



# REVUE INTERNATIONALE DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

## SUPPLEMENT

### CONTENTS

	Page
News Items . . . . .	39
The Red Cross and the Administrative Radio Conference ( <i>C. Pilloud</i> ) . . . . .	48

---



# INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

---

## SUNDRY ACTIVITIES

### News Items

**Assistance to Algerians interned in France.** — *On February 24 Mr. P. Gaillard and Mr. P. Delarue, delegates of the ICRC, visited the " Centre d'assignation à résidence forcée " at Neuville-sur-Ain.*

*The previous visit to this centre took place on July 13, 1959.*

**Mission in Israel.** — *In mid January Mr. D. de Traz, General-Delegate of the ICRC for the Near East, went to Israel where he had several talks with some of the authorities in that country. Mr. de Traz also visited Arabs under detention in Ramleh Prison and inspected the detention conditions.*

**International Centre for the Co-ordination of Legal Assistance.** — *The Statutes of the International Centre for the Co-ordination of Legal Assistance, created under the auspices of the Conference of NGO interested in Migration, have just been officially approved by the Liaison Committee of the Conference.*

*The Centre, installed in premises placed at its disposal by the ICRC, (7, avenue de la Paix, Geneva), has the benefit of the services of the Conference Secretariat of the NGO interested in Migration.*

**Mission in Tunisia.** — *During the first fortnight in February Mr. D. de Traz, delegate of the ICRC, went to Tunis on a special mission to the GPRA (Gouvernement provisoire de la République Algérienne). The purpose of his mission was to recall to the GPRA*

*the importance attached by the ICRC to receiving a satisfactory reply to the general proposals put forward by it in May 1958, and repeated in October 1958 and again in December 1959. Mr. de Traz had been requested to give strong support, by representations made on the spot, to the numerous requests for news submitted by the Central Agency concerning French military personnel or civilians who are missing or presumed to be held by the ALN (Armée de Libération nationale).*

**Heads of Sections of the Swiss Red Cross visit the ICRC.** — *It will be remembered<sup>1</sup> that the heads of sections of the ICRC had the pleasure of visiting the Swiss Red Cross in Berne last year. This year the ICRC was happy to receive, in its turn, the visits of heads of sections of this Society on two occasions (January 19 and 26) in Geneva. The first group was headed by Dr. Hans Haug, Secretary-General of the Swiss Red Cross and included the Director of the Central Laboratory of te Blood Transfusion Service, Dr. Alfred Hässig. The second group was headed by Dr. Ernst Schenkel, Assistant Secretary-General.*

*The visitors were received at the ICRC headquarters by Mr. R. Gallopin, Executive Director, and Mr. J. Pictet, Director for General Affairs, who spoke to them of the structure and organisation of the ICRC and its activities, and the development of humanitarian law.*

*The programme was continued by a long visit to the Central Prisoners of War Agency, the showing of the film "Blood is still being shed . . ." and a number of talks concerning the training of medical personnel, the action of the ICRC in Africa and the Far East and the re-uniting of dispersed families.*

*During the day the visitors were shown the house where Henry Dunant was born, the Athénée where the Red Cross came into being and the Alabama Room at the Town Hall.*

*The heads of sections of the Swiss Red Cross were afterwards received at the headquarters of the League of Red Cross Societies.*

**Relief Actions.** — *In January the International Committee sent to Piding Camp, Germany, a consignment of clothing, footwear*

---

<sup>1</sup> See *Revue internationale*, February 1959.

and foodstuffs valued at 16,000 Swiss francs. These supplies, for the use of «*Volksdeutsche*» repatriated from Jugoslavia, were greatly appreciated by the German Red Cross.

Algeria: In January the ICRC sent to Algeria a third consignment of vitamin products and medicaments, for a value of NF 20,000; these gift supplies were to be distributed to the resettled population through the mobile teams of the French Red Cross.

Laos: Mr. A. Leuenberger, the delegate of the ICRC in Saigon entrusted with a relief action in behalf of refugee groups in Laos, handed over to the Laotian Red Cross in Ventiane 500 layettes and 30 hospital beds. In addition, a consignment of 275 cases each containing 48 tins of condensed milk, has been despatched to Ventiane.

