



REVUE
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SUPPLEMENT

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ACTION BY THE RED CROSS IN THE HUMANITARIAN FIELD

The Red Cross is one of those great institutions that gives mankind a ray of hope amidst the strain and strife that unfortunately characterise our present day life. In the midst of ideological differences and political conflicts the Red Cross provides a rallying point for all those desirous of rendering service to those in need. Universal brotherhood may be a distant ideal, very difficult of attainment, but there is no doubt that the Red Cross through its humanitarian services is making a notable contribution towards the achievement of good-will among men.

Paradoxically this institution which aims to attain peace was born out of war. One hundred years ago the sight of forty thousand dead and wounded soldiers lying uncared for on the bloody battlefield of Solferino, so moved Henri Dunant that he set in motion efforts for the calling of an International Conference which resulted in the signing of the First Geneva Convention and the birth of the Red Cross. Since then for the best part of a century, the name Red Cross has become a unique symbol of aid to all those in distress, just as an arrow mark is, everywhere, a means of indicating directions.

The Geneva Conventions which can be described as the Magna Carta of the Red Cross mark a happy and revolutionary transition in human affairs. Governments, signatories to the Conventions, have voluntarily agreed to a limitation of their

sovereignty to the extent of observing the conditions and rules laid down in the Conventions for the protection of sick and wounded soldiers in the battlefield, for prisoners of war, for civilians during war time etc. Thus they have shown the way how by mutual agreement and cooperation other problems facing the world can also be solved on a satisfactory basis without recourse to war.

The Red Cross is essentially a humanitarian organisation. But it is much more than that. It has some unique features that distinguish it from similar organisations. One of the outstanding features of the Red Cross is its universality. Cutting across all national frontiers and rising above all sectarian, racial and regional prejudices and with a membership of over 127 millions it has set before mankind a great ideal and united the world in a common bond of service. Barring the great religions of the world it is doubtful whether any single movement anywhere commands the allegiance of such a large number. The Red Cross is unique in this respect. There is hardly any part of the world where its well known flag does not fly. There is no person who cannot become its member and there is none who is not eligible for its help in case of need.

Neutrality comes next. As an organisation the Red Cross scrupulously keeps clear of all conflicts and as its ideals are non-controversial and humane it is considered by all to be above partisanship.

Closely allied with the principle of neutrality is impartiality which demands action without favour towards or prejudice against any one. A standing example of this principle of impartiality in action and the recognition of this attribute of the Red Cross was provided at the time of the conflict in Hungary in 1956 when the International Committee of the Red Cross alone was given permission by the Hungarian and Soviet Governments to accompany medical and relief supplies into that country and supervise their distribution. The Indian Red Cross mission in Korea earlier in 1953 was another example of the great role played by the Red Cross as an intermediary between conflicting powers.

In the course of its mission of mercy the Red Cross is active both in war and peace. During war its agents are engaged in tracing the missing, in working for the re-union of families, the exchange of prisoners of war and similar humane activities. It arranges for information about war prisoners to their relatives and friends at home, ensures proper treatment for such persons, arranges for an exchange of prisoners of war and also sometimes acts as an intermediary between belligerent powers.

A touching example is the service of the Red Cross to the dead soldier. It ensures that he is honourably interred or cremated according to his own religious rites. Instances are not uncommon where the Red Cross is called upon to lay wreaths on war graves in distant countries, year after year, on special anniversary dates at the wishes of the bereaved families.

Numerous and unique as are the services of the Red Cross during times of war its work during peace is no less significant and important. The concept of a welfare state which is the guiding principle of governments in these days has often raised the question as to whether the role of voluntary organisations is still as important as before. The idea that a State can do everything for the welfare of its people is, however, erroneous. However powerful and resourceful a government may be, it can never hope to cope with the innumerable calls for help that it is bound to receive and it is only an organisation like the Red Cross, motivated by human sympathy and unhampered by rigid rules and regulations, that can lend a helping hand to those in distress not only promptly but also in a humane manner.

