

Zeitschrift: Annual report / International Committee of the Red Cross
Herausgeber: International Committee of the Red Cross
Band: - (1970)

Rubrik: Europe

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: 13.12.2025

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

from the conflict in Vietnam. On 12 March, the ICRC sent a telegram to the North Vietnamese Minister for Foreign Affairs asking for a list of United States prisoners. There was no reply to any of these approaches, but in December the North Vietnamese delegation to the Paris Conference handed a complete list of United States prisoners in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to the emissaries of Senator Fulbright and Senator Kennedy.

Finally, during his stay in Laos, in November, Mr. Barde also had a talk at the Vientiane Embassy of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam about problems arising out of the Vietnam conflict.

Europe

In 1970, Mr. Melchior Borsinger, ICRC Delegate-General for Europe, visited a number of countries in order to establish contact with government authorities and National Red Cross leaders.

In January, he spent a few days in the Federal Republic of Germany, where with Mr. Herbert G. Beckh he visited the President and the Secretary-General of the German Red Cross in the Federal Republic of Germany, as well as the National Society's Mainz branch. The ICRC representatives were received in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Bonn by the Deputy Under-Secretary of State and the Deputy Director of the Legal Division. They also met the Permanent Under-Secretary of State in the Ministry of Justice and his counterpart in the Ministry of Inter-German Affairs.

In March, Mr. Borsinger accompanied the ICRC Delegate-General for Africa to Lisbon, where he had an opportunity for preliminary contacts with Portuguese Red Cross leaders and the Portuguese Minister for Foreign Affairs.

In April, Mr. Borsinger carried out an inspection mission to the ICRC delegation in Athens.

Lastly, on the occasion of his stay in Vienna, in August and September,¹ the ICRC Delegate-General for Europe paid calls on the President and the Secretary-General of the Austrian Red Cross and at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

¹ See p. 110 of this Report.

In addition to these various missions, Mr. Borsinger went with Mr. Marcel A. Naville, President of the ICRC, to Poland, the USSR, Liechtenstein and the Federal Republic of Germany.¹ He also took part in the first European Regional Red Cross Conference, held at Cannes, France, in April, where he made a statement on the ICRC's relief activities and the need for National Societies in the European region to support the efforts of the institution which had launched the world Red Cross movement.

Greece

From 1 January to 3 November 1970, a year after the conclusion of the Agreement² with the Hellenic Red Cross, the ICRC continued its mission in favour of political detainees and their families. For this purpose, it maintained in Athens a delegation which, in addition to the technical staff, was composed of the head of the delegation, a delegate and a doctor-delegate.

Visits to places of detention. During this period, the ICRC delegates had access to all categories of political detainees, namely sentenced detainees; administrative deportees; detainees held by the military police (E.S.A.), the civilian police and the judiciary; and persons under house arrest. On four occasions, they visited the following thirty-five places of detention:

- The camps of Leros-Lakki, Leros Partheni, Oropos and Alikarnassos, as well as the General Hospital of Athens, the Aghios Pavlos and Aghios Savas hospitals, and the Hellenic Red Cross hospital at Leros (administrative deportees);
- The military police stations of Vassilissa Sofia, Aghios Ioannis Reutis, Papagore, and the Drossia and Varibopi hotels (detainees held by the military police authorities);
- The police station on Bouboulinas Street, Athens, the central police station of Nea Ionia, and the Piraeus and Salonica transfer centres (detainees held by the civilian police authorities);

¹ See p. 109 of this Report.

² Annual Report 1969, p. 42.

- The prisons of Aegina, Korydallos, Averoff (men and women), Corfu, Trikkala, Eptapyrgion, Chalkis and Kalami (detainees held by the judiciary);
- The villages of Karpenissi, Makrakomi, Pelagia, Aghios Nikolaos, Tsotyli, Pentalofon, Granitsa, Chora-Samothrace, Thermon and Kerassochori (persons under house arrest).

In all the places of detention, the ICRC delegates were able to move about freely and talk without witnesses with detainees of their own choosing. One exception was when they spoke in the presence of a police officer with accused persons who were being interrogated, at the Bouboulinas Street police station.

In the course of their visits to camps for administrative deportees, with the co-operation of the Hellenic Red Cross and the Ministry of Social Affairs, the ICRC delegates distributed various types of relief, including physical training items, orthopaedic appliances and spectacles, as well as indoor and outdoor games. They also supplied a number of prisons with pharmaceutical products.

Lastly, in addition to the visits provided for in the Agreement of 3 November 1969, on three occasions the ICRC delegates were authorized to visit Mr. Alekos Panagoulis, who had been sentenced for the attempted murder of the President of the Council and incarcerated in the Boyati military prison.

Following each visit, the ICRC delegation in Athens immediately sent the competent authorities a succinct report. In addition, two general reports—summarizing improvements and releases requested on humanitarian grounds—were sent to the Greek Government by the ICRC in January and September 1970.

Releases : At Easter and Christmas 1970, as well as in August, the Greek authorities released more than a thousand political detainees. Thus the total number of detainees visited by the ICRC dropped from about 2,000 on 1 January to 750 on 31 December (350 condemned in the hands of the judiciary, 340 administrative deportees, and 60 persons under house arrest). This number does not, however, include persons detained since 3 November 1970.

With the releases it became possible to abolish several camps as proposed by the ICRC: first of all the two prison-hotels of Varibopi and Drossia, north of Athens; then the women's camp at Alikarnassos

(Crete), the Lakki camp in the island of Leros and the women's wing of the Oropos prison.

