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## 2. NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST

### Yemen

The situation in the Yemen, where, until the beginning of autumn, hostilities were still continuing in various regions, obliged the ICRC to pursue, and even intensify, its humanitarian activity in favour of the victims of the conflict. This activity was carried on in both the territory of the Yemen Arab Republic and in areas held by the Royalists.

**Relief to prisoners.**—On both sides the ICRC delegates continued their mission of assistance to prisoners of war and other persons detained by reason of the events. In Royalist territory they undertook long expeditions to reach prisoners held in places difficult of access, some of them being in the mountainous hinterland. With the consent of the belligerents, the delegates frequently crossed the lines in order to reach these highlands. They brought material relief to the prisoners, as well as family mail, and the ICRC doctors gave them treatment and medicaments.

The delegates also visited Royalist supporters held in prison by the Republic, particularly at Taiz and Sanaa.

The Jeddah agreement, reached towards the end of summer and resulting in a cease-fire, did not put an immediate end to the ICRC's activity in favour of prisoners. Indeed, its delegates intervened repeatedly to have military prisoners and political detainees released and to arrange their exchange and repatriation, in accordance with the provisions of the Jeddah agreement. It may be mentioned, in this connection, that the first two meetings of Egyptian army and Royalist representatives took place at Uqhd in the ICRC's hospital and under its auspices, for the purpose of deciding upon arrangements for the exchange of prisoners.

**Medical Activities.**—The greatest task which still faced the ICRC in the Yemen was of a medical nature. The number of victims of the war compelled it to maintain in operation the field hospital it had set up in November 1963 at Uqhd near the country's northern frontier. There was hardly any decline in the number of patients during the first half of the year. There were indeed some critical

periods when the influx of wounded and sick was such that the doctors and staff were hard put to it to cope.

The cessation of hostilities, following the coming into effect of the Jeddah agreements, made unnecessary the field hospital which had been set up for the victims of the fighting. As a result, after two years of activity, the hospital closed down in November 1965. However, until the end of the year, the ICRC maintained a medical service on a lesser scale through a clinic-cum-dispensary which gave an average of about a hundred consultations a day.

For the whole time the hospital was operational, medical teams set out from Uqhd to the hinterland to give treatment to combatants and civilians sorely tried by the hostilities. In these remote regions, difficult of access, the ICRC doctors and nurses, during the two years, gave over 12,000 consultations.

At Uqhd itself, from November 1963 to the closure of the hospital, the hospital activity was remarkably intense, as the following figures show:

1,700 in-patients

2,800 surgical operations

60,500 consultations at the polyclinic.

Eight medical teams of 20 to 25 persons (doctors, male and female nurses, technicians and assistants—mostly Swiss but also some British, French and German) took turns at Uqhd during the two years. In all, 186 people took part in the ICRC's medical mission in the Yemen, where they had to contend not only with the suffering caused by the war, but also with extremely trying climatic conditions, with sandstorms and heat sometimes reaching 122°F. As for the wounded and sick, they reached Uqhd after toiling along for days, to seek treatment at the hospital, their only hope of cure and healing.

The ICRC also carried out its medical mission on the territory of the Yemen Arab Republic, even though there were some good hospitals there able to care competently for the wounded and the sick and needs were less acute than among the Royalists. In February a doctor and a male nurse set up their base in a village near Sanaa and they treated hundreds of people. This team later worked in other regions, in accordance with a programme drawn up jointly

by the Republic Minister of Health and the ICRC delegation in Sanaa. A second team was delegated to Sanaa in the spring and later went to Qataba in the south of the Yemen in order to tend the refugees from Radfan (Federation of South Arabia). By the beginning of July, the number of persons treated by these teams was estimated at 2,000.

The medical teams also worked in various other regions of the Yemen Republic, particularly at Dhamar, a township situated on a high plateau mid-way between Sanaa and Taiz, and where the local hospital had been without a doctor for several months. The ICRC doctor and his two assistants treated hundreds of out-patients, apart from the in-patients. They later carried out the same work at Manakha, between Sanaa and Hodieda, where they also organized a smallpox vaccination campaign in the schools of the town and surrounding villages.

