On 11 December, in New York, the International Committee of the Red Cross and seven other organizations received a special prize awarded on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights. At the ceremony, the President of the ICRC, Mr. Alexandre Hay, delivered an address to the United Nations General Assembly, and spoke later with the Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim.

In his address, Mr. Hay said that, in fact, ICRC action had been rendered possible by the governments which had signed the Geneva Conventions and had authorized its delegates to go to the aid of the victims of armed conflicts. It was also the governments which had allowed the ICRC to develop activities not covered by the Geneva Conventions, in the course of which, in the past fifteen years, its delegates had visited more than 300,000 political prisoners in some seventy countries. Mr. Hay went on to say that at present the ICRC had over 100 field delegates providing protection and assistance to the victims of the far too numerous armed conflicts that were taking place, and visiting detainees in a score of countries.

Whether in armed conflicts, both international and internal, or in domestic disturbances, ICRC action was geared to the efforts of the international community to promote the observance and furtherance of human rights. International humanitarian law itself had many points in common with human rights; moreover, other fields of action - in which States had no obligations to the ICRC - such as ICRC visits to political detainees or its opposition to the practice of torture represented, too, a significant contribution to this undertaking, which was also an action for peace.

The human rights award is not, therefore, considered by the ICRC as a reward for past achievements, but rather as an encouragement for the continuation of its humanitarian work. As we pass from the old year to the new, the increasing number of situations of conflict and tension throughout the world, causing more victims than ever, demonstrate that the ICRC's tasks in 1979 will be just as pressing and numerous as they were in 1978.
CONFLICT IN KAMPUCHEA - ICRC OFFERS ITS SERVICES

Greatly concerned at the fighting in Kampuchea, and anxious to ease the suffering inflicted on civilian and military victims, the ICRC has decided to remind all the parties involved of the provisions of the Geneva Conventions and to offer them its services.

In particular, the ICRC hopes to visit the prisoners and to receive a full list of all persons captured.

IRAN: REINFORCEMENT OF ICRC DELEGATION - FURTHER VISITS TO PLACES OF DETENTION -

The rapidly changing situation in Iran during the last few weeks has caused the ICRC to reinforce its delegation in Teheran. Two extra delegates and a doctor have already arrived there and a third delegate is expected to fly out very shortly.

ICRC delegates are pursuing their visits to sentenced political prisoners and to recently arrested persons. By the end of December, they had gone to three Teheran prisons, where they saw altogether 455 detainees, 156 of whom had been arrested during recent disturbances. Further visits are planned to other places of detention in Teheran and elsewhere in Iran.

The ICRC is seriously concerned about those hurt in the disturbances, and its delegates are endeavouring to ensure that the wounded persons are swiftly removed to a hospital and treated in safety.

The ICRC's Tracing Agency bureau in Teheran is in frequent contact with families seeking to obtain news of relatives who are missing or are under arrest.

TANZANIA: EMERGENCY RELIEF FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE CONFLICT BETWEEN UGANDA AND TANZANIA

Concern for the victims of the border clashes between Uganda and Tanzania at the beginning of November prompted the ICRC to send one delegate to Dar es Salaam and another to Kampala.

On his arrival in Dar es Salaam delegate Thierry Germond had preliminary interviews with the Prime Minister and other government ministers and with the leaders of the National Red Cross Society. He was then allowed to go to the north of the country close to the combat area in order to make an appraisal of the number and the needs of the displaced persons. From 1 to 3 December, accompanied by representatives of the Tanzania Red Cross, he visited the areas along the river Kagera to the north of the town of Bukoba. He saw some 1,500 civilians housed in three schools (500 per school) in conditions of the utmost deprivation. According to various sources, there were 42,000 displaced persons in all.

On the basis of its delegate's estimates, the ICRC decided to launch an emergency relief programme consisting of sending 10,000 blankets, 10 tons of powdered milk, clothes and kitchen utensils, to a total value of approximately 250,000 Swiss francs. A relief delegate left for Dar es Salaam to co-ordinate the arrival of the relief supplies and their transport by train to the town of Mwanza, from where they would be distributed in the stricken areas by the ICRC and the Tanzania Red Cross.

No ICRC medical programme is planned for the moment, since the local authorities said they could handle the situation.

Eddi Leeman, regional delegate in Nairobi, was in Kampala from 11 to 15 December to determine the extent to which the ICRC could come to the aid of the victims of the conflict. After discussions with the authorities concerned with assistance for the refugees and displaced persons and with representatives of the Uganda Red Cross, ICRC aid did not appear to be required at this stage, since the government had dealt with the re-housing of the displaced persons. However, if the government saw the need for emergency assistance, it would call upon the ICRC through the Uganda Red Cross.

IN BRIEF.........................

The ICRC's nine dispensaries in the Chiweshe tribal trust lands in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe provide treatment to about 16,000 patients every month. In addition, an average of 2,600 cases are seen monthly by ICRC mobile medical teams. There are now 57 Africans among the ICRC's paramedical staff, working in 27 rural dispensaries.
ICRC PRESIDENT IN LONDON

From 7 to 14 January, ICRC President Alexandre Hay, accompanied by Jean-Pierre Hocké, Director of Operations, and Melchior Borsinger, delegate-general for Europe and North America, will be carrying out a mission in London. The ICRC President is expected to meet the British Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and various other ministry officials. He will also attend a meeting of the British Red Cross Society Council and will be received at the Mansion House by the Lord Mayor of London.

The purpose of the visit is to exchange views with British Government officials and the British Red Cross on questions of mutual concern relating to the ICRC's work throughout the world in countries which are engaged in conflicts or in which disturbances are taking place, in particular in Africa. Co-operation with the ICRC in its operations in the field and questions relating to financial support will also be examined.

NICARAGUA: VISITS TO DETAINES AND CHRISTMAS PARCELS

ICRC protection and assistance activities in Nicaragua are being maintained. In the first half of December, ICRC delegates visited and distributed relief supplies, mainly medicaments, to some 220 detainees held in seven places of detention and about 300 persons who had taken refuge in two embassies.

The ICRC also continued its visits to civilian internees and to refugees in camps in neighbouring countries. The assistance in these camps is the responsibility of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in co-operation with the National Red Cross Societies concerned.

Thirty thousand food rations were distributed in November and twenty thousand in December (half of which were in fact supplementary rations for Christmas) by the ICRC, working in co-operation with the Nicaraguan Red Cross. The rations consisted of rice, beans, maize, oil, salt, sugar, sardines, coffee and fruit juice. The aid distributed in November and December was worth 280,000 US dollars.

The total cost of the ICRC action in Nicaragua (food and medical aid, transport, operational expenses, etc.) for the period from September to the end of December 1978 amounted to approximately one million dollars.

CHAD: EVACUATION OF DETAINES FREED BY FROLINAT

Following the decision taken by the Chad National Liberation Front (Frolinat) to release some of the families of prisoners of war and of civil servants, the ICRC took steps to evacuate the released persons to N'Djamena. On 5 December 43 persons, including 22 children and the wives of 15 prisoners, were evacuated on board a chartered aircraft.

In another transfer operation, five persons (3 adults and 2 children) were taken from Faya to N'Djamena for medical treatment.

A further series of visits to prisoners of war was carried out at the beginning of December in the Tibesti region. From 6 to 8 December ICRC delegates saw altogether 120 POW's in the camps at Bardai, Zoui, Edissi and Zoumri. Food and medicaments were distributed during the visits.

As part of its protection activities, the ICRC visited, on 7 December, eleven Frolinat prisoners held by the Chad Government at N'Djamena.

Between 12 and 16 December, about 90 tons of relief supplies were carried from N'Djamena to Faya in six flights on board a Hercules aircraft chartered by the ICRC. These supplies of food for the victims of the Chad conflict will be distributed in the regions of Borkou, Ennedi and Tibesti.

THE ICRC IN AFRICA

What is the extent of the ICRC's mission in Africa? What kinds of activity does it carry out and for whom? The answers to these questions - and several others - may be found in the publication "The International Committee of the Red Cross in Africa", just issued by the ICRC's Press and Information Division in six languages - English, French, German, Portuguese, Spanish and Swahili. It is intended in the first place for donors (governments and National Red Cross Societies) and the international press. It gives in summarized form an account of all that has been accomplished in six months with the international community's moral, material and financial support, and it describes the enormous task still to be accomplished to alleviate the suffering of hundreds of thousands of victims of the conflicts.
The calendar, with colour photographs illustrating ICRC activities in Africa, has been distributed to ministries and other government offices, to the liberation movements and to army barracks and to schools in the countries of southern Africa.

"CHALLENGE IN AFRICA":
MUCH APPRECIATED IN BOTSWANA

The ICRC film on its work in southern Africa, entitled "Challenge in Africa", was shown privately to Sir Seretse Khama, President of Botswana, Lady Khama, President of the National Red Cross Society in Botswana, and a number of eminent officials from among the President's immediate circle. Sir Seretse Khama was so impressed by the film that he ordered a special showing to be arranged for Government Ministers and Members of Parliament. Accordingly, the following day, the film was shown before all the members of the Government and of the National Assembly. The President himself gave an introductory address, in which he laid stress on the scope and impartiality of the ICRC's humanitarian activities in Africa.

The film was shown, again, at the Botswana Red Cross national seminar, and here, too, was much appreciated.

In Lusaka, "Challenge in Africa" was shown in Mr. N'Komo's residence for the ZAPU leader and members of his Executive Council, who expressed their great appreciation of the film.

"Challenge in Africa" is a joint Derek Hart/ICRC production. This 16 mm colour film is available in the original English version and in nine other languages (French, Portuguese, Spanish, German, Swedish, Dutch, Russian, Japanese, Swahili).

"Challenge in Africa" can be obtained on loan or bought at a cost of 500.— Swiss francs from the ICRC Audio-Visual Service, 17 Av. de la Paix, CH-1211 GENEVA (telex 22 269).

As requested by the Red Cross and the authorities of Botswana, the ICRC has agreed to cover the treatment and rehabilitation costs for two disabled soldiers, since this kind of medical care is not available in Botswana.

THE PROTOCOLS ADDITIONAL TO THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS COME INTO EFFECT

The two 1977 Protocols additional to the 1949 Geneva Conventions came into effect on 7 December 1978, six months after the deposit of instruments of ratification or accession. These two instruments of international humanitarian law supplement the four Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 for the protection of war victims. The first is applicable to international armed conflicts, and the second to non-international armed conflicts.

These two Protocols, which take into account the new features of the many conflicts since the Second World War, were negotiated in Geneva, at an annual session in each of the four years from 1974 to 1977, by a diplomatic conference convened by the Swiss Government.

On 10 June 1977, the plenipotentiaries of over a hundred States and of several liberation movements signed the Final Act of the Conference. The Conference was preceded by several years of preparatory work, carried out by the ICRC which had the satisfaction of witnessing the signing of the Protocols by the representatives of 46 States at a ceremony in Berne on 12 December 1977. To date, Protocol I has been signed by 61 States and Protocol II by 52. Ratifications have been notified by three States, namely, Ghana, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and El Salvador.

The Protocols (which were the subject of a special edition of the ICRC Bulletin in July-August 1977) reaffirm and develop considerably the rules for the protection of war victims, and especially of the civilian population. For example, while the Fourth Geneva Convention protects populations against abuse of power by the enemy or the occupying power, Protocol I extends the rules of humanitarian law to protect civilians against the direct effects of hostilities. It also extends the category of prisoners of war to include henceforth not only regular combatants but also guerrilla fighters without uniform, provided they bear arms openly and conform to certain rules. It improves the protection of medical personnel, units and transports, by giving the civilian medical services a protection similar to that of military medical personnel and units. Protocol II supplements and develops substantially the rules to be observed in a non-international armed conflict.

Although no undertaking of this kind can reach perfection, it is agreed that the
Protocols constitute considerable progress in the codification of international humanitarian law. On the occasion of their entry into force, the ICRC launched an appeal to the governments of the States parties to the Geneva Conventions inviting them to ratify these two instruments. In doing so, they would show the world how important they consider it is to improve the observance of humanitarian rules on the battlefield. They would thus respond to the desire of all people that essential humanitarian guarantees be universally accepted. It is also to be hoped that, through this effort towards the respect of the human person even in combat, the community of States will have made a significant contribution to spreading a spirit of peace in the world.

THE KING OF SWEDEN VISITS THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS

During a private visit to Switzerland, the King and Queen of Sweden visited, on 5 December, the two institutions of the International Red Cross in Geneva. The Swedish Sovereigns were welcomed at ICRC headquarters by President Alexandre Hay and members of the Committee and the Directorate. After a discussion with the ICRC representatives, they made a short visit to the Central Tracing Agency.

The King and Queen then went to the headquarters of the League of Red Cross Societies, where they were received by the Secretary General, Mr. Henrik Beer, and his chief associates. The orientation and organization of current League activities and its major relief operations were discussed.

VISIT BY PRINCESS TO ICRC

The ICRC received the visit of the President of the Nepal Red Cross Society, H.R.H. Princess Princeps Shah, on 18 December. The Princess met President Alexandre Hay and senior officials of the ICRC. Various topics of mutual concern to the Nepal Red Cross and the ICRC were touched upon at the meeting, including the school textbook "The Red Cross and My Country", which was translated into Nepalese some years ago and is in wide use in Nepal's schools.

IN BRIEF

The ICRC was invited to attend the Romanian Red Cross Congress which is held every four years. Mr. Laurent Marti, Special Assistant to the President, and Mr. Philippe Grand d'Hauteville, Regional Delegate for Europe, were delegated, and were in Bucharest from 28 November to 1 December.

The dates and frequencies of RCBS (Red Cross Broadcasting Service) programmes will henceforth be published every month in the ICRC Bulletin. As stated in our November 1978 issue, RCBS, now in its 14th year, will be broadcasting monthly on an omnidirectional aerial on a frequency of 7,210 kHz. Directional programmes will continue to be beamed once every two months to Asia and the Pacific and to Africa and the Middle East. Frequencies will be shown, as in the past, in the Bulletin.

In January 1979, broadcasts will be made as follows:

On 7,210 kHz, in the 41.6 meter band, Monday 22 January, in English and French from 0600 to 0700 GMT, from 1130 to 1230 GMT and from 1700 to 1800 GMT; Wednesday 24 January, in Spanish, German and Arabic at the same times.

DIRECTIONAL FREQUENCIES

ASIA AND PACIFIC, Tuesday 23 January, from 0945 to 1015 GMT in English, on 21,520, 15,305, 11,780 and 9,560 kHz.

AFRICA AND MIDDLE EAST, on Thursday 25 January, from 0945 to 1015 GMT in Arabic, English and French, on 21,630, 21,545, 21,520 and 17,830 kHz.

In December the ICRC continued its humanitarian work for victims of the fighting in Ethiopia-Eritrea. The ICRC delegation in Addis Ababa provided the Ethiopian Red Cross with 53 tons of foodstuffs (flour, sugar, lentils, beans, vegetable oil) for the civilian population of Asmara.

The ICRC has also continued to give emergency relief supplies to some groups of needy persons who were victims of the Ogaden conflict. Twenty-eight tons of foodstuffs and 4,000 bars of soap were sent to the Sidamo region, 13 tons of foodstuffs and 3,825 blankets to the region of Bale, and 16 tons of foodstuffs to the region of Harrar. New despatches of medical supplies were made to the provinces of Tigré and Harrar. A consignment of 2,025 blankets was given to the Ethiopian Minister for Health for the "Black Lion" hospital in Addis Ababa.
In Argentina, between 13 November and 15 December, ICRC delegates visited 960 detainees in three of the main places of detention. The value of relief supplies distributed in the prisons and to 865 families of detainees in November amounted to 15,000 US dollars.

Mission to Nepal and Pakistan: Dominique Borel, ICRC regional delegate for the Asian subcontinent, was in Nepal from 5 to 9 December 1978 and in Pakistan from 11 to 17 December. In both countries he had talks with government and National Society officials.

Under the auspices of the ICRC, the Israeli authorities returned to the Jordanian authorities a person who had crossed the border near Eilat. The operation took place on the Allenby Bridge on 4 December.

Repatriation - A five-year-old boy, who was wounded in the events in southern Lebanon in March 1978 and taken to a hospital in Israel, was returned to his family on 13 December, under the auspices of the ICRC. The transfer took place at the frontier post of Ras Nakoura.

In Israel and the occupied territories, between 8 and 14 December 1978, ICRC delegates carried out 33 visits to detainees under interrogation in Jerusalem and Gaza.

International Symposium on Ballistics in Gothenburg: ICRC expert Philippe Eberlin attended the third international symposium on wound ballistics in Gothenburg (Sweden) from 6 to 8 December 1978. About 120 experts from sixteen countries took part in the symposium. They exchanged views on the results of research carried out on the behaviour of projectiles in wounds ("terminal ballistics") and the response of the body to the wound.

Meetings in Copenhagen and Stockholm: On 5 and 6 December 1978, Michel Convers, ICRC Assistant Director of Operations, took part in two meetings organized by the National Societies of Denmark and Sweden. At the Copenhagen meeting, Mr. Convers outlined ICRC activities to a group of prospective delegates for International Red Cross work. In Stockholm, he spoke to officials of the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of the CIDA (a government body responsible for foreign aid) on the ICRC's role and activities throughout the world, and in particular in Africa.

Cyprus mission: From 4 to 14 December 1978, ICRC delegate Lix Simonius was in Cyprus, visiting minority communities, in particular those in the northern part of the island. Miss Simonius met government and Red Cross officials in various sectors and examined with them various humanitarian issues.

BACKGROUND BACKGROUND BACKGROUND BACKGROUND BACKGROUND BACKGROUND

FIRST ASIAN SEMINAR ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

A GREAT SUCCESS

The first Asian Seminar on Humanitarian Law, organized by the Malaysian Red Crescent and the ICRC, was held in Kuala Lumpur from 14 to 24 November. Some 50 delegates from 19 countries in Asia and the Pacific (Australia, Bangladesh, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam), a delegation from the League of Red Cross Societies and observers from several international organizations (such as the HCR, ICEM, the Asia Foundation) were present.

38 years of evolution

In the first week, after the opening ceremony in the presence of the Malaysian Minister for Foreign Affairs, the delegates heard seven lectures on different aspects of international humanitarian law. The first, given by Noreen Minogue, Deputy Secretary-General of the Australian Red Cross, and entitled "History and Nature of International Humanitarian Law" traced the development of international humanitarian law from the signing of the First Geneva Convention in 1864 - codifying the humanitarian principle that a wounded soldier is no longer an enemy but a man in need of care - to the adoption of the 1977 Protocols, which restrict the methods and means of combat available to belligerents, with a view to improving the protection of the civilian population.
Yves Sandoz, legal adviser at the ICRC, spoke on the law of The Hague (governing the conduct of war) and the Geneva Conventions (protecting victims of conflicts). In his paper, Mr. Sandoz analysed the differences between these branches of humanitarian law and their inter-relation in the light of the 1977 Protocols.

The third lecture was given by Justice Mushtaq Hussain (Pakistan), and entitled "New Developments in International Humanitarian Law - the Protocols of 1977". It covered the evolution of humanitarian law over the last 38 years, in relation to current philosophies.

**Paradox**

Professor Kenneth J. Keith from New Zealand examined "The Legal Mechanism for the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law". He discussed in particular the paradox between the desire of governments to develop rules protecting victims of armed conflict and their reluctance to adopt international measures allowing for a better application of these rules.

Professor Ahmad Ibrahim from the University of Kuala Lumpur gave a lecture on "Humanitarian Law and Religious Beliefs in Asia", in which he gave an account of the humanitarian principles common to the different religions in Asia.

**The Red Cross and Humanitarian Law**

Two talks on the Red Cross and humanitarian law closed the series of lectures: Jacques Moreillon, Director of the ICRC Department of Principles and Law, spoke on ICRC activities in armed conflicts and those for political detainees, and Kai Warras (Finland) representing the President of the League of Red Cross Societies, discussed the role and work of the National Societies under the Geneva Conventions and the 1977 Protocols. Each lecture was followed by a discussion allowing the participants to express their views on the subjects in hand.

During the second week, the delegates divided into two working groups. The first dealt with dissemination of knowledge of humanitarian law among the armed forces, in government institutions and in universities and schools, and also with the role of the National Societies in this field.

The results and constructive attitude of the participants justify calling this meeting a great success. However, as Jacques Moreillon stressed in his final address on behalf of the President of the ICRC, the success of the seminar will depend largely on the follow-up action by the various countries. The ICRC thanked the Malaysian Red Crescent cordially for the exemplary organization of the meeting and especially for the warmth of its hospitality, which was deeply appreciated by all the delegates.
 CONTRIBUTIONS AND BUDGETS

The President of the International Committee of the Red Cross and two members of the Directorate were in London in January to meet officials of the Government and of the National Red Cross Society. Upon his return, Mr. Hay reported two worthwhile results of his mission. First, the British Government will increase its contribution to the ICRC ordinary budget from 40,000 pounds to 100,000 pounds and will donate a million pounds (more than 3 million Swiss francs) to the ICRC's work in Africa. Second, during the President's discussions with senior government officials, proof was given that information about the institution and its activities was a major factor in ensuring the success of fund-raising.

For two years the ICRC has been conducting a systematic fund-raising campaign, the expansion of its work making an increase in its budgets inevitable and, hence, contributions on a larger scale necessary. Its efforts are beginning to bear fruit. The Swiss Government has set an example by deciding to raise its annual contribution by 2 million francs to 14.5 million francs. Other governments have also increased their financial support. For instance, Sweden has given 600,000 kroner, as against the previous 400,000; the Federal Republic of Germany has raised its contribution from 300,000 DM to 400,000 DM; Ireland and Italy have doubled theirs; Canada, Finland, Hungary and Poland have also given substantially greater funds.

"Ideally," says President Hay, "the budget would be covered half by Switzerland and half by other signatories to the Geneva Conventions, for in today's world of more numerous and more violent tensions and conflicts the ICRC must have the funds necessary to discharge the humanitarian mission assigned to it by the international community."

Consequently, far from relaxing its efforts, the ICRC will undertake several worldwide fund-raising missions in 1979. The results already achieved are a considerable encouragement.

The texts of this Bulletin have no official character, and may be freely reproduced.
IRAN: CONTACTS WITH ALL PARTIES - VISITS TO HOSPITALS AND PRISONS

In January the ICRC delegation, consisting of three delegates and a doctor, contacted all the parties involved in the crisis, with a view to working for the benefit of the victims in all circumstances. The delegates continued their work for the injured and for arrested persons.

A delegate and doctor went to Qazvin, which had been the scene of serious violence, to meet local doctors, military officers and representatives of the opposition. They also visited two hospitals and observed that for the time being the medical situation was under control.

On 14 January, the delegates went to Ghasr prison in Teheran, where there were 131 convicted detainees and 130 persons who had been arrested during recent demonstrations. A few days later most of the convicted detainees were released.

ICRC intervention resulted in the release of a cargo of 15 tons of blood transfusion material and equipment which was despatched from New York to Teheran. The consignment, ordered for the Iranian Blood Transfusion Service to cover needs for the next four months, is of primary importance in the situation prevailing in Iran.

VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN MALAYSIA: MISSION OF THE CENTRAL TRACING AGENCY

Nicolas Vecsey, Deputy Director of the ICRC Central Tracing Agency, has been in Kuala Lumpur since 4 January 1979, working in close co-operation with the Malaysian Red Crescent to assess the difficulties facing the Agency in the camps for Vietnamese refugees, who now number approximately 50,000. The CTA has offered its services to the Malaysian National Society - the operating agent in the UNHCR camps in Malaysia - to work out a plan of action and to help it set up an Agency office in Kuala Lumpur.

A preliminary appraisal shows three areas for priority action: exchange of family correspondence; tracing of missing persons and reuniting of separated families; and transmission of funds and parcels between the refugees and their families. Among the proposed solutions was, for example, that of using 25-word Red Cross message forms giving family news only, which would allow the flow of correspondence to be set in motion. Similarly, a rationalization of the system of registering refugees and, in particular, precise co-ordination between the UNHCR, the National Society, and the CTA should make tracing people and reuniting families easier.

The Agency office will be run by three delegates from the National Societies of the Federal Republic of Germany and Switzerland, who will be assisted by a technical adviser from the Central Tracing Agency. These four people arrived in Kuala Lumpur at the end of January.

The CTA programme is part of the general Red Cross plan of action for the Vietnamese refugees in Malaysia. On 23 January, the League of Red Cross Societies launched an appeal to its members, with a view to obtaining the logistic and financial support required for the work of the Red Crescent in Malaysia. A six-month budget of 500,000 Swiss francs has been drawn up by the League, in agreement with the UNHCR and the ICRC.

On 12 January, the League and the ICRC had launched an urgent appeal to the international community to make it aware of the dramatic situation of the refugees.

VIET NAM-KAMPUCHEA CONFLICT: ICRC OFFERS ITS SERVICES ALSO TO THAILAND

We announced in our previous Bulletin (No. 36 of 10 January 1979) that the ICRC, at the beginning of January, had offered its services to all the parties involved in the Kampuchea conflict, for the purpose of assisting the civilian and military victims.

In Thailand, the ICRC delegation expressed to the authorities its concern about the situation in Kampuchea and, on 18 January, offered its services to the Thai Government should ICRC assistance, especially medical, be required for civilian and military victims crossing the border into Thai territory. In this connection, the ICRC stated it was ready to lend its support to the Thai Red Cross and authorities.

The ICRC delegates went, moreover, several times to the border area near Aranyaprathet. This town's hospital is run by the National Society and for the last few weeks its facilities have been doubled after a field hospital was erected to provide for the accommodation and care of any influx of wounded and refugees from Kampuchea.
CONFLICT BETWEEN UGANDA AND TANZANIA:
THE ICRC REMINDS THE TWO PARTIES OF THEIR HUMANITARIAN OBLIGATIONS

Following the outbreak of new hostilities on the border between Uganda and Tanzania, the ICRC launched an appeal on 27 January to the governments of the two countries, reminding them of their obligations under the 1949 Geneva Conventions relating to the protection and humane treatment of the wounded, the sick, prisoners of war and civilian populations. The ICRC is ready to carry out humanitarian work for the two parties, such as visiting, protecting and assisting prisoners of war.

At the end of November 1978 the ICRC, concerned for the victims of the clashes, despatched a delegate to Dar-es-Salaam and another to Kampala to assess the needs of the population in the combat areas. A plan of assistance was devised on the basis of this assessment, and, at the end of December, Pierre Pont, the ICRC delegate in Tanzania, carried out an initial distribution of emergency relief supplies in the region of Bukoba, south of the River Kagera.

On 20 January Mr. Pont returned to this region to take charge of another distribution of relief supplies (10,000 blankets, 9 tons of clothes, 200 boxes of soap, 11 tons of powdered milk, 10 tons of sugar) to some 12,000 displaced persons in the reception centres in the district of Izimbia.

The ICRC has not yet been called upon to give assistance in Uganda, where the government is taking care of displaced persons.

RHODESIA/ZIMBABWE: ICRC MEDICAL ASSISTANCE - SOME FIGURES

In 1978 some 630,000 people received medical assistance from the ICRC in the mission hospitals and rural dispensaries in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. This assistance was provided by two medical teams (which often travelled around the country by plane), helped by 57 African para-medical staff.

In the same year, ICRC doctors gave 21,482 consultations and carried out 160 surgical operations. In addition, 22,772 vaccinations were made, of which 1,738 were against measles, 10,878 against diphtheria and 10,156 against polio.

In the "protected village" of Bueke (Mount Darwin district), the ICRC has opened a new dispensary to provide a medical service for the 10,000 inhabitants now that the Karanda mission hospital has been closed. The dispensary, run by two para-medical assistants, is visited twice monthly by an ICRC mobile medical team.

Moreover, following the discovery of cases of malnutrition among the children of pre-school age, a programme of milk distribution is under way in 17 "protected villages" in the tribal territories of Dotito and Chiweshe. Twice a week one ton of powdered milk is given to approximately 4,500 children.

ETHIOPIA: AMPUTEE PROGRAMME - RELIEF SUPPLIES TO A VALUE OF 2.6 MILLION SWISS FRANCS DISTRIBUTED SINCE OCTOBER 1977

On 4 January 1978, in Addis Ababa, François Musy, ICRC delegate, delivered to the Ethiopian Red Cross six ambulances (worth about 165,000 Swiss francs) for the expansion of its activities in the areas affected by the fighting. Sister Yeshi Teshome, First Vice-President of the Ethiopian Red Cross, paid tribute to the ICRC's humanitarian work for the victims of the war in Ethiopia.

