



INTERNATIONAL
COMMITTEE
OF THE
RED CROSS

GENEVA



ANNUAL REPORT 1980

362.191

563

(1980)

(Engl.)

MIDDLE EAST

In 1980, owing to the Israelo-Arab conflict and the internal Lebanese conflict, the ICRC has maintained its delegations in Egypt, Israel and the occupied territories, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.

In addition to continuing its activities in Iran on behalf of political detainees, the ICRC had to begin a welfare and assistance campaign in this country and in Iraq to help civilian and military victims of the conflict between these two States. In order to do this, it set up a delegation in Baghdad and reinforced its existing organization in Teheran.

Finally, at the end of the year, the ICRC had occasion to carry out a mission in the Yemen Arab Republic in connection with problems of protection.

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In 1980, the total value of material assistance and medical relief supplied or dispatched by the ICRC to the Middle East amounted to 8.1 million Swiss francs (see Table, page 58).

Missions by the President

From 27 January to 6 February, Mr. Alexandre Hay, the President of the ICRC, accompanied by the head of the Financing Division and the regional delegate for the Arabian peninsula and North Africa, carried out a mission which took him successively to Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the Sultanate of Oman and the United Arab Emirates.

Apart from the fact that it constituted the first official visit undertaken by a President of the ICRC to this part of the world, this tour enabled the various activities of the ICRC throughout the world, and more particularly in the Middle East, to be explained in detail to the Sovereigns and high-ranking dignitaries of the countries visited, as well as to representatives of the National Societies in Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar. In addition, it provided the opportunity to expose certain problems confronting the ICRC, particularly its ever-greater financial needs owing to its numerous commitments in situations of conflict.

In response to the invitation of the Libyan authorities, Mr. Hay, accompanied by the delegate-general for the Middle East and the head of the Financing Division, visited Tripoli from 7 to 9 July where he was received by Colonel Moammar Kadhafi, by the President of the People's Council (Prime Minister) and by the Ministers of Health and the Economy. In the course of lengthy and far-ranging conversations, he described to them the activities of the ICRC throughout the world. The authorities, as well as senior members of the

Libyan Red Crescent, showed keen interest and promised their support for the ICRC action. Following this visit, the representative of the Libyan Permanent Mission in Geneva handed the ICRC, on 10 October, the first annual contribution from his government as well as a non-recurring gift of one million dollars.

Conflict between Iraq and Iran

Shortly after the outbreak of hostilities between Iraq and Iran, the ICRC appealed to both sides, through the intermediary of their permanent Missions in Geneva, on 23 September, to honour their obligations under the four Geneva Conventions of 1949. In particular, the ICRC asked the two governments concerned for the wounded, sick, prisoners of war and civilians to be protected and treated humanely and for hospitals and hospital units to be respected. In addition, it stated that it was ready to assume the tasks that fell to it in such a situation by virtue of the Geneva Conventions, notably concerning military and civilian prisoners, displaced persons, and its role of neutral intermediary between the belligerents for all humanitarian questions.

On 26 September, the ICRC was authorized to send delegates to Iraq. Arriving in Baghdad two days later, these delegates immediately embarked on a preliminary mission of assessment in the region of Kirkouk, visiting hospitals in particular. They also had various discussions with representatives of the authorities and senior members of the Iraqi Red Crescent in order to establish the procedure for visits to Iranian prisoners of war in Iraqi hands. These visits actually began on 10 October.

In Iran, where the ICRC already had a delegation, steps were taken to obtain access to Iraqi prisoners of war. This authorization was obtained on 21 October and visits started on the 22nd.

In order to deal with its new tasks, the ICRC had to set up a delegation in Iraq and reinforce the one in Teheran. By the end of October this had been achieved and there were 8 delegates in Teheran and 7 in Baghdad.

Appeal for funds

To obtain the necessary funds to finance its action, the ICRC launched an appeal on 9 December to a number of governments and National Societies, calling for 2.5 million Swiss francs and covering the period from 1 November 1980 to 31 March 1981.

Activities in Iraq

Protection

Between 10 October and 31 December, ICRC delegates carried out about a dozen visits to approximately 1,500 Iranian prisoners of war held in four detention centres (including two hospitals) and talked without witnesses to the prisoners of war of their choice.

The ICRC also made approaches to the Iraqi authorities with a view to obtaining access to all camps where Iranian prisoners of war were held. By the end of 1980, these efforts had not produced any results. The delegation in Baghdad also requested permission to visit the Iranian Minister of Oil and representatives of the Iranian Red Crescent, captured in October. Here again, no results were obtained.

At the same time, ICRC delegates approached the authorities with a view to visiting the occupied territories to assess the situation of the civilians affected by the fighting. Authorization having been granted, visits were made in December to the localities of Qasr-Shirin, Mehran, Korramshahr and Shalemjeh.

Medical activities

A doctor from the ICRC took part in each visit carried out by the delegates in Iranian military hospitals and prisoner of war camps. A list of the severely wounded and dangerously ill was drawn up and submitted to the authorities with a view to their repatriation.

More generally, regular contacts concerning the medical situation were maintained with the National Society, whose President is the Minister of Health.

Tracing Agency

The activities of the Agency in Iraq consisted mainly of listing the names of Iranian prisoners of war visited by the ICRC, making out captivity cards and transmitting family messages—delivered by delegates during visits to places of detention—in order to enable prisoners to communicate with their families.

As regards the tracing of persons captured or reported missing, families were able to submit requests for inquiries to the ICRC through the Tracing Bureau of the Iraqi Red Crescent or through a governmental body, the "Permanent Committee for War Victims".

In 1980, 339 requests for inquiries were received by the Tracing Agency, 50 of which had positive results and 2 negative. Out of a total of 3,023 family messages received, 2,793 had been transmitted to their addressees by the end of the year.

Activities in Iran

Shortly before the outbreak of hostilities between Iraq and Iran, the delegate-general for the Middle East and the regional

delegate carried out a mission to Iran, starting on 4 September, during which they met representatives of the civilian and military authorities, as well as senior members of the Iranian Red Crescent. On 17 September, they were received by the President of the Republic, Mr. Aboulhasan Banisadr, with whom they took stock of the activities of the ICRC in Iran, especially in connection with visits to political detainees (see below). Regarding the situation at the Iraqi-Iranian frontier, the delegates reminded the President of the treaty obligations of Iran in case of armed conflict and the role incumbent on the ICRC.

Protection

Begun on 22 October, in a prison in Teheran, visits by the ICRC to Iraqi prisoners of war in Iranian hands were subsequently extended to other places (including three hospitals) in and near the capital. At the end of these visits, the delegates requested the transfer of detainees to prisoner of war camps in accordance with treaty provisions. In all, some 600 Iraqi prisoners of war were seen by the end of the year.

Assistance

From the outset of the conflict, the ICRC offered to assist the victims. These offers were declined by the President of the Iranian Red Crescent. Assistance was therefore limited to the sending of three tons of medicines and five tons of dried milk.

Tracing Agency

In close co-operation with the Iranian Red Crescent, the Tracing Agency of the ICRC in Iran handled the transmission of captivity cards and family messages from Iranian prisoners of war visited in Iraq. In addition, it collected and dispatched approximately 1,330 messages written by Iraqi prisoners of war, and it dealt with some 500 requests for news of civilian or military persons reported missing.

Iran

Apart from the activities it developed as a result of the Iraqi-Iranian conflict, the delegation in Teheran carried on with its protection action on behalf of political detainees throughout the year. It was also concerned with the fate of the victims of events in Kurdistan, as well as that of the American hostages and certain religious minorities.

Protection

VISITS TO PLACES OF DETENTION IN TEHERAN AND THE PROVINCES. — Following the approaches made in 1979 to the civilian and religious authorities for permission to continue its action of protection for persons arrested in

connection with the events, the ICRC received a reply from the Iranian government that was in principle positive. In consequence, visits began on 24 January 1980, first of all in Teheran and in February in two towns in the provinces. Later, between June and September, delegates visited eight places of detention outside the capital and, in November, went again to the prison of Evin in Teheran.

Some 3,300 political detainees were visited by the ICRC in 1980.

REPORTS ON VISITS BY THE ICRC. — Following the publication in the press by the Iranian authorities of extracts from one of the general reports on visits carried out in April and May 1977 to Iranian places of detention, the ICRC, applying the principles that guide it in matters of this kind, decided to make all reports available to the public. In a press release which appeared on 9 January 1980, it reiterated that

its delegates' findings in places of detention were recorded in confidential reports intended only for the detention authorities. Should this confidential character not be respected and the detaining authorities publish incomplete versions of its reports, the ICRC reserves the right to publish such reports in full.

VISIT TO THE AMERICAN HOSTAGES. — On 14 April, two ICRC delegates—one being a doctor sent from Geneva—visited the hostages held in the American Embassy in Teheran.

This visit made it possible both to establish the identity of all the hostages (a question that had hitherto remained vague) and to ascertain the conditions in which the hostages were being detained, to bring them moral support and, above all, to enable their relatives to hear from them. The hostages were able to write Red Cross messages which were conveyed to their families by the ICRC.



Visit to Iranian prisoners of war in Iraq



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MIDDLE EAST

In 1981, the ICRC had seven delegations in the Middle East, in Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel and the occupied territories, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. Its activities were connected mainly with the war between Iraq and Iran, the conflict between Israel and the Arab countries and the Lebanese conflict. In addition, the ICRC continued its protection tasks in Jordan, the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. It was also active on behalf of persons detained in connection with events inside Iran.

In 1981, the total value of material assistance and medical relief supplied or dispatched by the ICRC to the Middle East amounted to 7.8 million Swiss francs (see Table, p. 54).

Conflict between Iraq and Iran

In connection with the hostilities between Iraq and Iran, the ICRC continued discharging the tasks falling to it under the Third and Fourth Geneva Conventions, namely visits to some 10,000 prisoners of war and assistance to the civilian population in the occupied territories and to persons displaced by the fighting. At times, however, difficulties arose, and the ICRC had to insist that both sides more closely honour their obligations under the Conventions, to which end it recommended various improvements in keeping with the provisions of international humanitarian law.

To carry out its numerous activities, the ICRC had to strengthen its delegations in Baghdad and Teheran, where staff was increased from 7 and 8, respectively, in 1980 to 11 and 12 (not counting locally recruited personnel), including three medical delegates and several specialists from the Central Tracing Agency.

Repatriations

After months of negotiations, 62 Iraqi prisoners of war and 102 Iranian prisoners of war and civilians were repatriated under the auspices of the ICRC, in conformity with Article 110 of the Third Convention. All of them were seriously wounded or sick persons whose health required their repatriation, which was organized in three airlifts between Teheran and Baghdad, via Larnaca airport (Cyprus), on 16 June, 25 August and 15 December.

On its first two flights, the plane chartered by the ICRC conveyed from Geneva to Teheran 8.5 tons of emergency

relief (tents, blankets, medicaments and sugar) provided to the Iranian Red Crescent by the Swiss Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies, for the victims of the Golbaf earthquake.

Missions by the President

In 1981, the President of the ICRC, Mr. Alexandre Hay, and the delegate-general for the Middle East, Mr. Jean Hoefliger, made several journeys to Iraq and Iran.

From 29 March to 4 April, President Hay was in Iraq, where he had discussions with the Vice-Prime Minister, Mr. Tarek Aziz, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Saadoun Hammadi. Mr. Hay laid special emphasis on Iraq's obligation to honour its commitments under the Conventions, particularly the Third and Fourth Geneva Conventions relative to the treatment of prisoners of war and the protection of civilian persons in time of war. Both ministers assured Mr. Hay that their Government had the firm intention to discharge these obligations, especially in granting the ICRC rapid access to all protected persons.

During his second visit to Iraq, from 18 to 23 October, President Hay met Mr. Tarek Aziz once again, and the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Al Yassin. He expressed the ICRC's satisfaction at the opening of a third prisoner-of-war camp and the improvement of detention conditions in the POW camp he himself had visited in the course of his previous mission. Mr. Hay nevertheless had to raise again the main problems still facing ICRC delegates and remind the Iraqi authorities of their obligations under the Conventions (access to all prisoners of war, separation of civilian and military prisoners in the camps, unilateral repatriation of civilians and respect for treaty provisions on detention conditions).

From 21 to 26 June, Mr. Hay and Mr. Hoefliger were in Iran, where they met the Prime Minister, Mr. Ali Rajai, the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Hachemi, the President of the Islamic Party and of the Supreme Court, Ayatollah Beheshti, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, General Fallahi, the Attorney General of the Islamic Revolutionary Courts, Ayatollah Qodoussi, and the President of the National Assembly, Mr. Rafsanjani. This journey was a follow-up to Mr. Hay's previous mission in Iraq. Discussions were held on the ICRC's activities to protect the victims of armed conflicts and its visits to persons detained in connection with events in Iran.

Appeal for funds

To gather the necessary funds for its activities, the ICRC appealed on 16 June to a number of governments and National Societies for 4,350,000 Swiss francs to cover the period from 1 April to 31 December 1981. Despite this appeal, the shortfall in December unfortunately amounted to 772,337 Swiss francs; a reminder emphasizing the gravity of the financial situation was issued at the end of the year.

Ships blocked on the Shatt al Arab

In October 1980 the ICRC had been approached by the Iraqi authorities, which requested its assistance to evacuate the numerous merchant ships blocked on the Shatt al Arab after the outbreak of hostilities.

The ICRC then made an attempt to negotiate a ceasefire out of concern for the crews. When all of them had finally been evacuated by other means, the ICRC considered that the removal of the ships did not lie within its competence; besides, almost all the vessels had managed to leave the dangerous area. At the beginning of 1981, representatives of the United Nations asked the ICRC to intervene, because the use of the Red Cross emblem had been envisaged in the negotiations between the United Nations and the parties involved in the conflict. In a memorandum to the parties concerned, the ICRC explained its position and the conditions on which it might lend its support for such an operation. At the end of the year, however, the problem had still not been solved.

Activities in Iraq

Protection

Once a month, ICRC delegates in Iraq visited the Iranian prisoners of war. By the end of 1981, they had seen some 2,600 prisoners detained in three camps (Ramadi, Mosul and the new camp opened at Anbar in October) and the military hospitals. A large number of prisoners were examined by the ICRC medical delegate, who drew up lists of the sick and wounded qualifying for immediate repatriation in accordance with the provisions of the Third Convention.

Throughout 1981, the ICRC made repeated efforts to gain access to all Iranian prisoners of war. The opening of a third prisoner-of-war camp at Anbar in October only very slightly improved the situation, and in the course of his second mission, President Hay expressed the hope that the process thus initiated would continue. At the end of 1981, the problem had still not been settled.

The ICRC moreover regularly requested the Iraqi authorities to bring detention conditions into conformity with the provisions of the Geneva Conventions.

The ICRC also drew the Iraqi Government's attention to the problem of the many Iranian civilians detained in POW camps and to its obligations, under the Conventions, to provide for the separate internment of prisoners of war and civilians, and for the latter's subsequent release and repatriation. Further to President Hay's second mission in October, the Iraqi authorities agreed to the unilateral repatriation of 37 civilians, who returned to Iran on 15 December.

Visits to the occupied territories

At the beginning of February, ICRC delegates went to the Khorramshahr area, which had been visited for the first time in December 1980. They went to Shalamjeh in April, where they visited the medical dispensary and contacted the Committee provisionally in charge of the town administration. They also made several journeys to Qasr-e Shirin and Mehran. Since April 1981, however, the delegates have no longer been authorized to visit either Khorramshahr or Shalamjeh.

Tracing Agency

The main tasks of the Tracing Agency in Iraq consisted in the registration of Iranian prisoners of war visited by the ICRC, the drawing up of capture cards and the transmission of family message forms provided by the delegates visiting places of detention to enable the captives to communicate with their families.