France: Following the visits made by delegates of the ICRC last autumn to places of internment and detention in France, supplies of warm clothing were sent early in January to 5 prisons and 2 internment camps, to be distributed through social workers to Algerians under detention or interned.

Switzerland: The ICRC handed to the International Union for Child Welfare some gloves and small articles for children, part of a gift in kind.

Greece: On the occasion of the New Year, the International Committee wished to make a gesture in behalf of young children in prisons where their mothers are under detention. A moderate sum was therefore made available to the Greek Red Cross which made distributions of toys to the children through its social workers.

**Compensation for former prisoners of war in Japanese hands. —** Mr. R. Gallopin, Executive Director, and Mr. J.-P. Maunoir, delegate, took part in the meeting of the Working Party of the beneficiary Powers under Article 16 of the Peace Treaty with Japan, held on December 18 in London.

Reference has been made on several occasions<sup>1</sup> to the work accomplished by the ICRC in connection with the apportionment

---

<sup>1</sup> See *Revue internationale*, June and September 1955, April, June and December 1956, June 1957 and February 1959.

*and distribution of compensation provided for in Article 16 to former prisoners of war in Japanese hands, nationals of the Powers party to the Treaty.*

**Visits to the ICRC headquarters.** — *Among the visitors to the ICRC in the period from mid December to the first fortnight in February mention should be made of H. E. Mr. Julio Fernandez-Davila, the Peruvian Ambassador in Berne, recently appointed as delegate of the Peruvian Red Cross to the International Committee, Mr. H. R. Amonoo, the new Permanent Delegate of Ghana to the international organisations in Geneva and Mrs. Ruth Z. Murphy, President of the American Immigration Conference.*

*Various persons connected with the Red Cross movement took advantage of their presence in Geneva to have talks with the directors of the ICRC. Thus the ICRC received visits from Mrs. Krista Djordjevic, Member of the Executive Committee of the Yugoslav Red Cross and President of the Yugoslav Junior Red Cross, Mr. C. V. Routley of the Canadian Red Cross, Dr. O. P. Agarwal, Director of the Pahang Branch of the Red Cross of the Federation of Malaya, Dr. Mario Madrazo Basauri, President of the Medical Society of the Mexican Red Cross and Mr. Daniel Godfrind, Director General of the Belgian Red Cross.*

*Various groups also called at the ICRC headquarters to collect information and visit the different sections, including in particular a party of town-planning officials from the United Arab Republic on a study-visit and student nurses from the Swiss Red Cross Nursing School in Lausanne.*

**The Red Cross Centenary and the XXth International Conference.** — *On January 22 meetings were held simultaneously, at the ICRC headquarters, of the Committee for the Commemoration of the Red Cross Centenary and the Committee for the preparation of the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross. These two Committees, presided over respectively by Mr. F. Siordet, Member of the International Committee of the Red Cross and Dr. H. Haug, Secretary General of the Swiss Red Cross, included representatives of the ICRC, the League and the Swiss Red Cross.*

*The two Committees held a joint meeting in the afternoon and*

*decided upon the dates to be proposed for the Centenary celebrations and the meeting of the XXth International Conference. The period chosen — from September 2 to 12, 1963, as part of the Centenary celebrations which will be held from August 15 to September 15, 1963—has still to be approved by the Standing Commission of the International Red Cross.*

*The two Committees also made a preliminary study of the programme of the celebrations.*

**The work of the Central Agency.** — *In 1959 the Central Prisoners of War Agency received 88,724 postal items and despatched 82,958. It dealt with 87,510 cases and opened 18,241 enquiries with National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, ministries, register offices, municipal authorities, etc.*

*During the past year the Central Agency continued its traditional activities which include the issue of certificates of captivity, searches for missing military personnel, the identification of combatants who fell on the battle-field and civilian internees who died in captivity, applications for death certificates, etc. In addition, an increasing number of former prisoners of war asked the Central Agency to help them to obtain the medical records of illness suffered during their internment.*

*As regards the events in Algeria, the Central Agency has opened 500 enquiries concerning French military personnel or civilians missing or presumed to be held by the ALN.*

*It may be stressed that searches for civilians are becoming an increasingly greater part of the Central Agency's work. A great many of the thousands of enquiries received come from persons who live in Eastern or Western Europe, or have emigrated overseas, and who have been separated from their near relatives either during the Second World War or as a result of post-war events. In many cases, through careful and patient searches, the Central Agency succeeds in placing these persons in contact with their relatives. The successful conclusion of searches gives the Agency the possibility of taking the necessary steps in behalf of those concerned—at their request and in so far as they fulfil the required conditions—to enable them to join near relatives resettled in another country. This work is part of the action for the re-uniting*

of families to which the Agency continues to devote considerable effort.

