Several National Red Cross Societies and press correspondents have expressed the wish to receive earlier than through the "International Review of the Red Cross" news and commentaries concerning the action of the ICRC in the world.

In order to comply with this request, the ICRC has decided to send you periodical information notes, of which these are the first of a series. It would appreciate it if recipients would publicize the information contained herein as soon as possible.

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Unpublished news

THE ACTIVITY OF THE ICRC IN LAOS

Since the last weeks of 1960, the International Committee of the Red Cross has, in various ways, come to the aid of victims of the conflict which broke out in Laos, in particular by distributing relief and visiting detained persons.

It recently received an appeal from the Government of Vientiane on behalf of a certain number of displaced persons.
This concerned civilians who had left those areas in which fighting had taken place. Amongst these refugees there are notably 6,000 Meos lodged in camps in the Mekong valley.

Mr. A. Durand, delegate of the ICRC, proceeded to the spot to discover the amount of relief which was needed for these refugees and to discuss the problem with the Laotian Red Cross and with the authorities of Vientiane.

On his return to Geneva on August 4, when submitting his report, Mr. Durand gave further information on the needs of the population in the Northern provinces, based on that which he had collected on the spot during his visit at the end of June to the Red Cross and to the authorities at Xieng-Khouang.

The ICRC has opened credit accounts, by way of advances, out of its own relief funds, in order to come to the aid of these displaced persons, as well as of the civilian population in the Northern provinces.

In addition, in view of the extent of the need, the ICRC forwarded on August 11 a memorandum to a certain number of National Societies requesting them to contribute to its relief action. At the end of August favourable responses had already been given by the American, Australian, Indian, Netherlands, Norwegian and Swiss Red Cross Societies.

In order to carry out the execution of the first steps of this plan on the spot, Mr. J.-J. Muralti, a specialist in relief matters, arrived in Vientiane at the beginning of August.

Emergency relief distributions are taking place at present through the Laotian Red Cross in the refugee camps at Vientiane, Luangprabang, Savannakhet, Pakket and Pakse.

COMPENSATION TO VICTIMS OF PSEUDO-MEDICAL EXPERIMENTS

As the "International Review of the Red Cross" has already mentioned in its edition of June 1961, the ICRC has agreed to act as an intermediary for transmitting financial assistance which the Government of Bonn has decided to allocate to certain victims of pseudo-medical experiments, inflicted on them in German concentration camps under the Nazi régime. This concerns those survivors who are at present residing in countries with which the German Federal Republic does not maintain diplomatic relations, chiefly in Hungary and Poland.
A mission of the International Committee consisting of Dr J. de Rougemont and Mr J.-P. Maunoir went to Poland in order to complete on the spot, in agreement with the Polish Red Cross, the files which the German Federal Republic had already forwarded to the ICRC, to examine the victims, to study their medical documents and to make contact with their medical practitioners. A similar mission was carried out in Hungary by Dr F. Züst and Mr J.-P. Maunoir.

The files were then handed over to a neutral commission consisting of three experts appointed by the ICRC. These were: Dr. Jean Graven, Professor at the Faculty of Law, Vice-Rector of the University of Geneva, Judge of the Supreme Court of Appeal and former Clerk of the Swiss Federal Insurance Tribunal in Lucerne, Dr René S. Mach, Professor at the Faculté of Medicine of Geneva, Head of the University Therapeutical Clinic of the Cantonal Hospital, and Dr Sylvain Mutrux, Assistant Medical Director of the Bel-Air Psychiatric Clinic in Geneva. Dr Edouard Loizeau, Head of the Clinic at the Cantonal Hospital of Geneva, was appointed a deputy member.

The Commission held its first meeting from August 21 to 24 at the headquarters of the ICRC, at which also took part the rapporteurs: Dr. J. de Rougemont, doctor-delegate of the ICRC for Poland, and Dr. F. Züst, doctor-delegate of the ICRC for Hungary; the observers, Mr. Viktor Karasz, Assistant Secretary-General of the Hungarian Red Cross, Dr Joseph Nowkunski, doctor-delegate of the Polish Red Cross, and Miss Danuta Zys, Head of the Department of External Relations of the Polish Red Cross, and the secretary of the meeting, Mr. J.-P. Maunoir, delegate of the ICRC.

This Expert commission, which had 63 Hungarian and 73 Polish cases before it, had the task of:

1) pronouncing on the substantiation of the claims submitted, by basing itself on criteria which had been applied in cases of victims residing in countries maintaining diplomatic relations with West Germany;

2) deciding upon the amount of financial assistance to be allocated, such assistance being intended in particular to contribute towards the rehabilitation expenses of each victim.

We will return to the work of the Commission at a later date.
RELIEF CONSIGNMENTS

To the Congo: At the request of the Central Medical Depot at Leopoldville, transmitted to Geneva through the Delegation of the ICRC, the International Committee forwarded to the latter in August 250,000 doses of anti-smallpox vaccine, basic pharmaceutical products and laboratory equipment to a total value of 26,000 Swiss francs. The necessary funds for this consignment were made available by the British Red Cross.

Furthermore, and in co-operation with the League of Red Cross Societies, a considerable consignment of medicaments and test serum, the donation of the Danish Red Cross, left the stores of the ICRC in mid-July and was despatched on board SS "Baden" for Matadi.

To Greece: A mission of the ICRC consisting of Mr Germain Colladon and Dr. René Bergoz left for Greece at the end of August to visit exiles and Greek political detainees once more and to distribute food, medicaments and clothing to them. The delegates of the International Committee were also entrusted with handing over relief supplies to the families of the detained persons.

Relief consisted of gifts in kind which had been offered by the Hungarian and Czechoslovak Red Cross, as well as by private individuals, and to which the ICRC contributed a donation out of its own relief funds.

To Tunisia: At the end of August, the ICRC despatched two consignments of 10,000 packets of cigarettes each one intended for military and civilian Tunisian prisoners in French hands, the other for French civilians interned by the Tunisian authorities.

ACTION IN FAVOUR OF POLITICAL DETAINEES

As is known, the ICRC is continuing its action on behalf of political detainees. It is visiting places of detention in countries whose authorities accord it the necessary facilities. This involves the delegates examining conditions of the penal system applied to persons who have been incarcerated without a civil war or internal disturbances having broken out. Reports on these visits are drawn up solely for the attention of those
countries, which thereby receive purely impartial observations. The visits which are made by the delegates of the ICRC are not in the nature of an enquiry, but are comparable to neutral reports the results of which are forwarded to the detaining Power only. It goes without saying that the delegates allow themselves to transmit to the authorities of the country any possible requests made by the detainees which appear to be justifiable from a humanitarian point of view. In granting authorization for such visits, these governments are contributing to the development of international humanitarian law.

Within the framework of such action, Mr. H.G. Beckh, delegate of the International Committee, went once more at the end of August to West Germany where he was received by the Attorney-General Republic and his assistant, as well as by a senior official of the Federal Ministry of Justice. These personalities made a point of emphasizing how much they appreciated the work accomplished by the ICRC in this field and they reaffirmed once more that the delegates of our institution would always have free access to places of detention on the territory of the Federal Republic.

During his stay in West Germany, Mr. Beckh visited three prisons where he spoke freely and without witnesses with political detainees in those establishments, 12 persons in all.

It should be pointed out in this connection that since the beginning of this action until the end of August 1961, the delegate of the ICRC made 57 visits to prisons in West Germany and 5 visits to prisons in West Berlin. He had a total of 274 interviews with political detainees.

REPATRIATION OF KOREANS RESIDING IN JAPAN

The repatriation of Koreans is continuing by weekly convoys in the presence of members of the mission of the ICRC. Since the beginning of the repatriation operations in September 1959 until the end of July 1961, 68,502 persons have left Japan for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The 69th convoy left on July 28 last. In July, however, the number of repatriates continued to decrease. On the other hand, 20,000 persons enrolled in the middle of August for future convoys.

The two National Red Cross Societies concerned have agreed to continue repatriation for a further year, that is to say, until November 12, 1962.
DEPARTURE FOR SAÏGON

Mr. Werner Muller, the new delegate of the ICRC in the Republic of Viet Nam, rejoined his post at Saigon at the end of July. He succeeds Mr. A.M. Leuenberger who has resigned to return finally to Switzerland.

Press releases already distributed:

Press release No. 737b of September 11:

**Exchange of Prisoners in Bizerta**

The exchange of French and Tunisian prisoners which took place on September 10 in Bizerta was facilitated by the representations which the International Committee of the Red Cross has been making for the past several weeks. Shortly after President Bourguiba's press conference announcing this exchange, a delegate of the ICRC promptly went to the spot. Acting as an intermediary, he contributed, in co-operation with the Tunisian Red Crescent, towards the accomplishment of this humanitarian operation.

Prisoners who were exchanged consisted, on the Tunisian side, of 778 persons, of whom 361 were civilians and 417 military, and, on the French side, of 217 persons, of whom 34 were military and 183 civilians. The exchange took place under the auspices of the ICRC at Menzel Djemil, in no man's land at Bizerta, in the presence of representatives of the Tunisian Red Crescent and the French Red Cross. Each released prisoner presented himself before two control commissions, one Tunisian and the other French.

The ICRC which has, since the events in July, brought its assistance to the Tunisian prisoners in Bizerta and to the French held at Sousse, has pleasure in recording the spirit of understanding which has resulted in the release of these victims of the conflict.
Official recognition of a National Society by the ICRC

ICRC PRESS, September 12, 1961: The International Committee of the Red Cross has recently announced the official recognition of the Togolese Red Cross Society, which thus becomes a member of the International Red Cross. This brings the number of National Societies which have been officially recognized to 87, and the Togolese Red Cross is the eleventh Society on the African continent.

Created in 1959, the young Society already numbers no less than 500 members in the capital alone. Three regional branches have already been opened and others will follow. It has established an infirmary and a day-nursery and is prepared to extend its activity on behalf of the victims, without any form of discrimination, of any event which may take place. Its headquarters is at Lomé, the capital.

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Documentary article

A SPECIAL STATUS AND DISTINCTIVE EMBLEM FOR CIVIL DEFENCE PERSONNEL

"Since the humanitarian Conventions grant special guarantees to Army medical personnel, in the very interest of their mission on behalf of sick and wounded servicemen, why should we, members of the Civil Defence who carry out an identical task on behalf of the civilian victims of the hostilities, not also benefit by a privileged status and especially by a distinctive sign?"

This is the wish which we often hear expressed by representatives of Civil Defence organizations, in particular when they have a non-military character. The question was given a thorough examination by a group of experts convened by the ICRC
last June under the title WORKING PARTY ON THE POSITION OF CIVIL DEFENCE BODIES IN INTERNATIONAL LAW.

Before giving details on the work of this Group, we should like to remind our readers of the reasons which led the ICRC to organize such a meeting.

Is this wish for a special status satisfied in present day humanitarian law? Admittedly, Article 63 of the Fourth Convention stipulates that non-military bodies providing relief for the population must be enabled to continue their activity in the event of occupation. However, in Civil Defence circles this article is considered inadequate: it lacks precision, it is accompanied by reservations and, above all, it only concerns the event of occupation.

Moreover, in the Draft Rules for the Limitation of the Dangers incurred by the Civilian Population in Time of War which it presented to the XIXth International Conference of the Red Cross, the ICRC included a provision (Article 12) which assured Civil Defence personnel of special facilities; however, this was only a draft. Nevertheless, in informing the ICRC of their comments on this draft, various Governments stressed the value of this provision and requested the Committee to elaborate it.

Considering all these desiderata, the Committee felt it to be its duty to examine attentively how far this idea of a special status for C.D. personnel could be realized. In this connection, it first carried out an enquiry, in 1959, concerning the status of the national C.D. organizations and, in particular, on the position of the Medical Service within these organisations; about twenty National Red Cross Societies especially interested in the subject were requested to give information in connection with this enquiry. The numerous and detailed replies which were received proved the great interest of the question. In order to examine the results of this enquiry, it was therefore considered useful to convene a Working Party, with a preliminary and private character, that is, a certain number of specialists who had been personally invited and chosen with the help of several National Red Cross Societies.

This Working Party met from June 12 - 16; it consisted of both real experts and of Red Cross personalities qualified in the matter, and comprised the following persons:

Colonel Ernest FISCHER, in charge of Swiss Civil Defence questions in the Federal Department of Justice and Police, Berne; Dr. Sten FLORELIUS, Doctor-in-charge of Norwegian Civil Defence, Oslo; Dr Bernhard GRAEFARTH, Professor at the Humboldt University (East Berlin) and Legal Adviser of the Red Cross in the German Democratic Republic; Dr. Hand HAUG, Secretary-General
of the Swiss Red Cross, Berne; Mr. Pierre LEBRUN, Director of Belgian Civil Defence, Brussels; Mr. Ivar MULLER, Assistant Director of Swedish Civil Defence, Stockholm; Mr. Hermann RITGEN, in charge of questions of relief and protection in the event of disasters, Red Cross in the German Federal Republic, Bonn; Mr. J.-G. ROMBACH, Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands Red Cross The Hague; Dr. Z. HANTCHEF, Director of the Medico-Social Bureau of the League of Red Cross Societies, was also invited to joint the Party.