The activities of the Red Cross during peace time have various aspects among which disaster relief is probably the most important. War is a familiar evil. Governments and peoples have often, however unwillingly, regarded it as inevitable and are constantly prepared for it. Natural disasters on the other hand are unpredictable and sporadic and no one can foretell when and where they will strike and these dangers seem less menacing than those of war. Hence the task of mobilising public support for all disasters is beset with great difficulty. It is to the credit of the Red Cross that it has always

been able to render immediate assistance in times of disaster. Whether it be a cyclone, flood, earthquake, fire, or a serious accident, involving considerable loss of life or property or both and wherever it may be the Red Cross world immediately comes to the rescue of the suffering. All the national Red Cross Societies spontaneously and willingly come forward with contributions of men, money and material for the relief services undertaken on such occasions. Similar help is also given by the Red Cross to victims of political upheavals and conflicts which create a great problem in the shape of hundreds of thousands of refugees. For instance nearly five million Swiss Francs' worth of relief was given for the Algerian refugees in Morocco and Tunisia by the national Red Cross Societies of thirtynine countries. National Societies are also engaged within their territories all the year round in giving relief to any of their own people whenever struck by disease or disaster.

The role of the Red Cross as an auxiliary to the Defence Medical Services is well recognised and the Red Cross Societies of a number of countries have their own programmes of assistance to Service personnel in peace time also. The services under this head take various forms. In India, for instance, Red Cross Welfare Officers are attached to military hospitals where they render great assistance to the patients. That Society also maintains a Home for disabled ex-servicemen. The " Gray Ladies " of the American Red Cross are famous in this connection.

The welfare of the child is the welfare of the future generation. The importance of the services rendered, therefore, by the Red Cross in the field of maternal and child health cannot be over-rated. These services under Red Cross auspices are widespread throughout the countries where there are established national Societies. In fact the Red Cross has been a pioneer in this field.

The Red Cross nursing service is perhaps the oldest branch of the Red Cross movement and the League of Red Cross Societies headquarters at Geneva has a Nursing Bureau which gives advice and guidance for nursing services to Societies in different countries. A large number of national Societies have

also got their own nursing personnel who are available for service at all times and especially during emergencies.

Some of the national Societies have well developed blood transfusion services. Special mention may be made of the American and the Australian Red Cross service in this context. A number of national Societies including India are also taking steps to expand this vital service within their own territories.

The idea of associating children and young people with the work of the Red Cross has been accepted and is gaining ground. And today over 50 million young people are members of the Junior Red Cross. This is a movement meant to instil in the minds of the youth of the world the ideals of service and international friendliness. The rapid growth of the Junior Red Cross gives an indication of the popularity of the movement and also augurs well for the future of the Red Cross organisation itself.

Training in First Aid, Home Nursing, Mothercraft etc. is undertaken by the Red Cross almost everywhere. In the Commonwealth countries the Red Cross works in close cooperation with the St. John Ambulance Association which undertakes training in such subjects.

The various humanitarian services undertaken by the Red Cross on a global basis effectively contribute towards the lessening of tension among peoples as also towards the mitigation of suffering.

It is up to everyone to become a member of this wonderful body and to contribute their mite not only towards their own national Society but also for the maintenance of our International Headquarters at Geneva.

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
Chairman, Indian Red Cross Society

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

A FURTHER MISSION OF THE ICRC IN CENTRAL AMERICA

CUBA

Mr. P. Jequier, delegate of the ICRC, who returned to Geneva on March 14, 1959 to report upon and discuss his mission in Central America, went back to Havana on April 26, accompanied by Mr. P. C. Delarue, assistant-delegate ¹.

First visit to a prison. — On February 20, the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Cuba confirmed that the delegate of the ICRC was authorised to visit all places where political prisoners had been detained since the change of regime, which took place in Cuba on January 1, 1959. Accompanied by the President of the Cuban Red Cross, Mr. Oscar Cossio del Pino, Mr. Jequier first visited the Cabaña Fortress, Havana, where some 1,000 political detainees were under detention, and spoke with persons of his choice without witnesses.

