

Zeitschrift: Annual report / International Committee of the Red Cross
Herausgeber: International Committee of the Red Cross
Band: - (1962)

Rubrik: Far East and South East Asia

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 24.08.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

August Mr. Senn paid a visit to approximately one hundred Katangese Army personnel in Stanleyville, on whose behalf Mr. de Preux had already intervened by approaching General Lundula, during the month of April.

Mr. Senn further rendered a visit, also in August, to the island of Bulambemba, near Matadi, to see Mr. Antoine Gizenga, whose fate had preoccupied the ICRC for some months past.

The Delegate also took part in the work of one of the UN's Commissions; its object was to repatriate 25,000 Baluba refugees from Elisabethville to Kasai. Besides, thanks to the repeated efforts of Mrs. J. Egger, ICRC Representative in Leopoldville, the Congolese Authorities released a certain number of political detainees.

Rhodesia and Nyasaland-Burundi.

Mr. G. C. Senn, Permanent Delegate of the ICRC in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, visited Salisbury prison in March, where a group of persons were detained as a result of the disturbances. In September he was able to make similar visits in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The same delegate called on the prison of Usumbura in Burundi in November. On each occasion, Mr. Senn made suggestions to the detaining authorities with a view to improving conditions of internment.

FAR EAST AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Laos.

On December 18, 1961, the ICRC sent a memorandum to various National Societies, which followed up the first appeal launched on August 11 of the same year, on behalf of the Laotian people, sorely tried by the hostilities. At the same time, it decided to continue its activity in that country, at least until the end of the summer of 1962. It finally carried out its humanitarian action in Laos up to 1963. The situation was indeed constantly alarming, in particular

where it concerned the refugees, who had fled from the insecurity of the fighting zones to the highly populated areas of the Mekong valley. With this in mind, the Vientiane Government had expressed the wish to see the ICRC pursue its humanitarian task. This action was partly financed by amounts drawn from the ICRC's Relief Fund to the value of Sw. frs. 310,600 and by contributions received in cash and in kind in response to the appeals launched in August and December 1961. These contributions came from National Societies of the following countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Burma, Canada, France, German Federal Republic, Great Britain, India, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxemburg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Switzerland, Thailand, United States. Other institutions made donations, among others the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief, which contributed 5,000 pounds sterling. The total aid remitted to Laos by the ICRC for the year 1962 amounted to Sw. frs. 239,180.

Independently of relief work properly speaking, the ICRC's action was equally concerned with every category of detainees, in keeping with the International Committee's traditional tasks.

Aid to Refugees.—The number of refugees grew considerably in the first months of the year; whereas in August 1961, when the ICRC started its action, they were estimated at 6,000, at the end of the same year they actually numbered 30,000-35,000 (17,000 of whom had received emergency aid from the Red Cross). Most of these were riparians, i.e. riverside dwellers on the banks of the Mekong. The ICRC, through the intermediary of its representative in Laos, Dr. Jürg Baer, sent them fishing nets as well as other relief supplies, consisting of textiles, medicaments (in particular multi-vitamins), foodstuffs and soap.

During that same period, Dr. Baer distributed shortly before Easter, clothes, foodstuffs and household goods to new refugees who had recently arrived at Paksane, approximately 150 km to the east of the administrative capital of Vientiane, as well as at Pakse and Thakhek, in South Laos. The ICRC Delegate went to the plain of Jarres, where he had talks with the Khang Kay Authorities concerning various humanitarian questions, especially as regards the exchange of family news between persons separated by the

events, about the regrouping of Laotian families and the situation concerning American and Philippine detainees, held by these Authorities. He handed over mail addressed to these American prisoners.