Presided over by Mr. Pilloud, Assistant Director for General Affairs of the ICRC, and with the help of Mr. Siordet and Mr. Schindler, members of the ICRC, this Party held eight meetings. It was therefore able to make a thorough examination of all of the questions, about fifteen, contained in its agenda. First of all, it considered the conditions to be fulfilled by a C.D. organization in order to be regarded as non-military according to the terms of the above-mentioned Article 63 (problems of defensive weapons, of co-operation with military units, of activities connected with military objectives).

The Party then went on to examine the type and scope of the guarantees conferred on C.D. personnel and equipment by the Fourth Geneva Convention. It also studied the legal protection of C.D. personnel in neutral countries when called upon to come to the aid of the C.D. personnel of countries involved in the war. Finally, the Party devoted two complete meetings to the problem of the particular marking of C.D. personnel and, possibly, equipment.

On all these points, the conclusions reached were often very positive. The experts were of the opinion that, if a generally accepted interpretation of Article 63 seems advisable it also appears necessary to draw up an ad hoc ruling — transcending the framework of this article — in order to assure C.D. personnel at all times of the privileged status which is indispensable for efficient action. They wholeheartedly encouraged the ICRC to continue its work.

A detailed report on the results of this meeting is being prepared. The ICRC will be pleased to forward it in due course to all the National Red Cross Societies, for their own information as well as for that of the Civil Defence services of their countries.

R.-J. W.
The ICRC was considering bringing its mission in the Congo to a close when the recent events in Katanga developed. As soon as it was confirmed that the fighting which had broken out was continuing and spreading to several parts of the province, the ICRC made a point of carrying out its humanitarian activity of neutral intermediary there, in order to help all the victims of the conflict, ensure the respect of the principles contained in the Geneva Conventions and to protect the victims by means of the Red Cross emblem. One of the ICRC delegates in Leopoldville received instructions to proceed to Elisabethville; he was, however, obliged to wait until September 19 before being able to fly to Katanga. At the same time, the ICRC sent another delegate from Geneva to Rhodesia, from where he was to try to reach Elisabethville.

At the present moment, this new ICRC mission is in the process of being reorganized.

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The United Nations and the application of the Geneva Conventions

Following the events in Katanga, the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr. Léopold Boissier, sent a letter to Mr. Sture Linner, in charge of the United Nations' mission in the Congo, concerning the application of the rules contained in the Geneva Conventions by the armed forces of the United Nations when these are engaged in military operations. "The recent events in Katanga have indeed shown this matter to be of the utmost urgency" states Mr. Boissier's letter.

With reference to the United Nations' Emergency Force sent to the Near East at the time of the Suez crisis in November 1956, the President of the ICRC reminded Mr. Linner of the correspondence which he had then had with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, who had written in particular: "In the draft regulations applicable to the United Nations' Emergency Force, I have included a provision whereby this Force must observe the spirit of the general international humanitarian Conventions with regard to the conduct of military personnel. I can well appreciate the prime humanitarian importance of the Geneva Conventions and have been in a position to stress to the parties concerned, in certain circumstances, the necessity of their implementation. Their importance, if need be, would not be less with respect to the United Nations' Emergency Forces." 1)

In his letter, Mr. Boissier reminded Mr. Linner that, in September 1960, the ICRC delegation in Leopoldville had approached the United Nations' Headquarters and obtained the assurance that "the members of the Force are bound to respect the principles and the spirit of the international Conventions regarding the conduct of military personnel".

Finally, the President of the ICRC pointed out that "the International Committee of the Red Cross is willing to assume in connection with this conflict the duties laid down for it in the humanitarian Conventions." Thus, the Central Tracing Agency is prepared to receive all information concerning captured or interned military and civilian persons. Moreover, the ICRC is willing to arrange for the prisoners and other

1) Translated from Mr. Hammarskjöld's letter, which was written in French.
victims of the events to be visited by a qualified representative.

The ICRC relief action in Laos

After a short stay in Geneva, which gave him the opportunity to report on the situation in Laos, Mr. André Durand, delegate, has now returned to the spot in order to direct the relief action which the International Committee of the Red Cross decided to carry out. The beneficiaries will be mainly the members of the Meo tribes who left the areas where fighting was in progress and who have been lodged in territories administered by the Government of Vientiane.

The ICRC is, moreover, trying to send a further consignment of relief supplies on behalf of the civilian population in the northern provinces of Phong Saly, Sam Neua and Xieng Khouang.

After the appeal which the ICRC sent to various National Societies on August 11, notification was received of the following contributions towards the relief action in Laos:

Cash contributions from Red Cross Societies:

- United States: 43,125.-- Sfrs.
- Norway: 6,035.--
- Australia: 4,801.--
- Great Britain: 9,300.--
- Switzerland: 20,000.--
- Canada: 42,000.--
- Thailand: 1,024.--

The Red Cross Societies of the following countries have notified us of contributions in kind:

- Netherlands: 30,000.-- Sfrs. (blankets & blood plasma)
- India: 10,000.-- (cloth & medicaments)
- France: 3,000.-- (blankets & milk)
- Poland: 3,000.-- (medicaments - value not yet stated)

Furthermore, the Swiss Government has also donated 30,000 Sfrs. for this action in Laos. With the addition of the credit of 50,000 Sfrs. already voted by the ICRC, the total amounts to over 200,000 Sfrs.
Negotiations are also in progress in order to obtain surplus US food stocks which would enable 6,000 refugees to be fed for six months.

Another ICRC delegate, Mr. Jean-Jacques Muralti, visited the hospital Mahosot in Vientiane where 82 sick and wounded military persons from the two sides were being treated. He handed over relief supplies to them.

The ICRC has also taken steps in order to trace missing persons. During his visit to Xieng Khouang in June, Mr. Durand presented the Government, at that time presided over by Mr. Khamsouk Keola, acting prime minister, with a list of about twenty missing American, French and Philippine nationals. He moreover obtained confirmation that the American Major Lawrence Bailey, reported missing as from March 23, had been captured, and he handed over to the authorities letters from this officer's family. The ICRC is continuing its efforts with a view to obtaining news of missing persons.

Compensation to former prisoners of war

The International Committee of the Red Cross is about to bring to a close an important and delicate post-war task with which it was entrusted several years ago: the compensation of former prisoners of war in Japanese hands.

In order to compensate for the hardships endured during their captivity, Article 16 of the Peace Treaty with Japan, signed in San Francisco, stipulated that a sum paid out of Japanese funds should be distributed to these former prisoners. The signatories to the treaty asked the ICRC to arrange for this sum, which amounted to 65 million Swiss francs, to be shared among the beneficiaries.

The ICRC then approached all the countries concerned in order to draw up complete lists of the beneficiaries. By 1956 all these lists had been sent to the International Committee, with the exception of that of the Philippines, where the destruction of the archives during the war had made it impossible to collect the necessary information concerning former prisoners of war. The representatives of the beneficiary Powers nevertheless decided that the ICRC should carry out a first distribution in the other countries, so that the beneficiaries should not be obliged to wait indefinitely. For the Philippines, it was agreed to reserve a lump sum corresponding
to the maximum estimate of the number of prisoners of war of this country, that is, 60,000 shares. Thus, the first distribution took place in 1957 in the countries signatories to the Treaty of San Francisco, with the exception of the Philippines.

To settle the case of the latter, the Philippine National Red Cross appealed to the public, requesting former prisoners of war to come forward. It was thus possible to draw up a list of 44,000 names, so that the ICRC was able to pay the Philippine National Red Cross, in August 1960, the equivalent of 13 million Swiss francs.

The first distribution of the Japanese funds was therefore finished. However, since the number of Philippines beneficiaries was 44,000, instead of the maximum of 60,000 for whom shares had been set aside, a balance of 16,000 shares was left over -- to which also had to be added the interest which had accumulated since the first distributions. For this reason, it was decided to carry out a second distribution, which is at present in progress.

The total number of beneficiaries will have been about 200,000. Each received a sum equivalent to 300 Swiss francs at the first distribution. Had the balance been divided up among such a large number of persons, the shares would have been very trivial. The representatives of the Powers concerned therefore decided that, generally speaking, this balance would not be used for individual distribution, but as a relief fund on behalf of former prisoners of war in need or for other social welfare purposes.

72,000 persons repatriated under the auspices of the Red Cross

The repatriation of Koreans living in Japan, which has been in progress since the end of 1959 under the auspices of the Japanese Red Cross and in the presence of ICRC delegates, has been momentarily interrupted from September 11 to October 2. This is due to the need to repair after 74 trips since December 14, 1959, the Soviet ships which have been carrying out a shuttle-service between the Japanese port of Niigata and that of Chonzjin, in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Until that date,
72,000 persons left Japan for Northern Korea, according to their own freely expressed wishes. The number of persons registered for the coming departures is still 20,000.

The ICRC at the Prague sessions.

As from September 27 for about ten days, various important sessions of the International Red Cross will be held in Prague. The foremost among these is the Board of Governors of the League of Red Cross Societies. This Board meets, in principle, every two years and groups the leaders of all the officially recognized National Societies and members of the League, that is, 87 at the present moment. The ICRC is represented by observers.

Moreover, the Standing Commission and other organs of the International Red Cross take this opportunity to meet. We should mention in particular the Council of Delegates which, together with the National Societies, includes representatives of the ICRC and of the League. It must hold two sittings and will deal with several important questions, especially the Red Cross principles and their possible drafting, the use of the Red Cross emblem, the protection of civilian medical personnel and the co-operation of the National Societies in Civil Defence. These questions will be introduced by the ICRC, which has already submitted prior reports on these subjects.

The ICRC delegation in Prague is headed by Mr. Léopold Boissier, President accompanied by Mr. Frédéric Siordet, member of the ICRC, Mr. Roger Gallopin, Executive Director, and Mr. Jean Pictet, Director for General Affairs, as well as by some of their assistants.

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Documentary article

THE RED CROSS IN THE CONGO 1960 - 1961

An unprecedented medical action.

At very short notice, as a result of the disturbances which broke out in the Congo on the proclamation of the country's independence at the end of June 1960, over 560 doctors out of the 760 working there left the country. Thirteen and a half million human beings, spread over a territory four times as large as France, were thus virtually deprived of medical care. The departure of the doctors was followed by that of the personnel essential for the running of the hospital and medical services. This complete breakdown was further aggravated by the terrible threat of epidemics, always latent in tropical regions.

On July 20, 1960, the International Red Cross received, through the World Health Organization, an appeal from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, requesting the urgent despatch of medical and nursing personnel to the Congo. The two international Red Cross institutions, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies, immediately cabled the National Societies of fifteen countries.

Within forty-eight hours the first ten teams had been recruited. The Norwegian team arrived in the Congo four days after that telegram was sent. By June 30, 1961, the date on which the Red Cross action in the Congo came to an end, a total of 57 teams from 23 National Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun (Iran) Societies, comprising 168 doctors, surgeons and nurses, had served 17,771 hours in Congolese hospitals.

The organization of the Red Cross medical operation in the Congo provides a remarkable example of the efficiency and the importance of the rôle played by the Red Cross in such cases of extreme emergency.
The installation of the various teams, their maintenance, their work on behalf of the Congolese, their provisioning with medicaments and supplies of all kinds involved countless logistical and practical problems.

It was for the ICRC delegation in Leopoldville, together with the Congolese authorities and the World Health Organization, to set up the general plans for this action. The various teams had to be distributed according to the most urgent needs, keeping in mind all the dangers which they might run; their transport and supplies of instruments and medicaments had to be ensured, their relations with the local authorities and installation on the spot had to be anticipated; these were a few of the International Committee's main tasks.

The League, on the other hand, was responsible for the administrative aspect, the material and moral welfare of the teams and their maintenance, and for relations with the National Societies.

Thus the urgency of the situation, the communication difficulties within the country and the need to be able to deal with all eventualities led the two international institutions of the Red Cross to build up a medical organization in the Congo from scratch.

The ICRC delegates and the liaison personnel of the League were thus called upon to negotiate on the spot with the local authorities and to carry with them medicaments, instruments, foodstuffs and other essential material of all kinds. They succeeded, in particular, in sending a technician to the hospitals in order to repair X-ray apparatus, in raising the three-month blockade of the Eastern Province by the despatch of five tons of medicaments and in relieving remote communities and hospitals short of all supplies. Three National Societies which provided equipment and personnel enabled a blood transfusion centre to be set up. A large part of these medical relief supplies could be acquired thanks to a considerable contribution from the British Red Cross.

Delegates, liaison officers, teams, Congolese auxiliary personnel (reconstituted when the abandoned hospitals were taken over by the Red Cross teams) all contributed in a remarkable way towards an operation in which it is impossible to enumerate the acts of self-sacrifice and the examples of initiative and courage. While one team succeeded for instance in imposing a truce in the tribal fighting in order to collect the wounded, another acted as stretcher-bearers and negotiators during a conflict between Congolese troops and members of the UN Force.
The vaccinations and operations can be counted by thousands; births, treatment for leprosy, tuberculosis, aid to the starving, Caesarian operations by the light of oil-lamps, the cleaning of unhealthy premises, the fight against superstitious practices, the search for sick persons in the jungle: the Red Cross personnel did not balk at any task.

