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Mr. E. Haegler in Brazil and Mr. W. Roethlisberger in Colombia, helped to maintain the good relations of the International Committee with the Governments and Red Cross Societies of these countries. On his way back from his mission in Cuba, Mr. Jequier paid a visit to the Red Cross of the Dominican Republic. A number of visitors from North and South America were received at the ICRC headquarters in Geneva, where they visited the Central Prisoners of War Agency. These visits supplied the opportunity for a useful exchange of views and for a better knowledge of the International Committee's work in this part of the world.

ASIA

Far East and South East Asia

In this vast region, which contains almost half the population of the world, the ICRC carried out various but not extensive activities in 1958. Most of the work undertaken was connected with the after-effects of the Second World War or armed conflicts which have occurred since then in this part of the world.

Compensation for former prisoners of war in Japanese hands. — Article 16 of the Peace Treaty between Japan and the Allies stipulates that former Allied prisoners of war in Japanese hands are entitled to compensation for the hardships suffered during their captivity. The ICRC, which was entrusted with the task of determining the portion of the funds received from the Japanese Government to be allocated to each of the Allied Powers, made a first distribution of funds in 1956 in all the countries which had submitted complete lists of former prisoners.

In 1958, the International Committee continued the checking operations undertaken in the Philippines to enable the National Society to establish a complete list of beneficiaries in this country. By the end of the year, the registration formalities were practically finished in the Philippines and United States (where former Philippine prisoners of war who emigrated to the USA were able to register applications for compensation with the American Red Cross).

Japan and Korea

The representations made previously by the ICRC in behalf of persons detained or interned in Japan and the Republic of Korea (South Korea) led to some positive results in 1958. On December 31, 1957, the Governments in Tokyo and Seoul signed an agreement relating to various questions outstanding between the two countries, in particular the situation of Koreans interned in Omura camp (Japan) and Japanese fishermen held in Pusan (Republic of Korea). The agreement resulted in the release of a number of Koreans in Japan and the repatriation of those who wished to return to the Republic of Korea. Further, in the early months of the year, 922 Japanese fishermen held in Pusan were repatriated to Japan.

A number of Koreans are still, however, interned in Japan and the International Committee's delegate in Tokyo, Mr. H. Angst, continued his visits to Omura camp. About a hundred internees in the camp wished to go to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea). The delegate distributed a cash donation of 2,500 dollars from the Red Cross of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which was shared equally without distinction between all Koreans interned in Omura camp to enable them to purchase extra food and small comforts.

In July, the internees who had been detained for over three years were released on parole. The matter of the repatriation of those who had expressed the wish to proceed to North Korea still remained in abeyance.

On October 23, Mr. Angst, accompanied by Mr. Inoue and Mr. Kikigawa of the Japanese Red Cross, visited the Kawasaki Emigration Centre, where 52 persons of various nationalities were interned. He returned to Omura camp at Christmas to distribute relief supplies and gifts to the internees. The ICRC also opened various enquiries in this part of the Far East with a view to tracing persons who disappeared during the war and the subsequent events. These searches were made in Japan, the two Republics of Korea and the People's Republic of China.

Viet Nam

During his mission in the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, from January 1955 to January 1957, Mr. A. Durand, delegate of the ICRC,

was approached on the matter of former military personnel (not French citizens), referred to by the local authorities as "ralliés" who had served in the Foreign Legion. A number of these "ralliés" had asked to be repatriated and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam had stated that it was willing to assist them in the matter. The Government requested the ICRC to organise the repatriation of those whose countries had no diplomatic or consular representations in Hanoi. The International Committee undertook this task in the same way and the same spirit as its action for the reuniting of families in other countries. First of all, it had to obtain the assurance of the authorities of the country of destination that the former legionaries would not be arrested and imprisoned on their arrival in their country of origin. Once this assurance had been given, the first of the "ralliés" were embarked, at the expense of the Hanoi Government, on vessels sailing to Hong Kong.

The former legionaries thus repatriated were of various European nationalities and mostly Italians. By the end of 1958 the operations were well advanced and there remained in North Viet Nam a last and small group of persons to be repatriated.