At the other extremity of the country, on the borders of Burma, China and Thailand, the military operations in the regions of Muong-Sin and Nam-Tha had led to a new influx of refugees at Luang Prabang, the Royal Capital. They had arrived on foot or in canoes, if they had not been evacuated from the fighting zone by helicopter or aircraft. New relief distributions had to be initiated and were completed by the end of April. The ICRC Delegate in the company of Mrs. Noupbat Chounramany, President of the Women's Committee of the Laotian Red Cross, then went to Houei Sai, on the river Mekong, facing Thailand, where he distributed clothes, blankets, condensed milk, soup concentrates to Meo refugees, recently arrived from the mountain regions north of the town. On this occasion the Laotian Red Cross set up a local provisional Committee at Houei Sai. That National Society had, since the month of December 1961, apart from aid to the wounded in hospitals and to victimized families, brought relief to 12,413 refugees by distributing considerable quantities of foodstuffs, clothes and various materials.

The ICRC concerned itself on several occasions with the Meo refugees. During the month of June, Dr. Baer, in the company of Princess Oun Kham, member of the Women's Committee of the Laotian Red Cross, went to Sayaboury on the right bank of the Mekong to distribute clothes, rice, soya beans, as well as rubber boots, a gift offered by Switzerland and highly appreciated in the muddy grounds of that area. As the Meo refugees were in the habit of frequently losing their registration cards, a new and more effective system was introduced in this connection: those who had received their share were marked with a cross on their stomachs !

In August, Mr. Jacques Ruff succeeded Dr. Jürg Baer as ICRC Delegate in Laos. The new delegate continued the task of his predecessor. During the month of September he went to Thakhek, the capital of the Khamouane province, to supervise relief distributions destined to groups of refugees from the mountainous regions of the Mekong valley. Accompanied by several members of the

Laotian Red Cross, as well as representatives of Social Welfare, Mr. Ruff distributed among the refugees of several camps and villages rice, condensed milk, salt and different relief materials. The recipients, mostly poor people, gave the Red Cross representative a warm welcome.

However, from the day of the cease-fire agreement the number of refugees began visibly to decline and the ICRC was able to consider the possibility of closing down its Delegation in Laos within the near future, while still continuing its relief work to certain large groups, which had remained behind in the Mekong valley. Mr. Ruff, Delegate of the ICRC, therefore continued throughout November to distribute foodstuffs to riparian refugees of the Mekong valley and in particular to groups of Kha and Meo refugees, who had arrived in that area less than three months previously and had not yet received any aid. At last towards the end of the year, the ICRC Delegate succeeded in bringing aid to regions particularly inaccessible, and escaping the Administrative Authorities of the Vientiane Government, he went to Phong Saly, a Laotian town situated less than 30 miles from the Chinese border and to certain isolated districts in the north of the country, namely Muong Hiem. His means of transport was a "Beaver" aircraft, belonging to Prince Souvanna Phouma's Forces.

Aid to prisoners and internees.—At the same time as its activity on behalf of refugees continued, the ICRC never ceased to look after the welfare of prisoners and internees. The Central Tracing Agency in Geneva, inundated with enquiries concerning foreign nationals missing in Laos, made every effort to obtain news from them.

At the end of July, the ICRC delegate, Mr. Jacques Ruff, visited the Laotian Prisoners' Camp of Savannakhet (300 internees) and had a consignment of medicaments sent there. He made another visit at the end of December and finally obtained authorization for prisoners to correspond with their families. The Laotian Red Cross took charge of forwarding this correspondence, as well as the families' replies which were drawn up on forms by the Central Tracing Agency.

The delegate passed on the customary report to the Laotian authorities, a report which contained the observations he had made

and the improvements he considered essential. Moreover, several representatives of the Ministry of Health and of the Laotian Red Cross had participated in visiting the camps where they attended the relief distributions which Dr. Baer had actively taken care of, already in April. Some improvements were made after this visit, such as allowing the internees to receive newspapers and parcels.

