



REVUE INTERNATIONALE DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

SUPPLEMENT

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INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

THE ACTION OF THE ICRC IN HUNGARY

The International Committee's relief action on behalf of the Hungarian people is continuing at the same rate. The following press releases on the subject have been issued by the International Committee's Delegation in Vienna :

February 4, 1957. — *As a gift from the American people, the United States Government has placed at the International Committee's disposal 500,000 relief food parcels which will be distributed to people in need as part of the ICRC " Parcel " relief action in Budapest. The parcels will be prepared, at the donors' expense, by Austrian firms in Vienna and will be handed over to the ICRC for transport to Budapest. Each parcel contains:*

*1 kg rice
1 kg powdered milk
500 gr tinned meat
500 gr fats
500 gr cheese
500 gr sugar
1 tin of sardines
250 gr coffee
200 gr chocolate*

and, possibly, a packet of American cigarettes.

The majority of the food products required for making up the parcels are already in Vienna, so that packing operations can start within the next few days.

At the same time the American Red Cross is making a gift of 100,000 food parcels packed in the United States, which will probably arrive this very week in Vienna for forwarding to Budapest.

The total value of the American food parcels for the needy people of Budapest exceeds two million dollars.

February 6, 1957. — *In Budapest the victims of recent events and other persons in distress are in urgent need of woollen blankets. Thanks to the gifts received, the International Committee of the Red Cross has already been able to hand over to the Hungarian Red Cross tens of thousands of blankets for distribution to those in need, but many more are being asked for because of the lack of heating; the American Government has therefore decided to make another gift of a large number of blankets for the Hungarian people. The blankets, made of first class American woollen material, will be manufactured in two Austrian factories and handed over to the International Committee for distribution in Hungary. The material, supplied as a "gift of the American people", will enable some 65,000 woollen blankets to be manufactured, of which 45,000 will be sent to Hungary, the remainder being intended for Hungarian refugees. The work will be put in hand this very week in order that the blankets may be delivered to Budapest in good time.*

The ICRC is informed that the British Government is placing at the disposal of the British Red Cross, on behalf of the Hungarian people, 3,600 tons of condensed milk, valued at 900,000 pounds sterling. This condensed milk will be distributed to people in need in Budapest by the ICRC, as part of its "Relief Parcel" scheme.

February 12, 1957. — *During their visit to Budapest the economic experts of United Nations found a serious lack of cereals seed in Hungary, making it impossible to sow the fields at the normal rate. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organ-*

ization therefore appealed to States Members to supply cereals to avoid a shortfall in the Hungarian harvest. In response to this appeal, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany announced that it was ready to give to Hungary, through the FAO and the International Committee of the Red Cross, 5,000 tons of barley and 2,000 tons of oats, to a total value of 4½ million Marks, for the spring sowing. An agreement on the distribution of the seed has been concluded between FAO, acting as trustee for the donor, and the Hungarian Government.

Under this agreement the seed will be loaded in special trains, sent to Hungary through the International Committee of the Red Cross during the next fortnight, and will be distributed in 13 countries in the west, south-west and north of Hungary. Only individual peasants farming their own land will be able to take advantage of this gift of seed, state and collective farms being excluded.

To ensure fair distribution and proper utilisation of the seed, it will be sold to the peasants at the price of 200 forints per 100 kg (as against a world market price of 500 forints) and in minimum quantities of 50 kg. The money paid for the seed will be placed in a blocked account of the Hungarian Red Cross from which withdrawals can only be made with the consent of the International Committee of the Red Cross. In this way, the Hungarian Red Cross will become the possessor of a fund amounting to 14 million forints, which will enable it to undertake relief actions on behalf of those in need without recourse to financial assistance from the Government.

The distribution of the seed will be supervised by a group of FAO representatives, to whom the Hungarian Government will give every facility for carrying out their task. All transport to the Hungarian frontier and in Hungary itself will be carried out free of charge by the railway administrations of Germany, Austria and Hungary. The first consignment of 1000 tons of barley has already left for Győr.

February 25, 1957. — The Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Trade has abolished, as from March 1, 1957, the exemption from Customs duty granted by decree in October 1956 for individual gift

parcels sent to persons in Hungary. The efforts made by the representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Budapest to persuade the Hungarian authorities to cancel this decision—published in the Official Gazette of February 20—or at least to prolong the time-limit during which individual parcels would be admitted duty-free, were not successful.