Relatives of persons captured or reported missing could submit enquiry requests to the ICRC through the Iraqi Red Crescent tracing office or through a government agency, the Standing Committee for War Victims.

In 1981, 7,349 enquiry requests were received by the Tracing Agency, which transmitted 148,473 family messages.

Activities in Iran

Protection

Up to the end of August, ICRC delegates regularly visited Iraqi prisoners of war in Iran. They then had to suspend their activities for two months, owing to difficulties they had in persuading the authorities to let them carry out their visits according to customary ICRC procedure, which includes

interviews without witness. Not before October, when the delegate-general returned to Iran and discussed the matter with the new Prime Minister, Mr. Mahdavi-Kani, and the new Commander-in-Chief of the Army, General Zahir-Nejad, was the ICRC able to resume its regular visits to the Iraqi prisoners of war.

Unfortunately, as from 25 November, the delegates once again had difficulty in carrying out their protection activities. Negotiations were still underway at the end of 1981, so that visits to POW camps might be resumed as quickly as possible, in accordance with customary ICRC procedure. During the period of suspension, the delegates nevertheless continued registering prisoners of war in the camps.

At the end of 1981, the ICRC had visited some 7,000 Iraqi prisoners of war in three places of detention and the military hospitals. Relief distributed during the visits (pyjamas, underwear and standard parcels) was evaluated at 182,000 Swiss francs.

In response to the Teheran delegation's repeated requests that all prisoners be transferred to POW camps in conformity with the provisions of the Conventions, the Iranian military authorities set up a new camp at Parandak, to which almost two thirds of all prisoners of war visited in Iran had been transferred by the end of June 1981. In July, when a second camp was opened at Heshmatiyeh, all Iraqi prisoners of war had been transferred to camps in conformity with Article 22 of the Third Convention.

Visits to displaced persons

In February and March, ICRC delegates visited several centres for displaced persons in the eastern province of Khorasan. Thousands of civilians fleeing the fighting in the western part of the country had sought refuge in these centres, where they were cared for by the Ministry of the Interior, which co-ordinates assistance activities discharged by the Iranian Red Crescent and organizations run by other ministries.

In the course of surveys carried out in other provinces, the ICRC delegates assessed the situation of persons displaced by the conflict, particularly at Tabriz, in the Ahwaz area and near Kerman, which a delegate visited on 14 and 15 June after the Golbaf earthquake.

These surveys showed that ICRC aid was not required in the displaced persons' camps the delegates had visited.

In response to a request for assistance from the Iranian authorities in October, three ICRC delegates, including a physician, went with a representative of the Iranian Foundation for War Victims to four provinces (Esfahan, Fars, Khuzistan and Ilam), where some 120,000 displaced families had been gathered under the responsibility of the Foundation. After this survey, the ICRC contacted various National Societies to collect warm clothing to be given at the beginning of 1982 to some 130,000 children in the Ilam and Esfahan provinces. In addition, almost two tons of medications were sent to Iran for the displaced population.

Tracing Agency

In close co-operation with the Iranian Red Crescent, one of whose tasks is to distribute Red Cross messages to families inside Iran, the Teheran Tracing Agency office transmitted 178,066 messages between Iranian prisoners of war in Iraq and their families. It received 2,874 inquiries concerning civilians or soldiers reported missing.

In addition to its work in connection with the conflict between Iraq and Iran, the Teheran Tracing Agency office continued its protection activities for political detainees (see below).

Iran

Beside its tasks linked to the war opposing Iraq and Iran, the Teheran delegation continued protecting persons detained as a result of events inside Iran. It was also concerned with the victims of incidents in Kurdistan and with various religious minorities.

Visits to places of detention in Teheran and the provinces

Up to 20 June 1981, ICRC delegates regularly visited persons detained in Evin Prison, in Teheran.

Visits to places of detention in the provinces, which had been suspended since the outbreak of the conflict with Iraq, were resumed on 17 February at Mashad, and then successively at Tabriz, Ardebil and Gezel-Hasar. The steps taken by the ICRC, particularly during the delegate-general's mission from 12 to 18 March, led, in April, to the Minister of the Interior giving the ICRC his written permission to visit persons detained by the Islamic Revolutionary Committees. On 15 April, the ICRC was also authorized to visit police prisons.

Unfortunately, from 20 June, although the Iranian authorities did not go as far as to call in question the ICRC's activity in the country, the delegates were denied access first to Evin Prison and subsequently to various other places of detention. Visits could still be carried on in some 20 places of detention in the provinces, for example in Iranian Kurdistan, Kermanshah and Sanandaj. As from 13 September, all ICRC activities in aid of political detainees were suspended, since the delegates' authorization to visit places of detention was not renewed. In the course of his mission at the beginning of October, the delegate-general discussed this problem with the Attorney General of the Islamic Revolutionary Courts, Hodjatoleslam Moussavi Tabrizi. At the end of the year, however, the situation had still not improved.

During the year, 3,098 political detainees were visited by ICRC delegates in 7 prisons and 31 Revolutionary Commit-

tees, out of some 300 places of detention accessible to the ICRC in Teheran and the provinces.

Israel and the occupied territories

In 1981 the ICRC continued its activities in Israel and the occupied territories, based mainly on the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the protection of civilians. It must be mentioned that the ICRC considers that the conditions for the application of the Fourth Convention are fulfilled in the conflict opposing Israel and the Arab countries, whereas the Israeli authorities maintain that the Fourth Convention is not legally applicable, but declare that they are in fact willing to comply with it. Regarding East Jerusalem and the occupied Golan territory, the ICRC tries to ensure that their residents are not deprived of the benefit of the Convention and that their inalienable rights in the meaning of Article 47 are respected.

Throughout the year the 16 members of the Tel Aviv delegation and sub-delegations in Jerusalem and Gaza regularly visited security detainees under interrogation, those awaiting trial and convicted prisoners; they also organized repatriations and transfers across the demarcation lines, intervened in cases of houses' being destroyed and other violations of the Fourth Convention, transmitted family messages and generally assisted protected persons.

Protection

The ICRC continued protecting persons from the occupied territories and from Arab countries detained in Israel or in the occupied territories. Its delegates had interviews with-out witnesses with security detainees under interrogation, to whom the ICRC has had access since 1978, and with other categories of detainees (sentenced prisoners, those awaiting trial and persons in administrative detention).

DETAINEES UNDER INTERROGATION. – In 1981, ICRC delegates carried out 2,700 visits to 1,367 detainees under interrogation: 1,363 visits on the West Bank and 1,337 in the Gaza Strip.

Under the terms of the agreements concluded with the Israeli authorities the ICRC is entitled to have access to detainees under interrogation arrested on security grounds, starting from the fourteenth day after their arrest, and subsequently once every fortnight during their period of interrogation. In 1981, visiting procedures were not changed in any way compared with the previous year.

OTHER DETAINEES. – Simultaneously, the ICRC continued visiting other detainees, most of them arrested for security reasons. The delegates saw some 3,000 detainees in 16 places of detention in Israel and the occupied territories.

Generally, each prison was visited once every three months and, as is the custom, reports were made on these visits and sent to the detaining power and to the countries of origin of the detainees. Since 1967, the ICRC has regularly approached the Israeli authorities to obtain an improvement in detention conditions. Overcrowding is still the ICRC's main concern, but some progress has been achieved in other fields, since detention conditions for security detainees in prisons in the occupied territories – much stricter than conditions for prisoners held in Israel – are being progressively modified in accordance with ICRC recommendations. From 1 June, for example, the food provided in both categories of prisons was standardized and in July, the frequency of family visits to detainees was raised from one to two per month.

There was only one administrative detainee left at the end of 1981, five others having been released in October.

MEDICAL ACTIVITIES. – From November to early 1982 a medical delegate undertook a new round of all the main places of detention. Pending the general conclusions to be drawn from these visits, preliminary discussions on the subject were held with the Israeli authorities concerned.

ASSISTANCE TO DETAINEES AND THEIR FAMILIES.

– As before, the ICRC continued providing material assistance to detainees and their families. The detainees received books, periodicals, leisure items, and parcels containing winter and summer clothing. The neediest among them were also given financial help to buy a few things in the prison canteens. In addition, the ICRC paid for dentures, medical trusses and spectacles for a number of detainees.

Thanks to the transport facilities provided by the ICRC, families of detainees were able to visit their relatives in detention once a month; 21,888 people benefited from this travel assistance in 1981.

Aid provided to detainees and their families in 1981 amounted to 494,890 Swiss francs.

LEGAL SAFEGUARDS. – The ICRC continued to help protected persons against whom legal proceedings had been instituted. Since 1973, the Israeli authorities have notified the ICRC of cases being brought before military courts. As in previous years, the ICRC delegation continued its efforts to obtain notifications of trials in good time. In 1981 the ICRC legal delegate in Israel attended 29 hearings of security cases brought before military tribunals in Ramallah, Nablus, Gaza and Lod and before the High Court of Justice in Jerusalem.

The ICRC once again drew the authorities' attention to the fact that defendants are obliged to sign confessions writ-



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who had entered the occupied territories without authorization.

In 1982 the following operations took place under ICRC auspices:

At *ROSHANIKRA* 12 persons were transferred; 11 to Lebanon and 1 to Egypt via Israel.

At *KUNEITRA*, between the occupied territory of the Golan and Damascus, 19 persons detained in southern Lebanon (including one Syrian prisoner of war) were able to return to Syria during the course of four transfer operations.

At the *ALLENBY BRIDGE* 27 persons (prisoners and illegal entrants) were transferred either to Jordan (19 persons) or to the West Bank (8 persons).

Tracing Agency

In this sphere ICRC delegates conducted inquiries to locate missing civilians and military personnel. In 1982 they submitted to the authorities concerned various tracing requests, a large number of which remained unanswered.

Thirty-five requests for inquiries, mainly from civilian internees in the occupied territories who were without news of their families, were transmitted to the Central Tracing Agency in Geneva.

The delegates also arranged the exchange of Red Cross messages and transfers of money between detainees and their families. In 1982, 4,659 messages were delivered to detainees and 9,524 to families in about fifteen Arab countries. All of these activities were carried out in co-operation with ICRC delegations in neighbouring countries and with the assistance of the National Societies of the countries concerned.

FAMILY REUNITING. — In accordance with the procedure established by the Israeli authorities, applications for family reuniting involving entry into the occupied territories must be made directly to those authorities by members of families already living in the occupied territories. It is only in the event of a negative response by the authorities and at the request of the families concerned that the ICRC will consider intervening with the Israeli authorities in individual cases.

In 1982, four cases were submitted (three for the West Bank and one for the Gaza Strip); one was rejected and the other three were still outstanding at the end of the year. Since 1978, 66 applications have been submitted of which 32 were accepted, 29 rejected and 5 still outstanding at the end of 1982.

Food assistance

The ICRC continued its food assistance to needy civilians in the occupied territories. Relief provided by the European Economic Community was distributed, under the supervision of ICRC delegates, by the Israeli Ministry of Social Affairs and with the co-operation of various charitable organizations.

Conflict between Iraq and Iran

In 1982 there were several large-scale military actions in the conflict between Iraq and Iran. At the end of March the Iranians launched a military operation in the region of Suza and Dezful; at the end of May they retook the town of Khorramshahr and, in July, recovered territories which had been occupied by Iraq since the beginning of the war and during attacks in October and November even penetrated into Iraq itself. These developments in the military situation directly affected ICRC activities, particularly with the substantial increase in the number of prisoners of war.

In view of the magnitude of the conflict and the difficulties which the ICRC was still encountering in its endeavours to discharge, in both countries, the functions assigned to it under the Conventions, the heads of delegation in Baghdad and Teheran were on three occasions recalled for consultation at ICRC headquarters in Geneva. The Director for Operational Activities and the delegate-general for the Middle East also carried out missions in both Iraq and Iran. The Director for Operational Activities visited both capitals in October in order to hold discussions with the authorities of the two belligerent countries concerning the difficulties encountered by the ICRC. In Iran he had talks with Hojratolislam Ali Khamenei, President of the Islamic Republic, Hojratolislam Hashemi Rafsanjani, Speaker of the Islamic Parliament, General Zahir Nejad, Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, Mr. Velayati, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and also with the Head of Military Intelligence, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Deputy Minister of the Interior and the President of the Red Crescent of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In Iraq the Director for Operational Activities met the governmental authorities and was received by Mr. Saddam Hussein, President of the Republic. He also had talks with Dr. Saadoun Hammadi, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and an extensive working meeting with the Standing Committee for Victims of the War. In both Teheran and Baghdad, the representative of the ICRC was assured that the two States intended to increase their efforts in the humanitarian sphere and would respect all the provisions of the Geneva Conventions.

Since 1981 a few changes were made in the size of the delegations. In Iraq the number of expatriate staff increased from eleven at the start of the year to seventeen. In Iran the number of staff fluctuated since, in view of the difficulties encountered, half of the delegation members returned to Geneva at the beginning of August. By the end of 1982, however, the delegation once again consisted of 11 members, the same number as at the start of the year. About thirty local employees were working for the ICRC in Iran.

Appeals for funds

In order to finance its activities the ICRC launched two appeals for funds, at six-monthly intervals, for the sum of 5,635,600 francs (covering the 1981 deficit) and 8,890,000 francs respectively. Since there was no improvement in the

financial situation of this specially financed operation, the ICRC convened meetings of representatives of the principal western and Arab donor countries on 10 and 25 November in order to inform them of the increasing deficit and the budgetary estimates for 1983. Nevertheless, the Iraq/Iran operation showed a deficit of almost 6 million francs on 31 December 1982, which was a most abnormal situation for an operation carried out in discharge of the obligations specified in the Geneva Conventions and quite exceptional in the history of the ICRC.

Tracing Agency

The main activities of the Tracing Agency in Iraq and Iran consisted in registering prisoners of war whom the ICRC was able to visit, filling in capture cards, exchanging family messages between prisoners and their relatives, and transmitting tracing requests to the authorities concerned. In 1982 the Tracing Agency conveyed 516,533 family messages and received 23,897 requests for inquiries concerning civilians or military personnel reported missing.

Family visits to prisoners of war

As a neutral intermediary, the ICRC endeavoured to arrange family visits to prisoners of war. To this end, it drafted a memorandum establishing the procedure for such visits. This memorandum was subsequently transmitted to the various parties concerned, namely Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Kuwait, the latter two countries being the proposed places of transit for the families. In May the delegate-general for the Middle East visited Teheran, Baghdad and Kuwait and the delegate-general for Europe travelled to Ankara in order to finalize the procedure and check on preparations for the operation. A final memorandum, in which suggestions and requested amendments were taken into account, was submitted to all the parties at the end of July. The delegate-general for the Arabian Peninsula made two visits to Kuwait to study the requirements for such an operation. However, the difficulties encountered by the delegates in the discharge of their duties under the Geneva Conventions impeded the implementation of this project for family visits.

Activities in Iraq

Protection

As in 1981, ICRC delegates visited Iranian prisoners of war each month in military hospitals, in the three camps at Anbar, Ramadi and Mosul and also in two new camps opened at Mosul during the year. Prisoners captured in the fighting were registered by ICRC delegates until May. Following the mission to Baghdad by the Director for Operational Activities in October, the ICRC delegates were granted access to the

prisoners of war captured during the battles at Basra in July, at Mandali in October, and at Amara in November. The total number of Iranian prisoners of war seen by the ICRC by the end of the year amounted to 5,285, including 2,521 captured during the year.

Most of the prisoners were seen shortly after their capture. Hence, the ICRC continued to feel concern about the fate of captured persons to whom it had not been given access, such as the Iranian Minister of Petroleum. However, at various times during the year ICRC delegates were able to see some of these prisoners, such as four women from the Red Crescent of the Islamic Republic of Iran and 18 Iranian army officers who had been captured at the beginning of the conflict in the autumn of 1980.