In August, the ICRC delegate attended the release of five Americans and one Philippine national who had been made prisoners by the Pathet Lao. Mr. André Durand, Delegate General of the ICRC in Asia, had visited these six persons in November 1961. Mr. Ruff was also present when six Vietnamese prisoners were set at liberty in Vientiane. Four of these men chose to return to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

Aid to the wounded and sick.—The ICRC also paid particular attention to the hospitals. On January 23, H.M. the Queen presided over the distribution of parcels to the wounded and sick in the hospitals of Luang Prabang and of blood plasma presented to the hospital's administration (a gift from the Netherlands Red Cross). This distribution was repeated during May, as a result of renewed military encounters which took place in the Nam Tha area. At the same time the ICRC was instrumental in sending a consignment of twelve ocular prostheses to the military hospital of Vientiane ; the Laotian Red Cross of Xieng-Khouang (the seat of Prince Souvanna Phouma's Government), received as a gift from the Polish, Indian and Swiss Red Cross Societies, 35 cases of medicaments, consisting principally of pharmaceutical products and surgical equipment. This last consignment reached its destination through the intermediary of the Red Cross Society of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. As for the Laotian Red Cross, it achieved remarkable results in this field : a group of women made distributions three times a week to 400 hospitalized wounded in Saravane, Vientiane, Savannakhet, Attapeu, Pakse, Luang Prabang and Thakhet.

In Houei Sai, Dr. Baer handed over condensed milk to wounded and sick men under treatment in the hospital founded by the late Dr. Tom Dooley, an American doctor, in whose memory a fund was created for the continuation of the admirable humanitarian task to which he had devoted his life.

In June, condensed milk and rice were distributed to the "Operation Brotherhood" hospital in Sayaboury, which enjoys the patronage of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce. The patients of the Military Camp of Chinaimo, near Vientiane, then received relief in August and September, through the good offices of Mr. Jacques Ruff. The latter subsequently took 700 kgs of medicaments to the Phong Saly infirmary, set up in an abandoned barn. He also visited the hospital of Louang Prabang and the Mahosot hospital in Vientiane, where he handed over relief supplies.

The Indo-Portuguese Conflict.

While, on December 24, 1961, a few days after the occupation of the territory, a representative of the ICRC called on the camps of Goa, where Portuguese prisoners were in the hands of Indian troops, the ICRC also applied to the Portuguese Government for permission to visit Indian prisoners interned in Portugal and in the overseas territories. A favourable reply from the Portuguese Authorities followed without delay and Mr. J. P. Maunoir, ICRC delegate, together with the Secretary of the Portuguese Red Cross, visited the Indian civilians interned in Caxias prison near Lisbon. Two other delegates, Mr. Robert Guinand and Mr. Jacques Ruff, made similar visits to Mozambique and Macao. When, subsequently, agreement was obtained from the New Delhi authorities to make a further inspection in Goa, Mr. Jacques Ruff set out for the second time to visit the internment camps of Vasco da Gama, Ponda, and the fortress of Aguada, in the former Portuguese enclave, where more than 4,000 prisoners were assembled.

The ICRC delegate forwarded to the Central Tracing Agency in Geneva 4,348 capture cards and 2,896 messages addressed to the prisoners' families. Moreover, as soon as the conflict had started the ICRC endeavoured to establish a postal liaison service between the prisoners and relatives, all normal communications between Goa and Portugal having been interrupted. The Indian Red Cross undertook to forward these messages.

In Mozambique, Mr. Robert Guinand, delegate of the ICRC, visited nine internment camps containing approximately 2,000 Indian nationals. At the same time, the ICRC approached the Indian

authorities to claim the release of Portuguese military prisoners, in conformity with the clauses of the Third Geneva Convention, which provides that prisoners must be released and repatriated without delay on the cessation of active hostilities.

The Sino-Indian Conflict

On the outbreak of hostilities in October 1962 between the Armed Forces of China and India in the Himalayas, the ICRC offered its services to the National Societies of both countries. In a cable sent simultaneously to New Delhi and Peking, it declared its readiness to carry out its humanitarian activity on behalf of the victims of the conflict, particularly in favour of prisoners.