Consequently, from the first of this month, all gift parcels for Hungary will be liable to Customs duty which may, in some cases, be heavy. Moreover, the new regulation limits the quantities of the various articles which may be imported per year, by any one recipient, and any infringement of the regulations might cause unpleasantness for the recipient of the parcel. In the case of coffee, for instance, which is liable to Customs duty amounting to 70% of the market value, the maximum quantity allowed is 1 kg 500; for tea, cocoa and chocolate, also liable to 70% duty, the quantities allowed are 500 gr., 2 kg and 3 kg respectively. The list of commodities liable to Customs duty includes, to date, butter, oil, fats, rice and sugar; all these products pay 25% duty and the quantity of each allowed per year and per person is 3 kg. For clothing and textiles of all descriptions, the Customs duty amounts to 50 to 60% of the value, and the quantities are strictly limited (for example: 1 coat, 2 men's suits, 1 dress, 2 children's suits, 2 pullovers, 3 shirts, etc.).

In these circumstances, it is advisable, when despatching individual gift parcels to Hungary, to send commodities on which freedom from Customs duty has not been affected by the new regulation, without, however, exceeding the quantities admitted per head and per year. Those commodities consist, in particular, of flour, pasta and bakers' products (4 kg), pork butcher's meat (5 kg), powdered milk (2 kg 500), tonics for children (5 kg), 2 working coats or aprons, 6 articles of children's clothing, layettes of 12 articles, 2 pairs of children's shoes or sandals, 3 cakes of soap and 2 toys. In addition, the Hungarian Government has declared that second-hand clothing and footwear of no commercial value, as well as medicaments sent to persons in need, may be imported free of Customs duty and without an import licence. The import of tinned goods in sealed containers as individual gifts is, as a rule, prohibited.

All consignments from National Red Cross Societies, or sent as part of other international relief actions, forwarded through the ICRC to Hungary, where the distribution is made by the Hungarian Red Cross under the supervision of the ICRC, are still permitted by the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to enter free of Customs duty.

February 26, 1957. — *The fiftieth road convoy of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) left Vienna on Tuesday morning for Budapest; it consisted of 12 lorries loaded with 52 tons of commodities. This brought the total of goods—food-stuffs, clothing, blankets, household ware, medicaments, window glass and gift supplies of all descriptions—carried into Hungary since the start of the relief action by the white lorries bearing the red cross emblem up to over three thousand tons. At the present time the ICRC road convoys leave Vienna regularly every Tuesday and Friday morning, arrive at Budapest after a journey of about six hours and return empty to Vienna on the following day.*

The total quantity of relief supplies sent by the ICRC to Budapest by rail, road and water to date amounts to 16,280 tons in round figures.

March 1, 1957. — *During the month of February, 1957, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) sent to Budapest by rail and road, 6,336 tons of foodstuffs, textiles, coal, medical equipment and other relief supplies in connection with its relief action in Hungary—nearly half as much again as in January (4,274 tons). Since the relief action began, on November 9, 1956, there have been sent to Budapest 50 road convoys, 16 rail convoys and 3 consignments by river, with a total load of 17,055 tons.*

In view of the persisting economic difficulties with which Hungary is faced on account of the heavy drop in production, the continuation of the International Committee's aid is an imperative necessity. An increasing number of persons in Hungary, women and children in particular, are suffering great distress as a consequence of political events. Thanks to the ICRC relief consignments, including generous gifts from numerous Western Governments and Red Cross organisations, the Hungarian Red Cross has been given the means of alleviating this distress,

in part at least, by the distribution of foodstuffs, clothing and medicaments, as well as individual distributions of coal, window glass and other articles which are unobtainable in the country. The ICRC delegation in Budapest continues to see that the relief supplies are shared out in conformity with the donors' wishes.

