



**REVUE
INTERNATIONALE
DE LA
CROIX-ROUGE**

SUPPLEMENT

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NATIONAL PREPARATORY MEASURES BY THE RED CROSS AGAINST THE DANGERS OF ATOMIC WARFARE

A Few Comments

One of the most moving statements during the New Delhi Conference was certainly that made by Mr. Inoué, the author of the present article (in connexion with a Japanese proposal concerning nuclear weapon tests), when he spoke of the victims of Hiroshima and, in particular, of the medical personnel there, in terms whose very moderation made the picture all more vivid.

The natural, spontaneous reaction to such a description is that of the millions of members of the Red Cross—to pray with all their might that by the maintenance of peace, the recurrence of such happenings may be prevented and that, if by some mischance nations again take up arms against each other, the conflict may never degenerate into a nuclear cataclysm.

Another reaction, which is more rare but nevertheless comprehensible coming from a member of the Red Cross—particularly since it is based on personal experience—is to be found in Mr. Inoué's article: he has the courage to envisage the possibility of a nuclear war and to consider, calmly and carefully, what action might be taken by national Red Cross Societies with a view to such a contingency, particularly in behalf of civilian victims suffering from the effects of radiation.

As will be seen, this article concerns a particular aspect of preparations by these Societies for their wartime task. The author cites as an example what has already been done by one national Red Cross Society. Had it not been that his aim was to emphasise

certain specific ideas, had he wished to give a fairly general picture of Red Cross activities in the field of the protection of civilians, he might well have added other examples. For in many countries the standard training of civilian medical auxiliaries for wartime duties includes instruction in the dangers of radioactivity and the treatment of victims of radiation. In many other countries, however, the prior conditions required for carrying out Mr. Inoué's suggestions could not be met because such auxiliary personnel are too few in number.

So far as the protection of civilians is concerned, the very marked differences between the various countries are inevitably a matter for concern, all the more so if some degree of "partitioning" or even secrecy is involved. In this respect, Mr. Inoué's appeal for a certain minimum of emergency measures and for worldwide dissemination of the best methods of treatment in regard to radioactivity is fully in accord with Red Cross principles and should arouse widespread response.

The following article is, of course, published on the sole responsibility of its author. One need hardly add, that through its activity the Red Cross is continually striving for peace; articles such as this one do not imply any condonation of war.

(The Editor)

Introduction — The Problem

The Red Cross was born on the battlefield, and its first duty is to make preparations, even in peacetime, so as to be ready to bring relief to the victims, in any place and at any time, as soon as war breaks out. Despite the difficulties, the Red Cross has hitherto succeeded in carrying out this duty.

But will it be able to do so in future ?

It would be able to perform this task magnificently, if the technique of the war had remained unaltered. This technique has changed very much, however, as everyone knows, but few persons have had practical experience of it. Before commencing this study, we shall therefore cite a few of our own experiences,

so that our readers may be made aware of the situation which confronts the Red Cross of today.

According to official statistics of Hiroshima, the one and only atomic bomb dropped on that city caused 249,000 dead, 157,000 wounded and 7,000 missing persons : a total of 413,000 persons, or 94 per cent of the population which, including garrison forces, at that time amounted to 440,000. And yet the devastated area was only 24,000,000 sq.ft. in size, 18 per cent of the total area of the city (132,000,000 sq.ft. at that time). These statistics show two facts : in the first place, the bomb fell in the centre of the city, but, secondly, persons who were outside the districts directly affected must also have suffered deadly effects, and although this is understandable, it must be taken into account for the future.

1. By a miracle—there is no other word for it—only the Red Cross Hospital of Hiroshima was left standing, though it was badly damaged. At the time of the raid, it contained 450 sick-bed patients; the staff consisted of 30 doctors, 5 pharmacists, 6 nurses and 408 student nurses (the graduate nurses were at the front, and student nurses received their training at the Hiroshima Hospital)—a total of 499 persons.