Moreover, as regards the financing of the medical action in the Congo, the Red Cross world provided solely for the personnel, direct contributions equivalent to $500,000. To this should be added consignments of medicaments, equipment and foodstuffs which all played their part in saving thousands of human lives.

In spite of the enormous difficulties which had to be overcome at each stage, the Red Cross medical action achieved the desired result: to set the hospitals and medical services functioning once more and to ensure their activity until the Congolese, with the aid of the World Health Organization, are able to take over.

The termination of the medical action has, however, not meant the end of the activities of the International Red Cross in the Congo. These are continuing in many other humanitarian fields, according to the principles of the almost 100-year-old Geneva institution.

Y. G.
SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF DELEGATES
OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS

PRAGUE, October 3 and 5

The Council of Delegates around which are grouped all the constituent elements of the International Red Cross, namely the International Committee, the League and the National Societies, met on October 3 and 5. The numerous delegates of 62 National Societies filled the large Conference hall. This was the first time that the Council of Delegates met in between the two international Conferences of the Red Cross and that it dealt with fundamental questions. For this reason it had a very special significance.

Opened by Mr. François-Poncet, President of the Permanent Commission, the Council of Delegates was presided over by Mr. Leopold Boissier, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva.

After a very animated and at times heated discussion the Council adopted a Declaration of fundamental Red Cross Principles. The debates were noticeable for their conciliatory spirit, their mutual understanding and for their genuine loftiness of thought, with the result that the
main text was finally adopted by a unanimous vote. On one of the points, relating to the problem of peace, the delegates of the American Red Cross and the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR reached agreement and proposed a joint amendment which enabled all voting to be united.

Thus for the first time official expression was given to and a definition made of the notions of humanity, impartiality, independence, neutrality and universality which form the Red Cross doctrine and are the very basis of its day-to-day action throughout the world. It will still rest with the XXth International Conference, which will meet in Geneva in 1963, to give its final sanction to the declaration.

The other items on the agenda also aroused keen interest and were noteworthy for the observations made by delegations from all parts of the world. The Council asked the ICRC in particular to draw up, for the 1963 Conference, a draft rule on the use of the Red Cross sign for which the need seemed to it to be evident. On the other hand, it encouraged the National Red Cross Societies to attract the interest of their Governments in the new emblem, the red staff of Aesculapius, which it was proposed to establish for the protection of civilian medical personnel. Finally, it confirmed the important contribution which the National Societies could make to civil defence in their own countries and requested the ICRC to continue its studies with a view to benefiting civil defence personnel by according it special guarantees in its activity.

All these resolutions, for the most part adopted unanimously, which voice these results, will enable the international organizations of the Red Cross, and the ICRC in particular, actively to continue their efforts to facilitate and considerably enlarge the action of the great Red Cross movement in the service of humanity.

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INFORMATION MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

On the occasion of the 26th Session of the Board of Governors of the League of Red Cross Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross held on October 5 in Prague, an information meeting for the benefit of representatives of National Red Cross Societies. After Mr. Siordet, a member of the Committee had recalled the principles which govern the action of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the circumstances
in which it is called upon to intervene, Mr. R. Gallopin, Executive Director,
gave an outline of the principal tasks which are at present being undertaken
by the Committee. He drew particular attention to the rôle played by the
Geneva institution in the conflicts in Algeria, the Congo, Laos and recently
in Bizerta. It is known that this last action was concluded by the general
exchange of prisoners of war and of Tunisian and French internees under the
auspices of the Committee. In conclusion, Mr. Pictet, Director
for General Affairs, emphasized the meaning and the value of the Geneva
Conventions and the necessity of ensuring their ever wider diffusion for their
better application.

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ICRC MISSION IN GREECE

A new mission of the International Committee of the Red Cross
composed of one delegate, Mr. Germain Colladon, and of a delegate-doctor
René Bergoz, has been in Greece since August, where it is carrying out a
tour of internment and detention camps. In particular, the delegates have
visited the political exiles of Aghios Efstratios, to whom they handed over
various relief supplies. They have also visited certain penal establishments
and distributed some relief supplies to convicts in those places.

This relief included provisions, medicaments and clothing
supplied from gifts received by the ICRC as well as from its own resources.

This tour, which is still in progress is a continuation of the
ICRC missions which have visited Greece at regular intervals since 1947.

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IN SEARCH OF MISSING PERSONS IN LAOS

The delegate of the ICRC in Viet Nam, Mr. André Durand, has
just received news concerning the American nationals missing in Laos, on
which question he had taken certain steps during his visit to Xieng Khouang. The
capture of 7 of the 16 people for whom searches were being made, including
4 military, has been confirmed through the intermediary of the international
armistice Commission. The death of one of the missing persons has been
announced, while seven military are presumed dead. There is still no news
of one civilian. This information was immediately transmitted to the American
Red Cross.
A new ICRC delegate, Dr. Jürg Baer, arrived in Viet Nam on the 13th October to assist Mr. Durand.

VISIT TO POLITICAL DETAINNEES IN THE PHILIPPINES

The delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr. John W. Mittner, accompanied by Dr. T. Calasanz, Manager of the Philippine Red Cross, has visited political prisoners detained in Fort McKinley at Manila. This was the third visit made by the delegate to these detainees to whom he distributed relief.

THE RED CROSS AND THE REPATRIATION OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN THAILAND

An important repatriation operation has been in progress since the beginning of 1960 under the auspices of the Thai Red Cross and the Red Cross of the People's Republic of Viet Nam. This concerns Vietnamese who fled to Thailand during the first phase of the war in Indochina.

As Thailand and the People's Republic of Viet Nam do not maintain diplomatic relations, the International Committee of the Red Cross acted as intermediary between the Red Cross Societies of the two countries. In 1959, representatives of the two Societies held meetings in Rangoon in the presence of an ICRC delegate, which resulted in an agreement on the methods of repatriation.

The first departure of refugees took place on the 5th of January 1960. By the end of September 1961 23,834 Vietnamese had been repatriated from Thailand in 39 convoys. ICRC delegates were present at several departures.
SUCCESS OF THE ARABIC-LANGUAGE COMPETITION
ORGANIZED BY THE ICRC AND THE LEAGUE

"If owe my life to the Red Cross", states the winner

The large-scale competition which the ICRC, with the help of the League, organized for listeners in Arab countries met with great success. The jury has just ended its work and has decided to offer prizes to 130 participants living in most of the Arab countries from Iraq to Morocco, including Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the Sheikdoms of the Persian Gulf area, the Sudan, Libya and Tunisia.

The competition was carried out by the Arabic-language section of the ICRC Broadcasting Office and formed the subject of regular weekly broadcasts from October 1960 to March 1961. It received support and active co-operation from the National Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies, as well as from the official authorities and the press of the Arab countries.

The participants were given a choice of seven different subjects dealing with the Red Cross idea, principles and activities. The jury was composed of independent Arab personalities resident in Geneva and working in the field of teaching and in the international organizations.

The first prize consists in a fortnight's visit to Geneva by Swissair. Other prizes included two Philips radio sets, eight Ernest Borel watches, two Thorens razors, a number of Caran d'Ache ball-point pens and various books and publications.

After the best works had been translated into French, so that non-Arab Red Cross personalities could judge them, Mr. Numan Abdel Dayim, 28 years of age, teacher in Jerusalem, Jordan, was chosen as the winner and will therefore be received in Geneva at the headquarters of the international institutions of the Red Cross. He wrote on the subject "The Red Cross as a factor for rapprochement between nations".

Mr. Abdel Dayim is himself a victim of the war. After being wounded during the Palestinian conflict in 1948, he had a leg amputated. He was aided by the International Committee of the Red Cross, which provided him with an artificial limb and thus enabled him to resume a normal life. In a letter to the ICRC, Mr. Abdel Dayim wrote: "I owe my life to the Red Cross".

The second prize-winner is Mr. Abdel Jalil Hassan Nour, State official in the Sudan, and the third is Mr. Mustafa Obeid Farahat, a Palestinian refugee in Gaza. The other prize-winners live in various other Arab countries, in particular in Egypt and Syria.

* * * *
At a plenary meeting held on October 12, 1961, the ICRC presented Professor Carl J. Burckhardt, on the occasion of his 70th birthday, with its Gold Medal in gratitude for the great services he has rendered the institution. Professor Burckhardt has been a member of the ICRC since 1933, and was its President from 1945 to 1947. It was he, in particular, who organized the extensive material relief work carried out by the ICRC during the Second World War on behalf of prisoners of war and the civilian population.

* * * *

A DOCUMENTARY ARTICLE

The Red Cross speaks only through its actions

Could the Red Cross have done something more effective to mitigate the horrors of the concentration camps? This question was raised during the Eichmann case and when recalling the atrocious crimes which were committed during that grim period, criticism has sometimes appeared in the press of the attitude of the International Committee of the Red Cross, which, it has been said, could have acted more energetically, especially by making public protests.

There is no question for the ICRC of exculpating itself or justifying its behaviour in any way. Its activity during the Second World War was made the object of various publications which furnished ample material to enable it to reply to criticism. But this raises a question of principle which will always be one of the greatest importance. Should the Red Cross protest publicity on hearing of crimes which are particularly inhuman or revolting? Or should its rôle be rather to keep silent, in order to maintain intact its chances of practical intervention and of giving direct assistance to the victims of events?

The dilemma obviously rarely presents itself in such a clear-cut manner, but it does however correspond with situations with which the Red Cross has often been confronted on a national or an international level and which it will no doubt often have to face in the future. It is therefore worth studying the question with a certain amount of care.
In all conflicts the opposing forces are tempted to commit excesses and it frequently happens that in the exasperation of the struggle, they yield, at least to a certain extent, to the terrible temptation of overstepping the limits imposed by the rules of war and by humanitarian Conventions, such as those of Geneva. One thing is certain in most of the conflicts which have broken out since the Second World War, the opposing sides, at one time or another, have mutually accused each other of violating humanitarian laws.

On several occasions such accusations have been brought to the notice of the International Committee of the Red Cross. On each occasion it was asked to protest to the opposing authority which was considered to be responsible for alleged violations of the principles of humanity. It was even often asked to raise its voice publicly against incriminating acts.

The ICRC was also frequently asked to take part in inquiries on atrocities or on violations of the rights of man. In accordance with the line of conduct which it has imposed upon itself for a long time, it has never been able to accept to undertake such a task. To those who asked it to do so, it invariably gave the same negative reply and added, for example, the following to such a refusal: "Exceptionally, however, it could accept to constitute a commission of enquiry from outside the International Committee provided the two parties concerned agreed to make such a request and on condition that such intervention was not liable to compromise its humanitarian work, nor to risk stirring up hatred between peoples".

One can in fact quote no case in which the two parties concerned would have agreed to accept impartial investigations being made in such explosive matters ...

Whether it is a question of making a protest or an enquiry, the risk to the Red Cross always remains the same, which is to do harm to its strict neutrality on which it bases all its action. To this the objection is sometimes made that, in the face of atrocities and crimes which are too monstrous even to contemplate, no form of neutrality can hold good. Such an objection, however, which is perfectly justifiable from a moral point of view, can no longer apply when one thinks of the practical needs which the mission of assisting the victims demands.

In other words, whilst defenceless beings are at the mercy of an iniquitous power, the Red Cross is unable to come to their aid without the consent of that same power. It must, in order to fulfil its mission, therefore appear to be neutral even in the eyes of tyrants who are guilty of revolting crimes.

Such reasoning may appear to be academical. It has corresponded nevertheless with terrible reality. The history of the Second World War furnished a particularly dramatic example of this; no relief action of any sort by the Red Cross in Germany or the occupied territories could have been undertaken without the approval of the authorities of the IIIrd Reich. Conforming to the letter, if not to the spirit, of the Geneva Conventions then
The Nazi government permitted the ICRC and its delegates to act on behalf of the several millions of military prisoners held in the Stalags and Oflags. It refused, however, to allow any intervention on the part of the Red Cross in the concentration camps in which the detained civilians were not protected by any Convention.

In the face of such an obstinate refusal which covered up the horrifying reality, about which one was then ill-informed, the ICRC certainly could have made itself heard; it could have protested publicly and called on the conscience of the world. By doing so it would, however, have deprived itself of any possibility of acting in Hitler's Empire; it would have deliberately given up what chances there still remained to it to help, even in a restricted manner, the victims of the concentration camp regime. But above all, it would have made it impossible for it to continue its activity on behalf of millions of military captives. For the Nazi leaders viewed this activity with suspicion which they would have ruthlessly suppressed on the slightest pretext.

In the interest of the victims, it was therefore essential that no loud protests should be made. This did not, however, prevent the ICRC from making protests, but without any publicity, against excesses of which it had knowledge.