March 4, 1957. — *The General Delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), for the Hungarian relief action, Mr. G. Rutishauser, on Monday took over at the Matzleinsdorf Goods Station in Vienna 51,000 food parcels donated by the Swiss Red Cross, which will be sent to Budapest as part of the ICRC's large-scale parcel scheme and will there be distributed to persons in need. These standard parcels, which have been packed by several large Swiss firms of distributors and are addressed in Hungarian, contain about 4 kg of foodstuffs with a total calorie content of about 14,000 units. More than twenty goods wagons will be needed to transport them.*

When the parcels were officially handed over by Miss Nina Vischer, the chief delegate of the Swiss Red Cross in Vienna, Mr. Rutishauser, in the name of the ICRC, expressed his appreciation of the generous readiness to help of the Swiss people, which made possible this consignment of relief for Hungary. In this connection, Mr. Rutishauser rejected the idea that the food parcels programme in Hungary did not meet an urgent need. The number of those in need who were dependent on relief from abroad was constantly increasing, both in Budapest and in the provinces. The ICRC would therefore continue to take steps to ensure that the relief parcels reach those families and individuals whose need is greatest.

* * *

The *Revue internationale* has already referred on several occasions to the increasing activity of the Central Prisoners of War Agency in Geneva, which enables the International Committee to give assistance to Hungarian refugees who are trying to keep in touch with other members of their families. A central card-index has therefore been set up in order to register Hungarian refugees and to keep track of them abroad.

The International Committee had already approached, last December, twenty-seven National Red Cross Societies, all of which approved of the establishment of the card-index and agreed to co-operate in building it up by filling in the refugees' cards as soon as they reached the countries of asylum. The National Societies concerned were those of the Argentine Republic, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, France, Germany, Guatemala, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jugoslavia, Luxemburg, Netherlands, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay and Venezuela.

It will be remembered that the cards are made out in Hungarian, German, French and English and that the central card-index in Geneva makes identification possible and thus promotes that traditional activity of the ICRC, the re-uniting of families who have been separated. By the end of February the central card-index contained about 90,000 cards, which had already led to tallying in some cases and enabled numerous enquiries to be answered. By that time it had been possible, in fact, to trace and to place in contact nearly one thousand members of Hungarian families who had been separated as a result of the events in Hungary of November last ; some members of those families had been transferred—and this occurred in many cases—to different countries of asylum during the evacuation operations.

The Central Prisoners of War Agency, thanks to the experience gained during the Second World War, was able to organise with great efficiency work which is growing in volume every day. It is true that the central card-index in Geneva is not yet complete since the return is awaited of cards which have been promised by several countries where they are now being filled in. Nevertheless, tallies are being made day after day and will, of course, increase in number as the index becomes more complete.

We stated previously that numerous civilian messages had also been received and forwarded by the ICRC over the past months. At present this work is slackening constantly, postal communications with Hungary having been re-established.

VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE TO BUDAPEST AND VIENNA

On February 13, Mr. Léopold Boissier, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross paid a visit to Hungary and Austria ; during the whole of his journey he was accompanied by Mr. Rutishauser, General-Delegate of the ICRC for Hungarian relief, and Mr. Borsinger, Assistant-Delegate to Mr. Rutishauser.

The object of the President's visit was to inspect the Budapest Delegation of the International Committee, to visit the warehouses and distribution centres and to ascertain, on the spot, how the administrative machinery for the distribution of relief to the Hungarian civilian population was working. He wished to take advantage of this journey to Budapest to visit the Hungarian Red Cross which carries out the practical work of distribution of relief in Hungary, and to thank this National Society for the very efficient help it is giving the ICRC in its humanitarian mission.

In the course of this visit the President of the ICRC met the Hungarian Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sarkas, and Mr. Niersch, Minister of Food, as well as professors Klimko. Nonay, Pommersheim and Földvály, Members of the Presidential Council of the Hungarian Red Cross, Dr. Killner, Executive Director and Dr. Gedenyi, Head of the Foreign Relations Department.

A Working Party was held, attended by Members of the Presidential Council and various Heads of Sections of the Hungarian Red Cross. Mr. Fischer, Head of the ICRC Delegation in Budapest, and Mr. Bovey, Permanent Delegate, were also present at this meeting, during which a study was made of practical methods of distribution of relief supplies, and the possibilities of improvement.