The Indian Government immediately accepted the ICRC's offer and Mr. André Durand, Delegate General of the ICRC in Asia, went on November 15 to New Delhi. The Indian authorities having interned Chinese nationals and persons of Chinese origin living in Assam, the delegate applied for and promptly received permission to visit these detainees. Thus, on December 12, Mr. Durand paid a visit to the Deoli camp, near Kota, between Delhi and Bombay, where some 2,000 Chinese were interned.

Furthermore, on December 4 and 5, the League of Red Cross Societies, in agreement with the ICRC, launched an appeal in favour of interned Chinese civilians, evacuated from the area of the fighting on the North East Frontier of India, and also on behalf of sick and wounded troops. For its part, the Chinese Red Cross prepared 2,000 parcels of food and clothing which were transmitted to interned Chinese at the beginning of 1963. Several National Societies of the Red Cross gave immediate response to the appeal of the ICRC and the League, particularly the Canadian Red Cross with a donation of 5,000 dollars, and the Australian Red Cross which sent powdered milk and multivitamin products, to a value of 5,000 pounds sterling. The sum total of all donations, amounting to 200,000 Swiss francs, was delivered by the ICRC to the Indian Red Cross, which had also the responsibility of providing for the needs of refugees. It was estimated that the latter totalled about 15,000 in North East India. Amongst these refugees were a great

many mountain-dwellers from the North East Frontier Agency and even some Tibetans. The ICRC delegate, Mr. Durand, visited the reception camps in Assam at the end of December. Fortunately the cessation of hostilities permitted a large part of these refugees to return fairly quickly to their normal place of residence.

However, the most important problem which this conflict set was that affecting Indian troops captured by the Chinese Forces. As has been said, the ICRC immediately approached the Chinese Government offering its services and as soon as it learned of the presence in China of Indian military prisoners, it requested permission for one of its delegates to visit these prisoners in conformity with the Third Geneva Convention. The Chinese Government did not reply favourably to the ICRC, putting forward the argument that the two countries maintained diplomatic relations. On November 16, the Chinese Red Cross had confirmed to the Indian Red Cross that 927 Indian troops were in captivity. Subsequently, it was revealed that their number was far superior to this figure. Moreover, before the end of the year, the Chinese Authorities began the release and repatriation of wounded and sick prisoners. By December 31, 716 prisoners had been repatriated whilst the first lists, covering 1,131 prisoners, were received by the Indian Red Cross. The latter, on December 19, had handed over to the Chinese Red Cross for delivery to these prisoners, 2,000 parcels of food and clothing.

The ICRC continued, with the full agreement of the Indian Red Cross, its approach to the Peking Authorities for permission to delegate a representative to visit these Indian prisoners of war.

Nepal

The work begun in 1960 and continued in 1961 in favour of some 20,000 Tibetan refugees in Nepal was carried on in 1962. First and foremost, according to reports from the ICRC doctor delegates, the question of medical assistance continued to be of particular urgency. Medical treatment was undertaken principally at Chialsa Gömpa, in the region of Khumbu Solu, at Katmandu, Pokhara and Dhor Patan, where the delegation set up dispensaries

for the benefit of the refugees and the Nepalese population. In the upper Thakkola valley, on the other hand, the ICRC was obliged to close one of the medical stations during the monsoon, which made the maintenance of supplies very difficult. The rains also hindered communications established by the ICRC in Nepal by means of two Pilatus Porter aircraft of Swiss manufacture and designed especially for high mountain flying. For these two planes, the ICRC improvised two landing strips which are amongst the highest in the world and which of course are sometimes rather hazardous. These aircraft, which began operating towards the beginning of 1961, at the instigation of Mr. Tony Hagen, gave valuable service.