Similar, although less dramatic, situations have taken place since then, for the armistice in 1945 did not mark the end of the rule of violence. Against certain particularly disgraceful excesses, the ICRC could have protested loudly and would have thus won the approval of vast sections of world public opinion. It did not do so, since it considers that its mission is not one of redressing wrongs nor of being the spokesman of humanity's conscience, but more simply that of acting as an agent of solidarity for all men who are suffering.

Such an attitude is often wrongly understood in the world today. The most varied circles tend to demand the Red Cross to take up a position. The ICRC is sometimes asked to set itself up as an investigator, even to act as judge and some would like to see it "committed".

In point of fact the Red Cross is always "committed", but not in the same way as the many groups, organizations and movements which make themselves known more by words than by acts. The activity of the Red Cross is often in itself more eloquent than any statement can be. The aid which it brings to the victims of violence is, in some measure, a protest against violence. All that it has done, or has tried to do, to relieve suffering brought about by war is without doubt the taking up of a perfectly definite position in favour of peace. At all events its mission lies more in acts of relief than in speeches or in pronouncing judgment.

R. D. P.
CONGO

THE SEARCH FOR MISSING PERSONS IN THE ORIENTALE AND KIVU PROVINCES

A member of the delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross in the Congo, Mr. Georges Olivet, has just carried out a mission lasting more than a month in the Orientale and Kivu Provinces with the object of continuing searches for persons missing as a result of the events which took place last year. This consisted of clearing up more than a hundred cases for which enquiries had been made and to which the ICRC delegation in Leopoldville had not yet been able to reply.

The steps taken by Mr. Olivet proved themselves to be successful, especially in the Orientale province where, out of 82 enquiries, 57 led to positive results. In the Kivu province, 8 out of 23 cases have been settled, but the long distances and the scattered population made searches more difficult. These, however, are still continuing thanks notably to the co-operation of the administrators of that territory to whom Mr. Olivet has sent telegraphic enquiries.

The delegate had also to verify whether Katanga civilians and military personnel detained in the Orientale and Kivu provinces had been released in accordance with the orders of the Central Government in Leopoldville. Mr. Olivet has established that these persons had in fact been released or were on the point of being so.
VISIT TO PERSONS DETAINED AT LEOPOLDVILLE

Mr. Jean de Preux, delegate of the ICRC, visited 9 prisoners held by the United Nations in Martini camp at Leopoldville. These were European officers and NCO's in the Katanga service captured in September and who are shortly to be repatriated. The delegate arranged for them to be medically examined by a Swiss doctor.

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THE ICRC AND THE RELEASE OF PRISONERS IN KATANGA

The International Committee of the Red Cross has recorded with satisfaction the news of the recent release of military prisoners by the United Nations and the Katanga authorities. Two of its delegates were present at these releases at Elisabethville and in North Katanga. At that particular moment one of them was carrying out a further round of visits to military prisoners of the Katanga forces held at Albertville, Manono, Nyunzu and Kolwezi. The delegates of the ICRC had previously twice visited prisoners of the two sides detained at Jadotville and Elisabethville. (This text was the subject of a Press Release on October 27).

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UNO REPLIES

Mr. Sture Linnér, Head of the United Nations mission in the Congo, has forwarded a detailed reply to the letter which had been sent to him by Mr. Leopold Boissier, President of the ICRC, on the subject of the application, by the UNO forces, of the Geneva Conventions (See our Information Notes No. 2).

In this, the assurance was repeated that the United Nations in the Congo intend fully to respect the principles of these Conventions, and that their forces had received previous instructions to that effect concerning the provisions which were applicable. Mr. Linnér emphasized that the allegations which had been made in the press concerning violations of the principles of the Conventions by UNO troops were without foundation.

The President of the ICRC has taken note of these assurances.

*   *   *
TERMINATION OF THE MISSION AT BIZERTA

The International Committee of the Red Cross has terminated its activity connected with the conflict at Bizerta, after having obtained several positive results. Its delegate, Mr. Michel Martin, has now returned to Geneva from Tunis.

During the first phase of the conflict, this activity consisted in intervening with the military authorities of the two sides for the purpose of concluding a cease-fire ensuring the evacuation of the wounded and killed. Later, the delegate made a number of varied representations on behalf of the prisoners and those who had been interned. He regularly visited the 780 Tunisian civilians and military held by the French forces, as well as the 220 French, of which 30 were military, interned at Sousse by the Tunisians. These visits were also made the occasion for making representations with a view to ameliorating conditions of detention. In co-operation with the Tunisian Red Crescent, the delegate initiated discussions which resulted in the exchange of prisoners which took place in September.

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ALGERIAN THANKS

The President of the International Committee of the Red Cross has received from Mr. Manfoud Aoufi, Vice-President of the General Union of Algerian Moslem Students, a letter informing him of the release, by the French authorities, of Mr. Ahmed Taleb, former President of the Union. Mr. Aoufi expressed his keen thanks to the President of the ICRC for this release "which is without any doubt the outcome of your action in favour of the rights of the human person".

Furthermore, the ICRC was visited by Dr. Mustafa Laliam, who had formerly been detained in Algeria, and on whose behalf it had intervened on several occasions.

Dr. Laliam, who had recently been released by the French authorities as an act of clemency, expressed his thanks in the ICRC Gold Book at its headquarters in the following terms: "A doctor of the ALN wishes to inscribe here his gratitude to the men of goodwill of the ICRC".

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THE TRANSMISSION OF MESSAGES TO THE MIDDLE EAST

The tense situation in the Middle East continues to impose various tasks on the Central Tracing Agency. This applies chiefly to the transmission of family messages, an activity which the ICRC undertakes when circumstances do not allow of a direct exchange of news between private individuals.

In this way, ever since the Partition of Palestine, the Central Tracing Agency transmits numerous messages sent by Arab families living in Israel, to their relations in one or other of the Arab countries. In this connection, we would point out that in the past few months the volume of this exchange of messages between the countries of the Arab world and Israel (and vice-versa) has shown a renewed increase. Thus, during 1960, 625 messages were transmitted and 369 in the first half of 1961.

According to established arrangements, these messages should be brief and of a strictly family character. Anyone wishing to send news to his family, fills in a form placed at his disposal and which consists of the name and address of the sender and a space for the text of the message and for the reply. The model of these forms, which was drawn up by the ICRC at the beginning of the Second World War, has been adopted by the National Societies.

In principle, the Central Agency transmits messages in the original as these are received, which represents a considerable saving in time. On the other hand, it is obliged in certain cases, to transcribe on ICRC forms, messages received which bear the heading of an institution which is not recognized. In fact, the National Societies of the countries of destination would not accept to retransmit such forms to the addressees.

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AN IMPORTANT ACTIVITY OF THE CENTRAL TRACING AGENCY

The reuniting of families

The ICRC has continued without a break the action which it has undertaken for several years, whose purpose it is to reunite or to contribute towards reuniting members of families dispersed by the second world conflict or as a result of the events which subsequently followed in Europe.

It is worth recalling in this connection that in 1960 more than 15,000 persons, adults and children, were able to rejoin close relatives who had left their countries of residence. This figure brings to more than 388,000 the number of persons, for the most part of German stock ("Volksdeutsche") who have thus been returned to their families.
The study of requests which the ICRC receives from the families concerned, is dealt with by the "Reuniting of families" section of the Central Tracing Agency.

This section makes a very careful examination of all such requests. It collects from those making the enquiries the necessary information for completing the file and makes certain that the persons who are asked to rejoin their relatives belong to categories which come within the scope of this action, namely:

- **Transfer** of minors to their parents (the age limit being generally fixed at 18 years);
- **Reuniting** of married couples to the place at which one of the two resides who provides for the maintenance of the family;
- **Transfer** of aged or ill persons to members of their families who can take care of them.

As regards each of these categories, it is in addition essential that the family established abroad has obtained an entry visa for the person concerned.

After having collected the necessary details, the "Reuniting of families" section forwards the file which has just been compiled to the National Red Cross Society of the country in which the person resides, whose transfer is sought, requesting that Society to support representations made personally by the person concerned to his authorities with the object of facilitating the granting of an exit visa.

If it is a question of a disabled person or a child, the National Society of the country of residence makes arrangements for the journey, in co-operation with the Red Cross Societies of the countries of transit and of destination.

Most of the cases which are at present being dealt with concern "Volksdeutsche" established in Central and Eastern Europe. The ICRC, however, finds that it has also to facilitate the repatriation of nationals of Eastern countries who have emigrated to Western Europe or overseas, wishing to return to their country of origin.

It should be emphasized that the efforts accomplished by the International Committee to give families which have been dispersed the joy of recreating their family circle, is based on the ever more active and effective support of National Societies wishing to co-operate in this profoundly humanitarian action.
MISS LUCIE ODIER, HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE ICRC

Miss Lucie Odier, a member of the International Committee of the Red Cross since 1930, has asked to be relieved of her duties for reasons of age, a decision which the International Committee has regrettfully recorded. Wishing to demonstrate its deep gratitude for the eminent services which she has rendered to the Red Cross cause throughout her whole career, especially in the fields of relief and nursing personnel, the ICRC has bestowed the title of Honorary Vice-President on her.

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DOCUMENTARY ARTICLE

THE RED CROSS EMBLEM AND THE DISTINCTIVE SIGN FOR DOCTORS

The Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross, which met at Prague on October 3 and 5, 1961, was called upon to examine the complex problems arising from the use of the Red Cross emblem by the National Societies.

According to the Geneva Convention of 1864, which officially adopted it, the emblem of the red cross on a white ground is above all "the emblem and distinctive sign of the Medical Service of armed forces". It is also the emblem which is displayed by the Red Cross institution.

This emblem (and this also applies to the sign of the red crescent and of the red lion and sun) "is intended to signify one thing only: . . . respect for the individual who suffers and is defenceless, who must be aided, whether friend or enemy, without distinction of nationality, race, religion, condition or opinion".

The Geneva Convention for the amelioration of the condition of the wounded and sick in armed forces in the field makes a distinction between the two different uses of the red cross emblem: "the protective sign", the visible displayment of protection accorded to persons and certain objects under the Convention, and "the purely indicatory sign" to designate persons or objects connected with the Red Cross, but without implying protection under the Convention.

This important distinction, in spite of the provisions of the Convention accompanying it, has not prevented certain abuses and, in the absence of a detailed and precise ruling, the carrying out of the most varied practices.
Thus, certain Societies do not authorize their members to wear the emblem, whilst others allow them to display it as they wish. There are some which even offer it for sale . . .

The South African Red Cross referred the matter to the Council of Delegates which took a decision, whose result will in future be to establish uniform rules, allowing each National Society and its members to make use of the emblem of the red cross, the red crescent and the red lion and sun, in conformity with international regulations and which would meet the institution's requirements.

The National Societies have therefore been invited to inform the ICRC of their experiences and to give it their advice on this question. The Council of Delegates has requested the International Committee to draw up, in co-operation with the League, a detailed draft regulation on the employment of the emblem for the XXth International Conference which will take place in Geneva in 1963.

As well as settling the matter of the employment of the red cross emblem, in order that it may preserve its value and character, the Council of Delegates has also been called upon to examine a question which it has been studying for several years with the large medical organizations, namely, the methods of increasing and strengthening the protection to which civilian medical personnel are entitled in times of conflict, protection which is still only partially assured by the Geneva Conventions.

Two methods have been considered. The first consists in setting forth rules acceptable to the public authorities which they would undertake to respect and to have respected. These rules affirm in particular the right of civilian medical personnel to respect and protection in the performance of their duties. The second method was to establish an emblem for the medical professions; the staff of Aesculapius, red on a white ground, a universal and an extremely ancient symbol to designate civilian medical personnel which are not entitled to display the red cross emblem.

In agreement with the medical organizations associated generally with this work, the ICRC has already prepared a Report which was submitted to the Council of Delegates in Prague. The National Societies will forward between now and the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross the methods adopted in their own countries, whilst the ICRC for its part will continue to study this important matter on which it will submit a report in 1963.

Codification will thus be made of regulations for which the need has been felt for a long time and which will contribute towards consolidating the work of the Red Cross.

Y. G.

* * *
RED CROSS PRINCIPLES

An ideal acceptable to all humanity

Since the decisive days in the summer of 1859 during which Henry Dunant cared for the wounded of Solferino and conceived the idea of what was to become the Red Cross, it is most significant to observe that the movement which he had so generously initiated has reached nearly every part of the world, nearly all races and social groups. The aid societies, whose creation he had advocated to assist the wounded, today exist in 87 countries under the sign of the Red Cross, the Red Crescent and the Red Lion and Sun Societies comprising about 127 million people who are animated by the same spirit of goodwill and prepared to serve a same ideal.

This remarkable development clearly demonstrates that the Red Cross idea does not limit itself to one form of civilization alone, but fulfils the innate aspirations of all mankind. This vast organization which has crossed all frontiers and has subsisted under all political and social regimes, thus accords with principles which are acceptable to all communities irrespective of colour, religion, beliefs or opinions.