On February 16, Mr. Boissier left Budapest for Vienna, to visit the Austrian authorities and Austrian Red Cross Society who have afforded considerable support to the International Committee's relief action in Hungary which is carried out from Vienna. All are aware of the large scale of the assistance given by the Austrian Government and Austrian Red Cross Society, who placed installations (warehouses, sleeping quarters, premises) and personnel at the Committee's disposal.

In the course of receptions and discussions, Mr. Boissier met Mr. Figl, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Helmer, Minister for Internal Affairs, Mr. Graf, Minister of War, Mr. Proksch, Minister for State Insurance, Mr. Jonas, Burgomaster of the City of Vienna, as well as several representatives of international organisations in Vienna, including Mr. Schaeffer, General-Delegate of the League of Red Cross Societies.

During his stay in Austria, Mr. Boissier visited offices and warehouses of the ICRC Delegation in Vienna; he also visited several Hungarian refugee camps. These camps are in charge of the League and are managed by various National Red Cross Societies who are giving devoted service.

**THE WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
IN THE NEAR EAST**

Since the issue of the last number of the *Revue internationale*, the following press releases have been published by the ICRC concerning its humanitarian activity in the Near East :

February 5, 1957. — *The repatriation of Egyptian prisoners of war in the hands of the Israeli forces has now come to an end.*

202 prisoners of war, the last group of any size held by Israel, have just left Sharm El Sheik in the tip of the Sinai Peninsula to be handed over to UNEF at El Tor under the supervision of two delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The other Egyptian prisoners of war, numbering some 5,500, detained in Israel have been repatriated since January 21 at the rate of 500 per day.

All these prisoners, released under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross, have been handed over to Egyptian forces by the officers of UNEF to the south-west of El Arish, under the supervision of a delegate of the ICRC.

Egypt, on her side, has repatriated the Israeli prisoners she held.

During their captivity all prisoners in Israel and in Egypt were assisted by the International Committee's representatives who paid frequent visits to their camps and arranged for the distribution of emergency relief supplies.

February 7, 1957. — (Joint communication League-CICR.) *Yesterday, a delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross visited the Port Said area, accompanied by a delegate of the League of Red Cross Societies and representatives of the Egyptian Red Crescent, to ascertain the needs of the civilian victims of the recent conflict, and in particular of the refugees.*

It will be remembered that a first large consignment of blankets, presented by various Red Cross organisations and including 2,000 supplied by the International Committee itself, has already been handed over to the Egyptian Red Crescent for the refugees.

A report on these persons' needs will be furnished to the League and the ICRC, so that the latter may take steps, if necessary, to supplement the relief action organised by the Egyptian authorities and the Egyptian Red Crescent.

February 11, 1957. — *813 stateless Jews, including 274 children, obliged to leave Egypt on account of the events, arrived at Piraeus yesterday from Alexandria, in a vessel chartered for the third time by the International Committee of the Red Cross.*

Since early in January, over 2,600 stateless Jews have thus been evacuated from Egypt by sea, accompanied by delegates of the ICRC.

After a brief stay in Athens, these refugees from Egypt will proceed to their various countries of asylum.

February 26, 1957. — *A flow of Arab refugees to El Arish having been reported a delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross will leave Cairo on February 27, at the request of the Egyptian authorities, to visit this town of 26,000 inhabitants, between Gaza and Port Said. He will enquire into the situation and the possible requirements of these refugees.*

El Arish, then still under Israeli control, was visited in December last by a delegate of the ICRC, whose mission was to see that the Geneva Convention of August 12, 1949, for the protection of civilian's was duly applied. He also distributed milk and egg powder for children and persons in need.

February 28, 1957. — *A second consignment of 2,000 blankets for the Egyptian victims of events, in Port Said, has just been*

handed over to the Egyptian Red Crescent by the Cairo Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The blankets will be distributed on the spot by the Egyptian Red Crescent, in the presence of the ICRC delegate in Port Said, Mr. H. Huber.

The International Committee will also supply these persons with some sewing machines and cooking utensils, which were found to be necessary during the visit made to the Port Said area on February 6 by the delegate of the ICRC, accompanied by representatives of the Egyptian Red Crescent and the League of Red Cross Societies.