*In addition the Agency issues Travel Documents to stateless persons who are unable to obtain identity papers from the authorities of their country of residence, owing to the fact that they have not so far been granted refuge status or that the legislation of the country of asylum does not provide for the issue of such documents.*

*The Central Agency and the International Tracing Service in Arolsen remain in close working contact and make available to each other the information contained in their vast card-indexes and archives.*

**Repatriation of Vietnamese refugees.** — *In accordance with the agreement concluded at Rangoon in August 1959 between the representatives of the Thai Red Cross and the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, 1,446 Vietnamese refugees left Thailand on January 5 and 19, bound for Haiphong.*

*The first group, composed of 922 persons including 514 children under 18 years of age, embarked on the S/S "HOI-YING" and the second group, composed of 524 persons, left by the S/S "BLISSFUL"; Mr. W. Salzmann, delegate of the ICRC, was present on both occasions.*

*The refugees were brought by special trains to Bangkok and were received and looked after at the port by the Thai Red Cross until they embarked. A meal had been prepared which was served by voluntary helpers of this Society; facilities were also granted to the refugees for changing the money in their possession into Hong Kong dollars.*

*The Head of the Government, Field-Marshal Sarit Thanarat, and the Minister for Internal Affairs, General Prapass Charusathira, visited the reception centre.*

*The departure of the second group took place in the presence of eight members of the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, headed by Mr. Nguyen Ong Jee.*

**International Red Cross Broadcast — May 8, 1960.** — *A preparatory meeting for the 11th international broadcast took place on November 23 at the Radio-Genève building, and was attended by*

representatives of the ICRC, the League, National Red Cross Societies, the broadcasting services of 13 countries and directors of Radio-Genève. Some countries which had not been able to send representatives had asked to be informed of the decisions taken during the meeting.

The broadcast on May 8, 1960, will be produced by the French Broadcasting and Television Service; the programme will include, among other items, a cantata on a poem by Loys Masson commissioned from Mr. Darius Milhaud.

Another meeting was held on November 24 for the purpose of preparing a television programme on the Red Cross which will be shown during May 1960. Representatives of the European Broadcasting Union, various National Red Cross Societies, the League and the ICRC took part in the meeting.

**World Health Organization.** — The 24th Session of the Executive Board of the WHO was held in Geneva from January 19 to February 1; the ICRC was represented by Dr. M. Junod, Vice-President.

**The work of the International Tracing Service.** — In 1959 the International Tracing Service received 125,871 enquiries and issued 320,072 certificates and documents; the figures for the previous year were, respectively, 154,581 and 383,023.

In the course of the year the ITS established 719,275 individual cards (644,817 in 1958) for its central card-index; during the same period it classified 725,601 cards (478,901 in 1958).

The ITS was able to collect in 1959 ten times the number of documents received in 1958; thus 370,000 names have been added in its files, about 260,000 of which were taken from lists and about 110,000 from individual documents.

**Mission to the Cameroons.** — Dr. E. Gloor, Member of the ICRC, returned to Switzerland on January 27 after representing the International Committee of the Red Cross at the ceremonies in celebration of the independence of the Cameroons. The ICRC had been invited to attend these ceremonies which took place early in January at Yaoundé, the capital of the new State.