ICRC medical delegates made regular visits to prisoners of war in camps and in hospitals where wounded or sick prisoners were being treated. A list of sick or wounded prisoners of war eligible for repatriation on medical grounds under the Third Convention was prepared and submitted to the Iraqi authorities. A Mixed Medical Commission was established towards the end of the year, in accordance with the provisions of that Convention, to examine individual cases with a view to eventual repatriation. Two ICRC medical delegates took part in the work of the Commission which examined 487 prisoners during the month of December and immediately reported dozens of cases which met the requirements for repatriation without delay.

Within the context of its protection activities, the ICRC made regular representations to the Iraqi authorities concerned with a view to ensuring that detention conditions were brought into conformity with the provisions of the Geneva Conventions. Acts of brutality in disciplinary methods, to which several persons had fallen victim in July and November, caused particular concern to the ICRC.

The ICRC also drew the attention of the Iraqi Government to the fate of Iranian civilians, including children and elderly persons, large numbers of whom were detained in prisoner-of-war camps.

Occupied territories and displaced persons

The ICRC was unable to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it under the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the protection of the civilian population. Two types of activity may nevertheless be mentioned.

In April, the ICRC delegates visited the outskirts of Khorramshahr, where they had not been allowed access since April 1981; a month later, on 15 May, the delegates visited the area of Qasr-I-Shirin, to which they had last been in October 1981.

The ICRC delegates also carried out several visits to Iranian Kurd civilians who had sought refuge on Iraqi soil, first near the border at Doura and Sangher, and then further inland, near Ramadi, where they had been displaced. The only result of these visits was a limited exchange of Red Cross messages.

The ICRC was unable to provide protection to the civilian population.

Activities in Iran

Protection

The protection activities of the ICRC delegates with regard to Iraqi prisoners of war suffered various setbacks in 1982.

While negotiations on the resumption of visits to camps, which had been suspended since November 1981, were underway (*see the 1981 Annual Report, p. 48*), the registration of prisoners of war continued at the start of 1982. Once certain problems had been resolved, visits as required by the Third Geneva Convention could be fully carried out with effect from mid-January. Consequently, visits were made to the Parandak and Heshmatiyeh camps, containing some 7,000 prisoners of war, in accordance with a programme agreed with the Iranian authorities concerned, for the first time in January-February and once again in April.

From the beginning of May, the ICRC delegates commenced the registration of newly captured prisoners of war taken during a large-scale operation launched by the Iranian army in the region of Suza and Dezful at the end of March. However, since registration was proceeding too slowly, the President of the ICRC sent a note asking the authorities to make greater endeavours to facilitate the work. After a new suspension of three weeks, registration resumed on 12 June in the hospitals where wounded prisoners of war were being treated, and also in the camps.

While the number of new Iraqi prisoners of war had substantially increased and, according to the Iranian authorities, amounted to about 40,000, the delegates encountered serious difficulties during visits at the end of July and their work had to be discontinued. The head of the delegation and half of the staff were recalled to Geneva and ICRC visits in Iran were suspended. Registrations were resumed after the mission by the Director of Operational Activities at the end of October but they still proceeded too slowly given the number of prisoners to be listed. By the end of the year the problem of these delays had still not been resolved. On 31 December no complete visit, as defined in the Geneva Conventions, had been carried out since April. From the start of the conflict 28,000 Iraqi prisoners of war had been registered but, of these, only 7,316 had received complete visits in accordance with the Conventions, and only in the first part of the year.

As in Iraq, an ICRC medical delegate took part in the visits to prisoners of war. A Mixed Medical Commission was also established in Iran in December and two doctors were sent from Geneva to Iran for that purpose. However, this Commission met only twice and examined only a dozen cases of prisoners who might be eligible for repatriation on medical grounds.

Although it was not possible to register all the prisoners of war, the ICRC decided to provide limited assistance and began the distribution of 40,000 individual parcels containing pyjamas, a hand towel and a bar of soap. This programme alone cost a total of 1,036,610 francs.

Assistance to displaced persons

As noted on page 48 of the 1981 Annual Report, following an evaluation mission in October 1981 in the provinces of Esfahan, Fars, Khuzistan and Ilam where 120,000 displaced families were living, the ICRC contacted various National Societies to collect warm clothing. As a result, more than 100 tons of clothing was distributed. ICRC delegates travelled to the province of Ilam at the end of February to supervise the distribution of this clothing on the occasion of which they visited eight camps for displaced persons. Basic medicines and medical equipment to a value of 65,000 Swiss francs were also supplied to dispensaries in the provinces of Ilam and Esfahan.

The ICRC was also concerned with groups of Iraqi Kurds who had sought refuge on Iranian territory in the neighbourhood of Ziveh (Western Azerbaijan). After their needs had been ascertained during an evaluation mission in August, a convoy of trucks transporting 20 tons of warm clothing and 150 kilos of multivitamines reached Ziveh at the end of October.

Persons detained as a result of the internal situation

In 1982 the ICRC was unable to resume its activities in favour of persons detained as a result of the internal situation. No places of detention were visited either in the capital or in the provinces.

Activities of other ICRC delegations in the Middle East

EGYPT

Following the return to Egypt of the last part of the territory of Sinai occupied by the Israelis, the ICRC delegates based in Cairo made periodic visits to the frontier town of Rafah in order to meet their colleagues stationed in Israel. Questions of common interest, such as Tracing Agency matters, were studied on these occasions. A programme established by the ICRC in 1980 for the distribution of 100 tons of powdered milk to needy persons in Sinai was continued in 1982 and ended, as scheduled, on 31 December. The distribution was carried out by CARE ("Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere") in accordance with ICRC principles.

The delegation continued its visits, in the presence of witnesses, to foreign detainees held in prisons near Cairo. These visits took place solely within the framework of Tracing Agency activities, in the same way as the handling of requests for news, the transmission of family messages, the issue of travel documents, etc., which the Cairo delegation undertook either within the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict, as in previous years, or, with effect from June, in connection with



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MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

For its operations in the Middle East, the ICRC had, as in previous years, seven delegations in that area: in Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel and the occupied territories, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. It also maintained a regional delegation, based in Geneva, for the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa. This part of the world continued to be of concern for the ICRC, in view of the magnitude of the problems encountered, not only because of the war between Iraq and Iran, where the difficulties it had met with had led the ICRC, on 9 May, to appeal to all the States party to the Geneva Conventions, but also because of the problems raised by the Israeli Armed Forces' intervention in Lebanon, by the Lebanese internal conflict and by the Israeli-Arab conflict. The ICRC also continued its protection work in Jordan and the Yemen Arab Republic and sought—for the present, unsuccessfully—to provide protection for people affected by the conflict in the Western Sahara.

The President of the ICRC, Mr. Hay, visited Bahrain from 23 to 25 January, where he attended the Fourteenth Annual Conference of the Arab National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. In March, he undertook a mission to Saudi Arabia, in the company of the Head of the Financing Division and of the regional delegate for the Arabian Peninsula. In Jiddah, the ICRC President had talks with the President of the Islamic Development Bank, Dr. Ahmed Mohammed Ali, and with the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Mr. Habib Chatti, and in Riyadh he met the Secretary-General of the Gulf Co-operation Council, Mr. Abdallah Bishara.

On 19 January, the ICRC President received, at the Geneva headquarters, the Minister for Health of Kuwait, Dr. Abdel-Rahman Abdullah Al-Awadi.

For the year under review, the total value of material assistance and medical relief supplied or despatched to the Middle East amounted to 18.1 million Swiss francs, including 14.5 million Swiss francs for the Lebanon operation alone (see table on page 71).

Conflict between Iraq and Iran

In order to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it by the Geneva Conventions and to try to put an end to the difficulties it had encountered in its activities in connection with this conflict, the ICRC made several important representations during 1983, including the issue on 9 May of an appeal to the States party to the Geneva Conventions.

The situation of the Iranian prisoners of war in Iraq and of the Iraqi prisoners of war in Iran continued to give cause for concern, although very different in degree. Despite the continuance of certain genuine difficulties, the Iraqi authorities persevered in their endeavours to implement the Geneva Conventions. The leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran, however, repeatedly committed breaches of those same Conventions, and the ICRC was consequently obliged to suspend its visits to the prisoner-of-war camps.

ICRC representations and missions from Geneva

As numerous questions relating to the Geneva Conventions, and particularly the protection of prisoners of war, had remained unresolved in both countries, the delegate-general for the Middle East went in February to Baghdad and Teheran to discuss with the authorities the various problems which had been raised in October 1982 by the Director for Operational Activities (see *1982 Annual Report*, p. 64).

In Teheran, the ICRC representative was received by the President of the Islamic Parliament, Hodjatolislam Hachemi Rafsandjani, the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, General Zahir Nejad, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Velayati, and his Deputy-Minister, Mr. Ardebili.

In Baghdad, the delegate-general for the Middle East had talks with Mr. Izzat Ibrahim, Deputy Prime Minister, and Mr. Tariq Aziz, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Appeal - memorandum

As grave breaches of international humanitarian law, witnessed by ICRC delegates, continued to be repeatedly committed in both belligerent countries, even though such violations were of a different nature, the ICRC, unable to obtain the cessation of those violations through confidential approaches, felt it was necessary to issue an appeal on 9 May to all the States party to the Geneva Conventions. In its appeal, the ICRC referred to Article 1 of the Conventions, which places States under the obligation not only to respect but also to *ensure respect* for the Conventions, and urged that every means provided for to ensure respect for international humanitarian law should be put into effect, in particular the designation of protecting powers to represent the belligerents' interests in the enemy country. In a memorandum annexed to the appeal, the ICRC reported on the situation of the prisoners of war in the power of each of the belligerents and cited a

number of grave breaches committed by both parties, such as summary executions of captured soldiers, the abandoning of enemy wounded on the battlefield and the indiscriminate bombardment of towns and villages.

Missions by the President

In view of the unceasing difficulties encountered in the discharge of its mandate (see the sections headed "Prisoners of war" for each of the countries concerned), the ICRC undertook steps at the highest level by sending its President on missions to both countries. So as to pave the way for the President's mission to Teheran, an *aide-mémoire* was transmitted, at the beginning of September, to the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the President of the Islamic Parliament and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, containing a description of the situation with reference to the Third Convention relative to the treatment of prisoners of war, and requesting the authorities to take the necessary measures to ensure the full respect of international humanitarian law. The ICRC President, who was accompanied by the Director for Operational Activities and the delegate-general for the Middle East, stayed in Iran from 24 to 27 September. Mr. Hay met Mr. Ali Khamenei, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Velayati and Mr. Ardebili, the Minister and Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs respectively, and Mr. Dastjerdi, President of the Iranian Red Crescent. The discussions centred mainly on the treatment of the prisoners of war and the conditions required to allow the ICRC to resume its activities on their behalf.

Prior to the ICRC President's mission to Iraq, an *aide-mémoire*, summarizing the main problems encountered in Iraq, was likewise transmitted at the end of September to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. These problems were discussed by the delegate-general for the Middle East with Mr. Tariq Aziz in Baghdad on 2 November. The ICRC President, accompanied by the Director for Operational Activities, flew to Iraq at the end of November; on this occasion, the ICRC representatives had talks with Mr. Izzat Ibrahim Ad-Douri, Vice-Chairman of the Revolutionary Council, and Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Contacts with the States party to the Conventions

Immediately after issuing its appeal at the beginning of May, the ICRC got in touch with representatives of many States party to the Geneva Conventions to draw their attention to the breaches committed by the two belligerents, who were not only imperilling the lives and dignity of many thousand victims of the conflict but also slighting the very essence and fundamental principles of international humanitarian law. The possible appointment of protecting powers was discussed with the diplomatic representatives of the States on various occasions, and also with the authorities whom the ICRC President or members of the International Committee

had the opportunity to meet in the course of their missions in a number of capitals.

Appeal for funds

To obtain the funds required for its activities in Iran and Iraq, the ICRC launched an appeal to donors at the beginning of the year for the sum of 11,307,000 Swiss francs which it estimated it would need to implement its programmes in 1983. As the Iran/Iraq operation had shown a deficit of nearly 6 million francs at 31 December 1982—a totally abnormal situation in an operation governed by the Geneva Conventions, and unprecedented in the entire history of the ICRC—the sum requested in the appeal came to 17,300,000 francs.

The ICRC received, in response to its appeal, a total of only 11,800,000 francs. But, because of the difficulties encountered, it was unable to carry out all the activities planned and in fact spent only 7,439,000 Swiss francs, with the result that the deficit at 31 December 1983 had been reduced to 1,627,000 francs.

Tracing Agency

In the two belligerent countries, the Tracing Agency's work consisted mainly in registering prisoners of war whom the ICRC was able to visit (16,751 Iraqi prisoners of war in the Islamic Republic of Iran and 1,992 Iranian prisoners of war in Iraq), filling in capture cards and exchanging family messages. In 1983, this latter activity increased considerably; no less than 1,147,319 family messages were transmitted through the Tracing Agency between the prisoners of war and their families. In addition, 7,500 inquiries concerning civilians or military personnel reported missing were transmitted to the appropriate authorities.

Repatriations

In 1983, two repatriation operations involving seriously wounded and sick prisoners of war were carried out, the previous repatriation having been completed on 15 December 1981. On 30 April, the ICRC, in its capacity as a neutral intermediary between the parties, took charge of 32 Iraqi prisoners of war handed over by the Iranian authorities to be transferred to Iraq. A second operation took place on 1 May, when 32 Iranian prisoners of war, held by Iraq, were handed over by the ICRC to Iranian representatives. Both operations took place at Ankara Airport (Turkey); all facilities and personnel were made available by the Turkish Red Crescent Society, which also, together with the ICRC, provided the necessary medical care for the prisoners.

Representations concerning bombardments

Throughout 1983, the ICRC was deeply concerned about the indiscriminate bombardment of civilians causing loss of

life and the destruction of civilian property. This violation of international humanitarian law was mentioned in the May memorandum. When the ICRC President went to Iran in September, together with the Director for Operational Activities and the delegate-general for the Middle East, he visited affected areas in Khuzistan, and the regions of Ahwaz, Howeizeh, Abadan and Khorramshahr.

In December, the intensity of the bombardments induced the ICRC to issue an appeal to the belligerents stressing that "civilians must not be the object of attack, nor of reprisals", and urging them "to respect these basic humanitarian rules, everywhere and at all times".

From 21 to 27 December, the Chief Medical Officer of the ICRC led a mission to assess humanitarian needs. The ICRC representatives visited war-affected zones in Kurdistan and Khuzistan but, since the authorities did not indicate any specific needs they were unable to meet, the ICRC finally did not take any particular steps to send assistance.

Child soldiers

In 1983, the ICRC found with consternation that a large number of Iranian children had been killed or captured while taking part in the fighting. Article 77 of the 1977 Protocol I additional to the Geneva Conventions forbids the recruitment of children who have not attained the age of fifteen years and stipulates that they shall not take part in hostilities. Young persons above the age of 15 but who have not attained the age of 18 years must benefit from special measures of protection. These provisions were adopted by consensus by the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law applicable in Armed Conflicts, in 1977, in order to lay down clearly in international humanitarian law a universal moral rule of extraordinary importance.

Personnel

In Iraq, the number of delegation personnel remained stable: about 13 non-local staff and 3 locally recruited employees. In Iran, however, the number varied according to the involuntary fluctuation in its activities: between 12 and 14 non-local staff when work was possible, reduced to three or four persons during months of waiting. Some 35 locally recruited personnel helped throughout the year with the ICRC's work in Iran.