Since October 1977, the ICRC, working in conjunction with the Ethiopian authorities and Red Cross, has been providing protection and assistance for victims in all parts of Ethiopia hit by hostilities. So far, it has distributed, through the local Red Cross branches and the State Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, 550 tons of food, 37,000 blankets, 39 tons of medicaments and 10 tons of soap to the people living in the provinces of Bale, Sidamo, Harerge, Eritrea, Tigre and Gondar. The total value of this aid amounts to about 2.6 million Swiss francs.

At the end of January, an important medical aid programme set on foot by the ICRC commenced its active phase with the arrival of two physiotherapists at the Debré Zeyit rehabilitation centre for disabled soldiers. They will be joined at a later date by three more specialists from Geneva. Four tons of medical material and medicaments will be despatched to the centre by air freight in the first half of February. The programme will be spread over at least twelve months and altogether is expected to cost about 500,000 Swiss francs.
APPOINTMENT OF A NEW DIRECTOR OF THE HENRY DUNANT INSTITUTE

At its last meeting of 1978 the General Assembly of the Henry Dunant Institute appointed Mr. Jacques Meurant, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General of the League of Red Cross Societies, in charge of Statutory Matters, as Director of the Institute. He succeeds Mr. Jean Pictet, Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, who has reached retirement age.

Mr. Meurant joined the League Secretariat in 1962, first handling the preparation of League meetings before assuming responsibility for legal and statutory matters.

The same General Assembly appointed Mr. Jiri Toman, the Institute's Director of Research, to the post of Assistant Director. Mr. Toman taught international law at the University of Prague for some years before entering the Henry Dunant Institute in 1969 as its research worker. He is the author of several books and articles on international law.

RESIGNATION OF A MEMBER OF THE ICRC

At its meeting on 18 January 1979, the ICRC Assembly noted the resignation of Mr. Herbert Lüthy, who had been a member since September 1975.

Mr. Lüthy, who is Professor of contemporary history and Swiss history at the University of Basle, felt that his duties at the university did not leave him free enough to make a valuable contribution to ICRC work.

The Assembly regretfully accepted Professor Lüthy's resignation and thanked him warmly for his valuable assistance in the past.

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW: HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN LAW

To mark the 30th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights, the January-February 1979 issue of International Review of the Red Cross is devoted to the theme of international humanitarian law and its dissemination.

It contains an article by Prof. D. Schindler, entitled "The ICRC and Human Rights", which describes the separate evolution of human rights and of humanitarian law and shows how they influenced each other. The same issue of the Review contains a summary of all the seminars, symposia and round table meetings organized in 1978 by the Red Cross and other organizations on the subject of international humanitarian law and its dissemination.

As usual, the Review also gives an account of current ICRC activities in various parts of the world.

IN BRIEF

Five deaf and dumb children who had been escorted to Jordan in December for treatment in a specialized institute returned to the occupied West Bank on 11 January under ICRC auspices.

The ICRC has supplied nearly seven tons of food, blankets and clothing to the Gwelo branch of the Rhodesian Red Cross, to be distributed in the village of Monomatapa. The ICRC's sub-delegation at Umtali has handed over 300 kg of powdered milk to the Red Cross centre at Inyanga, to help it begin a food aid programme for children suffering from malnutrition.

An ICRC medical team has started a vaccination campaign against typhoid in the Dukwe camp (Botswana), where there are 6,245 refugees from Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. In addition, with a view to improving the health conditions in this camp, the ICRC has organized health courses for a group of young refugees.

In December last the ICRC distributed over 225 tons of relief supplies (foodstuffs, blankets, clothing and soap), valued at 167,750 Swiss francs, to victims of the conflict in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe.

Mission to two East European countries: From 1 to 6 February, Edmé Regenass, Director of Finance and Administration, and Melchior Borsinger, Delegate-General for Europe and North America, were in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. In both countries they discussed ICRC activities and financing with government officials and representatives of the National Societies.

In January 1979 Botswana became the fourth country to ratify the Protocols to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, following Ghana, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and El Salvador.
IN BRIEF

In Nicaragua ICRC delegates visit places of detention in Managua and the provinces and also embassies where people have sought refuge. More than 1,300 tons of relief supplies provided mainly by the EEC and the Swiss Government have been forwarded to Nicaragua for distribution in that country and in Honduras to the victims of the events. The cost of medical assistance in December and the first fortnight of January amounted to 23,000 dollars.

42nd series of prison visits in Israel and occupied territories: In January 1979 the ICRC delegates continued the 42nd series of visits to places of detention begun in autumn last year. They went to 14 prisons where there were 3,059 civilian Arab detainees who had been arrested for security reasons or penal law offences.

The Israeli prisoner of war held by the PFLP General Command was visited by the ICRC on 14 January 1979. Family messages were exchanged.

Operations across the Allenby Bridge: On 4 and 22 January, the Jordanian authorities returned to the Israeli authorities, under ICRC auspices, a detainee and two people who had crossed from the occupied West Bank.

Mission in Chile: While in Santiago from 3 to 10 January regional delegate François Robadey visited a place of detention where he saw 38 detainees for whom he provided 225 kilos of relief supplies from the ICRC stocks in Santiago.

Mission in Colombia: Regional delegate Leonard Isler has been in Colombia since mid-January to visit civilian and military places of detention. By the end of the month he had visited 160 detainees in seven places. He is continuing his mission.

The ICRC has given 6,900 blankets to the ZAPU for refugees from Rhodesia/Zimbabwe in a new camp in Zambia. In another refugee camp, where the supply of drinking water had dried up, the ICRC, in response to an urgent appeal, has financed the boring of two wells. Finally, about thirty pairs of crutches have been delivered to the hospital in Lusaka for patients sponsored by the ZAPU.

The ICRC held a training course for future delegates at Cartigny, near Geneva, from 28 January to 3 February. About twenty delegates from all over Switzerland took part.

BACKGROUND

ICRC MEDICAL DIVISION ACHIEVEMENTS AND PLANS

Exactly two years ago, the ICRC Bulletin (see issue No. 13 of 2 February 1977) announced the creation of the ICRC Medical Division. Since then the Division, under Dr. Remy Russbach - who in the meantime has been appointed ICRC Chief Medical Officer - has gained much experience, and it might be enlightening to review what it has done and to examine its short and medium-term plans.

Question: The Medical Division, which used to be a relatively small service, has increased its personnel in the last two years. Does this correspond to an increase in its responsibilities?

Answer: The Division's rather rapid growth is due to an expansion in ICRC activities, especially in Africa. In 1977, I was assisted by a pharmacist and a secretary. At present, we have, in addition, a male nurse and an administrator and I expect a deputy head of division to be appointed in April, as I have to be away quite often in the field and there is a great deal of work to be done in Geneva all through the year.

Three fields of action

Q.: What have the principal developments been in medical activities?

A.: Three distinct fields of action may be singled out. The most important is undoubted-
ly the medical care to be provided following a conflict, by which I mean the aid we must give towards the equipment and rehabilitation of amputees and war disabled. Here, the ICRC co-operates very closely with the governments, liberation movements and National Societies concerned. After our encouraging experience in Lebanon, where nearly 600 amputees were equipped with prostheses thanks to the co-operation given by the Swiss and British Red Cross Societies, we are continuing in this particular field and have initiated similar projects in some African countries. In Mozambique, Angola and Ethiopia, the ICRC provides the technical equipment for the workshops and also sends specialists, whose job includes the training of local personnel, so that they should take over the work when the specialists leave.

Q.: What about the second field of action ?

A.: It, too, is the result of the extension of ICRC activities in Southern Africa. There are serious problems of hygiene and preventive medicine raised by the presence of very large numbers of displaced persons sheltering in the refugee camps in Botswana and Zambia. In the camps we visited, we found that sanitation was totally or partially lacking, that the water supply was often polluted and that flies, vermin and other insects were present in swarms. In short, the threat to the health of those communities is acute, especially as the resistance of these people, particularly of the many infants, has been undermined by circumstances. We therefore organized special courses on health, given to the population by volunteers trained by us, in both Botswana and Zambia. In the latter country, Mr. El Badri, a Sudanese public health expert made available to us by WHO, gives practical courses on public health and hygiene in the camps.

Q.: And then is there not the traditional task of supplying medicines and medical material ?

A.: Quite so. This is a form of assistance which has been performed by the ICRC at all times, but I should add that we have raised our criteria to professional standards. At present, medical surveys are carried out by specialists who take into consideration such factors as local hospital facilities, the general medical standards, the possibility of working on the spot, and so on. The aim is to ensure, like for other forms of relief, that inappropriate aid is not sent to recipient countries. In this way, we can act more efficiently and with less expense. But it should be said that the effectiveness of a medical operation depends not so much on the amount of money spent as on the efficiency of preparation and proficiency in actual action.

Future goals

Q.: What are your objectives for 1979 ?

A.: We have some continuous and also some specific projects, and they all extend beyond the next twelve months! The general aim is to try and fit the work of the Medical Division into that of the ICRC as a whole, in Geneva as well as in the field. We shall also pay more attention to recruiting. At present, we have 25 persons - doctors, nurses, specialists in orthopedics - on missions abroad, twenty of whom are in Africa. But we also need doctors to visit places of detention, and for this we need Swiss nationals. Although we have a panel of about 200 names, it is all the same difficult to find just the man or woman we want for a specific mission at a given time; for instance, there are few doctors in Switzerland who can speak Spanish. In emergency actions, we come across fewer problems, because we can call upon National Red Cross Societies to send medical teams or specialists.

Concomitantly with recruiting, we would like to develop the training of medical delegates. Until now, they followed the preparatory course at Cartigny but did not have any special training for ICRC operations. It is true the ICRC did organize in 1977 a seminar for Swiss doctors who had carried out missions, and some constructive results were derived from the discussions. It would be desirable to draw upon this seminar for organizing something similar for non-Swiss doctors and delegates of National Societies who have taken part in our missions.

Contacts and documentation

Q.: Don't you intend also to develop contacts with the National Societies ?

A.: You're right, and I am sure that a symposium of National Societies would meet a genuine need, for the Societies as much as for us, as medical questions can be dealt with only by specialists. In this connection, I would like to add that, in my opinion, every National Society should have a doctor or a special service in charge of medical activities; unfortunately this is not always the case.
Q.: Is there not also a good deal to be done in the field of documentation?

A.: That’s true and we are already doing something about this, too. We are preparing for our medical and other delegates a sort of guide on various medical tasks, for instance, how to draw up an assessment of medical needs or how to reply to a request for medicaments. The aim is to rationalize consignments to delegations in the field, as has been done by the Relief Division (see ICRC Bulletin No. 32 of 6 September 1978). In addition, we are classifying our records of past activities in systematic fashion. Before that, we went into action without being able to refer to past experience. Moreover, we are working jointly with other ICRC departments on the preparation of various papers. For instance, at the moment work is in progress on a paper on the protection of children in war-time, an appropriate theme since 1979 has been proclaimed International Year of the Child, and we shall do the same for handicapped people, who will have their international year in 1981, to which I think the ICRC, with its experience with war disabled persons will be able to usefully contribute.

Pharmaceutical service to be expanded

Q.: What are your aims at ICRC headquarters?

A.: Well, there are several, but I shall mention only the two which I think are the most important. First of all, we have to build up the pharmaceutical service. Last year, the ICRC Executive Board allocated half a million Swiss francs for the purchase of stocks of medicaments; this is quite a sizeable amount and should allow us to snap into action right away should an emergency arise. We have built up, with this money, a stock of those medicaments and medical supplies which usually take some time for delivery, and we have also purchased standard units of medical equipment, suitable for immediate use in different sorts of hospitals and dispensaries. In this way we were able to send, in record time, emergency medical aid to East Beirut, Nicaragua and Zambia, besides taking advantage of prices lower than those we would have been obliged to pay when shopping around under heavy pressure of time. There are still some improvements we have to make, like more efficient packaging, but our pharmaceutical service has got off to a good start.

Emphasis on detainees’ medical records

Another field that will be expanded is the study concerning the medical aspect of the files relating to detention. Until now, there has not been adequate continuity from one prison visit to another with respect to the medical observations in various places. We have started to centralize the details obtained so that the medical delegates visiting places of detention — who are not necessarily one and the same person at every visit — should have fully detailed files at hand.

As may be seen, neither ideas nor tasks are lacking for Dr. Russbach and all the people working with him, for the greater benefit of the ICRC and of the victims receiving ICRC aid.

REMI RUSSBACH

Was born in 1941 in Geneva and did all his schooling in the same town. In 1967 he qualified as a doctor at Geneva University, after having spent some time in two Paris hospitals. He then worked at the Institute of Pathology before being appointed to the internal medicine department of the Geneva Cantonal Hospital.

In 1969 Rémi Russbach performed his first mission for the ICRC, visiting political detainees in Greece. The following year, a second mission took him to Viet Nam, where he cared for prisoners of war and homeless children. He became so interested in ailments affecting children that he decided, on his return in Switzerland, to specialise in pediatrics, in which field he practised first as a house physician and then, until the autumn of 1976, as head of the pediatric service.

It was at this time that he joined the permanent staff of the ICRC at the head of its newly created Medical Division. In April 1978, he was appointed chief medical officer. In this capacity, he now spends part of his time in Geneva and the rest of the year travelling around in various countries in southern Africa, the Middle East and Asia, supervising and co-ordinating the ICRC’s medical assistance programmes.
As always at this time of the year, ICRC-Bulletin gives a preview of the main statistical data which will be published in the ICRC Annual Report now being prepared.

The figures it gives reflect a picture of the crisis which the world and the ICRC have lived through last year. Not since the Second World War has the ICRC been engaged in so many theatres of operation simultaneously. It had 323 delegates and doctors in the field, as against 256 in 1977. In 25 countries its delegates visited some 37,000 persons deprived of their freedom, about 2,180 of whom were prisoners of war. In comparison with the previous year, during which the ICRC visited 16,000 detainees, of whom about 400 were prisoners of war, its protection has been more than twice as extensive and the number of prisoners of war visited was more than five times greater.

In 1978 the ICRC forwarded 17,433 tons of relief supplies valued at 38 million Swiss francs to about fifty countries. Of the total, 9,721 tons of food valued at 18.3 million Swiss francs was provided by the European Economic Community, and 1,202 tons valued at 2.5 million francs was donated by the Swiss Confederation. To the African continent alone the ICRC sent 5,250 tons (13 million francs), more than three times the quantity sent in 1977.

But behind the bleak statistical data there is an immeasurable sum of action and dedication by delegates. While a figure may be given to material aid, the moral assistance provided by delegates is incalculable so that the most accurate statistics can but give a hint of what the goods and services really meant to those who so badly needed them.

The texts of this Bulletin have no official character, and may be freely reproduced.
On 12 February violent combats took place between the Chad Armed Forces and members of the Armed Forces of the North. On the days that followed the ICRC delegates in N'Djamena organized several convoys of vehicles to remove the wounded to the central hospital. Two flights from N'Djamena to Abeche (in east Chad) and back were also arranged by the ICRC to evacuate to N'Djamena over a hundred wounded civilians and combatants on board a DC-4 aircraft under cover of the red cross.

Immediately after the outbreak of the fighting the ICRC had expressed its deep concern for the victims and had broadcast an appeal urging combatants to observe the fundamental humanitarian principles. The appeal referred to the obligation to protect wounded persons, women, children, and all hospitals, ambulances and Red Cross vehicles, so that the Red Cross might discharge its mission promptly and without obstruction.

On 15 February during a truce, after obtaining the agreement of both parties, the ICRC evacuated the first group of wounded from Abeche by air. At about the same time and while fighting was still going on, the ICRC delegates made several trips to take badly needed medical supplies to the central hospital. On 20 February, a consignment of 256 kg medicaments was sent by air from Geneva. Powdered milk was also provided for the central hospital and for civilians (including many children) who had fled the combat zones and had found shelter in the military base and in a hotel. After the entry into force of a cease-fire, and in view of the difficult food situation, the delegates sent supplies to the hospital's medical and paramedical personnel and to the personnel of the prison where several hundred detainees were held.

Rice, millet, maize flour and vegetable oil were also distributed to a number of conflict victims in N'Djamena and in Koundoul, twelve kilometres to the south of the capital, where about 500 persons had sought refuge.

During those events, five persons were sent to strengthen the ICRC delegation in Chad, two of whom were doctors and another a nurse from the Swiss Technical Co-operation organization.

ICRC PRESIDENT IN CUBA

From 12 to 16 February ICRC President Alexandre Hay and Serge Nessi, delegate general for Latin America, were in Havana at the invitation of the Cuban Red Cross.

They were received in audience by the Head of State, Dr. Fidel Castro, with whom they discussed subjects of common interest and to whom they described ICRC activities throughout the world. Mr. Hay and Mr. Nessi also met the Vice-President of the State Council and of the Council of Ministers and member of the Cuban Communist Party Political Bureau, Dr. Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Isidoro Malmierca.

The two ICRC representatives were accompanied throughout their stay by Dr. Gutierrez Muniz, President of the National Society and Minister of Health. They visited the various services of the Cuban Red Cross in Havana and talked with several Red Cross officials.

CHINA-VIET NAM CONFLICT:
ICRC REMINDER

Following the armed clashes which broke out a few days ago on the border between China and Viet Nam, the ICRC sent a note on 19 February to the Governments of the People's Republic of China and of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam reminding them of their obligations under the Geneva Conventions.

The ICRC also stated that it was ready to perform the tasks incumbent upon it under the Conventions in such situations, in particular for the benefit of military and civilian prisoners and to seek missing persons.

IRAN: URGENTLY REQUIRED MEDICAL SUPPLIES FLOWN IN - CONTINUATION OF ICRC PROTECTION

Following the eruption of violence in Iran in the middle of February, causing many casualties, the Iranian Medical Association asked the ICRC to send medical supplies quickly. On the night of 17 - 18 February, an aircraft chartered by the ICRC took off from Zurich for Teheran with three delegates, radio equipment and 15 tons of medical supplies.

This action was made possible by the prompt financial support provided by the Swiss and Canadian Governments and by the National Red Cross Societies of Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Switzerland.

The ICRC medical delegate in Teheran undertook a survey of the medical services and of possibilities for delivering supplies to them.
The ICRC contacted Prime Minister Mr. Mehdi Bazargan with a view to obtaining the necessary assurance that it would be able to continue its mission for the wounded and for persons who had been arrested.

At the end of January the ICRC, at the request of the International Road Transport Union (IRU), intervened on behalf of about a thousand lorry drivers stranded by strikes at the Turkish-Iranian frontier and in need of help.

NICARAGUA AND HONDURAS: CONTINUATION OF ICRC ACTION

In Nicaragua, ICRC delegates continued their activities throughout February to protect and assist the victims of the events. They carried out nine visits to eight places of detention, where they saw altogether 25 persons held in custody. They also visited 175 persons who had taken refuge in two embassies. The delegates distributed foodstuffs to the persons visited and to a number of needy families.

Considerable quantities of goods have arrived in Nicaragua since the beginning of 1979: 500 tons of flour donated by the Swiss Confederation, a gift of 500 tons of rice from the EEC and 46 tons of canned meat, and a consignment of 100 tons of powdered milk (from the EEC) is expected to arrive at the beginning of March. A part of these foodstuffs - 150 tons of flour, 150 tons of rice, 12 tons of meat and 30 tons of milk - will go to Nicaraguan refugees in Honduras where they are being cared for by the Honduran Red Cross.

VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN MALAYSIA: TRACING AGENCY TAKES PRACTICAL STEPS

Following the mission undertaken in Kuala Lumpur by Nicolas Vecsey, Deputy Director of the ICRC Central Tracing Agency (CTA) (see ICRC Bulletin No. 37 of 7.2.79), practical steps have been taken to seek an answer to the CTA's problems in Vietnamese refugee camps in Malaysia. All activities in connection with the forwarding of mail and parcels to the refugees from their relatives and with enquiries for missing persons which until now had been dealt with by several different bodies will henceforth be centralized in the tracing agency bureau of the Malaysian Red Crescent. Accordingly, special letter-boxes have been placed in the refugee camps, whose inmates have been recommended to use standard air-letters. These measures should help to speed up the exchange of correspondence between the refugees and their families in other lands.

In agreement with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), it was decided that this organization would continue to compile its statistics on the refugees, adding information of specific utility to CTA work. In this connection, it has been found advisable to centralize all data in order to facilitate enquiries for missing persons and to help reunite members of dispersed families. Mr. Vecsey therefore returned on 5 March by air to Kuala Lumpur, where he will try to work out an appropriate scheme.

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS: KEEN ICRC INTEREST

From 12 February to 16 March, the UN Commission on Human Rights is holding its 35th session at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. As in previous years, the ICRC Delegate to International Organizations is closely following the work of the Commission. The ICRC is mainly interested in questions which are related to its own activities. In this connection, notable among the agenda items are those which refer to the elimination of torture and racial discrimination, to respect of human rights in regions where the ICRC is active - such as Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East - and to the machinery for the application of human rights.

BOGOTA: FIRST INTER-AMERICAN SEMINAR ON DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE OF HUMANITARIAN LAW

From 5 to 15 March the First Inter-American Seminar on the Dissemination of Knowledge of International Humanitarian Law, organized jointly by the Columbian Red Cross and the ICRC, is being held in Bogota. Twenty-two National Societies of Latin America and the Caribbean and representatives of the League and of the ICRC are taking part.

Like the seminar at Kuala Lumpur last November, the Bogota meeting has on its programme several lectures on the history and development of international humanitarian law. The seminar will then split into two working groups to examine ways and means by which the Red Cross may disseminate knowledge of humanitarian law among government circles, the armed forces, universities, schools and the public at large.
ICRC IN COLOMBIA

After a 15-day mission in Colombia, Léonard Isler, ICRC regional delegate for the Andean countries, returned to Geneva on 2 February. While in Colombia, he visited seven places of detention in which there were 160 persons, arrested under the Law on State Security.

For three places of detention, under military control, Léonard Isler's visit was the first by an ICRC delegate. In some of the civilian places of detention Mr. Isler was accompanied by Dr. B. Cosendey, medical delegate.

Mr. Isler conferred with several members of the Government, including the Ministers of Defence and of Justice. His contacts with these officials were made the easier by the invaluable support given by the National Red Cross Society.

IN BRIEF.................................

Seminar in Indonesia: Following the Kuala Lumpur seminar on the dissemination of knowledge of humanitarian law last November, the Indonesian National Society has decided to hold a similar meeting for its members in March.

Illegal immigrants in Thailand: From 8 January to 23 February, an ICRC delegate visited 29 places of detention near the Kampuchea border in the east and south-east of Thailand. He saw 1,300 people who had fled their own country and entered Thailand illegally. He distributed relief supplies to a value of about 7,000 Swiss francs.

The ICRC regional delegate in South-East Asia, Roland Duc, attended on 17 February the ceremonies for the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Singapore Red Cross Society.

On 20 February Mr. Duc was in Melbourne to attend a seminar organized by the Australian Red Cross on the dissemination of knowledge of humanitarian law, at which he gave a talk on the activities of the ICRC.

Michel Veuthey, ICRC delegate to international organizations, in Cape Town from 22 to 26 January, took part in the Conference on Human Rights in South Africa. Before some 300 magistrates, lawyers, teachers and students, he spoke on the Geneva Conventions, the Red Cross movement, the ICRC in southern Africa and its activities for the benefit of political prisoners. On 30 January and 2 February he addressed the United Nations Institute for Namibia, in Lusaka, on the ICRC and humanitarian law.

Mission in Namibia/South-West Africa: Roger Santchy, regional delegate in Pretoria, while in Windhoek from 5 to 17 February, conferred with local officials and with members of the South African Red Cross Regional Council. Contacts will be continued with the Government in Pretoria with a view to further ICRC visits to political detainees in the Republic of South Africa.

The first repatriation to Rhodesia/Zimbabwe under ICRC auspices took place on 13 February. A young man returning to Salisbury after three years of study in the United States took the wrong plane from London and landed in Lusaka. Not less than 2½ months of laborious negotiations by the ICRC delegations in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe and in Zambia were required before the young man could finally return to his family by a roundabout trip by air and rail from Lusaka via Gaborone and Bulawayo to Salisbury.

Relief action in Tanzania: From 30 December 1978 to 9 February 1979, the ICRC distributed 7,750 blankets, 5 tons of powdered milk, 2.4 tons of soap and 120 cases of kitchen utensils in 27 villages and camps in the Bukoba region, sheltering persons displaced by the fighting on the border between Tanzania and Uganda. This operation, carried out with the assistance of 15 volunteers of the Tanzanian Red Cross, helped 2,480 families, a total of about 14,800 persons.

Twelve bus trips from various towns in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe were organized in January by the ICRC to enable 528 persons to visit family members detained in Wha Wha prison.

JOINT LEAGUE-ICRC FILM CREW IN ASIA TO PRODUCE A FILM ON REFUGEES

A joint League-ICRC film crew left Geneva on 16 February for Burma, the first stage in their operations in Asia during which they will film international Red Cross assistance to refugees in that continent.

The crew, consisting of Michael Goudstikker, attaché de presse at the League of Red Cross Societies, and Jean-Jacques Kurz, head of ICRC's audio-visual service, will go also to Thailand, Malaysia and Bangladesh. This is the first time the League and ICRC have pooled their audio-visual resources since the idea was approved by the Twenty-third International Red Cross Conference at Bucharest in October 1977.
More than 30 years after the Second World War, the Central Tracing Agency of the ICRC is still issuing various documents for war victims or their surviving kin. The Polish Service of the CTA delivers certificates of this nature to Polish veterans to enable them to obtain from their Government the "combatant's card" which entitles them to various advantages. These advantages include early retirement (at 55 years of age for women and 60 for men), a war pension in case of infirmity, an increase in retirement or other pension, extra holidays, and so forth.

All these benefits are provided for in a law which came into force in Poland on 1 January 1976. Since that date the work of the Polish section of the ICRC Central Tracing Agency has been considerable: in 1977 it dealt with 16,277 applications and in 1978 with 15,000.

IN BRIEF

Mission in Paraguay: From 6 to 9 February regional delegate André Tschiffeli and his successor, Frangois Robadey, were in Paraguay. Mr. Robadey was introduced to the authorities and to the National Society. The two delegates also visited five political detainees in three places of detention.

A donation of 35 tons of powdered milk from the EEC has been distributed by the ICRC in the Selebi Pikwe, Dukwe and Francistown refugee camps in Botswana. In addition, 51 tents were delivered to Selebi Pikwe and 40 to Dukwe.

Michel Convers, Assistant Director of Operations, in Finland from 25 to 28 January, addressed the training seminar organized by the Finnish Red Cross for prospective delegates on current ICRC activities. He also conferred with the National Society's Secretary-General on the recruitment and training of delegates for international Red Cross missions. During stopovers at Stockholm and Copenhagen he discussed the same subject with officials of the Swedish and Danish Red Cross Societies.

Across the Allenby Bridge, a person who had strayed into Jordan was handed over to the Israeli authorities by those of Jordan on 31 January, under ICRC auspices. On 13 February a detainee of Iraqi origin was released by the Israeli authorities and conducted to Jordan in the presence of an ICRC representative.

Repatriated Lebanese: On 8 February, via Rosh Hanikra, fourteen Lebanese who had been taken prisoner by the Israeli forces in south Lebanon in March 1978 were repatriated under ICRC auspices.

Two Syrian prisoners held by the NLP were visited on 31 January by an ICRC delegate in Beirut.

Reunited in Syria: A person living in the occupied Golan territory was enabled on 31 January to go to the Syrian Arab Republic under ICRC auspices, to rejoin his family.

Travel in Middle East: In 1978 the ICRC organized travel between the occupied territories of Gaza/Sinai and Cairo. It arranged for 6,110 people (5,155 of them students) to go to the Arab Republic of Egypt and for 4,954 (of whom 3,939 were students) to go in the opposite direction.

The 7,807 radio messages - 502,000 words - exchanged between ICRC headquarters and its delegations in 1978 was 11.2% more than in 1977. Of the total traffic, 49.6% was with the Middle East and 41.8% with Africa. In addition, 19,701 telex messages were sent last year, 17.2% more than in 1977.

TUNE IN TO RCBS IN MARCH 1979

The dates and frequencies of RCBS (Red Cross Broadcasting Service) programmes in March will be as follows:

On 7,210 kHz, in the 41.6 meter band, Monday 26 March, in English and French from 0600 to 0700 GMT, from 1130 to 1230 GMT and from 1700 to 1800 GMT; Wednesday 28 March, in Spanish, German and Arabic at the same times.

