

2. INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS.

At the first meeting of the UNRRA Council in December 1943, a Resolution was passed relating to policies with respect to Displaced Persons which provided, among other things, that the Director-General should "take steps to ensure the closest cooperation with such agencies as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees and any other appropriate bodies....." Following the Council meeting, the Director-General wrote on 14th December to the Delegate of the ICRC in the USA, stating that he was pleased to note the decision of the ICRC to extend their existing Record Bureau for Prisoners-of-War to "civilians no longer living at their usual addresses who desire to establish contact with other members of their families". He added that UNRRA would be "pleased to collaborate with the International Committee of the Red Cross particularly as such collaboration was envisaged by action of the Council of UNRRA". Thus it was assumed from the outset that UNRRA would look to the ICRC for services in connection with the tracing of missing persons.

During 1944 the ICRC in Geneva established a Central Register for Civilians along the lines of that already existing and in use during the war for Prisoners-of-War. By means of this Register it was hoped that enquirers could be paired off against one another by the use of a suitably indexed record in which the names of missing persons could be sought.

Reference has already been made to the fact that UNRRA and the Standing Technical Sub-Committee on Displaced Persons for Europe contemplated using the services of the ICRC as a Central Tracing Bureau for Europe for which purpose, as has been seen, an invitation was issued in the name of UNRRA on September 15th, 1944. It was the intention of UNRRA that the bulk of the tracing business in Europe should be carried out by direct communication between National Tracing Bureaux and that the Central Bureau for Europe should only be consulted, generally speaking, in the case of enquiries not solved by National Tracing Bureaux, or enquiries in which even the country of probable residence of the person sought was unknown. The ICRC felt that as a Central Tracing Bureau they should be consulted in the first place; cases of enquiries not satisfactorily dealt with in this way should then be

2. INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

At the first meeting of the ICRC Council in December 1945, a resolution was passed relating to policies with respect to displaced persons which provided, among other things, that the Director-General should take steps to ensure the closest cooperation with such agencies as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees and any other appropriate bodies..... Following the Council meeting, the Director-General wrote on 14th December to the Delegates of the ICRC in the USA, stating that he was pleased to note the intention of the ICRC to extend their existing Search Bureau for Prisoners-of-War to civilians no longer living at their usual addresses who desire to establish contact with other members of their families". He added that UNRWA would be pleased to collaborate with the International Committee of the Red Cross particularly as such collaboration was envisaged by action of the Council of UNRWA. Thus it was assumed from the outset that UNRWA would look to the ICRC for services in connection with the tracing of missing persons.

During 1947 the ICRC in Geneva established a Central Register for missing persons along the lines of that already existing and in use during the war for Prisoners-of-War. The name of this register is as hoped that enquiries could be paired off against one another by the use of a suitably indexed record in which the names of missing persons could be sought.

Reference has already been made to the fact that UNRWA and the Standing Technical Sub-Committee on Displaced Persons for Europe contemplated using the services of the ICRC as a Central Tracing Bureau for Europe for which purpose, as has been seen, an invitation was issued in the name of UNRWA on September 19th, 1946. It was the intention of UNRWA that the work of the tracing bureau in Europe should be carried out by direct collaboration between National Tracing Bureaux and that the Central Bureau for Europe should only be consulted, generally speaking, in the case of enquiries not solved by National Tracing Bureaux, or enquiries in which even the country of possible residence of the person sought was unknown. The ICRC felt that as a Central Tracing Bureau they should be consulted in the first place; cases of enquiries not satisfactorily dealt with in this way should then be

sent to the National Tracing Bureaux. This point of view was, of course, in contradiction to the pattern envisaged by UNRRA. The scheme which had already been accepted by the Standing Technical Sub-Committee did not provide for referral to the Central Tracing Bureau until after the National Tracing Bureaux had failed to produce results. It was considered by UNRRA essential that the tracing system should be decentralized as far as possible, and the volume of work which would be thrown on the Central Tracing Bureau, if it worked on the plan suggested by Mr. Burchardt, President of the ICRC, would be overwhelming. Finally there were political difficulties in the way of too extensive a committal to the ICRC owing to the lack of diplomatic relations between the USSR and Switzerland. This difference of opinion between UNRRA and the ICRC did not appear capable of resolution in London, and accordingly the London Delegation of the ICRC suggested to Geneva that they should invite UNRRA to send delegates to Switzerland for conferences. The invitation was for coming on January 29th, 1945 and arrangements were immediately made to send to Geneva Mr. Eyre Carter of the Foreign Office Relief Department, working with UNRRA.