It is curious to note that these principles, which were capable of giving unanimity to the human race, have not, over a period of very many years, even been defined. They remained more or less implied which led to a lack of precision and to confusion, each person being left free to interpret in his own way the ideal inherited from Henry Dunant and from his unforgettable experiences at Solferino.

With the passing years and the Red Cross mission increasing its stature everywhere throughout the world, it was seen to be increasingly necessary to define its doctrine. From the outset it appeared that the International Committee of the Red Cross was the most qualified and the best placed organ to accomplish this task.

Thus, the International Conference of the Red Cross of 1921 declared that the Geneva Committee was "the guardian and the propagator of the fundamental moral and legal principles of the institution". Since 1928 the Statutes of the International Red Cross described this Committee as "the guardian of the principles of the Red Cross".

It was left to the late Mr. Max Huber, who was for many years President of the ICRC before becoming its Honorary President, to raise the question in his numerous writings of the doctrinal bases of the Red Cross. His work in this sphere was considerable. But even then there was not as yet any systematic setting forth of the principles from which the institution has drawn its inspiration since Henry Dunant.

These principles, which had existed since the beginning, whilst remaining merely implicit for so long, finally formed the subject of a methodical
study published in 1955 by Mr. Jean S. Pictet, Director for General Affairs of the ICRC. As soon as it appeared, the publication was welcomed with marks of approval from the most varied regions of the world. It enabled many of those co-operating with the Red Cross to become more aware of the moral meaning of their task but it also made the directors of the National Societies understand the need for initiating measures leading to a final drafting of the Principles and to their official adoption.

In fact these measures started in 1958. A study group was constituted, generally known as the "Pictet Committee" which undertook the preliminary work, followed by the permanent Commission of the International Red Cross, presided over by Mr. André François-Poncet, President of the French Red Cross, which submitted to all the National Societies a first draft wording of the Principles. This text, with certain alterations, was recently submitted to the Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross which met at the beginning of October in Prague.

This declaration of the Principles, the text of which will be found below, was only slightly altered before being approved unanimously by the assembled delegates. It is for the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross, which will take place in Geneva in 1963 on the occasion of the Red Cross Centenary, to finally adopt the text.

In the meanwhile, it is to be hoped that the Principles will be ever more widely known throughout the Red Cross world. It may well be that they may be found to be too abstract. They do, however, in the light of the reality of the multiple activities of the Red Cross, give a guarantee of a noble ideal. They enable the taste for action to be harmoniously allied with the impulses and demands of both heart and mind.

R. D. P.

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DECLARATION OF RED CROSS PRINCIPLES

(Text adopted by the Council of Delegates meeting at Prague)

HUMANITY
The Red Cross, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours - in its international and national capacity - to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendships, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

IMPARTIALITY
It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours only to relieve suffering, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

NEUTRALITY
In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Red Cross may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

INDEPENDENCE
The Red Cross is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with Red Cross principles.

VOLUNTARY SERVICE
The Red Cross is a voluntary relief organisation not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

UNITY
There can be only one Red Cross Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

UNIVERSALITY
The Red Cross is a world-wide institution in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other.
No 5

Geneva, 15 November 1961

THE ICRC CONTINUES ITS ACTIVITY IN LAOS

Mr. André Durand, Delegate General of the International Committee of the Red Cross in the Far East, has been, since mid-October, in Xieng Khouang, the seat of Prince Souvanna Phouma's Government in North Laos.

There he is examining with the Government and with Dr. Thao Phao, Vice-President of the Laotian Red Cross and Chief Medical Officer of the Xieng Khouang hospital various humanitarian questions, especially the condition of the population in the Northern provinces which has suffered from the recent events, and the fate of missing persons and prisoners in the hands of the authorities of that region.

On the other hand, Dr. Jürg Baer, delegate of the ICRC, is continuing, in co-operation with the Laotian Red Cross and the Vientiane authorities, distribution of relief to the victims of the events. Most of these beneficiaries are persons who had fled from the unsettled areas to take refuge in the large centres in the Mekong valley.
MISSION IN THE BALKANS

During a recent visit to Greece and Yugoslavia, Mr. G. H. Beckh, delegate of the ICRC, was able to study various problems connected with the reuniting of families with the Heads of the National Red Cross Societies and the authorities of those two countries.

Furthermore, during his mission in Yugoslavia, Mr. Beckh took the opportunity of visiting two penal establishments where he spoke freely and without witnesses with 20 political detainees of his own choosing.

We would point out in this connection that the Yugoslav authorities, wishing to contribute towards the development of international humanitarian law, granted, as did various other countries, authorization to visit persons detained for political reasons.

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END OF A MISSION IN GREECE

Mr. Germain Colladon, delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross, accompanied by Dr. René Bergoz, doctor-delegate, has recently returned to Geneva on the termination of a mission in Greece. For two months the delegates visited several places of detention and internment where they distributed various forms of relief. Further details of this mission will be given in the next distribution of our Information Notes.

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FINANCIAL AID TO VICTIMS OF PSEUDO-MEDICAL EXPERIMENTS

The authorities of the German Federal Republic have now placed at the disposal of the International Committee of the Red Cross amounts for compensation to Polish and Hungarian victims of pseudo-medical experiments, carried out in concentration camps under the National-Socialist regime. As
we mentioned in our Information Notes No. 1, the ICRC had agreed to act as intermediary in the handing over of financial aid offered by the Bonn Government to this category of victims. At the end of August, a neutral Expert Commission met at its headquarters in order to come to a decision regarding requests for financial aid which had been submitted by 136 persons in view of the German offer.

The Commission's first task was to establish the substantiation of these requests. In particular it had to decide whether the treatment of which the victims were complaining corresponded in fact with the definition of convictable pseudo-medical experiments mentioned in the verdict pronounced on August 20, 1947 by the 1st American Military Tribunal at Nuremberg in the so-called "trial of the doctors" (case of Karl Brandt and associates). It then had to assess the correlation between the experiment and the present state of health of the victim. The Commission thus dismissed one case, since it was unable to be convinced that the claimant had in fact been subjected to a pseudo-medical experiment.

In so far as a sum of money, whatever its amount, can be considered adequate compensation for such suffering, the Commission had also to decide the amount of allocation in relation with the seriousness of the observed after-effects.

In agreement with the proposals made by the doctor-delegates of the ICRC in Poland and in Hungary, as well as by the doctor-delegates of the two National Red Cross Societies, the Commission was of the opinion that, independently of its conclusions, the experiment to which the victim had been subjected by itself justified a first basic allocation. This amount, which was similar for all beneficiaries, was to be allocated even if the victims no longer showed, nearly 20 years later, visible traces of attacks on their health or on their physical integrity. On the other hand, in cases in which after-effects, had been discovered by the doctor-rapporteurs, the neutral Commission had determined a supplementary allocation of which the amount varied according to the seriousness of the victim's state of health. It also acted in the same way where moral damage resulting from the experiment had seemed especially heavy, and where, for example, the victim's life had been permanently affected.

As a general rule, the Commission only took into consideration the victim's state of health at the time of the most recent medical examinations. Only as an exception did it consider as an aggravating factor the future course of the illness following on the pseudo-medical experiment. On the other hand, it rejected acts which could not be satisfactorily connected with the experiment, even when brutality or maltreatment was inflicted in a concentration camp.

All these decisions were taken unanimously. The observers of the two National Societies concerned who had taken part in the deliberations of the neutral Commission expressed their satisfaction and gratitude for the way in which it had carried out its mission.
As soon as the first session had completed its work, the ICRC informed the Government of the German Federal Republic of the decisions which had been taken by the neutral Commission on behalf of the 135 victims whose claims had been accepted.

A further session of the neutral Commission will be arranged when the files of a second group of Polish and Hungarian victims will have been completed. The neutral Commission will also be advised later of requests for financial aid from victims residing in Czechoslovakia.

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THE ACTIVITY OF THE CENTRAL TRACING AGENCY

ON BEHALF OF HUNGARIAN REFUGEES

In view of the existing uncertain situation in the world, the ICRC is unceasingly being faced with fresh tasks. But our institution must also pursue activities following on events which are not, properly speaking, of a topical character. Thus the Section for Hungarian refugees of the Central Tracing Agency is still dealing, five years after the events in Hungary, with 250 to 300 cases each month and has carried out more than 630 inquiries in the first three quarters of 1961. Every day new inquiries are received swelling its card-index, which contains about 300,000 files representing on an average 170,000 refugee cases.

On the one hand it is a question of rediscovering the trace of Hungarian nationals who have been separated, since 1956, from their families remaining in that country. The Central Agency also receives inquiries from refugees established in Europe or overseas, who wish to be joined there by their children or parents who have remained in Hungary.

In these operations of the reuniting of families, the Central Agency can lean on the Hungarian Red Cross, the guardian Hungarian authorities responsible for looking after children who have been left alone in Hungary, as well as on the National Societies of the countries of destination.

The Central Agency also lends its good offices to facilitate representations relative to refugees, whether adults or children, wishing to return to their country of origin.

In the same way, it does everything it can to reunite families whose members find themselves in various countries of asylum. We should in fact remember that during the exodus in 1956 numbers of people had not
succeeded in crossing the frontier at the same time as their own parents. Having subsequently left the country, they were not at once able to trace parents who had preceded them in flight during the exodus. Thus, owing to circumstances, some refugees have found asylum in one or other of the European countries, whilst their parents had emigrated overseas.

It should besides be added that the guardian Hungarian authorities have appealed to the Central Agency in order to ensure that heads of families who have fled abroad pay maintenance allowances for their children left behind in Hungary.

In the countries signatory to the Convention of 1956 "on the recovery of maintenance abroad", anyone avoiding his responsibilities for maintaining his family is liable to prosecution. Elsewhere, this is not the case, and persuasive measures must be employed to induce a father to assume his responsibilities towards his children. In such an action, which involves the intervention of social workers, the Central Tracing Agency can fortunately call upon the International Social Service to co-operate.

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AFTER 16 YEARS OF SEARCH A FATHER REDISCOVERS THE ADDRESS OF HIS CHILDREN

Two young people, a brother and a sister, living in the Soviet Republic of Lithuania, had lost all trace of their parents since the end of the war in 1945. They recently requested the Central Tracing Agency at the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva, to attempt to trace them. The inquiry, which was opened by the Agency, resulted in contact being made with the father, who is at present living in the German Federal Republic. Being divorced, he was not able to supply the address of his former wife, the mother of those making the request, but he expressed his joy at having obtained news of his children, for whom he had been searching in vain since 1945. Having been informed of this by Geneva, the young people also expressed their pleasure at knowing that their father was alive and requested the Agency to forward them his address.

* * * *
THE ACTIVITY OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRACING SERVICE

The International Commission of the ITS (International Tracing Service), which consists of representatives of the Governments of Belgium, France, German Federal Republic, Great Britain, Greece, Israel, Italy, Luxemburg, Netherlands and the United States, held its 25th meeting on October 30, under the presidency of the Italian delegate, Mr. Paolucci. This meeting took place at the Italian National Institute of Cologne, in the presence of the Director of the ITS, Mr. Nicolas Burckhardt and of a representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr. Claude Pilloud, Assistant Director for General Affairs. It should be recalled that the International Tracing Service possesses immense archives and a great number of card-indexes concerning the fate of persons who had been deported, displaced or missing during the Second World War in Germany and in the countries then occupied by the German forces. Since 1955 the ICRC has been responsible for running this important information centre.

The Commission especially studied the ITS report for the period January 1 to June 30, 1961. From this it can be seen that the number of inquiries submitted to the ITS has, contrary to expectations, slightly increased. These chiefly concerned requests for certificates for the purpose of obtaining compensation.

In this connection, the report recalls that "the Government of the German Federal Republic has placed financial resources at the disposal of the United Nations High Commissioner's Office for Refugees for the purpose of granting compensation to refugees which are under its protection and which are not covered by German compensatory legislation for persecution which they have suffered during the war".

Up to the present, the report notes, more than 2,000 requests submitted by refugees in this category have been received by the ITS through the Office of the High Commissioner. Several tens of thousands of requests of this nature can be expected.

On the other hand, the ITS receives an increasing number of requests for the obtaining of disability benefits. In this connection, the report states: "During the war foreign workers in Germany had, as one knows, to be insured against disability. The ITS often possesses information about these insurances, about the treatment given in a hospital or, at least, about the work carried out or the length of stay in a particular commune. These requests are more often than not made by benevolent societies on behalf of persons under treatment in homes or in hospitals, or by social insurance administrations of "Länder" to whom those concerned submit their claims due. The administration which deals with claims for allowances for Italian workers, for example, has itself alone forwarded nearly a thousand requests of this sort to the ITS. These concerned, moreover, cases which this particular administration was unable to settle in the normal way by other methods and which it considered to be "hopeless cases". In spite of this, the ITS has been able to deal positively with more than a third of these cases."
In all the number of inquiries received during the period reviewed by the report exceeds 60,000. During the same half-year, the ITS has sent out 89,000 replies, thus making up for some of the delay between these and the number of inquiries made.

At present, there are 213 members on the staff of the ITS compared with 223 at the end of 1960.