March 4, 1957. — *The delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross for the Middle East, M. D. de Traz, recently visited at Rafah the 23 Egyptian doctors and nurses who have just been transferred by the Israeli authorities to that locality, situated at the southern end of the Gaza territory, and was able to talk to them without witnesses.*

This visit followed numerous others made in the Gaza area by the delegates of the ICRC, to ascertain that the Geneva Convention relative to the protection of civilian persons in time of war was being duly applied by the Israeli authorities.

The Repatriation of Prisoners of War in the Near East

On his return to Geneva, after completing his task as delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Israel, and before starting off on his mission to Kenya, Dr. Louis Gaillard gave us a few particulars of the more striking aspects of his humanitarian work during the recent conflict in the middle East.

As the four Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949, were applicable to the theatre of operations, the International Committee was faced with a heavy task, and its representative in Israel, in accordance with the provisions of those Conventions, had to act on behalf of both prisoners of war and civilians. In this article we shall merely summarize Dr. Gaillard's work on behalf of prisoners of war.

His task was made easier by the helpful attitude of the Israeli Government, which placed at his disposal, as liaison officer, Major Baron one of the Israeli plenipotentiaries who took part in the establishment of the new Geneva Conventions of 1949 and who was fully acquainted with their machinery. On all occasions the Israeli Government showed willingness to fulfil its humanitarian duties and this meant that the International Committee's representative was in the best possible position to carry out his work. That did not imply, as we shall see, that it was neither difficult nor arduous...

The number of Egyptian prisoners of war in the hands of the Israeli forces amounted to over 5,600 officers and men. After first being placed in transit camps from which, on the intervention of the Committee's delegate, several hundred civilians captured by error were rapidly released, the majority of these prisoners were assembled in the permanent camp at Atlith, about one hundred kilometres north of Tel Aviv. They were visited regularly by Dr. Gaillard who was able to converse with them without the Israeli authorities being present, and was allowed to distribute relief supplies and provide cultural and religious material (copies of the Koran, books, cinema shows, musical instruments, footballs, jam, fruit, coffee, etc.). He also arranged for the exchange of family news between the prisoners and their relatives, which was authorised without restriction, through the regular services of the Central Prisoners of War Agency, Geneva.

It was possible to repatriate a certain number of seriously wounded before the close of hostilities. These men were under treatment at Tel Hoshomer Hospital, near Tel Aviv. After examining the patients, and in agreement with the Israeli Government, Dr. Gaillard passed 48 for repatriation and these left by air, in two convoys, on December 4 and 16, 1956.

The planes were medical aircraft of the Italian Army which, at the request of the General-Delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross, M. D. de Traz, the Italian Government and Italian Red Cross had generously agreed to lend for this purpose. The crew were all of Italian nationality and the medical team consisted of Dr. Gaillard himself, Dr. Casi, an Italian doctor in Egypt, and two Swiss nurses.

Thus, all these seriously wounded men, taken to the airport by ambulance, were transported directly, without transshipment or delay and under the best medical supervision.

These journeys by air were the first direct link between Israel and Egypt since the outbreak of the Palestine conflict of nearly nine years ago.

The repatriation of the unwounded prisoners of war took

place, under the auspices of the ICRC, shortly after the close of hostilities and in eleven stages, from January 21 to February 5. The 5,384 prisoners in Atlith Camp were all repatriated, in groups of about 500, under the personal supervision of Dr. Gaillard. In each case, after making out a nominal list including the names, first names, ranks and army numbers, the roll was called in the camp by an Israeli police officer, accompanied by an Egyptian senior officer in captivity. In the early morning the prisoners of war were placed in Israeli army lorries and the convoy consisting of some 25 to 30 vehicles left the camp under escort. At the end of the morning it arrived at the demarcation line. The prisoners were then formed into detachments of 25 men and the number checked by officers of the United Nations Emergency Forces. This operation was carried out under the responsibility of Major Baron of the Israeli Army, Major Morgan of the Canadian Army, a United Nations liaison officer, and Dr. Gaillard, delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Israel. After the roll call, the prisoners of war were taken by UNEF vehicles to El Arish and Misfak where the convoy came into contact with the Egyptian Army. The prisoners were once more formed into detachments of 25 men, and the numbers checked by an Egyptian officer, in the presence of Major Morgan and the delegate of the International Committee.

