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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM

The ICRC delegate in the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam ¹ successfully accomplished his mission and the International Committee recalled him to Geneva in January 1957.

After representing the ICRC in Saigon since 1952, this delegate was sent to Hanoi in January 1955, in order to make arrangements with the authorities and the Red Cross of that country for the shipment to the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam of pharmaceutical relief supplies which had been donated by National Red Cross Societies and the ICRC.

The delegate also studied certain humanitarian problems which fall within the scope of the ICRC.

Following these negotiations, which progressed smoothly, the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam applied for official recognition and this request was approved by the ICRC on November 1, 1957.

Certain foreign nationals who had remained in the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam after the cease-fire, in 1954, were deprived of diplomatic or consular protection and had difficulty in obtaining the necessary documents and financial resources to enable them to return to their country of origin. With the agreement of the authorities of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, the ICRC approached the European countries concerned on their behalf. A number of persons were thus repatriated in 1957, the majority to Switzerland and Italy.

EUROPE

AUSTRIA

The relief action started in 1956 for children and young people who had been disabled by the explosion of war material, is still continuing. The necessary enquiries were made by the ICRC delegate in Vienna ² in conjunction with the social services in the various "Länder". In addition to contributions towards appren-

¹ Mr. A. Durand.

² Mr. G. Joubert.

ticeship fees, these young victims were given rest cures in convalescent homes and also received text books, clothing and shoes or orthopaedic footwear. In addition, the ICRC contributed to the cost of establishing in Vienna a sound library for the blind, in which books are in the form of recordings on magnetic tape.

HUNGARY

The events in Hungary which shook the world aroused a universal charitable impulse which enabled one of the greatest relief actions of post-war years to be undertaken.

The Annual Report for 1956 had already shown the magnitude of this relief action. The ICRC continued to give its assistance in 1957 in accordance with agreements concluded with the League of Red Cross Societies, the United Nations, the Hungarian Red Cross and the Hungarian authorities. Their united efforts thus made it possible to meet the most urgent material needs. A special report published by the ICRC¹ gives an account of the relief action. It covers the period up to June 30, 1957 when it was estimated that the new harvest would relieve the difficult food situation. This report only refers, therefore, to relief activities in Hungary during the second half-year in 1957.

1. BASIC AGREEMENTS

After closing its delegations in Vienna and Budapest at the end of June 1957, the International Committee maintained in Hungary a mission composed of five members, under the direction of Mr. E. Fischer, delegate, to attend to the winding-up of the relief action begun in November 1956. An agreement for this purpose was concluded on June 27, 1957 between the Ministry of Public Health, the Hungarian Red Cross and the ICRC. The time-limit of three months fixed for the winding-up operations was prolonged to October 10, and later to October 20, 1957.

Since then it has been arranged that matters still pending should be dealt with by temporary missions sent from Geneva.

¹ See Report on the Relief Action in Hungary, October 1956-June 1957, Geneva 1957.

In the interval, the Hungarian Red Cross which, since November 1956, had been presided over by five professors of the Faculty of Medicine, had been reorganised.

2. THE LAST RELIEF PROGRAMMES

From the spring of 1957 the food situation showed considerable improvement and the relief action was centred on pharmaceutical products (still in short supply) and the re-equipment of hospitals and clinics which had suffered great damage during the fighting in 1956.

As many individual requests for assistance were made on the spot, the ICRC delegation grouped the applications to avoid the harmful dispersal of supplies. The allocation of relief supplies was therefore directed to university clinics and the larger hospitals¹. Hospital equipment was thus distributed rationally as requested by the medical specialists concerned and the Ministry of Health.

Considerable distributions were made of bedding and household linen. Small hospitals, old people's homes and children's hospitals were also included in this relief programme. Distributions were also made to a few small dispensaries opened during the epidemic of poliomyelitis in 1957.