Iraq

Prisoners of war

As in the two previous years, ICRC delegates visited, in 1983, Iranian prisoners of war once a month, in military

hospitals, Anbar camp, Ramadi camp and the three Mosul camps. When a fourth camp was opened at Mosul at the beginning of December, it was immediately visited by the ICRC delegates, and a second visit was carried out in the same month. The ICRC chief medical officer took part in the visits to the Mosul camps in December to assess the situation. Prisoners newly captured in the fighting were regularly registered within a reasonable time by ICRC delegates. The number of Iranian prisoners of war seen by the ICRC by the end of the year had risen to 7,592, including 1,992 newly registered prisoners.

While its delegates were able to see most of the new prisoners shortly after their capture, the ICRC continued to feel concern about the fate of captured persons to whom it had not yet been allowed access (for example the Iranian Minister of Petroleum), most of whom had been taken prisoner at the beginning of the conflict. The ICRC regularly transmitted to the Iraqi authorities lists of several hundred prisoners whose names were known to it but who were kept concealed from it; however, it was finally able to register and visit only a few dozen of them in the camps. This grave problem was raised in the memorandum of 9 May (see above) and by the delegate-general for the Middle East and the ICRC President in the course of their missions.

Within the context of its protection activities, the ICRC felt considerable concern about detention conditions and regularly approached the authorities concerned with requests to ensure full conformity with the provisions of the Geneva Conventions. Specific steps were required in particular to counter occasionally brutal disciplinary measures, besides their condemnation in the May memorandum.

The ICRC also drew the attention of the Iraqi Government to the situation of Iranian civilians, including children and old people, large numbers of whom were detained in prisoner-of-war camps.

Displaced persons

During 1983, improved facilities were granted to the ICRC to fulfil its mandate under the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the protection of the civilian population.

At the beginning of the year, ICRC delegates on three occasions went to see Iranian Kurd civilians, who had at first sought refuge on Iraqi territory and had later been moved in 1982 by the Iraqi authorities to a camp near Ramadi. The only result of those three visits was a limited exchange of Red Cross messages.

However, the Iraqi authorities later authorized the ICRC to visit these civilians in accordance with full ICRC criteria for such visits, in conformity with the Fourth Convention. The first complete visit was carried out in July, allowing an assessment to be made of the living conditions of these displaced persons; the ICRC delegates transmitted a detailed report, containing suggestions for improvements, to the Iraqi authorities concerned. Two more comprehensive visits, conducted in November and December, allowed the delegates

to review their assessment of the situation, which in the meantime had distinctly improved. The Tracing Agency, of course, continued its activities during the visits in the second half of the year.

In 1983, ICRC delegates also obtained access to civilians of Iranian nationality from Arabistan, who had been moved to Iraqi territory in 1982 following the retreat of Iraqi troops back behind the border. (These civilians had been visited by the ICRC in 1982 in Iranian Khuzistan, then occupied by the Iraqi Army.) Two full visits in accordance with ICRC procedure were carried out in July and October to the villages of Al-Sweib and Al-Bubseiri, enabling the ICRC delegates to assess the situation of these protected persons under the terms of the Fourth Convention and to undertake the Tracing Agency's customary activities (transmission of Red Cross messages, inquiries, etc.).

Iran

Prisoners of war

While prison visits proper had been discontinued since 1982 (see 1982 *Annual Report*, p. 65), ICRC delegates, at the beginning of 1983, continued the registration (resumed in October 1982 but progressing far too slowly) of newly captured prisoners of war and the distribution of 40,000 individual parcels, each containing one pair of pyjamas, a towel and a bar of soap. But certain difficulties arose at the end of January and constrained the ICRC delegates to discontinue this activity, too. At the end of February, the mission by the delegate-general for the Middle East culminated in the resumption of activities provided for by the Third Convention. Two teams of delegates were then able to work simultaneously from 23 February to 20 March; the registration of 2,400 new prisoners was thus completed and a complete visit of Karaj camp carried out. The Mixed Medical Commission, which had been set up in 1982 but whose work had been prematurely suspended, also resumed its task and examined 178 cases, 104 of which were recommended for repatriation and submitted to the Iranian authorities.

After the Iranian New Year (end of March), it was not found possible to agree with the authorities on any further work programme and all activities in the camps were once again discontinued. The difficulties encountered were described in the May memorandum and, for the first time, the ICRC publicly drew attention to the ideological and political pressures brought to bear upon the prisoners of war, in violation of the Third Convention.

The ICRC delegation in Teheran was able to resume its activities in June. Its delegates began on 11 June to register the names of prisoners of war who had not yet been seen, and by the end of the month over 12,000 names had been registered. The ICRC, however, was not authorized access to certain categories of prisoners, for example, officers and other prisoners not of Iraqi nationality. Visits to prisoner-of-war

camps, and in particular interviews without witness with prisoners, began towards the end of June; four camps were visited in accordance with ICRC criteria until further grave incidents, in the camps of Mehrabad and Bandar-e-Anzali, put a stop to visits. At the end of July, protection work could no longer be carried out satisfactorily and visits were consequently postponed *sine die*. When, following the Mehrabad camp incidents, an ICRC delegate was expelled by the Iranian authorities, the ICRC issued an official protest.

The ICRC then entered into a discussion with the detaining authorities on a fundamental issue, namely the ideological and political pressures to which the prisoners were being subjected and the incompatibility of these pressures with the Third Convention. Negotiations were undertaken at different levels all through the second half of 1983, in particular during the ICRC President's mission to Teheran in September (see above).

From the end of July to 31 December, the activities of the delegation, whose personnel had been reduced, consisted primarily in forwarding messages from the Iraqi prisoners of war to their families.

In 1983, the ICRC therefore visited, in accordance with its criteria, only some 5,000 prisoners of war, out of a total of 41,052 prisoners registered since the beginning of the conflict (of whom 16,751 were registered in 1983), or the total of 50,000 prisoners of war announced by the Iranian authorities.

Displaced persons

In 1983, the ICRC was unable to provide any assistance for persons displaced because of the conflict or for the groups of Iraqi Kurds who had sought refuge on Iranian territory, all of whom should be considered as protected persons under the Fourth Convention. Although a relief consignment had been forwarded at the end of 1982 to a camp of refugee Iraqi Kurds near Ziveh in Western Azerbaijan (see 1982 *Annual Report*, p. 65), the delegates had not obtained authorization during 1983 to visit the camp to monitor the use of the relief supplies sent and to re-assess these refugees' situation.

Persons detained as a result of the internal situation

In 1983, the ICRC was unable to resume its activities, which had been discontinued in September 1981, in favour of persons detained by the authorities because of the internal situation. No places of detention were visited, either in Teheran or in the provinces.

The ICRC would have been able to visit prisoners held by the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) and to take part in the release and repatriation of a certain number of them, but the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran rejected the offer of services made to them by the ICRC, on the grounds that the latter had no right to concern itself with questions considered to have no relation to the international conflict.



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MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

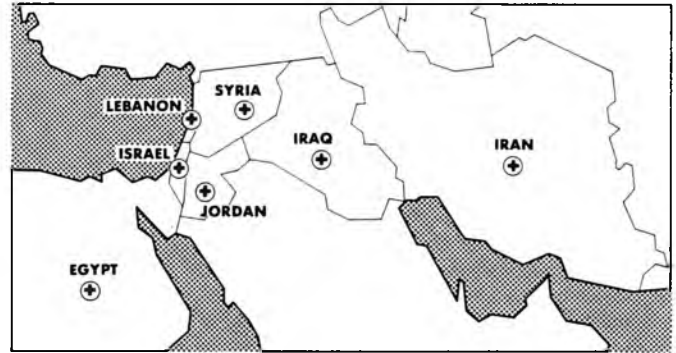
For its operations in the Middle East, the ICRC had, as in previous years, seven delegations in that area: in Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel and the occupied territories, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. It also maintained a regional delegation, based in Geneva, for the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa. In 1984, as in past years, this part of the world was of major concern to the ICRC which, on two occasions, was prompted by the difficulties it encountered in discharging its humanitarian mandate in the war between Iran and Iraq to appeal to all the States party to the Geneva Conventions. The ICRC based its appeals on Article 1 common to the four Geneva Conventions which places the High Contracting Parties under the obligation not only to respect but also to ensure respect for the Conventions in all circumstances. These appeals were made following repeated representations to both belligerent countries, in conformity with ICRC policy. In the absence of tangible lasting results, the ICRC, on 13 February, nine months after a previous appeal, called for the first time in 1984 on the States party to the Conventions to take action in the face of the grave and repeated violations of international humanitarian law committed by Iran and Iraq. On 23 November, in the wake of, among other things, the interruption of its protection activities for Iraqi prisoners, the ICRC made its second appeal of 1984 to the international community asking it to help in putting an end to the violations committed by the belligerents which strike a blow at the very essence of international humanitarian law. In addition, on 5 March the ICRC issued its findings concerning the use in the Iran-Iraq conflict of weapons prohibited by the customary and codified rules of the law of war. On 7 June the ICRC requested the cessation by both belligerents of reprisal and counter-reprisal bombing raids on civilian zones.

In 1984 the ICRC also continued its activities in connection with the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Lebanese conflict. It also resumed its protection of prisoners captured in the Western Sahara conflict and continued its visits to security detainees in Jordan. It was not, however, able to carry out activities for detainees of the same category in other countries of the Middle East and North Africa.

The ICRC's activities in connection with the Iran-Iraq conflict and in Lebanon were financed through donations received in response to special appeals (the ICRC's special budgets) while its other activities in the Middle East were financed by the ordinary budget.

Conflict between Iran and Iraq

In 1984 the ICRC once again met with difficulties in discharging the mandate entrusted to it by the Geneva Conventions, particularly in its activities on behalf of



prisoners of war captured in the Iran-Iraq conflict. At the beginning of the year, visits to Iraqi prisoners of war, which had been suspended at the end of July 1983, had still not been resumed and the delegates were not able to visit all of the Iranian prisoners. Consequently, the ICRC issued an Appeal-memorandum on 13 February calling on all the States party to the Geneva Conventions to aid it in its efforts on behalf of the victims and to raise, in the course of their bilateral or multilateral relations with the two belligerents, the humanitarian question of the prisoners of war and the civilian victims of the Iran-Iraq conflict. On 9 May 1983 the ICRC had already appealed to all the States party to the Geneva Conventions which are under the obligation (Article 1) to respect and to ensure respect for the Conventions (see Annual Report 1983).

In the period from 25 February to 13 May, during which two series of visits were to have been conducted, protection activities on behalf of Iranian prisoners of war were suspended. Visits to Iraqi prisoners of war were resumed on 19 May but were stopped again in October following an incident in the Gorgan camp. As a result, the ICRC issued a second appeal on 23 November urging signatory States to intervene in accordance with Article 1 common to the Conventions so that some 50,000 Iraqi prisoners of war in the Islamic Republic of Iran could be provided with protection.

Overt representations

—In view of the grave and repeated breaches of international humanitarian law committed by both parties to the conflict, placing in jeopardy the very essence and principles of international humanitarian law, the ICRC felt it necessary to make an appeal on 13 February to all the States party to the Geneva Conventions. In this first appeal of 1984 it pointed out that some 50,000 Iraqi prisoners benefited from no protection

OVERT REPRESENTATIONS BY THE ICRC RELATED TO THE IRAQ/IRAN CONFLICT

9 May 1983: first appeal to States party to the Geneva Conventions

13 February 1984: second appeal to States party to the Geneva Conventions

7 March 1984: report on the use of prohibited weapons

7 June 1984: press release on the bombing of Iraqi and Iranian cities

23 November 1984: third appeal to States party to the Geneva Conventions.

in the Islamic Republic of Iran as the ICRC, since the suspension of its visits on 27 July 1983, was no longer able to establish the number, location or identity of the prisoners; to monitor their detention conditions or state of health; to draw up lists of prisoners of war requiring prompt repatriation for medical reasons; or to transmit Red Cross messages between prisoners and their families. Moreover, the ICRC stated in this appeal that some Iraqi prisoners, particularly officers, had been systematically concealed from it during the visits and that serious incidents had taken place in the camps where prisoners were undergoing indoctrination contrary to the ideology of their government. The appeal, while mentioning certain improvements in material conditions and disciplinary measures for the Iranian prisoners of war in Iraq, also pointed out that a large number of Iranian prisoners, some of whom had been captured at the beginning of the conflict, had regularly been concealed during visits by the ICRC. The appeal further pointed out that the Iraqi armed forces' bombardment of Iranian civilian zones constituted a violation of the customary law of war and especially of the essential principle that a distinction must be made between military zones and civilian persons and objects.

—Following an incident on 10 October in Gorgan camp in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the protection activities of the ICRC in this country were suspended. On 23 November, the ICRC President invited the diplomatic representatives of the States party to the Geneva Conventions to meet him at ICRC headquarters where he described to them the situation of some 50,000 Iraqi prisoners of war held in the Islamic Republic of Iran who had recently been deprived of all the protection to which they were entitled under the Geneva Conventions. In addition, he pointed out that these prisoners, who were being subjected to a programme of indoctrination aimed at setting them against their own government, were dividing within the camps into antagonistic groups which violently attacked each other, sometimes with fatal results, as was the case at Gorgan on 10 October. In its appeal of 23 November to the States signatory to the Conventions, the ICRC stated that it was no longer able alone to provide protection for the roughly 50,000 Iraqi prisoners of war and it therefore requested the States party to the Geneva Conventions to support it in the performance of its task and aid it to ensure application of

international humanitarian law, the very essence of which was being undermined.

—After a medical survey conducted in Iran to estimate the need for assistance created by fighting on the Iranian-Iraqi front, the ICRC reiterated publicly on 7 March that the use on the battlefield of substances prohibited by the international law of war was incompatible with humanitarian principles and constituted a violation of the customary and codified rules of this branch of law.

—As in the previous year, indiscriminate bombardment of civilian persons and objects was a cause of great concern to the ICRC. After mentioning the situation on 13 February (see first public appeal of 1984), it issued a further appeal on 7 June following the bombing of the Iranian city of Baneh, which led to a series of reprisals and counter-reprisals directed against the inhabitants of Iranian and Iraqi cities. It called on the belligerents to put an immediate stop to these acts.

Missions from Geneva

In an attempt to resolve the differences and dispel the misunderstandings which had prevented the ICRC since 25 February from carrying out its protection activities in Iraq, the ICRC President, accompanied by the delegate-general for the Middle East, undertook a mission to Baghdad where he met Mr. Tarek Aziz, Vice Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs. Following this meeting, the visits to Iranian prisoners of war were resumed. Mr. Hay, again accompanied by the delegate-general for the Middle East, undertook a second mission to Iraq from 9 to 13 August, in the course of which he again met Mr. Tarek Aziz.

In addition, on 19 May, the delegate-general for the Middle East undertook a mission to Iran, where he supervised the resumption of visits to Iraqi prisoners of war. On 15 December, while on a mission to Iraq, he again met Mr. Tarek Aziz. Following their discussions, the ICRC obtained access to the Iranian prisoners of war captured during the 1984 offensives, a Mixed Medical Commission was appointed to designate those prisoners eligible to be repatriated under Article 109 of the Third Geneva Convention and, finally, the ICRC was allowed to undertake, consistent with the mandate

devolved on it under the Fourth Geneva Convention, an assessment mission to Iraqi Kurdistan.

Repatriations

In 1984, three repatriation operations involving seriously ill or wounded prisoners of war were carried out under the auspices of the ICRC after the desire of each prisoner involved to be returned to his country of origin had been verified during an interview without witness. On 29 January at Ankara Airport, Turkey, the ICRC took charge of 190 Iranian prisoners handed over by representatives of the Iraqi authorities. Acting as a neutral intermediary between the parties to the conflict, the ICRC delegates then handed the released prisoners over to representatives of the Iranian authorities, who repatriated them. Delegates and doctors from the ICRC accompanied the prisoners from Baghdad to Teheran. On 20 October, a similar operation took place involving 100 ill or wounded Iranian prisoners. On 25 October, 72 Iraqi prisoners were repatriated, also via the Turkish capital. All of the personnel and equipment necessary for this operation were supplied by the Turkish authorities and the Turkish Red Crescent, which, together with the ICRC, provided the prisoners with the necessary medical care and oversaw their transfer at Ankara Airport.

