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VIII. RELATIONS WITH RED CROSS INSTITUTIONS

THE XIXth INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS

The International Red Cross held its XIXth regular session at New Delhi, from October 28 to November 7. This was the second International Red Cross Conference in Asia : in 1934 it was held at Tokyo. The XIXth Conference was originally planned to take place at the beginning of 1957, but because of the abnormal amount of relief work in which the Red Cross was engaged at that time, following the events in Hungary and Egypt, it was postponed until the autumn.

The International Conference, which is held every four years in principle, is always an important event. It is true that the destiny of the Red Cross is shaped above all in time of crisis and suffering, in the field rather than in the assembly hall, and its slogan might almost be : action first, speeches afterwards. But that in no way detracts from the importance of these international meetings, which are a sort of parliamentary session of an empire on the world scale, composed of countries from every part of the globe. In a world as divided as ours, it is necessary that from time to time the ideas of each one should be presented, in order that the common path, which is not necessarily the middle path, of humanity, may emerge.

The special and all-important features of the Conference is that its members consist of the national and international Red Cross institutions as well as the States party to the Geneva Conventions



*Opening ceremony of the XIXth International Conference of the Red Cross,
New Delhi*

—in fact almost all Powers—all with full voting rights. At the Conference, therefore, the government authorities are entitled to as many votes as the National Red Cross Societies. In practice, however, there are fewer governmental delegates. The States as such are not legally bound by the decisions of the Conference.

The fact that Governments are represented at the Conference is in line with the nature of the Red Cross, which serves as an auxiliary to the public authorities, and in return receives their constant support.

The International Conference is the supreme deliberative body of the Red Cross. Its principal objective is to ensure unity in the work of the various branches which make up the International Red Cross, and the ICRC is represented there in its own right. The Conference also considers proposals for the development of humanitarian law.

During the Conference, the International Committee's responsibility falls into three categories : in the first place, it has a moral responsibility to take an important part as a result of the undisputed authority which it enjoys in this domain ; secondly, technical, for the ICRC representatives are appointed to each commission, and they present a large number of reports.¹ Lastly, the ICRC has a practical responsibility, since it makes some of its staff members available to assist in the organisation of the Conference.

The ICRC delegation to the New Delhi Conference consisted of the President, Mr. Leopold Boissier, the Vice-Presidents, Mr. M. Bodmer and Mr. F. Siordet, Dr. M. Junod, a member of the Committee, Mr. R. Gallopin, Executive Director, and Mr. J. Pictet, Director for General Affairs, assisted by Mr. C. Pilloud, Mr. M. Borsinger, Mr. G. Fiechter, Mr. P. Gaillard, Mr. W. Michel, Mr. J. Wilhelm and Miss A. Pfrter.

* * *

The International Committee and the League gave all possible assistance to the Indian Red Cross for the organisation of the Conference. The experience gained at previous conferences was drawn upon, and one of the directors of the Secretariat of the Indian

¹ For the 1957 Conference, 18 reports were prepared.

Red Cross spent several weeks at Geneva. In addition, the ICRC and the League each sent a staff member to New Delhi in November 1956 to take part in the organisation of the Conference ; they returned there at the beginning of October 1957.

After each plenary session or commission meeting, a spokesman of the ICRC¹ reported on the views expressed and answered questions from journalists accredited to the Conference (about 200 in all).

* * *

82 countries took part in the Conference, which was inaugurated by the President of the Republic of India, Mr. R. Prasad. The Prime Minister, Mr. J. Nehru also spoke during the opening meeting.

The Chairman of the Conference was Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, President of the Indian Red Cross. The items on the agenda were first considered in three commissions. The first of these, the International Humanitarian Law Commission, revealed itself from the start to be the most important. Its meetings were held in the main hall of the Vigyan Bhavan, where the plenary sessions also took place, and all the delegations were well represented. The Commission was presided over, with great competence, by Mr. John MacAulay, who had already directed with success the discussions of the XVIIIth International Conference at Toronto, in 1952. The work was carried out in favourable conditions and the participants showed a conciliatory spirit.