Mr. Carter travelled to Geneva on February 23rd in the company of Mr. Ben Youngdahl, UNRRA officer attached to SHAEF. In the course of some cordial meetings with the ICRC the latter accepted without questions the view of UNRRA that all possible enquiries should be dealt with in the first place by National Tracing Bureaux. Thus, apparently, the stage was set for tracing to be carried out in the main by National Tracing Bureaux, but in regard to difficult cases not solved by other methods or with regard to persons in distant countries for whom a National Tracing Bureau was not available, the Central Tracing Bureau for Europe would exercise its function.

By the early Spring of 1945, therefore, the time had apparently arrived for the establishment of a tracing system along the lines proposed by UNRRA, and indeed a number of Governments of liberated countries were already taking practical measures to set up National Tracing Bureaux. An account will be given below of the manner in which at this stage the military authorities became interested in the subject of tracing and eventually took over the responsibility for the Central Tracing Bureau and Record

being or were shortly being returned to their homes and that they would,

... to the National Trading Bureau. This point of view was, of course, in contradiction to the pattern envisaged by UNCTAD. The concern which had already been accepted by the Economic Commission for Europe was not yet fully reflected in the General Trading Bureau until after the National Trading Bureau had failed to produce results. It was considered by UNCTAD essential that the trading system should be formalized as far as possible, and the volume of work which would be thrown on the General Trading Bureau, if it worked on the plan suggested by Mr. Borchardt, President of the ECEU, would be overwhelming. Finally there were political difficulties in the way of too extensive a transfer to the UNCTAD of the task of organizing relations between the USSR and Switzerland. This difference of opinion between UNCTAD and the ECEU did not appear capable of resolution in London, and accordingly the London Delegation of the UNCTAD suggested to Geneva that they should invite UNCTAD to send a delegate to Switzerland for consultation. The invitation was for coming on January 27th, 1955 and arrangements were immediately made to send to Geneva Mr. Guy Carter of the Foreign Office Relief Department, working with UNCTAD.

The matter proceeded to Geneva on January 27th in the company of Mr. Ben Youngblood, UNCTAD officer attached to UNCTAD. In the course of some initial meetings with the UNCTAD the latter accepted without question the view of UNCTAD that all possible expedients should be dealt with in the first place by National Trading Bureau. This, accordingly, the stage was set for dealing to be carried out in the main by National Trading Bureau, but in regard to difficult cases not solved by other methods or with regard to particular in distant countries for whom a National Trading Bureau was not available, the General Trading Bureau for Europe could exercise its function.

In the early spring of 1955, therefore, the line had apparently been set for the establishment of a trading system along the lines proposed by UNCTAD, and under a number of Governments of interested countries were already taking practical measures to set up National Trading Bureaus. In the future will be given below of the manner in which at this stage the UNCTAD authorities became interested in the subject of trading and eventually took over the responsibility for the General Trading Bureau and its work.

Tracing Office in Germany. In the meantime the ICRC in a memorandum addressed to SHAEF on April 21st 1945 asked SHAEF to enable the ICRC to instal their delegates in occupied Germany. While, in the main, they would devote their time to the traditional tasks of assisting Prisoners-of-War, it was pointed out that the Committee was much concerned with the problem of dispersed families and desired to place its service at the disposal of the official organisations in connection with the enquiry for and the repatriation of this category of war victims. This letter seems to have been followed up by a personal conference between Mr. Pradervand, ICRC Delegate in France and General Graslet of SHAEF, in which the latter reacted favourably to the ICRC proposals. On May 30th he replied officially approving the establishment of an office of the ICRC in Germany and stating that if the ICRC desired to work in connection with Displaced Persons, it would be necessary to work out an arrangement with UNRRA.