Finding Sanaa and other areas of the Republic to be seriously lacking in medical supplies, the ICRC took steps to remedy the situation to some degree. It delivered to hospitals and an orphanage supplies provided in the main by the Swedish and Swiss Red Cross Societies.

Another aspect of the ICRC's medical campaign was its action for the benefit of war disabled in the Republic. This action was carried out in close co-operation with the Red Crescent Society of the United Arab Republic. The return to Sanaa of the first group of amputees to have been treated and fitted in the Cairo Orthopaedic Hospital was in January. A second group then left for the Egyptian capital, followed by a third in March and a fourth in May.

Thanks in large part to subsidies provided by the ICRC, it was possible for these disabled persons to receive the treatment and be fitted with the artificial limbs which their condition made necessary. As a temporary measure, the ICRC delegation in Sanaa distributed crutches and wooden legs.

**Food and clothing relief.**—The ICRC delegation in the Yemen Arab Republic continued its regular distribution of food relief in 1965. The main beneficiaries, as last year, were child victims of the events in Sanaa; some 800 to 1,000 each morning received sweetened and vitaminized milk. This powdered milk was from

Swiss Government surpluses. The quantity distributed sometimes amounted to as much as two tons in one month. The children were also frequently given cheese and tonics.

The delegate also organized distributions in various other institutions in the capital and other areas, such as the Republican hospital, the orthopaedic hospital, the school for girls, the Nursing and Medical Laboratory Assistants School, the orphanage school, the WHO Dispensary, the Souk Baghaar Dispensary, the Hodeida Hospital and Dispensary, the El Kalaa Prison, and the Association of Yemeni Women. The commodities distributed included milk, cheese, tuna fish, sardines, soap and cigarettes.

In May, the ICRC delivered to the Radfan refugees in the South of the Yemen five tons of milk, two tons of cheese and 1 ton of soap. Several thousand refugees benefited from this relief action organized by the ICRC medical team.

At the beginning of the year, the ICRC delegation received 20 tons of clothing and a thousand bed-sheets as well as medical supplies provided by the Swedish Red Cross for the benefit of Yemeni victims of the events. The ICRC delegation supplemented this relief with six sewing-machines. Eleven tons of this clothing was distributed by the delegates at Sanaa and the remaining nine tons was divided between Taiz and Hodeida. They also delivered four tons of clothing provided by the Swiss Red Cross and a consignment of slippers. The Republican Government expressed its gratitude to the donors.

The value of relief distributed in 1965 in the Yemen Arab Republic amounted to 427,000 Swiss francs. ICRC expenditure in the Royalist zones, inclusive of operating costs for the Uqhd hospital and relief supplies, amounted to some 1,350,000 Swiss francs.

### **Federation of South Arabia**

Mr. André Rochat, Head of the ICRC mission to the Yemen, went to Aden in February. He contacted the Governor of the Federation of South Arabia, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, sheikh Mohamed Farid Aulagi, as well as the local British authorities. He visited Radfan territory to the north of Aden where disturbances had occurred some months before.

The ICRC representatives also visited hospital establishments in Aden and clinics in various parts of the Federation.

### **Bahrein**

In April, Mr. Rochat visited the Principality of Bahrein in the Persian Gulf. He was received in audience by the Sovereign H. H. Sheikh Khalifah bin Salman al Khalifah, who expressed his interest for the ICRC's action in the Arab countries and he decided to give encouragement by means of a financial contribution. At the Prince's invitation, Mr. Rochat visited the prison and government hospitals where treatment was given to persons wounded during the riots which had taken place shortly before.

### **Persian Gulf States**

The ICRC representative then went to other States in the Persian Gulf, inter alia Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Qatar. He was received by the Sovereign of each of these Principalities who agreed to make substantial financial contributions to the ICRC for its humanitarian activity in the Yemen.

