

Chile

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when Portuguese troops attacked in order to recapture the camp, all the men involved in the original operation re-crossed the border into the territory of the People's Republic of the Congo. The ICRC, with the consent of the Congolese Government, sent a delegate to Pointe Noire to visit seventeen Portuguese soldiers and customs officials who were still detained there on 29 November. Six civilians had been repatriated to Massabi three days beforehand.

As customary, the ICRC delegates who carried out the above-mentioned visits saw the prisoners without witnesses and brought them material assistance.

Chile

During 1974, the ICRC continued its action on behalf of victims of the events of September 1973, the Chilean authorities having permitted ICRC delegates to visit most places of detention as from 20 September 1973. By 31 December 1973 they had made 114 visits to sixty-one places of detention and met several thousand detainees held by the military authorities.¹

Not only was ICRC action continued in 1974 but its field of activity was considerably extended, particularly with regard to relief. The number of delegates increased accordingly. From ten delegates at the beginning of the year, it had risen by June to twelve and by December to eighteen, aided by a dozen Chilean assistants. Special attention was given to the need for doctors, relief experts (logistics) and telecommunication experts.

The emergency activities which had been a feature of ICRC operations in Chile in 1973 were succeeded by long-term programmes of protection and assistance. With such programmes and the reorganization of the delegation, the ICRC was able to respond to needs more promptly and to render assistance more appropriate to the needs of the victims of the events.

Visits to places of detention

As they had done from September to December 1973, the ICRC delegates continued their visits to places of detention in different

¹ See Annual Report 1973, pp. 33 and 34.

parts of the country. Four teams consisting of two delegates each (a visiting delegate and a doctor) carried out that duty on a continuing basis.

Between 1 January and 31 December 1974, 271 visits were made to 108 civilian and military places of detention, where up to 9,000 detainees altogether were held by the military authorities.

While the facilities provided by the Chilean authorities were, as the statistics show, very considerable, they did not enable the ICRC to extend its action to all detainees. There was first the fact that certain military places of detention, and all interrogation centres, remained closed to the ICRC throughout. Then again, visits had to be interrupted for several weeks in May and June because the necessary authorizations were not renewed.

Numerous verbal and written approaches were made to the Chilean authorities to remedy the situation. Further, the ICRC delegate-general for Latin America, in the course of several missions to Santiago, conferred with the highest government authorities. In June he met the Head of State, General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, to whom he handed a statement on ICRC activities.

Through these various approaches, authorities at every level were made aware of the work carried out by the delegates and of the difficulties which they encountered. As usual, each visit to a place of detention was covered by a report which the ICRC sent to the competent authorities, with its findings and recommendations.

Assistance to detainees

Parallel to the programme of visits to places of detention, the ICRC developed a considerable programme of assistance to detainees. During their visits ICRC delegates were able to ascertain that detention conditions were sometimes unsatisfactory from a medical, sanitary or purely material standpoint. This prompted them, apart from any recommendations made to the responsible authorities, themselves to provide essential aid directly. This aid took the form partly of medical supplies—even though on a smaller scale than during the first few months following the events of September 1973, the most pressing needs having been covered—and partly of relief supplies proper, such as clothing, toilet items, mattresses,

blankets and food. (Particulars regarding assistance to detainees are given in the table on page 47).

Where immediate distribution by ICRC delegates was not possible, relief supplies were channelled through SENDET (*Secretaría Ejecutiva Nacional de Detenidos*) or the National Prison Service. During 1974, the value of material assistance to places of detention gradually diminished, while assistance to detainees' families increased. The ICRC delegates had noted that in some cases detention conditions had improved; moreover some of the items with which detainees were supplied, such as blankets and mattresses, lasted and did not need to be renewed within a short interval.

Assistance to detainees' families

During 1974 the ICRC paid special attention to assistance to the families of detainees. In January already it was noted that the problems created by detention often had serious consequences for dependants. Being deprived of their mainstay and unable to support themselves, some became totally destitute.

Early in 1974, a delegate specialized in relief, assisted by three Chilean women helpers, set up a relief distribution service for the benefit of the most needy families. After a census of such families had been taken, a system was organized for the regular supply of their more essential needs, such as food, blankets and toilet items. Under this distribution programme, operated in conjunction with the Chilean Red Cross which provided the ICRC with warehouses and voluntary workers, more than 1,500 families of detainees received assistance in the Santiago area. A relatively simple and effective system of control also made it possible to consider requests for urgent supplementary aid, usually in cash, for school attendance, rent, medical expenses and so forth.