DIRECTIONAL FREQUENCIES

ASIA AND PACIFIC, Tuesday 27 March, from 0945 to 1015 GMT in English, on 9,560, 11,780, 15,305 and 21,520 kHz.

AFRICA AND MIDDLE EAST, on Thursday 29 March, from 0945 to 1015 GMT in English and French, on 17,830, 21,520 and 21,545 kHz, and in Arabic on 21,630 kHz.
The ICRC information campaign in Southern Africa has already been reported in the ICRC Bulletin (see, for instance, issue No. 33 of 4 October 1978 in which appeared an interview with Alain Modoux, Head of the Press and Information Division). In this issue, we give an African's point of view, written by James Mwakisyala, a 30-year old Tanzanian journalist, who has been engaged by the ICRC regional delegation in Lusaka as one of its press attachés.

Before coming in January to Geneva, where he is familiarizing himself with all kinds of questions relating to the Red Cross in general, James Mwakisyala was on the staff of the Shihata press agency in Tanzania. Previously he graduated from Carleton University's school of journalism in Ottawa (Canada) in 1976. Since 1970 Mr. Mwakisyala has worked for various Tanzanian periodicals, such as the Swahili monthly "Nchi Yetu", for a monthly government journal, and for "Kwetu", a weekly periodical concerned with adult education.

Here are some of James Mwakisyala's views on the role and activities of the Red Cross in Southern Africa and other parts of the world.

I can say with some certainty that the Red Cross establishment is not widely known, and wherever it is, it is visualized in a hundred and one ways, none of which presents the total picture of the Red Cross.

In Tanzania, as in many African countries and elsewhere in the world, people have come to know the Red Cross through the organization's physical presence in their area. Naturally, they assume the local Red Cross activities cover the whole range of operations.

Many people in Tanzania have come to associate the "Red Cross on a white background" as a symbol of their community's ambulance that takes expectant mothers to the maternity ward or rushes accident victims to the hospital. To thousands more, the symbol means the charitable organization which brings truckloads of relief materials to the refugees. Tanzania has had thousands of refugees in the past 15 years from Mozambique, Ruanda, Burundi, Zaire and many countries in southern Africa.

Urban dwellers know the Red Cross as the organization which appeals for blood donation or runs a dispensary or clinic here and there. Unfortunately the majority, educated or not, are completely unaware of the Red Cross (Maslaba Mwekundu - as it is called in Swahili).

It wasn't until I finished High School in 1970 that I got to know something about the Red Cross, and even then as an escapee from the routine in the Tanzania national youth military camp.

It all began one morning when an army officer, accompanied by a nurse, appealed for volunteers to donate blood for the Muhimbili Hospital in Dar es Salaam, and in return, the officer said, the donors would be excused from all duties for two days plus an extra day of light duty. That did it! It is not that I was lazy: by no means. I wanted a break from the heavy military drill.

In time I have come to know the advantages of donating blood and for the past few years it has been my habit to donate blood on my birthday, the day after Xmas.
Red Cross information scanty

Ignorance about the Red Cross, its activities and what makes it tick and its origins, cries out for a concerted information campaign in southern Africa. Fortunately the magnitude of the ignorance has been grasped by the International Red Cross and efforts to remedy the situation have just begun.

From the Lusaka ICRC regional office, I have had the chance to work in the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross to familiarize myself with the workings of the institution, what it stands for and how it strives to accomplish its humanitarian activities the world over.

In my discussion with the head of the Press and Information Division, Mr. A. Modoux, I understood that the ICRC has fully realized the gravity of humanitarian problems pertaining to southern African countries - now and in the near future. In its efforts to relieve the suffering of the people in the region, the ICRC has launched an appeal for about SFrS. 15m for the six months to the end of April 1979 to cover purchases of relief materials for the displaced persons and refugees and for the information campaign without which much of the relief work and Red Cross personnel in the field would be unable to function effectively and safely.

The funds, which are expected to be donated mainly by industrialised countries, will be spent on relieving the suffering of over a million displaced people inside Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, over half of them children; more than 17,000 refugees in Botswana; nearly 29,000 refugees in Zambia and tens of thousands more in Mozambique.

The Deputy Director of the Operations Department, Mr. M. Convers, cautioned that the complexity of the situation in southern Africa offers no blanket solutions. This, he said, has meant that the heads of the delegations in the area have had to meet every six weeks with the responsible people in Geneva to review the situations as they arise and consider the action called for. To be effective, the ICRC has, as always, to be neutral and never interfere in any conflict.

The most tricky part of the ICRC's activities is to be effectively active on both sides of the conflict and be accepted on either side as an organization whose only interest is to relieve human suffering. In the Rhodesia/Zimbabwe conflict for example, the ICRC is active inside the country assisting the displaced people with shelter, food, clothing and medical care. Outside the country in Botswana, Zambia, and Mozambique, the ICRC is helping the refugees, victims of the conflict between the country's government and the guerrilla forces. These refugees are provided with blankets, tents, clothing, food and medical care.

Chad offers another example of ICRC neutrality within the country. Two delegations have been established, one in N'Djamena, the seat of government and another in Faya-Largeau in northern Chad, an area which is controlled by the FROLINAT guerrilleros.

The ICRC strives to provide relief materials to prisoners of war in the north, and a link for messages between families who have been separated because of the conflict.

This means moving relief goods by camel and days of travel in the desert.

But I was reminded that it is not always possible to give humanitarian help, because governments or conflicting parties are sometimes not keen to give the ICRC a free hand to help all who are in need.

Let us help each other

Mr. Modoux said the information campaign is aimed at getting the people and the governments in the area to know and appreciate the humanitarian work of the Red Cross and to motivate the people to involve themselves in the institution's activities. Success will create a conducive environment for the International Red Cross to come speedily and smoothly to the help of the needy.

As the uncertainties of the embittered Rhodesia/Zimbabwe conflict keep mounting, Namibian independence becomes more complex and the political dissension in South Africa continues brewing, all of which point to increasing violence, more and more humanitarian activities of the International Red Cross will be required and preparedness for handling that eventuality is essential.
RHODESIA/ZIMBABWE: THE ICRC CALLS UPON THE PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT TO ASSUME THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

Mr. Alexandre Hay, President of the International committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), held a press conference on Tuesday, 20 March 1979. Mr. Hay read out the text of a pressing and solemn appeal made by the ICRC to all the parties to the conflict in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, calling upon them to respect and to observe most scrupulously the fundamental humanitarian principles and to allow the ICRC to carry out fully its tasks for the protection and assistance of war victims.

An unprecedented step taken by the ICRC was its decision, in the persistent climate of wanton cruelty characterizing the conflict in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, to give a public, specific and detailed enumeration of the measures to be taken to put an end to the rising tide of ruthless violence of which the civilian inhabitants in the combat zones, the displaced persons and the members of families dispersed by the hostilities suffered most.

"This departure from our habitual policy diplomatic circumspection is deliberate", said Mr. Hay. "Our commitment is to those who suffer, not to those who cause the suffering. For too long we have witnessed, on the part of both sides of the conflict, the systematic violation of the code of human conduct. The degree of misbehaviour has risen to such levels that the ICRC feels it can no longer remain silent.

The ICRC appeals to all parties to cease attacks against the civilian population (killings and ill-treatment, setting villages on fire), to spare the lives of those who surrender, to treat humanely all captured enemy combatants and to respect the protective emblem of the Red Cross.

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The ICRC specifically requests the Transitional Government in Salisbury to put an end to the executions of captured members of the nationalist forces and of persons sentenced to death for offences of a political character; to allow the ICRC delegates to visit, in their places of detention, all captured members of the nationalist forces, political detainees, persons detained under martial law, and civilians forcibly removed from their homes in the war-affected areas and temporarily detained in camps; and to authorize the ICRC to provide medical care without discrimination to all wounded and sick war victims, and to resume the distribution of relief supplies in those areas where they have been forbidden by the security forces.

The ICRC requests the Patriotic Front to cease the killing of captured enemy combatants and of civilians; to cease the shooting down of civil aircraft; to refrain from abducting civilians, in particular children, and taking them across the border to neighbouring countries; to allow those who wish to do so to return to their homes, and to allow the ICRC to visit captured enemy combatants, register all civilians in refugee camps, search for missing persons, forward family messages and carry out the repatriation of various persons on humanitarian grounds.

The ICRC appeal has been sent to all the States parties to the Geneva Conventions, and in particular the United Kingdom, the five "Front-line" States, the members of the United Nations Security Council, the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations Secretary-General.

The ICRC hopes that the world-wide significance of its appeal and its dissemination at the highest levels will arouse the international community to take heed of the intolerable situation which exists in the Rhodesia/Zimbabwe conflict.

ICRC EMERGENCY RELIEF FOR YEMEN CONFLICT VICTIMS

Conflict having erupted at the end of February between North and South Yemen, ICRC delegate Fred Isler went to the Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen) to assess the needs of the victims. During his mission, from 3 to 15 March, he conferred with the authorities at Sana'a and with officials of the Yemen Red Crescent. He also visited several regions in the south of the country, namely Ibb, Taz, Rada, Suwadi, Bayda and Dhamar (where there was a camp giving shelter to some 800 displaced persons, most of them women and children).

It appeared from his survey that the civilian and military medical services had until then been able to meet the medical needs of the casualties. On the other hand, several thousand people had fled the fighting areas to seek refuge in safer regions. In spite of the efforts of the Yemeni authorities, most of these people were living in severe hardship and distress.

The ICRC therefore decided to start an emergency operation for about 5,000 particularly needy displaced persons. Blankets, mattresses and food for a month will be distributed in co-operation with the Yemeni Red Crescent. The value of this assistance amounts to about 350,000 Swiss francs.

Mr. Isler returned to the Yemen on 22 March to supervise relief distributions in co-operation with the Yemeni Red Crescent. For speed and economy relief supplies consisting of food for a month, blankets and mattresses were purchased locally. During distribution Mr. Isler will again survey the situation and assess relief needs with a view to adapting the ICRC assistance programme to the requirements of a changing situations.

CHAD - EMERGENCY ACTION IN THE SOUTH

The acute tension created in the south of Chad by the fighting between different ethnic groups has led the ICRC to undertake a series of protection and assistance operations for the civilian population.

At the beginning of March a survey started at Moundou and Doba, where several thousand people who had fled from N'Djamena and were trying to reach their native villages had found refuge in improvised camps. Hygiene and food problems were causing alarm. On 13 March a DC-3 aircraft took 1.5 tons of food to Doba. On the same day a team of delegates, one of them a doctor, went to Sahr for a temporary mission to the town hospital where there were many wounded, and which they supplied with medicaments. The N'Djamena delegation sent three further consignments (powdered milk and medicaments) before the month was out.

In the capital, split in two by the opposing forces, the ICRC has set up an office in the sector held by the Armed Forces of the North (FAN) in order to carry on its work on both sides of the "front". A surgeon, an
anaesthetist, a radiologist and a theatre nurse arrived on 14 March from Geneva to revive the surgical department of the central hospital, which had closed for lack of staff. In addition, the delegates continued supplying food to the paramedical staff and to detainees in the prison.

On 9 March six tons of food were flown to Abeché for distribution among about 1,500 wives and children of prisoners of war. The hospital was supplied with oxygen.

The delegates based on Faya continued visiting camps where prisoners of war were held by the Frolinat. During the first fortnight of March they saw 190 prisoners in six places of detention and conveyed seven sick prisoners to Faya hospital.

RELIEF PROGRAMME IN UGANDA

An ICRC mission, carried out from 24 February to 8 March by the regional delegate for East Africa and a medical delegate, to assess needs in the southern part of Uganda, has led the ICRC to set on foot a relief programme in aid of the civilian inhabitants who have suffered from the border clashes between Uganda and Tanzania.

Powdered milk, soap, blankets, clothing and kitchen utensils will be distributed among some 4,500 persons who have sought refuge in the camps at Kahunge (Toro district) and Ibuga (Ruwenzori district). Medical kits and medicaments will also be supplied so as to reopen Ibuga's dispensary.

In conformity with its policy of providing assistance to all victims of a conflict, the ICRC had organized on the other side of the front, in Tanzania, an emergency relief programme for persons affected by the hostilities.

CIVILIAN ARAB DETAINEES AND A PRISONER OF WAR RELEASED IN GENEVA

On 14 March, at Cointrin airport, Geneva, a simultaneous release of prisoners took place under ICRC auspices.

With an interval of a few minutes, two aircraft landed, one with 66 civilian Arab detainees released by the Israeli authorities, and one with an Israeli prisoner of war who had been captured in southern Lebanon on 5 April 1978 by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. At the same time, in the territory occupied by Israel, another ten civilian Arab detainees were released and escorted back to their families by ICRC delegates. During their captivity, all the prisoners had been visited by ICRC delegates.

This operation, conducted on the initiative of the Israeli authorities and the PFLP-GC, had required several months of effort by the ICRC to settle all arrangements. The actual exchange was organized with the agreement of the Swiss authorities and necessitated including a doctor delegate and an ICRC interpreter: Mahatta Rehabilitation and Correctional Centre (5, 6, 7 and 10 February), General Intelligence Department in Abdali (10 February), Zarka Military Prison (11 and 12 February), Madaba prison (14 February), Kerak prison (15 February), Tafileh prison (15 February), Ma'an prison (17 February), Akaba prison (18 February), Zarka prison (21 February), Salt prison (22 February), Jarash prison (25 February), Mafraq prison (26 February), Irbid prison (27 and 28 February), Kura prison and Ajlun prison (1 March), Ruseifah police prison (11 March).

LATE NEWS: SINOVIETNAMESE CONFLICT: DISPATCH OF DELEGATES AND DOCTORS TO HANOI

Having received acceptance of its offer of help of 19 February, following the outbreak of the sino-vietnamese conflict, the ICRC dispatched a mission to Hanoi on 4 April.

It is composed of two delegates and two doctors and goes to join the permanent delegate of the ICRC in Hanoi. This mission will carry out humanitarian tasks for victims of the conflict, as entrusted to the ICRC by the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

JORDAN: VISITS TO PLACES OF DETENTION

The authorities of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan have invited the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in accordance with its traditional humanitarian activities to visit all places of detention in Jordan. Consequently, the following visits were carried out by a team of 4 ICRC delegates, strict security measures.
On 22 March 1979, the ICRC President, Mr. Alexandre Hay, was received in audience by H.M. Queen Elizabeth II of England at Buckingham Palace. He was accompanied by Sir Evelyn Shuckburgh, Chairman of the British Red Cross and of the Standing Commission of the International Red Cross. The President of the ICRC thanked the Queen for the constant and generous support of the British Government and the British Red Cross for the humanitarian work of the ICRC.

Mr. Hay, accompanied by Mr. Melchior Borsinger, ICRC Delegate General for Europe and North America, then went to Scotland where he had been invited to attend the Quadrennial Assembly of the delegates of the Scottish branch of the National Society.

International Tracing Service, Arolsen:

More than 83,000 Documents Issued in 1978

More than thirty years after the Second World War, the International Tracing Service (ITS) at Arolsen in the Federal Republic of Germany is still gathering information on victims of National Socialism with a view to issuing the documents necessary for their identification or compensation.

Each year the number of applications diminishes and the identification of victims becomes more difficult, information unearthed being often piecemeal and inaccurate. However, by dint of minute research and meticulous recording and filing, the ITS has unceasingly built up its documentary evidence in order to solve even very old cases. It has processed more than two million enquiries and its records contain information relating to more than ten million people who suffered persecution by the Nazi régime.

In 1978 the ITS replied to 93,493 enquiries from some forty countries (mainly from the Federal Republic of Germany and Poland but also from France, the USA, Israel, the USSR etc.).

Of the replies sent by the ITS, 43,035 concerned persons who had been confined in concentration camps, 9,745 were certificates attesting to labour assignment during the war, 2,871 were certificates testifying to periods spent in camps for displaced persons after the war, and 430 gave information to people doing historical research, twenty-two of whom went to the ITS headquarters to consult its records to obtain details for inclusion in publications.

International Review also starts in this coming issue the publication of Jean Pictet's latest paper "Commentary on the fundamental principles of the Red Cross".

IN BRIEF

50,383 people in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe received material assistance from the ICRC in February: 6,439 in the province of Victoria, 15,739 in Matabeleland, 13,603 in Mashonaland and 14,602 in Manicaland. In the same month the ICRC distributed 295 tons of foodstuffs, 4,175 blankets, 5,818 articles of clothing and more than five tons of soap, valued altogether at about 275,000 Swiss francs.

The ICRC medical team in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe in February gave 3,043 consultations; X-rayed 301 people; inoculated 63 against measles, 66 against diphtheria and 66 against poliomyelitis; and operated on 77.

120 refugee families - more than 500 people - had been rehoused by the beginning of March in houses built by the ICRC at Seki, 15 miles from Salisbury. Another 180 houses are being built as part of the rehousing programme (costing about 200,000 Swiss francs) for persons uprooted by the conflict.

Repatriation from Viet Nam to Taiwan: A repatriation flight took place on 15 March 1979 under the auspices of the ICRC, allowing 124 Chinese of Taiwanese origin, who had been living in Viet Nam, to be reunited with their relatives in Taiwan.

Middle East repatriation. On 8 and 15 March the ICRC escorted from the West Bank of the Jordan to Amman two people who had strayed into occupied territory and were released by the Israeli authorities.
BACKGROUND

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN ARMED CONFLICTS

LIMITATIONS AND POSSIBILITIES FOR RED CROSS ACTION

The proclamation by the United Nations of the "International Year of the Child" in 1979 will draw the attention of world public opinion to children and the problems affecting them. When people speak of unhappy children, they have in mind undernourished, sick, abandoned waifs. But one rarely thinks of those who have been confronted by war and all its attendant woes. It is a sad fact that there are millions of such children whose tender age renders them particularly vulnerable to the horrors of war, which once seen and experienced can never be effaced from the memory of a child.

The ICRC is very much alive to the innumerable human tragedies which wars leave in their wake and to this aspect of the problem of children, for whom it has for a long time tried to provide additional protection and special assistance. In this respect, the theme of the 1979 international year closely corresponds to Red Cross aspirations and the ICRC is eager to be fully associated with it.

While children had always held an important place in Red Cross activities, it was in the period immediately after the end of the First World War that the ICRC seriously began to work in aid of children, by getting the various organizations which had been set up during the war, but were operating separately in several countries without any co-ordination, to join their forces.

In particular, the ICRC took part, together with Eglantyne Jebb, founder of the "Save the Children Fund", in the creation of the International Union of Child Welfare (IUCW). Later it prepared with the IUCW a draft of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, adopted by the League of Nations before being used as a basis for the United Nations Declaration adopted in 1959.

In 1939, the ICRC and IUCW prepared a draft convention for the protection of the child, but with the advent of the Second World War it had to be shelved. During the war, the ICRC spared no effort to protect children and alleviate their misery. In spite of the difficulties it met with in its attempts to protect civilians, there being no legal grounds for such activities, it managed to do something for children: it settled boys and girls under eighteen in special camps; it transmitted radio broadcasts to facilitate the re-uniting of children and parents; and it founded children's homes in war-stricken countries.

Legal protection

After the end of the Second World War, the ICRC began its undertaking to revise the Geneva Conventions and adapt them to the realities of modern warfare. One the aspects it had to deal with was the protection of civilians - and, consequently, of children - a category of persons who had
not been covered so far in any convention. Its efforts were crowned in 1949 with the convening of the Diplomatic Conference whose deliberations closed with the adoption of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, the fourth of which referred to the protection of civilian persons in time of war. The Fourth Convention contains specific provisions concerning the protection of children and the aid which can be given them. For instance, the "Parties to the conflict shall take the necessary measures to ensure that children under fifteen, who are orphaned or are separated from their families as a result of the war, are not left to their own resources, and that (...) their education shall, as far as possible, be entrusted to persons of a similar cultural tradition. The Parties to the conflict shall facilitate the reception of such children in a neutral country... They shall (...) endeavour to arrange for all children under twelve to be identified by the wearing of identity discs (...) In the section on occupied territories, it is stated that the "Occupying Power shall, with the cooperation of the national and local authorities, facilitate the proper working of all institutions devoted to the care and education of children (...) It may not, in any case, change their personal status, nor enlist them in formations or organizations subordinate to it (...) The Occupying Power shall not hinder the application of any preferential measures in regard to food, medical care and protection against the effects of war (...)"

In other words, children must be brought up in surroundings as close as possible to those to which they are accustomed.

Impressions that cannot be eradicated

Since the second world conflict, the conduct of war has undergone a major change: methods and means of combats are more deadly, and non-international armed conflicts opposing organized armed forces against groups of irregular combatants are more and more frequent. Both developments have led to a reversal of the principles underlying the conduct of war; at the same time the separation between fighting troops and non-combatants which had existed in classical wars has been swept away. Max Huber once said that the evolution to total warfare, with all its dangers and suffering, had erased the distinction between armies and the civilian population. Modern warfare was causing greater loss of life and injury amongst civilians - especially among their weaker members, the children - than in the combatants' ranks, a state of affairs which led some people to observe that it was less dangerous to don a uniform and carry arms than to continue to perform one's everyday tasks. A Swedish delegate at the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law, which adopted in 1977 the two Protocols to the Geneva Conventions, quoted the following figures in support of this notion:

in the First World War, the number of civilian casualties was 15 per cent of the total, in the Second World War, it was 50 per cent, and in the Korean and Viet Nam wars, this proportion rose to 60 and 70 per cent respectively. It is frightening to think of the number of children who have been killed, maimed, wounded, or affected indirectly by hostilities.

War may have vastly different consequences upon children than upon adults, for its effects may be irreparable. A child who has seen the horrors of war may be unable to surmount the psychological shock and mental disturbance and may suffer all his life from such traumas, even though he may have completely recovered from physical wounds.

New standards

The 1977 Protocols to the Geneva Conventions reinforce considerably the protection afforded to the civilian population, and therefore to children. In Protocol I

ICRC AND IUCW: CLOSE TIES

On 29 September 1976 a commemorative stone was unveiled at ICRC headquarters to mark the centenary of the birth of Eglantyne Jebb, who founded the IUCW in 1920.

As mentioned by President Hay during the ceremony, Miss Jebb had appealed to the ICRC to support her project, for she realized that international backing and permanent action were necessary to meet the needs of children. The ICRC therefore gave its patronage to the International Union for Child Welfare. Founded on principles of impartiality, non-discrimination and universality, the IUCW has maintained its close association with the ICRC and has been authorized to display the red cross beside its own sign.
applicable in international armed conflicts and in Protocol II applicable in non-international armed conflicts, the new provisions confirm and supplement the measures laid down in the Fourth Geneva Convention.

These provisions concern, more particularly, the identification and evacuation of children. It should be pointed out that, in addition to a better protection of children, the Protocols also refer to a problem which had not been touched upon hitherto, that of children taking part in hostilities. This is one of the consequences of the evolution in the nature of conflicts, where civilians and combatants are often indistinguishable, some persons taking part in military operations at night and then reverting to civilian life during the day. It is in this context that the question of the part which children may take in hostilities should be placed - such as the blowing up of a target by means of a bomb which a child may be asked to carry without being told what it is, or indirectly providing assistance to combatants. It would not have been realistic to forbid totally such participation, and so the Protocols mention that the Parties shall "take all feasible measures" to exclude children's participation in hostilities and "shall refrain from recruiting" children under fifteen years into their armed forces. Moreover, children shall benefit from special protection when captured, whether or not they are prisoners of war. It should be noted that already in 1949, special provisions had been introduced concerning the treatment of interned children.

It is not long since the Protocols have entered into force and, for the moment, they are binding on only a few States. It is clear that international legal instruments, however perfect they might be, can never ensure full protection. Great distress is caused wherever a war is waged, wherever fighting is taking place, in fact in those very situations where the ICRC must intervene.

A case in point is ICRC action in Africa, where sixty per cent of its resources in men and equipment are engaged in the countries at present in conflict. For example, in Zambia, of the 29,000 persons from Rhodesia/Zimbabwe living in the refugee camps, 18,000 are boys and girls under sixteen, and 300 are young women with infants.

It is important that the ICRC should be aware of the situation, because its food and medical aid programmes must be adapted to the victims it has to assist, and special programmes must be prepared, wherever necessary, for children.

Central Tracing Agency

In one particular branch, the ICRC's contribution is unparalleled; the tracing of mission persons, the exchange of family messages and the re-uniting of members of families separated by the fighting. For more than a century, the ICRC's Central Tracing Agency has been gathering and transmitting information, and replying to inquiries concerning missing and captured persons, refugees, and people who have been released or repatriated. When normal channels of communication are disrupted, it forwards family messages. In the case of children, the Central Tracing Agency often has to deal with additional difficulties, as some children cannot remember certain details, such as their family name or their home address. But, notwithstanding such obstacles, the ICRC delegates give priority to finding children who are missing, and putting them in contact and re-uniting them with their families.

The future of mankind and peace

The Red Cross came into being, as a result of the horror felt by Henry Dunant at the sight of the wounded and dying on Solferino's battlefield, and his fierce resolve to find remedies for such terrible agonies. The idea that lay smouldering in his breast fanned into a flame which gave light to the pages of "A Memory of Solferino". Dunant suggested the creation of voluntary relief societies whose activities were to be based on an international treaty. Since then Red Cross action has saved millions of lives. But there still exist nevertheless human tragedies which lie beyond its reach. One of the most revolting aspects of contemporary conflicts is the fact that children are its most vulnerable victims.

It is in this context that the ICRC endeavours to protect and assist children and parents, physically and psychologically, in order to deliver them from the distress caused by the nightmare scenes at which they were present and which continue to torture them long after those harrowing events.
Suffering is to be found all over the world; it occurs in many and varied forms. It generally arouses in those who witness it a feeling of pity, of compassion and also a desire to help the sufferers.

The ICRC, since its foundation 115 years ago, has applied itself mainly to fighting suffering caused by war. This mission, which it took upon itself, is still carried out by the ICRC today, in a world bristling with the most deadly weapons and where, in the name of the most diverse causes, arbitrary and violent confrontations occur. It thus acts in accordance with its motto "Inter arma caritas" and tries to do some good where misfortune and suffering prevail.

One crucial question arises: is it sufficient to fight suffering in its manifold appearances or would it not be better to attack the root of the evil, that is to say war itself and violence? In fact, the ICRC has taken steps to do this, more specifically in taking a definite stand against torture, launching appeals for disarmament, or sponsoring a round table meeting on peace.

These initiatives were not very successful and the press did not display the interest one had anticipated it would. From this it is possible to gauge the difficulties encountered every day and the efforts that the ICRC must constantly make in its struggle against suffering.

In the world today there are 126 National Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies with some 230 million members. If each one supported, to the fullest possible extent, the efforts of the ICRC and of the Red Cross for peace, perhaps at last progress might be made in this battle against war and the suffering it causes.

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CHINA-VIET NAM CONFLICT: ICRC MISSION TO CHINA - ASSISTANCE TO VIET NAM

An ICRC mission comprising Marcel Naville, member and former President of the ICRC, Jean de Courten, delegate-general for Asia and Oceania, and Dominique Borel, regional delegate, left Geneva on 24 April for Peking for discussions with the Chinese authorities about humanitarian problems arising from the conflict between China and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

The ICRC had offered its services to the two governments on 19 February. From 5 to 14 April two ICRC delegates, two ICRC doctors and the resident delegate in Hanoi carried out a mission in Viet Nam. Accompanied by representatives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and of the Vietnamese Red Cross, they visited two provinces affected by the fighting, Cao Bang and Lang Son, where they saw in what need was the population. Emergency medical assistance was decided upon and a consignment of three tons of medical supplies will shortly leave Geneva for Hanoi. It has not so far been possible, however, to reach an agreement with the Vietnamese authorities on visits to Chinese prisoners of war detained in Viet Nam.

STOP PRESS

On 30 April the ICRC delegation left Pekin to start its visit to all Vietnamese prisoners of war in Chinese hands.

IRAN: OBSTACLES TO PROTECTION

At the beginning of a visit to the Qasr prison in Teheran at the end of March, ICRC delegates counted 1,257 detainees. However, they were obliged to discontinue their visit as they were told they would not be allowed to talk in private with detainees.

The ICRC delegates have since continued their efforts to discharge their task of protecting detainees. They have made contact with the authorities with a view to obtaining permission to resume their visits to places of detention in accordance with normal ICRC requirements, in particular to inspect the places of detention without let or hindrance and to interview detainees of their choice without witnesses.

SOUTH LEBANON - EMERGENCY AID TO HOSPITALS AND DISPENSARIES

As a result of military operations in south Lebanon, the ICRC delegation is again faced with an emergency. The delegates based on Tyre have made several surveys of the situation and needs of the civilian population. They went to several dispensaries and hospitals which they provided with standard surgical kits and medical supplies.