2. 85 per cent of the hospital staff were killed or wounded; the operating theatre was destroyed; no surgeons survived; the nurses' home collapsed and many of them died. The hospital was surrounded by fire, and that had to be extinguished as a first step. There were no more medicaments, no instruments—they had been destroyed; no gas, electricity or running water. Most of the nurses had received injuries to face and arms from flying glass and instruments scattered by the explosion. They nevertheless continued tending the wounded, heedless of their own injuries. Many of them died later from the effects of radiation.

The wounded who managed to reach the hospital but could not be admitted, since it was already full of patients—even the corridors were crowded—remained outside and died. Anyone going out of the building saw people rising from among the dead, crying for water. It was a nightmarish scene.

That was more or less the situation at Hiroshima. Would it be the same in the future, if war broke out? It is not easy to answer this question.

Nuclear weapons are indiscriminate weapons because of (1) the radioactivity and (2) the tremendous heat which they produce.

Therefore,

- (a) If more powerful weapons are used, and particularly more "contaminating" ones, such as cobalt bombs, the damage will probably be a thousand times greater.
- (b) If non-radioactive nuclear bombs were invented and could be made smaller (which has not been achieved so far, although it is possible), the damage would certainly be more limited (provided, of course, no other nuclear weapon were used).
- (c) If the radioactivity of each bomb could be reduced (which is possible to some extent), the resultant damage would vary according to the number and concentration of bombs dropped, i.e. according to the strategy employed.

In brief, the question depends on the technical evolution of weapons and strategy; and the latter must vary according to the nature of the war—i.e. whether it is a world war, or a local or limited war. We shall examine each case in turn.

In the event of a world war, if a bomb of the present force was used, the number of victims would easily reach several millions, at one stroke or within a very short time. Considering that a single rudimentary bomb caused 413,000 victims, this estimate is not an exaggerated one. The number of victims could certainly be reduced if modern protective measures were established efficiently. If, however, the bomb or bombs fell in the centre of an urban area, this estimate would certainly not be impossible. And since such a case is not impossible, one should be prepared for it.

Would the belligerents dare to resort to such a step? Here again, there is no reason to assume that they would not. According to one strategic theory, the only hope of survival in

the event of a world conflict would be to attack and at one stroke to destroy the nerve centre of the enemy countries by a concentration of all available resources, without waiting to be attacked. The implications are beyond human conception. But let there be no illusions; we have already seen the "Blitzkrieg", or lightning war.

If the governments choose to boast to the world that they know how to make "clean" bombs as well as the most "contaminating" kind by means of tests, then in our opinion there is no reason for the Red Cross to hesitate either; the Red Cross should be prepared for all contingencies, determined never to abandon its duties or the humanitarian principles which are its *raison d'être*.

Can it do so, however? The question is a serious one.

What if it cannot do so? The question would be immeasurably more serious.

It is for this reason that we wish to state that, at this moment, the Red Cross is faced with a crisis such as it has never known before.

1. The Red Cross must establish and train a corps of specialised medical personnel

Nothing should be impossible for mankind. *In humanitate nihil impossibile.*

First of all, it must be remembered that this is not the first time that the Red Cross has faced seemingly insuperable difficulties. The situation must have been very similar when Henry Dunant was at Solferino, with wounded on every side. After careful and lengthy consideration, however, he found the solution, by establishing a worldwide movement which, today, we know as the Red Cross. Now that it is familiar to all of us, one thinks of it as a simple and natural thing. Those who consider it thus should think back for a moment to the story of Christopher Columbus and the egg. One must rightly recognise that Henry Dunant had to overcome tremendous difficulties. And one must also realise that, although his genius enabled him to overcome them, that genius was rooted in his deep love for

his fellowmen. Love is the source of invention, and we are at a Solferino of today; by following the example of our founder, we shall find a solution.

Defence against atomic warfare is obviously above all the responsibility of the governments which are not prepared to renounce the use of certain weapons. We may assume that all governments and all military authorities believe that their plans will be adequate for such a contingency. Most of these plans are State secrets, and the national Red Cross Society, in its capacity as an auxiliary to the public authorities, must act in accordance with them.