Between July 1 and October 18, thirty-seven relief programmes were drawn up in succession with the Hungarian Red Cross and the Ministry of Health; the majority were carried out during this period. The representatives of the ICRC visited a number of the establishments supplied and had no difficulty in ascertaining that the distributions were being made as planned. The delivery of supplies was checked by means of vouchers signed by the doctor in charge who received the equipment supplied through the ICRC.

3. MANUFACTURE OF ARTIFICIAL LIMBS

Some commodities such as coal and seeds were distributed through normal economic channels, State warehouses, etc.². The product of these operations, placed in a "blocked" account in Budapest, was to be used for relief actions. With these amounts

¹ The ICRC sent the Hungarian Association for the Blind books, maps, Braille typewriters and magnifying glasses and guide-rulers to assist reading.

² See Report on the Relief Action in Hungary, p. 22.

and the balance of the funds received in Geneva a relief programme could be arranged for a longer duration on behalf of Hungarian war-disabled.

A Commission of Experts ¹ visited in April 1957 the artificial limb factory now working in Hungary ; it made suggestions for more modern working methods and for setting up new workshops and a rehabilitation centre. On the basis of its conclusions, the ICRC and the Ministry of Health signed an agreement on October 12, 1957 ; in execution of this agreement Hungarian technicians have already taken preparatory courses at the artificial limb workshops at Eisenberg. The building of the new factory in Budapest will start in the autumn of 1958.

4. STATISTICAL FIGURES

A table is appended of the relief supplies received and carried to Hungary. The value, according to the estimations of the ICRC delegates or the donors, reached nearly 88 million Swiss francs for the period from October 1956 to December 1957. The total weight of the gifts in kind was about 50,000 tons.

These figures include all the gift supplies received from National Red Cross Societies or other sources, handled by the ICRC and included in the relief programmes set up in agreement with the Hungarian Red Cross. They do not include the various gifts sent direct to Hungary, not entrusted to the ICRC which were not included in its distribution programmes.

¹ Miss A. Pfirter, Head of the Medical Personnel Section and War Disablement Section of the ICRC, and two technicians from the Eisenberg artificial limb workshops (German Democratic Republic).

RELIEF PROGRAMMES AS FROM JUNE 30, 1957

- No. 168 Soap for institutions in Budapest.
- No. 169 Washing machines for clinics and institutions.
- No. 170 3,750 kg. of soap for old people's homes.
- No. 171 Linen for hospitals in the provinces.
- No. 172 10,000 metres of cloth for the medical units of the Hungarian Red Cross.
- No. 173 30 tons of infant foods for hospitals.
- No. 174 Medicaments for hospitals in the provinces.
- No. 175 Medical articles.
- No. 176 Artificial respiration appliances lent to Laszlo Hospital.
- No. 177 Coffee, tea and sugar handed over to the Hungarian Red Cross.
- No. 178 Medical material supplied to various hospitals.
- No. 179 Textiles and beds for poliomyelitis hospitals.
- No. 180 Chocolate and sugar handed over to the Hungarian Red Cross.
- No. 181 Crutches for the crippled.
- No. 182 VW car for the Hungarian Red Cross.
- No. 183 PH-metre and electro-encephalograph apparatus for hospitals.
- No. 184 Radiograph apparatus for hospitals.
- No. 185 Linen for hospital operating theatres.
- No. 186 Operating tables for hospitals.
- No. 187 Linen for hospitals.
- No. 188 Medical material for hospitals in the provinces.
- No. 189 Children's clothing handed to the Hungarian Red Cross.
- No. 190 Iron lungs for Laszlo Hospital.
- No. 191 Surgical instruments for skin disease and eye clinics in Budapest.
- No. 192 Clothing for 4 Church communities.
- No. 193 377 kg. tea handed over to the Hungarian Red Cross.
- No. 194 Equipment for Füzerradvany TB Hospital.
- No. 195 Clothing for orphans.
- No. 196 Clothing and theatre properties for the Jaszai Odri Actors' Home.
- No. 197 Medical apparatus (van Slyke, etc.) for various hospitals.
- No. 198 Children's beds for the hospital in Ilka utca.
- No. 199 Radcliff respirators for various hospitals.
- No. 200 Medical books for various hospitals.
- No. 201 Material for the blind.
- No. 202 Typewriters for the Hungarian Red Cross.
- No. 203 Surgical instruments for various hospitals.
- No. 204 Medical articles for various hospitals.

