

# Greece

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## PART II

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The second part of this Report concerns the work of the ICRC on behalf of victims of the disorders and new conflicts which have occurred since the end of the World War in a certain number of countries.

A survey is made here of the International Committee's work in regard to Greece, Egypt, Indochina and Korea.

### I. Greece

In 1952 the ICRC pursued its relief action for victims of disturbances in Greece—military personnel, civilians under prosecution for various offences, and men and women interned on account of their political beliefs.

The ICRC Delegates visited about fifty camps, prisons and places of exile. On each occasion they were able to converse without witnesses with the persons under detention or exiled, to transmit their complaints, and to suggest and to obtain improvements of conditions in their favour. Incidentally, as a result of representations made by the Delegation the detainees in question were authorised to make use of the ICRC Civilian Message Forms for corresponding with persons resident in countries deprived of regular postal communication with Greece <sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The ICRC has acted as an intermediary for facilitating the exchange of family news between enemy nationals where postal communications have been suspended owing to hostilities. During the First World War, as later during the disturbances in *Spain*, millions of persons applied



The ICRC supplemented its work by more general assistance in favour of the whole of the civilian population suffering from the consequences of the War, forwarding large quantities of relief supplies in the form of foodstuffs, clothing and medicaments. Between January 1 and December 31, 1952, the Athens Delegation distributed 72 tons of various relief supplies representing Sw. Fr. 472,314 in value, which brings to nearly 3 million Swiss francs the value of relief supplies made available in Greece by the ICRC since January 1947.

In addition the ICRC instituted from its own resources an anti-tuberculosis campaign for the civilian population affected by the war and post-war events, and for inmates of penitentiaries and places of exile. The Head Nurse of the Delegation made a count of the sick persons and a selection of those for whom treatment with antibiotic drugs would be effectual. This detection of tuberculosis by means of clinical and radiological examinations was in each case accompanied by the compilation of a medical record, of which a duplicate was sent to the ICRC doctor, who was thus enabled, where necessary, to advise as to the treatment required. Thanks to the medicaments donated by the ICRC, and the relief supplies despatched, nearly five hundred TB cases were given treatment under close supervision by the medical record system, and in numerous cases diets were prescribed to supplement medical treatment.

The ICRC received valuable support in carrying out these various tasks from the Greek authorities and the Greek Red

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to the ICRC. In face of this stream of correspondence the ICRC set up a Civilian Message Service at the Central Prisoners of War Agency. In 1939 it instituted a model message form, with particulars of (1) the sender organisation (National Red Cross Society, ICRC, Delegation) and (2) the addressee, as a basis for a family message of 25 words and the reply. From September 1939 to 15 June 1945 the total number of civilian messages sent through the Post reached nearly 24 millions—a striking example of the results achieved by the ICRC, with the help of the National Red Cross Societies, during the Second World War. All National Red Cross Societies now have their own forms, which tally with the model set up by the ICRC. In time of war all these messages go through Geneva. See *De la question des messages familiaux à celle de la protection des civils*, by J. G. Lossier, Member of the ICRC Secretariat, *Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, Novembre 1941, and *The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949*, 3rd Edition, 1951, Fourth Convention, Article 25 (*Family News*), page 164.

Cross, as well as from numerous Greek doctors who placed their voluntary and regular services at the Delegation's disposal in order to make this anti-tuberculosis campaign a success.

For the repatriation of Greek children, we refer to the account given above <sup>1</sup> of the joint representations of the ICRC and the League in accordance with the mandate which they accepted from the United Nations Assembly.

The ICRC also made efforts to obtain the support of the National Red Cross Societies concerned in regard to former Greek military personnel still detained in certain foreign countries and wishing to be repatriated.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Part I*, Chapter IV, above, page 34.