Visits to all places of detention. — On their arrival in Havana the delegates made the necessary approaches in order to arrange a programme of visits to places of detention in the capital and throughout the Republic of Cuba with the co-operation of the Cuban Red Cross and the authorities.

After several meetings and discussions with the authorities, who showed a most favourable and understanding attitude to-

¹ See English Supplement of the *Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, May 1959.

wards this mission, the visits to political detainees started on May 7. The delegates, invested with the necessary authority, made a first visit (of which no previous notice had been given) to the Castillo del Principe, an important municipal prison in Havana, in which 600 political prisoners were held on the day of their visit. They were left entirely free to inspect the prison premises, sleeping quarters, open-air terraces and various sectors, and to question a number of detainees on the subject of interment conditions.

The delegates visited, in the same conditions, the Cabaña Fortress in Havana, which Mr. Jequier had inspected in March. The delegates noted during this second visit that on several points (in particular family visits and medical care) considerable improvement had been made.

On May 12, the delegates visited the Cuban State Prison for men situated in the Island of Pines ("Treasure Island"), where some 600 prisoners were serving sentences. The prison is run on very modern lines.

The delegates also visited the Cuban State Prison for women at Guanajay near Havana.

After each visit the detaining authorities and the Cuban Red Cross (which took part in the visits), were given a copy of the delegates' report sent to the ICRC in Geneva.

The General Director of Prisons in Cuba — with whom the delegates had numerous discussions in a cordial and co-operative spirit — called a Press conference in Havana after receiving the first reports, for the purpose of communicating the impartial comments of the delegates on their first visits to prisons. This conference was given considerable publicity in the Havanese Press. Moreover, it was suggested that the Director General of Prisons, the Attorney-General, an eminent magistrate, the President of the Cuban Red Cross, the Directress of the State Prison for women, Mr. Jequier and Mr. Delarue, should appear on television to speak on the subject of detention conditions for political prisoners.

The television programme took place on May 21; Mr. Jequier had the opportunity of recalling the position of the ICRC in regard to political detainees, of referring to various points noted

in his report and of thanking the authorities for their co-operation.

The delegates (duly supplied with written authority to visit all places of detention of their choice) pursued their humanitarian task throughout the entire Cuban territory. Cuba is divided into six provinces: Oriente, Havana, Las Vallas, Camaguëy, Pinal del Rio and Matanzas. The delegates visited various prisons in each province; no previous notice of the visits had been given. When their mission came to an end, they had visited 14 principal places of detention and a report on each visit had been sent to the detaining authorities, the Cuban Red Cross and the International Committee; the Director General of Prisons was also given a brief summary of all the points noted by the delegates in the course of their visits. On a whole, the reports were satisfactory and the Cuban authorities informed the delegates that their suggestions for various improvements in detention conditions would be given careful consideration. The persons under detention with whom the delegates had numerous conversations without witnesses stated that they had never been subjected to illtreatment and affirmed that they were treated with humanity.

HAITI AND MEXICO

Mr. Jequier took advantage of his stay in Havana to pay a visit to the Haitian Red Cross in Port-au-Prince before his return to Geneva. The delegates also made a brief visit to Mexico and called upon the Mexican Red Cross.

The delegates had very interesting conversations with the heads of these National Societies on questions of mutual interest.

NICARAGUA

Following the mission in Cuba and before returning to Europe, the delegates were requested by the ICRC to proceed to Managua, the capital of Nicaragua, and to pay a visit to the National Society of the country.

During the recent disturbances in the Republic of Nicaragua, a number of rebels were arrested while bearing arms. The families

of these prisoners (held in solitary confinement), had already applied to the National Society and asked it to approach the Government authorities to obtain news of their relatives under detention and to seek permission to send them relief parcels. The International Committee had also received a request for its intervention in this connection. The delegates of the ICRC were cordially received by the Nicaraguan Red Cross; the directorate and members of this Society showed great willingness to assist in the matter. On June 24 the delegates, accompanied by Mr. Rafael Cabrera, President of the Nicaraguan Red Cross, were received by the President of the Republic, Mr. Luis Somoza. After this interview, during which Mr. Jequier informed the President of the Republic of the position of the ICRC in regard to political detainees, the delegates were authorised to visit victims of recent events in Managua.