The International Humanitarian Law Commission started its programme with the most significant item, i.e. the study of the *Draft Rules for the Limitation of the Dangers incurred by the Civilian Population in Time of War*, prepared by the International Committee of the Red Cross with the co-operation of experts and made available, over a year before, to Governments and Red Cross Societies.

We are giving below some essential passages from the explanatory statement made by the International Committee's representative² when introducing the *Draft Rules* :

¹ Mr. G. A. Fiechter.

² Mr. F. Siordet.

"... These Draft Rules have their origin in the memory of the cruel losses inflicted on the civilian population during the First, and more particularly the Second World War and our anxiety to avoid a repetition of these losses, which the development of modern means of destruction could only increase. The fact must be recognised that while all States which signed the Geneva Conventions in 1949 proclaimed that non-combatants must be respected and protected and assistance given to the victims, this protection and assistance might be jeopardised so long as there were indiscriminate attacks on military personnel and civilians alike with weapons which might even raze whole cities to the ground.

... The Draft Rules are the result not merely of the International Committee of the Red Cross carrying out a task entrusted to it but of joint efforts. From the beginning of our work, we have kept the National Societies informed of our intentions and we communicated to them the results of the first advisory meeting of the Commission of Experts held in Geneva in March 1954. Almost at the same time the Board of Governors, meeting in Oslo in May 1954 and moved by the same anxiety for the better protection of the civilian population, spontaneously and unanimously requested the ICRC "to make a thorough examination of the subject and propose at the next International Conference of the Red Cross the necessary additions to the Conventions in force in order to protect civilian populations efficiently from the dangers of atomic, chemical and bacteriological warfare".

... When, in 1952, we resumed the studies undertaken by the ICRC before 1939 and began the preparation of these Draft Rules, world opinion had been put on its guard by a new and important factor, not present before the war : the development of nuclear energy. It is a fact that many see a guarantee for the civilian populations in prohibition, pure and simple, of the use of atomic energy for warlike purposes. Many resolutions of International Red Cross Conferences or of the Board of Governors reflect this trend by expressing a wish that Governments succeed in reaching agreement on such a prohibition and on the means of ensuring its observance.

While the ICRC has associated itself with these resolutions, it has nevertheless considered it necessary from the very start to tackle the problem of the protection of civilians in case of conflict from a different viewpoint in keeping with the purpose of the Red Cross. Indeed, prohibition of nuclear weapons leaves out of account all the other devices, new or old, which, used in certain ways, may cause considerable losses to civilians. Furthermore, attempts to achieve total prohibition under effective safeguards have for a long time been under discussion in the United Nations. Now, the Red Cross is not a political institution ; it has no competence in the art of war and still less in nuclear science. It does not have to concern itself either with the manufacture of arma-

ments or with the elaboration of strategy. Its only anxiety is, and should remain, the protection of non-combatants and the giving of relief.

The ICRC therefore considered that a solution should not be sought in drawing up a catalogue of authorised or prohibited means of warfare, but rather in making out a list of principles ensuring the safety of those who must, by general consent, be protected from attack. Now, these principles have long existed. Though they are often forgotten and are stated in the ancient rules of the law of nations in a form which may appear out of date in this age of aviation and atomic energy, innumerable manifestations of public opinion and even the opinion of States—such as the signature of the Geneva Conventions of 1949—show that they are still living in the public conscience. We therefore considered that it was both necessary and sufficient to reaffirm these rules in a form which takes into account the developments of modern science. Indeed, there can be found in our Draft Rules nothing but :

- a reaffirmation of the principle that the civilian population must be left outside the sphere of armed attacks ;

- the consequent obligation on the parties to the conflict to take every precaution to ensure that attacks on military objectives do not harm the civilian population which is to be removed from the vicinity of threatened objectives ;

- the consequent obligation to abstain from the use of methods of destruction, the effects of which may escape from the control of the person using them, thus endangering the civilian population.