The ICRC is also closely watching the developments which have caused tens of thousands of people to flee the areas where fighting has occurred, with a view to providing any short-term emergency assistance which might be necessary.

NICARAGUA : EMERGENCY AT ESTELI

During the recent fighting in the northern town of Esteli, the ICRC and the National Society came to the aid of the civilian victims. Two Convoys were organized on 11 and 14 April to take supplies to several hundred people who had sought refuge at the Esteli branch of the Red Cross and in the Rosario College. Five doctors and 33 first-aiders from the National Society, accompanied by the Society's President and the ICRC delegate, delivered food, water and medical supplies and organized air transport to Managua of eight seriously wounded persons for hospitalization.

Visits to places of detention continued, although with diminished frequency. Since the start of its action in Nicaragua last September, the ICRC has visited nearly 900 detainees in 24 places of detention.

YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC : RELIEF ACTION CONTINUES

An ICRC delegate specialized in relief operations, Cedric Neukomm, has been in Sana'a since mid-April, having taken over from Fred Isler who, in March, started an emergency relief action, budgeted at 350,000 Swiss francs, for the victims of the recent conflict along the border between the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (see "ICRC Bulletin" No. 39, 4.4.79).

Cedric Neukomm is at present completing a survey of the situation, visiting all the places where some 43,000 people displaced by the fighting are gathered, and which it had not been possible to visit previously. Near the capital the ICRC has helped establish a camp for displaced persons by providing the authorities and National Society a hundred tents donated by the British Government. In addition other supplies, mainly camping equipment, were distributed in April.
ICRC PRESIDENT RECEIVED BY H.M. KING KHALED OF SAUDI ARABIA

The President of the ICRC, Alexandre Hay - accompanied by Serge Nessi, Head of the Financing Division, and Jean Hoefliger, delegate general for the Middle East - was in Saudi Arabia from 5 to 10 March. At Riyadh, President Hay was received in audience on 9 March by H. M. King Khaled Ibn Abdul Aziz. Also present were H.R.H. Prince Abdullah Ibn Abdul Aziz, 2nd Vice-President of the Council and Commander of the National Guard and H.R.H. Prince Sultan bin Abdul Aziz, Minister of Defence and Aviation. The ICRC President also conferred with Dr. Rashad Pharaon, Minister of State and Adviser to His Majesty. During his stay, Mr. Hay met on several occasions Dr. Abdul Aziz Mudarris, President of the Saudi Arabian Red Crescent.

The purpose of this visit to Saudi Arabia was to give an outline of the ICRC's work and obtain financial support, in view of the number of critical situations requiring the ICRC's intervention in various parts of the world.

UGANDA: RELIEF ACTIVITIES AND NEW DELEGATION IN KAMPALA

The spread of hostilities in Uganda and the flight of 50,000 people impelled the ICRC to step up its relief and assistance activities in March. A delegation led by François Chappuis, complete with a medical delegate, a relief delegate, a delegate from the Central Tracing Agency, an administrator and a radio operator, will open in Kampala. Three delegates left Geneva on 27 April for Uganda, via Kenya. They will soon be followed by the other members of the team.

At the height of the battle for Kampala, Eddie Leemann, regional delegate for East Africa, was in the town and distributed medical supplies, blankets and soap to hospitals and reception centres for displaced persons at Rubaga and Sentema. He was subsequently compelled to go to Nairobi because of the difficulty of travelling to stricken districts, but returned as soon as Entebbe airport was reopened, accompanied by a medical delegate. From 17 to 25 April the two delegates visited the hospitals at Rubaga, Naamba, Masaka and Malago. They had talks with the new Ministers of Health, Defence and Rehabilitation and Reconstruction and with other officials.

To meet emergency needs, the ICRC will provide ten tons of medical supplies, valued at 200,000 swiss francs. Five tons of milk powder, 2000 blankets and 1000 bars of soap will be purchased in Nairobi for despatch to Kampala. Two lorries and four Land-Rovers for the transport and distribution of relief supplies will also be bought in Nairobi, where a logistics centre will be set up for ICRC activities in Uganda.

At the same time, the ICRC is negotiating with the Tanzanian and Ugandan Governments with a view to visiting prisoners of war and detainees.

VIETNAMESE REFUGEES: A CONTINENT-WIDE TASK FOR THE TRACING AGENCY

Jean de Courten, ICRC delegate-general for Asia and Oceania, accompanied by Nicolas Vecsey, assistant director of the ICRC Central Tracing Agency, and Roland Duc, ICRC regional delegate for South-East Asia, attended, as observers, the Third Conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the Member Countries of ASEAN, held in Manila from 2 to 5 April. One of the major items on the agenda was the question of reception, assistance and emigration of the Vietnamese refugees, the "boat people", who are setting a difficult problem for the Asian countries giving them temporary refuge.

Mr. de Courten gave a talk on international humanitarian law and Mr. Vecsey on the work of the Central Tracing Agency. "I stressed the ways in which resettlement of the refugees in countries of asylum can be accelerated", said Mr. Vecsey. "For that we must solve the problem of finding missing persons and of reuniting dispersed families. With that in view, the Agency, which is working in close co-operation with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, propose the setting up, in all the countries concerned in South-East Asia, of local tracing service offices in the
National Societies. We are contemplating the opening of a regional office which would centralize the recording of refugees' names and make for efficient co-ordination."

Nicolas Vecsey went to Kuala Lumpur, Tokyo and Hong Kong before going to Manila, examining in each place, with the National Society, the authorities and the local HCR representatives, the gravity of the problem and action to cope with it.

"In Hong Kong", he added, "I visited the 'Sky Luck' which had been anchored there since December with 2,650 refugees aboard, cut off from the rest of the world since their departure from Viet Nam. With the Hong Kong Red Cross we initiated a system to enable these refugees to correspond with their families abroad. At Manila, too, the ICRC delegates, and two representatives of the League, went aboard the 'Tung An' which reached Manila towards the end of 1978 and whose 1,500 refugee passengers are faced with the same problems of communication and tracing. There too a system of mail transmission was instituted."

Three months on mission across the Asian continent have given Nicolas Vecsey an overall perspective of the plight of the "boat people". "I went to some fifteen camps in several countries, and spoke with hundreds of refugees. About a third of these people are seeking a family member somewhere in the world; that is the size of the problem confronting the HCR and the Red Cross. The ICRC is prepared to provide technical assistance when and where it seems necessary and the collaboration of the National Societies is vital, just as is close co-operation among all the organizations involved in this action."

CHADS ASSISTANCE AT VARIOUS PLACES IN THE SOUTH; CONTINUED VISITS TO POWS IN THE NORTH

With the influx of refugees from the south, the ICRC delegation at N'Djamena has distributed rice and milk powder to the Kabalayes and Walia Catholic missions, the central hospital and the girls college now being used as a refugee reception centre. Some 900 people have benefited. In addition, distribution on a district basis is being organized.

Delegates and doctors have made surveys in Sahr, Moundou, Doba, Bongor, Bousso and other southern localities where tension is running high following the February clashes in N'Djamena. Similar missions were carried out at Bol and Mao near Lake Chad. At the same time the delegates delivered food and medical supplies to hospitals, dispensaries and reception centres for displaced persons.

The delegates based at Faya continued visiting prisoners of war held by the Frolinat in the north. On 9 April they went to Amoule, Mardingai and Addi, providing 1.1 tons of food to keep thirty prisoners of war in those places for two months. Food for three months was distributed also at Gouro and Uimianga (9 tons for 165 POWs) and at Yarda, Horom and Gouri (5.1 tons for 108 POWs).

REFUGEES IN BOTSWANA AND ZAMBIA: ESSENTIALLY MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

The ICRC has delivered 50,000 dollars worth of medical supplies to the Lusaka University Teaching Hospital for the treatment of the many wounded from the recently attacked refugee camps. The hospital's stocks had been rapidly diminishing because of the large number of casualties. The ICRC has now stored emergency stocks (mainly medical supplies and blankets) in Lusaka to meet any contingency.

In the refugee camps in Zambia and Botswana, a hygiene promotion and medical assistance programme is being carried out jointly by the ICRC, UNICEF, the HCR, the World Lutheran Federation and other organizations. As already mentioned in ICRC Bulletin, first-aid courses are conducted by the Zambian Red Cross with ICRC help, and an ICRC public health specialist has just completed a survey in the camps in both countries and supervised the construction of sanitary facilities. In one camp near Lusaka no less than 500 latrines have been provided and in a new camp for boys in the north of Zambia work on sanitary installations will shortly begin.

The ICRC medical team in Botswana, a doctor and two female nurses, are busy in the Dukwe, Selebi Pikwe and Francistown camps where there are some 30,000 refugees. The capacity of the first two of these three camps is to be doubled in the next few months.

IN BRIEF

Donation to ICRC medical division. A British manufacturer of medical appliances, which participated in the exhibition of medical transport equipment held last year in Geneva, has donated to the ICRC an automatic oxygen resuscitator. This portable appliance to give artificial respiration to a patient during conveyance to hospital was given to the ICRC on 11 April.
ICRC ACTIVITIES FOR THE ARAB CIVILIAN POPULATION: SOME ELOQUENT STATISTICS

Humanitarian activities for the Arab population of the territories occupied by Israel have for several years been an important facet of ICRC action. ICRC delegations in Israel and the occupied territories (16 delegates and 35 locally recruited staff), in the Arab Republic of Egypt (2 delegates and 6 local employees), in Jordan (2 delegates and 6 local employees) and in the Syrian Arab Republic (1 delegate and four local employees) have for years been carrying out traditional protection and assistance operations.

In 1978, as in previous years, the ICRC delegates have regularly visited 14 prisons in Israel and the occupied territories, in which some 3,000 Arab civilians are detained on remand, on administrative order or after conviction. Each month they distributed fruit to all these detainees and to several hundred they also supplied some articles of summer and winter clothing. The ICRC also paid for books and magazines and for a number of medical prostheses. It organized bus transport to enable an average of 2,700 people each month to visit their detained relatives. The cost of this assistance amounted to 335,500 Swiss francs.

Following an agreement reached with the Israeli authorities in December 1977, the delegates made 1,280 visits to 780 civilian Arab detainees undergoing interrogation.

The Central Tracing Agency, in 1978, forwarded 13,000 messages between separated families, mainly detainees and their relatives living in Arab countries.

In addition, the ICRC sent to Gaza and the West Bank of the Jordan large quantities of milk powder and cereals donated by the EEC and the Swiss Government, i.e. 1,824 tons of flour, 740 tons of rice, 550 tons of skimmed milk powder and 280 tons of butteroil. To Jordan it sent 100 tons of skimmed milk powder and 662 tons of flour. To Syria it sent 130 tons of powdered whole milk.

The ICRC organized travel for many people between the occupied territories and the Arab countries. In the UN buffer zone in the north of the Sinai, 33 such operations took place, enabling 14,627 people to go from Gaza to Cairo or in the opposite direction. Most of these people were students registered in Egyptian universities, others were people going to visit relatives.

On the Golan Heights six such operations enabled ten families (52 people) to reunite and a number of students to go to or return from Damascus university. Between the West and the East Bank of the Jordan, ten people crossed the river in each direction last year under ICRC auspices.

IN BRIEF

More than 4,300 persons who had entered Thailand illegally from Kampuchea were visited by ICRC delegates in March and April, in 22 places of detention in the east and south-east of Thailand.

The 2nd training course for delegates took place in Cartigny, near Geneva, from 1 to 7 April. A score of candidates - including three women - came from all over Switzerland to take the course.

Monaco conference. Philippe Eberlin, technical adviser to the ICRC, attended the Third International Conference on Disaster Medicine, held in Monaco from 6 to 9 April. This year the meeting was concerned with lifesaving at sea. More than 300 doctors from some fifty countries and representatives of many international organizations took part. Discussions centred on disasters at sea and their consequences in peace and war.
NATIONAL SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVES INVITED TO ICRC

Representatives of about thirty National Societies from all over the world, in Geneva for the meeting of the Executive Council of the League of Red Cross Societies from 23 to 28 April, were received at ICRC headquarters on the 26th. This visit the third of its kind, presents an opportunity for the ICRC and its guests to exchange views on current problems and Red Cross action in many parts of the world. The meeting was attended also by representatives of the League Secretariat.

After an address of welcome by President Alexandre Hay and a review by Director of Operations Jean-Pierre Hocké of ICRC activities in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, the meeting split into two working groups. One discussed Red Cross work in non-international armed conflict, a subject covering the extension of Red Cross action provided by the 1977 Protocol II in addition to its activities under the common article 3 of the four 1949 Geneva Conventions. The subject for the other group was Red Cross action for refugees, a central feature of which was Red Cross relations with the UNHCR.

The visit terminated with a reception in which the ICRC and its guests talked informally in a cordial atmosphere.

RED CROSS LEADERSHIP COURSES AT THE HENRY DUNANT INSTITUTE

The third annual course on Red Cross international activities, organized by the Henry Dunant Institute for National Society leaders and senior officials will take place from 10 to 17 May at Geneva. The language in which the courses are held every year is alternately French and English. This year's course will be attended by over thirty participants from twenty-four Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in English-speaking countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. The programme includes lectures followed by discussions, visits to the ICRC and League and a meeting with members of the Geneva Branch of the Swiss Red Cross.

INFORMATION DAY FOR THE BELGIAN PRESS

The Belgian Red Cross had the idea of inviting 32 journalists, representing Belgian newspapers, broadcasting and television, to visit Geneva on 4 April for a day and get better acquainted with the international bodies of the Red Cross.

The humanitarian demands created by the numerous incidents of the last few months provided material for sustained discussions in which were reviewed the main subjects of concern for the ICRC, such as the conflicts in Africa, political detainees, the ICRC's activities during the Second World War (brought to the fore by the television film "Holocaust").

The interest shown by the representatives of the Belgian mass media clearly demonstrated the value of such meetings, which provide an opportunity to explain better the philosophy underlying ICRC action and methods of operation.

If might be well worth while repeating this kind of visit with journalists from other countries.

NEW MEMBERS OF THE ICRC

The Assembly of the International Committee of the Red Cross on 4 April co-opted three new members. They are: Miss Andrée Weitzel, who worked some years as a journalist before becoming head of the women's auxiliary service of the Federal Military Department, Berne, from 1953 to 1977; Mr. Maurice Aubert, Doctor of Laws, banker, President of the Grand Council of the Republic and Canton of Geneva until January this year, and President of the Institut universitaire d'études du développement in Geneva; and Mr. Rudolf Jaeckli, Doctor of Science, geologist, former company manager and director of various development projects in the Middle East. Since 1977, Mr. Jaeckli has been a part-time adviser at the ICRC. He has also carried out a number of missions to various countries, including Lebanon and Ethiopia. Thus reinforced, the ICRC has 21 members.

IN BRIEF

Centenary of the Peruvian Red Cross: Rudolf Jäckli, a member of the ICRC, was in Peru from 13 to 18 April and attended the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Peruvian Red Cross. Peru was the first Latin American country to accede to the 1864 Geneva Convention and the first on the American continent to form a Red Cross Society.

Repatriated to Lebanon: After medical treatment in Israel, a young woman was repatriated to southern Lebanon on 2 April under ICRC auspices via the Rosh Hanikra border post.

and to Syria: A young Syrian woman was escorted by the ICRC on 3 April from occupied Golan via Kuneitra to the Syrian Arab Republic to join her betrothed and future in-laws.
IN BRIEF

The Jordan authorities on 5 April handed over to those of Israel, through the ICRC, a person who had wandered into Jordan.

Mission by the new delegate general for Latin America: André Pasquier, recently appointed ICRC delegate general for Latin America, accompanied by his predecessor, Serge Nessi, went to Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina and Uruguay, where Mr. Nessi introduced him to the leaders of the National Societies. Mr. Nessi has been appointed Head of the ICRC's Financing Division.

PREPARATORY CONFERENCE ON WEAPONS
MODERATE PROGRESS

As at the first session, the ICRC, in its capacity as observer and expert, was also present at the second session of the "Preparatory Conference for the United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects".

This Conference followed upon the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law applicable in Armed Conflicts (CDDH), with a view to reaching agreements on prohibitions or restrictions of the use of specific conventional weapons and so supplementing the principles contained in the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions, adopted in 1977 by the CDDH. The weapons referred to were those which have indiscriminate effects or which were deemed to be excessively injurious, and the aim was to spare the civilian population and to make warfare somewhat less inhumane.

At its first session, the Preparatory Conference did not reach agreement on the method of decision-making on substantive matters to be taken up by the main United Nations Conference. As this question had absorbed a substantial proportion of the time at the first session, it was dealt with at the second session in informal discussions, but again no agreement was reached and in the rules of procedure proposed for the main Conference it was left in suspense for the time being.

Notwithstanding that fact, the Preparatory Conference examined in detail several substantive manners. It is expected that agreements might be reached on the question of non-detectable fragments and the use of landmines and other devices. Some progress was made on the question of incendiary weapons, even though it seems that the Conference has not yet worked out a text that would be unanimously acceptable. Among other proposals examined, a Swedish text on small-calibre weapons should be mentioned, although here, too, no real agreement yet seems very likely. An outline of a general treaty with optional protocols, submitted by Mexico, was greeted with considerable interest.

However, the results obtained by this Preparatory Conference were less meagre than might have been feared at the end of the first session. This time, useful discussions were held, even though the progress achieved was slight. The ICRC, therefore, judged it necessary at the closing plenary meeting to make a statement in which, among other things, it invited States to lay stress, during their discussions, on the humanitarian aspects and reminded them of the high expectations placed in the work of the main United Nations Conference.

It was recommended that this Conference should take place in 1979, from 10 to 28 September, but it is not likely that its work will be completed in a single session.

TUNE IN TO RCBS IN MAY

The dates and frequencies of the Red Cross Broadcasting Service programmes in May will be as follows:

Omnidirectional frequency

7210 kHz in the 41.6 metre band from 0600 to 0700, from 1130 to 1230 and from 1700 to 1800 GMT; Monday 28 May, transmission of programmes in English and French; Wednesday 30 May, Spanish, German and Arabic.

BEAMED FREQUENCIES

ASIA AND PACIFIC

Tuesday 29 May, from 0945 to 1015 GMT, in English, on 9560 kHz, 11,780 kHz, 15,305 kHz and 21,520 kHz.

AFRICA AND MIDDLE EAST

Thursday 31 May, from 0945 to 1015 GMT, in ENGLISH/FRENCH, on 15,430 kHz, 17,830 kHz and 21,520 kHz; in ARABIC on 21,630 kHz.
THE AGELESS FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

The International Committee of the Red Cross has at the present moment one hundred and fifty of its delegates working in thirty countries, in half of which armed conflicts are taking place. Everywhere they are performing tasks in the name of the Red Cross and of its fundamental principles, visiting persons deprived of their liberty, repatriating prisoners of war, distributing relief supplies to civilian populations affected by combats.

Born on the field of battle, with the avowed intention of "bringing relief to the wounded without discrimination", the Red Cross has endeavoured, for over a hundred years, to alleviate all suffering caused by war. And yet, the ideals underlying its action are not always accepted, and international humanitarian law, which is based on those ideals, is not always applied. In a world where men are bent on each other's destruction, where even non-combatants are not spared the evils of war, the fundamental principles of the Red Cross retain their full value.

When Dunant and his friends founded the Red Cross, they hoped that its ideals would bring about its own gradual extinction, through the establishment of a universal peace which would render the work of the Red Cross no longer necessary. Today, it seems, on the contrary, that the sufferings endured by men and women are far from having been abolished for all time. Nevertheless, even though there are still many shortcomings in the application of humanitarian norms for the victims of conflicts, we must applaud every step forward made in the respect of the principles which safeguard humane treatment for such persons without distinction of any kind and uphold their personal dignity, in all circumstances.

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CHINA-VIETNAM: PRISONERS VISITED AND REPATRIATED

On 21 and 28 May 1979, altogether 238 Vietnamese prisoners and 63 Chinese prisoners, most of whom were either wounded or sick, were repatriated. ICRC delegates were present on both occasions. In three similar operations, planned to take place in June, all prisoners on both sides will be sent back to their country under ICRC auspices.

Pursuant to an agreement for the exchange of prisoners concluded between the People's Republic of China and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the National Red Cross Societies of these two countries settled the final arrangements for the repatriation of the prisoners. ICRC delegates were represented on both sides during these talks.

An ICRC delegation visited six camps and a hospital in the south of the People's Republic of China and saw all the 1,638 Vietnamese prisoners captured by the Chinese in the course of the hostilities.

Another ICRC mission is at present in the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. Together with the ICRC's resident delegate at Hanoi, it is visiting all Chinese prisoners in Vietnamese hands, in accordance with the Geneva Conventions.

ICRC HELPS EVACUATE CIVILIAN INTERNEES FROM ABECHE TO N'DJAMENA

The work of the ICRC delegation in N'Djamena resumed on 11 May. It had been interrupted briefly to allow the delegates to find ways and means improving safety during travel and to obtain formal guarantees on this matter from the local authorities.

On 25 May, the ICRC helped in the evacuation to N'Djama from Abeché of 467 civilian internees, 333 of them on lorries provided by the ICRC. The delegates gave them medical aid and distributed food for five days, i.e. 500 kg. of rice, 75 kg. of powdered milk, 75 kg. of sugar and 75 litres of oil. The cost of this operation was approximately 6'000 Swiss francs.

The ICRC meanwhile distributed foodstuffs in N'Djama and supplied hospitals and dispensaries with medicines and medical equipment.

UGANDA: VISITS TO PRISONERS AND DISTRIBUTION OF RELIEF

The ICRC team of a delegation head, a relief delegate, an Agency delegate and an administrator, which left for Uganda, via Kenya, at the end of April to undertake emergency relief work for combat victims (see ICRC Bulletin No. 40, 2.4.79) arrived in Kampala on 4 May. At that time land and air communications, interrupted as a result of the hostilities, had not been fully restored.

Between 7 and 17 May, in the first phase of the programme of aid set up in co-operation with the authorities and the Uganda Red Cross, 900 kg. of medicines, 600 kg. of powdered milk and 140 kg. of soap, which arrived in Kampala from Nairobi in three chartered planes, were distributed to Rubaga and Mulago hospitals in the capital and to dispensaries and hospital centres of Nsambya, Masaka and Jinja.

In the second phase, which began on 24 May, two ICRC teams, one working in the southern and central regions and the other in the north-eastern regions of the country, are distributing four tons of medicines and medical equipment thirteen hospitals and twenty dispensaries. Needs (especially medical supplies, mattresses and sheets for the hospitals) increase as the Uganda authorities extend their control over the country.

The ICRC began its protection mission at the same time as its assistance work; on 7 May, its delegates visited 22 wounded prisoners of the armed forces of the former regime in Mulago hospital. The authorities also allowed the delegates to visit other military and civilian detainees, the first visit being to Luzira prison on 25 May. The delegates saw, in all, 2823 detainees - mainly prisoners of war - including 11 women and about a hundred leading figures of the previous regime. The delegates were able to talk to the detainees without witnesses.

The Agency delegate visited Ibuga camp for displaced persons and handled 90 cases of persons reported missing in Tanzania. He also collected 44 family messages for transmission to the Tanzania Red Cross.

IN BRIEF

Between 7 and 21 May, the artificial limb workshop in the rehabilitation centre for disabled soldiers in Debri Zeit, near Addis Ababa, produced 24 temporary prostheses, 50 pairs of walking sticks, 10 plaster splints for paraplegics and carried out 30 repairs.

Visits to prisons in Malaysia: Three places of detention in Malaysia were visited recently by ICRC regional delegate Roland Duc. He saw altogether 755 persons detained under the International Security Act.
NICARAGUA: RELIEF CONVOYS FOR JINOTEGA

The ICRC, with the help of the National Society, organized emergency relief for the civilian population of the little town of Jinotega, which was the site of violent clashes in May. Two ICRC delegates and two volunteers of the Nicaraguan Red Cross escorted two convoys of foodstuffs and medicines and an ambulance on 22 and 24 May. The relief supplies were intended primarily for some 1,500 persons who had found refuge in various parts of the town.

On their way back the Red Cross convoys took a wounded soldier and three seriously ill children to Managua for treatment.

On 21 May the President of the Jinotega branch of the Red Cross, Mr. Enrique Ramon Pereira, was killed in circumstances which are still not fully known to the ICRC. The ICRC President sent his condolences to the family and to the National Society.

VISITS TO PLACES OF DETENTION IN ZAIRE

A series of visits to places of detention in Zaire took place from 21 April to 11 May in the Province of Shaba. Two ICRC delegates, accompanied by Jean-François Labarthe, the special delegate for detention problems, visited 13 civilian and military places of detention at Lubumbashi, Likasi, Buluo Kolwezi, and spoke without witness with all the detainees of their choice. At Kinshasa and at Lubumbashi Mr. Labarthe met representatives of the civil and military authorities and of the National Society.

ZIMBABWE-RHODESIA: NEW AIRCRAFT FOR ICRC - RESUMPTION OF DISTRIBUTIONS

Since the end of April, the ICRC delegation in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia has the use of a new "Islander" aircraft. It is a most useful adjunct to the ICRC's logistical equipment which until then included two small aircraft employed mostly to convey medical teams to areas which were inaccessible by road.

Protection and assistance activities have been resumed at a normal pace after having been somewhat slowed down during the election campaign. In Matabeleland, a new relief programme is under way, involving the distribution of 300 kg of powdered milk and 300 kg of protein-rich food. In Manicaland, too, distributions of powdered milk and protein-rich food have been resumed in protected villages, through the Chikore and St. Faith Missions. In the Chipinge district, 5,000 blankets will be given away, now that the cold season has started. In the Seke camp, where there is room for 200 families, the ICRC and the local Red Cross have begun issuing food and powdered milk, while the dispensary is now open on four days a week, with a nurse in charge.

YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC: AID FOR DISPLACED PERSONS

The relief programme set on foot by the ICRC in March, in aid of the victims of the recent conflict on the border between the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, continues.

The ICRC relief specialist, with the help of the Yemen Red Crescent, particularly of the Society's first-aid workers, distributed supplies on several occasions in the regions of Suadia and Abas, where some 900 villagers, who had fled from their homes, had taken refuge in caves. Camping equipment and one month's food rations were provided. Further distributions are in progress in the regions of Beida and Marib, where 9,500 displaced families have congregated.

The ICRC delegate received from the Yemenite Government all facilities for the discharge of his mission.

RED CROSS SEMINAR IN USSR

From 14 to 19 May Marion Bovée-Rothenbach, a member of the International Committee, Rémi Russbach, chief physician, and Philippe Grand d'Hauteville, regional delegate, attended an international Red Cross seminar on primary health care in Froundzé (Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic). The seminar, for developing National Societies, was organized by the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the USSR jointly with the League. Eighty National Societies from all parts of the world, WHO, UNICEF and the ICRC sent representatives to this seminar. During their stay, the participants visited schools, hospitals, dispensaries and co-operatives, where they witnessed how the primary health care methods taught by the Kirghiz Red Cross were applied.

IN BRIEF

Cyprus mission: From 28 May to 6 June, Melchior Borsinger, delegate general for Europe and North America, and Lix Simonius, delegate, were in Cyprus. As on previous missions, they visited the minority communities living in the northern and southern sectors and had talks with the appropriate authorities concerning those communities. The ICRC delegate also met leading officers of the Cyprus Red Cross. The ICRC continues to finance the Tracing Agency Office which forwards family messages between the two sectors in both directions, there being no other means of communication.
Jean Pictet, Vice-President of the ICRC and Director of the Henry Dunant Institute, retires from the Red Cross on 30 June, after 42 years of devoted service. Prime mover in the development of international humanitarian law, Jean Pictet will continue the general editorship of the Commentary to the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions, and will continue teaching at Geneva University. He is a doctor honoris causa of the University of Leyden (Netherlands) and has just been similarly honoured by the University of Zurich.

ICRC President Alexandre Hay pays a tribute which expresses the immense debt of gratitude which the entire Red Cross movement owes to Jean Pictet:

"Red Cross action would be impossible without profound reflection which extends and consolidates it and provides it with legal grounds. Since Solferino this certainty has been constantly upheld by such notable figures as Gustave Moynier, Max Huber and now Jean Pictet.

Those who have the privilege of dealing with Jean Pictet realize that he is not only a man of keen intelligence and wide culture, a scholar who is a very fount of learning, but that he is also a man with a heart.