On June 24 and 25 the delegates visited places of detention in six districts of the capital accompanied by Mr. Rafael Cabrera, President, and Mr. Marcelino L. Mora, Secretary-General, of the Nicaraguan Red Cross, and two senior army officers. The delegates conversed freely with about 130 prisoners and found that conditions were, on the whole, satisfactory. As customary the delegates gave a report on their visit to the President of the Republic of Nicaragua. The visits to detained persons in Nicaragua relieved the anxiety of families who thus obtained news of their relatives and were informed of their place of detention. The delegates received assurance from the authorities that the visits would be continued by the National Society, which would deal with any request for assistance. This further mission of the ICRC in Central America ended on July 7, 1959.

The International Committee's action in Cuba and Nicaragua was based — as for similar interventions in other countries in conflicts not of an international character — on Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions and several Resolutions adopted by International Conferences of the Red Cross.

THE ICRC AND THE QUESTION OF KOREANS IN JAPAN

August 11, 1959. — The International Committee of the Red Cross has decided to lend its assistance to the Japanese Red Cross with a view to preparing the repatriation of those Koreans resident in Japan who express the wish to proceed to a place of their choice in their country of origin. This decision is inspired by the principles which were set out in the Press Release of March 13, 1959 ; it is dictated solely by the interest of the persons concerned.

The International Committee notes that on October 16, 1958, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea stated that it was prepared to receive those Koreans resident in Japan who wished to proceed to North Korea, and to make ships available for their transport. On February 13, 1959, the Government of Japan decided, on its own responsibility, to authorise these repatriations and to entrust the Japanese Red Cross with the organisation of the repatriation, with the assistance of the ICRC.

Further, the agreement reached in Geneva on June 24, 1959, between the Red Cross Societies of Japan and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has shown that the two Societies intend to base their action on the principle whereby every person should have the right freely to choose his place of residence and, in particular, to return to his home country.

Since, in the opinion of the ICRC, this principle of free choice implies that the Koreans in Japan have the possibility of proceeding to North Korea, of remaining in Japan or of going to South Korea, negotiations were started with the Government of Japan and the Japanese Red Cross. The ICRC has received satisfactory assurances from them in regard both to the conditions whereby the principle of the free choice of the persons concerned will be guaranteed, and to the position of Koreans who would remain in Japan.

Lastly, the Government and the Red Cross of the Republic of Korea recently informed the ICRC that Koreans residing in Japan who wished to go to the Republic of Korea would be authorised to do so as soon as the necessary arrangements for this purpose have been made with the Japanese Government. The International Committee hopes that it will also be possible to reach an agreement for the organisation of these repatriations.

A mission of the ICRC will shortly be leaving for Tokyo to make arrangements for the International Committee's participation in this matter.

SUNDRY ACTIVITIES

News Items

Distribution of relief supplies. — *In June the International Committee sent supplies of clothing (valued at Sw. Fr. 5,500) through its delegate in Algeria, Mr. A. Vust, to the General Delegation of the French Red Cross in Algiers, which had undertaken to distribute these supplies in the assembly centre at Djorf (Algeria).*

The ICRC also sent to Mr. Vust 15,000 packets of cigarettes for distribution, without distinction, to wounded military personnel in various hospitals in Algeria. The cigarettes were a gift from Swiss manufacturers to our institution.

An important gift of pharmaceutical products presented to the ICRC by the firm Hoffmann La Roche, Basle, made it possible to send medicaments to Algeria. These supplies were placed at the disposal of the General Delegation of the French Red Cross in Algiers for distribution, in co-operation with Mr. Vust, to the Algerian population being resettled. In June the International Committee sent 5,000 packets of cigarettes to its delegation in Paris, for distribution during the delegates' visits to various internment camps for Algerians in France.

A sum of Sw. Fr. 4,000 has been placed at the disposal of the Paris Delegation to enable it to send intellectual relief supplies to Algerian internees in France and, in a few cases, food parcels.