When the first convoy arrived, M. Thudichum, delegate of the International Committee in Egypt, was present at the handing over of the prisoners to the Egyptian authorities; Dr. Gaillard was also present. The latter followed every stage of the operations, on each occasion covering nearly three hundred kilometres from the departure camp, and making the same journey back to his base. Twelve journeys of this description, from January 21 to 31, represent a respectable number of kilometres, sometimes over rough roads, and it must be presumed that conditions as regards accommodation and food did not help to make those journeys into agreeable tourist excursions. However, the governing principle of the relevant provisions of the Geneva Conventions, whereby the International

Committee should be present to ensure that operations of this kind are carried out in conformity with the humanitarian regulations, was thus respected.

The last repatriation of Egyptian prisoners of war took place at a great distance from the Mediterranean coast, at the most southern point of the Sinai Peninsula. It took place on February 5 at Ras Canisse on the route leading to El Tor. The 202 prisoners of war who were still in the Sharm el Sheik Transit Camp, about 25 kilometres away, were brought to the locality to be handed over to the UNEF officers in the presence of the delegate of the International Committee; another of the Committee's delegates, M. Robert, had come specially from Cairo and was present at El Tor when the men were taken over by the Egyptian authorities from the UNEF officers.

On January 26, in Dr. Gaillard's presence, the few Israeli prisoners held by the Egyptian Army were handed over to the Israeli military authorities at Rafah, by the officers of the UNEF, the same procedure being used as for the repatriation of Egyptian prisoners of war.

H. C.

THE RED CROSS TO THE HELP OF PORT SAID VICTIMS

During the military operations on Egyptian soil, thousands of persons left the Port Said area, occupied by the Franco-British forces, to seek refuge in the Delta.

Whereas many of these refugees have now returned to their homes, a great number have found their homes destroyed and have been obliged to take shelter in camps hurriedly organised by the Egyptian authorities.

A delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross and two members of the directorate of the Egyptian Red Crescent visited Port Said on February 5, 1957, to investigate the situation and to ascertain the distressed persons' needs. A representative of the League of Red Cross Societies, on a visit to Egypt, accompanied them. The joint report on the visit showed, on the basis of the information supplied by the authorities, that about 15,000 persons, living in two camps, were in need of further help. Although the Egyptian Ministry of Social Welfare supplies the necessary foodstuffs and medicaments, it was thought necessary to suggest the distribution to these persons of 8,000 blankets, 250 tents, 10 sewing machines and kitchen utensils.

In order to meet the situation, the International Committee again placed a delegate in Port Said in the premises occupied until the end of December 1956 by the head of the Delegation in Egypt, Mr. Thudichum.

Funds transferred from Geneva enabled considerable relief supplies to be purchased locally and distributed by the delegate of the ICRC, in agreement with the authorities and the Egyptian Red Crescent; the supplies consisted of 4,000 blankets, 10 sewing machines and kitchen utensils.

In addition, an important cash donation from the Iraqi Red Crescent, received by the International Committee in Geneva following its appeals of November 1956, was transferred to Egypt in accordance with the donor's wish and at the formal request of the Egyptian Red Crescent, to be used for the Port Said victims.

Moreover, the ICRC has just suggested to the Egyptian Red Crescent to make use of the balance of the funds received as a result of its appeal of November 7 and 8 to National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for the purchase of relief supplies still required by the Port Said victims. If this last sum is taken into account, the total value of the assistance given to persons in Port Said through the International Committee has reached some 300,000 Swiss francs, of which the greater part was made up of gifts from National Societies.

ICRC MISSION TO EAST GERMANY

At the invitation of the Red Cross of the German Democratic Republic, a delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr. M. H. G. Beckh, visited Dresden in February last. During his visit he had the opportunity of meeting the Honorary President of that Society, Mr. Otto Buchwitz, the President, Dr. Werner Ludwig, the Vice-Presidents, Mr. Emil Rische and Dr. Hans Paul, the Secretary-General, Mr. Hans Schwöbel and Mr. Helmut Fichtner, Head of the Foreign Relations Section and Central Tracing Office. He discussed various questions with them concerning the general work of the Red Cross. Later, Mr. Beckh also had an interview, in East Berlin, with the representatives of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic and the Chief Inspector of Prisons.