Apart from medical assistance, the ICRC has carried out relief action on a considerable scale. Of the total number of 20,000 refugees, some 4,000 were deprived of all means of existence and the ICRC took charge of 2,000 of them. It supplied them not only with food and clothing, but endeavoured also to resettle them on a permanent basis by assisting them to provide for their own needs. Those who had a trade were able to pursue it at the handicraft centre in Katmandu, which employs weavers, tailors, carpenters and cobblers. Near Pokhara, 400 other refugees were also looked after by the ICRC, thanks in part to a donation of 300 tons of food (powdered milk, flour, pulses, edible fat) from the American Government. The Nepal International Tibetan Refugee Relief Committee, with headquarters in Katmandu, provided the ICRC with valuable aid, including in particular a rich food called " Multipurpose food ", highly appreciated by the refugees. The Swedish Red Cross also made a contribution, in the form of six tons of powdered milk for children.

The agricultural colony of Dhor Patan, which took in nomads from West Tibet, has developed in a satisfactory manner ; to such an extent, indeed, that numerous Tibetans, drawn by news of this success, have poured into the colony from the adjoining regions. Two new villages have sprung up in this high valley of central Nepal.

Indonesia

The co-operation between the Indonesian Red Cross and the

ICRC which was begun in 1961 for the payment of allowances by the Netherlands Government to nationals of that country who continue to live in Indonesia, was maintained during the course of 1962.

In March, the ICRC delegate, Mr. Pierre Vibert, went to Djakarta to examine the arrangements to be made for these payments. He discussed this matter with the Indonesian Red Cross which had been entrusted by the Indonesian Government to attend to this problem. After the first payment in December 1961, from which 800 persons benefited, a second distribution was effected at the beginning of April for a total amount of 125,000 dollars. The third remittance of 100,000 dollars was effected in August. Acting in the capacity of neutral intermediary, the ICRC discharged this humanitarian function in Indonesia in view of the absence of diplomatic and consular relations between the two countries.

The ICRC also intervened in the conflict between the Netherlands and Indonesia over New Guinea (West Irian). During a naval engagement on January 15 in the waters of the Aru Islands between Indonesian and Netherlands vessels, the Dutch Forces captured a certain number of Indonesians. The ICRC accepted the mandate proposed by U Thant, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for the release and repatriation of these prisoners, and sent to Hollandia in New Guinea its Delegate General for Asia, Mr. André Durand, who was at that time based on Tokyo. Mr. Durand visited the 52 Indonesians taken prisoner following the naval engagement on January 15, as well as a number of civilian Indonesians who, after infiltration into New Guinea, were arrested by the Netherlands authorities in 1960 and 1961. On March 11, Mr. Durand arrived in Singapore with the 52 prisoners who were met by a delegation of the Indonesian Red Cross whose responsibility it was to see them safely to Djakarta. In this manner, the ICRC acquitted itself of the task which the Secretary-General of the United Nations had requested it to undertake.

In addition, the ICRC also looked after the transmission of family messages in Indonesia, thus putting into effect its offer to the Indonesian and Netherlands Governments following the interruption of postal communication between the two countries. These messages were transmitted on forms based on a model made

out by the ICRC. These forms were made available to the public by the National Societies which sent them to the Central Agency in Geneva. The latter ensured that they were forwarded on to the country of destination. Replies were routed in the same way. Urgent communications were made by telegram. The number of messages communicated in this manner amounted to nearly 4,000.

Republic of Vietnam

The new delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross in the Republic of Vietnam, Mr. Werner Muller, who succeeded Mr. A. M. Leuenberger, visited a detention camp at Phu Loi, near Saigon, on October 18. Arrangements for this were made by the Red Cross of the Republic of Vietnam, whose President for the Southern Region Committee, Dr. Truong Tan Tung, was himself one of the visitors.