In addition, in September the ICRC repatriated the passengers and crew of two Iranian aircraft hijacked to Iraq. The first of these operations took place on 4 September for 189 passengers and 11 crew members, who were returned to Teheran aboard an aircraft chartered by the ICRC. The second took place on 15 September involving 57 passengers and eight crew members. Both operations were carried out at the request of the Iranian authorities, with the consent of the Iraqi authorities and in accordance with the ICRC's policy on hostage situations—the ICRC condemns all acts which violate legal and humanitarian principles. In these matters, as in all others, it is guided solely by the interests of the victims and the desire to help them.

Tracing Agency

In Iran and Iraq, the Tracing Agency continued to register the prisoners of war that the ICRC was able to see in 1984 (28,222 Iraqi prisoners of war in the Islamic Republic of Iran and 9,473 Iranian prisoners of war in Iraq). In addition, 1,733,538 family messages were exchanged between prisoners of war and their families through the Central Tracing Agency and 12,790 enquiries concerning civilians or military personnel reported missing were transmitted to the appropriate authorities. Of these many inquiries there were responses to only 1,319, all of them relating to persons in prisoner-of-war camps.

Personnel

In 1984, the ICRC delegation in Baghdad was made up of 19 expatriate staff and three locally recruited employees. In

Teheran, the delegation numbered between 13 and 15 until November when ICRC activities, with the exception of the tracing, ceased. From that point on, only three expatriate staff remained in Teheran. Thirty-eight locally recruited employees helped throughout the year with the ICRC's work in Iran.

Appeal for Funds

To obtain the funds required for its activities in connection with the conflict between Iran and Iraq, the ICRC launched an appeal to donors at the beginning of the year for the sum of 10,580,000 Swiss francs. Of this, 8,950,800 francs was for 1984 while 1,629,200 was to cover the budget deficit of previous years.

Iraq

Protection

PRISONERS OF WAR.—In 1984, ICRC delegates visited, on five occasions from 1 January to 25 February and from 13 May to 31 December, eight prisoner-of-war camps and four military hospitals, seeing a total of 9,473 Iranian prisoners. Among them were 2,100 new prisoners who were duly registered (some 1,400 prisoners who had been captured at the beginning of the year were not visited for the first time until December). Capture cards supplied by Iraq were forwarded to the Iranian authorities and the Iranian Red Crescent so that the families concerned could be informed. In 1984, the ICRC's conviction that it did not have access to all of the prisoners, particularly those captured at the beginning of the conflict, was strengthened. An ICRC doctor who participated in each visit examined the medical and sanitary conditions in the camps and drew up a list of seriously ill or wounded prisoners eligible for repatriation in accordance with the Third Geneva Convention. This list was forwarded to the authorities. During the visits, the delegates distributed to the prisoners books and leisure items worth 99,000 francs.

CIVILIAN POPULATION.—In 1984 the ICRC was able to discharge the mandate entrusted to it in the Fourth Geneva Convention, especially in Article 143. It had regular access to certain displaced civilians in Iraq entitled to protection under Article 4 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Their treatment is laid down in Article 35 and those immediately following. In January and December, ICRC delegates visited several thousand families from Khuzistan (Arabic-speaking Iranians), who had been transferred in 1983 by the Iraqi armed forces to the Basra region following the Iraqi withdrawal back across the border, then to the Meisan region in mid-1984. In addition, Iranian Kurdish civilians who had sought refuge in Iraq were regularly visited at the Al-Tash camp near Ramadi. In the course of each visit the living conditions of these persons were examined. Family messages were exchanged

between Khuzistanis or Kurds and members of their families still in Iran. The ICRC also endeavoured, at the request of the Iraqi authorities and in co-operation with the diplomatic representatives of certain countries, to find countries willing to accept a number of Iranian citizens who had been regularly visited by the delegates and wished to leave Iraq. Four hundred and eleven family messages were transmitted on behalf of these persons.

Iran

Protection

On 19 May the ICRC resumed its protection of Iraqi prisoners of war; these activities had been suspended since 27 July 1983. In the last half of 1984 visits were made to nine camps and the military hospitals in the Teheran region. In one of the camps, Davudieh, the ICRC did not have access to all of the prisoners. In all, 28,222 Iraqi prisoners were seen in these camps near the capital, 4,443 of them for the first time. The capture cards supplied by Iran were forwarded to Iraq in order to inform the prisoners' families. For these visits, each ICRC team included three delegates, one medical delegate and one tracing delegate.

In early October, the delegates began a tour of the camps in the rest of the country. During their visit to the first, Gorgan, violent clashes broke out between prisoners belonging to different factions. This incident resulted in the death of several prisoners and caused Iran once again to suspend the ICRC's protection activities, which had still not resumed at the end of the year. Following the incident at Gorgan the ICRC called on the detaining authorities to hold an enquiry in accordance with Article 121 of the Third Geneva Convention. The Iranian authorities ignored this request. On 10 October, 35 prisoners injured in the incident (which is reported to have resulted in six deaths) were visited by the ICRC.

Greatly concerned about the plight of some 50,000 Iraqi prisoners left without any protection, the ICRC issued, on 23 November, in accordance with Article 1 common to the four Conventions, an appeal to all the States party to the Geneva Conventions (see above).

In addition, the ICRC forwarded to the Iranian authorities a list of 500 seriously ill or wounded prisoners eligible for repatriation under Article 109 of the Third Geneva Convention. These prisoners, like the 98 Iraqi prisoners whose repatriation had been approved by the Mixed Medical Commission (ICRC-Iran) in 1983, had not been repatriated by the end of the year.

Assistance

In February, the ICRC carried out a survey in civilian zones which had been bombed, after which it provided the Iranian Red Crescent with 7,900 blankets and 210 tents for the victims. In addition, several offers of medical assistance were made to the Iranian authorities, who consistently declined.

Lebanon

The situation in Lebanon continued to be of profound concern to the ICRC in 1984, owing to the intense fighting that took place in February in Beirut and in August in Tripoli, and to the problem of applying the Fourth Geneva Convention in southern Lebanon, under Israeli occupation. During the first half of the year the delegation and the sub-delegations of the ICRC in Lebanon were active essentially in providing assistance. In the second half of the year, thanks to the relative calm that prevailed, they were able to concentrate on their traditional tracing and protection activities for the civilian population and persons under arrest.

In order to assist the victims of the fighting during the first six months of the year, the ICRC had to make appeals, as it had the year before, to the parties to the conflict, notably on 7 February in Beirut, calling on them to respect the Red Cross emblem and agree to cease-fires in order to evacuate the wounded. During this period of fighting, a first-aid worker from the Lebanese Red Cross was killed while attempting to evacuate the wounded.

Since Israeli troops entered Lebanon in 1982, the ICRC has considered the Fourth Geneva Convention to be applicable in the zones under Israeli control for the benefit of the affected population. Israel does not share this view.

The ICRC, alarmed at the consequences (numerous arrests, interrogations, destruction of homes, harassment of the population, confiscations, pressure to collaborate) for the civilian population of the "legal void" prevailing in southern Lebanon, repeatedly reminded the occupying power of its humanitarian obligations and attempted to bring about the application of the Fourth Geneva Convention. A document was presented to the Israeli Prime Minister and the Minister of Defence by the ICRC Director for General Affairs and the delegate-general for the Middle East, who together undertook a mission to Tel Aviv from 28 January to 2 February. In its reply to the ICRC on 28 October, Israel stated that it was unable to accept the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention in southern Lebanon because of the temporary character of its presence there and the lack administrative structures. Moreover, the Israeli authorities denied any responsibility for the acts of the South Lebanon Army.

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Mr. Aubert, ICRC Vice President, on mission to Lebanon from 30 July to 4 August, met, among other persons, the President of the Lebanese Red Cross.

Appeal for Funds

To finance its traditional activities in Lebanon, the ICRC appealed to donors at the beginning of the year for 32,840,000 Swiss francs. During the events of February in Beirut, a special appeal was launched for a further 15 million francs to cover the



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MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

For its operations in the Middle East and North Africa the ICRC had, as in previous years, seven delegations in that area: in Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel and the occupied territories, Jordan, Lebanon (with offices in Beirut, Sidon, Tripoli, Tyre, Jezzine, Ksara and Baalbeck) and Syria. It also maintains a regional delegation, based in Geneva, for the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa.

In 1985, the major part of the ICRC's activities in the Middle East was devoted to visits to Iranian prisoners in Iraq and assistance and protection activities for victims of the war in Lebanon. The ICRC also continued its activities in connection with the Arab-Israeli conflict. In addition, it made visits to Moroccan prisoners detained by the Polisario Front and by Algeria and to security prisoners in Jordan and the Yemen Arab Republic. On the other hand, it was unable to carry out activities on behalf of this category of detainee in other Middle East and North African countries.

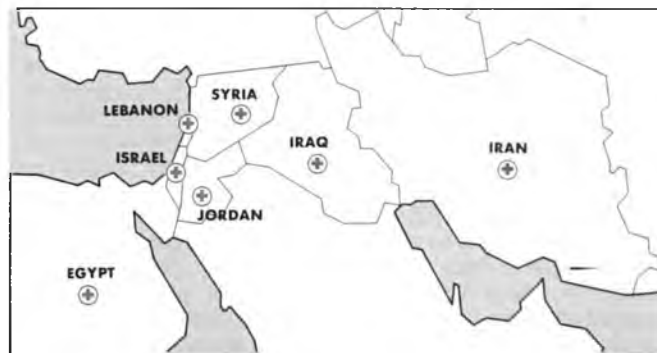
The ICRC's activities in connection with the Iran-Iraq conflict and in Lebanon were financed through donations received in response to special appeals (the ICRC's special budget) while its other activities in the Middle East were financed by the ordinary budget.

CONFLICT BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ

Following the intensification of hostilities between Iran and Iraq in the spring and in view of the escalation of the methods of combat used by the belligerents, the President of the ICRC issued an appeal on 28 May pointing out that the bombardment of civilian zones constitutes one of the gravest violations of international humanitarian law and calling for the termination of such practices. The text of this appeal was delivered to the Permanent Missions of Iran and Iraq in Geneva and made public through the press on the same day.

Repatriation of prisoners of war

In 1985, six prisoner-of-war repatriation operations were carried out under the auspices of the ICRC. Four of them, which took place respectively in May, July, August and September, involved 119 seriously ill or wounded prisoners of war designated by an Iraq-ICRC Mixed Medical Commission. Two others were carried out in October and November, on behalf of a further 72 Iranian prisoners of war. Before each of these operations, the prisoners' desire to return to their countries of origin had been ascertained by the ICRC delegates during interviews without witnesses. These operations were conducted in the following manner: the Iranian



prisoners, accompanied by ICRC delegates and doctors, were conducted from Baghdad to Ankara aboard an Iraqi aircraft. At the airport of the Turkish capital, the authorities and the Turkish Red Crescent provided the facilities and medical personnel necessary for the transfer of the Iranian prisoners, who subsequently departed for Tehran aboard an Iranian aircraft, accompanied by ICRC delegates and Iranian Red Crescent medical personnel from Iran.

Iran, for its part, in March, April, July, October and December, repatriated to Iraq 322 Iraqi prisoners of war with the assistance of the Turkish Red Crescent. Owing to the suspension of its protection activities in Iran, the ICRC was not authorized to supervise these operations. Among the repatriated prisoners of war were 41 Iraqis selected by the Iran-ICRC Mixed Medical Commission during a tour of the camps in 1983.

Missing persons

Since 1980, the Tracing Agency has registered 65,733 tracing requests concerning persons reported missing (mainly combatants) in connection with the Iran-Iraq conflict. These requests were transmitted to the respective party to the conflict, requesting it to make the necessary inquiries, so that families without news of their relatives could be informed. On account of the almost total absence of information from the two belligerents concerning the identity of soldiers killed in combat in 1985, the ICRC was able to answer only a few hundred of the tracing requests, primarily relating to persons found in prisoner-of-war camps in Iraq.

Because of the absence or imprecision of the information provided by the two belligerents, the ICRC decided in March to suspend its tracing activities in relation to persons missing in connection with the Iran-Iraq conflict. This decision was conveyed to the two governments on 6 March by a verbal note reminding them of the provisions of Articles 70 and 122 of the Third Convention. At the end of 1985 no progress had been made in this field.

Appeal for funds

To obtain the funds required for its activities in connection with the conflict between Iran and Iraq, the ICRC launched an appeal to donors at the beginning of the year for the sum of 11,997,000 Swiss francs.

Iraq

Protection

IRANIAN PRISONERS OF WAR. — In 1985, the ICRC delegates were able to regularly visit the Iranian prisoners of war interned in Iraq. Until the end of July, the visits to the camps to which ICRC had access took place every two months; between each of these visits an interim visit was made to give medical consultations and to distribute and collect family messages. From August onwards, complete visits to the camps took place about every six weeks and, consequently, the interim visits were discontinued at the request of the Iraqi authorities. Thus, during the year, the delegates had access to 9,847 Iranian prisoners of war in nine camps and four hospitals and at the military police station in Baghdad. During these visits, toiletries, leisure items and educational materials to the value of some 225,000 Swiss francs were distributed to the prisoners. The capture cards of 884 new prisoners of war were forwarded to the Iranian authorities and to the Iranian Red Crescent so that the families concerned could be informed.

From 7 January to 9 February, a Mixed Medical Commission, composed of two ICRC medical delegates and an Iraqi doctor, made a round of the camps to draw up a list of prisoners of war whose state of health necessitated their repatriation, in accordance with Article 112 and Annexes I and II of the Third Convention. The 119 prisoners designated were repatriated to Iran in 1985, in successive batches, under ICRC auspices. The prisoners were chosen on the basis of a list compiled by the ICRC doctors during their visits to the camps the previous year, as well as lists drawn up by the prisoners themselves. A second Mixed Medical Commission, also composed of two ICRC medical delegates and an Iraqi doctor, during another tour of the camps in November and December, selected 82 prisoners for advance repatriation.

IRAQI PRISONERS OF WAR REPATRIATED. — In 1985, during several visits to Tamuz military hospital, the ICRC delegates were able to see 173 former Iraqi prisoners of war who had been repatriated.

CIVILIAN POPULATION. — In 1985, as in previous years, the ICRC continued to discharge the mandate entrusted to it by the Fourth Geneva Convention, especially Article 143, on behalf of the civilian population. ICRC delegates had regular access to certain displaced persons in Iraq entitled to protection under Article 4 of the Fourth Geneva Convention;

their treatment is laid down in Article 35 thereof and the following articles.

In January, May and October, several thousand families from Khuzistan (Arabic-speaking Iranians) were visited by the ICRC delegates, including a doctor, in the Meisan region in the same villages as in 1984 and in seven new villages to which the ICRC had access, for the first time, in May. Other delegates, including a doctor, also regularly visited the Kurdish refugees of Iranian origin interned at the Al-Tash camp near Ramadi. The total number of persons visited in 1985 amounted to approximately 25,000.