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DOCUMENTARY ARTICLE

THE RED CROSS AND THE PROTECTION OF THE WOUNDED AND SICK IN THE EVENT OF ARMED CONFLICTS

The strength of the Red Cross lies in its universality, in the acceptance of its humanitarian principles by all men and all nations. Whatever his race, degree of civilization and usual conduct towards his fellow-men, everyone, idealist and realist alike, believer and non-believer, can in his own way attain the ideal of the Red Cross.

That is the secret of the effectiveness of the Red Cross - that all its actions derive from two simple notions capable of being understood everywhere and by all: respect for human dignity and prevention of unnecessary suffering.

The intervention of the Red Cross is obviously most needed in the case of an armed conflict, when it must protect the victims of these events or at least alleviate their suffering.

It was therefore by the development of the laws of war that the Red Cross movement began to be acknowledged in the world. The first Geneva Convention of August 22, 1864 marked a historic date in International Public Law; for the first time a multilateral convention, open for ratification by all States, stipulated that members of the armed forces who had been placed "hors de combat" as a result of injury or sickness and had laid down their arms, were to be collected and cared for, by their own army as well as by the opposing army, should they fall into the hands of the enemy; although they ceased to be combatants, they were still men, and should therefore, as far as possible, not be doomed to suffering and death. Respect of this rule, which was to become universal, was guaranteed by the creation of the Red Cross, which since then has never ceased to protect the wounded and sick of armed forces in the field and to extend this protection to include the personnel and equipment needed for their care.
However, there are not only international conflicts in these times. In fact, since the end of the Second World War, in spite of the atmosphere which has come to be known as the "Cold War", international conflicts have proved to be the exception in comparison with the countless internal conflicts, civil wars, disturbances, armed insurrections, etc., which in various forms have caused strife between men who risk being exposed to suffering and inhumane treatment as the result.

This was the reason for the large-scale revision of the Geneva rules undertaken in 1949, which led to the insertion in the four Geneva Conventions of August 12 of the same year, of an article common to all four Conventions, Article 3, which lays down a minimum degree of humane treatment to be accorded to all detained persons in the event of armed conflicts not of an international character. This stipulation completes most satisfactorily the provisions for the usual protection of the wounded and sick.

It is accompanied by two very useful stipulations; firstly, that the Parties to a conflict shall endeavour to bring into force, by means of special agreements, all or part of the other provisions of the Convention, and, secondly, that an impartial humanitarian body, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, may offer its services to the Parties to the conflict.

During the past ten years, this Article has been invoked on numerous occasions throughout the world. In Bengal, Greece, Indochina, Guatemala, Kenya, Algeria, the Lebanon, Cuba and the Congo, the "services" of the International Committee have been accepted by both sides with equal confidence and have helped to relieve suffering and protect human dignity.

However, does this imply that the results, however considerable they may be, can be regarded as sufficient? - Certainly not, as the Red Cross is the first to realize and to seek to complete them.

When the International Conference of the Red Cross was held in New Delhi in October 1957 (this deliberative Assembly grouped representatives of all the National Societies, of the International Committee and of the League of Red Cross Societies, as well as delegates of the Governments party to the Geneva Conventions), a resolution was passed requesting that a further provision be added to the Geneva Conventions in order to widen the scope of Article 3; the purpose of this provision was to obtain that:

(a) the wounded be cared for without discrimination and that doctors be in no way hindered when giving them the care which they are called upon to provide in these circumstances,

(b) the inviolable principle of medical professional secrecy be respected,

(c) there be no restrictions, other than those provides by internal legislation, on the sale and free circulation of medicaments, it being understood that these will be used exclusively for therapeutic purposes.
This recommendation raises the question of instituting international medical law, which is already being followed closely by various medical associations. These had proposed that the right to display freely and in all circumstances the red cross emblem should be accorded to all members of the medical professions. This proposal could not, however, be accepted since it entailed modifying the Geneva Conventions, and that the convening at that moment of a new Diplomatic Conference, which would be entitled to alter the law, was hardly possible or even desirable; furthermore, such an extension of the use of the emblem and the impossibility of its control would have had serious drawbacks. Other solutions to the problem therefore had to be found.

It was then decided, at the suggestion of the World Medical Association, to entrust the study of this question to a working party consisting of representatives of that Association, of the International Committee of Military Medicine and Pharmacy and of the International Committee of the Red Cross, with a member of the World Health Organization acting as an observer. The conclusions reached by this working party have recently been adopted unanimously by the institutions represented and are in the process of being notified to the various national organizations of military and civil medicine. They have also been adopted by other professional bodies, including the International Dental Federation.

These "rules of medical ethics in time of war" as well as the "rules ensuring aid and care for the wounded and sick, especially in cases of armed conflict", contain the constitutive elements of an international medical law fitted to ensure the practice of medicine in accordance with humanitarian principles. Article 6, in particular, of these latter rules, institutes a distinctive emblem for the medical and auxiliary professions (the staff of Aesculapius, red on a white ground) whose adoption by Governments would give effective protection to these professions, in the interest of the wounded and sick.

In view of these studies and international practices which are becoming more and more generalized as a result of the actions of the Red Cross, it is to be hoped that the codification of such legislation will soon be possible, in the same way as that which has been achieved since 1864, through the efforts of the International Committee of the Red Cross, in formulating the law of Geneva.

H.C.
THE ICRC AND THE DETENTION CONDITIONS OF ALGERIANS IN FRANCE

Since the beginning of the hunger strike started by the Algerian detainees in France, the ICRC's neutral humanitarian intervention was sought from various directions.

The French Government, for its part, requested the ICRC to continue its visits to prisons in Paris and the provinces. It should be recalled that, already since the end of 1958, the delegates of the ICRC have proceeded from time to time to the places of detention for Algerians in France. After each visit an official report is forwarded to the detaining authorities in which the ICRC records the observations made by its delegates, as well as various suggestions aimed at improving the conditions of the detainees.

Following on previous missions, a number of concessions were granted to the detainees which, in most of the prisons, benefited from more favoured conditions than those of other prisoners, known as "régime A".

After its most recent visits, the ICRC submitted to the French Government a certain number of suggestions tending to enlarge the scope of "régime A" and to extend its application in a uniform manner to all the penal establishments in France and in Algeria.
Taking these proposals into account, the detaining authorities have drawn up a new statute which is more lenient to prisoners detained for offences of a political nature.

This new provision was communicated to the representatives of the Algerian detainees, who then decided to put an end to their hunger strike.

In Geneva, the ICRC received from certain National Red Cross Societies and in particular from various Arab groups, numerous requests for its intervention on behalf of Algerians on hunger strike.

It was pleased to have been able to reply to them that as a result of the representations made by its representatives in Paris, a satisfactory solution had been found to that problem. (See page 8 text of our press release No 743b).

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THE EFFORTS OF THE ICRC TO HAVE THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS RESPECTED IN THE CONGO

A solemn appeal to President Kasavubu

The International Committee of the Red Cross was all the more dismayed on hearing of the acts of cruelty committed in the Congo, since it had, from the beginning of the events in that country in the summer of 1960, attempted unceasingly to spread the knowledge of the Geneva Conventions and to impose a spirit of humanity. It published a press release on the subject, which can be found on page 8.

On the other hand, the President of the ICRC addressed to Mr. Kasavubu, President of the Republic of the Congo, a telegram expressing his deep concern over the outrages which had recently been reported in various parts of the country, and reminded him that his Government, by acceding to the Geneva Conventions, had undertaken to have their provisions respected. In this telegram, the President of the ICRC made a solemn appeal to the Congolese Head of State, so that all measures shall be taken to prevent a recurrence of such acts, which are contrary to recognized humanitarian law.
The dissemination of the Conventions amongst the Congolese forces.

The ICRC has instructed its delegates at Leopoldville and at Elisabethville to undertake fresh measures to ensure that the precepts of the Geneva Conventions become better known amongst the forces opposing each other in the Congo. In 1960 it had despatched 6,500 illustrated booklets, in various languages, on the Conventions, with the addition of a version in Lingala, which is the language generally spoken in the Congolese army. It requested its delegates to see that the booklet had a greater circulation amongst the troops.

In this connection, it should be noted that the ICRC is considering the publication of a new edition of the booklet in Swahili, a language which is current in Katanga as well as in large areas of Central and East Africa.

Following on the military operations which have recently been carried out on the Katanga frontier and since the outbreak of further hostilities can be expected, the delegates have been instructed to make special representations with the Central Government at Leopoldville, as well as with the Katanga authorities, so that the troops respect the essential provisions of the Conventions. They have also attempted to make inquiries about prisoners who may have been captured during the recent operations in order to bring them the aid of the ICRC.

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THE APPLICATION OF THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS BY THE ARMED FORCES PLACED AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The ICRC has sent to Governments of all the States party to the Geneva Conventions and members of the United Nations Organization a memorandum the text of which is given below. This document, which is dated November 10, 1961, deals with the application of the Geneva Conventions by the military contingents placed at the disposal of UNO, and with the instruction to members of these contingents, of the humanitarian rules which they contain. It reads as follows:

On August 12, 1949, the four Geneva Conventions were concluded for the protection of the victims of the war. These fundamental agreements constitute the most recent and the most complete standards assuring to the human person the essential guarantees for his protection in the case of armed conflict. Having been signed
and ratified by nearly all States, the Geneva Conventions form part of the heritage of all peoples. The International Committee of the Red Cross has been its promoter since 1864, and it considers it to be one of its primary duties to ensure that these are respected and made widely known.

Since 1956, the International Committee has drawn the attention of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the necessity of assuring the application of the Geneva Conventions by the Emergency Forces which have been placed at their disposal. It made further representations when the United Nations Organization intervened in the Congo.

In reply to these communications, the International Committee of the Red Cross received assurances that the United Nations Organization would respect the principles of the international humanitarian Conventions and that instructions to that effect had been given to the troops placed under its command. It was pleased to place these assurances on record.

However, in view of the overwhelming importance of the interests involved, the International Committee judges it to be necessary that the matter should be very seriously considered, not only by the United Nations Organization, but also by each of the States bound by the Geneva Conventions.

In fact, the United Nations Organization is not, as such, party to the Geneva Conventions. Consequently, each State is personally responsible for the application of these Conventions, when supplying a contingent to the United Nations.

It would therefore be highly desirable that such contingents receive, before leaving their own countries, instructions to conform to the provisions of the Geneva Conventions in the event of their finding themselves having to use force. It seems to us no less desirable that the troops receive, in their own countries, appropriate instruction so that they may acquire a sufficient knowledge of these Conventions. This instruction could quite easily be included within the framework of study which the States, by virtue of Article 47/48/127/144 of the Geneva Conventions, have pledged themselves to incorporate in their programmes of military and, if possible, civilian instruction in such a manner that the principles are made known generally to their armed forces and to the civilian population.

Finally, the International Committee wishes to remind States, which might supply contingents to an Emergency Force of the United Nations, that under the terms of Article 1 common to the four Geneva Conventions, the High Contracting Parties are bound not only to respect, but also "to have respected" the provisions of these Conventions. It therefore expresses the hope that they will, each one, in case of necessity, use their influence to ensure that
the provisions of humanitarian law are applied by all contingents engaged, as well as by the United Command.

The International Committee of the Red Cross remains at the entire disposal of Governments which might consider its assistance to be useful, especially by supplying them with the requisite documentary material for assuring instruction in the Geneva Conventions.

One copy of this memorandum has been forwarded to the National Red Cross Society of each country.

For the International Committee of the Red Cross

Léopold BOISSIER
President

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THE ACTION OF THE ICRC ON BEHALF OF POLITICAL DETAINES AND EXILES IN GREECE

Mr. Germain Colladon, delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and Dr. René Bergoz, doctor-delegate, have recently completed, as we noted briefly in Bulletin No. 5 of our Information Notes, a mission in Greece, where they had made a further round of visits to places of detention and internment for detained persons and political exiles. They thus have continued the series of periodic visits which the representatives of the ICRC have made since 1947. The Greek Government had then authorized the International Committee to occupy itself with the condition of persons deprived of their liberty after the events which had taken place in 1945 and 1946.

The delegates were thus able to visit the camp on the island of Aghios Efstratos in which there are approximately 200 political exiles to whom they distributed relief consisting of clothing, food and medicaments. Accompanied by the doctor whom the Greek Red Cross had placed at the disposal of the exiles, Dr. Bergoz ascertained the medical situation in the camp and examined several of the sick.

After Dr. Bergoz' return to Geneva, Mr. Colladon visited seventeen penal establishments in which there were detainees condemned to prison sentences, although the exiles of Aghios Efstratos are under an administrative decree. The delegate of the ICRC also distributed relief supplied by certain National Red Cross
Societies, by non-governmental organizations as well as by the International Committee to detainees under fixed sentences.

The mission lasted two months. It benefited from the full co-operation of the Greek Red Cross and from the local authorities which helped in the transport and the storage of the relief supplies. These reached a value exceeding 120,000 Sw. francs.