On the other hand, the International Committee, which is the guardian of Red Cross principles, has already prepared Draft Rules for the Limitation of the Dangers incurred by the Civilian Population in Time of War, and these are now being put into final form. The International Conferences of the Red Cross has also adopted several resolutions on this matter. There is no need to discuss them here, interesting though it would be, since recent resolutions have been widely commented upon, while earlier resolutions are no longer of current interest.

There remains, however, one essential matter which, in our view, has not yet been studied sufficiently. It is the establishment of a corps of medical personnel specialised in radioactivity. What has been done by the Red Cross of the German Federal Republic may serve as an example. It appears that this national Society decided that the first step was to train a corps of Red Cross doctors specialised in the treatment of victims of radiation. For this purpose, two professorships were founded, at the universities of Freidberg and Munich. Instruction is given in first aid, etc. ¹. The course covers not only medicine, but also industry

¹ INSTITUT UND POLIKLINIK FÜR PHYSIKALISCHE THERAPIE UND ROENTGENOLOGIE DER UNIVERSITÄT MÜNCHEN (Vorstand: Prof. Dr. med. H.v. Braunbehrens).

Unterrichtsplan zur Ausbildung von Ärzten.

I. Theoretischer Unterricht :

- A. Grundbegriffe der Atom- bzw. Kernphysik
- B. a) Natürliche Radioaktivität.
b) Künstliche Radioaktivität.

and agriculture, no doubt with a view to the use of radioactivity for peaceful purposes.

The course lasts for four months. Those who complete it are given the title " Medical specialist in Radioactivity ". In this way the Red Cross of the German Federal Republic has already given specialised training in the treatment of radioactivity to 80 doctors, and the intention is to reach the figure of 200. Special nurses will be trained at a later stage, in order to disseminate first aid methods.

The Germans are reputed for their sense of method and organisation. We consider that this programme is an excellent one. In order to care for the victims of radioactivity, it is first essential to have doctors who are able to give them the treatment they require.

2. This procedure is, however, not enough; but it is essential.

It is obvious that the Red Cross cannot limit its peacetime activity to the rôle of doctors and nurses. If first aid is to be effective, plans must be drawn up in peacetime for taking the appropriate measures and establishing the necessary organisations. Account must also be taken, however, of the possibility that even the most elaborate and efficient organisation may be destroyed or paralysed in wartime. It is difficult to make pro-

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- C. Dosimetrie energiereicher Strahlung.
 - D. Radio-Isotope in der Medizin.
 - E. Radio-Isotope in der Chemie und Physiologie.
 - F. Übersicht über die Anwendungsmöglichkeiten der Radio-Isotope in Industrie und Technik.
 - G. Radio-Isotope in der Landwirtschaft.
 - H. Strahlenpathologie.
 - I. Radiobiologie — Strahlenschaden — Strahlenkrankheit.
 - J. Strahlenschutz.
 - K. Statistik.
 - L. Meteorologie.
 - M. Erste Hilfe bei Strahlenunfällen.

II. Praktische Übungen :

- A. Experimente.
- B. Praktische Dosimetrie.
- C. Instrumenten und Apparaturen-Praktikum.
- D. Anwendung von offenen und geschlossenen radioaktiven Substanzen an Patienten.

vision against all contingencies in a total atomic war, and none of us has yet experienced such a conflict.

From the theoretical point of view, therefore, every effort should be made

- (a) to discover a method of treatment or of *physical*¹ or *physiological* prevention,
- (b) to make this method as simple as possible,
- (c) to teach it to everyone,
- (d) to give everyone the opportunity to learn and practise this method.

These are perhaps ideals which are impossible of achievement; but no other system is conceivable when it is a matter of bringing assistance to millions of persons at the same moment (for time also counts). Each one must help himself if he is to survive. Outside assistance will only arrive when it is too late, if at all. Protective measures must therefore be individualised or, so to speak, "atomised".

This is why we find the German system an excellent one. In our view, it is the best method of carrying out the plan we have drawn up. And even if war broke out before it had been executed in full, specialized teams like these would be better than nothing at all.