*During his stay, Dr. Gloor made some useful contacts and was able, in particular, to give advice concerning the creation of a Red Cross Society of the Cameroons.*

**Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.** — *Mr. C. Senn, delegate of the ICRC in this territory, visited several places of detention in Nyasaland from October 27 to November 7, 1959. After visiting the Kanjedza internment camp and the prisons in Zomba, Domasi and Chetedze, where a number of persons are held as a result of the disturbances which occurred at the beginning of 1959, Mr. Senn completed his mission by a series of interviews with the Federation authorities concerning conditions of detention in the places visited by him.*

*From November 28 to December 2 Mr. Senn also visited the enforced residence area in Gokwe.*

*During each of his visits the delegate of the ICRC had numerous talks without witnesses with the detainees' and internees' representatives.*

**Donations in memory of Max Huber.** — *At the time of the death of Mr. Max Huber, his family expressed the wish that persons desirous of honouring his memory should, instead of sending flowers, make a donation to any of the three institutions, including the CICR, to which Mr. Huber was particularly attached.*

*Thus the ICRC has received several donations which in February 15 had reached a total of 4,540 Swiss francs.*

**Mission in West Germany.** — *On December 13 and 14, Mr. H. Beckh, delegate of the ICRC, took part at Piding (Bavaria) in the reception of the thirteenth and last group of "Volksdeutsche" children from Jugoslavia. The journey of this group of 16 children and young people had been organised by the Yugoslav Red Cross and they were accompanied by two representatives of that Society. Thirteen of the children were awaited by their families in the German Federal Republic, two by their families in the German Democratic Republic and one was going to Australia.*

*When passing through Munich, Mr. Beckh had an interview with Mr. Leopold of the Bavarian Ministry of Justice on the*

*subject of political detainees. He again visited Stadelheim Prison in Munich where he spoke without witnesses with eight political prisoners. He also visited the prison hospital.*

**A gift from Matrons of the German Red Cross.** — *As mentioned in the Revue internationale (November) the matrons of the parent establishments (Oberinnen der Mutterhäuser) of the Red Cross of the German Federal Republic took part in October 1959 in a study-week organised in their behalf by the International Committee and the League.*

*Wishing to show their gratitude and their interest in the work of the two institutions, the visitors made a collection among the members of their association on their return to Germany. The funds thus collected enabled them to send donations of DM 9,000 each to the League and the ICRC. The donors expressed a wish for the funds to be used in behalf of victims of the events in Algeria.*

*Great praise is due to this spontaneous and generous gesture which shows the keen interest of the donors in the work of the Red Cross.*

**World Refugee Year.** — *The International Committee for the World Refugee Year, constituted on the initiative of the Standing Conference of Voluntary Agencies Working for Refugees, and which includes 72 non-governmental agencies, recently organised in Geneva, with great success, the Conference of National Committees for the World Refugee Year.*

*This meeting, held at the Palais des Nations from January 12 to 14, was attended by representatives of 26 national committees, 13 government observers, 53 non-governmental agencies and 6 intergovernmental institutions specially concerned with the refugee problem.*

*Some important reports were adopted following the discussions; special mention should be made of two reports concerning the legal protection of refugees.*

# CHRONICLE

---

## THE RED CROSS AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE RADIO CONFERENCE

The Administrative Radio Conference took place in Geneva between August and December 1959. It was attended by representatives of all the countries members of the International Telecommunication Union, and accomplished a great deal of work.

Problems connected with radio become increasingly complicated as new discoveries are made and also because of the growing number of requests for the assignment of frequencies, due partly to the accession to independence of a number of States.

The agenda of the Conference included several matters of direct interest to the Red Cross, and the ICRC was therefore glad to accept the invitation to be represented by an observer. In particular, the three problems referred to below were discussed at the Conference.

### 1. — The use of radiotelegraph and radiotelephone links by Red Cross organizations

The Red Cross in the Federal Republic of Germany has a considerable amount of radio equipment which it has frequently had occasion to use. On the basis of its experience, it approached its own Government with a view to the submission of a proposal

to the Administrative Radio Conference providing for certain frequencies to be set aside for Red Cross use. The approach was successful, and the delegation of the Federal German Government submitted to the Conference a proposal, drafted in very general terms, which immediately took the International Committee's attention. The German Red Cross and the delegation of the Federal German Government both expressed the hope that the proposal would be supported by the ICRC before the Conference. In order to supplement the information at its disposal, the ICRC decided, in agreement with the League of Red Cross Societies, to inform the National Societies of the German proposal and to ask for their opinion on the matter. A circular letter was sent to the National Societies, reading as follows :

Dear Secretary-General,

*Re: Broadcast communications of the Red Cross*

The Red Cross organisations, both national and international, are sometimes in need of very rapid means of communication in their work, and broadcasting is the best means to be employed in such cases.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has been concerned with this matter for some considerable time, in particular as regards the transmission of information concerning war victims. You will have seen from previous reports that since 1948 the juridical and technical means have been available to the Committee to enable it to broadcast in time of war.