Indonesia

Towards the end of 1957 many Dutch nationals in Indonesia were obliged to leave the country. The ICRC sent a delegate, Mr. A. Durand, to Djakarta, to ascertain the conditions in which the departures could take place and, in conjunction with the Indonesian Red Cross, to assist if necessary the persons concerned at the time of their departure.

Mr. Durand arrived in Djakarta early in January and visited various ports in Indonesia where Dutch nationals were on the point of embarking, i.e. Tandjung Priok (the port of Djakarta), Surabaya and Semarang (Java), Macassar (Southern Celebes), Medan and Palenbang (Sumatra). He noted at all these embarkation ports the useful part played by the Indonesian Junior Red Cross units, which helped the disabled and looked after young children. No hitch occurred in the embarkation operations, but the disturbances which broke out in Sumatra from February 15 onwards delayed the evacuation of Dutch nationals from the Padang (Central Sumatra) area, which was being subjected to a blockade by the Government fleet. Some were able to reach the East coast of the island

by their own means and to proceed to Medan (Northern Sumatra) and Singapore. The Indonesian Red Cross could not remain inactive and as soon as the fighting ceased it sent relief teams to help with the transport of persons who wished to be evacuated from the district.

Early in May, Mr. Durand went to Padang and from there to Indarung, where he got in touch with a number of Dutch nationals whose evacuation had not until then been possible. With the agreement of the Indonesian authorities, he helped them to find the means of transport they required.

A little later hostilities were resumed in Northern Celebes. As the ports in this region were being bombed by the rebel forces, further evacuations had to be undertaken, this time in behalf of the families of the employees of the Shell Petroleum Works at Balikpapan and Tarakan (Borneo). The Indonesian Red Cross took part in these evacuations by accompanying to Djakarta a vessel carrying 300 women and children, mostly Dutch nationals.

By the end of June nearly all Dutch nationals in Indonesia had left the country to return to the Netherlands. Shortly afterwards, Mr. Durand left in his turn, having accomplished his task in the best possible conditions. In order to assist the numerous civilian victims of the disturbances, the ICRC made available to the Indonesian Red Cross, relief supplies stated to be necessary consisting of 15 tons of soap, 10,000 metres of textiles and 6,000 tins of sweetened condensed milk, as a contribution towards this Society's relief action on behalf of the victims ¹.

Ceylon

At the end of May, disturbances occurred in Ceylon between the Cingalese population and the Tamils from Southern India. In July, the delegate of the International Committee, Mr. A. Durand, arrived in Colombo and got in touch with the Red Cross Society and the authorities in Ceylon. He visited refugee camps in the Jaffna area and handed over the International Committee's gift of 15,000 Swiss francs towards the relief action undertaken by the Ceylon Red Cross for the assistance

¹ These relief supplies reached Indonesia in the early months of 1959.

and resettlement of the refugees. The gift was used for the purchase of foodstuffs, soap and clothing material.

EUROPE

Hungary

During the events in 1956, a large delegation was set up in Budapest, which was withdrawn in 1957. Since then, contacts with the Hungarian Red Cross and the Hungarian authorities have been maintained by temporary missions sent to that country. The three missions sent by the ICRC to Hungary in 1958 dealt with the following matters:

a) Winding up of the relief action (1956-1957)

The International Committee's representatives have continued to visit the hospitals to which equipment was made available under the medico-social programme started early in 1957. They noted that the gifts had arrived safely and that the setting up of the last equipment delivered would soon be finished. The Hungarian doctors expressed great appreciation of the apparatus already in use. The checking of the supplies delivered was carried out in the same manner as for the previous year: the doctors in charge of the hospitals signed vouchers which were sent through the Hungarian Red Cross to the ICRC which transmitted them to the donors. The delegates of the ICRC also examined the use made by the Hungarian Red Cross of various relief funds which served for making hospital mattresses and equipping auxiliary medical teams.

b) Manufacture of artificial limbs

Following the programme established in 1957, the International Committee supplied two machines which will enable immediate improvement to be made in the output of artificial limbs by the old workshop until the new workshop is opened¹. These machines were purchased with the balance of the funds donated for Hungary by National Red Cross Societies.

¹ See Annual Report for 1957, pp. 13-18.