* * *

Registration of former Philippine prisoners of war. — *In May Mr. A. Durand, delegate of the ICRC, went to Manila where he saw the Philippine Red Cross, Mr. J. Mittner (delegate of the ICRC in the Philippines) and his assistant Mr. Graber. Their discussions concerned the checking of the registration of former Philippine prisoners of war eligible for compensation as provided in Article 16 of the Peace Treaty with Japan.*

Mr. Durand reported that this work was nearly finished and that the lists drawn up by the local branch of the International Business Machines Corporation could soon be sent to Geneva for the final checking.

* * *

Discussions at the ICRC headquarters. — *Mrs. Aura Mesaros, Vice-President of the Rumanian Red Cross, accompanied by Dr. Austriaco, on her way to Italy to take part in the ceremony for the commemoration of the Birth of the Red Cross Idea, paid a visit to the International Committee. She discussed the matter of the reuniting of families with the directorate of the ICRC and handed over a further list of persons who had been granted exit visas, and would thus be able to join near relatives living in other countries.*

* * *

Visits to the ICRC. — *From May to July a number of persons visited the ICRC headquarters. The International Committee had the pleasure of receiving Mr. Ange Vlachos, the new representative of Greece to the international organisations in Geneva, Mr. Heinrich Toeplitz, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Justice (German Democratic Republic), accompanied by Mr. Zimmering, Permanent Delegate in Geneva, Mr. Hans Oprecht, National Counsellor in Berne, the Mufti Ahmad Kaftaro from Damascus, Lt.-General W.A. Burki, Minister of Health and Vice-President of the Pakistan Red Cross, accompanied by Mr. K.S. Mahmud, Central Commissioner for Labour, H.E. Mr. Katsuzo Okumura, Ambassador of Japan in Berne, and the President of Columbia University and Mrs. Grayson L. Kirk.*

A number of delegates who took part in the 12th Session of the World Health Organization in Geneva took the opportunity of visiting the ICRC headquarters. On May 26 the Committee received a group of representatives of Saudi Arabia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the United Arab Republic, Sudan and the Yemen, and visits from Mr. H. Sebside, one of the directors of the Ethiopian Ministry of Health and member of the Board of Directors of the Ethiopian Red Cross, Dr. R. Baidya, Director of the Nepal Medical Services and Dr. N. Diakit , Director of the Ministry of Health in Guinea. The International Committee had the pleasure of receiving the Minister of Health of Rumania, Dr. V. Marinesco, accompanied by Dr. Belea, President of the Rumanian Red Cross, and the Hon. J.O. Adigun, Member of Health of the Western regions of Nigeria and Mr. Anthony Ikem Ibegbuna, of the Office of the High Commissioner for Nigeria in London, who had come to Geneva to take part in the meeting of the World Health Organization.

It was a great pleasure for the ICRC to welcome the new President of the Netherlands Red Cross, Mr. F.H.A. de Graaff, accompanied by one of the directors of this Society, Mr. A. van Emden, Miss Lusingh Meijer, Assistant Permanent Delegate of the Netherlands in Geneva, Mr. Bernard, Delegate of the Netherlands Red Cross in Switzerland, and Mr. Rombach, Secretary of the Foreign Relations Department of the Netherlands Red Cross. After a long conversation with the directorate of the International Committee, Mr. de Graaff visited the Central Prisoners of War Agency.

H.H. Paku Alam VIII, President of the Indonesian Red Cross, and Dr. Chadli Zouiten, Vice-President of the Tunisian Red Crescent, visited our headquarters. Members of National Societies who called upon the ICRC when passing through Geneva included Miss J. Whittington, Director of the Overseas Branches Department of the British Red Cross, Mr. J.H. Whiteford, Secretary General of the South African Red Cross, Mrs. Olga Milosevic, Secretary General of the Yugoslav Red Cross, Dr. Hans B rger, Chief Medical Officer of the Swiss Red Cross, Begum Aizaz Rasul, Vice-President of the Lucknow Branch of the Indian Red Cross, Miss Marguerite Reinhard, Editor of the «Revue de la Croix-