It is not the selection of a particular weapon which may make it lawful to destroy human life. We are, therefore, very desirous of the principles stated in the Draft being valid in all circumstances, whatever the weapon used and whether it is already known or yet to be invented.

Peace and war are a matter for governments. The ICRC knows that in a conflict the preservation of a country's safety may face it with harsh necessities. It is not the Committee's role to discuss this point. On the other hand, its mission and the mission of the Red Cross in general is to proclaim and ceaselessly reaffirm the fact that humanity also has its necessities. Our Draft Rules have no other purpose.

... Only Governments and their specialists can draw up international conventions in their final form. This is a Red Cross meeting and not a Conference of Experts. Moreover, in the very short time available it would not be possible to reconcile differences of opinion on the wording of each article without running the risk of distorting the text of the Draft with harmful results for its future.

Votes on particular provisions of the Draft Rules do not matter at present. The various opinions expressed on the subject, and any remarks and suggestions you may make concerning possible amendments, will be carefully noted with a view to the setting up, later on, of the regula-

tions which we all wish to see established. What matters now, and what we are proposing is that this XIXth International Red Cross Conference should give the opportunity for all the delegates present to unite in stating their unanimous approval of the basic principle of the Draft Rules for the protection of the civilian population in the event of an armed conflict.

The compilers of the Draft Rules have never at any time considered them to be an alternative solution. They merely represent the last attempt of the Red Cross—if, unhappily, recourse should once more be had to force—to save what can and should be saved. But all those who have taken part in the establishment of the Draft Rules as well as those who have studied them, will certainly be the first to stress repeatedly the idea which appears at the beginning of the Preamble that “all nations are firmly convinced that war should be banned as a means of settling disputes between man and man”.

The discussions then started and lasted two days ; matters of procedure and substance were both considered.

The first question of procedure was to decide whether the Draft Rules were, as had been suggested, to be examined article by article (for instance by a Working Party), amended and the actual text voted upon, or if the Commission should merely submit to Governments for consideration a matter judged to be too complex for a Red Cross meeting. A middle course was finally adopted.

With regard to matters of substance, a number of delegations proposed that Article 14 of the Draft Rules should be amended to prohibit purely and simply the use of nuclear energy for warlike purposes. Other delegations criticised certain provisions of the Draft Rules and proposed amendments which were duly noted.

Finally, the following resolution was adopted unanimously :

The XIXth International Conference of the Red Cross,

convinced that it is interpreting the general feeling throughout the world which demands that effective measures be taken to rid the peoples from the nightmare of the threat of war,

having taken cognizance of the “Draft Rules for the Limitation of the Dangers incurred by the Civilian Population in Time of War”, drawn up by the International Committee of the Red Cross, following a request by the Board of Governors of the League meeting at Oslo in 1954,

considers that a set of rules revising and extending those previously accepted is highly desirable as a measure of protection for the civilian population, if a conflict should unfortunately break out,

deems that the objectives of the Draft Rules submitted are in conformity with Red Cross ideals and the requirements of humanity,

urges the International Committee of the Red Cross to continue its efforts for the protection of the civilian population against the evils of war, and and

requests the International Committee of the Red Cross, acting on behalf of the XIXth International Conference, to transmit the Draft Rules, the record of its discussions, the text of the proposals, and the submitted amendments, to the Governments for their consideration.

Although different in form, the meaning of the text is close to that submitted by the ICRC itself ; having been drafted by the Conference, however, the resolution has the advantage of being a direct issue of its discussions.

As it stands, the resolution voted is no doubt the most which, in present circumstances, could have been expected from the international community. Without entering into discussions which, in view of the political positions taken up by the various States, would have led to no solution, the recommendation contains an approval, in principle, of the efforts of the ICRC and enables it to continue its work. It is on this basis that the ICRC was requested to send to all Governments in 1958 the complete record of the proposals submitted in this connection at the New Delhi Conference.