### **Kuwait**

The Head of the ICRC mission also went to Kuwait; this State too has generously supported the ICRC's action in the Yemen. He met the Crown Prince as well as the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Health and Information.

### **Iran**

The ICRC delegate completed his tour by a visit to Teheran where he was granted an audience by H. M. the Shah of Persia. He also met the Minister of Health and the leading officials of the Iran Red Lion and Sun Society.

### **Cyprus**

Thanks to contributions made by twenty-one National Red Cross Societies and the United States Government, the ICRC delegate in Cyprus was able to continue relief distributions to the victims



of the events, thereby helping them to survive the winter. Refugee and needy children belonging to the Turkish-Cypriot communities were the main beneficiaries ; they numbered 8873.

The delegates used the major part of the funds at their disposal for the local purchase of clothing and shoes. In this way they provided work to local traders and craftsmen whom events had reduced to total or partial unemployment. Apart from the children, other distributions were made to aged people of both communities sheltered in homes in Nicosia, Larnaca, Limassol and Famagusta, as well as to some sixty Greek-Cypriot families who were destitute because their breadwinners had disappeared during the disturbances.

To the displaced and homeless people, the ICRC delivered 1100 mattresses and 400 tents offered by the United States and Great Britain. Apart from other donations forwarded by the delegation, mention must be made of an incubator provided by the Canadian Red Cross for the Turkish hospital in Nicosia.

Total financial contributions entrusted to the ICRC for the benefit of the victims of the disturbances amounted to over 212,000 francs ; apart from this there were also a number of donations in kind from several sources.

The passing of winter did not put an end to the ICRC's mission. Tension persisted in the island, preventing certain sections of the population from moving freely as they wished. As a consequence the ICRC delegate had frequently to intervene on behalf of persons separated from their families in order to facilitate their movements.

On June 17, the delegate, accompanied by General Thimayya, commanding UN troops in Cyprus, went to Kokkina where previously the situation had been particularly tense and given rise to many incidents. He observed that conditions there had considerably improved following President Makarios's decision no longer to consider this area as a no-man's land, but to permit the free passage of food, clothing and medical supplies. It appeared to the delegate that many of the destroyed homes had already been rebuilt and that, thanks to the tents provided before the winter by the American and British Governments, there were no refugees without some form of shelter.

The ICRC delegation to Cyprus also had to negotiate with the Cypriot Government the customs clearing of two ships loaded with

relief supplies sent by the Turkish Red Crescent to the Turkish-Cypriot community. They managed to obtain authorization for some of the cargo to be discharged from the Turkish ships.

A number of special cases were also entrusted to the ICRC representatives. These they endeavoured to resolve in accordance with their function as neutral intermediaries. They frequently negotiated, for instance, on behalf of Greek or Turkish-Cypriots wishing to emigrate, or of children who had been separated from their parents by the events. To quote one example : the head of the ICRC delegation, towards the end of summer, had to find two missing Greek Cypriot youths aged 13 and 15. He learned they were held by the Turkish Cypriot community, the leaders of which soon agreed to release the two youths and hand them over to the ICRC delegate. The release took place shortly after in the presence of an officer of the UN police force. The delegate took the two youths to the Greek sector and delivered them to their parents.

By autumn the presence of ICRC delegates was no longer permanently required and the delegation withdrew at the end of November.

The delegation was headed in 1965 first by Mr. Jacques Ruff and later by Mr. Max Stalder. Since the delegation's departure, ICRC intervention on the island, when required, has been made direct from Geneva.

### **3. AFRICA**

#### **Congo**

ICRC activity in the Congo consisted mainly of visits to prisons where people were held for taking part in the rebellion. At the beginning of the year its delegate went to the prisons of Ndolo, Makala and Luzumu, near the capital ; he distributed relief supplies to detainees, particularly blankets. He later returned to Ndolo where there were not only civilians and soldiers who took part in the rebellion, but also a group of Angolans. For their benefit, the ICRC delegation made weekly deliveries of food, in co-operation with the Congolese Red Cross. It also made representations to the authorities for an improvement in conditions of detention in general.