

Latin America

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nature. He was able to interview prisoners of his choice in private. As usual, the reports on these visits were submitted to the Detaining Power by the ICRC.

Latin America

In 1971, there were two outstanding events in Latin America : the opening of a permanent ICRC delegation in Caracas, in August, and the launching of a long-term operation in Bolivia, again in August.

In accordance with the wish expressed by a number of Red Cross Societies in Latin America, in February the ICRC decided to establish a permanent regional delegation in that part of the world. Caracas was chosen as the delegation headquarters for practical and financial reasons, and the official inauguration took place on 19 August, in the presence of Government representatives, Venezuelan Red Cross leaders, Mr. Serge Nessi, ICRC Delegate-General for Latin America, and the two new Regional Delegates. Mr. Nessi had already introduced Mr. Eddi Leemann, Regional Delegate for Central America and the Caribbean, and Mr. Jacques Moreillon, Regional Delegate for South America, to H.E. Dr. Rafael Caldera, President of the Republic, and to various Ministers.

From 19 March to 24 May, Mr. Leemann carried out a mission to Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama and Venezuela.

Mr. Nessi went to Brazil, Argentina and Chile, in June and July. With Mr. Moreillon, who joined him on 29 July, he proceeded to Peru, Ecuador and Colombia, where he introduced the new Regional Delegate to the government authorities and National Society leaders. On his way back to Caracas, Mr. Nessi made a stop-over in Trinidad and Tobago.

On 27 August, shortly after the official inauguration of the ICRC delegation in Caracas, Mr. Moreillon again went on a mission to Bolivia following the events which had occurred in that country. He was joined by Mr. Robert Gaillard-Moret, a delegate, on 30 August. To ensure that detainees received effective medical assistance, the ICRC sent out a doctor-delegate in October. On 17 October, Mr. Moreillon left Bolivia for Peru, Ecuador and Colombia, returning to Caracas on 23 December.

Mr. Leemann carried out a second mission to Central America from 6 September to 4 November.

The ICRC delegates thus visited thirteen Latin American countries in 1971. In each country, they held fruitful talks with government authorities, particularly regarding the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions and Red Cross principles in the armed forces and among youth. Close contacts with leaders and visits to a great many regional committees forged closer links between the ICRC and National Societies.

Having been granted permission by the authorities in the various countries to visit places of detention, the ICRC delegates went to sixty prisons, where they saw several thousand detainees, including some hundreds of "political" detainees. In some of the prisons they distributed relief supplies, in co-operation with the National Red Cross Societies.

The ICRC representatives also went to Mexico, in September and October, to take part in the International Red Cross meetings.

Contacts were made with the competent authorities of a number of countries to consider the feasibility of setting up a direct radio link with Geneva.

In addition, further relief supplies and donations were sent to Latin America, particularly for detainees in the prisons visited and for people in need.

Argentina

Visits to places of detention : During his stay in Argentina, from 2 to 19 July, the ICRC Delegate-General for Latin America received from the government authorities a general authorization to visit places of detention. He went to four, and there met a large number of detainees, about a hundred of whom were being held for political offences or reasons. As usual, the reports on the visits were sent to the competent authorities.

CONTACTS

While in Argentina, the Delegate-General on various occasions met National Society leaders and visited several chapters. He also con-

ferred with officials in some of the ministries regarding the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions and the Red Cross principles within the armed forces, schools and universities.

Bolivia

While in La Paz, from 27 July to 2 August, Mr. Nessi introduced Mr. Moreillon, the new Regional Delegate for South America, to government authorities and National Society leaders. During their stay in Bolivia, the ICRC delegates visited three places of detention where they saw several hundred detainees.

Three weeks later, on 22 August, trouble broke out in Bolivia. Hundreds of people were wounded and there were a large number of arrests, which created a critical situation particularly in prisons. On 23 August, Geneva headquarters received a telegram from the Bolivian Red Cross asking for aid and supplies. The ICRC took the following steps : on 26 August, the Regional Delegate for South America left Caracas for La Paz in a plane carrying 12 tons of relief supplies from the ICRC and the Venezuelan Red Cross (medicaments, blood plasma, transfusion equipment, dressing material, clothing, etc.), which were handed over to the Bolivian Red Cross. Since it was evident that the operation would involve a great deal of work, the ICRC sent out a second delegate, Mr. Gaillard-Moret, on 29 August. A further consignment of relief supplies from Geneva, comprising medicaments and blankets, reached La Paz on 4 September.