At the request of the Iraqi authorities and in collaboration with the diplomatic representatives of certain countries, the ICRC tried to find host countries willing to accept a number of Iranian nationals who had taken refuge in Iraq and had been regularly visited by the delegates. In 1985, 96 Iranian refugees obtained authorizations enabling them to settle in host countries. In addition, the ICRC endeavoured to expedite resettlement abroad of the Iranian refugees in Iraq by organizing, on 30 September at its headquarters, a meeting of the ambassadors and representatives of countries likely to be interested in the question, as well as with representatives of the UNHCR and the ICM. All the participants received an *aide-memoire* reminding them of the reasons why the ICRC has consented to act as neutral intermediary on behalf of these refugees, and trying to sensitize the participants to the plight of these persons.

Tracing Agency

In Iraq, while registering the new prisoners of war to whom it had access, the ICRC was able to deliver to the Permanent Committee for War Victims 477,129 family messages to the Iranian prisoners of war and to receive 225,491 for families living in Iran. In addition, the Tracing Agency's activities on behalf of Iranian civilians living in Iraq increased perceptibly in 1985: 8,000 family messages were distributed to them and some 17,000 collected for families living in Iran.

Iran

Despite the approaches made to Iran, in response to the ICRC's appeal on 23 November 1984, by certain States party to the Geneva Conventions, in 1985 the ICRC was not able to resume its protection activities on behalf of Iraqi prisoners of war, which had been halted by Iran on 10 October 1984. On numerous occasions, in Geneva, New York, Tehran and Luanda (during the summit meeting of non-aligned countries), the ICRC expressed to the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran its willingness to resume its protection activities in Iran. At the end of 1985, it had not yet received a positive reply to this proposal.

To assist the National Society in its activities, the ICRC gave the Iranian Red Crescent parcels worth some 450,000 Swiss francs for distribution among civilians displaced by the conflict.

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Following the intensification of hostilities between Iraq and Iran in spring 1985, the ICRC delegates, accompanied by leaders of the Iranian Red Crescent Society, carried out missions in the bombarded areas. A joint ICRC/National Society team went to different districts of Tehran on 2 April and 4 June, and on 29 May to the prisoner-of-war camp of Heshmatieh, which had been hit.

During another joint mission from 11 to 13 July in the Zivheh region (Iranian Kurdistan), the delegates could not obtain access to the Iraqi Kurds living in the region. As in the past, the Iranian authorities did not request ICRC assistance.

Tracing Agency

Since protection activities were halted, the work of the Tehran delegation was centred on the exchange of messages between the prisoners of war and their families. The delegation in Tehran delivered 458,862 messages for Iraqi prisoners of war to the Iranian Red Crescent and received 508,817 from that National Society for transmission to families living in Iraq.

LEBANON

In 1985, the situation in Lebanon continued to be of extreme concern to the ICRC, on account of the frequent outbreaks of intense fighting which flared up successively in different parts of the country.

From 12 to 16 February the President of the ICRC, accompanied by the delegate-general for the Middle East and North Africa, went to Beirut, where he had talks with Mr. Amin Gemayel, President of the Republic, Mr. Rachid Karami, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Mrs. Issa-el-Khoury, President of the Lebanese Red Cross.

The activities carried out by the ICRC and the National Society were often hampered by a lack of respect for the Red Cross emblem and personnel. Despite the guarantees given by the various parties to the conflict, some Lebanese Red Cross relief workers were killed and others wounded during their work; two abducted relief workers had not been released at the end of 1985. Three ICRC delegates were abducted as well, but were soon released. Also, ICRC and Lebanese Red Cross vehicles were stolen. It is even possible that one of these vehicles carrying the Red Cross emblem was used in southern

Lebanon in a car-bomb attack. Following this serious incident, the ICRC issued a press release on 16 July in which it declared that the use of the protective emblem of the Red Cross for indiscriminate killing and wounding is a detestable act which compromises the efficacy of ICRC activities in Lebanon, to the detriment of the victims themselves.

The ICRC reminded the Israeli occupation forces continually, before and after their withdrawal from southern Lebanon, of their obligations concerning the application of the clauses of the Fourth Convention, in southern Lebanon up until 10 June and in the "security zone" after that date. The Israeli authorities, for their part, do not consider that the Fourth Convention applies either *de facto* or *de jure* in the "security zone".

Appeal for funds

To finance its traditional activities in Lebanon, the ICRC appealed to donors at the beginning of the year for 6,960,000 Swiss francs.

Protection

CIVILIAN POPULATION. — As in past years, the ICRC was greatly concerned for civilians in Lebanon who were seriously affected by the grave events occurring there, brought about as much by the clashes between the various parties to the Lebanese conflict (mainly in Beirut, the Sidon region and Tripoli) as by the Israeli occupation, and then by the withdrawal of the Israeli army from the south of the country. Consequently, the delegates went regularly to the worst affected areas or their vicinity, as soon as any serious disturbances occurred, in an attempt to ensure by their presence the safety of the civilian population. The ICRC also made representations to the Israeli authorities, in particular when there was a renewed upsurge of violence in southern Lebanon during the first six months of 1985, urging them to respect the clauses of the Fourth Convention. The ICRC voiced its concern about the civilians living in the south of the country, who had suffered particularly severely during the first months of the year. On several occasions, the ICRC delegates tried systematically to gain access as quickly as possible to the inhabitants of villages in this region, which were cut off from the rest of the country.

PERSONS ARRESTED. — Throughout the year, the ICRC visited or tried to visit the persons arrested in connection with the Lebanese conflict and the Israeli occupation of the south of the country.

— Until its closure on 3 April 1985, **Ansar camp** was visited 13 times, during which 2,192 civilian internees in Israeli hands were seen and registered. When the camp was closed, the Israeli authorities released 752 civilian internees. The ICRC helped them to return to their families by facilitating their departure for the destination



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MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

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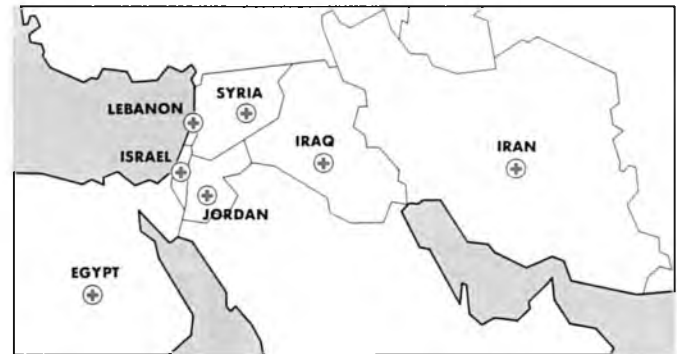
In 1986 as in 1985, visits to Iranian prisoners of war in Iraq and protection and assistance for the victims of the war in Lebanon constituted the greater part of ICRC activities in the Middle East. Its activities also continued in connection with the Arab-Israeli conflict. It furthermore visited Moroccan prisoners held by Algeria and Algerian prisoners held by Morocco, and security detainees in Jordan and the Arab Republic of Yemen. It was unable, however, to engage in any activities for detainees belonging to the same category in other countries of the Middle East and North Africa.

A notable event at the end of the year was the resumption of visits to Iraqi prisoners of war in Iran. In the early months of the year, the ICRC carried out emergency activities in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, as a result of the events which broke out on 13 January.

ICRC operations in connection with the conflict between Iran and Iraq, in Lebanon and as a result of events in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen were financed by donations received in response to special appeals (ICRC special budgets), while the other activities in the Middle East—especially in Israel and the occupied territories—and in North Africa were covered by the institution's regular budget.

CONFLICT BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ

The war between Iran and Iraq continued to claim countless victims and was a subject of grave concern to the ICRC, particularly as regards respect for the Geneva Conventions which are fully applicable in this international conflict. There were nevertheless some developments in 1986, since the ICRC was able to resume its activities for Iraqi prisoners of war in Iran which had been interrupted since October 1984, and continued its work in Iraq for the benefit of Iranian prisoners of war. In Iran, these activities were carried out by two delegates until 7 November, and from then on by eight, assisted by 18 locally recruited persons; in Iraq, there were 21 delegates (including administrative personnel) and three Iraqi employees.



Bombardment of civilian zones

As in previous years, indiscriminate bombardments of civilian persons and objects were of great concern to the ICRC, especially since they gave rise to an escalation of reprisals and counter-reprisals against the populations of both Iranian and Iraqi towns. The ICRC intervened on several occasions with both belligerents, urging them to stop these practices, which constitute a serious violation of international humanitarian law.

Missing persons

In 1986 the ICRC was still unable to resume its searches for persons reported missing in the course of the hostilities (mainly combatants). This work had had to be interrupted in March 1985 because of the absence or inexactitude of information supplied by the two belligerents about combatants killed on the battlefield. On 23 January, in a *note verbale* to the Permanent Missions of Iran and Iraq in Geneva, the ICRC reminded these two States of their obligations under the Third Geneva Convention concerning notification to the ICRC of enemy soldiers killed or captured. This concern of the ICRC was also raised in interviews with the respective authorities of the two countries, both in their capital cities and in Geneva. Despite all these efforts, however, the ICRC had not observed any improvement in this domain by the end of the year.

Repatriations of prisoners of war

Prisoners of war designated for repatriation, under the provisions of Article 112 of the Third Convention, by Mixed Medical Commissions which visited camps in Iran at the beginning of

1983 and camps in Iraq in November of 1985, had not been repatriated by the end of 1986.

No seriously wounded or sick prisoners of war, under the terms of Articles 109 and 110 of the Third Convention, were repatriated by either of the belligerents during 1986.

Appeal for funds

To obtain the necessary funds for its activities in connection with the conflict between Iran and Iraq, the ICRC launched an appeal to donors at the beginning of the year for 5,200,000 Swiss francs.

Activities in Iraq

ICRC delegates continued their protection and assistance activities throughout the year for victims of the conflict.

On two occasions, the President of the ICRC met Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iraq, in Bern in June and in Geneva in October. These meetings dealt with humanitarian problems resulting from the conflict.

Protection

IRANIAN PRISONERS OF WAR.—In 1986 the delegates continued their visits to Iranian prisoners of war in Iraq on a regular schedule of one complete visit to their camps every six weeks. During the year, the ICRC thus visited 12,698 Iranian prisoners of war, 2,857 of whom were registered and visited for the first time. The ICRC continued to be concerned about a group of prisoners of war to whom it had not yet been able to obtain access.

During their visits, ICRC delegates gave the prisoners recreational and educational material worth about 270,000 Swiss francs.

REPATRIATED IRAQI PRISONERS OF WAR.—In January, ICRC delegates visited 97 former Iraqi prisoners of war at the military hospital in Tamuz, seriously wounded or sick, who had been repatriated in December 1985.

CIVILIAN POPULATION.—In Iraq the ICRC also continued its work for the civilian population protected by Article 4 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

ICRC delegates continued to make regular visits every three months to 25,000 Kurdish refugees, natives of Iran who were interned at the Al Tash camp near Ramadi. These visits made it possible to monitor their living conditions and to exchange Red Cross messages.

Similar visits were made to several thousand families (about 20,000 persons) who came originally from Khuzistan or Ahwaz (Arabic-speaking Iranians) in 15 villages in the region of Meisan in February. Later, ICRC delegates no longer had access to this

population because of differences of view between the ICRC and the authorities on the procedures for visits. Subsequent approaches to the authorities had not succeeded in changing the situation by the end of the year.

At the request of the Iraqi authorities, the ICRC also continued its efforts to find countries willing to accept a number of Iranian citizens who had sought refuge in Iraq and were visited regularly by the delegates in the Shomeli and Ramadi camps. With the co-operation of the diplomatic representatives of various countries, 122 Iranians thus obtained the necessary authorization in 1986 to settle in host countries.

Tracing Agency

In addition to registering new prisoners of war to whom the ICRC had access, Agency activities were concerned mainly with exchanges of family messages. The ICRC was thus able to give the Permanent Committee for War Victims 415,553 Red Cross messages for Iranian prisoners of war and received 345,266 for families living in Iran or other countries. Several hundred messages were distributed to or collected from the civilian population assisted by the ICRC.

Activities in Iran

In order to renew the dialogue with the Iranian authorities, the President of the ICRC sent a letter on 4 April to Dr. Velayati, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In this message Mr. Alexandre Hay emphasized the ICRC's desire to resume its dialogue with the Islamic Republic of Iran with a view to finding solutions to the humanitarian problems created by the conflict.

After two missions to Iran by the ICRC Director of Operations in May and July, an agreement was reached for the resumption of visits to Iraqi prisoners of war interned in Iran. A team of delegates including doctors left for Iran on 7 November and visits proper were able to begin on 4 December. By the end of the year, visits had been made to the first two camps with a total of 3,615 Iraqi prisoners of war. Among them, 377 prisoners who were visited for the first time by the ICRC filled in capture cards, which were handed over to the Iraqi authorities so that their families in that country could be informed.

Tracing Agency

Throughout the year, the ICRC delegation in Tehran continued to exchange family messages between prisoners of war and their families. Thus, 712,592 Red Cross messages were passed on to the Iranian authorities for forwarding to Iraqi prisoners of war and 540,495 messages from these prisoners were sent to Iraq for their families.

In addition, two Egyptian sailors taken from their ship in November 1985 left Iran under ICRC auspices in January 1986.

LEBANON

In 1986 the situation in Lebanon continued to be of extreme concern to the ICRC because of the many violent clashes in different parts of the country (particularly in Beirut, in the Metn, in the southern part of the country and in Tripoli). The ICRC continued its intensive protection and assistance activities for the civilian population affected by the conflict and sought to extend this protection to persons arrested and detained by the various parties to the conflict. Its humanitarian activities were prompted by two aspects of the conflict: on one hand the events associated with the internal conflict, in particular the "war of the camps" between Lebanese and Palestinian factions, and the series of indiscriminate acts of violence such as car bombs and parcel bombs; and on the other hand the situation in the "security belt" controlled by the South Lebanon Army (SLA), supported by the Israeli armed forces. In this region the ICRC, during approaches to the SLA and the Israeli authorities, reminded the latter of their responsibilities under the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The activities of the ICRC and the Lebanese Red Cross were rendered especially difficult throughout the year by the increasing disrespect for the Red Cross emblem and personnel. For example, two Lebanese Red Cross first-aid workers were killed and eight others injured during the evacuation or transfer of casualties, and ICRC and Lebanese Red Cross vehicles were stolen. Relief supplies intended for victims were also stolen, usually for fear that only some people, and not others, would benefit by this assistance, or conversely to ensure that only one side received it.

The movements of Red Cross representatives were accordingly limited. These restrictions prevented the humanitarian operation from progressing normally. As a result, there were wounded who could not be evacuated in time and stranded civilian victims of fighting between factions who could not be given assistance.

The ICRC and the Lebanese Red Cross maintained constant contact with all the parties involved in the conflict, seeking to obtain sufficient assurances to enable them to continue their humanitarian action. Due to the seriousness of the situation, they were compelled to launch public appeals to this effect. On 1 December, the ICRC delegation in Beirut issued a press release calling attention to the impossibility of coming to the assistance of victims of combats, both in Beirut and in the southern part of the country.

Throughout the year, the ICRC remained in contact with the Israeli authorities and the principal leaders of the SLA, reminding them of their obligations and responsibilities in the "security belt". Although it had observed serious humanitarian problems in this region and in areas close to the demarcation line, the ICRC was not always able to do what it should to help the

victims. Indeed, the situation was sometimes so hazardous that all movement had to be discontinued for several weeks, preventing delegates from evacuating the wounded or helping civilians cut off in their villages. Furthermore, the ICRC did not obtain access to persons detained by the SLA, despite repeated approaches to its commander, General Lahad, and the highest Israeli authorities.

To carry out its various activities, the ICRC had a team of about 28 delegates and some 80 local employees in Lebanon all year, and in early December even increased the number of staff there. At the beginning of the year, some members of the team had been supplied by the Canadian, French and Swedish National Societies (two physiotherapists, a nurse and a radio operator). In view of the growing dangers, however, the ICRC felt obliged to withdraw them from Lebanon and keep only expatriate staff of Swiss nationality who were exclusively under contract to the ICRC.