Some National Societies hold the opinion, of which they have informed us, that greater use could, and should, be made of broadcasting in time of peace in all emergencies which call for rapid communications between national and international Red Cross bodies.

Following an initiative of the Red Cross of the German Federal Republic the Government of that country instructed its delegation to the Administrative Conference of the International Telecommunication Union, now sitting in Geneva, to submit the following proposals :

*The functions of the Red Cross are of such world-wide importance that it appears to be justified to allocate and protect frequencies on an international level for the fixed and mobile radio services which will become necessary between the Red Cross organisations. The Administrative Radio Conference should therefore include certain frequencies for the Red Cross in the table of frequency allocations.*

As this proposal is couched in general terms it required to be defined and clarified. The Government Delegation and the German Red Cross have therefore requested the International Committee—taking part in the Conference as an observer—to submit a memorandum before November 15 for the purpose of justifying and supporting this request.

The German Red Cross proposes that this means of communication should be resorted to in the event of natural disasters or armed conflicts, when other means of rapid communication have broken down or are insufficient. It is a matter of communication firstly within the national territory, secondly between National Red Cross Societies, and thirdly between National Societies with international Red Cross bodies. Communications between National Societies during conflicts will be made through the ICRC.

The foregoing has naturally been brought to the knowledge of the Secretariat of the League of Red Cross Societies, which is directly concerned with this matter, since its mission is to co-ordinate action by the National Societies in the event of natural disasters. Our action in this field is therefore undertaken in conjunction with the League.

We should be pleased to know your views and in particular to receive replies to the following questions :

1. Does your Society make use of broadcasting facilities for urgent communications?

If so, does it use its own transmitting and receiving installations? If not, how does it propose to organise the broadcasting of communications in future?

2. Has your Society been allocated the necessary wave-length for this service by the Government of your country?

Has it applied for a wave-length?

3. If a wave-length has been allocated to your Society, what charges are made for assignment and use?

Does your Society enjoy any special privilege in this connection?

4. What is your Society's opinion of the German proposal?

We shall be pleased to receive your replies and comments on this matter which, to serve any useful purpose, should reach us not later than November 5, as the Conference of the ITU will come to an end early in December.

If your Society is in favour of the measures referred to above, it would be advisable to make an approach to the authorities concerned

in your country in order that the official delegation to the Conference may be informed of your position.

The proposal of the Delegation of the German Federal Republic only came to our knowledge a few days ago ; for this reason we have not written to you earlier but we hope, nevertheless, that it will be possible for you to send us (before November 5) any information which will enable us to support this interesting proposal.

\* \* \*

Following this enquiry among the National Societies, on November 23, 1959 the ICRC submitted the following memorandum to the Conference :

Geneva, November 23, 1959

Administrative Radio  
Conference  
Bâtiment Electoral  
Geneva

To the Secretary-General,

The Conference agreed to have an observer from the International Committee of the Red Cross, to which post I was appointed. With the Chairman's permission I had the honour in this capacity to make a statement in Committee IV in the afternoon of Saturday 21 November, when Proposal No. 4483 (Document No. 26) came up for discussion, dealing with the allocation of special frequencies for Red Cross communications.

In the course of my speech I pointed out that the International Committee of the Red Cross proposed to submit an explanatory memorandum to the Conference. I am taking the liberty of enclosing this text with an English translation. The International Committee would be greatly obliged if this text could be distributed to delegates participating in the Conference for their information.

I would like to thank you in advance for your interest in this matter.