On the other hand, Mr. Colladon, complying with the request made by the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, intervened with the Greek authorities on behalf of Greek subjects at present living in North Viet Nam and wishing to be repatriated. This concerned former members of the Foreign Legion who had remained there after the end of the war of Indochina.

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MISSION IN INDIA AND NEPAL

Two representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr. Claude Pilloud, Assistant Director for General Affairs, and Mr. Charles Ammann, Head of the Relief Section, have left Geneva for New Delhi where they will have discussions on various humanitarian problems of common interest with the heads of the Indian Red Cross. They will then go to Katmandu, capital of Nepal, where a delegation of the ICRC is engaged in coming to the aid of certain groups of refugees.

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GENEVA, MEETING PLACE FOR NURSES

For about the last five years, an extremely welcome custom has been growing more and more widespread: visits of entire classes of Swiss and foreign nursing schools to the ICRC and the League of Red Cross Societies.

The school of "Bon Secours", in Geneva, and that of "La Source" in Lausanne, had for a long time been in the habit of visiting the international Red Cross institutions, but we are now happy to welcome student nurses from neighbouring countries. It was the French Red Cross which inaugurated these visits to Geneva. Then about fifty directors of German Red Cross nursing schools in
the Federal Republic took part in a seminar organized jointly with the League.

In 1957, on the occasion of the 11th Congress of the International Council of Nurses in Rome, the ICRC and the League were visited by groups of nurses from Great Britain and even America.

Visits are continuing at the moment, from Italy, Switzerland, France, Yugoslavia, etc.

Nor should it be forgotten that numerous individual visits are made by nurses who, in the framework of refresher courses or during study tours, come to gather information in Geneva and learn how close the tasks of the Red Cross are to their professional activity, frequently merging with it.

The medical personnel section of the ICRC attaches great importance to the contacts which are thus made. They contribute towards an understanding of the Red Cross work on a national and international level and they encourage one of the most useful activities that exists, since it consists in caring for and assisting human beings in suffering.

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THE PROBLEM OF REFUGEES

The European Association for the Study of Refugee Problems (Strasburg) and the Association for the Study of the World Refugee Problem (Vaduz, Liechtenstein), have just held their annual congress at Salonica and then in Athens. The congress has decided to merge these two institutions and has elected Mr. Henri Coursier, of the legal department of the ICRC, as joint president for three years.

The two organizations have set up committees of international experts devoted to scientific work, strictly objective, free from any political leanings, and whose purpose is to contribute towards humane solutions to the distressing problems affecting refugees.

The doctrine of the right to one's native soil formulated by one of these working groups, has been implicitly recognized by the adoption of the Convention on the elimination or the reduction of cases of stateless persons by the United Nations. This is proof that theoretical studies can have a beneficial influence on the development of ideas and consequently on the decisions of Governments.

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IN CONNECTION WITH THE RECENT ASSASSINATIONS IN THE CONGO
Press release No 742b of November 17, 1961

Questioned about its attitude towards the recent acts of cruelty perpetrated in the Congo, the International Committee of the Red Cross wishes to define the limits of its present activity in that country.

The International Committee has constantly reminded the Congolese authorities de jure or de facto of the minimum requirements proceeding from the application of the Geneva Conventions and it has frequently intervened, and often with success, in saving numerous lives. However, in areas given over to disorder, it is not possible for it to accomplish its mission with complete effectiveness. The prevention of outrages against human dignity and life is the sole responsibility of the civil or military authorities, whose task it is to assure public order and to see that national and international laws are observed.

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VISITS OF THE ICRC TO ALGERIAN DETAINNEES
Press release No 743b of November 20, 1961

For the past week, delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross have carried out a new round of visits to Algerians detained in France. In several penal establishments they spoke without witnesses with the spokesmen of the detained persons. Accompanied by a medical dietitian, they also visited Messrs. Ben Bella, Ait Ahmed and Khider, interned in the hospital at Garches.

Anxious to fulfil its role of neutral intermediary between the detainees and the detaining authorities, the ICRC has made every effort to find, on the humanitarian level, a solution to the problems raised by the hunger strike observed by many Algerians. It has thus contributed towards improving the condition of these detainees and obtained important concessions for them, such as an increase in the number of food parcels, an extension of visiting hours and improvements in diet. Following on these decisions the hunger strike has come to an end.

With the agreement of the French authorities, the ICRC intends to continue its activity in the prisons and camps for Algerians in France. It also proposes to visit activist detainees.

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NEW MEMBER OF THE ICRC
Press release No 744b of November 27, 1961

The International Committee of the Red Cross, in Geneva, has appointed Miss Marjorie Duvillard, Director of "Le Bon Secours", Nursing School, as a new member.
THE ICRC'S DIFFICULT TASK IN KATANGA AND THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MR. OLIVET, DELEGATE

Following on the disappearance of Mr. Georges Olivet, its delegate in Katanga, last seen on December 13 near the UNO headquarters in Elisabethville, the International Committee of the Red Cross immediately made the most urgent representations on the highest level to attempt to discover his whereabouts. Mr. Jean de Preux, delegate of the ICRC at Leopoldville, went to Elisabethville in order to look for his colleague. At the present moment, there are still hopes of finding Mr. Olivet alive. Since the beginning of the events in the Congo, in the summer of 1960, he has rendered great service to the humanitarian cause of the Red Cross, thanks to his wide experience of the country, his knowledge of the local languages and to his great devotion.

This dramatic and obscure episode brings out once more the difficulty of the task facing the International Committee of the Red Cross in Katanga, where often in spite of conflicting circumstances, it attempts to intervene on behalf of all the victims of the conflict. The delegates of the ICRC have notably sought to assist prisoners of both sides, to aid the wounded and sick and to arrange for the evacuation of the civilian population, which has remained in the battle zone. Amongst the prisoners whom they have tried to assist were thirteen Swedes and two Norwegians of the United Nations Emergency Force, captives of the Katangans.
Generally speaking, the ICRC's task is to have the humanitarian precepts of the Geneva Conventions respected in this conflict. It must, however, be noted that the humanitarian activity of its delegates encounter considerable obstacles, which it is hoped will finally be overcome.

A further complication increases the ICRC's difficulties arising from the poor liaison between Elisabethville and Geneva. The ICRC can in fact no longer communicate as it would like with its representatives on the spot. To remedy this situation, it has had recourse, amongst other methods, to transmission on the Swiss Short-Wave Service, which has broadcast messages for the ICRC delegation in Katanga.

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**THE ICRC INTERVENES WITH UNO**

In order to support the delegates' action, Mr. Léopold Boissier, President of the ICRC, sent a telegram to Mr. Thant, Secretary-General of the United Nations, insisting on the urgent necessity of evacuating the wounded, the sick and elements of the civilian population who found themselves in the zones of military operations in various parts of Elisabethville and Katanga. He asked him to see to it that the representatives of the United Nations in the Congo help the delegates of the ICRC to accomplish their strictly humanitarian mission.

In his reply to Mr. Boissier, Mr. Thant stated: "I wish to take this opportunity of assuring you that the troops of UNO Command will continue to do everything possible to protect the life and property of the civilian population and that it will co-operate with your representatives in Katanga in every possible way in the accomplishment of their humanitarian mission".

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**A NEW DELEGATE SENT TO THE SPOT**

In order to render its activity more effective and to strengthen its delegation at Elisabethville, the ICRC has instructed another of its representatives, Mr. G.C. Senn, delegate in Rhodesia, to proceed immediately to the spot. At the same time it called on the Rhodesian branch of the British Red Cross to place personnel and equipment at the disposal of the delegates of the ICRC. Other offers of help from outside have reached the ICRC, which it is examining with its delegates on the spot.
THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE APPLICATION OF THE
GENEVA CONVENTIONS

A letter from the UNO Secretary-General to the ICRC

Mr. Thant, UNO Secretary-General, replied to a communication which he had received from Mr. Léopold Boissier, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross. The following are principal extracts from this letter:

"I am in entire agreement with you in considering that the Geneva Conventions of 1949 constitute the most complete standards granting to the human person indispensable guarantees for his protection in time of war or in case of armed conflict whatever form it may take. I also wish to confirm that UNO insists on its armed forces in the field applying the principles of these Conventions as scrupulously as possible.

"In this connection, you ask whether it would be opportune for the United Nations to issue an official and public statement that it undertakes in all circumstances to respect the Geneva Conventions. In so far as the United Nations Emergency Force is concerned, a formal provision to this effect has been inscribed in article 44 of the regulations drawn up by the Secretary-General in accordance with Resolution 1001 (ES-I) of the General Assembly; the said article reads as follows:

"Respect for the conventions. The members of the Force are bound to respect the principles and the spirit of the general international Conventions relative to the conduct of military personnel".

"A similar provision will apply to the United Nations Force in the Congo ..."

Furthermore, the Secretary-General declares himself prepared to co-operate in the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions amongst UNO military personnel in the Congo. He further states: "I am certain that there is no need to specify that all measures envisaged by UNO would have no other object than that of reminding members of its Forces of the principles of the Geneva Conventions and thus to show, without any possible ambiguity, that operations carried out in the name and under the command of the Organization must be in complete accordance with the spirit of the Conventions".

(See page 9 text of our press release No. 746)

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THE ICRC AT WORK IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF LAOS

The general delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr. André Durand, has just completed a visit to Xieng-Khouang in Northern Laos, where he was concerned with various humanitarian questions. He visited four American prisoners in the hands of the Xieng-Khouang Government, three civilians, Mr. Grant Wolfkill, Mr. Edward Shore and Mr. John McMorrow and one soldier, Sergeant Orville J. Ballenger. The ICRC delegate was able to speak with them in the presence of representatives of the Laotian authorities. He enquired as to their needs, so as to be able to send them the necessary relief. He has already handed over parcels for them to the authorities. The prisoners declared that they were in good health and they also said that they had received letters which the ICRC had previously sent them.

Similarly, Dr. Jürg Baer, ICRC doctor-delegate, is continuing his activities in Southern Laos. He recently went to Savannakhet, where he revisited prisoners and Laotian internees in the hands of the Vientiane Government. Previous visits had been made in the spring.

Working in close co-operation with the Laotian Red Cross, Dr. Baer has also continued relief distributions to the refugees in the Mekong valley. In this connection, he went to the Saravane region, where he handed over relief to two villages built by the refugees. In this part of Laos many of the refugees are Khas who are of early Indochinese origin.

In a Saravane hospital, Dr. Baer handed over four cases of blood plasma, a gift from the Netherlands Red Cross. Still in co-operation with the Laotian Red Cross, he also distributed relief parcels to the sick and wounded.

Further relief distributions are scheduled for the southernmost part of Laos.

During these different tours, the ICRC doctor-delegate took particular interest in the state of health of the refugee populations who, in general, are suffering from a lack of vitamins and from diseases such as beriberi, amoebic dysentery and malaria. The needs to which this alarming situation has given rise have resulted in the contributions made since August by a dozen National Red Cross Societies being exhausted. The ICRC intends to ask for further contributions to this relief action.

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NINTH ICRC MISSION TO ALGERIA

A mission of the ICRC has just completed an extensive tour of Algeria, where it visited about fifty places of detention where persons are held who have been arrested as a result of the events. This mission, the ninth since the beginning of 1955, was composed of Mr. Pierre Gaillard, Mr. Roger Vust and Dr Jean-Louis de Chastonay. Apart from Algerian detainees, it also visited several camps and prisons where European activists are detained.(1)

The ICRC is also continuing its work on behalf of the resettled population. Thus 20 tons of powdered milk from dairy surplus provided by the Government of the Swiss Confederation, are on their way to Algeria. This gift is the continuation of previous consignments, totalling 150 tons, which made it possible for the mobile teams of the French Red Cross to carry out numerous distributions of milk, in co-operation with the ICRC delegate in Algeria, to the children in the resettlement centres.

(1) See page 10 text of our press release No.747.

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ARTIFICIAL LIMBS SUPPLIED TO ALGERIAN WAR-DISABLED

This autumn saw the end of an action by the International Committee of the Red Cross, which was responsible for bringing aid to Algerian war-disabled in Morocco. From 1958 to the present date, the ICRC has supplied 25 temporary and permanent artificial limbs, 8 pairs of orthopaedic footwear for those with foot amputations or leg wounds, 70 pairs of crutches, 112 artificial eye-pieces of various types and 2 invalid carriages.

This relief action was undertaken following a request by the Algerian Red Crescent and visits by ICRC delegates. Already in 1957, a delegate had gone to Lousteau hospital, in Oujda, where the senior physician advised him of the requirements of the disabled. A number of steps had then to be taken to obtain equipment corresponding exactly to these requirements.

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RELIEF CONSIGNMENT TO TOGO

In order to contribute to the action which the Togolese Red Cross is undertaking on behalf of refugees settled in Togo, the ICRC sent relief to Lomé at the end of November. This consignment consisted of two tons of concentrated soup.

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AID TO NETHERLANDS SUBJECTS IN INDONESIA

The Indonesian Government has decided to entrust the National Red Cross Society with the task of dealing with the humanitarian aspect of the problems concerning Netherlands subjects remaining in Indonesia.