The day after his arrival in La Paz, the government authorities granted Mr. Moreillon general permission to visit places of detention. He started his visits on 31 August, in La Paz and the Viacha military camp, and subsequently in the interior : Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, Sucre and Potosí.

Following the first round of visits, the ICRC delegates decided to concentrate on places of detention in La Paz and its surroundings, where most of the detainees had been transferred. Thus they made weekly or fortnightly visits to the Criminal Investigation Department, the Viacha camp Achocalla prison. In September and December, however, they made two further rounds of visits to Potosí, Sucre, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz.

At all the places of detention, the ICRC delegates, in close co-operation with the Bolivian Red Cross, distributed medicaments, mattresses, blankets, clothing and, in certain cases, food. They concerned themselves particularly with the welfare of sick detainees, in which they had the support of Bolivian Red Cross doctors.

When Mr. Moreillon left for Peru, on 17 October, Mr. Gaillard-Moret continued the ICRC action in Bolivia alone. As the situation and medical assistance were still problems of paramount importance, the ICRC decided to send a doctor-delegate to second him. On 30 October, the doctor-delegate arrived in La Paz, where he remained until 20 December. From that time until the end of the operation, on 14 January 1972, the ICRC kept only one delegate in Bolivia.

Throughout their mission, the ICRC delegates had frequent contacts with the government authorities, to whom they conveyed their findings and recommendations.

In the context of its action in Bolivia, the ICRC sent to La Paz five consignments totalling 650 kg of medicaments and dressing material, plus 300 blankets. It also opened a credit to enable its delegates to purchase essential articles locally. The ICRC's overall assistance to Bolivian detainees is estimated at around 40,000 Swiss francs.

The Ecuadorian and Peruvian Red Cross Societies informed the ICRC that, when the trouble started, they sent blood substitute and dressing material to Bolivia by air.

Several hundred detainees were visited, and the reports on the visits were, as usual, sent to the competent authorities by the ICRC.

Brazil

Medical mission to the Brazilian Amazon region : From 10 May to 14 August 1970, the ICRC, in co-operation with the League of Red Cross Societies, sent a medical mission to the Amazonian region to survey the living and health conditions of the indigenous population in different areas. A report on the findings and suggestions of the ICRC medical team was sent to the Brazilian Government early in December. During his stay in Brazil, from 25 June to 2 July 1971, the ICRC Delegate-General for Latin America conferred with the President of the *Fundação Nacional do Índio* (FUNAI) and the Brazilian Red Cross

regarding the continuance of the Red Cross operation in the Brazilian Amazon region. The competent authorities welcomed the idea.

The proposed operation will be carried out with the co-operation and aid of the Brazilian Red Cross and of a number of National Societies and governments.

National Society : On 11 November, when the new President of the Brazilian Red Cross took office, the intervention regime which dated back to late 1968 came to an end.

Chile

The ICRC Delegate-General for Latin America was on a mission to Chile from 19 to 26 July.

National Society : He was received at the seat of the Chilean Red Cross by its President and the members of the Executive Board. He also visited two *asociaciones* of Gran Santiago, the Valparaiso regional committee and two child centres.

Dissemination of the Conventions : Mr. Nessi contacted authorities in different ministries interested in the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions and the Red Cross principles.

Relief : In an audience which he was granted, Mr. Nessi conferred with H.E. Mr. Salvador Allende, President of the Republic, regarding possible ICRC assistance in the government powdered milk distribution programme. The matter had previously been discussed at a meeting of the Executive Board of the Chilean Red Cross which the Delegate-General had attended. ICRC participation in such a programme, which is mainly for the benefit of infants, is proposed to take place through the National Society.

Colombia

Following a stay in Colombia from 10 to 13 August, when he was introduced to Red Cross leaders and local authorities by the ICRC Delegate-General for Latin America, Mr. Moreillon was again in that country from 26 November to 23 December.

Visits to places of detention : At that time, Mr. Moreillon again received from the Government a general authorization to visit places of detention. He visited ten such places, both in Bogotá and in the provinces, and saw several thousand detainees including some thirty detained for political offences. As usual, the reports on the visits were sent by the ICRC to the detaining authorities.