The second item on the Agenda concerned the " Role of National Red Cross Societies in the sphere of civilian protection ". There was no question here of drafting rules concerning the conduct of warfare but to find practical measures which could be taken by National Societies in the various countries. The importance of such work and the urgent need of it were strongly emphasised. Moreover, the ICRC had submitted to the Conference a number of suggestions for the use of National Societies. The suggestions were approved.

Apart from the questions just mentioned, but in connection with the protection of the civilian population, the Japanese Red Cross had requested the addition to the Agenda of an item on *nuclear weapon tests*, in view of the danger suffered by human beings and their descendants through such tests. The Japanese Red Cross proposed that an appeal to all States should be launched, asking for these tests to be given up or at least discontinued until the time when scientists could make a definite statement as to the actual risks involved. The ICRC was requested to convene a meeting of experts, although a meeting of that description is now being held under the auspices of the United Nations. The Japanese Red Cross gave a very striking report on the matter, and produced some very relevant documents. A number of delegations supported its proposal and some of them were even in favour of the prohibition of all nuclear weapons.

Nevertheless, on the whole the Commission considered it advisable not to enter into details of a matter which is now the object of negotiations between States and discussions within the United Nations ; finally, on the suggestion of the Indian Red Cross, a resolution of a general nature met with the approval of all concerned and was adopted. The resolution appeals to all countries of the world to give up recourse to war which " is no solution to any problem " and to adopt measures which will at all times " effectively protect humanity from the terrible consequences of the use of incendiary, chemical, bacteriological, radioactive or other such agents ".

" The ratification, dissemination and application of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 " is a traditional subject of discussion at International Red Cross Conferences ; the ICRC had submitted a detailed report on the matter.

When the previous Red Cross Conference was held in Toronto in 1952, the new Conventions had been ratified by 18 States only. By the end of 1957, they had been ratified by 69 States¹, including all the great Powers. This is, undoubtedly, a great victory for humanitarian ideals. The representative of the

¹ See p. 65.

ICRC made an appeal¹, in this connection, to the countries (now few in number) which have not yet ratified the Conventions.

The attention of National Societies and Governments was drawn to the imperative need to undertake or to intensify the dissemination of knowledge of the Geneva Conventions. It would seem, in fact, that their very efficiency depends upon their dissemination, not only in official circles but also among the masses. The ICRC mentioned, in this connection, its special publications and, in particular, the illustrated pamphlet in nine languages recently published.

On the same subject, the representative of the World Medical Association, Dr. J. Maystre, gave a report of the joint work of the Association with the International Committee of Military Medicine and Pharmacy and the International Committee of the Red Cross, with a view to developing "international medical law". New regulations concerning medical ethics in time of war have already been established, while rules are now being drafted to ensure assistance to and care of the wounded and sick in all circumstances. One of the most outstanding results of this work was the creation of a new medical emblem for members of the profession who are not entitled to make use of the red cross.

With regard to "legal assistance to aliens", which is always a topical subject, the ICRC and the League submitted a report which was approved. Their representatives stated that the two international Red Cross institutions intended to participate in the creation of an International Centre for Legal Assistance, with the support of the non-governmental organisations interested in migration, which seems likely to give impetus to the development of this assistance and encourage the formation of national branches, on the lines of what has been done in Italy and Greece.

Two questions arose in the course of the discussions and gave rise to resolutions of the International Humanitarian Law Commission, and later of the Conference itself.