The Indonesian Red Cross, which is the sole organization empowered to do this, thus has the task of transmitting Netherlands Government pensions and allowances to its beneficiaries. These payments were previously made through the intermediary of Great Britain, which represented Netherlands interests in Indonesia. These were, however, interrupted when the Detaining Power was obliged to cease exercising its functions last March.

Thanks to the Red Cross, Dutch pensioners can consequently once more receive payments upon which they mainly rely for their subsistence. The Indonesian Red Cross can also be called upon to assist, as it did in 1958, Netherlands subjects who might decide to leave Indonesia to return to the Netherlands.

In order to facilitate the carrying out of humanitarian tasks thus devolving on the Indonesian Red Cross, practical cooperation has been established with the International Committee of the Red Cross, which ensures liaison with the Netherlands authorities. There is a representative of the Committee at present at Djakarta.

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THE ICRC AT A CONGRESS OF RADIATION MEDICINE

In reply to an invitation from the German Red Cross in the German Federal Republic, the International Committee of the Red Cross was represented by one of its members, Brigade Colonel Hans Meuli, former Director of the Swiss Army Medical Service, at the Vth Session of Medical Specialists in Radiation (5. Tagung der DRK-StrahlenschutzÄrzte). This meeting, which was organized by the German Red Cross, discussed problems raised by the protection of
the civilian population against the risks incurred from radiation in time of peace as in time of war. It took place between November 23 and 25 at the Nursing Centre of the Bavarian Red Cross at Munich (Mutterhaus der Schwesterinnenchaft München des Bayerischen Roten Kreuzes).

The participants, numbering about 200, were greeted by Dr. G. Denecke, Head Medical Officer of the German Red Cross in the Federal Republic. The President of the German Red Cross, Ritter von Lex, who had just come from Geneva where he had been received by the ICRC, also spoke. Brigade Colonel Meuli, the only foreign guest to be invited, brought greetings from the ICRC.

It was brought out at this meeting, that over the past four years about 200 German doctors had been specialising in the treatment of radiation and that they could in future undertake the instruction of nursing and auxiliary personnel in this subject. This will be of immense value to the Red Cross.

Brigade Colonel Meuli took the opportunity, whilst he was in Munich, of visiting hospital establishments for the war-disabled and for accidents. He thus visited the Hermann Schramm Hospital at Murnau, as well as the clinics and rehabilitation centres of Bad Tölz. He also visited an exhibition of vehicles for the disabled and was most impressed by the remarkable work which has been accomplished in that field.

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THE ACTIVITY OF THE CENTRAL TRACING AGENCY ON THE TRACK OF FORMER ITALIAN INTERNEES IN GERMANY

It may seem surprising that, 16 years after the end of hostilities, certain sections of the Central Tracing Agency are obliged to continue their task of discovering the fate of members of the armed forces missing or presumed dead during the course of the Second World War.

Thus, for example, the Italian Section is still dealing on an average with 400 cases each month. The chief object of these enquiries, which are mostly submitted to it by the Italian authorities, is to identify interned Italian military personnel in German hands who died in captivity in Germany or in German occupied territory.

It should be pointed out in this connection that these interned military did not enjoy the status of prisoners of war and that the ICRC did not receive official notification concerning their capture, internment or death.
Information of their death was gradually discovered after the war through the records of certificates of births, marriages and deaths or from the cemetery in the locality in which they were working during their internment, but more often than not these records do not state the place of birth of the deceased, whose name is often incorrectly spelt. Furthermore, searches which are made in cemeteries result in finding graves of Italian subjects often with incomplete and even half-obliterated inscriptions.

It should also be added that many former internees have, on their return from captivity, given eye-witness accounts of the death of some of their comrades, without, however, being able to indicate the place of origin or the exact name of the deceased.

How is the Italian Section able to supply details necessary for the identification of these deceased military? Only a certain number of Italian military internees were authorized to send capture cards to the Central Agency. The latter, however, anxious to fill in the gaps in its documentation, took care to record on card indexes details mentioned on the internees' message forms (a certain number of these messages were in fact sent via Switzerland), details which included the name and Christian name of the internee, his prisoner's number, the number of the camp upon which he was dependant, the work commando to which he was attached, as well as the address of his family.

In addition, the Italian Section's card-index, containing 7 million cards, also retains all enquiries which were made by Italian families to the Central Agency.

As one can imagine, it is by no means easy to correct a mistake in a name in such a way as to find subsequently in the card-index details which are likely to refer to the same person. In order to solve such a real puzzle, one should take various factors into account: the dialect of the person writing down the name in his own spelling, mistakes in striking in type-written texts, distortions arising from the repatriated prisoner's dialect in which a verbal account has been given, etc...

The same work has to be done, to a certain extent, in the opposite direction, that is to say when the fate has to be established of military missing or interned personnel who have not returned home, after the war. Using their exact particulars as a basis, it is then necessary to imagine all the possible distortions to which their names could have been subjected in order to find some information concerning them in the card-index.
This is no doubt an arduous task, but, in the end, is it not a question of being able to give to the families of the military missing, a certainty, however painful it may be, and the comfort at last of knowing where a son's or a husband's body lies buried?

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Press release

NEW MEMBER OF THE ICRC

Press Release No 745b, December, 4, 1961

The International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva has appointed as a new member, Mr. Max Petitpierre, former President of the Swiss Confederation and an honorary member of the Swiss Red Cross.

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THE ICRC AND THE EVENTS IN KATANGA

Press Release No 746b, December 11, 1961

Before the renewal of hostilities in Katanga, the International Committee of the Red Cross undertook new measures to extend its humanitarian aid to all the victims, military and civilian, of the events. Its delegate is attempting to obtain the evacuation of civilians trapped in the zone of operations, to organize truces to enable the wounded and dead to be collected, to visit prisoners and, in general, to have the rules of the Geneva Conventions respected.

Furthermore, the ICRC is studying methods of increasing its delegation at Elisabethville and to enable it to make its action more effective.

Contrary to various reports which have appeared in the press, the delegate of the ICRC in Katanga has made no public statement on the subject of alleged observations on the conduct of the military operations. In accordance with a rule allowing for no exception, observations which are made by a delegate are transmitted exclusively to the ICRC in Geneva.

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ICRC MISSION IN ALGERIA AND TUNISIA

Press Release No 747b, December 19, 1961

Continuing its customary activity on behalf of prisoners and detained persons, the International Committee of the Red Cross sent a new mission to Algeria between November 24 and December 16, 1961.

Consisting of Mr. Pierre Gaillard, Mr. Roger Vust and Dr. Jean-Louis de Chastonay, this delegation, the ninth since 1955, has just returned to Geneva after having visited 51 places of detention of various categories, including hospitals in which the detained and interned are treated. Sixteen of these visits were made to places in which European activists were detained or interned as a result of the recent events.

As usual, the delegates of the ICRC were everywhere able to speak with detainees of their own choosing or with the representatives appointed by the detainees.

On December 15, the head of the mission verbally submitted his principal observations and suggestions to Mr. Jean Morin, Delegate General of the Government in Algeria, and to General Ailleret, Commander-in-Chief of the French forces. The written report on these visits will be presented to the French Government as soon as possible.

Since it was anxious, however, also to bring its aid to French prisoners held by the "Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic", the ICRC had, prior to its mission in Algeria, despatched a delegation to Tunis from November 21 to 23, 1961.

The object of this mission, which consisted of Miss Marguerite van Berchem, a member of the Committee and Mr. Pierre Gaillard, delegate, was to examine with the members of the GPRD the problem raised by the application of the Geneva Conventions to French civilians and military personnel presumed to be held by the "Algerian National Army of Liberation".

The representatives of the ICRC met various Algerian personalities, notably Moussef Ben Khedda and Belkacem Krim, who promised to forward the names of five French prisoners to the ICRC.

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DOCUMENTARY ARTICLE

THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS

AND THE PROTECTION OF PRISONERS OF WAR

In the laws of war of ancient times, it was an accepted custom that prisoners of war became slaves. According to Roman Law, they were sold for the benefit of the State and then became, together with their descendants, the property of their masters.

Although it became an established practice during the Middle Ages to buy back prisoners by ransom, Public Law of modern times had not yet officially discarded these concepts of Roman Law. It was only under the influence of the philosophical movement of the 18th century, and especially that of two writers of Swiss origin, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Emer de Vattel, that the ideas which prevail to-day concerning the safeguard of prisoners of war began to assert themselves.

At the time when the first Geneva Convention was about to be signed, in 1864, the United States were engaged in the War of Secession, and at the request of President Lincoln, the jurist Lieber, imbued with the ideas of the French Encyclopaedists, had drawn up a code for the conduct of the United States Army in the field; this amounted to a real code of the laws of war, which went much further than the International Law in force at the time. "Lieber's Laws" not only safeguarded prisoners of war, but added: "Prisoners of war shall receive as wholesome and plentiful food as possible and shall be treated humanely".

This example is all the more interesting since the first Geneva Convention, which created the Red Cross, only concerned the wounded and sick. However, from 1867 onwards, Henry Dunant, the founder of the Red Cross, emphasized the need to enlarge these safety guarantees to include able-bodied prisoners. But it was not until the Peace Conference of The Hague in 1899 that Lieber's principles became part of International Public Law.

In 1929 the Geneva rules were revised in the light of the experience gained during the First World War and, especially, the practices which the International Committee of the Red Cross had succeeded in enforcing, during the war, in order to improve the conditions of captives. By virtue of the last codification of the Geneva rules in 1949, a further code was defined and enlarged, based on the principles of the Hague Regulations.

It is interesting to study the principal provisions of these international regulations, which, although so many
prisoners had to undergo prolonged internment during the two World Wars, nevertheless saved the lives, health and morale of millions of human beings.

The Third Geneva Convention of August 12, 1949 contains the following essential points:

**Protection of prisoners of war**

Prisoners of war are entitled in all circumstances to humane treatment as well as to respect for their persons and their honour. (Articles 13, 14).

They shall be treated alike; only health, sex, age, rank or professional qualifications can justify privileged treatment. (Article 16)

Prisoners of war are bound, when questioned, to give their names and first names, age, rank and army, regimental, personal or serial number. They may not be forced to supply other information. (Article 17)

They are entitled to keep personal effects and articles of personal use. Of their military equipment, which the enemy may seize, they are entitled to keep clothing and food. Sums of money and articles of value may only be withdrawn against a receipt and shall be returned to the prisoners at the end of their captivity. (Article 18)

Prisoners of war shall, on the whole, be subject to the discipline and laws in force in the Army of the State detaining them, known as the Detaining Power. (Articles 39, 82-88) This Power may, for security reasons, limit their freedom of movement, but not hold them in close confinement without infringing these rules. (Article 21) Prisoners shall at least be able to present their defence before any conviction. (Articles 96, 99, 105, 106)

**Conditions of captivity**

The Detaining Power shall provide prisoners, free of charge, with adequate food and clothing, quarters

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(1) Extracted from "Brief Summary for the use of military personnel and the public" drawn up by the ICRC for instruction in the Geneva Conventions,
as favourable as those of its own troops and all medical care necessary to their state of health. (Articles 15, 25, 26, 27, 30)

With the exception of officers, prisoners of war may be obliged to work, for a small working pay and under conditions at least equal to those of the nationals of the Detaining Power. However, they may not be compelled to perform work of a military nature, neither dangerous, unhealthy or humiliating work. (Articles 49 - 54)

Immediately upon capture, they shall be enabled to advise their families and the Central Prisoners of War Agency (International Committee of the Red Cross). Afterwards, they shall be allowed to correspond regularly with their families, receive relief parcels and have the spiritual assistance of a minister of their faith. (Articles 33, 70, 71, 72)

They shall be entitled to elect among themselves prisoners representatives entrusted with representing them before the authorities of the Detaining Power and any other organization assisting them. (Article 79)

They shall also have the right to address complaints and requests to the representatives of a neutral Power, known as the Protecting Power, who shall be authorized, with the delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross, to visit the camps and speak to prisoners, directly or through their representative. (Articles 78, 126)

The text of this Convention shall be posted in every prisoner of war camp, so that these may acquaint themselves with their rights and duties at any time. (Article 41)

Repatriation

Seriously wounded or seriously sick prisoners shall be repatriated; they may not be employed on active military service again after their repatriation. (Articles 109, 117)
After the cessation of active hostilities, prisoners of war shall be released and repatriated without delay. (Article 118)

These provisions apply to conflicts of an international character, that is, to wars between sovereign States.

However, as we saw last week when we were dealing with the treatment of wounded and sick in armed forces in the field, the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 have one article in common, Article 3, which demands a minimum degree of humane treatment for all persons detained as a result of armed conflicts of an internal character (civil wars, internal disturbances, etc.) This article mentions in particular that the International Committee of the Red Cross may offer its services to the Parties to such a conflict, and, as we have seen, these services have been accepted on numerous occasions during the last ten years and have, as far as possible, been extended to include political prisoners, thus granting them the assistance recognized by International Law for prisoners of war.

H. C.