Despatch of medicaments : In September, the ICRC sent medicaments to Bogotá for the places of detention visited by the ICRC.

Contacts : In the course of his mission, the ICRC Delegate met Colombian Red Cross leaders in Bogotá and visited several departmental committees.

During his talks with government representatives, Mr. Moreillon discussed with them the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions and the Red Cross principles, and the regular teaching of humanitarian law in universities. He also gave several lectures.

Ecuador

During his stay in Ecuador from 5 to 10 August, Mr. Nessi introduced the new Regional Delegate for South America to Ecuadorian Red Cross leaders in Quito and Guayaquil and also to the Government.

Mr. Moreillon returned to Ecuador and stayed there from 7 to 25 November.

Visits to places of detention : On receiving government authorization, the Regional Delegate visited seven places of detention in Quito and in the provinces. He saw several hundred detainees, some of whom were being held for political offences. As usual, the ICRC sent reports on the visits to the detaining authorities.

Relief : In June, a consignment of medicaments was sent to Quito by air for the places of detention visited by the ICRC.

Contacts : In Quito, the Regional Delegate met National Society leaders and later visited several local sections in the provinces. He gave a series of lectures on ICRC activities and international humanitarian law in a number of Ecuadorian universities and other institu-

Dr. S.-P. Tchoungui, President of the Cameroon Red Cross and Prime Minister of East Cameroon, welcomes the President of the ICRC. ICRC Records



Visit to a place of detention in Latin America. ICRC Records



tions. The dissemination of the Geneva Conventions, particularly among the armed forces, was also discussed with the ministries concerned.

Guatemala

Visits to places of detention : Mr. Leemann, ICRC Regional Delegate for Central America and the Caribbean, made two visits to Guatemala, the first from 4 to 12 April and the second from 16 to 31 October.

During his second stay in Guatemala, the ICRC delegate received from the competent authorities a general authorization to visit places of detention. He went to six such places and saw several hundred detainees, about forty of whom were held for political offences. As usual, the reports on the visits were sent by the ICRC to the detaining authorities.

Relief : The Guatemalan Red Cross received a number of tents and gas masks from the ICRC, to supplement the Society's equipment for emergency operations. In December, the ICRC despatched 250 kg of baby food for the National Society's assistance programmes.

Contacts : In the course of the two visits he made to Guatemala, Mr. Leemann met the principal leaders of the National Society and attended a meeting of the Red Cross Youth.

A great many government contacts were made with regard to the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions. The regular teaching of humanitarian law in universities was also discussed with education authorities.

Guyana

Donation to National Society : Following the visit which the ICRC Delegate-General for Latin America made to Guyana in December 1970, the ICRC sent the Guyana Red Cross two tons of powdered milk in April and one ton in October, which enabled the Society to continue its action for handicapped children and the needy.

Haiti

Donation to National Society : In May, the ICRC donated a Land-Rover, two tons of powdered milk for destitute children at Cap-Haïtien, and fifteen first-aid kits for the Society's mobile brigades. A further batch of fifteen kits was despatched to Port-au-Prince in October.

Honduras

Donation to National Society : In October, the ICRC sent the Honduran Red Cross fifteen first-aid kits for the Society's first-aid workers.

Mexico

Visits to places of detention : During his visit to Mexico, from 21 March to 3 April, the ICRC Regional Delegate for Central America and the Caribbean had access to two places of detention where he met a number of detainees, six of whom were being held for political offences. As usual, the reports on the visits were sent by the ICRC to the competent authorities.

Contacts : In the course of his stay, Mr. Leemann met Mexican Red Cross leaders and had various government contacts regarding the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions and international humanitarian law.

Meetings : From 6 September to 15 October, the ICRC Regional Delegate was in Mexico on a further mission, in the course of which he attended the meeting of the first Regional Training Institute and the first world Red Cross Youth Council.

Nicaragua

Visits to places of detention : The ICRC Regional Delegate for Central America and the Caribbean stayed in Nicaragua from 13 to 28 April. The Government granted him authorization to visit all places of detention. He visited nine in Managua and in the provinces and saw several hundred detainees, some thirty of whom were detained for of-

fences of a political nature. As usual the reports on the visits were sent to the competent authorities.