How many times, in moments of crisis, have we heard him flare up at the cruelty which men all over the world inflict on others! This capacity for indignation has not been diminished. Never has he given up the struggle against suffering, for he believes that where there is a will there is always a way.

This contagious faith is expressed in lofty thoughts and penetrating languages, sometimes with a caustic touch but tempered with humour at exactly the right place to attenuate the utterance.

So we should not be surprised to see that people for whom the Red Cross is not just one humanitarian organization among others, but a dynamic movement whose forces must be guided and directed and in which none may slumber or lack imagination, turn to him for guidance and counsel.

The Red Cross in general, and the ICRC in particular, owes an immense debt of gratitude to Jean Pictet, whose whole life and thought have served their ideals."

Following the invitation in October 1978 from the Egyptian Red Crescent Society the Commission on the Red Cross and Peace met in Cairo from 1 to 4 May 1979. The commission of 15 members (12 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, including the host Society, the ICRC, the League of Red Cross Societies and the Henry Dunant Institute) is chaired by Harald Huber, Vice-President of the ICRC.

The opening ceremony, which was addressed by Mrs. Jihan El Sadat, President of the Egyptian Red Crescent Society, was followed by four work sessions on various subjects related to the promotion of peace, in particular: dissemination of international humanitarian law, League development programmes and Red Cross Youth programmes.

The ICRC delegation took advantage of its stay in Cairo to have several conversations with the leading members of the Egyptian Red Crescent, thus helping to strengthen the links with the National Society which had been established by the permanent ICRC delegate in the Egyptian capital.

The ICRC attended the first, 1979 ordinary session of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) which was held in New York from 10 April to 11 May.

Michel Veuthey, ICRC delegate to International Organizations, and Clermont Dominice, his assistant, followed the debates on matters related to human rights, in particular those concerning detainees, displaced persons, draft conventions against torture and relative to the rights of the child, and to respect of human rights in several parts of the world - e.g. Southern Africa, Arab occupied territories and Latin America - in which the ICRC is operating.

The ICRC delegates at the ECOSOC meetings made useful contacts with the delegations and non-governmental organizations concerned with human rights. They also give two lectures to the American Red Cross, one in Farmington (Connecticut) and the other in Alexandria (Virginia).

Conference in Athens: The Third Conference of the National Red Cross Societies of Balkan countries was held in Athens from 21 to 27 May. It was attended by Marcel-A. Naville, former President and ICRC member, and Melchior Borsinger, Delegate General for Europe and North America.
IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF THE RED CROSS

To mark his coming retirement, a "Tribute to Jean Pictet" will be published in the May-June edition of the International Review of the Red Cross. The tribute will consist of articles by specialists in international humanitarian law: J.-G. Lossier (Geneva), I.P. Blishchenko (Moscow), G.I.A.D. Draper (London), H. Sultan (Cairo) and D. Schindler (Zurich), who all refer to the contribution Jean Pictet has made to this branch of law and the Red Cross as a whole.

The edition will also contain Jean Pictet's latest work, "Commentary on the fundamental principals of the Red Cross".

8TH FILM FESTIVAL IN VARNA

INNOVATIONS AND VIDEO

At the 8th International Festival of Red Cross and Health Films in Varna (Bulgaria) from 9 to 19 June, there will be two innovations this year: video programmes "Television" class, and a two-day "workshop" to study the possible uses of audio-visual communication techniques in the film industry.

The ICRC will be represented in Varna by Alain Modoux, Head of Press and Information Division, Jean-Jacques Kurz, Head of the Audio-Visual Service, and Jean-Claude Genoud, video-technician. The ICRC will show its latest film "Challenge in Africa" and a series of video-films, co-produced with the League on refugees in Burma, Malaysia and Thailand.

ICRC FILM "CHALLENGE IN AFRICA" GAINS AWARD

At its festival in Brighton (15 to 18 May 1979) the British Industrial and Scientific Film Association (BISFA) awarded the bronze medal to the ICRC film "Challenge in Africa" produced by Derek Hart Productions Ltd.

Forty-eight other films were presented in the same category.

This award by a professional association, which has no connection whatsoever with the Red Cross, is a confirmation of the success which "Challenge in Africa" has met wherever it has been shown. There are 160 copies of the film in 12 languages at present distributed throughout the world.

WORLD RED CROSS DAY

EXHIBITION IN LUANDA

In celebration of World Red Cross Day (8 May), Luanda, the capital of Angola, dedicated a week to the Red Cross. An exhibition of colour and black and white photographs, specially prepared by the ICRC and the League, made it possible for the public of Angola to become acquainted with the aims and activities of the Red Cross. There were also National Society posters and photographs showing the first assistance activities of the Angola Red Cross.

Local authorities and members of the diplomatic corps in Luanda, of the League and of the ICRC attended the inauguration of the exhibition.

It is planned to hold the exhibition in Zambia and other countries in southern Africa.

IN BRIEF

The last operation involving the movement of persons through the United Nations buffer zone in North Sinai under ICRC auspices took place on 16 May, when 106 persons went from the occupied territories to Cairo, and 233 crossed in the opposite direction. The next operation will be at a point east of El Arish.

The Jordanian authorities handed over to Israel a young man who had entered Jordan. The operation took place at Allenby Bridge on 25 May under ICRC auspices.

Mission in Colombia: A delegate and a doctor of the ICRC have been in Colombia since 9 May, visiting persons held by the military authorities. They have already visited 36 persons detained in four military prisons under the law on state security. They are currently visiting other detainees in the same category in civilian prisons.

During the first half of May, the ICRC delegates in Argentina visited 645 detainees in Villa Devoto prison in Buenos Aires. On 28 May, they began their visit of Rawson prison.

Mission to Romania: Edmé Regenass, Director of the ICRC Finance and Administration Department, and Philippe Grand d'Hauteville, Regional Delegate, were in Bucharest from 3 to 5 May 1979. The government officials and leading members of the National Society with whom they discussed the ICRC's financial problems in relation to the many crises which call it to many parts of the world showed considerable interest and expressed their wish to increase as far as they could their financial support for ICRC relief operations and its budget.
Ratification of the 1977 Protocols: On 10 April and 1 May respectively, the Republic of Ecuador and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan deposited with the Swiss Government their instruments of ratification of the Protocols additional to the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

A Jordanian detainee was handed over to the Jordanian authorities by the Israeli authorities under the auspices of the ICRC.

Course on the law of war in San Remo: During the fourth course for English-speaking officers on the law of war, the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo organized, on 5 May, a meeting on the United Nations emergency forces. Lectures acquainted the participants with various legal aspects of the laws of the Hague and of Geneva. Jean de Preux, ICRC legal adviser, took part in the discussions.

WORLD ADMINISTRATIVE RADIO CONFERENCE 1979
WHAT'S AT STAKE FOR RED CROSS?

Next September WARC 1979 will be held in Geneva, attended by representatives of the national telecommunication administrations of ITU member countries. In view of the way the ICRC and National Societies have developed their emergency radio network, WARC 79 is very important for our whole movement.

We asked Philippe Eberlin, ICRC technical adviser, to explain to our readers why this meeting of the ITU will be followed attentively by the Red Cross, and what implications the conference will have for Red Cross emergency radiocommunication.

Question: Mr. Eberlin, before mentioning the problems raised by WARC 79, could you say a few words about how the Red Cross started its radio network?

Answer: It began in 1963. It was then, during the war in the Yemen, that the ICRC felt the need for its own radio link. It installed its main station at its Geneva headquarters and its first radio outpost in the Yemeni desert. The system has been developed considerably since then to meet the demands caused by increasing conflicts and natural disasters all over the world. Radio links between the International Red Cross headquarters in Geneva and ICRC delegates or National Societies all over the world became essential.

22 ICRC Stations

Today there are 22 transmitting-receiving stations. Ten of these are in direct contact with Geneva. The network has undoubtedly added to efficiency in the field. Last year Geneva exchanged 7,800 messages with its field delegations, and delegations among themselves exchanged 12,600. About fifty National Societies have a radiocommunication service.

Q.: Does the Red Cross have privileges in radiocommunication or does it have to conform to international rules?

A.: No privileges. The ICRC and National Societies must obtain and operating licence from the authorities, and permission to use a call sign and specific frequencies. Moreover, messages transmitted by the Red Cross may concern only Red Cross activities, must be in clear language and must not be confidential.

Communications and natural resources


A.: It allocate frequencies for radiocommunication, direct or by satellite, for radio navigation, etc., and examines resolutions and recommendations put forward by the various ITU bodies, to decide whether and how they should be followed up or replaced by others. It may issue rules on all subjects proposed by international advisory committees or national administrations. So you can see how important this conference is for the Red Cross, since it issue radio regulations which are applicable the world over. We must not forget that electromagnetic radiation is a natural resource already being exploited, some frequency bands fully so.
Q.: What can the ITU do in this particular field?

A.: The Conference will probably reallocate frequencies to avoid interference. There is much talk of artificial satellites which could be used for long-distance communications on some frequency bands and would ease the load on the present network. Actually, to be more precise, what are really needed are geo-stationary satellites (that is to say, satellites which remain vertically above a fixed geographical point). As geo-static orbits are also considered to be natural resources, they too must be protected to prevent overcrowding.

Q.: So there is apparently a very complicated problem which will have to be deliberated.

A.: Yes, and it is here that the Red Cross is anxious. Two questions which concern it closely will be discussed in September. First, the Conference will examine what action should be taken on resolution 19 adopted by the Diplomatic Conference on humanitarian law (CDDH), when it ended its deliberations in June 1977. The resolution asked the ITU Conference "to study the technical aspects of the use of radiocommunications for marking, identifying, locating and communicating with the means of medical transport protected under the 1949 Geneva Conventions and any additional instruments of these Conventions". This means that the purpose of resolution No. 19 is to implement the articles of Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions and the regulations contained in the Annex to Protocol I, relating to the security of medical transports in armed conflicts.

Q.: That is in fact a rather new notion.

A.: Yes, it is. During the Second World War, it was found that visual markings (a Red Cross on a ship's sides or on an aircraft's fuselage) were in adequate in situations where modern means of warfare - on land, at sea and in the air - were being utilized. To overcome this shortcoming, it was decided to lay down regulations for the use of radiocommunications by medical means of transport.

Q.: Do you think the international community will welcome this new step?

A.: To be sure it will, for resolution No. 19 will supplement other provisions which have been adopted by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and by its counterpart for maritime navigation, IMCO. The decisions adopted by the ITU Conference will be valid for all means of transport and not only for protected aircraft and vessels. We know that several countries, including the United States, Sweden and Switzerland, have already made proposals relating to the Diplomatic Conference resolution: the ICRC is gratified that those countries have taken action and is grateful to them.

Red Cross frequencies to be maintained

Q.: What about the second subject to be discussed by the Conference?

A.: The second subject is emergency radiocommunication by international Red Cross bodies. For the last fifteen years or so, the ICRC has been using frequencies allocated to it by the Swiss PTT Administration. But those frequency bands must not be allocated by the ITU Conference to other bodies (a contingency which is not totally unlikely, considering the overloaded electromagnetic spectrum). It is important for the ICRC to keep the frequencies allocated to it and to take steps to maintain and protect its radiocommunication system which has been in use now in 48 countries.

Q.: I believe that the ICRC has approached National Societies on this matter, has it not?

A.: Yes that is correct. The ICRC President has asked all National Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies to call their governments' attention to resolution IX of the Twenty-third International Red Cross Conference (Bucharest, 1977), which requests the support of governments for the allocation by the ITU of Red Cross emergency network frequencies.

Moreover, the ICRC and League of Red Cross Societies have sent all National Societies a joint letter and a questionnaire about WARC-79. For the ICRC, it is essential to have reliable radiocommunications for its protection and assistance operations in war-stricken countries whose communication network may have been damaged or suspended. For the National Societies, the usefulness of the emergency network has been amply demonstrated during emergency situations or natural disasters. The ITU Conference of September 1979 is, therefore, an event of the greatest importance for the whole of the Red Cross.
THE PRETEXT OF IGNORANCE

In June, the International Committee of the Red Cross made an earnest appeal to the community of States to make them fully aware of the extent of the tragedy affecting hundreds of thousands of refugees in South-East Asia.

The aid given by the humanitarian organizations, including the Red Cross and the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, is ridiculously inadequate and can treat only the effects of the crisis. This assistance is not even enough to appease human conscience.

The State must, without delay, find political solutions for the causes of the disaster. In addition, a plan of aid and development for the refugees and also for the native populations of the preliminary reception countries must be launched, and the definitive re-settlement of the refugees must be speeded up. The Red Cross believes that considerable aid should also be given to the refugees' countries of origin.

Not since the end of the Second World War has public opinion been so aroused by the tragic fate of hundreds of thousands of human beings. But today, unlike in the past, and irrespective of the outcome of the situation and the judgement made by history, no-one can claim he simply did not know.

Meanwhile, the days go by and the death toll increases; the international community is still at the discussion stage and, despite their valiant efforts, the humanitarian organizations can achieve next to nothing.

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The endless stream of people entering Thailand from Cambodia from the early days of May to the beginning of June gave rise to grave humanitarian problems and required emergency measures to be taken. The 45,000 Cambodian civilians at the Thai border were almost totally destitute and in urgent need of food and medical aid.

The ICRC, with the co-operation of the Thai Red Cross, set up a relief programme to assist these refugees. From 14 May to 8 June, 170 tons of rice, milk powder, dried fish and other foodstuffs, one ton of soap, 200 tents, 6,000 mattresses, 23,400 sets of cooking utensils, 8,000 articles of clothing and various items of medical supplies were distributed, and an ICRC medical team was at work every day caring for the sick.

At the same time, in response to an appeal for financial aid, a number of governments and National Societies remitted more than 1.3 million Swiss francs to enable the ICRC to extend its activities in Thailand.

However, on 8 June, after the Thai Government had announced its decision to send refugees back into Cambodia, the ICRC had to suspend its relief programme. Despite its appeals to the Government, almost all the refugees had to quit Thai territory and return to Cambodia.

On 28 June, confronted with this tragic situation, the Red Cross appealed once again to the international community, demanding that swift measures should be taken to save human lives - the lives of the refugees, victims of the conflict in Cambodia, and of those of the "boat people" who were being prevented from landing. The Red Cross repeated that it was ready to act immediately, nationally and internationally, until larger-scale measures could be organized by the international community.

With regard to the conflict in Cambodia, the Red Cross once again urgently requested that, as a first step in a programme providing aid for all the victims of the conflict, it be authorized to give assistance to the forty thousand persons forcibly removed from Thailand back into Cambodia. It requested the Thai Government to open its borders to refugees and allow the Red Cross to continue to give relief to those refugees already in Thailand and also to new arrivals.

Concerning the "boat people", the Red Cross demanded that the provisions of the 1910 Brussels Convention, obliging vessels to pick up persons in distress at sea and land them at a port, be observed. Governments should stop forcing refugees reaching land to put to sea again, and a genuine effort must be made by the countries of final destination to accept immediately a larger number of refugees, to lighten the burden of those countries giving temporary asylum.

A BUDGET OF 2.7 MILLION AND A COMPUTER

In view of the deterioration of the situation of the refugees in South-East Asia, the ICRC Central Tracing Agency (CTA) has taken steps to speed up the work process and to ensure greater co-ordination between headquarters, the field and other humanitarian organizations.

For this purpose, a budget of 2.7 million Swiss francs for the CTA has been drawn up for the continuation and expansion of its work between now and June 1980. A computer system will be introduced to accelerate and systematize the handling of data, and the staff in Geneva will be increased from 12 to 25.

In the field, to strengthen the co-operation already existing between the Red Cross and the HCR, a co-ordination bureau is to be opened, which will provide a link between the agency offices of the National Societies and improve the gathering of information used in tracing missing persons and in the re-uniting of families.

Round table on refugees: Nicolas Vecsey, Deputy Director of the ICRC Central Tracing Agency, and Claude Wenger, jurist, took part in a round table on refugees, organized in Florence by the International Institute of Humanitarian Law, San Remo. The two topics under discussion were the right of asylum and the re-uniting of families.

CHINA - VIET NAM: END OF OPERATIONS TO REPATRIATE PRISONERS

The fifth and last repatriation operation of Chinese and Vietnamese prisoners was carried out on 22 June under the auspices of the National Red Cross Societies of the two countries and in the presence of ICRC delegates. The operation involved 354 Vietnamese and 55 Chinese prisoners.

Between 21 May and 22 June, a total of 1,636 Vietnamese and 238 Chinese prisoners returned home under the auspices of the Red Cross.
AFRICA: 35 MILLION SWISS FRANCS FOR ACTION IN TWELVE COUNTRIES IN CONFLICT

At the beginning of June the ICRC made a new appeal to governments and the National Red Cross Societies in order to obtain the financial and material support required for the continuation of its protection and assistance work for the victims of the conflicts in Africa. This appeal is for 35.8 million Swiss francs, planned to cover the period from 1 June to 31 December 1979 - a commitment of some 5 million Swiss francs a month.

The ICRC is now working in a dozen countries directly involved in a conflict or experiencing resultant humanitarian problems. Every day some 90 delegates - 15 of whom have been seconded from National Societies - bring moral and material aid to the conflict victims, visiting the prisoners, caring for the wounded, providing food for the civilian population, tracing missing persons and reuniting families.

ACTIVITIES IN ZIMBABWE/RHODESIA SIX MONTHS OF FIGURES

From November 1978 to May 1979, the ICRC delegation in Zimbabwe/Rhodesia undertook a considerable volume of protection and assistance activities.

Each month, relief - food, clothing and blankets - to a total value of over a million Swiss francs was distributed to 50,000 people.

The ICRC continued to run 24 clinics and dispensaries, mainly in the north and east of the country. Its medical teams gave some 3,000 monthly consultations in the hospitals and vaccinated about ten thousand children against measles, diphtheria and poliomyelitis. The ICRC also supplied medicines and medical equipment to 34 mission hospitals and rural dispensaries, to a total value of 183,000 Swiss francs.

The Tracing Agency compiled a file of 8,600 cards containing information on detained or missing persons, to facilitate replies to requests for news.

IN BRIEF

New ICRC office in Gwelo: In order to give better coverage in the Midlands, the ICRC has decided to open a permanent office in the town of Gwelo, some 200 km south-west of Salisbury.

UGANDA AND TANZANIA: PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE WORK CONTINUES

The ICRC team which arrived in Kampala in May (see ICRC Bulletin No. 41, 6.6.79) continued its protection and assistance work for conflict victims in June.

Between 11 and 17 June over 3,600 prisoners in three places of detention in the Ugandan capital were visited. Visits to prisons in other parts of the country are being prepared. Relief goods - blankets, mattresses, soap and food - have been given to the prison administration for distribution to the detainees.

On 2 June, an ICRC delegate began prison visits in Tanzania. A doctor joined him on 7 June, and they went to several prisons and a military camp. They also visited two hospitals, where they saw 233 wounded people, and the camp for displaced persons in Omupweya, providing shelter for 670 people, half of whom are children. Relief supplies were purchased in Tanzania for distribution to the prisoners and civilians visited by the delegate.

NICARAGUA: RED CROSS RELIEF PLANE AND APPEAL TO THE PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT

In June, the ICRC, in conjunction with the American Red Cross, organized flights to take food supplies and medicines from Miami to Managua. During the second half of June, half a dozen flights carried a total of 80 tons of relief. An aeroplane belonging to the Spanish army, which had been chartered by the Spanish Government to evacuate civilians from the Nicaraguan capital to San José in Costa Rica, took on board 24 tons of food for the ICRC in four of its flights to Managua. The National Red Cross Society has 36 distribution points in Managua, where every day approximately 50,000 displaced persons go for food.

Although visits to places of detention have had to be suspended in connection with the situation, at the request of the authorities, the ICRC has launched a special relief operation for the detainees held in the "Central de policia" prison. The fighting has prevented families from taking food to their detained relatives as they did previously.

At the beginning of June, the XIth Inter-American Red Cross Conference, in which 22
National Societies from North and South America, the ICRC and the League took part, appealed to the Parties to the conflict to respect fundamental humanitarian principles and to support the Red Cross in its work for the benefit of all the victims without discrimination.

CHAD: FAMILIES OF POWS GROUPED FOR TRANSFER TO THE SOUTH

At the beginning of June, the Chad authorities officially agreed to the ICRC's organizing the transfer to the south of the country of families of prisoners of war and of some civilian internees, who had been held since the end of 1977 in the northern territory under FROLINAT control. This operation was to involve about a thousand people. Between 7 and 10 June, the ICRC aeroplane made 11 flights from Faya to Fada and back, allowing 70 women and 30 children to be grouped together before departure for N'Djamena. The disturbances which broke out in the capital have caused the operations to be temporarily suspended.

Meanwhile, the ICRC delegates in Faya have continued to visit prisoners held by the FROLINAT and to provide food for the camps. From the very beginning of June, the ICRC has taken charge of health conditions and has provided food in four reception centres in the capital, where there are 1,500 former civilian internees. These people were evacuated in May from Abéché with ICRC assistance. During the fighting in N'Djamena, the ICRC organized convoys to take medical supplies and the wounded to the hospitals.

XIth INTER-AMERICAN RED CROSS CONFERENCE IN RIO DE JANEIRO

One of the objectives of the XIth Inter-American Red Cross Conference held in Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 8 June, at the invitation of the Brazilian Red Cross, was to encourage the development of National Red Cross Societies according to the realities of each population. During these five days, about a hundred leading members of 22 National Societies from North and South America, the League and the ICRC exchanged views on the future of the movement in this part of the world in the light of present needs. Among the many topics discussed were disaster relief, health and social welfare, young people, information and public relations.

Finally, the conference made an appeal concerning the conflict currently raging in Nicaragua.

The next Inter-American Conference will be held in Costa Rica in four years' time.

BANGLADESH—PAKISTAN: THE ICRC TAKES PART IN THE REPATRIATION OF BIHARIS

Two delegates from the ICRC Central Tracing Agency have been in Dacca since mid-June, helping in the repatriation to Pakistan of some 17,000 persons of Bihari origin who until now have been living in Bangladesh.

The first ship chartered by the Bangladesh Government left Chittagong on 22 June with 1,800 passengers. Further repatriation will take place by sea and air between now and December.

The ICRC, as a neutral intermediary is giving technical assistance, in particular in checking passenger embarkation. The practical and financial arrangements are made by the HCR and the governments involved.

EXERCISE IN THE DISSEMINATION OF HUMANITARIAN LAW IN THE ARMY: A FIRST IN SWITZERLAND

Forty questions on specific situations related to the law on neutrality and international humanitarian law formed the basis for the theoretical dissemination exercise organized in June by the Swiss army as part of the tactics course for Frontier Brigade 1. Three experts from the ICRC took part in this novel experience which brought together about fifty officers. The situations referred to in the questionnaire had been selected for the likelihood of their occurring in the future or because they had already taken place in the past.

The course will no doubt have exercise led to a lively debate. This course will no doubt have helped to make humanitarian law better known among the officers of the Swiss army.

IN BRIEF

The Republic of Korea National Red Cross recently organized a seminar on international humanitarian law and its dissemination. Some 40 participants from various circles (Red Cross Societies, the Government, universities, the press, etc.) called for an increase in efforts to make the law of Geneva better known among all sections of Society.
8TH FILM FESTIVAL IN VARNA: VIDEO COMMUNICATION, A MEDIUM FOR THE FUTURE

From 9 to 18 June 1979 the seaside resort of Varna, in Bulgaria, was the host of the 8th International Festival of Red Cross and Health films. This festival, which is sponsored by the League of Red Cross Societies, the ICRC, WHO and UNESCO, is organized once every two years by the Bulgarian Red Cross in co-operation with the League.

During the festival an audio-visual workshop brought together about twenty representatives of National Societies. Luc Chessex, a Swiss photographer currently on mission for the ICRC, chaired the debates on photography, while Dr. Georges Karpaty, a Hungarian film director, chaired those on the cinema. George Manno, head of the audio-visual service of the American Red Cross, introduced the debate on video-films, which proved to be the most fruitful moment of the workshop; video-techniques have already been put to use by several National Societies and all agreed that they have a vital role to play in the future.

Of the 290 films entered for the competition, the selection panel retained 163 for presentation in the following four categories: Red Cross films (that is, films that it produced or commissioned), short or medium-length films, television films and full-length films.

Although it was a pleasure to see so many productions taking part, it should be noted that there were no films from Latin America or Africa, whereas various countries and National Societies from Asia presented a total of 15 films. Most of the productions came from Europe, and more especially from socialist countries.

The majority of the Red Cross productions were concerned with blood donations and the teaching of first aid; rather more rare were films on the activities of a particular National Society and recruitment films. However, a new feature was the application by certain National Societies of recent cinema techniques first used in advertising films. The producers of the short and medium-length films expressed their interest in environmental problems and in the fight against the abuse of tobacco and alcohol. The productions intended for television were mainly concerned with medico-social information and preventive medicine, while seventeen of the full-length fiction films portrayed social situations and problems.

The first prize in the latter category was awarded to Reinhardt Hauff's film "Knife in the Head" (Federal Republic of Germany). The first prize in the other three categories was awarded to: "Summer Has Come" (USSR) in the Red Cross category, "Don't worry, it's not serious" (Netherlands) among the short and medium-length films, and "Four Women" (Canada) among the television films. The film "Challenge in Africa", produced and presented by the ICRC, was awarded a gold medal.

ICRC PRESIDENT ABROAD

In June, the President of the ICRC, Alexandre Hay, went to several different countries. On his first journey, to Paraguay, where he met the President of the Republic, General A. Stroessner, Mr. Hay was accompanied by André Pasquier, Delegate General for Latin America, and Serge Nessi, Head of the ICRC Financing Division. Mr. Hay, Mr. Pasquier and Mr. Nessi had meetings with members of the Government and leading members of the National Society, with whom they discussed ICRC activities in the world and its financing.

Mr. Hay then went to Brazil, heading the ICRC delegation at the Xth Inter-American Red Cross Conference organized in Rio by the Brazilian Red Cross. He also went to Brasilia, where he met the Head of State, João Baptista de Oliveira Figueiredo, and the Minister of the Interior, Mario David Andradez.

Upon his return to Europe, Mr. Hay, accompanied by Melchior Borsinger, Delegate General for Europe and North America, went to the Federal Republic of Germany to attend the General Assembly of the National Society, which took place from 13 to 16 June. Mr. Hay and Mr. Borsinger visited Bonn, Munster (where they were received by the local authorities), Arolsen (Headquarters of the International Tracing Service/SIR) and Berlin, where they were received by the head of the Berlin Senate. They also met the Federal Minister for Internal Relations, Egon Francke.

From 22 to 24 June, President Hay, accompanied by Françoise Ferret, jurist, was in Poland for the VIIth National Congress and the 60th anniversary of the Polish Red Cross. The President of the ICRC met the President of the Polish State Council, Dr. Henryk Jabłonski, who presided over the ceremonies of the National Society, and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Eugeniusz Kulega.
IN BRIEF............................

A new series of repatriation flights between Viet Nam and Taiwan has begun under the auspices of the ICRC. Two operations, on 31 May and 14 June, took 159 and 125 Chinese who had been living in Viet Nam to relatives in Taiwan.

A series of visits to places of detention in Indonesia began on 17 June. ICRC regional delegate for south-east Asia, Roland Duc, is accompanied by a delegate and a doctor.

Congress in Czechoslovakia: From 14 to 18 June, Maurice Aubert, member of the ICRC, and Philippe Grand d’Hauteville, regional delegate, attended the 8th Congress of the Czechoslovak Red Cross, held in Brno, the principal city of Moravia. Representatives of the National Societies of all the countries in eastern Europe were present at the congress, and the participants were received in Prague, Brno and Bratislava by leading members of the Red Cross Society.

Conference in Mogadishu: On 2 July the XIth Conference of Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies opened in Mogadishu. Jacques Moreillon, Director of the Department of Principles and Law, Jean Hoefliger, Delegate General for the Middle East, and Jean-Marc Bornet, regional delegate, are taking part.

Visits to places of detention in Argentina: In June, the ICRC delegates in Buenos Aires visited a total of 303 detainees in the prisons of Rawson, La Rioja and Mendoza. The ICRC delegates are currently visiting the new prison of Caseros in the capital.

Mission to the Congo: An ICRC delegate was in the People's Republic of the Congo from 30 May to 2 June. He met the head of the Health Minister's cabinet, to whom he outlined ICRC activities in Africa.

Visits to places of detention in Zimbabwe/Rhodesia: Between 5 and 8 June four delegates and an ICRC doctor visited Wha Wha and Chikurubi prisons. They saw a total of 234 people detained under the Emergency Regulations.