Rouge Suisse», Mr. W.S. Boe, Public Relations Officer of the Norwegian Red Cross, Mrs. Fred. E. Johnston, President of the Nursing Advisory Committee and Secretary of the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Red Cross, who was recently elected "Red Cross woman of the year" in the U.S.A., Mrs. L. della Valle Ferri, Superintendent of the Voluntary Nurses of the Xth Mobilisation Centre of the Italian Red Cross in Naples, Miss Doris O'Ramsay, of the Central Committee of the Voluntary Aid Division of the New Zealand Red Cross, Dr. Bingâl of the Turkish Red Crescent, Miss Rigmor Gustav, of the Norwegian Red Cross Nursing School, Oslo, Mr. and Mrs. Silverman, of the South American Red Cross, Mrs. Mc Malan, of the Vancouver Branch of the Canadian Red Cross, Miss Guyon, Miss Monnier and Miss Sacze, nurses of the French Red Cross on a study visit to Geneva, Miss Elise Robinson, of the Ashford Branch of the British Red Cross.

The ICRC was pleased to meet Miss E. Paull, President of the Trained Nurses Association of India and Adviser to the Indian Red Cross, Miss Dorabji, Secretary of the Student Nurses Association of India, Miss Marie Bihet, First Vice-President of the International Council of Nurses, Mrs. Zyzykime de Spiridonov, Delegate in Argentina of the International Social Service, Miss Yvonne Schroeder, Assistant Director of the Florence Nightingale Education Division of the International Council of Nurses, Mrs. Kimi Tomaro, Member of the directorate of the International Social Service in Tokyo, Miss Culpeck, Matron of the London Hospital, Miss Kumajiro Fakahashi, Japanese Delegate to the International Labour Conference.

The numerous groups of visitors to the ICRC headquarters during the past months included some 50 nurses and social workers of the French Red Cross in Alençon, students of the Munich section of the World University Service, about 15 journalists from West Germany, 2 groups of members of sections of the Finnish Red Cross (of which Mrs. Nordin and Mr. Rosen were in charge), some Jugoslav doctors and nurses and 2 groups of members of sections of the Swedish Red Cross, headed by Mrs. Marta Wieslander and Miss Westerhund.

A great many tourists brought by the travel agencies in Geneva also visit the ICRC and in particular the Central Prisoners of War Agency; 444 of these visitors were received at the ICRC headquarters from May 15 to July 15.

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Study-visits to the ICRC. — *In June Mr. S. Popovic, head of the Foreign Relations Department of the Jugoslav Red Cross, carried out a three weeks' study-visit at the ICRC headquarters, during which he made a close study of all the various sections.*

During the same period Miss Eva Nobel, grand-daughter of the founder of the Nobel Prize, also made a study-visit to the ICRC.

In July Miss Helen Kim, Vice-President of the Red Cross of the Republic of Korea and Rector of the University for Women in Seoul, visited various sections of the ICRC in order to collect information on the work of our institution.

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Lecture by the President of the ICRC. — *Mr. Léopold Boissier President of the International Committee, gave a lecture at Lucerne on May 31, during the Annual Meeting of the delegates of the Swiss Red Cross.*

After defining the fundamental principles of the ICRC — neutrality, impartiality and independence — Mr. Boissier gave a general view of the Committee's activities from its foundation until the present day and laid emphasis on the delicate matter of interventions by the ICRC — which are becoming more and more frequent — to assist the victims, without distinction, of internal conflicts.

* * *

A mission of international fellowship. — *The ICRC had great pleasure in receiving the visit, on June 22, of two members of the Junior Red Cross, Miss Anneli Korvenkari, head of one of the Junior Red Cross Sections of the Finnish Red Cross, and Mr. Bed-ger Vakharia, member of a Junior Section of the Pakistan Red*

Cross, who are making a world tour for international fellowship under the auspices of the League of Red Cross Societies. Before going to Italy to take part in the ceremony of the Centenary of Solferino, Miss Korvenkari and Mr. Vakharia stayed for a week in Geneva in order to collect information and directions for their tour, during which they will cover some 30,000 km. The object of this long journey is to take a message of international fellowship to Junior Red Cross members in several countries and to prepare an article on the activities of the Junior Red Cross throughout the world.