TABLE No. 1

GIFT SUPPLIES RECEIVED IN KIND OR PURCHASED WITH
CASH DONATIONS AND CARRIED TO BUDAPEST

	Kg.	Sw. Fr.	Total	
			Kg.	Sw. Fr.
(a) <i>Foodstuffs</i> :				
Condensed and powdered milk	6,155,681	13,782,675		
Tinned meat and fish . . .	864,601	3,717,631		
Tinned fruit and vegetables	115,548	316,621		
Infant foods	121,745	316,537		
Fats, oil and butter . . .	1,961,124	4,082,289		
Cheese	1,220,543	4,112,456		
Sugar	443,486	388,463		
Coffee and tea	27,866	295,292		
Chocolate and cocoa-powder	152,857	735,813		
Rice	646,895	582,205		
Flour	8,216,563	5,211,137		
Other cereals	34,505	25,318		
Pulse	79,550	66,026		
Pasta	59,395	65,334		
Salt	10,100	5,858		
Sundry foodstuffs	224,491	317,013		
Fruits	92,833	117,838		
Potatoes	30,470	3,351		
Food parcels	5,551,750	13,747,274		
Various	13,779	96,873	26,023,782	47,986,004
(b) <i>Textiles and leather goods</i> :				
Clothing and underwear . .	2,132,657	6,934,209		
Footwear	244,812	1,224,060		
Blankets	395,840	1,512,947		
Sheets	36,423	91,057		
Sundry bedding	21,140	52,850		
Sundry textiles	10,498	76,976		
Leather bags	2,393	11,965		
Textiles for children . . .	107,526	2,241,450	2,951,289	12,145,514
(c) <i>Medicaments and medical equipment</i>			195,848	8,575,063
(d) <i>Hospital equipment</i> . . .			578,110	5,073,311
(e) <i>Various supplies</i> :				
Toilet requisites (soap, razors)	227,441	387,885		
Kitchen utensils	50,546	106,101		
Bed-frames and mattresses	73,117	197,003		
Window-glass	105,515	131,894		
Coal	9,223,370	1,106,804		
Seeds (through the FAO) . .	9,600,000	4,308,500		
Vehicles		258,000		
Sundry articles	212,796	127,900	19,492,785	6,624,087
			49,241,814	80,403,969

The above figures represent an estimate, as near as possible, of the gifts in kind handled by the ICRC. In several cases the value was given by the donor Societies themselves.

TABLE No. 2

GIFTS IN CASH AND IN KIND

Country	Gifts in kind	Gifts in cash	Total
	Sw. Fr.	Sw. Fr.	Sw. Fr.
Argentina	64,509	—	64,509
Australia	135,000	447,171	582,171
Austria	331,851	—	331,851
Belgium	707,592	174,650	882,242
Brazil	10,000	12,987	22,987
Canada	593,128	573,530	1,166,658
Ceylon	—	13,803	13,803
Chile	—	7,133	7,133
Colombia	—	42,887	42,887
Denmark	1,749,967	—	1,749,967
Ecuador	—	13,673	13,673
Finland	951,917	2,667	954,584
France	971,751	249,401	1,221,152
France (Intermin. Committee) .	4,334,409	—	4,334,409
German Federal Republic . .	13,325,195	463,500	13,788,695
Greece	60,608	—	60,608
Guatemala	—	3,097	3,097
India	—	6,386	6,386
Iran	—	27,932	27,932
Israel	12,000	—	12,000
Italy	674,666	40,096	714,672
Japan	—	178,343	178,343
Lebanon	—	668	668
Liechtenstein	198,440	20,000	218,440
Luxemburg	27,281	35,130	62,411
Mexico	10,164	—	10,164
Monaco	50,000	15,528	65,528
Netherlands	3,853,203	150,000	4,003,203
New Zealand	—	262,160	262,160
Norway	1,284,608	—	1,284,608
Pakistan	—	2,253	2,253
Portugal	60,489	—	60,489
South Africa	—	646,868	646,868
Spain	492,022	—	492,022
Sweden	4,422,405	194,026	4,616,431
Switzerland	4,964,363	1,030,000	5,994,363
Thailand	20,249	10,711	30,960
United Kingdom	4,936,951	1,229,831	6,166,782
United States	27,595,789	976,126	28,571,915
Uruguay	8,066	64,256	72,322
Vietnam	—	2,140	2,140
F.A.O.	4,308,500	—	4,308,500
U.N.I.C.E.F.	2,740,537	—	2,740,537
Various	1,507,509	470,706	1,978,215
	80,403,169	7,367,659	87,770,828