3. A local or limited atomic war

The possibility of a local war calls for special consideration. An atomic war would not necessarily break out solely between the Powers which manufacture and stock nuclear weapons. War might well break out in regions where the population is not prepared for such a possibility, and it would be absurd to imagine that use would not be made of the weapons which are available

¹ *Physical* prevention would imply a system of global atomic protection which would counteract radioactivity or—if one can use the term—would "decontaminate" it. Since radioactivity is an artificial physical phenomenon, there must be a physical means of nullifying it. Although no such means has yet been discovered, it is nevertheless the duty of government authorities to search for it.

at the present time. As we have already seen during the Spanish civil war, all modern weapons then existing were used.

In order to save manpower, effective weapons will be used; in order to limit the scope of the war and to prevent it from developing into a world conflict, a "Blitzkrieg" will be proposed.

One must also consider that in a local war, neighbouring countries would be affected by radioactivity. In Japan, for some time, we could not eat fish from the waters which had been contaminated by nuclear testing at Bikini (the contaminated area stretched for 450 sea-miles). Radioactivity may be carried by rivers, ocean currents, wind and rain.

Because we cannot live in a region which has been devastated and contaminated by radioactivity, a stream of refugees will flee from the places which have been attacked, and these refugees will themselves be contaminated. Before treating them, one must therefore remove their clothes immediately and get rid of all they have brought with them. But where can one dispose of these things? Moreover, great care must be taken in giving treatment; we have seen from practical experience that the doctors and nurses who tended the victims were also eventually contaminated by radioactivity.

The national Societies in neighbouring and even far-off countries would probably be called upon to give assistance to the victims. It might perhaps be necessary to mobilise Red Cross rescue teams throughout the world. In our view, this all points to the need to co-ordinate relief action in the event of a limited war.

4. Preparations must be made on a world scale

There is, however, another imperative reason for co-ordinating the efforts of the Red Cross to prepare for an atomic war. No effective treatment of radioactivity has yet been discovered, nor any sure method of protection against it. Although there is hope that they will be found, it must be achieved soon, before any outbreak of war. When one thinks of the deadly effects which we in Japan see every day, nothing can be more urgent than to discover methods of protection and treatment. But

scientific research requires not only expert knowledge and experiments of every kind ¹, but also enormous sums of money in order to carry out such experiments.

All the Red Cross Societies must co-operate in order to achieve this end. We must not guard our secrets jealously, like some national organisations which pride themselves on making a contribution to humanity; the results of experiments must be exchanged, and joint studies undertaken. In our humble opinion, Dunant's affirmation that the Red Cross must be universal if it is to succeed has never been more justified than now.

We are certain that if a movement of this kind were launched, many national Societies would take part in it and would benefit from it. The Japanese Red Cross would be prepared to make its contribution, in the following way :

We were the victims of atomic warfare, we suffered tremendously and we are still suffering from its effects; it is therefore only natural that for the last twelve years, in every university and hospital laboratory in Japan, we have been working day and night to discover effective means of restoring the health of victims of atomic bombs. Even today, there are in Japan at least 10,000 persons, in addition to those who are in hospital, whose health must be checked regularly. These people are apparently as healthy as anyone else. The men go to work, the children go merrily to school. And then one day a fatal symptom appears, and at the earliest one week later, or at the latest one year afterwards, most of them will inevitably die ... and they know it.

At the present time, an average of two or more persons die like this each month in Japan. The news of their death, which recurs with relentless regularity, and above all the news of a suicide, rends the heart of all who hear it. Such are the retroactive effects of radioactivity.

And that is not all. The children grow up and marry. We are now finding out that the percentage of malformed children born is much higher when the parents were directly or *indirectly*

¹ See the German study course as indicated in the foregoing footnote.

exposed to radioactivity than when the parents have remained safe and sound. This is the second generation. What will the third be like? We do not know, but the predictions of science are not reassuring.

This is the experimental data—the material—which we have in Japan. This material is of great value for all scientific research in this field. We have exchanged information and undertaken joint studies with some countries, but our great desire is to do so with all our sister Societies for the good of mankind and above all in order to prepare a co-ordinated plan of action in the event of an atomic war. That is our desire. It would, however, probably be necessary to have a single common centre from which the whole movement could efficiently be directed.