One concerned the "protection of victims of internal disturbances" and was the subject of two resolutions. The first, put

¹ Mr. J. S. Pictet.

forward by the Syrian Red Crescent, recommended that doctors, like wounded, shall in no way be hindered in their duties, that medical professional secrecy (i.e. the fact that doctors may not give information concerning the wounded or sick) shall be respected and that no restrictions shall be placed on the free circulation of medicaments. The second resolution (proposed by the Argentine Red Cross) emphasises that, in the event of internal disturbances, relief supplies must be distributed equitably among the victims ; it also requests that the National Red Cross Society and the ICRC shall always be allowed to distribute relief supplies.

These two resolutions are important ; they are in full conformity with humanitarian principles and, in fact, fulfil the aim pursued in the establishment of "international medical law" to which reference is made above. They also sanction the pioneer work undertaken by the ICRC since the Second World War in connection with assistance to the victims of internal disturbances and conflicts.

The second and last question concerned the reunion of dispersed families, following proposals put forward by the Red Cross Societies of Hungary, Japan and the Republic of Korea, whose countries sought the return from other lands of some of their nationals. It was evident, at an early stage, that it would be difficult to reach a general agreement on texts which concerned specific situations. The Canadian Red Cross then submitted a text of a more flexible nature which set forth once more the basic principle of Red Cross assistance in the re-uniting of families, i.e. to conform to the wishes of those concerned and, in the case of children, those of the head of the family no matter where domiciled. This text received almost unanimous support.¹

* * *

The second Commission (Medico-Social Commission) was presided over by Dr. Domanska (Poland). It gave special consideration to the part played by National Societies in the medical and social field (first aid, hospitals, blood transfusion, mother and child welfare, health education of the general public, nutrition, etc.)

¹ See pp. 42 to 44.

and also with regard to nursing (recruitment and training of medical personnel, etc.). The Commission also discussed the organisation of the Junior Red Cross.

* * *

The third Commission (General Commission) was presided over by General Martola (Finland). It took note of the reports by the various bodies and committees of the International Red Cross. It set forth the principles which should govern co-ordination of relief action and the experience gained from the recent Red Cross activities in Hungary and the Near East.

All the resolutions approved by the third Commission came before the plenary session for final acceptance.

It was decided to hold the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross in Geneva in 1963, to mark the centenary of the Red Cross. The USSR delegation withdrew its proposal to hold the Conference in Moscow, so that the centenary celebrations could be held in the city where the Red Cross was born.

Lastly, the members of the Standing Commission were appointed¹, and the Conference concluded its agenda with a discussion on "The Red Cross as a factor of peace".

* * *

Despite the sharp discussion between certain governmental delegations, the Conference may be considered to have attained its objectives.

The President of the International Committee has made the following assessment of these important discussions :

"In our day, with the world weighed down by anxiety, too much should not be expected of an international conference. If it passes over in silence the problems dividing the world, its results will bear the imprint of a false optimism. If, by accident or design, it is used as an arena for wordy political strife, the sterile polemics of the speeches will doom to failure all attempts to achieve understanding and unity.

¹ See p. 93 and 94.

Certainly the New Delhi Conference did not entirely escape this dilemma. The vote on the proposal to invite the government established in Formosa to attend the Conference under its official title of the " Republic of China " caused a very sharp incident during the closing session. Distressing though it was, this incident nevertheless gave a most useful object lesson to all, by proving that the unity, vitality and work of the Red Cross was not affected and that this affair, which made such a great stir, was foreign to the real nature of the Red Cross movement, which is a reality, based on lasting feelings and aspirations, unaffected by the diplomatic ebb and flow.

This could be felt at New Delhi, where all the delegates united in constructive activity. The success of this activity was due to the valuable contacts made at Conference meetings, at the innumerable receptions and during the fine excursions so well organised by our Indian hosts. The universality of the Red Cross was shown not only by the presence of eighty-one National Societies and as many Governments, but also by the discovery by each delegate that all his colleagues were animated by the same ideals and convictions as himself. This was a stimulating and promising discovery and was perhaps the best result of the Conference.