The delegate-general for the Middle East visited Lebanon twice, in August and November, to take stock with the delegation and discuss the main humanitarian questions resulting from the situation with the leaders of the various parties involved in the conflict.

Appeal for funds

At the beginning of the year the ICRC launched an appeal for 8,045,900 Swiss francs to finance its activities in Lebanon.

Protection

CIVILIAN POPULATION.—The effect on civilian victims of the tragic events in Lebanon continued to be of major concern to the ICRC. Outbreaks of fighting in various parts of the country often compelled groups of civilians to flee their homes or, on the contrary, left them isolated in their villages or camps, unable to get food or medical care. The ICRC arranged on several occasions for cease-fires to enable civilians to cross through the fighting lines, for example in the last quarter of the year for the inhabitants of the village of Maghdouché and for people living in Palestinian camps near Tyre and Beirut.

In the south of the country, the people living in and alongside the "security belt" suffered particularly from the situation. Hundreds were forced to leave their villages in the "security belt" and thus joined the growing number of displaced persons; other civilians were cut off by the fighting, especially in villages along the demarcation line. Both crops and homes were pillaged or destroyed. Whenever possible ICRC delegates visited these places to bring assistance to the populations and made regular visits to villages near the front line. The ICRC also repeatedly approached all parties concerned to remind them of the essential rules of international humanitarian law.

Following grave violations by armed combatants, all parties to the conflict were also reminded by the ICRC in Beirut in July

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MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

As in previous years, the ICRC carried out its activities in the Middle East and North Africa through seven permanent delegations, in Iraq, Iran, Egypt, Israel and the occupied territories, Jordan, Lebanon (with offices in Beirut, Sidon, Tripoli, Tyre, Jezzine, Jounieh, Ksara and Baalbek) and Syria. In addition, the regional delegation for the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa, hitherto based in Geneva, was split into two in 1987. The Tunisian Government having signified its agreement on 14 September a regional delegate took up office in Tunis in October to cover North Africa (Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya, as well as the conflict in the Western Sahara). The regional delegation for the Arabian Peninsula is still based in Geneva.

In 1987, visits to Iranian prisoners of war in Iraq and Iraqi prisoners of war in Iran and protection and assistance activities on behalf of the victims of the war in Lebanon constituted the major part of ICRC work in the Middle East. These operations were funded by special appeals (ICRC special budget).

The ICRC also pursued its work in connection with the Arab-Israeli conflict, stepping up its activities as a result of the unrest that developed from December onwards in the territories occupied by Israel. It also visited Moroccan prisoners in the hands of the Polisario Front, and security detainees in Jordan, the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

In March, the President of the ICRC, Mr. Hay, travelled to Tunis for lengthy talks with the Secretary-General of the Arab League, Mr. Khedli Klibi. Discussions focused on various humanitarian questions, with particular regard to the situation in Lebanon.

On 7 September, the new President of the ICRC, Mr. Sommaruga, received the Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Mr. Yasser Arafat, at the Committee's headquarters in Geneva. Talks centred on the ICRC's humanitarian activities in the Middle East.

CONFLICT BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ

The war between Iran and Iraq continued to claim numerous victims, both civilian and military, and remained a subject of very grave concern for the ICRC, particularly as regards respect for the Geneva Conventions, which are fully applicable in this international conflict.

As in previous years, the problem of Iranian and Iraqi prisoners of war and the indiscriminate bombardment of

civilian persons and objects were matters of serious concern to the ICRC, along with the use of arms prohibited by international humanitarian law. In 1987, in view of the increasing number of acts of indiscriminate violence and, in particular, the intensification of the "war of the cities", the ICRC appealed to the two parties to the conflict and the international community, calling their attention to the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law relating to the protection of civilians and the conduct of hostilities. On 13 January, for instance, the ICRC published a press release urging both belligerents to cease their attacks, which constituted a grave violation of international humanitarian law. Seeing that the bombings were nonetheless continuing, on 11 February the ICRC addressed a solemn written appeal to the governments of the two parties to the conflict, stressing the fundamental rules governing the protection of civilian populations. Simultaneously, the Committee also approached the Member States of the Security Council and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, requesting them to support its initiative by any means they deemed fit. Furthermore, all the States party to the Geneva Conventions were informed of the measures taken. In addition, between 23 and 26 February the Director General and the Director of Operations of the ICRC travelled respectively to Baghdad and Tehran to discuss the ICRC's solemn appeal with the authorities there.

In May, following the report, compiled by a special mission of experts despatched by the United Nations Secretary-General, on the use of chemical weapons in the conflict between Iran and Iraq, the ICRC officially informed the two belligerents of its serious concern with regard to the consequences, in terms of human suffering, of the use of such methods of warfare, which are prohibited by the Geneva Protocol of 1925. The ICRC also informed the Secretary-General of the United Nations of its alarm, indicating that it supported all the efforts deployed and deemed necessary to put an end to the use of chemical weapons. The ICRC made a further approach to the parties to the conflict in July to remind them that the use of chemical weapons runs contrary to international law and is incompatible with the principle of humanity, and to signify its availability to assist the victims of armed conflicts, whether in connection with the use of chemical weapons or attacks perpetrated against civilians. Both Iran and Iraq requested the ICRC to despatch delegates to visit the civilian victims of such acts of indiscriminate violence. In accordance with its doctrine, the ICRC conducted several surveys to assess the effects of certain acts

of war committed against civilian populations in order to provide them with any necessary help.

Missing persons

In 1987, as in the previous year, the ICRC was unable to resume its tracing work in search of persons reported missing in the course of the hostilities (mainly combatants). This work had had to be interrupted in March 1985 on account of the absence or inexactitude of information supplied by the two belligerents about combatants killed on the battlefield. In 1987, the ICRC continued taking steps to remind the two belligerent States of their obligations under the First and Third Conventions concerning notification to the ICRC of enemy soldiers wounded, killed or captured. This concern was raised in particular during the Director General's mission to Baghdad in February and the missions to Tehran conducted by the Director of Operations and the delegate-general for the Middle East in February and August, respectively. It was also the subject of a *note verbale* which the ICRC addressed to the parties to the conflict on 15 September. Despite all these efforts, however, the ICRC had not observed any improvement in this domain by the end of the year.

Repatriations of prisoners of war

In 1987, two repatriations of Iraqi prisoners of war were carried out under ICRC auspices. In March and October, respectively, 76 and 101 disabled, sick or aged Iraqi prisoners of war — selected by the Iranian authorities and mostly corresponding to the criteria set forth in the Third Convention — were handed over to the ICRC by the Iranian authorities and escorted by a team of ICRC doctors, nurses and delegates from Tehran to Baghdad on board an aircraft specially chartered for the purpose by the ICRC. Before each of these repatriations, ICRC delegates ascertained in the course of interviews without witnesses that the prisoners wished to return to their homeland.

No further Mixed Medical Commissions having been set up in the two countries, the ICRC doctors took the opportunity when visiting the camps to draw up lists of prisoners of war entitled to direct and immediate repatriation under the terms of Articles 109 and 110 of the Third Geneva Convention.

Appeal for funds

To obtain the necessary funds for its activities in connection with the conflict between Iran and Iraq, the ICRC

launched an appeal to donors at the beginning of the year to raise 13,702,900 Swiss francs.

IN IRAQ:

The ICRC continued its protection and assistance activities for victims of the conflict through a delegation comprising 18 persons.

In February, the ICRC Director General travelled to Baghdad with the delegate-general for the Middle East and North Africa. This mission, prompted above all by the bombings of civilian areas, provided an opportunity to review with the Iraqi authorities the various humanitarian questions relating to the conflict. The ICRC representatives were received, inter alia, by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Mr. Tariq Aziz.

Activities for Iranian prisoners of war

As in the previous year, two teams of ICRC delegates, both of them including a doctor, visited Iranian prisoners of war interned in Iraq, following a regular schedule of one complete visit every eight weeks to ten camps and three military hospitals. The ICRC thus visited 12,747 Iranian prisoners of war in 1987. However, in contravention of the Third Geneva Convention, it was not authorized to visit or register the prisoners of war captured since December 1986. The ICRC also continued to concern itself with the plight of prisoners of war to whom it had never obtained access and was again unable to do so in 1987. These are serious problems of constant concern to the ICRC.

The Committee was able to monitor the cases of prisoners of war brought before a judge and to visit them in the prison where they were being held in Baghdad, verifying that the provisions of the Third Geneva Convention relevant to such circumstances were being applied.

During their visits to the camps, the ICRC delegates supplied prisoners with recreational and educational material worth about 220,000 Swiss francs.

Activities for the civilian population

In Iraq, the ICRC is also performing work for various groups of civilians protected by the Fourth Geneva Convention.

ICRC delegates continued their visits to 25,000 Kurdish refugees, natives of Iran, interned at the Al Tash camp near Ramadi. During these visits, which took place in March, June and October, delegates assessed the living conditions of the interned civilians and handled the exchange of Red Cross messages.

On the other hand, similar visits could not be made to persons originally from Khuzistan or Ahwaz (Arabic-speaking Iranians) who have been displaced and are living in villages in the region of Meisan. The last visit to those persons dates back to February 1986, since when differences of views have arisen between the ICRC and the authorities concerning the procedures for visits. The ICRC's efforts to resume the visits were unsuccessful in 1987.

Elsewhere, the ICRC continued its visits to a number of Iranian citizens who have sought refuge in Iraq and are interned in the Shomeli and Ramadi camps, and at the request of the Iraqi authorities endeavoured to find host countries to receive them. As a result of these efforts, 152 Iranian refugees were able to leave Iraq for a third country in 1987.

Tracing Agency

Tracing activities centred mainly on the exchange of Red Cross messages. The ICRC gave the Permanent Committee for War Victims a total of 559,027 Red Cross messages for Iranian prisoners of war and received 313,286 for their families living in Iran or other countries. Several hundred messages were also distributed or collected among the various groups of refugees assisted by the ICRC.

IN IRAN:

Visits to Iraqi prisoners of war, which were resumed in December 1986 after being suspended for two years, accounted for the bulk of the work performed by the ICRC delegation in Iran throughout the year. In order to carry out these visits and associated activities such as tracing operations, the delegation was staffed by ten delegates and some twenty locally recruited employees.

In February, the ICRC Director of Operations travelled to Tehran to discuss various matters of humanitarian importance with the Iranian authorities, in particular bombings of civilian areas and Iraqi prisoners of war. During his visit, he met several high-level representatives of the Iranian Government. In August, the delegate-general for the Middle East spent about ten days in Iran to discuss a series of humanitarian problems connected with the conflict, in particular the procedures and conditions for ICRC visits to Iraqi prisoners of war interned in Iran.

Furthermore, on 24 July the President of the ICRC met the Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Ali Akbar Velayati, who was passing through Geneva.

Despite its repeated requests to the Government, the ICRC was not granted access to the displaced Iraqi Kurdish populations.

Activities for Iraqi prisoners of war

Visits to Iraqi prisoners of war interned in Iran had been resumed in December 1986, when two camps were visited. ICRC delegates continued the series of visits in 1987 and had access to thirteen other camps and six hospitals. Only one visit to these camps was possible in 1987, since the ICRC was authorized to have only one team of visiting delegates in operation in Iran, including a doctor and an Arabic-speaking delegate; the latter was the sole delegate authorized to interview certain Iraqi prisoners of war without witnesses. These restrictions imposed on the ICRC's work are due to the Iranian authorities' extremely restrictive interpretation of the provisions of Article 126 of the Third Geneva Convention, which specify the ICRC's mandate in this respect. During this series of visits, which was completed in December 1987, the ICRC was able to register 4,252 new prisoners of war and verify the presence of 37,702 others who had been registered during previous visits. However, it was unable to verify the presence in the camps visited of 7,327 prisoners of war already registered on earlier occasions. Nor did it obtain access to more than 8,000 prisoners whose existence is proven by the family messages they have sent. These extremely serious problems result from the Detaining Power's failure to respect fundamental provisions of the Third Geneva Convention.

Tracing Agency

As well as registering the new prisoners of war to whom the ICRC had access, the Tracing Agency handled exchanges of Red Cross messages. Accordingly, 744,486 Red Cross messages were passed on to the Iranian authorities for forwarding to Iraqi prisoners of war and 640,051 messages from such prisoners were sent to their families in Iraq.

IN THE GULF:

On 21 September, American naval forces in the Gulf captured 26 Iranian citizens and retrieved the mortal remains of three persons. The United States immediately signified its intention not to keep these Iranian nationals in its custody. At the request of the Government of Oman, and following contacts with the Iranian, Omani and American authorities, the ICRC despatched a delegate to Oman to supervise the operation at Muscat airport on 26 September, when the Iranian nationals were handed over by American representatives to the Omani authorities; the latter subsequently handed them over to Iranian representatives.

A similar operation took place at Muscat airport on 17

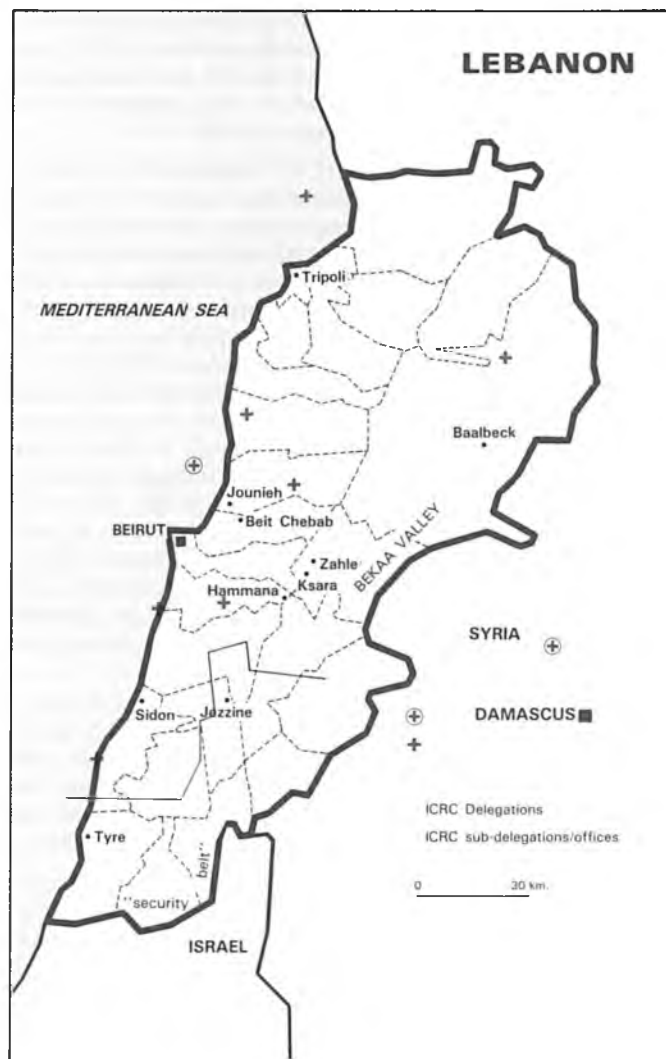
October involving the handing over to Iranian representatives of four Iranian seamen who had been captured by the American navy on 8 October, and the mortal remains of two persons. On the day preceding the operation, two delegates, including a doctor, were able to visit the four wounded Iranian seamen detained on board an American army ship.

The ICRC subsequently addressed a *note verbale* to all States with a military presence in the Arabian-Persian Gulf, reminding them of the conditions of applicability of the Geneva Conventions. The note stressed that international humanitarian law in general (and the Geneva Conventions in particular) apply in the case of declared war or of any other armed conflict arising between two or more High Contracting Parties, even if one of them does not recognize the state of war.