In April the ICRC delegate went to Da Nhang (Tourane) to visit 20 Chinese fishermen from the Island of Hainan in the Gulf of Tonkin, who had been reported missing and who were the subject of a tracing request which the Chinese Red Cross addressed to the ICRC. They were finally traced and found to be in good health in Da Nhang, and these 20 fishermen were able to sail for their own country aboard a junk which the Vietnamese Government obtained for them, their own, in which they had arrived in Tourane, being unserviceable. The Chinese Red Cross later informed the ICRC that the 20 fishermen had reached home safe and sound.

Japan

In 1961 the shuttle service between the Japanese port of Niigata and the North Korean port of Chongjin for the purpose of repatriating Koreans residing in Japan, was interrupted twice ; once owing to an epidemic of influenza and the second time owing to the necessity of repairing the vessels. Repatriation was resumed early in 1962 but at a somewhat slower pace. The 86th sailing had less than

100 persons, whilst at the beginning of these operations more than 1,000 Koreans left Japan each week. Subsequent sailings accounted for only two to three hundred passages on an average. Under the circumstances, the Red Cross Society of Japan and the People's Republic of Korea decided, towards the end of the year, to prolong for one year the agreement covering repatriation of Koreans settled in Japan, which had been signed in Calcutta in 1959 and expired on November 12, 1962. The ICRC for its part complied with the request of the Japanese Red Cross for the maintenance for yet another year of its special delegation in Japan. This delegation's mission, it will be recalled, consists essentially in verifying that persons leaving Japan are doing so of their own free will. In order to accomplish this task, the members of this special ICRC mission paid a visit in November and December to the local Committees of the Japanese Red Cross and to the authorities of a number of provinces, enquiring closely into the conditions under which registration took place for departure to North Korea. At the end of December the total of repatriates amounted to about 78,000, as against 75,000 at the end of 1961 and 52,000 at the end of 1960.

Philippines

In September and December, Mr. John W. Mittner, Delegate of the ICRC to the Philippines, visited prisoners at Fort McKinley in Manila. He was accompanied by Dr. T. Calasanz, Director of the Philippine Red Cross. This was the third visit made by the ICRC delegate to these detainees, to whom he delivered relief supplies.

Compensation to Former Prisoners of War

In 1962 the ICRC transferred to the Philippine Red Cross the sum of 3,000,000 Swiss francs, the last payment made to that country by virtue of article 16 of the Peace Treaty with Japan. This article stipulated that a financial indemnity should be paid to former prisoners of war in Japanese hands, to compensate them for hardship endured during their captivity.

The ICRC was nominated in the Peace Treaty to carry out this humanitarian task and in 1957 it distributed in the signatory States the larger part of the funds appropriated from Japanese sources. In the Philippines, however, payments were delayed owing to the absence of records destroyed during the war.

The ICRC was also able to make additional payments to other beneficiary countries, by distributing the balance of that part which had been set aside for the Philippines before the number of persons entitled to payments in that country was known. Thus, France received the equivalent of 427,000 Swiss francs, which brought the total of Japanese funds transmitted to France through the intermediary of the ICRC to about 3,500,000 Swiss francs. In addition, the Republic of Viet Nam received 251,000 Swiss francs, thus bringing up to a total of 1,600,000 Swiss francs the payments made to that country. By the end of 1962, the distribution effected in 14 countries had covered compensation payments totalling about 65 million Swiss francs to some 200,000 former prisoners of war or their surviving dependants.

NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST

Iraq

In the course of the year the ICRC received various lists covering a total of 94 members of the Iraqi Armed Forces or Administration captured by the Kurdish insurgents in Iraq. The ICRC had copies of these documents delivered to the authorities in Baghdad, through the intermediary of the Iraqi Red Crescent, at the same time expressing the wish to receive similar information on the fate of prisoners and internees of Kurdish origin in the hands of the Iraqi Government.

In December the Kurds, at the request of the ICRC, released a British employee of the Iraq Petroleum Company, who was captured in October.

The ICRC confirmed its offer to the Iraqi Government to carry out all humanitarian tasks which might arise from the Kurdish