* * *

Conference for the eradication of prejudice. — *From June 22 to 26, the second U.N. Conference of NGO Organisations interested in the Eradication of Prejudice and Discrimination was held in Geneva. Over a hundred organisations, represented by 200 delegates, took part in the conference. The delegates' discussions were mainly concerned with problems in Europe and Africa and several resolutions were adopted with a view to closer co-operation in efforts to eradicate prejudice.*

The ICRC was represented at this Conference by an observer, Mr. J. de Preux, of the Legal Department.

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ICRC broadcasts. — *In connection with the weekly information broadcast in Arabic over the Swiss Short Wave Service (13 m 88 and 19 m 60), Mr. I. Zreikat, a member of the ICRC staff, had the opportunity of discussing with the Sheik Ahmad Kaftaro, Mufti of Damascus, during his recent visit to Geneva, the significance for him of the humanitarian principles of the Red Cross in the light of the teachings of Islam. The Sheik Ahmad Kaftaro was accompanied by the Imam of the Islam community in Geneva, Mr. Mohamed Hassan Ereksoussi, who also expressed his views on the "Geneva Conventions seen by Islam". These interviews are part of a series of broadcasts during which other leading figures of the Arab world have discussed the subject.*

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An award to a film of the ICRC. — *The film "Blood is still being shed..." showing the work of the ICRC over the past few years, was chosen to represent Switzerland at the IXth International Film Festival held in Berlin from June 26 to July 7, 1959.*

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Conference on the problem of migration. — *The ICRC was represented by Mr. H. Coursier, Member of the Legal Department, at the VIIth Conference of Non-Governmental Organisations interested in Migration, held at the United Nations headquarters in New York from June 8 to 12 and presided over by Mr. Stewart W. Herman of the Lutheran World Federation.*

The theme of the Conference was « International Migration and Public Opinion »; the opening address was given by The Hon. G. F. Davidson, Deputy Minister of National Welfare, Canada.

The various Working Parties submitted their reports on the implementation of general principles concerning the protection of migrants, the problem of non-European migrants, the integration of migrants into the life of countries of resettlement, the problem of migrants in professional categories, legal assistance, re-emigration, physically handicapped migrants and preparation for migration.

Three Working Groups were instituted, the first under the chairmanship of Mr. H. B. M. Murphy, Fellow of the Millbank Memorial Fund, to analyse individual attitudes affecting the migration process, the second, presided over by Mr. Leo Cherne, Executive Director of the Research Institute of America and Chairman of the Board of the International Rescue Committee, to study the means of educating the public toward a better understanding of the refugee problem, and the third, under the chairmanship of Mr. W. L. Milligan, Chairman of the Department of Social Sciences, St. John's University, on the substance of an educational programme.

The Conference adjourned after having approved the reports submitted and thanked the speakers as well as the representatives of the Secretary General of the United Nations, the International Labour Office and the High Commissioner for Refugees, who took part in the discussions.

The Conference appointed Mr. H. Coursier, representative of the ICRC, as Chairman for the next two years.

* * *

Vietnamese refugees in Thailand. — *Following the visits of Mr. A. Durand, delegate of the ICRC to Bangkok and Hanoi¹, the Thai Red Cross and the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam sent representatives to a meeting in Rangoon which started on June 20, in which Mr. Durand took part. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the matter of the repatriation of Vietnamese refugees in Thailand, who had expressed the wish to proceed to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.*

* * *

The Centenary of the Birth of the Red Cross Idea. — *Mr. F. Siordet, Vice-President and Mr. C. J. Burckhardt, member of the ICRC, were invited by branches of the Red Cross of the German Federal Republic to speak — the first named at Hamburg and the second at Lubeck — during the ceremonies held in these two cities on the occasion of the centenary of Henry Dunant's humanitarian action on the battle-field of Solferino.*

Mr. M. Bodmer, member of the ICRC, was asked to speak on the same subject at Bonn, during the ceremony held under the auspices of the Central Committee of the Red Cross of the German Federal Republic.