Assistance to families: In accordance with the Agreement of 3 November 1969, the ICRC, in co-operation with the Hellenic Red Cross and the Ministry of Social Affairs, aided destitute families whose breadwinner had, for one reason or another, been in detention for more than two years. In January and in September 1970, the ICRC delegation in Athens launched two operations for material assistance to more than 4,000 families. This assistance was in the form of the refund of amounts paid for the purchase of medicines or for hospitalization, the distribution of tokens for the purchase of extra food, the payment of rent in the case of particularly needy families, and the purchase of woollen goods, clothing, spectacles, dentures, games, books, etc., for the detainees.

In May, the ICRC delegation in Athens chartered a boat to carry about 200 persons who had close relatives in detention in the island of Leros whom they were unable to visit owing to lack of funds.

More than 1,600 persons called at the ICRC delegation offices in Athens seeking information about relatives. Pharmaceutical products were supplied free to needy persons who brought a medical prescription and had made an application.

Non-renewal of the Agreement of 3 November 1969: On 3 November 1970, the Greek Government informed the ICRC that the Agreement signed on 3 November 1969 and expiring on 3 November 1970 could not "remain in force in its present form. This would not preclude a later study of the problem of the relations between the ICRC and the Greek Government as a whole".

To ascertain the intentions of the Greek Government regarding the continuance and development of its activities in Greece, the ICRC sent Mr. Melchior Borsinger, Delegate-General for Europe, to Athens from 24 to 29 November. He had several talks at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, particularly with the Secretary of State. On learning of these talks, the ICRC drew up a number of concrete proposals regarding the continuance of its activities in Greece, for consideration by the Greek Government. The letter containing the proposals was handed to Ambassador Palamas by the head of the ICRC delegation in Athens, on 17 December.

At the request of the Greek Government, all activities of the ICRC delegation in Athens were suspended as from 3 November 1970.

Assistance to the Victims of Pseudo-Medical Experiments

In 1970, the ICRC continued to act as the intermediary for the remittance of compensation to the victims of pseudo-medical experiments carried out in the concentration camps of the National-Socialist regime of the Third Reich. Referring back to the decree of 26 July 1961 concerning this category of ex-deportees, the Government of the Third Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) had, in 1961, requested the ICRC to remit to such victims residing in Eastern Europe the funds intended to contribute to the recovery of their health.

Pursuant to that arrangement, an ICRC mission, comprising Dr. Jacques de Rougemont, member of the ICRC, Mr. Jean-Pierre Maunoir, Assistant Director, Dr. Jean-Louis Roux, doctor-delegate, and Miss Lix Simonius, delegate, went twice to Poland—from 9 to 23 July and from 25 October to 8 November—to examine further groups of victims of pseudo-medical experiments. The meetings took place in Warsaw, in the presence of a judge delegated by the Ministry of Justice Central Committee on War Crimes in Poland, the doctors of the Polish Red Cross Medical Commission, and the Head of the National Society's Tracing Service.

The Neutral Commission of Experts appointed by the ICRC to decide the Polish claims for compensation held two sessions, on 18 and 19 March, and again from 30 September to 3 October, attended by Polish and German observers. Compensation amounting to DM 5,160,000.— was paid by the FRG Government to the ICRC, which remitted it to the persons in Poland to whom it was due. This brought the total paid by the FRG Government to Polish victims of pseudo-medical experiments since this action was initiated in 1961 to DM 26,430,000.—. In Poland, the compilation of files in respect of persons claiming assistance in view of their being victims of pseudo-medical experiments was considerably speeded up. The Polish Red Cross sent to the ICRC, mostly during the second half of 1970, nearly 500 files which were to serve as the basis for the Neutral Commission's work in 1971.

The Hungarian Government concluded an agreement direct with the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, as the Czechoslovak Government had done in 1969, on the payment of a lump sum for Hungarian cases still in abeyance. The ICRC therefore brought this part of its work to a close.

Middle East

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE ARAB COUNTRIES

As fresh outbreaks in hostilities broke out, the International Committee of the Red Cross sent, on 11 April, the following message to the Powers engaged in the Middle East conflict.

Despite the cease-fire, acts of war continue to occur in the Middle East. It is alarming to observe the escalation of hostilities in regions where military installations sometimes co-exist with civilian populations, thus involving ever greater suffering.

In view of the tragic development of this situation, the International Committee of the Red Cross urgently appeals to the governments and all the forces engaged in that part of the world to apply, in all circumstances, the universally recognized rules of humanity.

It emphasizes that when signing the 1949 Geneva Conventions, Powers solemnly undertook to observe a series of standards which demand, *inter alia*, that non-combatant populations shall be spared and that no attacks shall be directed against them, that military and civilian detainees shall be treated in a fitting and humane manner, and that no maltreatment and reprisals shall be directed against persons and property. Hospitals shall enjoy particular protection.

The International Committee of the Red Cross urges the parties concerned to give its delegates greater support and increased facilities for the discharge of their mission. It is imperative that, through its representatives in the area of conflict, the ICRC be permitted to carry out its plans to provide more effective protection for non-combatants.

The Committee, which has often confronted the responsible authorities with their obligations, earnestly requests them to observe the essential rules of humanity and to abstain from all acts likely to make efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict more difficult.

A new cease-fire agreement was concluded on 7 August.

The ICRC continued its humanitarian action for prisoners of war, civilian internees and detainees and the civilian population. To that purpose, it continued to maintain its delegations in Israel and the occupied territories, the United Arab Republic (UAR), Jordan, the