Panama

Contacts : The ICRC Delegate went on a second mission to Nicaragua on 1 and 2 November.

In the course of his two stays in that country, Mr. Leemann met Nicaraguan Red Cross leaders and visited a number of chapters in the provinces.

The teaching of international humanitarian law in universities and, in general, the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions within the armed forces and in schools, was the subject of talks with the competent authorities.

Visits to places of detention : During his stay in Panama, from 29 April to 10 May, the ICRC Regional Delegate for Central America and the Caribbean received government authorization to visit places of detention. He went to three of them, where he saw several hundred detainees. As usual, the reports on the visits were sent to the competent authorities.

Relief : The Regional Delegate handed over to the representative of the Medical Service of the Penal Administration a small batch of medicaments for the detainees held in Coiba Island.

Donation to National Society : In December, the ICRC sent the Panamanian Red Cross 250 kg of baby food for the Society's welfare centres.

Contacts : Mr. Leemann was received by Panamanian Red Cross leaders and visited the Colón provincial committee.

The ICRC Delegate also discussed with the competent government authorities the matter of the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions within the armed forces and in schools.

Peru

During a stop-over in Lima, from 2 to 4 August, Mr. Nessi, ICRC Delegate-General for Latin America, introduced Mr. Moreillon, the

new Regional Delegate for South America, to government authorities and Peruvian Red Cross leaders.

Visits to places of detention : On his second mission to Peru, from 17 October to 7 November, Mr. Moreillon obtained from the authorities renewed authorization to visit places of detention. He visited seven in Lima and in the provinces, including those which had in 1970 received ICRC aid in the form of medical supplies. As usual, the reports on the visits were sent by the ICRC to the competent authorities.

Contacts : The ICRC Delegate was received by National Society leaders and he visited various departmental sections in the provinces. In the talks he had with government representatives, he raised the question of the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions within the armed forces and in schools, as well as the teaching of international humanitarian law in universities.

Trinidad and Tobago

The ICRC Delegate-General for Latin America was in Trinidad and Tobago on 20 and 21 August.

Contacts : The Delegate-General met local Red Cross leaders with whom he discussed the Society's problems. He also had a talk with the Governor-General.

Donation to National Society : In March, the ICRC despatched a ton of powdered milk to Trinidad and Tobago for the Society's programme of assistance to the destitute.

Venezuela

Opening of ICRC Regional Delegation in Caracas : The formal opening of the ICRC Regional Delegation in Caracas took place on 19 August. The ceremony was attended by the President of the Venezuelan Red Cross, members of the Central Committee, government authorities and the press.

The ICRC Regional Delegation is installed in premises which were made available by the Venezuelan Red Cross. It is equipped with a radio station which provides a direct link with Geneva.

Visits to places of detention : The ICRC delegates were assured by the government authorities that they would, as hitherto, be afforded all manner of facilities for visiting places of detention.

Contacts : There were numerous contacts with the authorities. They related, *inter alia*, to the introduction of delegates to the government authorities, the installation of the regional delegation, the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions particularly within the armed forces and schools, and the teaching of international humanitarian law in universities.

Donation to National Society : In December, the ICRC sent the Venezuelan Red Cross 250 kg of baby food and one ton of powdered milk.

Asia

During 1971, the situation on the Indian sub-continent deteriorated, leading to the December conflict between India and Pakistan.

The ICRC maintained its permanent delegations in the Republic of Vietnam, the Khmer Republic and Laos. Towards the end of the year, it set up further delegations in Islamabad, New Delhi, Calcutta and Dacca.

One of the main missions made from Geneva was that of the President, Mr. Marcel A. Naville, and the Presidential Attaché, Mr. Michel Barde, to the People's Republic of China from 14 to 25 September¹.

In July, Mr. Victor H. Umbricht, Member of the ICRC, and Mr. Jean Ott, the Delegate-General for Asia and Oceania, went to Pakistan, the Republic of Vietnam and India to contact the Governments and National Societies. Mr. Ott had already been to these three countries and to Thailand in late April/May.

In October, Their Majesties The Emperor and Empress of Japan visited ICRC headquarters where they were received by the President and several members of the Committee.

¹ See p. 90 of this Report.