

Relations with Red Cross Institutions

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The following persons participated in the meeting—For Italy : Captain G. Fiorani, of the Italian Admiralty, and Mr. F. Nicotera, Engineer, Inspector-General in the Ministry for Postal, Telegraph and Telephone Services ; for Sweden : Captain H. Hansson, Director of the Swedish Sea Rescue Institution, Captain A. Bjöling, of the Swedish Admiralty and Mr. T. Overgaard, Director in the Swedish Telecommunication Office ; for Switzerland : Mr. H. Thévenaz, Professor of international law at the University of Neuchâtel (representing the Federal Political Department), Mr. C. Gillioz and Mr. R. Monnat, respectively Chief and Inspector in the Radio Section of the Swiss Postal, Telegraph and Telephone Administration.

The meeting was held from June 9 to 11, 1959 ; Professor Thévenaz acted as Chairman. It soon became apparent that agreement could easily be reached on principles and the technical means for their application.

The experts were thus able to draw up new regulations which were submitted to the Italian and Swedish Governments for study by the services concerned. The text of the draft regulations was also presented to the VIIIth International Lifeboat Conference (Bremen, June 22 to 25, 1959). A resolution was adopted calling on States, in the event of this text being transmitted to them, to make a careful study of the proposals of which the sole object is to increase the protection afforded by the Second Geneva Convention to hospital ships and rescue craft.

RELATIONS WITH RED CROSS INSTITUTIONS

In 1959, the year which marked the centenary of the Battle of Solferino and Henry Dunant's charitable action, the ICRC maintained particularly close and cordial relations throughout the Red Cross movement. It was represented by Mr. Leopold Boissier, President, and a number of persons, at the ceremonies organised in Solferino and places in the neighbourhood for the commemoration of the birth of the Red Cross Idea. This provided an excellent opportunity for meeting representatives of many National Red Cross (Red Crescent, Red Lion and Sun) Societies and in particular the Italian Red Cross Society which organised the ceremonies.

League of Red Cross Societies

As customary, the ICRC kept in close and constant touch with the League of Red Cross Societies, especially by joint meetings for the discussion of all matters of mutual interest. In addition to the regular meetings, the two International Red Cross bodies took counsel together whenever special or urgent problems arose.

During the summer the ICRC had the pleasure of receiving at its headquarters two groups of League staff members who visited the Central Prisoners of War Agency.

Invited to attend the 25th meeting of the Board of Governors of the League, the ICRC was represented by a delegation led by Mr. Leopold Boissier, President. At the information meeting held on this occasion, Mr. F. Siordet, Vice-President, spoke on the protection of civilians, Mr. J. Pictet, Director for General Affairs, on the ratification and dissemination of the Geneva Conventions, and Mr. R. Gallopin, Executive Director, on the action of the ICRC on behalf of victims of civil wars and internal disturbances.

In October the new Chairman of the Board of Governors of the League, Mr. John A. MacAulay, during a day's visit to Geneva, was received at the ICRC headquarters by the President and his colleagues.

National Societies

As often stated in previous reports, the ICRC remains in close contact with the National Red Cross (Red Crescent, Red Lion and Sun) Societies, which co-operate in its work in various ways. The National Societies are in frequent touch with the ICRC to consult it and, sometimes, to ask for its assistance as a neutral intermediary.

In addition to the work shared, the ICRC considers it essential to maintain cordial relations with all the National Societies. For this purpose it keeps them regularly informed of its activities, welcomes members of their directorates and staffs visiting Geneva and takes every opportunity of visiting them. Thus, Professor A. Franceschetti, member of the ICRC, took advantage of a tour in Latin America to visit National Societies in that part of the

world¹. The International Committee was represented by a delegate (Mr. R. Du Pasquier) at the Third Triennial Convention of the Irish Red Cross, held at Galway in November.

The ICRC received visits from several leading members of National Societies to its headquarters, including Mr. F. H. A. de Graaff, the new President of the Netherlands Red Cross, H.H. Prince Paku Alam VIII, President of the Indonesian Red Cross, Dr. G. Newman-Morris, new Chairman of the Australian Red Cross, Mrs. Jeannette King, President of the Liberian Red Cross, Dr. Belea and Mrs. Mesaros, President and Vice-President of the Rumanian Red Cross, Lieut.-General W. A. Burki, Minister of Health, Vice-President of the Pakistan Red Cross, Mr. Li Il Kyung, Vice-President of the Red Cross of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, Mr. Y. Kasai, Vice-President of the Japanese Red Cross, Dr. Helen Kim, Vice-President of the Red Cross of the Republic of Korea, Dr. Chadli Zouiten, Vice-President of the Tunisian Red Crescent.

Other visitors to the ICRC headquarters included numerous representatives of National Societies, members of Central Committees, directors, secretaries-general, heads of foreign relations or information departments, staff members and voluntary workers, who came to discuss questions of common interest with the ICRC or merely to get in contact with the founder body of the Red Cross. Numbers of nursing instructors, nurses, ambulance and social workers and members of National Societies stopped at Geneva on their way to Solferino or on their return journey.

Study-visits were made by Mr. S. Popović, head of the Foreign Relations Department of the Yugoslav Red Cross (June 15 to July 3) and Miss Eva Nobel of the Swedish Red Cross (June 15 to early August).

Recognition of National Societies

The ICRC granted recognition to three National Societies in 1959, i.e. the Ghana Red Cross Society and the Liberian Red Cross

¹ See p. 31.

Society on February 5 and the Red Cross of the Mongolian People's Republic on September 15.

The ICRC took note of the merging of the Red Crescent Societies of Egypt and Syria which henceforth form one Society—the Red Crescent of the United Arab Republic—of which the National Societies were informed by a circular letter of the ICRC on September 10, 1959.

These recognitions and the merger brought the total number of National Societies officially recognised by the ICRC to 84.

The ICRC also had some contacts with societies to which official recognition has not been granted, in particular the Red Cross of Malaya. During his mission to the Far East Mr. J.-P. Schoenholzer, delegate, paid a visit to this new Society which will take the place of the Malaya Branch of the British Red Cross. He was given a cordial welcome and had useful discussions with the directorate which was waiting to receive the decree of the Government of Malaya in this connection in order to apply for official recognition by the ICRC.

Administration of Funds

During its annual meeting in February 1959, the Joint Commission of the Empress Shôken Fund, which includes representatives of the Japanese Red Cross, the ICRC and the League, allocated to National Societies which had made applications for grants the revenue for 1958 of this Fund, which is administered by the ICRC. The beneficiaries were the National Societies of Belgium, France, Greece, Norway, Pakistan and Tunisia.

RELATIONS OF THE ICRC WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

United Nations

As in former years the ICRC continued to remain in close contact with the United Nations and with those of its specialised agencies whose activities are of special interest to it. Thus it sent observers to the following meetings and conferences held in Geneva :