We should be happy if this article serves to draw the attention of readers of the *Revue internationale* to a problem which is of great current significance. In conclusion, we say: *Long live the Red Cross!*

MASUTARO INOUÉ
Director of Foreign Affairs,
Japanese Red Cross

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

RECOGNITION OF THE LIBYAN RED CRESCENT

GENEVA, September 9, 1958.

422nd Circular

*To the Central Committees of the National Red Cross
(Red Crescent, Red Lion and Sun) Societies*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

We have the honour to inform you of the official recognition of the Libyan Red Crescent by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The President of this Society applied for its recognition by the International Committee on June 22, 1958. The letter stated that the Libyan Red Crescent accepted the ten conditions laid down for the recognition of new National Societies and would abide by them.

The application was accompanied by the text of the Society's Statutes and a copy of the Royal Decree of October 5, 1957 (12 Rabi el-Awal 1376) which afforded them official recognition. The study of these documents in conjunction with the League of Red Cross Societies showed that the ten conditions for recognition had been fulfilled. The International Committee has pleasure, therefore, in according the recognition of this Society which is a further step towards the universality of

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

the institution and brings the number of member Societies of the International Red Cross to eighty-two.

By the terms of its Statutes, the Libyan Red Crescent is recognised by its Government as a voluntary and autonomous relief society auxiliary to the public authorities, in particular the Army Medical Service, in conformity with the provisions of the Geneva Convention. Moreover, it has the special mission to take urgent relief measures in the event of public disasters, to assist in campaigns against epidemics and for the prevention of disease, to train nursing personnel and social workers and to further the Red Cross ideal among the population, and among young people in particular.

The United Kingdom of Libya acceded to the Geneva Conventions on May 22, 1956.

The Libyan Red Crescent was founded on October 5, 1957, and started its work immediately; branches have been opened in the provinces and large cities, also in less important districts. The Society is headed by a Board of Directors composed of the President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer and Secretary-General who are nominated by a Central Committee elected by the General Assembly.

The President of the Society is Mr. Mohammed Ben Othman; its headquarters are in Benghazi.

The International Committee has great pleasure in admitting this new Society into the International Red Cross, accrediting it by the present notice to all other National Societies and recommending it to their kind attention. It also expresses its best wishes for the Society's future and the success of its charitable work.

Yours sincerely,
FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
OF THE RED CROSS,

Léopold BOISSIER
President

BRITISH RED CROSS DISTINCTION
FOR MONSIEUR MAX HUBER

We have already mentioned that the Council of the British Red Cross Society, with the approval of the President, Her Majesty The Queen, awarded the Society's Certificate of Honour, Class I, to Monsieur Max Huber, Patron of the International Committee of the Red Cross¹. This is the highest distinction in the Society's gift. Only two other persons have received it to date, Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal, Commandant in Chief of the Voluntary Aid Detachments of the Society and Lady Twining, who has pioneered the development of Red Cross overseas.

On the occasion of the last meeting of the Executive Board of the League of Red Cross Societies, Lady Limerick, Vice-Chairman of the Central Council and Miss Bark, the Society's international Relations and Relief Adviser, give a dinner at Geneva in Monsieur Huber's honour, who especially wished to come in person to receive this distinction from Lady Limerick's hands. The British Red Cross representatives availed themselves of this opportunity to surround M. Huber with his principal colleagues on the International Committee at Geneva, together with members of the Directorate of the Committee who were his principal assistants during the Second World War.

In her speech, prior to handing the badge of honour to M. Huber, Lady Limerick stressed, in moving terms, the remarkable services rendered by M. Huber to mankind and in particular to British and Commonwealth victims of the last great war. She also recalled M. Huber's exceptional qualities of heart and mind which together with his great modesty enabled him to be

¹) See *Supplement* August 1958.

the effective spokesman and protector of the victims of the harsh events during those tragic years.

