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II. — EUROPE

GREECE

Assistance to interned persons, or those exiled as a result of disturbances in Greece, was continued in 1953 by visits to 22 camps, prisons and places of exile. The delegates of the ICRC were able to converse freely with detained and exiled persons; when it appeared to them that those persons' treatment called for improvement, they referred the matter to the Greek authorities who, in most cases, acceded to their requests.

In order to supplement its work by more general assistance in favour of the whole of the civilian population suffering from the consequences of the War, the ICRC forwarded large quantities of relief supplies in the form of medicaments, clothing and foodstuffs. From January 1 to December 31, 1953, the Athens Delegation distributed 65 tons of sundry relief supplies representing Sw. Fr. 360,000.—¹ in value. Thanks to gifts in kind received from exterior sources and purchases made with its own funds, since January 1947 the ICRC has made available to persons under detention and the civilian population in Greece nearly 1,265 tons of relief supplies, of which the total value was Sw. Fr. 3,200,000.—.

In addition, as mentioned in the first part of this Report (Page 38), the ICRC took relief measures on behalf of the victims of earthquakes which devastated the islands of the Ionian Archipelago. Emergency relief supplies consisting of foodstuffs (cocoa, powdered milk, sugar), pharmaceutical products (vaccines, serums and antibiotics) clothing and blankets were drawn from the Delegation's stores in Athens and distributed. The ICRC also shared out relief supplies emanating from sundry donors, in particular Swiss drug manufacturers.

¹ See table of distribution of relief supplies under page 39.

A Head-Nurse of the ICRC left Geneva for Greece and proceeded to the disaster area, accompanied by members of the ICRC Delegation in Athens. The Commander in charge of the devastated islands requested the mission to organise a vast camp in Zante for the purpose of sheltering 1,500 persons. The camp, composed of over 80 tents and an infirmary for urgent medical treatment, was set up within a very short time; also a centre for about one hundred children. In October the camp and the centre were handed over to the Greek authorities.

Following the respective destruction by earthquakes of Zante and Argostoli Prisons, 155 of the inmates were among the disaster victims and had to be transferred to other penitentiaries in Greece. The ICRC was also able to provide each person thus transferred with a parcel of clothing and a blanket. The delegate also visited those persons in the new places of detention to which they were assigned.

Reference has already been made (see Report for 1952) to the anti-tuberculosis campaign instituted by the ICRC (from its own resources) for the civilian population affected by the war and its consequences, and also persons in penitentiaries and places of exile. The campaign was continued in 1953 on the lines previously described. The detection of tuberculosis among exiled persons in Aghios Efstratios had not been possible owing to the lack of radiographic apparatus and an analytical laboratory. The ICRC having intervened, the Greek authorities agreed to transport 150 exiled persons to Lesbos who, from first tests made on the spot, were found to be tuberculosis suspects. Each of the exiles was examined and X-rayed at Mytilene Hospital in the presence of the Head-Nurse of the Delegation; the X-ray charts and medical records were sent to the ICRC Medical Adviser in Geneva who, after forming a diagnosis of each case, could thus advise the Greek doctors upon the treatment required.

The ICRC continued its relief action on behalf of the war-disabled. In the course of 1953 it devoted an amount of Sw. Fr. 16,000.— to the purchase of orthopaedic apparatus for Greek disabled. In addition, those who showed symptoms of

tuberculosis were given X-ray examinations and treatment with rimifon and streptomycine supplied by the ICRC. All war-disabled suffering from open tuberculosis were transferred to hospital establishments where they received the treatment they required.

On page 74 will be found particulars of the International Committee's aid to Greece for the repatriation of Greek children.