The discussions reflected this universality of moral outlook. They were moderate and imbued with a desire to achieve unanimity. The International Committee finds nothing but matter for congratulation in the spirit of understanding which reigned during the consideration of the items which it had placed on the agenda. It was not entirely unapprehensive concerning the fate that might befall some of its proposals, which raise difficult problems. There exist antagonisms and feelings of mistrust which might have found therein a pretext for unbridled expression. However, in fact a voluntary discipline enabled discussions to proceed in an atmosphere of calm, and texts of far-reaching importance were the result. The acceptance of the resolution on the Draft Rules for the Limitation of the Dangers incurred by the Civilian Population in Time of War was one of the high points of the Conference. The same applies to the resolution concerning medical care and the one on relief in the case of internal disturbances.

The texts adopted at New Delhi are filled with a spirit which only the Red Cross could impart to them, something deeply human ; at grips with suffering, men resemble each other, and the great organisation which has set itself the task of helping them is faced in every country with much the same problems. These problems were dealt with by the Conference in full consciousness of its duty and responsibilities ; it convinced those taking part of the usefulness of its work, which will be carried out by the Red Cross movement with renewed zeal.

In short, the New Delhi Conference was a great success."

RELATIONS WITH THE NATIONAL RED CROSS SOCIETIES AND WITH GOVERNMENTS

In addition to its practical work in various countries, the principal features of which have been mentioned in the preceding section of this report, the ICRC maintains close contact with all the National Red Cross Societies and Governments. These contacts have to be renewed constantly ; although the institutions remain, those who direct them may change frequently. The International Committee maintains liaison, either by sending special representatives from Geneva or through the good offices of its resident delegates in various capitals¹, most of whom work for the Red Cross in a voluntary capacity.

* * *

The dominant event in 1957 was the XIXth International Conference. The ICRC took this opportunity to strengthen its links with the National Red Cross Societies of Asia and Australasia, just as it had visited countries in the New World during the Toronto Conference, in 1952.

As part of this programme, the President of the ICRC, Mr. Leopold Boissier, visited Lebanon and Syria, Mr. Martin Bodmer, Vice-President, accompanied by Mrs. Bodmer, travelled to Nepal, Thailand, New Zealand and Australia ; Mr. Frederic Siordet, Vice-President and Mr. Melchior Borsinger carried out

¹ For the list of these delegates, see p. 120

an extensive tour in the course of which they went to Hong Kong, the People's Republic of China, the USSR and Poland. Mr. William Michel visited the Federation of Malaya, Indonesia, Cambodia, Burma and Goa ; lastly, Mr. Claude Pilloud, together with the Director of the Medico-Social Bureau of the League of Red Cross Societies ¹ paid a visit to the Ceylon Red Cross.

* * *

During the session of the Executive Committee of the League, which took place at Geneva in April, representatives of over forty National Societies visited the ICRC headquarters. They included the President and Vice-Presidents of the Red Cross Societies of : Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, German Democratic Republic, German Federal Republic, India, Ireland, Norway, Rumania, Sweden, Switzerland, USSR, United Kingdom, United States and Venezuela. An important information meeting was held, at which certain problems of topical interest including the question of the protection of the civilian population in the event of war, were considered.

In the course of the year numerous officials of National Red Cross Societies visited the ICRC headquarters : Mr. Paulino Garcia, President of the Philippine National Red Cross, General A. Gruenther Executive President of the American Red Cross ; H.E. Djemil Mardem Bey, President of the Syrian Red Crescent ; Mr. Marshal Stearns, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Canadian Red Cross ; Judge U Aung Khine, President of the Burma Red Cross ; Dr. Rafael Cabrera, President of the Red Cross of Nicaragua ; Dr. Belea, President of the Red Cross of the People's Republic of Rumania ; Dr. Castagnino, President of the Argentine Red Cross ; Dr. A. Inostrosa, President of the Chilean Red Cross, H.E. Mr. Kolarov, President of the Bulgarian Red Cross ; Mr. G. Machado Morales, President of the Venezuelan Red Cross ; Dr. G. Fernandez-Davila, Secretary-General of the Peruvian Red Cross and Mr. J. R. Perrotto, Secretary-General of the Argentinien Red Cross.