More than 6,000 people, mostly from Europe, the United States and Japan, visited the ICRC in 1978, in 170 groups. In addition there were many individual visitors. The groups came mainly from National Societies, nursing schools and various educational and other institutions.

Transfer operation east of El Arish: On 13 June, a transfer operation was carried out under the auspices of the ICRC, allowing 44 people to return to Cairo after visiting relatives in the occupied territories. 341 students from the Gaza Strip had enrolled at the universities in Cairo were also enabled to return to their families for their holidays. This was the first operation east of El Arish since the town was handed back to the Arab Republic of Egypt.

In June, an ICRC/Swiss Red Cross exhibition of photographic panels and audio-visual displays was put on in towns in German-speaking Switzerland. It was the first to be organized jointly by the ICRC and the National Society of Switzerland.

RCBS IN JULY

In July, the Red Cross Broadcasting Service will be transmitting on 7210 kHz, in the 41,60 metre band, at the following times:

Monday, July 23: in ENGLISH and FRENCH, 0600 - 0700 GMT, 1130 - 1230 GMT, and 1700 - 1800 GMT;
Wednesday, July 25: in SPANISH, GERMAN and ARABIC, at the same time.

Directional Broadcasts

ASIA and the PACIFIC

Tuesday, July 24: in ENGLISH, 0945 - 1015 GMT, on 21520 kHz, 15305 kHz, 15305 kHz, 11780 kHz, 9560 kHz.

MIDDLE EAST and AFRICA

Thursday, July 26: in ENGLISH and FRENCH, 0945 - 1015 GMT, on 21630 kHz.

National Red Cross Societies which missed our last programme in June, of which would like to hear a part of it again, can apply to the ICRC for a tape of the programme. Please contact the Press and Information Division, ICRC.

Topics covered in the June programme included refugees in south-east Asia, Red Cross work in Nicaragua, and action by the League of Red Cross Societies in Yugoslavia, as well as news of other Red Cross activities.

And don't forget - if YOUR Red Cross society is doing something new and interesting, in fields such as health care and spreading information about the Red Cross family, tell us about it at ICRC headquarters.
The 12 August this year will be the thirtieth anniversary of the signing of the four Geneva Conventions relative to the protection of victims of armed conflicts - an important stage in the development of international humanitarian law, as protection was thereby extended to the most vulnerable victims, civilians. Since 1949, the Geneva Conventions have been of benefit to millions of human beings.

Today, in various parts of the world, apparently internal conflicts belie their international character. Unfortunately, this new kind of conflict is of such politico-legal complexity that belligerents often disregard many provisions of international humanitarian law, and consequently leave victims without aid or protection.

However, the signature, in 1977, of the two Protocols to the 1949 Geneva Conventions was a considerable step forward in the development of international humanitarian law. Let us hope that many States will soon ratify these new legal instruments. In that event, the 600 or so articles which make up the body of international humanitarian law will give increased protection to conflict victims, without discrimination and in all circumstances.

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STILL A LOT TO BE DONE FOR THE VICTIMS

The political upheaval in Nicaragua during the night of 16/17 July and in the following days marked the end of active hostilities in the country; the lifting of the curfew was one of the first signs of a return to normality. Yet, a lot still remains to be done, and in fact, the volume of Red Cross relief work increased rather than diminished in recent weeks; help had to be given as swiftly as possible to all those cut off by the war in the towns and villages, and food had to be provided for tens of thousands of people who for months have been entirely dependent on relief organizations.

From 19 June to 17 July the ICRC air-lift took 715 tons of foodstuffs, 40 tons of medical supplies and several tons of other relief goods (beds, blankets, etc.) to Managua. Three aircraft - one DC-6 and two DC-8 - were chartered to take the relief supplies from neighbouring countries or the United States.

The Spanish and British Governments each made available a large Hercules carrier, one based in Costa Rica and the other in Panama.

From the start of the food crisis caused by the conflict, these relief flights were the only means available to the Nicaraguan Red Cross and the ICRC, working in collaboration with the local relief agencies - the Catholic Relief Services, CARE, CEPAD, CARITAS, and others - to take humanitarian aid to Nicaragua.

Now that the fighting has ceased, it is possible to organize convoys by road instead of despatching goods by air, certainly effective, but a much more costly method.

Protection work has also increased and has followed a different pattern. Prior to 17 July, the ICRC delegates visited persons detained in connection with the events and those taken prisoner during the fighting. The Red Cross gave daily food supplies to several hundred detainees in the "Central de Policía" prison in Managua.

Since then priorities have changed: the persons held by the National Guard in Managua were freed, whilst hundreds of its members surrendered their weapons, and were placed under Red Cross protection.

The ICRC, in collaboration with the National Society, placed nearly 3,000 members of the National Guard and their families in a building near Managua airport. Discussions on what should be done with these people are being held with the new Nicaraguan authorities.

Managua military hospital, where there are 365 wounded soldiers, is also a scene of protection work. The doctors of the Nicaraguan Red Cross and the ICRC are treating the sick, and the building has been placed under ICRC protection until the new authorities can take over.

The extent of the needs and the means used to meet them already make it clear that the sum of 3.3 million Swiss francs originally planned to cover the work will all be expended by the end of August. In consultation with its delegation in Nicaragua, the ICRC is currently preparing a new budget for the coming months, the period of emergency being far from over.

A CONVOY FOR JINOTEPE

Michèle Mercier, Assistant to the Head of the ICRC Press and Information Division, spent a few days in Nicaragua, just before the end of the war. Here are some of her impressions of the work performed by the Red Cross for the victims.

Who would have thought at the time that the end of the war was only five days away? That morning in Managua, just after dawn, under a threatening sky, the only concern of the relief workers from the Nicaraguan Red Cross was to complete loading the convoy of five heavy duty vehicles as quickly as possible and to set out before it began to rain. The rain here is enemy number one - it blocks all progress on the roads, even though all the permits have been obtained to go to Jinotepe, about 50 km south of the capital. The journey would perhaps not have been too bad if the main roads had been practicable along their entire length. Unfortunately, at many points the surface had been destroyed and trenches dug, to slow down the progress of the combatants. To overcome such obstacles, the Red Cross, too, was obliged to make a change in its methods: instead of sending goods in long convoys of lorries, it employed a smaller number of heavy duty vehicles carrying much lighter loads but capable of getting through sticky patches where a heavy lorry would just sink to its axles in the mud. A consignment of two or three tons
delivered on each trip is not much, but at least that is better than ten tons stuck in a ditch.

Everybody has known about the relief workers of the Nicaraguan Red Cross, ever since the terrible earthquake in Managua when their helmets and tabards had been a familiar sight as they worked among the rubble in their search for survivors. Since then, they have been ever-more active and their numbers have been increased by dozens of volunteers seeking to help the National Society in an emergency situation which has already lasted several months.

In a country where all the economic structures have collapsed, Red Cross assistance is the only hope for all who take no part in the fighting but who suffer the direct and extensive consequences. The inhabitants of Jinotepe are among the hundreds of thousands of people throughout Nicaragua who wait day after day for a Red Cross convoy to arrive, bringing at least their minimum needs, until things improve.

In addition to foodstuffs, which constitute a large proportion of the Red Cross consignments, the vehicles also bring medical supplies for the regional hospital of Jinotepe which takes in all the wounded persons from the surrounding districts and which has been reinforced by the ICRC surgical team. After being unloaded in the Red Cross centre, the vehicles are driven back to Managua, taking with them, under the protection of the ICRC and the National Society, several families who wish to be reunited with their relatives, and sometimes foreigners anxious to leave the country. These transfers are carried out quite openly, in accordance with regulations, to the knowledge of both the opposing parties.

One of the ICRC's tasks is to ensure the protection and evacuation, when requested, of foreigners cut off in a country at war, without diplomatic protection, and to facilitate the reuniting of families. All these people seeking some kind of safety still retained a wild hope that the work would end one day and that they would not have to leave the only land which they could really call their own.

IN BRIEF

On 14 July, a medical delegate went to Tanzania to carry out a survey in the camps for displaced persons, most of whom are Tanzanian nationals returned from Uganda.

CAMBODIA: ICRC AND UNICEF ASKED TO HELP

The ICRC and UNICEF had been invited to send representatives to Phnom Penh to confer with the authorities and the Red Cross of the People's Republic of Kampuchea on possibilities of helping the conflict victims.

On 13 July, therefore, François Bugnion, ICRC delegate, and Jacques Beaumont, of UNICEF, went to Hanoi from there to Cambodia for initial contacts. They stayed in Cambodia from 17 to 19 July. After discussion with members of the Government and the Red Cross in Phnom Penh, they visited several hospitals in the capital. They then carried out a survey in Kompong Speu as a preliminary to the planning of a large-scale programme of food and medical assistance.

In Geneva, at the United Nations conference on refugees and displaced persons in South-East Asia, the President of the ICRC stated that the "ICRC solemnly undertakes to work to discharge the mandate entrusted it by the international community, that is to say, to provide the population of Cambodia as soon as possible with the protection and assistance necessary for their survival, in strict accordance with humanitarian principles. In view of the extent of the needs, the Red Cross action must develop rapidly throughout the whole of Cambodia, in accordance with International Red Cross procedures".

The ICRC is awaiting further details from Mr. Bugnion and is making preparations for the first dispatch of emergency relief to Cambodia.

REFUGEES IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA: RED CROSS ASSISTANCE CONTINUES

On 20 and 21 July, a meeting sponsored by the United Nations met in Geneva to discuss the problem of refugees and displaced persons in South-East Asia. The UN Secretary-General invited the ICRC and the League of Red Cross Societies to send observers. In his address, ICRC President Alexandre Hay expressed the Red Cross movement's appreciation of the efforts being made and the results already achieved, and its desire to continue participating actively in the assistance programmes of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (HCR). Such co-operation had been most effective in liaison with the HCR, and with the co-operation of the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies concerned, the ICRC had already begun its work of tracing missing persons, transmitting news and reuniting families.
On behalf of the League of Red Cross Societies, Under Secretary-General Enso V. Bighinatti described the contribution of the National Societies. With League support they were supplying and managing refugee camps in the countries of first asylum, and they were the prime movers in providing for the refugees in the countries of final resettlement.

Both Mr. Hay and Mr. Bighinatti stressed the need for the Red Cross to help the war-ravaged countries of South-East Asia which were faced with the tremendous problem of refugees arriving by land and sea.

In view of the constructive outcome of the United Nations meeting, the ICRC and the League, on 25 July, issued a joint statement expressing the determination of the Red Cross to do everything it can without delay to contribute to the HCR programme for refugees.

For that purpose, the National Societies of countries of first asylum and of donor countries have been asked to come to Geneva on 31 July and 1 August for consultation and discussions on the possibilities for future Red Cross action.

VISITS TO PLACES OF DETENTION IN INDONESIA

An ICRC team has been in Indonesia since mid-June for visits to places of detention. It consists of the regional delegate for South-East Asia, a doctor and an interpreter, all three of Swiss nationality.

The first series of visits was to fifteen places of detention in Java, where the delegates saw altogether about a thousand political detainees. Various relief items, to a value of about 6,000 Swiss francs, were handed over to be distributed to these detainees.

During August, the ICRC team will be making further visits to places of detention in Sulawesi, Kalimantan and Sumatra.

UGANDA : GIFT OF A MILLION DOLLARS

The President of the Saudi Arabian Red Crescent Society, Dr. Abdul Aziz Mudarris has given the ICRC a cheque for one million dollars - the contribution of the Saudi Arabian Government to ICRC work in Uganda and neighbouring countries for the benefit of victims of the recent conflict.

The ICRC has been carrying out protection and assistance work in Uganda since November 1978. From 9 to 18 July, four delegates, including one medical delegate, made a survey in the western Nile area and distributed food and medical supplies. On 13 July, the delegates visited 15 detainees in Arua prison and gave them various relief supplies.

In recent weeks, the Kampala delegation has received 54 tracing requests, 43 of which have been answered positively. Forty-six Red Cross messages were received, and 35 sent.

ECOSOC DEBATES

The United Nations Economic and Social Council is holding its summer session in Geneva from 4 July to 3 August.

Although this ECOSOC session is primarily concerned with economic matters, the humanitarian questions of famine in Cambodia and of Indo-Chinese refugees featured in the general debate.

A report by the United Nations Secretary-General on UNDRO (Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator) deals with assistance during natural and other disasters. It contains several references to collaboration between UNDRO, the League, the National Red Cross Societies and the ICRC in relief operations.

ICRC 1978 ANNUAL REPORT JUST PUBLISHED

The ICRC 1978 Annual Report has just been published in French and German - the English and Spanish editions are to follow shortly.

As a result of the increase in the institution's activities in the world, the report is considerably fuller than those of previous years. It looks back upon twelve months of protection and assistance work for the benefit of hundreds of thousands of civilian and military victims of the violence of war.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF "INTERNATIONAL REVIEW"

The July-August issue of International Review of the Red Cross contains a study by H.G. Beckh on the reuniting of families during and after the Second World War. Mr. Beckh, a former ICRC delegate for Europe, took part in this work which lasted 25 years.

The same edition contains the second part of Jean Pictet's work "The Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross".
IN BRIEF

The ICRC sub-delegation in Fort Victoria recently sent relief goods (vitamin-enriched foods, milk, soap) to the Musume mission hospital, in the Belingwe tribal territory, for the benefit of a group of people who had been particularly badly affected by the fighting. In Manicaland a programme of milk distribution was set up for about sixty schoolchildren suffering from malnutrition in the Mount Vumba area.

Repatriation of Biharis

The second ship chartered by the Pakistan Government left Chittagong on 15 July with 1,563 people (239 families). A third sailing is planned for 5 August. The ICRC, as a neutral intermediary, assists in these operations by a tally of the passengers as they go aboard.

Work on 100 new shelters in Seke camp, 23 km from Salisbury, began in mid-July and should be completed by the end of August. These will be added to the 300 previously built by the ICRC for persons who have fled the combat zones.

VISIT TO ICRC DELEGATIONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

TOTAL DEDICATION TOWARDS RELIEF WORK FOR VICTIMS

For its information campaign in Southern Africa, the ICRC was fortunate in obtaining the co-operation of the Australian Red Cross, in the person of its Western Division (Perth area) public relations head, June Dunstan, who spent three months with the ICRC in Geneva and with its delegations in Southern Africa. June Dunstan is a qualified journalist who has been on the staff of her National Society for the last nine years and she gives here a lively and graphic account of her impressions of the ICRC delegates' work and life in Southern Africa.

When the Director of the ICRC Press and Information division, Alain Modoux, came to Australia to promote the African Appeal late last year, I assisted with the publicity programme. But I certainly never expected to become personally involved in the same relief actions I was helping to publicise. Then this year I was asked to join the ICRC information team for a special assignment as a journalist, to write human interest stories on the African operations.

So with the good wishes of the Australian Red Cross Society, I left my desk in Perth for ICRC Headquarters in Geneva to undergo a short briefing programme before heading for Southern Africa.

After some three weeks in Geneva I left with Swiss photographer, Mr. Luc Chessex, for my first African assignment: in Lusaka, Zambia. A front-line State, Zambia is trying to cope which thousands of refugees that have swarmed over the border from the conflict areas of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. Just the day before our arrival the home of Nationalist Leader, Joshua Nkomo, had been bombed and the situation was very tense, with a curfew from dusk to dawn.

Barriers lifted

But we were met at the airport by members of the Red Cross delegation and ushered quickly through customs. A tribute no doubt to the good relations between the delegation and the authorities. In Lusaka I found a highly organised team of International Committee employees, Swiss delegates and locals working side by side, under chief delegate, Mr. Frederick Steine mann.

After preliminary introductions I was into my first story with the arrival of two Red Cross pilots flying from Geneva to Salisbury in a Red Cross plane. I took notes as they hurried through departure procedures for early next morning, when we arranged to meet on the tarmac for photos. I took some time to get permission to take pictures at the airport but, again because we were Red Cross, the barriers were lifted with just five minutes to spare before the small white plane taxied along the strip and disappeared into the bright blue African sky. Later we were taken to a refugee camp, also normally off limits to journalists and photographers. I thought I was well informed on the hardships of refugee camps but still I was unprepared for the dire conditions I met in the Victory Camp. Thousands of women and young girls, some with babies and toddlers, all without husbands, fathers and brothers, totally involved with the basics of survival. Their response to my questions was brief and cautious, the grim reality of life mirrored in their deep dark eyes. Suddenly I knew the totality of commitment of the Red Cross delegate, working to ease the burdens of victims of conflict, waging a constant fight against tremendous odds.
A courageous spirit

But the courageous spirit of man, and woman, is never very far from the surface and in a hut built by the United Nations, with type-writers donated by other welfare agencies, teenage girls practised secretarial skills and studied Living English in preparation for the day they could leave the camp and start to live a normal life. Still others worked in a sewing factory set up in a large tin shed while children sat in the dry dusty earth, under dead leafless trees, studying school books; for learning is considered very important here.

In the small clinic, refugees with some nursing experience tried to keep up with the constant flow of patients, doing out the few simple medicines left on the shelf. Although there is no Red Cross clinic in the camp, the ICRC does provide some medical supplies, blankets, supplementary food, clothing and material and is involved in the provision of water supplies and toilet facilities.

In contrast to the grimness at the camp I met a happy group of mothers in a community development centre, outside Lusaka, with the Deputy General Secretary of the Zambian Red Cross Society. With babies strapped to their backs they intently followed the first aid course being conducted by a Red Cross training officer, laughing as they bandaged each other's heads and arms.

Food and medical programmes

A Red Cross flag flies in each camp in Botswana, above the clinics, which are open every day. Although the main ICRC activity is medical care it is also involved in milk distribution and supplementary feeding programmes. Dukwe camp some 120 kilometres from Francistown is more like the traditional African village with refugees living in family groups. There is more freedom and laughter in this camp but unfortunately more visible signs of malnutrition and long queues wait each day for treatment at the clinics.

I was recruited to help with an immunisation programme for all the children under five years. It took us a solid eight hours, apart from a 30 minute break for lunch, which consisted of a can of hot beer and some cold beans eaten out of the tin, in a hut belonging to another welfare agency. First we drove to a clearing at one end of the camp, then the signal was sent out by a Botswana girl known for her resonant voice which it seemed could be heard for miles around. Slowly families came into the clearing. Mothers with baby bundles on their backs holding the hands of toddlers; older children, carrying, pushing or cajoling small brothers and sisters. My job was to place two drops of polio vaccine on each small tongue, then push up the sleeve and hold the child while the nurse gave an injection. Knowing my own reactions to a hypodermic I was very liberal with my sympathy, but despite my coaxing words many of the small victims squirmed through the legs of the crowd in a valiant escape bid. But of course it is often necessary to be cruel to be kind, although some of the little arms were so thin it was hard to find a place to put the needle.

From Lusaka I flew on alone to Francistown in Botswana where I was met at the small airport by the women of the delegation, amongst them an Australian nurse, also from Perth. Francistown has a pleasant village atmosphere, with dirt roads, street markets and donkey carts. The small ICRC delegation is headed by Charles Pierrat, who lives here with his wife Liselotte, secretary of the delegation, and his two small daughters. The Red Cross medical team of one doctor and two nurses, together with some local nursing aides are responsible for running clinics in the three refugee camps for some 20,000 people. In the first camp I visited I was proudly taken to inspect the shoe factory. The shoemakers, a small group of men obviously held in high esteem by their fellow refugees, sat on the ground in the shade at the back of a shed which served as a maternity ward. Their tools of trade were penknives and old kitchen knives made razor sharp on a large stone. Working with rubber cut from old tyres they fashioned several styles of footwear, thongs and slip-ons, in great demand by camp residents.

From Botswana I went on to Johannesburg to attend a meeting of heads of delegations in Southern Africa. Full reports were given on all operations and problems were discussed at length: a very beneficial sounding board providing the necessary contact and support for delegates in the field. Here I met Rene Kosirnik, the head of the delegation in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia which is the largest ICRC delegation in the world today, with its headquarters in Salisbury, my next destination. With members of a delegation from Geneva I visited the Red Cross village of some 300 small wooden huts, built as temporary housing for displaced persons living on the outskirts of Salisbury.

I spent an interesting morning at the headquarters of the "Rhodesian Red Cross" and was taken to see their large training...
centre for country people. Mothers can bring their babies and live in the comfortable units for the period of the course. Training includes hygene, home health, first aid and care of the sick. In the large well-kept grounds they grow vegetables, keep chickens and breed some of the biggest rabbits I have ever seen: all part of the practical lessons in nutrition.

On the outskirts of Salisbury I watched a group of volunteers distributing mugs of thick creamy milk to about 200 small children from a displaced persons camp: a joint "Rhodesian Red Cross"/ICRC operation provides the nourishing ingredients, obviously very much enjoyed by the youngsters.

A climate of war
That afternoon I was whisked off again in the Red Cross plane to join a medical team - a Danish surgeon, a Finnish nurse and a Rhodesian nursing aide - preparing to fly next morning to a lonely mission hospital to carry out urgent surgical operations. Night in Fort Victoria brings home the seriousness of war. At dusk, tanks and other army vehicles roll through the town with truck-loads of soldiers going to patrol the borders. Office workers, miners, farmers and labourers, members of the emergency security forces, change their clothes for a khaki camouflage and set off for their nightly vigil.

Petrol tankers gather in convoy fashion, parked bumper to bumper with guards posted all around for protection. Through the night I was aware of the movement of troops, the trigger tenseness of the atmosphere, as if the whole town waited, knowing that out there men were engaged in mortal combat, that morning would surely bring more news of death and killings, more weeping for wives and mothers on both sides.

The morning dawned grey and cloudy and our early take-off for the mission was postponed until mid-morning when a promising blue streak appeared in the sky and we were sped to the airport to board the small plane with its significant red markings. The medical team visits two missions in this area every week, so because of our late start (all treatment must be finished by 4 p.m. and the plane back in town before dusk) and the inclement weather it was decided that the team would work at the nearer mission, leaving the more remote one until the next day. The delegate in Fort Victoria rang to inform the mission of our expected time of arrival so that the normal security procedures could be attended to.

The plane flies over the mission but makes no attempt to land until the pilot sees the safety signal, then a vehicle is sent to the landing strip to pick up the medical team. Many roads in these areas have been mined and the missionaries and nuns risk their lives every time they drive along them.

A hair-raising flight
Our flight should have taken 40 minutes at the most but then the weather again deteriorated. The clouds thickened and the drizzle turned to blinding rain, forcing the pilot to fly low in order to see the roads and landmarks. Not too much of a problem in normal circumstances but in these areas low flying planes are good targets for snipers' bullets. The country is fairly mountainous and we scanned the ground below, but through the driving rain it was difficult to distinguish any buildings dotted among the hills although we did sight a few African villages. We flew up into the clouds, round a mountain and down again to spot the road and then sighted some mission buildings but no welcoming flag. It was the wrong mission, and we had followed the wrong road. By this time visibility was almost nil and the pilot, knowing the risk, was loath to continue flying low, yet still we searched, knowing that we could not be too far away.

Finally, with no sign of life and no signal to be seen in any direction, the pilot decided we must head back for Fort Victoria. The doctor was more concerned for his waiting patients than for his own safety but the pilot was firm: trying to find an isolated mission in mountainous country, in a blinding rainstorm, waiting for the whine of a bullet, with petrol running low, was far too risky and his responsibility to his passengers must come first. I blessed the Red Cross pilot for his wisdom and we all sat in silence as the plane climbed high into the clouds for the return journey and though I won't admit I was dead scared, I did say a brief prayer of thanks on touch-down.

In the course of my African assignment I visited camps, villages, schools, community centres, hospitals, clinics, delegations and National Societies, talking to refugees, displaced persons, doctors, nurses and delegates. And like the famed American journalist on "Nightbeat", I found a million stories, some of which can never be told, while others I have already recorded. But the thing that impressed me most was the total dedication of the Red Cross personnel in the field who daily risk their lives to help the victims. As they themselves say, "not just for the good we can do but for the bad we may prevent".
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HUMANITARIAN TASKS AND MONEY PROBLEMS

It looks as if the International Committee of the Red Cross will soon have on its hands several large-scale operations in South-East Asia alone. In Timor, the ICRC has launched an extensive programme to bring food and medical assistance to large numbers of the inhabitants who are in a desperate plight after years of want. At the same time, the Central Tracing Agency's activities, which form part of the International Red Cross aid programme for the refugees of Indo-China, are being stepped up. In Kampuchea, the ICRC is making plans to undertake relief operations, once agreement has been reached with the authorities there, on a scale commensurate with the needs assessed on the spot by its delegates.

These operations in South-East Asia, like those carried out by the ICRC in other areas, will require aid amounting to several tens of millions of Swiss Francs. As in the past in similar circumstances, the ICRC will have to call upon the international community to provide the necessary funds quickly. It is quite conscious of the fact that its appeals have been getting more numerous than ever. At the moment, there are no less than six appeals for aid to people in twenty-three countries. This is the direct consequence of the deterioration of the international situation, causing crises in many parts of the world.

But governments should not put forward the frequency and number of the appeals as an excuse for delaying or reducing their aid. The ICRC has neither resources nor capital of its own. Often an emergency situation impels the ICRC to start or continue providing aid even before it has ensured that the money to pay for such aid is forthcoming, but to do so when several such programmes are being carried out at the same time is extremely dangerous.

Will the time come when, in order to help the victims of conflicts, the ICRC will be reduced to paying high rates of interest on loans from banks?

The texts of this Bulletin have no official character, and may be freely reproduced.
KAMPUCHEA: FIRST RELIEF FLIGHTS

Following a mission carried out in July to Phnom Penh by François Bugnion of the ICRC and Jacques Beaumont of UNICEF (see ICRC Bulletin No 43 of 1 August), two flights were organized to carry relief to Kampuchea. The first took place on 9 August and the second on 29 August. Twenty-five tons of foodstuffs (powdered milk donated by the EEC, sugar and vitamin-rich food) and medical supplies for the hospitals were conveyed.

A third flight is planned for 10 September, when about forty tons of relief goods, including food, medical supplies, disinfectants, cooking utensils and tools, will be sent.

The first two consignments to Kampuchea were agreed upon during high-level talks with the authorities and Red Cross by Mr. Bugnion and Mr. Beaumont at Phnom Penh between 17 and 19 July and again between 9 and 16 August. The ICRC and UNICEF representatives were received by President Heng Samrin, and also by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Health and Commerce, to whom they presented an aid programme for Kampuchea's civilian population. The practical details were discussed with officials at administrative level.

On 29 August, Mr. Bugnion and Mr. Beaumont flew back to Phnom Penh, accompanied by a doctor, for further talks.

RELIEF ACTION LAUNCHED IN EAST TIMOR

The Indonesian Red Cross has undertaken, in conjunction with the ICRC, an emergency food and medical aid programme for about 60,000 displaced persons in East Timor.

After the ICRC had completed a preliminary survey in April 1979 in the area, an agreement was entered into with the Indonesian Government and the National Society in Indonesia, under which the ICRC undertook to finance the aid programme and to provide medical and logistics experts to supervise its execution.

In July, Indonesian Red Cross and ICRC made a survey to assess the needs, on the basis of which plans for assistance and the practical means to carry out the programme were drawn up, taking into account the very difficult terrain. It was established that the 60,000 persons, scattered in eight extremely remote villages situated in broken mountain areas, were in desperate straits. These localities could only be reached by air, and roads were either non-existent or were completely impassable even for heavy-duty vehicles. Relief goods will therefore have to be sent by helicopter. The cost of the operation will accordingly be considerable and the ICRC is studying cheaper means of transport for a later stage of the programme.

The ailments most frequently encountered during the medical survey - apart from malnutrition - were malaria, intestinal diseases and parasites, and lung infections. Four Indonesian Red Cross medical teams with help from relief delegates will be in charge of medical and food assistance. Concomitantly, a paramedical training programme will be organized. The ICRC delegates will supervise the progress of operations, from the purchase of relief supplies to distribution among the beneficiaries.

The cost of the assistance is estimated at 13 million Swiss francs (including transport) for six months, after which the Indonesian Government will take over and carry out a large-scale programme.

An appeal was made at the end of August to several governments and National Societies with a view to raising the necessary finance and other material support. However, in view of the urgency of the situation, the Indonesian Red Cross and the ICRC have already gone into action.

LAST MINUTE: 5 September, today the first relief shipment is sailing from Jakarta to Dili.