* * *

ICRC Delegation in the Middle East. — *Mr. David de Traz, General-Delegate of the ICRC for the Middle East, visited Baghdad from May 13 to 18, 1959. Mr. de Traz made a short stay in Israel from June 9 to 13 and from June 14 to July 3; he visited Bahrain, Kuwait and the Sheikhdom of Qatar, and again went to Baghdad.*

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¹ See English Supplement of the *Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, June 1959.

International Hospital Congress. — *The 11th International Hospital Congress, organised by the International Hospital Federation, was held in Edinburgh from June 1 to 6; the main subjects for discussion were productivity and rationalisation.*

Dr. G. A. Pollock, of Edinburgh was good enough to act as the representative of the ICRC on this occasion.

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Visit of a delegate to Ethiopia. — *Early in July, on his way back from his mission in Kenya, Dr. J. M. Rubli, delegate of the ICRC, stopped at Addis Ababa in order to pay a visit to the Ethiopian Red Cross. He was welcomed by the Secretary General of this Society, Captain O. Niskanen, and had the honour to be received by H. I. H. the Crown Prince Asfa Woassen, delegate of the Ethiopian Red Cross.*

During his short stay in Ethiopia Dr. Rubli visited the Nursing School at the Haile Sélassié Hospital and a number of hospital establishments and dispensaries, and thus saw the considerable efforts displayed by the Ethiopian Red Cross in various fields, particularly in regard to medical care.

* * *

Conference concerning the protection of the disabled. — *The 1st Mediterranean Conference on Rehabilitation of the International Society for the Welfare of Cripples took place in Athens from June 8 to 14, 1959. Mr. Marinos Sigalas, Professor of Surgery at the Salonika University and President of the Macedonia Branch of the Greek Red Cross, was good enough to represent the ICRC at this Conference.*

* * *

A mission in West Germany. — *During his mission to West Germany from June 6 to 12, Mr. H. G. Beckh, delegate of the ICRC,*

had discussions concerning political detainees with high ranking officials of the Ministry of Justice in Bonn. Mr. Beckh was received at Karlsruhe by Mr. Gude, Attorney-General of the German Federal Republic, who takes special interest in this matter and has already given his support to representations made by the ICRC with a view to obtaining the release of political detainees who are seriously ill. It may be pointed out in this connection that a political detainee who was in a very bad state of health was recently released by the President of the Federal Republic. Mr. Gude made a point of giving a written declaration to Mr. Beckh which authorises the delegate of the ICRC to visit at any time persons under prosecution or detention arrested by order of the Attorney-General, and to speak with them without witnesses.

Before leaving the Federal Republic Mr. Beckh visited two prisons and spoke with political detainees.

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The ICRC and the Economic and Social Council. — *The 28th Session of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations was held in Geneva from June 30 to July 3. The ICRC was represented by Mr. Ph. Courvoisier of the Information Department.*

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The action of the ICRC in Hungary. — *Mr. Ernest Fischer, delegate of the ICRC, visited Budapest from June 1 to 14 and had further discussions with the directorate of the Hungarian Red Cross concerning the various relief actions of the International Committee in Hungary.*

Mr. Fischer, accompanied by Mr. Habegger, representative of Messrs. Habegger & Co, Meinisberg, also had the opportunity of visiting the artificial limb workshop of the Hungarian Red Cross; they were present during the assembling of the machinery supplied by the ICRC for the purpose of improving the output of artificial limbs.

The ICRC is also interested in the new workshop which is being set up by the Hungarian Red Cross, to which it will make a gift of machine tools.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

*The reuniting of Hungarian families dispersed as a result of the events in 1956 was also discussed by Mr. Fischer with the directorate of the Hungarian Red Cross. As regards our institution's activity in behalf of Hungary, the ICRC continues to send, in conjunction with the Hungarian Red Cross, medicaments of vital need for persons suffering from serious diseases*¹.

¹ See English Supplement of the *Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, February 1959.