## Annex

## THE RED CROSS AND THE USE OF RADIO

*The International Red Cross is a movement comprising the National Red Cross Societies established in almost all the countries of the world, the League of Red Cross Societies (LRCS), which is the international federation of these Societies, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) which is the founder body of the movement and is specially responsible for taking action in the event of war or internal strife.*

*For a long time past, consideration has been given in the Red Cross to the possibility of using radio, which is a rapid and sure means of communication, and already during the Second World War, especially towards the end of the conflict, a great deal of information regarding war victims was transmitted in this way between various countries as well as by the ICRC. Since then, the International Committee has continued its activity in this field.*

*The ICRC and the League were therefore very interested to learn that the Delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany to this Conference had submitted Proposal No. 4483 (Document No. 26), regarding the allocation on an international level of special frequencies for radio services between the various Red Cross organizations.*

*In agreement with the League of Red Cross Societies, on October, 14 1959, the ICRC sent a circular-letter to the National Red Cross Societies informing them of the submission of this proposal and asking for their views on the subject.*

*This circular-letter aroused great interest among the National Red Cross Societies, and to date the ICRC has received 32 replies, sent by the National Societies in the following countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Federal Republic of Germany, Ghana, Haiti, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Pakistan, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, United Arab Republic, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom, United States of America, Viet-Nam and Yugoslavia.*

*With one exception—the Canadian Red Cross, which does not see any particular advantage in allocating special frequencies—all those Societies are in favour of the proposal, at least as regards the principle.*

*The replies received have also shown that some National Societies already use radio in their own country, either to maintain local contact—for instance with ambulances, first aid stations, warehousing points, etc., or as a means of communication with more distant places in order to maintain the necessary contact between the various sections of a National Society. Thus, for instance, in Iran this system works extremely well between the various branches of the Society. Other Societies have estab-*

lished relations with societies of amateur short-wave broadcasters and use their services for communication by radio. Lastly, there are a number of Societies which are very much interested in the use of radio but do not have the necessary technical equipment.

Thus, the National Red Cross Societies are virtually unanimous in supporting this idea and it is therefore to be hoped that the present Conference will give favourable consideration to the proposal submitted by the German Federal Delegation and will take a decision which would enable the Red Cross to develop its communications by radio-telegraph and radio. In this connection, it may be noted that the use by each National Society of wave-lengths allocated by the Government of the country concerned for use only on the national territory is a matter which is perhaps not of direct concern to this Conference.

Nevertheless, it seems most desirable that the Conference encourage the Governments to grant facilities of this kind to their National Societies, as many have already done.

The question of radio communication on an international level is, of course, of direct concern to the present Conference. The following will serve as an explanation of the conditions in which such radio facilities would be used.

(1) It is understood that Red Cross organizations would use radio communications on an international level only if other means of rapid communication were interrupted, damaged, or so overloaded that urgent Red Cross messages could not be transmitted quickly enough.

(2) Moreover, such international communications by radio would be used only in the event of a catastrophe, natural disaster, international conflict or civil war.

(3) Such communications would mainly be between National Red Cross Societies and the two international bodies of the Red Cross—the League of Red Cross Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross—which have their headquarters in Geneva, but may also be required to direct or co-ordinate joint action by the Red Cross from some other central point. It would also be desirable that two or more National Red Cross Societies should be able to establish contact by radio, particularly if they are together taking part in urgent relief action. Thus, for instance, many National Societies in neighbouring countries have made arrangements for mutual assistance in case of serious catastrophes or natural disasters. In such cases, emergency action is obviously required and communication by radio could help to hasten the arrival of relief supplies and personnel at the place where they are required, as well as to ensure that they are distributed in the most effective way.

(4) In the case of armed conflict, communication by radio would mostly be between the ICRC and the National Societies in the belligerent countries. It is not expected that there would be any direct communication

*between the National Societies of those countries. If any such contact proved necessary, it would be established through the ICRC, which, within the Red Cross movement, is ideally suited to act as a neutral intermediary.*

\* \* \*

*The ICRC and the League of Red Cross Societies hope that the foregoing explanations will convince the delegates to the present Conference that it would be of very great value for the work and effectiveness of the Red Cross to have wave-lengths at its disposal. In present times, it is essential in any emergency relief action to have a rapid and independent means of maintaining contact. Any important action by the Red Cross almost always concerns several countries, whether in the case of a disaster affecting an extensive area, or because relief supplies and personnel are sent by a number of National Red Cross Societies. It is therefore also necessary to be able to establish rapid contact on an international level.*