LEBANON

In 1987, clashes in Lebanon continued to take thousands of victims (deaths, wounded, displaced and homeless persons, etc.) and remained a source of serious concern for the ICRC. In addition, the economic situation deteriorated still further, confirming the trend which had already begun to emerge in 1985. Against this background, the ICRC continued its intensive protection and assistance activities for the civilian population affected by the conflict, whilst seeking to extend still further its protection work for persons arrested and detained by the various parties to the conflict. Its humanitarian activities focused on two main aspects: first, events associated with the internal conflict, in particular the "war of the camps" between Lebanese and Palestinian factions, clashes between Lebanese factions and the succession of indiscriminate acts of violence such as car bombs; and secondly, events associated with the situation prevailing in the "security belt" controlled by the South Lebanon Army (SLA), supported by the Israeli armed forces.

Generally speaking, more respect was shown for the Red Cross emblem in 1987 than in 1986. Nevertheless, to the profound regret of the ICRC and the Lebanese Red Cross, military fire was directed on several occasions against relief workers from the National Society. One was killed and three others wounded, as was an ICRC employee last year. In addition, the restrictions placed at various times on the movements of Red Cross representatives prevented the ICRC and the Lebanese Red Cross from duly coming to the assistance of victims, and hence from performing their mission properly. As a result, there were wounded who could not be evacuated in time, and assistance could not be given to isolated and stranded civilian victims of fighting between factions.



Seeking to secure the guarantees essential for continuance of their humanitarian action, the ICRC and the Lebanese Red Cross maintained constant contact with all the parties involved in the conflict. Due to the seriousness of the situation, they were compelled to launch public appeals to this effect. On 10 February, the ICRC delegation in Beirut issued a press release condemning the constraints which prevented it from assisting the victims of fighting in the "war of the camps", both in Beirut and in the southern part of the country. In addition, the ICRC made a special effort to increase knowledge and understanding of the Red Cross message in Lebanon. Information and dissemination meetings were organized for militia leaders and an information booklet on the ICRC and its presence

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ENG)

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

To carry out its activities in the Middle East and North Africa, the ICRC maintained seven permanent delegations in 1988: Tel Aviv, Beirut, Amman, Damascus, Cairo, Tehran and Baghdad. 1988 also witnessed the official opening of the regional delegation for North Africa in Tunis, in charge of coordinating ICRC activities in Tunisia, Libya, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania and for matters related to the Western Sahara conflict. ICRC headquarters in Geneva continued, however, to handle relations with the countries of the Arabian Peninsula (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen).

Important developments occurred in the Middle East in 1988, some of which significantly changed ICRC activities in this part of the world. The cease-fire that came into effect between Iran and Iraq on 20 August brought the hope that all prisoners of war interned during the conflict that had opposed the two belligerents since 1980 would be repatriated without delay, and led to sustained diplomatic efforts. As part of the peace process begun in the Western Sahara, the ICRC obtained an agreement in principle to visit Moroccans detained by the Polisario Front, although this visit had not yet been carried out by the end of the year. In the territories occupied by Israel, the unrest grew to an extent that had not been anticipated and continued throughout the year, leading the ICRC to increase its staff and operational capacity. Serious incidents forced the institution to withdraw its delegates from Lebanon temporarily, from 20 December 1988 to 8 February 1989, at a time when assistance for victims of the conflict in Lebanon constituted one of the most important ICRC operations in the region. It should be noted that the most expensive ICRC operations in the Middle East (in Lebanon, Iran and Iraq) were still financed this year through separate appeals to donors, under the ICRC's special budgets.

Besides these three major operations, ICRC activities in the Middle East included visits to security detainees in Jordan, in the Yemen Arab Republic and in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

IRAN/IRAQ

Activities for prisoners of war

1988 was the year a cease-fire came into effect between Iran and Iraq, on 20 August, following Iran's acceptance

of UN Resolution 598 on 18 July 1988 (Iraq had accepted the resolution in 1987). This important step towards a settlement in the conflict that had opposed the two belligerents since September 1980 raised hopes to a considerable degree. The ICRC submitted concrete proposals to both parties for the comprehensive repatriation of all prisoners of war, as provided for in the Third Geneva Convention, which is mentioned in point three of UN Resolution 598. Some progress had been made towards this goal by year's end, but the process proved to be very complex. In spite of the fact that both countries signed an agreement on 10 and 11 November at ICRC headquarters in Geneva, stipulating that all sick and wounded prisoners would be repatriated as a priority and without delay, only a few isolated repatriations could be carried out.

During the last few months of the year, the ICRC's headquarters in Geneva and its delegations in Tehran, Baghdad and New York were therefore the scene of intensive negotiations with Iranian and Iraqi government representatives and discussions with the United Nations Secretary-General. Mr Perez de Cuellar and the President of the ICRC met twice, on 24 August and 31 October, while negotiations were being held for an overall settlement to the conflict. The Iranian and Iraqi representatives at these peace talks, in particular the Iranian Deputy Prime Minister in charge of Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, Mr Mohajerani, and the two Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Mr Tareq Aziz and Mr Velayati, were received several times at ICRC headquarters for in-depth discussions. Bilateral technical commissions organized by the ICRC reached an agreement, signed by both parties, that sick and wounded prisoners of war would be granted priority and repatriated.

At the end of August, the ICRC handed over to both parties a document entitled "Principles and operational procedures for the release and repatriation of POWs captured during the Iran/Iraq conflict". This document specified the legal foundations for a repatriation of all POWs by the ICRC, the principles that would govern it and the institution's customary procedures. It also proposed a scenario for the smooth running of this complex operation. The difficulties encountered during the negotiations on the application of UN Resolution 598 led the ICRC to send a note verbale to both parties on 4 October, inviting them to take, without further delay, the preliminary measures necessary for the repatriation of all prisoners of war, i.e., to give notification of all POWs held captive

and to proceed with the repatriation, as a priority, of all sick and wounded prisoners.

It should be recalled that since the beginning of the conflict, the ICRC has only been partially able to fulfil its mandate to provide protection for all POWs interned in both countries. The ICRC has never been notified (as stipulated in Article 122 of the Third Geneva Convention and Article 16 of the First Convention) of the identity of soldiers captured or killed on the front. Tens of thousands of prisoners have thus never been registered by the ICRC, whose delegates have not been given access (Article 126 of the Third Convention) to all POWs interned in both countries. In addition, only a small number of sick or wounded prisoners of war have been granted priority repatriation as provided for in the Third Convention (Article 109 *et seq.*). Finally, during its last series of visits in Iran in 1986-87, the ICRC did not have access to some 7,000 POWs registered by its delegates before the end of 1984, and obtained no information about them. To draw the belligerents' attention to these repeated violations of international humanitarian law the ICRC sent them a Memorandum on 15 July taking stock of its protection activities in both countries.

Repatriations

Several repatriations could nevertheless be organized in 1988 for sick and wounded prisoners of war, one at the beginning of the year and the others after the cease-fire came into effect on 20 August.

On 17 February, 28 wounded or sick Iraqi POWs were repatriated from Iran aboard an aircraft chartered by the ICRC. ICRC delegates accompanied these prisoners, having previously conducted an interview without witness with each of them to ascertain that they were returning home of their own free will. Following a unilateral decision taken by the Iranian government, the ICRC organized, according to its criteria, a second repatriation of sick and wounded POWs on 12 September; this time 72 Iraqis were able to return to their country. On 30 October, a simultaneous repatriation of sick and disabled POWs took place under the auspices of the ICRC, involving 25 Iranian and 25 Iraqis.

The agreement concerning the repatriation of all sick and wounded POWs (signed by both parties after a series of intensive negotiations at the ICRC's Geneva headquarters on 10 and 11 November) provided for the repatriation of all such prisoners before the end of 1988. The first phase was to include 1,158 Iraqis and 411 Iranians, identified by the ICRC during its visits to camps and hospitals in

both countries. During a second phase, sick and wounded POWs not yet registered by the ICRC were to be repatriated. Unfortunately, this operation, begun on 24 November, had to be suspended on the 27th after three flights, with only 56 Iranian prisoners and 155 Iraqis having returned home.

Activities for civilians in both countries

The plight of civilians who fell victim to the conflict and to its repercussions was a matter of serious concern for the ICRC. On 28 February, the ICRC made vigorous representations to the governments of Iran and Iraq when bombing in "the war of the cities" killed hundreds of civilians in several cities in both countries. Then, on 10 March, the ICRC issued a press release condemning the bombing of civilian areas as a very grave violation of the fundamental rules of international humanitarian law. When chemical weapons were used in attacks in the Iraqi province of Sulaymaniyah, it again intervened publicly: in a press release issued on 23 March, the ICRC condemned the use of chemical weapons.

Appeal for funds

At the beginning of the year, the ICRC appealed to donors for 16,691,800 Swiss francs to finance all of its activities related to the conflict during 1988 (for civilians as well as prisoners of war).

IRAQ

In February the ICRC's Director of Operations and the Delegate General for the Middle East were received by the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs; they gave him an account of protection activities conducted by the ICRC in 1987 during visits to Iraqi POWs interned in Iran.

The ICRC delegation in Baghdad had a permanent staff of 21, who were backed by 16 local employees at year's end.

Activities for Iranian prisoners of war

The ICRC continued its regular visits to the eleven camps for Iranian prisoners of war in Iraq. ICRC delegates and doctors carried out six series of visits in 1988. Whereas the Iraqi authorities had not allowed the ICRC to register POWs captured since the beginning of 1987, the delegation was able in April 1988 to register a group of 21 recently captured prisoners and, in July, it obtained an agreement in principle to register all POWs captured in 1987 and 1988: 5,364 new prisoners were registered before authorization

was again withdrawn by the Iraqi authorities.

During their visits to POW camps, ICRC delegates distributed educational material, sports and leisure articles for a total value of some 228,000 Swiss francs. Progress was also made on programmes to help set up workshops where POWs could produce clothing, shoes and carpets.

Activities for the civilian population

In Iraq the ICRC also works on behalf of various groups of civilians protected by the Fourth Geneva Convention. Delegates continued to visit Iranian Kurdish civilians interned in Al-Tash camp. Regular visits enabled the delegation to monitor living conditions in the camp and to collect and deliver Red Cross messages. An ICRC team also conducted a complete survey of medical and sanitary conditions at Al-Tash in January. The results of the survey were presented to the authorities, who responded immediately, setting up projects to provide the necessary installations and instruction to promote hygiene and prevent disease. The ICRC also distributed books, educational material and sports articles valued at around 42,000 Swiss francs. In November, construction work began on buildings to house workshops where clothing, shoes and carpets will be produced.

As in previous years, ICRC delegates visited other Iranian civilians who have sought refuge in Iraq and are interned in Shomeli camp. At the request of the Iraqi authorities and in co-operation with UNHCR, the ICRC continued to seek host countries willing to receive these refugees. As a result of these efforts, 172 of them were able to leave Iraq during the year (this figure includes refugees from Al-Tash camp who have been resettled in a third country).

For the first time since 1986, the ICRC conducted a mission to evaluate needs in the Meisan region, in south-east Iraq, where several tens of thousands of displaced Khuzistani civilians (Arabic-speaking Iranians) sought refuge in 1982.

Tracing Agency

Tracing activities still accounted for much of the ICRC's work in Iraq. The ICRC transmitted 116,424 Red Cross messages written by Iranian prisoners of war to their families and 384,922 messages from these families to the POWs. This brings the number of Red Cross messages sent or received by Iranian POWs since the beginning of the conflict in 1980 to 4.5 million. Eleven million messages in all have been transmitted between Iran and Iraq since

that date. Red Cross messages written by Iranian Kurdish civilians interned at Al-Tash camp were also entrusted to ICRC delegates, whose visits to the camp included the distribution of family messages sent by Iranian POWs interned in Iraq.

Dissemination

A dissemination seminar on the Third Geneva Convention took place in Baghdad from 18 to 23 June, attended by commanders of POW camps, high-ranking military police officers and military judges. This seminar, the first of its kind there, was organized jointly by the ICRC, the Iraqi Red Crescent Society and the Iraqi government's Permanent Committee for War Victims.

IRAN

Activities for Iraqi prisoners of war

Visits to Iraqi prisoners of war held in Iran, which were resumed in December 1986 after a two-year interruption, could not continue in 1988 because approaches made by the ICRC met with a negative response: the institution was not able to obtain terms and conditions allowing its delegates to act in conformity with the provisions of Article 126 of the Third Geneva Convention. The delegation in Tehran therefore reduced the number of delegates on its staff from ten to four. Several times during the year, the ICRC reminded the Iranian government that thousands of Iraqi prisoners had never been visited by ICRC delegates, who had not even been notified of their identity. These are serious instances of non-respect by the Detaining Power for the provisions of the Third Convention.

Activities for the civilian population

On 8 April, the ICRC launched an additional urgent appeal to its National Society donors for relief goods valued at 3.28 million Swiss francs and destined for civilian victims (mostly Kurds) of the use of chemical weapons in the Halabja region of Iraqi Kurdistan, who had resettled in the Iranian province of Bakhtaran. On 9 May, after a second comprehensive survey, an additional appeal was sent out to all donor governments and National Societies, requesting relief supplies with a total value of 2,392 million Swiss francs for displaced Iraqi civilians living in the Iranian provinces of Bakhtaran and Kurdistan, who had fled there as a result of military offensives.

Further surveys were conducted jointly with UNHCR

from 6 to 9 September and from 24 October to 4 November in Iranian West Azerbaijan, where thousands of Iraqi Kurds had taken refuge from a new series of military operations. The ICRC organized a convoy from Turkey to bring relief supplies for these displaced civilians; the supplies were handed over to Iranian Red Crescent personnel, who took charge of local distributions. Another ICRC team visited Turkey from 19 September to 4 October to evaluate living conditions among Iraqis who had taken refuge in camps located in the Diyarbakir region. The ICRC informed the authorities and the Turkish Red Crescent of the survey results, the needs observed, and its willingness to organize a relief operation in co-operation with the National Society. However, the Turkish authorities did not wish to follow up the ICRC's proposal.

Tracing Agency

Although not a single visit could be made to Iraqi prisoner-of-war camps in Iran in 1988, the Central Tracing Agency transmitted 460,980 Red Cross messages written by Iraqi POWs to their families in Iran and 453,594 messages from these families to the POWs. This brought the total number of Red Cross messages sent or received by Iraqi prisoners since the beginning of the conflict in 1980 to 6.5 million.

ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

The continuing unrest in the Israeli-occupied territories since 9 December 1987, the dimension it assumed and the means adopted by the Israeli authorities to repress it left their mark on the year 1988. The ICRC delegation found itself compelled to adapt its operational capacity accordingly, for the changed situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip rendered the question as to the Fourth Geneva Convention's applicability even more acute and called for the delegation's presence to be much more sustained both in the field and in the places of detention, where the number of people in custody increased considerably over the year.

The Israeli authorities maintain that "in view of the *sui generis* status of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District, the *de jure* applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to these areas is doubtful, Israel prefers to leave aside the legal question of the status of these areas and has decided, since 1967, to act *de facto* in accordance with the humanitarian provisions of that Convention". The ICRC, however, considers that the conditions for application of the Fourth Convention are fulfilled in all of the occupied

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territories, namely the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Golan and East Jerusalem. In 1988 the ICRC intervened many times to remind the civilian and military authorities of the obligations this Convention entails for the protection of the civilian population.

The ICRC was in regular contact with the Israeli authorities throughout the year, in particular with those responsible for the places of detention. Discussions were also held with the authorities concerning protected persons in the "security zone" in southern Lebanon (see the section on *Lebanon* below). On 19 May the delegation sent a report to the Israeli Minister of Defence about the behaviour of the Israeli army (IDF) towards the civilian population in the occupied territories. This report included a series of recommendations to end the viola-