M. Huber then replied in English as follows :

I am deeply moved by the very kind words which Lady Limerick has addressed to me, as I was deeply moved also when I received Lord Woolton's friendly letter. I realized, in reading the beautifully balanced wording of the Citation, that this was a proof, both of benevolence and of competence. I am fully aware of the extraordinary privilege which this distinction implies considering the very small number of persons chosen to receive it. I have only learnt this evening, however, who were the two eminent persons on whom it already has been bestowed. But over and above this, I attach the greatest value to the fact that this high order of the Council of the British Red Cross Society had to have the consent and approval of Her Gracious Majesty, The Queen, the President of the British National Society, just as all legislative enactments of the "Mother of Parliaments" have to receive Royal Assent in order to become the Law of the Kingdom.

If a shadow falls on this day of honour and joy for me, it is the fact that my late, dear wife did not live to see it, for she would have rejoiced in it particularly. Indeed, she had a strong predilection, I may say a love for Great Britain, for its people and land, for the English language, customs and traditions.

As regards English honours and British decorations I am, I fear, a Sunday-child, indeed a spoilt one. To explain this, I must recall a souvenir of my early childhood: When I was a boy of 5 or 6 years old, I often played with a little girl of the same age. She was the daughter of a friend of my father's and the granddaughter of the celebrated jurist, Hans Caspar Bluntschli, whose celebrated work: "The Law of Nations, codified" has played an important part in my scientific and public life. At this time Bluntschli received the honorary degree of a Doctor of Law of the University of Oxford, the famous D.C.L. From the mother of my young friend I learned many interesting things about the ceremonies at Oxford. I do not know why it became the ambition of a small Swiss boy and later the aim of a young student of international law to achieve one day the award of the D.C.L.

When this youthful and somewhat fantastic ambition became a reality in 1945 and I was received in the Sheldonian Theatre by the Vice-Chancellor, together with such famous persons as Fieldmarshal Lord Montgomery and General of the Army, Eisenhower, now President of the United States of America, I was deeply impressed by the mysterious way in which man's life is conducted by a higher hand.

But I was no less impressed when I received Lord Woolton's gracious letter some weeks ago, telling me of the honour reserved for me by the British Red Cross; this, more than 12 years since I withdrew from the Chairmanship of the International Committee of the Red Cross and since, on account of my great age and state of health, I had practically vanished from the Red Cross scene.

I know that in the stony regions of public life, both national as well as international, lasting memories and gratitude are amongst the rarest jewels. Though I trust that ambition and the expectation of honours have never entered my Red Cross thoughts—for Red Cross service is self-abnegation—I am all the more moved by this unexpected recognition of service.

Before I entered the world of international affairs and the International High Court of Justice and the Red Cross, I was a scholar and later professor of Political Science and International law. Thus, it was natural that I was much concerned with the evolution of the British Constitution from the Magna Charta to modern times. As a student of international affairs I was greatly interested in the rise of the British Empire and the unique historical phenomenon of its peaceful transformation into a Commonwealth of free Nations. In this particular world of self-government, liberty and greatness, the idea of the Red Cross found the appropriate climate for its development. The British Red Cross is not only one of the first national societies, founded after the conclusion of the Geneva Convention of 1864, but it has also spread over the world and given birth to many daughter branches, which later became sister societies.

I had the privilege, in my younger years, to become acquainted not only with Great Britain, its institutions and its culture, but also with numerous outposts of the Empire and Commonwealth in different continents.

Before and after, but above all during the hard and testing years of the Second World War, the ICRC found in the British Red Cross and its sister societies great comprehension, spontaneous aid and collaboration. I also had the pleasure of close and friendly personal relations with the leaders of the British Red Cross: Sir Arthur Stanley, Fieldmarshal Lord Chetwode, Lord Woolton and Lady Limerick.

In the name of the International Committee and also personally I here wish to express my profound gratitude to the British Red Cross Society.

Last, but not least, I want to thank Lady Limerick, from the bottom of my heart, for her kind initiative in arranging this wonderful gathering which has given me the opportunity of thanking the British Red Cross in the presence of my colleagues, our directors and other collaborators closely connected with our relations to the British Red Cross. We are all members of a team, working together in the Committee. Indeed, the more I advance in age and see facts in perspective, the more I see how modest my personal merits—if any—are and the more I feel indebted to my colleagues, amongst whom I can only mention at this moment, Monsieur Jacques Chenevière, who, together with Mrs. Frick, brought us not only his intelligent, devoted and untiring collaboration, but also his priceless experience, gained during the First World War. Nor can I forget the immense aid given us by thousands of collaborators and voluntary workers and our men on the front, who had not only a hard, but often a painful and dangerous task.