In the provinces the distribution system was organized with the help of those delegates who were visiting places of detention. As they were constantly on the move, they were able to establish local centres for the distribution of relief to detainees' families, with the assistance of local sections of the Chilean Red Cross or, in some cases, of the churches (prison chaplains as a rule). A list was drawn up of the families who were in greatest need in each province.

Aid was initially rendered in the form of food, medicines and toilet articles from ICRC warehouses in Santiago. It was later supplemented by local purchases.

As from May and June, all relief supplies were bought on the spot, but were supplemented by donations in kind sent by various Red Cross Societies. To lend the visiting delegates support, three relief delegates were sent to Santiago at the beginning of the second half-year. Thus strengthened, the delegation was able not only to extend its programme of assistance to families very considerably, but also to effect a more thorough control of the receipt, routing and distribution of goods from the time of their arrival in the port of Valparaiso (in the case of donations from abroad) until they came into the recipient families' possession.

During 1974, forty-six local centres for the distribution of emergency relief to families were opened by the ICRC delegates, who rendered assistance to some 3,000 families a month. (Particulars regarding assistance to families are given in the table on page 47).

" Release " programme

On 11 September 1974, the Chilean authorities announced their intention of releasing a number of political detainees on condition that they agreed to leave Chilean soil. At the same time, they asked the ICRC to supervise the release operations.

After considering the proposal and concluding that it contained some positive factors, the ICRC agreed to co-operate in the programme; but for a number of reasons, and in view of the fact that other organizations (in particular the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration) were taking an active part in the programme, the ICRC decided to confine its co-operation to recording the wishes of the detainees to whom the general offer was made.

By 31 December 1974, the ICRC had interviewed ninety-three of the hundred detainees figuring on a preliminary list drawn up by the Ministry of the Interior.

Central Tracing Agency

Throughout 1974, the ICRC's Central Tracing Agency (CTA) in Santiago pursued its vital information task started in the early

days of the ICRC's presence in Chile. The bureau had two specialized delegates during the first half of the year, and subsequently one delegate assisted by three Chilean women helpers. A description of the work is given in the chapter of this report which deals with the CTA (see page 67).

Financing of action

In meeting the operational costs of its action in Chile, the ICRC had the support of a number of Governments and National Red Cross Societies (see financial table VI, page 105). Moreover, the ICRC delegation in Santiago received donations in kind from several National Societies and other bodies,¹ which were used in the programmes of assistance to detainees and their families.

¹ The National Societies of eight countries: Argentina, Bulgaria, France, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Netherlands, Romania and USSR; and the following bodies: Franco-Chilean Chamber of Commerce, Chiprodal (Santiago); Laboratoire Le Petit (Paris); Secours populaire français; and the ICRC in Geneva.

RELIEF AND ASSISTANCE TO PLACES OF DETENTION AND TO DETAINEES' FAMILIES
(in Swiss francs)

Type of assistance and/or relief	to places of detention				to detainees' families				Total
	Northern Area	Centre and Santiago	Southern Area	Total	Northern Area	Centre and Santiago	Southern Area	Total	
<i>Medical</i> (medicines, vitamins, toilet articles, soap)	155,383	396,800	234,220	786,403	14,291	66,369	27,682	108,342	894,745
<i>Food</i> (powdered and condensed milk, baby foods, pre- serves, tinned meat, rice and pasta)	60,064	45,333	22,346	127,743	44,840	494,332	44,177	583,349	711,092
<i>Household</i> (beds, mattresses, blankets, towels and sheets, furnish- ings, kitchen utensils, cleaning materials) . . .	40,952	92,417	95,642	229,011	10,853	36,176	25,323	72,352	301,363
<i>Clothing</i> (clothes, underwear, footwear)	3,675	15,864	1,865	21,404	24,311	81,038	56,726	162,075	183,479
<i>Financial</i> (for "relegados")	—	—	504	504	—	—	—	—	504
<i>Education and leisure</i> (books, sports items, tools, games)	1,148	29,336	8,670	39,154	—	—	—	—	39,154
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	—	—	—	—	62,616	208,720	146,104	417,440	417,440
	261,222	579,750	363,247	1,204,219	156,911	886,635	300,012	1,343,558	2,547,777

Note. — Specific and detailed information regarding the distribution of donations received can be furnished readily on request.