¹ Dr. Z. Hantchef.

In the course of the year, members of a number of National Red Cross Societies had the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the work of the various ICRC sections. Mr. Rombach was sent to Geneva by the Netherlands Red Cross, and Mrs. Ferreira was assigned by the Brazilian Red Cross ; Mrs. Mac Vicar, of the British Red Cross, came to the ICRC in order to obtain information before leaving for the Far East, to act as adviser to the Malayan Red Cross Society which was recently established.

OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL SOCIETIES

Under its Statutes, the International Committee of the Red Cross is instructed " to recognise " National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies which fulfil the required conditions. Once they have been recognised, these Societies are members of the Red Cross family, and may request admission to the League of Red Cross Societies and take part in the activities of the International Red Cross.

In 1957, the International Committee had the pleasure of granting recognition to five National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

On May 23, it announced the recognition of the Red Cross of the Kingdom of Laos and also of the Red Cross of the Republic of Viet Nam. In September, recognition was accorded to the Tunisian Red Crescent, which was founded on October 7, 1956 ; lastly, on November 1, the ICRC recognised the Sudanese Red Crescent which had been founded the preceding year, and the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

Thus the total number of Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies which are officially recognised by the ICRC had reached 80 as on December 31, 1957.

From year to year the universality and the vitality of this humanitarian movement, which was founded in Geneva in 1863, continues to develop.

RELATIONS WITH THE LEAGUE OF RED CROSS SOCIETIES

The International Committee has maintained, as always, close contact with the League of Red Cross Societies.

In addition to the monthly meetings required under the Statutes of the International Red Cross, a number of joint meetings

were held to discuss special matters (Hungary, Algerian refugees, etc.). The members of the two Secretariats also maintain good relations through frequent meetings.

The ICRC and the League hold regular consultations concerning arrangements for visits by leading officials of National Red Cross, Red Crescent or Red Lion and Sun Societies, who pass through Geneva.

The two institutions also co-operate in the arrangements for study visits of members of National Societies who come to Geneva to study the work of the Red Cross.

During the session of the Executive Committee of the League, as well as other meetings held by that organisation, the League Secretariat was good enough to arrange, as customary each year, a meeting at which the International Committee was able to inform the representatives of National Societies of its present activities.

STANDING COMMISSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS

The Standing Commission of the International Red Cross is composed of nine members: five¹ elected in a personal capacity by the International Conference of the Red Cross, two representatives of the ICRC² and two representatives of the League of Red Cross Societies.³

The Standing Commission establishes the agenda and the provisional programme for the International Conferences of the Red Cross, and makes arrangements for the Conference in co-operation with the National Society acting as host.

During the interval between sessions of the Conference, the Standing Commission ensures the co-ordination and harmony of the efforts of the ICRC and the League. It also settles any questions which may be submitted to it by either, if differences should arise between them. The independence of the ICRC and of the League

¹ H. E. Mr. A. François-Poncet, Chairman, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Vice-Chairman, Mr. T. W. Sloper, Deputy to the President, General A. Gruenther, Professor Dr. G. Miterev (elected by the XIXth International Conference).

² Mr. L. Boissier, President, Mr. F. Siordet, Vice-President.

³ Mr. E. Sandstroem, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the League of Red Cross Societies, the Countess of Limerick, Vice-Chairman.

in their respective spheres continues, however, to be strictly safeguarded.

The Standing Commission met in plenary session in April at Geneva and in October and November at New Delhi. It considered mainly questions connected with the XIXth International Conference of the Red Cross, as well as a draft resolution submitted by the Japanese Red Cross concerning nuclear tests. At the second of these sessions, it drew up the final agenda of the XIXth Conference, and dealt with various matters in connection with arrangements for the Conference.