*Of course, it is not for the ICRC and the League of Red Cross Societies to examine the technical difficulties which may be involved in putting these ideas into practice; we are confident, however, that the Conference will be favourably disposed to study them. Meanwhile, the ICRC and the League are naturally at the entire disposal of the Conference to supply any additional information which may be useful in considering this matter.*

The Conference gave favourable consideration to the proposal, and the ICRC and the League informed the National Societies of the result by an information note dated February 17, 1960, reading as follows:

Geneva, February 17, 1960

*Information Note to the National Red Cross (Red Crescent,  
Red Lion and Sun) Societies*

*Subject: Broadcast communications of the Red Cross*

Dear Secretary-General,

In a circular letter dated October 14, 1959, the International Committee of the Red Cross, in agreement with the League of Red Cross Societies, informed the National Societies of the proposals which had been presented to the Administrative Radio Conference of the International Telecommunication Union, which was meeting in Geneva at that time. Those proposals provided for special frequen-

cies to be set aside for radio communication between the various Red Cross organizations. A number of questions were put to the National Red Cross Societies in the circular letter, so that the views of the Red Cross movement as a whole might be presented to the Administrative Radio Conference.

By November 5, 1959 (the time-limit set for replies), the ICRC had received thirty-two replies from the National Societies in the following countries :

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Democratic Republic of Germany, Federal Republic of Germany, Ghana, Haiti, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Pakistan, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Union of South Africa, United Arab Republic, United Kingdom, United States of America, Republic of Viet-Nam, Yugoslavia.

On the basis of these replies, a memorandum was prepared and submitted by the ICRC, which was represented by an observer, to the Administrative Radio Conference. The memorandum is annexed to the present communication. After the time-limit, replies were also received from the National Societies in Ethiopia, Brazil, San Salvador and the Mongolian People's Republic. It was unfortunately not possible, because of the short time available, to take their replies into account in the memorandum presented to the Conference.

The ICRC and the League wish to express their sincere thanks to the National Societies which responded to this enquiry. The replies received have shown that there is keen interest in the use of radio and in the possibility of certain special wave-lengths being set aside for radio-communication by the Red Cross. The enquiry has also shown, however, that at present only very few National Societies have the necessary equipment to transmit or receive radio-communications. This fact naturally made it more difficult, on the international plane, to obtain the assignment of certain wave-lengths.

\* \* \*

The proposals submitted to the Conference by the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany were in principle favourably received by Committee IV to which the matter was referred. An ICRC observer presented the views of the Red Cross and emphasized the interest aroused by the use of radio in Red Cross relief actions, on both the national and international level. A number of delegates also spoke in support of the proposal, and it was decided to appoint a working group to draft a recommendation for adoption by the Conference. The working group prepared the text of the recommendation, which

was adopted unanimously on November 27 by Committee IV, after a slight amendment had been made, and it was subsequently adopted unanimously by the plenary assembly of the Conference. The recommendation reads as follows :

RECOMMENDATION NO. 33  
RELATING TO THE USE OF RADIOTELEGRAPH AND RADIOTELEPHONE  
LINKS BY THE RED CROSS ORGANIZATIONS

*The Administrative Radio Conference, Geneva, 1959,*

*considering*

- (a) *that the world-wide relief work of the Red Cross organizations is of increasing importance particularly in the event of disasters, catastrophes, etc.;*
- (b) *that in such circumstances normal communication facilities are frequently overloaded, damaged or even completely interrupted;*
- (c) *that it is necessary to facilitate by all possible measures the rapid intervention of the Red Cross, national and international;*
- (d) *that rapid and independent contact is essential to the intervention of the National Red Cross (Red Crescent, Red Lion and Sun) Societies;*
- (e) *that for international relief work it is necessary that the National Red Cross Societies involved be able to communicate with each other as well as with the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies;*

*recommends*

- 1. *that administrations take account of the possible need of the Red Cross for rapid communication by radio when normal communication facilities are disrupted;*
- 2. *that administrations study the possibility of assigning, for this purpose, at the upper or lower limits of the amateur bands, one or more common frequencies to stations of the Red Cross;*
- 3. *that the next Administrative Radio Conference should consider whether any further action is necessary.*

This recommendation gives real encouragement to those National Societies which already possess radio equipment and will no doubt serve as an inducement to those Societies which do not yet have such equipment to endeavour to obtain it, with the assistance of their radio administrations. Of course, the recommendation does not go as far as one would have desired, but it is a first step and it is important that the problem should be referred to in the texts which govern radiocommunication throughout the world. The National Societies will

certainly find support therein for their own representations with a view to obtaining radio facilities from their national authorities.