REFUGEES IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA: RED CROSS ACTION PROGRAMME

Current assistance operations must be stepped up and a concerted plan of action for the benefit of refugees and displaced persons in South-East Asia must be put into effect without delay; such are the conclusions of the International Red Cross meeting which was held in Geneva on 31 July and 1 August at the urging of the League of Red Cross Societies and the ICRC. Seventeen National Societies, including those of the countries of first asylum in South-East Asia took part. Representatives of the HCR and of ICEM participated in part of the meeting.

The Red Cross plan is to cover the needs of refugees and local population in the countries of first asylum, and to implement the Central Tracing Agency programme to facilitate the reuniting of dispersed families.

The cost of this programme for a period of five months will amount, according to initial estimates, to 17 million dollars. The participants in the meeting considered that
the plan and its financing were within the means of the International Red Cross. They also emphasized how important it was for the League and the ICRC to continue co-ordinating assistance programmes and to direct the resources provided by the Red Cross or other sources, including the HCR and other international organizations.

After the meeting, the League and the ICRC dispatched delegates to South-East Asia to study, jointly with the National Societies concerned, the practical measures to be taken to carry out the plan of action. K. Seevaratnam and P.C. Stanissis, both of the League, went to Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and Hongkong, while R. Tissieres and W. Knobel of the ICRC Central Tracing Agency went to Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Hongkong to deal with problems relating to the search for missing persons and the reuniting of families.

In addition, the Central Tracing Agency is organizing a meeting on 6 and 7 September in Kuala Lumpur of officials in charge of tracing offices in the National Societies of the countries of first asylum.

Jean de Courten, ICRC delegate general for Asia and Oceania, left Geneva on 3 September for a mission to the region, in relation with current operations and developing Red Cross activities.

CAMBODIAN TRAGEDY

"I am a Cambodian woman who came to France in 1975. I have just heard news of my family from my two sisters who are in Viet Nam. They told me my father was killed in 1978 but they did not know why. All that remains of my family are my mother and sisters... They are in distress. I would like to send them medicines and help them to leave the country, but I do not know what I can do... My husband received a telephone call on Saturday 2 June from a friend who had reached Paris after fleeing from Cambodia to Thailand. At the border he met my husband's youngest brother who said he was the sole survivor of the family and that he too was fleeing from Cambodia. They became separated on the way. All I know is that my brother-in-law fled from Cambodia for Thailand, but I don't know where he is. I have received a letter from my elder sister who found refuge in Thailand with her family, but unfortunately she forgot to give me an address. In desperation I turn to you."

This letter reflects the thousands of family tragedies which each day the ICRC Central Tracing Agency tries to alleviate with the help of the ICRC delegations in South-East Asia and of the National Red Cross Societies the world over.

After receiving this moving appeal, the Agency instituted an investigation in Geneva as well as in the field. On 16 July a message from the ICRC delegation in Thailand reached Geneva announcing that the brother-in-law had been found in the Buriram camp. The Agency immediately cabled the family in France asking it to send a statement that it would provide him with board and lodging, so that he might obtain permission to join the family in France. All trace of the sister seems to have been lost since 40,000 of her compatriots were expelled to Cambodia at the end of June, and there is little hope of finding her.

NICARAGUA: PRIORITY FOR PROTECTION

Since the end of the civil war in Nicaragua in July, ICRC delegates have been concentrating on their protection operations. First they recorded some 5,000 prisoners held by the new Nicaraguan authorities. Most of these prisoners had been members of the National Guard and supporters of the Somoza regime.

During the last hours of the civil war, several hundred National Guardsmen and their families asked the ICRC to protect them. The ICRC having received assurance of their safety and the families having been released, the National Guardsmen became the responsibility of the Government.

The new Government stated it would grant all detainees prisoner of war status. As such, the prisoners are protected by international law and the ICRC is authorized to enquire into the conditions of their detention and to provide them with any necessary assistance.

For the civilian population, the ICRC organized an airlift and road convoys from neighbouring countries, taking into Nicaragua more than 5,000 tons of food during the last two months. These supplies, distributed in Nicaragua by the National Red Cross Society, certainly contributed to averting famine.

IN BRIEF

The ICRC team in Indonesia is continuing the series of visits to places of detention which it began in mid-June. In August, that two ICRC delegates, the doctor and the interpreter went to eleven places of detention in Sulawesi (Celebes) where they saw 660 political detainees and distributed relief.
MISSION IN TAIWAN

After a mission in Thailand, where he has headed the ICRC delegation since January 1977, Francis Amar was in Taiwan from 24 to 31 August on the invitation of the Government.

While in Taiwan, Mr. Amar visited the Penghu refugee camp and conferred with his hosts on the development of International Red Cross activities for the benefit of refugees in South-East Asia, particularly the tracing of missing persons and the re-uniting of dispersed families.

CHAD: RETURN HOME OF CIVILIAN INTERNEES

Between 12 and 19 August, 654 Chad civilian internees, most of them the wives and children of prisoners of war held by the Chad National Liberation Front (FROLINAT), were conveyed to their native villages, through the ICRC's good offices.

Seven flights in all were arranged: four from Faya and N'Djamena to Moundou and Sahr, and three from Faya to N'Djamena.

In August, ICRC delegates stationed in Faya visited prisoner-of-war camps at Ounianga-Kebir, Gouro and Amoul and saw altogether 171 prisoners. Aid furnished by the ICRC from 20 July to 16 August amounted to 30 tons of foodstuffs - sufficient for two months - sent to six camps containing approximately one thousand prisoners of war and their families.

RELIEF DISTRIBUTIONS IN UGANDA AND TANZANIA

A team of four ICRC delegates, one of them a doctor, made a survey of the needs in Uganda's West Nile Province and distributed relief goods. They visited a dozen hospitals and about the same number of dispensaries, some run by the government, and others by religious missions. The articles distributed included medicaments and other medical supplies, blankets, soap, powdered milk and cooking utensils.

More medicaments and relief supplies were distributed in Acholi and Karamoja Provinces.

Part of the medical aid, consisting of dispensary units, was sent to the ICRC by the Danish Red Cross. The League of Red Cross Societies also contributed relief supplies.

In Tanzania, Eddi Leemann, regional delegate for East Africa, and Dr. Cerutti, medical delegate, began on 18 August a second series of visits to places of detention, which lasted until 30 August.

Prior to that, Dr. Cerutti had carried out a survey of the needs in the region of Bukoba close to the Ugandan border, where some 30,000 displaced persons, including 3,000 infants, were living in four camps. The ICRC had already furnished mattresses, blankets and 250 kg of medicaments for the dispensaries in the camps. It has decided, also, to supply supplementary food to 3,000 children, many of whom are suffering from malnutrition, and to 1,200 pregnant women.

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON WEAPONS: ICRC SHOWS KEEN INTEREST

From 10 to 28 September the "United Nations Conference on prohibitions or restrictions of use of certain conventional weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects" will take place in Geneva, pursuant to a resolution adopted in June 1977 by the Diplomatic Conference on humanitarian law. Two preparatory conferences were held first to settle most of the procedural questions, thus paving the way for examination of the subject of the Conference.

The purpose of the Conference is to adopt one or more international instruments prohibiting or restricting the use of excessively injurious conventional weapons or those which strike indiscriminately. Such instruments would supplement the principles concerning weapons referred to in the 1977 Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions and would at the same time improve the protection of the civilian population against the effects of hostilities. That is the reason why the ICRC, whose delegation will be led by one of the members of the ICRC, Maurice Aubert, will follow the proceedings with the greatest attention.

The Conference will examine the question of certain conventional weapons, including land-mines and booby-traps, incendiary, fragmentation and anti-personnel weapons, and bullets that tumble on impact. It will not deal with weapons of mass destruction (atomic, biological and chemical) which are within the province of the Disarmament Conference.

However, as there is still a considerable number of items on the Conference agenda, three weeks may not be sufficient for all of them to be dealt with. It is therefore quite likely that a second session may have to be convened.
SEMINAR FOR UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

From 27 August to 1 September a European Seminar on the Teaching of International Humanitarian Law in Universities was held in Krakow (Poland). It was organized by the Jagellone University of Krakow, the ICRC and the Polish Red Cross. Some sixty university teachers from Europe and North America took part.

Subjects on the agenda included the role of the 1977 Protocols in developing the law of armed conflicts, the question of reprisals in the light of the 1977 Protocols, the extended concept of "combatant" in the Protocols, relief actions in non-international conflicts, and the implementation of the Geneva Conventions and their Protocols. The Seminar also discussed problems and methods of international humanitarian law teaching in universities.

PILOT MEDICAL PROJECT: DISABLED REHABILITATION PROGRAMMES IN AFRICA

The ICRC is at present taking part in several medical programmes for the benefit of war-disabled persons in Africa. Two of the projects are an innovation in disabled rehabilitation in the Third World.

"The idea is simple", said Rémi Russbach, ICRC chief medical officer. "We are helping some countries to set up centres for the rehabilitation of the disabled and for the production of artificial limbs adapted to local conditions. It is useless to transfer to Third World countries costly and complicated techniques which cannot be continued after the departure of the ICRC. We therefore thought we must use local material and manpower resources. With some simple parts imported from Europe and with locally purchased wood, metal, leather etc. it is possible to produce complete functional prostheses cheaply. Many of the staff trained by our technicians are themselves disabled and find in this work an invaluable opportunity for social and economic integration."

At the Debre Zeit Centre opened in January 1979 near Addis Ababa an ICRC team of two physiotherapists and two prosthetists are at work. About a thousand disabled have already been registered for care and artificial limbs. The centre has been so successful that it has now been decided to extend the programme for the benefit of paraplegics.

A similar project is taking shape at Huambo where, since August, an ICRC team is setting up a new centre for the manufacture of artificial limbs for Angolan amputees.

In Mozambique, the ICRC has been managing and financing a programme for disabled members of the ZANU for more than a year. At present some forty amputees are following a rehabilitation course there. By the end of the year it is expected that another forty will have been fitted with artificial limbs.

Another such programme is about to begin in Zambia. In Lusaka, the ICRC is participating in a joint project with the Government and with ZAPU by sending equipment for the manufacture of artificial limbs.

These various programmes for amputees and paraplegics constitute for the ICRC a pilot experiment in the medical field whose development it will be interesting to watch, to judge from the initial results achieved.

IN BRIEF

An emergency relief programme is due to start very soon to bring aid to about 15,000 members of the Batonka, who are living under very harsh conditions in the north-western part of Zimbabwe/Rhodesia. Food and medical care will be provided by the ICRC for a period of five months.

Cases of malnutrition having appeared in the refugee camps in Botswana, a nutritionist has been made available to the ICRC by the Swedish Red Cross for several months to organize a special programme. In addition, particular attention will be directed to the detection of tuberculosis in the camps.

RCBS IN SEPTEMBER

The dates and frequencies of the Red Cross Broadcasting Service programmes in September will be as follows:

Omnidirectional frequency

7210 kHz in the 41.6 metre band from 0600 to 0700, from 1130 to 1230 and from 1700 to 1800 GMT: Monday 24 September, transmission of programmes in ENGLISH and FRENCH; Wednesday 26 September, SPANISH, GERMAN and ARABIC.

BEAMED FREQUENCIES

ASIA AND PACIFIC

Tuesday 25 September, from 0945 to 1015 GMT, in ENGLISH on 9560 kHz, 15,305 kHz, 21,520 kHz and 21,695 kHz.

AFRICA AND MIDDLE EAST

Thursday 27 September, from 0945 to 1015 GMT, in ENGLISH/FRENCH on 15,430 kHz, 17,830 kHz and 21,520 kHz; in ARABIC on 21,630 kHz.
A British national who had wandered into Jordan at the end of July was handed over to the Israeli authorities on 2 August by the ICRC. On 10 August, a Jordanian soldier who had strayed into occupied territory was returned to the authorities in Amman.

Golan operation: On 6 August, seventeen students from Golan and Gaza crossed the lines under ICRC auspices to go to Damascus University, and eleven people went in the opposite direction to join their families in occupied territory.

Some 350 people were able to visit relatives detained in Wha Wha prison (Zimbabwe Rhodesia) in July, thanks to the ICRC which provided bus transport for these families.

Repatriation of Biharis: On 5 August a ship chartered by the Government of Pakistan left Chittagong with 1,489 persons (237 families). This was the third sailing of Biharis from Bangladesh to Pakistan for which the ICRC lent its assistance.

Forty tons of relief supplies donated by the Swedish Red Cross are being distributed by the Angolan Red Cross to the displaced persons in the Huambo and Benguela provinces, in Angola.

Visits to places of detention in Zaire:
Having visited 35 places of detention in the regions of Lubumbashi, Kipushi, Likasi, Kolwezi and Luvalaba, the ICRC delegates have completed the series of visits to 54 places of detention in Zaire. They began the series in June and have since seen a total of 191 detainees, 12 of whom had been arrested for political reasons. They distributed relief to the detainees and to ten detainees' families.

Red Cross meetings in Geneva: From 2 to 9 October the first General Assembly of the League of Red Cross Societies will be held in Geneva. The meeting of the Council of Delegates, on which all members of the International Red Cross are represented, will take place on 3 October.

DELEGATE RECRUITING AND TRAINING DIVISION

EMERGENCY MEASURES AND LONG-TERM PLANS

Today, 161 delegates are at work in 29 delegations throughout the world. By the end of this year the ICRC must find another fifty if it is to cope with the expansion of its humanitarian tasks.

The Delegate Recruiting and Training Division, recently set up under its Director, Laurent Marti, has therefore a heavy programme in front of it. "ICRC Bulletin" wanted to know more:

Q.: Who are your delegates?
A.: I would first say that they are the vital factor in ICRC missions, because it is on them that the success or failure of our work for conflict victims depends. We therefore need people of high calibre, and they are not always easy to find.

Q.: Yet you do find them. How?
A.: The delegate must meet certain standards, but even more important than professional skills and qualifications is personality. A delegate must be completely trustworthy, motivated and adaptable to situations which often involve mental and physical hardship. He must be able to fit in with a team and also display initiative. Our selection criteria include a university education or its equivalent, knowledge of languages - English and Spanish, of
course, but also others less frequently known to Swiss nationals, such as Arabic - diplomacy and good health.

Q. : You said Swiss nationals ?

A. : For delegates who visit places of detention or negotiate with the authorities, Swiss nationality is an imperative, not that we consider them any better than other nationals, but that Switzerland, with its policy of neutrality, has avoided involvement in the world's disputes when even other neutral nations have adopted political standpoints. Consequently, the single nationality of the ICRC is still today an assurance of impartiality and hence efficiency.

On the other hand, where negotiations with the authorities are not required, we do have recourse to non-Swiss staff. The National Red Cross Societies, for example, make available medical teams and technical personnel (specializing for instance in logistics or relief operations) whose work is invaluable.

Q. : Is the manpower supply in Switzerland sufficient ?

A. : We may well say it is, to judge from the results of our recent recruiting campaign. After broadcasting on the television and radio, and publishing an article in the major newspapers, we received 250 applicants, half of whom we accepted for our training course.

Q. : How do you select applicants ?

A. : We first consider such general criteria as the family situation, since our delegates undertake a mission for at least one year. Then we consider age and training. Candidates are then invited separately to the ICRC for three thorough interviews by staff members with wide experience and an ability to judge character. The aim is to assess the applicant's personality in the course of apparently casual conversation which, in fact, is carefully prepared. The applicant's file is submitted to various departments in our organization, depending on the assignment contemplated (visits to places of detention, relief, Central Tracing Agency and so on).

The applicant who successfully gets through this stage then goes on a three-day training course at Cartigny near Geneva before going on a three-month trial mission. If he gives satisfaction during this probation he is offered a contract for one year or more (three or five years).

Q. : Was this system not in operation before your division was set up ?

A. : As a matter of fact, it was. In recent years the Delegation Servicing Section has done an excellent job, but because of the present situation it has become necessary to put the work on a systematic basis. We have redefined the Section's relationship with the Personnel Department and the Directorate and it has in fact become a Division with specialized Services.

Q. : What are these Services ?

A. : First there is the "Reception" Service which contacts applicants, organizes interviews with them when they leave for or return from mission, and keeps families informed about the whereabouts of delegates in theatres of operations.

The Applicants Service attends to all formalities relating to the selection of applicants. The Training Service organizes the courses at Cartigny. We also have, of course, a Planning Service which, in co-operation with the Operations Department, assigns delegates to missions, constitutes a pool of delegates and maintains a watching brief over the quest for and the choice of staff for missions. A novelty is the Delegates' Qualifications Bureau which we have just set up.

Q. : What does it do ?

A. : It meets a need felt by both the ICRC and the National Societies for we have noticed that there is sometimes a gulf between what we are looking for and what the National Societies offer. Qualifications must therefore be standardized and in addition functions must be co-ordinated and re-appraised according to the way the situation in the field develops.

Q. : What are your projects ?

A. : One of the most interesting is the advanced training for delegates while on mission. Even those men and women who are highly qualified cannot always be expected to know all the ropes. Even a head of delegation might need to brush up his knowledge in some branch or other, such as language, management or leadership. There are courses for these subjects in Switzerland and other countries of Europe. To provide such a possibility for advanced training is not a luxury, but a long-term investment of benefit as much to the institution as to the delegate and, hence, to the victims of circumstances who need our help.
RED CROSS SOLIDARITY - NOT AN EMPTY WORD

During the first days of this month of October, the Red Cross movement is holding in Geneva a number of important meetings, in particular, those of the General Assembly of the League of Red Cross Societies and of the Council of Delegates. With the entry into force of the League's new Constitution, the Assembly, composed of the leaders of the member Societies of the League, will be meeting at least once every two years, while the Council of Delegates' sessions will bring together the delegates of the ICRC, of National Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies and of the League. At these meetings, the Red Cross movement will review all its problems and activities, in the light of the events which marked the international scene during the past few months and put the Red Cross on the front page of the news in Central America, South-East Asia, Southern Africa and the Middle East. In each of the very different situations in which the Red Cross was involved, the close solidarity joining its various components was amply demonstrated. But this solidarity is not only constituted by the ties linking institutions; it is that feeling, which Henry Dunant contemplated and which first finds expression on the field of battle, that impels human beings, whether they be the voluntary workers of the local Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or the "international" delegates despatched by the Geneva Institutions or coming from distant countries, to work together, moved by the same ideal. All these men and women share the same joys and sorrows. They run the same kind of perils, very often at the risk of their lives; in the last eighteen months, twenty-one Red Cross workers have been killed in action, in Nicaragua, Southern Africa and Lebanon. May the spirit of solidarity which moved those volunteers and delegates be an inspiration to the leaders who will be deliberating these days at their meetings.

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The representatives of the ICRC and of the UNICEF in contact with the Cambodian authorities at Phnom Penh ("People's Kampuchea") have just received an affirmative reply concerning the start of the large-scale relief operations made necessary by the urgency and extent of the needs of the civilian population in Cambodia for food and medical services.

Indeed, the representatives of the two institutions have just been informed by the Minister of the Economy of the authorities' agreement to the opening in Phnom Penh of an ICRC delegation and of a UNICEF office. This decision has been interpreted in Geneva and New York as acceptance by the "People's Kampuchea" authorities of the emergency action plan which was proposed in August by the ICRC and UNICEF. The plan provides for the presence of at least some representatives of both institutions to ensure that relief distribution is both quick and consistent with the principles of impartiality and non-discrimination which have always guided the action of the ICRC and of UNICEF.

Moreover, the authorities of "Democratic Kampuchea" have agreed to the immediate start of a relief action based on the same principles for the benefit of tens of thousands of civilians stranded in a region near the Thailand frontier. Here too, the representatives of both institutions will be permitted to see for themselves that the relief is distributed without discrimination to all victims.

In accordance with the principle of neutrality, the ICRC and UNICEF, through their representatives on the spot, will watch that this relief, so essential for the civilian populations, will in no way contribute to the war effort of either belligerent.

STOP PRESS

A DELEGATION IN PHNOM PENH - RELIEF SUPPLIES TO THE WEST FRONTIER REGION

An aircraft chartered by the ICRC and UNICEF will leave Europe for Phnom Penh on 4 October. At the same time four ICRC delegates, specialists in relief work and in radiocommunication, will go to reinforce the ICRC-UNICEF team already on the spot. In addition, two UNICEF representatives are going from Bangkok to the "People's Kampuchea".

From 9 August to 28 September the two organizations forwarded to Phnom Penh, in five flights, about 150 tons of food and emergency medical supplies. These consignments were distributed mainly to hospitals and orphanages in Phnom Penh, Kompong Speu, Kompong Chnang and Kandal province.

In the area bordering Thailand, after an ICRC-UNICEF team had managed to go there on 17 September and stay until 19 September, a further consignment of relief is expected to leave today, supervised by delegates of the two institutions.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA REFUGEES: DEVELOPMENT OF TRACING AGENCY TASKS

On 6 and 7 September, a meeting was organised at Kuala Lumpur by the ICRC Central Tracing Agency (CTA) and the Malaysian Red Crescent Society for the heads of the Tracing Agency offices of the National Societies of countries which had given temporary asylum to South-East Asia refugees. The ICRC was represented by Jean de Courten, delegate general for Asia, Florence Vondra, head of the CTA Asia service and Michel Baumgartner, assistant to the CTA director. ICRC and CTA delegates based in the region were also present.

The purpose of the meeting was to devise
methods to co-ordinate the work of the CTA in Geneva and of the various National Societies' tracing offices, with a view to working out the problems connected with re-establishing contact between members of dispersed families and forwarding mail to refugees and their relatives.

On her return from Malaysia, Mrs. Vondra said that the very constructive spirit shown throughout the meeting would no doubt facilitate the discharge of the numerous Red Cross tasks in aid of refugees; everyone who took part in the meeting related his or her activities and experiences, both good and disappointing, in a spirit of co-operation and mutual aid which was bound to be of help for future tasks; it was important to have a uniform approach in order to co-ordinate the work between CTA headquarters and National Societies in this area, and all the more so as the data received was now being computerized.

To organize this technical collaboration, three Central Tracing Agency delegates were despatched at the beginning of October to several National Societies in the region, to act as advisers. The CTA has at the moment five of its staff in South-East Asia: in Indonesia, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Macao and Thailand. A sixth delegate of the CTA will travel to South-East Asia periodically to ensure co-ordination.

THE ICRC INFORMATION CAMPAIGN IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

In October 1978, "ICRC Bulletin" No. 33 announced that the ICRC had launched an information campaign in Southern Africa. This was a new venture, conducted by ICRC delegates based on Lusaka and Salisbury, which by now has gathered momentum. Its aim is to impart, as widely as possible, better knowledge and understanding of the red cross emblem and of its significance, and in this way to create conditions favouring the safety of Red Cross personnel in regions where their lives might be exposed to considerable danger because of military operations. To that end, various means of information and publicity are being utilized by the ICRC Press and Information Division in Geneva as well as by the ICRC delegates in Southern Africa, as for example, strip cartoons, a bulletin "Red Cross in Action", radio broadcasts, talks, posters, and the distribution of publicity articles such as T-shirts, exercise-books, pencils, etc.

It is still premature to attempt a definitive assessment of this information campaign or to judge its impact on the population. But one can nevertheless draw at this stage a number of lessons and, where necessary, revise some of the objectives and means employed.

The cumulative effect of the information campaign has brought home to many people the presence of the Red Cross, which hitherto was almost totally unknown, as a familiar and welcome entity. There is still, however, a great deal to be done to get the Red Cross to penetrate into the remote rural areas and to strengthen the participation of the local Red Cross Societies in the preparations and conduct of the campaign.

MONUMENT TO DR. JUNOD AT HIROSHIMA

On 8 September 1945, Dr. Marcel Junod, ICRC delegate in Japan, arrived in Hiroshima, one month after it had been virtually wiped out by the first atomic bomb. He was the first foreign doctor to set foot in the stricken city and for several days cared for the casualties before obtaining authorization from the Allied Command to forward ICRC relief supplies to the population.

Thirty-four years later, on 8 September 1979, Dr. Junod's son, Benoît Junod, was present at the official unveiling of the monument erected to the memory of his father in the Gardens of Peace.

The monument - a granite cross with Dr. Junod's portrait inset in a copper medallion - was the idea of a committee of representatives of Hiroshima's medical association, its chamber of commerce and the Hiroshima Branch of the Japanese Red Cross. The ceremony, led by the mayor, Mr. T. Araki, took place in bright sunshine, in the presence of senior officials of the Japanese Red Cross, the Swiss Consul, the ICRC honorary delegate in Japan and a large number of Hiroshima's leading citizens.

Dr. Junod, who became Vice-President of the ICRC, died in 1961. He wrote a book entitled "Le Troisième combattant" (1), in which he gave an account of his work as an ICRC delegate during the period from the Abyssinian War to the Second World War.

IN BRIEF....

The repatriation of Biharis from Bangladesh to Pakistan which had been at first carried out by sea has now been resumed by air. It is planned to make fourteen flights. The first aircraft with 20 families (198 persons) on board left Dacca on 14 September.

INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW : TUNIS SEMINAR ON DISSEMINATION

From 9 to 19 October Tunis will host the first French-speaking African seminar on the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law. The seminar was organized jointly by the Tunisian Red Crescent and the ICRC. Representatives from a score of African National Societies will take part as will also a delegation of the League of Red Cross Societies.

To learn of and teach the principles and ideals of the Red Cross and humanitarian law in such diverse circles as the armed forces, government ministries, universities, schools and the general public; such are the aims of this meeting, the fifth of its kind since 1977, after those held in Warsaw, Mombasa, Kuala Lumpur and Bogota. The final seminar in this series will take place in 1980 in Jordan.

ROUND TABLE ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW AT SAN REMO

Sixty experts took part in the Sixth Round Table organized by the International Institute of Humanitarian Law at San Remo (Italy) from 5 to 9 September 1979. The ICRC delegation, led by its President, Alexandre Hay, comprised also two members of its Assembly, Andrée Witzel and Maurice Aubert.

The promotion and dissemination of international humanitarian law and of the principles and ideals of the Red Cross took up a large part of the discussion. Other problems relating to peace and human rights - and torture, in particular - were considered. A whole day was devoted to problems of reuniting dispersed families and to the possibilities for relevant action by the ICRC's Central Tracing Agency on such matters under international law.

IN BRIEF....

Parties to the 1977 Protocols; Tunisia and Sweden have deposited with the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in Berne their instruments of ratification of the 1977 Protocols to the 1949 Geneva Conventions. The two Protocols will enter into force for those two States in February 1980, by which date the Protocols will be binding on eleven States, the other eight being Botswana, Ecuador, El Salvador, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Jordan, Ghana, Niger, Yugoslavia. Cyprus has ratified Protocol I.

The ICRC distributed 2,500 blankets, a hundred tents and 2.5 tons of powdered milk to young boys in the J.Z. Moyo refugee camp in north-west Zambia.

The ICRC gave the Botswana Red Cross two vehicles to help it carry out its tasks in the refugee camps of Selebi Pikwe and Francistown. In addition, 11 tons of soap, 1,400 blankets and 260 bowls were distributed. Besides holding food, the bowls which are made of a white synthetic material with a red cross painted on them serve to familiarize the refugees with the idea of the Red Cross.

Twenty young women, living in refugee camps in Zambia, followed a first aid course organized jointly by the ICRC and the Zambia Red Cross. They are now qualified to give first aid treatment and pass on their knowledge to other refugees.

In Matabeleland Province, in Zimbabwe Rhodesia, the ICRC distributed, in September, 15 tons of protein-enriched food to 2,000 displaced persons. A distribution of 2.5 tons of food and soap was made to needy persons in the Fort Victoria district.

A team of three delegates carried out, from 15 to 19 September, a further series of visits to five camps of Chad prisoners of war, held by FROLINAT in the Kirdimi region of Chad.

An additional delegate arrived in Uganda at the end of September to step up the activities of the Kampala delegation, particularly in the search for missing persons and the exchange of family messages among displaced persons.

In co-operation with the Uganda Red Cross, the ICRC distributed 10 tons of powdered milk to civilians in the Karamoja area, threatened by famine in the aftermath of the armed conflict in Uganda.

The ICRC distributed in September, through the Ethiopian Red Cross, 58 tons of foodstuffs, 60 cases of soap, 10 bales of blankets, and 4 bales of cotton cloth to persons in the provinces of Harar and Tigrai.

Visits to places of detention in South Africa: From 13 to 23 August, a team of ICRC delegates and doctors, led by Frank Schmidt, delegate general for Africa, visited six places of detention in South Africa, holding altogether 482 convicted security prisoners. The prisons visited were: Robben Island, Pretoria Local, Pretoria Hospital, Pollsmoor, Kroonstad and Potchefstroom.