At its meeting on November 7, the Commission appointed its members : H.E. Mr. A. François-Poncet was again elected Chairman and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Vice-Chairman, while Mr. T. W. Sloper was re-appointed as Deputy to the Chairman.

DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME FROM THE SHÔKEN FUND

The Joint Commission entrusted with the distribution of the income from the Empress Shôken Fund, met at Geneva in February. In view of the small number of requests for grants, the Commission decided to allocate a total amount of Swiss Fr. 7,500 only and to carry forward the balance to the following year. The grants were allocated as follows :

League of Red Cross Societies : Sw. Fr. 5,000.—	as a contribution towards the purchase of a van for the transport of relief consignments, in particular, between warehouse and airport.
Syrian Red Crescent : Sw. Fr. 2,500.—	for the development of its First Aid Service for accidents and disasters.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE MEDAL

Every two years the International Committee honours professional nurses and voluntary aids who have distinguished themselves exceptionally in caring for the sick or wounded in time of peace or war by the award of the Florence Nightingale Medal.

In 1957, for the sixteenth distribution of the Medal, the award was made to the following nurses and voluntary aids :

1. Miss Joan ABBOTT, Professional Nurse and Midwife (*Australia*).
2. Señorita Ana Maria CERMAK, Professional Nurse (*Bolivia*).
3. Miss Helen G. McARTHUR, Professional Nurse (*Canada*).
4. Señorita Maria Luisa TORRES DE LA CRUZ, Voluntary Aid (*Chile*).
5. Sister Eva LYNGBY, Professional Nurse (*Denmark*).
Miss Zelna MOLLERUP, Professional Nurse (*Denmark*).
7. Miss Sigrid Eleonora LARSSON, Professional Nurse and Health Visitor (*Finland*).
8. Mademoiselle Anne VALETTE, Professional Nurse (*France*).
9. Mademoiselle Jeanne LE CAMUS, Professional Nurse (*France*).
10. Frau Oberin Regine KÖHLER, Professional Nurse (*German Federal Republic*).
11. Frau Oberin Cläre PORT, Professional Nurse (*German Federal Republic*).
12. Miss Sigridur BACHMANN, Professional Nurse (*Iceland*).
13. Miss Tehmina K. ADRANVALA, Professional Nurse and Midwife (*India*).
14. Miss Ellen LUND, Professional Nurse (*India*).
15. Miss Rosetta SHERIDAN, Professional Nurse and Midwife (*India*).
16. Signorina Mimy Rigat MACCHI, Voluntary Aid (*Italy*).
17. Signorina Bice ENRIQUES, Professional Nurse (*Italy*).
18. Miss Hisako NAGASHIMA, Professional Nurse (*Japan*).
19. Miss Chiyo MIKAMI, Professional Nurse (*Japan*).
20. Miss Nabiha Salameh WIRR, Professional Nurse and Midwife (*Jordan*).
21. Sister Kuk SIN-BOK, Professional Nurse (*Korea (North)*).
22. Sister Li MYONG-OO, Professional Nurse (*Korea (North)*).
23. Mrs. Hyo CHUNG LEE, Professional Nurse and Midwife (*Korea (South)*).
24. Mrs. Marcelle HOCHAR, Professional Nurse (*Lebanon*).
25. Mrs. Eva Hélou SERHAL, Professional Nurse (*Lebanon*).

26. Mrs. Catherine Lynette WELLS, Professional Nurse (*New Zealand*).
 27. Sister Martha PALM, Professional Nurse (*Norway*).
 28. Miss Gladys Maure HODGSON, Professional Nurse and Midwife (*Pakistan*).
 29. Dame Elizabeth COCKAYNE, Professional Nurse and Midwife (*United Kingdom*).
 30. Mrs. Elizabeth K. PORTER, Professional Nurse (*United States*).
 31. Miss Marion W. SHEAHAN, Professional Nurse (*United States*).
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