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Europe and North America

Mr. Max Petitpierre, a member of the ICRC, accompanied by Mr. Raymond Courvoisier, Special Assistant to the President and Director of the Operations Department, and Mr. Jean-Pierre Hocké, a delegate, was in Spain from 15 to 18 March, at the invitation of the Spanish Red Cross.¹

From 17 to 25 April, Mr. Melchior Borsinger, Delegate-General for Europe and North America, accompanied Mr. Marcel A. Naville, President of the ICRC, to the United States of America, where he was a guest of the American National Red Cross.²

On the occasion of the 59th Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, held in Paris from 1 to 11 September and at which he represented the ICRC, Mr. Borsinger contacted the leaders of the French Red Cross.

Lastly, in the framework of his activities and contacts with the authorities and National Societies of his area, Mr. Borsinger went three times to Great Britain, in March, May and October, and to Spain in November.

Greece

Approaches to the Greek Government regarding political detainees : 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 existing form, although this would not preclude a study of the problem of the relations between the ICRC and the Greek Government as a whole at some later date. To ascertain the Greek Government's intentions in this regard, the ICRC sent Mr. Borsinger to Athens at the end of November. He had several talks at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and on 15 December the ICRC sent the Ministry a letter containing a number of proposals for the continuance of its activities in favour of detainees in Greece.

¹ See p. 90 of this Report.

² See p. 88 of this Report.

On 15 January 1971, the ICRC handed the Greek Permanent Mission in Geneva a memorandum recalling its proposals of 15 December. In a letter dated 16 January, the Government of Greece, basing itself on recent releases and the fact that preventive detention and assigned residence would end in 1971, declared that, in the circumstances, any ICRC action similar to that agreed upon in November 1969 would serve no useful purpose.

In view of the situation, the head of the ICRC delegation left Athens for Geneva on 28 February 1971.

Material assistance to detainees : In January, the ICRC delegation in Athens was authorized to provide relief in the form of clothing for some 340 persons still under preventive detention in the Leros-Partheni and Oropos camps. As in the case of previous relief action, in February locally purchased articles were handed to the Hellenic Red Cross for distribution. The ICRC delegation also provided the Society with medical supplies for the hospitals and needy families.

Northern Ireland

Visits to places of detention : Owing to a deterioration in the situation in Northern Ireland and the emergency powers decreed in the night of 9 to 10 August, the ICRC on 27 August offered the Governments of Great Britain and Northern Ireland its services for assistance to persons deprived of liberty following the events. In mid-September, the British Government invited the ICRC to send representatives to London and subsequently to Belfast, to discuss ways and means of ensuring appropriate action. Mr. Borsinger went to the two capitals at the end of September, and the Government of Northern Ireland and the ICRC reached an agreement under which the ICRC was permitted to visit different categories of persons interned in that province.

From 5 to 7 October, an ICRC delegate and a doctor-delegate visited Crumlin Road Prison in Belfast, Long Kesh Internment Camp near Lisburn, and Armagh Prison.

A second series of visits took place from 12 to 17 December, when in addition to Crumlin Road Prison and Long Kesh Internment Camp, the ICRC team had access to the detainees on board the "Maidstone", in Belfast port.

In the course of their second mission, the ICRC delegates met some 560 detainees. In each series of visits, they were able to speak with all detainees freely and without witnesses. As is customary, the reports which the ICRC drew up following the visits were sent direct to the Government of Northern Ireland.

ASSISTANCE TO THE VICTIMS OF PSEUDO-MEDICAL EXPERIMENTS

In 1971, 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. In accordance with a decree of 26 July 1951 concerning this category of former deportee, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany had in 1961 requested the ICRC to remit to surviving victims residing in eastern Europe the funds designed to contribute to the recovery of their health.

Pursuant to that arrangement, five ICRC missions—comprising Dr. Jacques F. de Rougemont, a member of the ICRC and rapporteur of the Neutral Commission ; Dr. Jean-Louis Roux and Dr. Albert Leupin, doctor-delegates and rapporteurs ; Miss Lix Simonius and Miss Françoise Perret, Delegates—went to Poland in January-February, March-April, July, September and December, to examine further groups of applicants. 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, members of the Polish Red Cross Medical Commission, and representatives of the National Society's tracing service.

The Neutral Commission of Experts, appointed by the ICRC to decide on Polish claims for compensation, held four sessions—from 7 to 9 January, from 30 April to 4 May, from 1 to 3 July, and from 14 to 16 October—attended by the ICRC rapporteurs and by Polish and German observers. It approved financial compensation to 305 victims. Compensation amounting to DM 8,400,000.— was paid by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany to the ICRC, which remitted it to the persons in Poland to whom it was due. Thus the total paid to 1,193 Polish victims since the relief action was launched in 1961 amounted to DM 34,830,000.—.