Visit to a prison in Iran: From 22 to 29 August, an ICRC team composed of two delegates, a doctor and a member of the Central Tracing Agency staff visited Evine Prison in Teheran. They saw about 700 people arrested in connection with recent events in Iran and spoke with them without witness.
Mission to Chile: François Robadey, ICRC regional delegate for the Southern Cone countries of South America, went to Chile on 23 September for a new round of visits to places of detention.

The ICRC in Paraguay: In September, the ICRC regional delegate for the Southern Cone countries of South America spent some time in Paraguay. In Asunción, he visited twelve persons detained on security grounds in seven different places of detention and had talks with the authorities and members of the Paraguayan Red Cross.

Sixty general staff officers and chaplains from ten countries in Europe and from the United States staying in Switzerland, visited on 19 September the ICRC. They were received by ICRC Directors and listened to talks on ICRC activities, the work of the Central Tracing Agency and international humanitarian law.

Five seamen, whose vessel had been seized in Israel's territorial waters, were repatriated to Lebanon on 14 September, thanks to ICRC intervention.

Student travel: on 13 September, 29 students living in the occupied area of the Golan Heights crossed the demarcation line, under ICRC auspices, on their way to Damascus for their studies.

Central Tracing Agency visit to Hamburg: On 20 and 21 September, Marion Scheinberger, head of the German section of the ICRC Central Tracing Agency, and Nicolas Vecsey, CTA deputy director, visited the tracing service in Hamburg of the German Red Cross. That service is specialized in the reuniting of German minorities living in Eastern Europe.

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF THE RED CROSS: Next issue

The September-October number of International Review of the Red Cross will deal with the general theme of voluntary service. It will contain articles on different aspects of this question: voluntary service; the legal basis of voluntary service in the Red Cross.

There will also be in the same issue a short history of the Peruvian Red Cross under the title "Centenary of the Peruvian Red Cross". When it was founded a hundred years ago, it was the first Red Cross Society in America.

BACKGROUND

ON THE AGENDA OF THE WORLD ADMINISTRATIVE RADIOCOMMUNICATION CONFERENCE "WARC 79"

Radiocommunication for identification of medical transport

The World Administrative Radiocommunication Conference (WARC 79), organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is being held in Geneva from 24 September to 30 November. We have in a previous issue already mentioned this important meeting, several items on its agenda being of direct interest to the Red Cross (see ICRC Bulletin No. 41 of 6 June 1979). Item 2.6 on the agenda is the study of the technical aspects of radiocommunication for the radio-detection and identification of, and contact with, medical vehicles protected by the 1949 Geneva Conventions and by any treaty additional to those Conventions. ICRC Bulletin interviewed Philippe Eberlin, technical and scientific adviser to the ICRC, on this subject:

Bulletin: When talking of the protective marking, we have in mind the identification in time of war of medical vehicles which are protected by the Geneva Conventions.

Ph. E.: For more than a century the sign of the red cross has protected medical personnel, vehicles and establishments in time of armed conflict, and while the emblem is still valid it is necessary today to improve the protection of persons and property in view of the way in which methods of warfare have evolved. An armband is hardly identifiable beyond fifty yards, a red cross on an ambulance cannot be recognized from much more than 1,000 yards although the vehicle itself is an easy target, with the sophisticated detection systems of today, such as radar, infrared, monitoring, radio-detection, acoustic detection and so forth which make it possible to seek and destroy without even seeing the target. Marking is therefore inadequate to identify persons and property protected by the Conventions.
Bulletin: This question was discussed by the Diplomatic Conference on international humanitarian law from 1974 to 1977 in Geneva.

Ph. E.: That is so. On the identification of medical vehicles the Diplomatic Conference adopted rules which are annexed to the 1977 Protocol I. These rules are mainly concerned with medical aircraft which previously had their wings clipped in war theatres by the situation I have just described. That is why special identification signals were urgently required to enable medical aircraft to carry out their missions. The signals may be used also by hospital ships and include flashing blue lights, radar and radio signals.

From the Diplomatic Conference to the ITU

Bulletin: Can the ITU confer the force of law on the technical rules adopted by the Diplomatic Conference?

Ph. E.: Yes. The Diplomatic Conference was not competent to adopt internationally valid provisions on radio and radar technicalities and therefore sent a resolution (No.19) to the ITU which immediately included on its agenda the problems of telecommunication as a means of protecting medical vehicles in armed conflicts.

Bulletin: What in fact is involved?

Ph. E.: The Diplomatic Conference asked the ITU and the WARC 79 to take the necessary measures to ensure that the radio regulations make suitable provision for the communication needs of medical vehicles during armed conflict. International regulations must be drawn up to reduce the risk of attack on medical aircraft and ships by mistake, as unfortunately such attacks have often occurred in the past.

Radar systems

Bulletin: But how is it possible for a neutral ship or aircraft to be attacked when it is visible on a radar screen?

Ph. E.: The reason is that, while there are methods to distinguish friend from foe, there is no means of checking that a ship or a plane is neutral. This was precisely the aim of the Diplomatic Conference and is the aim of the ITU. The WARC 79 will examine the use of maritime radar responders to identify vessels. For hospital and non-belligerent ships this will be a

PHILIPPE EBERLIN

was born in 1921, a stone's throw from Geneva airport. Although keen on aviation since childhood, it was towards the sea that he turned when he enrolled in the merchant marine school at Nice in 1938. He had only just qualified when war broke out and employment in seafaring became scarce. Nevertheless, in 1941, Philippe Eberlin was a crew member on the first ship to fly the Swiss flag, and a year later he sailed with one of the two ICRC ships conveying relief supplies to prisoners of war. Both the ICRC ships were sunk in 1943, but by that time Mr. Eberlin had returned to Switzerland to join the armed forces.

After serving as an ICRC escort in Germany during World War II, Philippe Eberlin returned to the merchant marine in 1946. In 1949 he became a director of an air-taxi company and in 1952-53 he worked in Canada. He returned to Geneva the following year and held an executive position in a radio and electrical corporation until 1968. During that period he continued his research work and wrote a study on the ships used by the ICRC and the Swiss Government during the war.

This led him to resume his co-operation with the ICRC and to serve, from 1969, as technical and scientific adviser. In preparation for the Diplomatic Conference, he organized in 1970, the first meeting of experts on signalling and at the Diplomatic Conference he was the prime mover in the framing of the technical annex to Protocol I.

Philippe Eberlin took a major part also in the work of the group of experts on weapons and in the two preparatory conferences organized by the ICRC on that question in Lucerne in 1974 and Lugano in 1976, before the weapons question was taken over by the United Nations.

Combining his two interests, in ballistics and the sea, Philippe Eberlin enrolled in the Ecole de securite de la marine de guerre in Cherbourg in 1976 and obtained the Higher Certificate. In 1978, at Geneva-Cointrin Airport, he organized an international exhibition of medical equipment and transport as part of the events to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Henry Dunant.
considerable advance, but by no means all technical and operational problems have been solved. Moreover, it is no longer sufficient for surface vessels to identify hospital ships; they must also be identifiable by submerged submarines.

**Bulletin:** This is a problem in which you are interested, I believe.

**Ph. E.** : Very much so, since I sailed on two neutral ships during World War Two which were later torpedoed, and the death of my fellow crew members did not leave me indifferent. I have given a great deal of thought to the problem, and my research has lasted for a number of years. With a specialist in acoustics, a physics teacher at the Ecole Polytechnique Federale in Lausanne, I have developed an underwater acoustic identification system which we have tested at sea and which proved successful.

**A Breakthrough**

**Bulletin:** What is it exactly?

**Ph. E.** : It is a complex system enabling a surface vessel sailing according to a schedule which had been notified to belligerents and confirmed by a radio signal, to identify itself to submerged submarines. So far a submarine below the surface could not identify a vessel it heard from a great distance if it did not have the "acoustic signature", that is to say all sounds issuing from the vessel while on route, made by its engines, the stem and the propeller. The system we have invented should remedy this. We had to overcome some complicated problems arising from the way sound travels in water, varying temperatures and depths, the nature of the sea bed and surface movement.

**Bulletin:** Your trials at sea were recent?

**Ph. E.** : Yes and the results were very satisfying. We carried out trials for two days in the North Sea with a 12,000 ton freighter equipped with our system which emitted a particular signal, and a trawler recording the signal under various conditions. We met with heavy weather, which made some tests more difficult, but the system proved very efficient. We shall of course have to repeat the trials particularly for endurance.

Improved signalling for medical aircraft

**Bulletin:** Will WARC 79 also consider signalling by medical aircraft?

**Ph. E.** : The Diplomatic Conference sent a resolution (No. 17) to the International Civil Aviation Organization, submitting it problems concerning the identification of medical aircraft. The regulations annexed to Protocol I refer to all medical vehicles. For aircraft marked with the red cross, they provide for identification also by a secondary radar system on which the ICAO has already issued rules for the safety of aircraft in time of peace. This system is in fact a responder aboard the plane, automatically transmitting a signal as soon as it is interrogated by the ground surveillance radar systems. Of course, in time of war, medical aircraft notify their flight schedule and also radio their routes to the authorities of the zones over which they fly; this is a useful extra precaution for their identification.

**Bulletin:** Are these technical methods not likely to become out-dated by new inventions?

**Ph. E.** : This did not escape the attention of the Diplomatic Conference which included in Protocol I a provision for the periodic up-dating of protective signalling regulations. The ICRC must keep abreast of development and convene meetings of experts if necessary. In this respect we might mention that the flashing blue lights, for example, are already in use on civilian and military ambulances. Similarly, medical aircraft are fitted with radar responders and may radio for priority in air traffic. We must obtain the universal recognition of these technical systems which will enable medical vehicles to continue their work unhindered in time of war.

No doubt current research will reveal other ways of improving the protection of medical vehicles in time of war, thereby saving the lives of many wounded and sick.

**THE ICRC AT "TELECOM 79"**

At the invitation of the ITU, the ICRC set up, on an area of about 100 square metres at the "TELECOM 79" exhibition, a radiocommunication station linking the ICRC with its delegations in various parts of the world. Visitors at the exhibition which took place in Geneva from 20-26 September, were able to view the equipment used by the ICRC and to get a good notion of the utility of radiocommunications for Red Cross operations. A video film, showing the structure of the International Red Cross emergency radiocommunication network and the importance of the WARC 79 Conference for the Red Cross, was another feature of the ICRC stand.
HARSH REALITY

At such a time as the present, with much talk about human rights and political detainees, surprise is sometimes expressed that the ICRC does not visit such detainees in all countries where they are known to exist, and that in some cases it actually seems to ignore them.

Then again, people are puzzled at the apparent slowness of the ICRC to start relief operations which are desperately needed by a whole population threatened with extinction by famine and disease.

These reproaches which are heard from time to time take no account of circumstances which cannot be brushed aside, namely the limits to ICRC action.

States rule supreme in their own territory. The ICRC is not a super-power which can dictate to them, even for the most urgent humanitarian cause. To obtain the authorizations it needs before undertaking any action, the ICRC can rely only on its moral authority, its persuasiveness, its tenacity in negotiation, its dedication to the relief of suffering, its discretion about its work, and examples of its unqualified neutrality.

Sometimes the ICRC must persist for a long time in its efforts to obtain permission to intervene under conditions which it considers essential to effective action.

This is a harsh reality to which the ICRC must submit.
KAMPUCHEA

UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) and the ICRC have taken the first hurdle in their race against famine in Kampuchea, by the despatch before the end of October of nearly 10,000 tons of food, medical supplies, vehicles and miscellaneous equipment.

The pace of shipments has accelerated considerably since mid-October, with the start of a daily shuttle between Bangkok and Phnom Penh by a Hercules C.130 on loan from the British Government. The air-lift includes also several flights from other countries, organized by a number of relief institutions. By the end of October the quantity of relief flown to Phnom Penh amounted to 550 tons and consisted mainly of emergency medical supplies, pending arrival by sea of larger consignments.

However, there is no shortage of difficulties facing the seven ICRC and four UNICEF delegates in Kampuchea. The thousands of tons sent to Kompong Som by sea must be distributed as quickly as possible among the population. For that purpose the two organizations, in cooperation with the authorities, are working to increase the handling capacity of the port of Kompong Som and of the railway, and they are endeavouring to get on the road the lorries which are essential to reach as many regions as possible. The road haulage fleet of twenty vehicles will soon be increased by another fifty.

The number of dispensaries, hospitals and orphanages receiving help in towns and villages is growing. But the area covered must be substantially extended within the next few weeks in order for the ICRC and UNICEF to attain their objective of helping all victims.

THAILAND

Events have been proceeding apace in the last few days along the Thai-Kampuchea border, with the massive influx of refugees into Thailand. The Thai authorities and the relief organizations are confronted with a critical situation requiring large-scale intervention. Tens of thousands of people must be given food, medical attention and shelter.

It is planned to transfer refugees from the transit camps to larger reception centres further inside Thailand. The first of these centres, at Sa Kaeo, has already 30,000 people, almost all of whom require medical attention. The ICRC has set up a field hospital to treat the most serious cases, of which there are about 3,000. The hospital is staffed by 17 doctors and 20 nurses from various organizations in addition to the four doctors and six nurses from the ICRC. At the beginning of November the ICRC medical team in Thailand was strengthened by the arrival of 12 doctors, 46 nurses and two laboratory technicians from the Red Cross Societies of Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States. A second field hospital sent from Europe reached Thailand on 1 November.

At the request of the Thai Government, the co-ordination of international medical assistance along the border and in reception centres has been assigned to the ICRC. An ICRC pharmacist is co-ordinating the purchase, storage and distribution of medical supplies. The medical teams provided by the various organizations have agreed to co-operate in the co-ordination board directed by the ICRC.

Red Cross vehicles are patrolling the border, round the clock, in order to help the wounded and sick who would be unable to reach a medical centre unaided. Medical care is given such cases on the spot.

The medical programme co-ordinated by the ICRC is in this way able to cope with the needs. In addition, the ICRC is drawing up a large-scale programme to deal with any medical problems to which the flood of further refugees might give rise.

EAST TIMOR: ASSISTANCE STARTS

The joint ICRC-Indonesian Red Cross relief action to bring aid to 60,000 persons in East Timor (see ICRC Bulletin No.44, of 5 September) has started. A doctor, a nurse and a relief specialist from the ICRC and Indonesian Red Cross staff members, doctors, nurses and voluntary workers have completed the logistic preparations necessary to distribute relief supplies.

An aircraft chartered by the ICRC, carrying food and medicines, landed at Dili on 8 October. On 20 October, the first cargo vessel, loaded with 640 tons of relief goods and motor trucks, also arrived at Dili.

The medical staff of the ICRC and Indonesian Red Cross began recording the names of the village people due to receive
aid. On 19 October, distributions of food took place at Hatolia and on 29 October, at Laclubar, each with over 8,000 inhabitants.

One of the most difficult problems of the East Timor programme is to move the goods into the interior. Only two of the eight villages which will receive aid can be reached overland throughout the year. The others will receive their supplies either partly or wholly by air. Accordingly, the ICRC regional delegate and relief delegate have signed at Djakarta a charter party for aircraft to fly relief goods to the villages in question.

Air transport will swell considerably the cost of this operation. Governments and National Red Cross Societies have so far responded satisfactorily to ICRC appeals for funds. But there is still a sum of five million francs to be found to make up the thirteen million francs considered necessary.

CHAD : ICRC MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN THE SOUTH

At the end of September an ICRC medical delegate flew to Am Timan, escorting 900 kgs of medical supplies for the medical centre of that locality, some 500 miles to the south-east of N'Djamena. This was the first aircraft to go to that isolated region since the fighting which occurred there eight months ago. The delegate made an assessment of the needs of nearly 2,000 displaced persons who had fled to Am Timan from the troubled areas in the south.

From 26 September to 5 October two ICRC delegates at Moundou, in the extreme south of Chad, distributed about three tons of medical supplies.

UGANDA: FURTHER SERIES OF PRISON VISITS

A further series of visits to places of detention was begun on 12 October in Uganda and will continue until mid-November. Two teams of delegates have already visited the prisons of Murchison Bay, Luzira and Jinja, distributing badly needed supplies such as soap, blankets and disinfectants. These visits followed a tour of the north-east and southern provinces during the second fortnight of September, when medical and other supplies to a value of 82,000 Swiss francs were delivered to dispensaries and other medical centres in the Soroti district and in the region from Jinja to Lake Kyoga. In the Kizegi and Ankole districts more than a score of dispensaries and medical centres received 90,000 francs' worth of ICRC assistance.

From the start of its operations in Uganda at the beginning of March until the 1st October, the ICRC distributed more than 68 tons of medical supplies, valued at about 1,852,000 francs.

IN BRIEF

A Bulgarian resident in Mozambique, who had been captured by the forces of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, was returned to Maputo by the ICRC.

The ICRC has just set up more distribution centres in the Mashonaland province of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, to supply displaced families periodically with food, soap, blankets and clothing. In the Mtoko district nearly 1,400 kgs of various relief goods were delivered to the victims of a plantation fire. In Victoria province similar assistance was given to 140 families whose houses also had been destroyed by fire.

Emergency relief was delivered to the Shilenda transit camp in Zambia, for the benefit of homeless people, including children suffering from malnutrition. The supplies distributed consisted of 60 tents, 2,500 blankets, 1,550 kgs of powdered milk and 860 kgs of soap.

Mission in Laos : François Zen Ruffinen, the ICRC delegate in Hanoi, recently went to Vientiane to deliver to the Lao Red Cross a donation of medical supplies for the capital's hospitals.

From 6 to 15 October, André Pasquier, delegate general for Latin America, carried out a mission in Nicaragua during which he met government and Red Cross representatives.

From mid-September to the end of October, ICRC delegates visited three places of detention in Argentina, namely the Rawson, Villa Devoto and Cordoba prisons in which there were 800 detainees.

Between 15 September and 10 October the ICRC gave to the Ethiopian Red Cross 146 tons of food, 3 tons of soap, 2,880 litres of oil and 2,250 blankets for distribution to the civilian populations in the administrative provinces of Sidamo, Tigré, Harar and Bale.
DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW: SIXTEEN FRENCH-SPEAKING AFRICAN COUNTRIES REPRESENTED IN TUNIS

The first seminar for French-speaking countries in Africa on the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law took place in Tunis from 9 to 19 October. It had been organized jointly by the ICRC and the Tunisian Red Crescent and was attended by some forty delegates from sixteen countries (Algeria, Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mauritania, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo, Tunisia, Upper Volta and Zaire), from the League of Red Cross Societies and from the Henry Dunant Institute.

The aims of the seminar were to make humanitarian rules for the protection of armed conflict victims better known and to find suitable ways and means to spread knowledge of them among government institutions, armed forces, universities, schools and the general public in each country.

During the first week participants listened to nine lectures on humanitarian law - its history, nature and application - on humanitarian principles common to African and Islamic religions and traditions and, finally, on the role and action of the ICRC.

The participants then met at Monastir, a hundred miles south of the capital, for four days of group discussions with a view to determining the means and methods necessary to reach the various target sectors. One group dealt with dissemination among the armed forces, government institutions, universities, schools and the general public in each country. The other was concerned more particularly with dissemination within National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Although the participants stressed in their conclusions that the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law was in the first place the responsibility of governments, they agreed that relevant national programmes should be devised in all countries in co-operation with the National Societies and the ICRC. They favoured the constitution of ad hoc committees comprising members of National Societies and representatives of government departments concerned (Defence, Foreign Affairs, Health, Education, Interior, etc.) to co-ordinate efforts to disseminate knowledge of international humanitarian law.

Finally, it was suggested that where local conditions were appropriate, and with a view to making the universality of humanitarian principles more clearly understood by the public, the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law should be related to religious precepts or to certain local customs, and that traditional means of communication should be employed for that purpose.

U.N. CONFERENCE ON CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS - 2nd Session in 1980

The United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects took place in Geneva from 10 to 28 September.

Convened in accordance with Resolution 22 of the Diplomatic Conference on International Humanitarian Law (1974-77), the U.N. Conference, by promulgating specific prohibitions and restrictions on the use of certain conventional weapons, should supplement the principles concerning methods and means of warfare introduced into international humanitarian law by Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions. The ICRC is therefore following the conference with great interest. Its delegation is led by Mr. Maurice Aubert, a member of the Committee.

The allotted three weeks were insufficient for the conference to deal with all the subject matter. However, the conference could not be called a failure, especially as the negotiations were conducted in a constructive atmosphere and as the delegates agreed on a second session, scheduled for 15 September to 10 October 1980. Progress made gives cause to believe, without being too optimistic, that the work may be completed during the second session.

"PRESENTING THE ICRC"

A new illustrated booklet issued by the Press and Information Division has just come off the press. Introducing the ICRC, as the title implies, gives a simple and comprehensive view of the ICRC and its activities. It is available in French, English, German and Spanish; Arabic and Portuguese versions will shortly be issued.
At the invitation of the World Veterans Federation, an ICRC delegation comprising Dr. Rémi Russbach, chief medical officer, and Mr. H.P. Gasser, Head of the Legal Division, attended the 16th General Assembly of that organization in Florence from 13 to 16 October.

The WVF is the international federation of national War Veterans' Organizations. Its Assembly's agenda was varied, including the struggle for peace, disarmament, human rights, refugees, and so forth, and also more technical matters relating to the integration of veterans and war victims in society.

Mr. Gasser gave a talk on ICRC activities and thanked the WVF for its constructive role in the working out of the Protocols to the Geneva Conventions. The WVF had proposed definitions of a combatant which proved to be very useful.

The Assembly passed a resolution urging all member organizations to involve themselves in promoting the ratification of the Protocols by their governments. The WVF promised to co-operate with the ICRC to participate in efforts to disseminate knowledge of the Geneva Conventions and Protocols among the armed forces.

Dr. Russbach gave an account of the war-disabled rehabilitation centre at Debre Zeit in Ethiopia, which had been organized and financed by the ICRC with Ethiopian Government co-operation. His talk was given to demonstrate that it was essential to work with means and techniques available locally to implement a programme of aid to the disabled of a Third World country. His exposition was well received and several delegations made a point of going further into the subject in discussions with Dr. Russbach.

The purpose of the meeting was to determine teaching methods to present Red Cross principles and ideals to primary school children. Four working groups drew up outlines of lessons which will be tried out in the coming months. The participants hoped, moreover, to meet again in a year's time in order to review the methods after they have been put into practice. The wish was expressed that the necessary means, particularly audio-visual, be made available to teachers, as they would contribute to making the subject matter more lively and accessible to young pupils.

Following the skirmishes on 8 October between rival factions in north Lebanon, and the subsequent abduction of partisans of both camps, the ICRC delegation in Beirut contacted the parties with a view to gaining access to the persons they were detaining. The delegates visited the detainees and were able to reassure their families about their well-being. On 12 October, in the presence of the ICRC, 162 of these detainees were released.
IN BRIEF

After a mission from 26 September to 1 October by one of its delegates, the ICRC supplied 8,000 blankets to the distress population of camps in the Tindouf region.

Two Lebanese nationals in Israel for medical treatment were repatriated by the ICRC.

An ICRC team on 8 October, started a further series of visits to places of detention in Jordan, and continued until the end of the month. The first such round of visits took place from 5 February to 11 March this year, at the invitation of the authorities of the Hashemite Kingdom.

On 11 October a Jordanian national was repatriated from Israel under ICRC auspices.

BACKGROUND

In the wings of the first League General Assembly

NATIONAL SOCIETIES TO HAVE A GREATER SAY IN LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

The General Assembly of the League of Red Cross Societies met from 4 to 6 October 1979 in Geneva. This Assembly, the first since, in accordance with the new League Constitution, the General Assembly replaced the Board of Governors as the supreme decision-making body, was attended by about a hundred National Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies and League representatives. The ICRC participated with observer status.

The creation of the Assembly was part of the profound reorganization of the League structure. We asked Jacques Meurant, Director of the Henry Dunant Institute and former special adviser to the Secretary General of the League, to explain the extent of the change and its implications.

Question : As the League Secretary General's special adviser on constitutional questions you had an active part in the drafting of the new Constitution. Why was the Constitution revised?

Answer : The need for a revision of the League Constitution made itself felt gradually, especially from 1970 onwards. The Constitution had remained unchanged since 1938, although the Red Cross mission, and particularly that of the League, had developed, so that the Constitution was no longer appropriate to community needs and League activities. There were several shortcomings which had to be remedied, and to do so became all the more pressing since the Tansley Report on the re-appraisal of the role of the Red Cross called, if I may say so, for heart-searching throughout the whole movement.

Q.: During the last thirty years there have been developments in National Societies, of which there are now more than ever. Did that fact weigh in the balance when the decision was made to revise the Constitution?

A.: It certainly did. I would even say that it was the most important factor. In 1938 there were only about fifty National Societies. By 1970 there were more than 120. National Societies were increasingly involved, therefore, in League activities and even in League decisions, so that there was a tendency for them to participate more. I think that the key word summarizing the new Constitution is participation, a greater participation by National Societies not only in League activities but also in League decisions. There was also the question of the composition of constitutional bodies of the League, whether deliberative, executive or consultative, in which National Societies from all parts of the world wished to be regularly represented.

Q.: One of the aims of the new Constitution is to make it possible to follow the daily work of the League. What does that mean in practice?

A.: The new Constitution has the great merit of drawing clear distinctions between the purely deliberative functions now falling to a General Assembly, comprising all National Society representatives, those of a 25-member Executive Council with responsibility for discharging mandates assigned it by the General Assembly, and those of the subsidiary bodies such as the Finance Commission, the Permanent Scale of Contributions Commission, and a number of advisory committees (relief, medical and paramedical, development, youth, nursing), and ad hoc commissions on such matters as the Red Cross and Peace, dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law, and so forth.
Q.: What, in your opinion, were the most important results of this first General Assembly?

A.: An awareness of the importance of the refugee problem. Of course, that is a subject quite different from the Constitution, but it dominated the whole general atmosphere as well as the decisions, especially in the light of events in Cambodia and of the agony of the refugees in South East Asia.

With regard to the application of the Constitution, this was the first meeting of the General Assembly and the new Constitution will undoubtedly be put to the test of events. We may say that the Assembly was "running in". It was noted that the Constitution was quite precise but had not been completely assimilated, as was only to be expected, since there were at times some problems of interpretation.

Regional representation "network"

Q.: In fact, the Jordanian Red Crescent proposed some amendments to the Constitution.

A.: It might be thought that the proposal to make amendments only two years after the adoption of the Constitution was premature. The National Societies of developing or Third World countries wished to be represented like the others - no more and no less - on the constitutional bodies of the League. That concern and wish was at the origin of the fair geographic representation principle which was written into the 1977 Constitution. But what had not been thought up at that time was a sort of "network" of representatives of so many National Societies region by region. The Jordanian Red Crescent asked for the principle of fair geographic representation to be put into effect genuinely. It was decided to set up a special committee to examine the question and to report to the next meeting of the General Assembly at Manila in 1981.

The mechanics of relief action

Q.: How can the new Constitution improve League operations, for example relief work following a natural disaster?

A.: One of the objects of the new Constitution was precisely to define the various League functions and its structures to discharge them. Strange to say, the old Constitution made no provision for international relief after a natural disaster, even though that is one of the League's most important activities. The new Constitution not only does so but it includes functions which explain the whole relief action mechanism. For instance, the Secretary General is responsible for the direction of relief operations decided upon by the Assembly or the Council, but in emergency or other exceptional circumstances he has authority to take all appropriate relief action, on his own responsibility, without referring to the Assembly or the Council, which would of course complicate the procedure. It must not be forgotten that in disaster relief time is of the essence. As I said before, the new Constitution distinguishes responsibility for decision-making from implementation and consultation. This is fundamental for the smooth-running of the institution.

JACQUES MEURANT

Jacques Meurant became director of the Henry Dunant Institute on 1 July 1979, succeeding to Jean Pictet. Previously he had been special adviser on constitutional affairs to the Secretary General of the League of Red Cross Societies.

Doctor of Political Science and Bachelor of Arts, Jacques Meurant, a French national, joined the League secretariat in 1962 at the age of 29 years. He discharged administrative functions before being given the responsibility for legal and constitutional affairs and for research and studies on the statutes, functions and structures of the League and of National Societies and on the mission and development of the Red Cross in contemporary society. He thus contributed to the studies on the re-appraisal of the role of the Red Cross and to the work of revising the League Constitution. In addition, he was associated in the work of the Diplomatic Conference on the reaffirmation and development of international humanitarian law, and he co-ordinated League activities for the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law and of Red Cross principles and ideals.

In carrying out his diverse functions, Jacques Meurant has forged many contacts with National Red Cross Societies and he has co-operated closely with the ICRC.