During an exchange of views on the ways in which the Red Cross could contribute towards safeguarding peace and the protection of the civilian population, the fact was brought out that in the present state of tension the activities of the Red Cross in solving humanitarian problems could tend to further better understanding between men.

It was in this spirit that discussions were held on the reuniting of dispersed families and the conditions of detention for persons arrested for political reasons. Mr. Beckh found that both the authorities and the Red Cross in the German Democratic Republic took up a very understanding attitude

on the re-uniting of families and were actively working to solve the problem, as regards not only the families in Poland or East Germany, but also persons in Poland who wished to proceed to the German Federal Republic; in East Germany every facility was granted for the passage of these convoys.

At Neubrandenburg, Mr. Beckh was present during the passage of a large convoy coming from Poland. He saw for himself the efficient help given on that occasion by the Red Cross of the German Democratic Republic, and took the opportunity of thanking the Red Cross workers, on behalf of the ICRC, for their devoted service. The plans for the re-uniting of families are being energetically carried out, thanks to the efficient help of the Red Cross Societies, under the best possible conditions and at an ever faster rate, which gives hope that this humanitarian action, of such great importance for the maintenance of peace, may be completed in the course of the summer. From the beginning of 1957 until mid-February some 10,000 Volksdeutsche were able to join their families in West Germany, and about 2,000 went to East Germany. On their side, the Polish authorities have, from the beginning, organised the repatriation operations in an excellent manner and the repatriated persons may now take their furniture with them.

In addition to these activities, in regard to which a most understanding attitude was shown to Mr. Beckh in carrying out his humanitarian duty, he paid a visit to Rummelsburg Prison in East Berlin, together with Mr. E. Rische, Vice-President of the Red Cross Society and a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic. He was able to converse with the prisoners and found that conditions of detention were satisfactory, as it is possible for these prisoners to work in circumstances similar to those of industrial workers.

The International Committee's delegate expressed the hope that on future occasions other places of detention in the Democratic German Republic could also be visited, and the authorities duly noted this wish.

During the discussions in Dresden, the question was also

raised of the Draft Rules established by the ICRC for the limitation of the dangers incurred by the civilian population in time of war. The Presidency of the Red Cross of the German Democratic Republic assured the International Committee's delegate that it took great interest in those Rules.

In general, Mr. Beckh found that the Red Cross of the German Democratic Republic attached great importance to the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions, among the general public, and in administrative and university circles. This Society has organised study courses on the humanitarian Conventions and their application, for civil servants and members of the armed forces, and has requested that the study of the Geneva law should be included in university programmes. During the discussions in Dresden the question was also raised of united effort for the protection of the Red Cross emblem.

Mr. Beckh also took the opportunity of visiting a camp for Hungarian children. After the events in Hungary, the Red Cross of the German Democratic Republic played an active part in the relief action, not only by sending relief supplies but also by setting up centres to which child victims of the events are admitted for a period of three months in turn.

AN ICRC MISSION ON THE WAY TO KENYA

The British authorities have agreed to the International Committee's request to send a mission to Kenya to visit the various places of detention where persons are held as a result of events. The delegates have been authorised to speak with the detained persons without witnesses.

The two representatives of the ICRC will arrive at Nairobi on February 20 ; they are Dr. L. A. Gaillard, of Geneva, who has already carried out missions for the ICRC in Algeria and Israel, and Mr. H.-P. Junod, the International Committee's resident delegate in South Africa.

As soon as they arrive the delegates of the ICRC will get in touch with the Kenya authorities and the local branch of the British Red Cross Society.

RELIEF TO PERSONS UNDER DETENTION IN GREECE

M. Germain Colladon, delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross, has just returned to Geneva after carrying out his mission in Greece. In particular, he distributed in some twenty places of detention about 50 tons of clothing, foodstuffs and medicaments, given by the Czechoslovak Red Cross.

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS

DATE OF THE XIXth INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS CONFERENCE

It will be remembered that the Conference, which was originally to have been held in January-February 1957 at New Delhi, was postponed by the Standing Commission of the International Red Cross.

The Indian Red Cross which is good enough to act as host and to organise the Conference has suggested that it should be held from October 11 to November 7, 1957.

The members of the Standing Commission, consulted individually, have all approved the dates suggested; the Conference will therefore be held between those dates in the Indian capital.