*.
- PERU** — Peruvian Red Cross, Jirón Chancay 881, *Lima*.
- PHILIPPINES** — Philippine National Red Cross, 860 United Nations Avenue, P.O.B. 280, *Manila 2801*.
- POLAND** — Polish Red Cross, Mokotowska 14, *Warsaw*.
- PORTUGAL** — Portuguese Red Cross, Jardim 9 Abril, 1 a 5, *Lisbon 3*.
- ROMANIA** — Red Cross of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Strada Biserica Amzei 29, *Bucarest*.
- SAN MARINO** — San Marino Red Cross, Palais gouvernemental, *San Marino*.
- SAUDI ARABIA** — Saudi Arabian Red Crescent, *Riyadh*.
- SENEGAL** — Senegalese Red Cross Society, Bd Franklin-Roosevelt, P.O.B. 299, *Dakar*.
- SIERRA LEONE** — Sierra Leone Red Cross Society, 6A Liverpool Street, P.O.B. 427, *Freetown*.
- SINGAPORE** — Singapore Red Cross Society, 15 Penang Lane, *Singapore 9*.
- SOMALI REPUBLIC** — Somali Red Crescent Society, P.O. Box 937, *Mogadishu*.
- SOUTH AFRICA** — South African Red Cross, Cor. Kruis & Market Streets, P.O.B. 8726, *Johannesburg 2001*.
- SPAIN** — Spanish Red Cross, Eduardo Dato 16, *Madrid 10*.
- SRI LANKA** — Sri Lanka Red Cross Society, 106 Dharmapala Mawatha, *Colombo 7*.
- SUDAN** — Sudanese Red Crescent, P.O. Box 235, *Khartoum*.
- SWEDEN** — Swedish Red Cross, Fack, S-104 40 *Stockholm 14*.
- SWITZERLAND** — Swiss Red Cross, Taubenstrasse 8, B.P. 2699, *3001 Berne*.
- SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC** — Syrian Red Crescent, Bd Mahdi Ben Barake, *Damascus*.
- TANZANIA** — Tanzania Red Cross Society, Upanga Road, P.O.B. 1133, *Dar es Salaam*.
- THAILAND** — Thai Red Cross Society, Paribatra Building, Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital, *Bangkok*.
- TOGO** — Togolese Red Cross Society, 51 rue Boko Soga, P.O. Box 655, *Lomé*.
- TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO** — Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society, Wrightson Road West, P.O. Box 357, *Port of Spain*, Trinidad, West Indies.
- TUNISIA** — Tunisian Red Crescent, 19 rue d'Angleterre, *Tunis*.
- TURKEY** — Turkish Red Crescent, Yenisehir, *Ankara*.
- UGANDA** — Uganda Red Cross, Nabunya Road, P.O. Box 494, *Kampala*.
- UNITED KINGDOM** — British Red Cross, 9 Grosvenor Crescent, *London, SW1X 7EJ*.
- UPPER VOLTA** — Upper Volta Red Cross, P.O.B. 340, *Ouagadougou*.
- URUGUAY** — Uruguayan Red Cross, Avenida 8 de Octubre 2990, *Montevideo*.
- U.S.A.** — American National Red Cross, 17th and D Streets, N.W., *Washington, D.C. 20006*.
- U.S.S.R.** — Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, I. Tcheremushkinskii proezd 5, *Moscow 117036*.
- VENEZUELA** — Venezuelan Red Cross, Avenida Andrés Bello No. 4, Apart. 3185, *Caracas*.
- VIET NAM, SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF** — Red Cross of Viet Nam, 68 rue Bà-Triêu, *Hanoi*.
- YUGOSLAVIA** — Red Cross of Yugoslavia, Simina ulica broj 19, *Belgrade*.
- REPUBLIC OF ZAIRE** — Red Cross of the Republic of Zaire, 41 av. de la Justice, B.P. 1712, *Kinshasa*.
- ZAMBIA** — Zambia Red Cross, P.O. Box R.W.1, 2837 Brentwood Drive, *Lusaka*.