Once more my heartfelt thanks to the British Red Cross and to you, Lady Limerick, in particular.

Monsieur Léopold Boissier, President of the International Committee thanked the British Red Cross for its new proof of friendship and esteem to its august patron. He also recalled the ties which have for many centuries bound Geneva, the cradle of the Red Cross movement, to the United Kingdom and the association between the International Committee and the British Red Cross Society since close on a hundred years.

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS

STANDING COMMISSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS

In connection with the September sessions the Standing Commission held a meeting composed (as appointed by the XIXth International Conference of the Red Cross) of H. E. Ambassador A. François-Poncet, Chairman, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, General A. M. Gruenther and Mr. T. W. Sloper. Professor A. Miterev, unable to attend on account of ill-health, was represented by Mr. N. U. Tchikalenko. The League was represented by Judge E. Sandström and the Countess of Limerick, and the International Committee of the Red Cross by Mr. Léopold Boissier and Mr. F. Siordet.

At the close of its work a press release was issued as follows :

The Standing Commission of the International Red Cross met at Geneva on September 23, 1958.

This was its first meeting since the International Red Cross Conference at New Delhi.

Referring to the difficulties which had arisen at that Conference the Standing Commission decided to establish a small committee, composed of representatives of the International Committee and of the League of Red Cross Societies, to study ways and means of remedying these difficulties and to submit proposals and recommendations for avoiding their recurrence.

Pending the completion of this study, the Standing Commission considers it appropriate to remind the National Red Cross Societies,

as well as the Governments parties to the Geneva Conventions, of the great principles which form the basis for the existence of the International Red Cross, which safeguard its standing in the world and on which its future depends: impartiality, independence, political and religious neutrality, non-discrimination between races, universality.

The International Red Cross rejects all which can divide. It upholds everything which can unite all the members of the family of mankind in the work of mutual aid and assistance.

MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF NATIONAL SOCIETIES AT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE'S HEADQUARTERS

The delegates of thirty-seven National Red Cross Societies present in Geneva to attend the sessions of the Executive Committee of the League took part in a meeting at the ICRC headquarters to discuss general activities and information, in accordance with the now well-established custom and with the kind approval of the League.

Mr. Leopold Boissier, President, welcomed his guests and stressed the importance, for the Red Cross, of the principle of universality.

The meeting then dealt with the principal item on the Agenda concerning the principles which govern assistance to victims of civil war and internal disturbances—a new field in which the role of the International Committee of the Red Cross is continually developing. During the animated discussion which followed the report on the subject given by Mr. R. Gallopin, Executive Director, a number of delegates expressed their approval of the action taken and assured the International Committee of their full support.

Mr. G. Fiechter, Head of the Information Department, described the efforts made by the International Committee to inform the general public of its activities. In this connection he asked whether the ICRC press releases were found to be satisfactory, and raised the question of the publication of a

complete English edition of the *Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge*; he also asked if National Societies could give their assistance with test broadcasts for the transmission of information over the ICRC wave-length.

Mr. F. Siordet, Vice-President, then reminded the delegates that the "Draft Rules for the Limitation of the Dangers incurred by the Civilian Population in Time of War" were at present being examined by the Governments to which the International Committee had sent the Final Record of the New Delhi Conference relating to the matter and a memorandum. Mr. Siordet requested the Red Cross Societies to use their influence with the authorities of their own countries to ensure that the study of this matter be actively pursued.

Mr. M. Inoué, Director of the Japanese Red Cross, and Mr. J. J. Gomez de Rueda, Delegate of the Mexican Red Cross, drew the delegates' attention to the great value which the Red Cross principles represent for the institution at the present time, and the advisability of their codification, and referred to the recent talk on the subject given by Mr. J. Pictet, Director for General Affairs of the ICRC.