As regards communication between the National Red Cross Societies and the international institutions of the Red Cross, it should be noted that in war-time this will mainly involve communication with the ICRC, whose responsibilities are laid down in the Geneva Conventions.

It will also be recalled that the ICRC already has a wave-length of its own which is internationally recognized; this was assigned to the ICRC in 1948 by the International Telecommunication Conference held at Mexico City. The ICRC has already made many test broadcasts over this wave-length and has been assisted by many National Red Cross Societies. These tests will now have to be developed further, and in particular arrangements will have to be made for establishing national listening and recording posts wherever there are none.

After this first stage, tests will have to be made of two-way radio links.

The ICRC, and possibly the League of Red Cross Societies, will have occasion to revert to this matter at a later date.

## **2. — Reduction of charges for radiotelegrams concerning persons protected in time of war by the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949**

It will be recalled that the Administrative Telegraph and Telephone Conference, held at Geneva in the autumn of 1958, agreed to reduce by 75 per cent the charges on the transmission of telegrams addressed to or sent by prisoners of war and civilian internees, and telegrams sent by the national Information Bureaux and the Central Information Agency for which provision is made in the Geneva Conventions, concerning prisoners of war and interned civilians<sup>1</sup>. This reduction applies to telegrams transmitted by radiotelegraph between land stations, but does not apply to radiotelegrams exchanged between land stations and mobile stations.

The Administrative Radio Conference has now filled the gap by adopting the following provision:

---

<sup>1</sup> See Supplement to the *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, February 1959, pp. 22-31.

ARTICLE 4

*Charges for radiotelegrams*

.....  
*Section II. Reduced-rate radiotelegrams.* . . . . .

E. *Radiotelegrams concerning persons protected in time of war by the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949*

§ 19. (1) *Radiotelegrams concerning persons protected in time of war by the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949, are accepted under the conditions specified in Article 64 of the Telegraph Regulations (Geneva Revision, 1958) and shall bear the paid service indication = RCT = placed before the address.*

(2) *The land station charge and the ship or aircraft station charge for radiotelegrams bearing the paid service indication = RCT = shall be decreased in the same proportion as the charge for transmission on the general network of telecommunication channels (see Nos. 646 and 647 of the Telegraph Regulations) (Geneva Revision, 1958).*

**3. — Means of radioelectrical and visual communication to give increased security during armed conflicts to ships, craft and aircraft protected under the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949 for the protection of war victims**

It will be recalled that the 1949 Diplomatic Conference, which drew up the final text of the Geneva Conventions, recommended that further consideration be given to the question of means of communication between protected ships, on the one hand, and naval and air forces on the other. A small group of Italian, Swedish and Swiss experts met under the auspices of the ICRC in June 1959, and drew up a draft text <sup>1</sup>.

As the draft text touches on the field of radiocommunication, it was important to make sure that it contained nothing contradictory to the Regulations in force. The Swedish delegation

---

<sup>1</sup> See Supplement to the *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, September 1959, pp. 172-179.

to the Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (which met at the same time and on the same premises as the Administrative Radio Conference) therefore submitted the draft text to the Secretary-General of the Union. In a letter dated December 23, 1959, the President of the Conference, Mr. J. D. H. van der Toorn, stated that the Conference had authorized him to inform the ICRC that the draft text contained nothing contrary to the provisions of the International Telecommunication Convention (Geneva 1959) and the Regulations annexed thereto.

\* \* \*

As may be seen from the above, the International Telecommunication Union and its deliberative bodies have given active and helpful consideration to the various activities of the Red Cross.

The results achieved during the Conferences of the International Telecommunication Union may be considered as very encouraging. Careful attention was given to the wishes of the Red Cross and the needs of war victims, and the provisions adopted will certainly prove most useful.

**CLAUDE PILLOUD**

Assistant Director for General Affairs,  
International Committee of the Red Cross