GERMAN FEDERAL REPUBLIC

The purchase and delivery by the ICRC of invalid chairs for disabled, amputated or paralysed Volksdeutsche was almost completed in 1957, in conjunction with the German Red Cross in Bonn. Approximately 100 invalid chairs have been distributed.

ITALY

With the funds allocated to the International Committee by the Swiss Federal Council, 22 Italian children, youths and adults, were given treatment at the Geneva eye hospital¹. The cases were submitted by the Italian Red Cross. Two-thirds of them are from the South of Italy. This assistance is still in progress.

SPAIN

In Spain, the "resident delegate" of the ICRC² was very active in behalf of refugees. In many instances, he intervened to help them to emigrate to other countries, or to facilitate their integration into the national economic life of Spain. He also provided material assistance of various kinds.

The ICRC delegate did his utmost to assist detainees in several categories as well as their families, by bringing them the moral and material encouragement which they needed.

With the approval of the administrative services concerned, he visited some of these detainees in central or regional prisons. He was able to converse freely with them and to form an impression of the general conditions of detention.

A large number of individual requests (enquiries, tracing, obtaining of documents, etc.) concerning Spanish nationals abroad have been dealt with either on the spot, or by the Central Agency of the ICRC. Enquiries have also been made in Geneva concerning Spanish military personnel who are abroad and cannot be traced.

The ICRC delegate has always maintained excellent relations

¹ The eye hospital is directed by Professor A. Franceschetti.

² Mr. E. Arbenz.

with the Spanish authorities and the Spanish Red Cross and established close and friendly working contacts with that Society. In particular, he was able to follow the Spanish Red Cross Society's activities in behalf of Spanish nationals repatriated from the USSR ¹ and concerning the victims of the events in Hungary.

After the Valencia region was devastated by severe floods, the ICRC delegate, on behalf of the International Committee, gave the Spanish Red Cross Sw. fr. 5,000 to assist the victims.

THE NEAR EAST

In October 1956, Mr. D. de Traz was appointed General-Delegate for the Near East, with headquarters at Beirut.

Thus, when the Suez conflict broke out, the ICRC was ready, and with tact and good judgment the General-Delegate established liaison with the public authorities, the United Nations representatives and the National Red Cross Societies.

He also co-ordinated action by other ICRC delegates in the area and made frequent visits to Egypt and Israel. In most cases, it was he who negotiated agreements permitting the ICRC to take action in the Near East.

The General-Delegate also carried out a series of missions to the capitals of the Arab countries. He had discussions with leading officials in Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the Lebanon, Syria and the Sudan, with particular reference to the possibility of some of these countries acceding to the Geneva Conventions, the New Delhi Conference and assistance to Algerian refugees in Tunisia and Morocco.

In Saudi Arabia, Mr. de Traz was received by H.M. King Saud, who assured him of his country's intention of acceding to the Geneva Conventions in the near future. In the Sudan, the General-Delegate succeeded in obtaining parliamentary ratification of that country's instrument of accession to the 1949 Geneva Conventions. Shortly afterwards, the Sudanese Red Crescent requested official recognition by the ICRC ; this was accorded on November 1.

The ICRC General-Delegate, accompanied by the Head of the

¹ See p. 48.