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PREFACE

The International Committee of the Red Cross was constantly on the alert in 1957. Its essential work, closely linked with events which shook the world, consisted of assisting the victims of so many upheavals. The Committee's delegates were called upon to take action in unforeseen circumstances and to adapt their duties to situations which could hardly have been imagined a few years ago. On every occasion ample evidence was given of the wisdom and authority of the Geneva Conventions.

Pursuing a difficult task the Committee gave the final form to the Draft Rules for the Limitation of the Dangers incurred by the Civilian Population in Time of War. The meaning of this text has not always been fully understood; it was therefore necessary to define it in order that all might know that it is merely one suggestion among others for a solution of the problem of the protection of non-combatants.

This endeavour, which had no other motive, apparently met with the approval of the New Delhi Conference which, while requesting Governments to give the Draft Rules their consideration, urged the International Committee to pursue its efforts in this field.

At New Delhi the Committee had the great satisfaction of seeing its efforts approved by the Conference. Fortified by this encouragement, it will continue to make its way towards those in distress, wherever they may be and wherever they are to be found, and then further still towards those who share this great hope for the reconciliation of mankind.

Léopold BOISSIER,
President,
International Committee
of the Red Cross.