The ICRC submitted its proposals to UNRRA on May 29th in which the ICRC proposed a plan, "the putting into practical effect of which will be studied with UNRRA", for tracing missing persons and, in connection with this, for "the distribution and collection of the cards, which are now being printed in Geneva, in Assembly Centres in Germany". This plan was approved by UNRRA and submitted to SHAEF G-5. Brig. Gen. Michelsen replied on behalf of G-5 that the recommendation of UNRRA for service by the ICRC along the lines of the ICRC memorandum was "accepted and the application of the International Red Cross approved subject to the terms set forth in Administrative Memorandum No. 39, Appendix G". This decision was communicated to the ICRC on June 12th. It was thus clear that both UNRRA and SHAEF accepted the principle of using the ICRC for tracing services along the lines of the ICRC proposals the details of which were to be discussed with UNRRA.

Some of these details had already been discussed on June 2nd 1945 by Major Eyre Carter, who was acting as Records Officer attached to the DP Division of IRO, in a document signed jointly him and Mr. Thudichum, the Tracing Expert of the ICRC, and addressed to G-5 SHAEF at Versailles. It was suggested that the bulk of the repatriable Displaced Persons were being or were shortly being returned to their homes and that they would,

Working Office in Germany. In the meantime the ILO in a memorandum addressed to SHARP on April 23rd 1945 asked SHARP to enable the ILO to furnish their delegates in occupied Germany. In the main, they would devote their time to the traditional tasks of studying conditions of work, it was pointed out that the Committee was much concerned with the problem of housing and facilities and desired to place its services as the disposal of the official organizations in connection with the enquiry for and the registration of this category of war victims. This latter seems to have been followed up by a personal conference between Mr. Trefanberg, ILO Delegate in France and General Weiser of SHARP, in which the latter requested favorably to the ILO proposals. On May 1945 he replied officially approving the establishment of an office of the ILO in Germany and stating that if the ILO decided to work in connection with displaced persons, it would be necessary to work out an arrangement with SHARP.

The ILO submitted the proposals to UNRRA on May 25th in which the ILO proposed a plan, "the purpose being to study the conditions of work in the occupied areas, for the purpose of making it possible to establish a connection with SHARP, for the distribution and collection of the cards, which are not being prepared in Germany, in assembly centers in Germany." This plan was approved by UNRRA and submitted to SHARP on 6-2-45. The plan was replied on behalf of SHARP that the reconstruction of SHARP for services by the ILO along the lines of the ILO memorandum was accepted and the application of the International had great growth subject to the terms set forth in Administrative Memorandum No. 22, Appendix B. This resolution was communicated to the ILO on June 1945. It was then clear that both UNRRA and SHARP accepted the principle of using the ILO for working very close along the lines of the ILO proposals the details of which it was to be discussed with UNRRA.

Some of these details had already been discussed on June 1945 by Major Pyre Carter, who was acting as ILO's Director, according to the Director of ILO, in a document which clearly sets out the ILO's traditional working program of the ILO, and referred to 6-2-45 as mentioned. It was suggested that the ILO of the representative displaced persons were being or were shortly being returned to their homes and that they would

therefore, be traced by their own National Tracing Bureaux. There would remain a number, estimated at 500,000 to a million, non-repatriable and it was proposed that the ICRC function as the Central Tracing Bureau for Europe would be the vast responsibility for dealing with the tracing enquiries of non-repatriable. The Red Cross tracing form P. 10,027 in nineteen different languages, together with instructions, were to be distributed in the Assembly Centres by ICRC delegates and after collection and censorship were to be transmitted to Geneva. The general authority for this plan stemmed, according to the document, from the fact that, "by agreement between SHAEF, UNRRA and the Committee of the International Red Cross the latter named acts as a central link in the system of tracing missing persons". Major Carter was, of course, correct in supposing that this proposal accorded with UNRRA policy as it had been developed during the previous eighteen months in ERO with the full approval of the Standing Technical Sub-Committee. His assumption reflected SHAEF policy was at that time less well founded though it was no doubt based upon the SHAEF approval of the document "Communication Between Displaced Persons and Their Families". Nevertheless, this document only related to the use of the ICRC facilities and no decision had hitherto been reached on detailed procedures for tracing enquiries by Displaced Persons either at SHAEF or in ERO. Major Carter appears to have overlooked the fact that it was SHAEF and not UNRRA that was running the operation at that stage and that any detailed procedure would have to receive the fullest concurrence of the various military authorities. However, it is evident that SHAEF at that time was ready to contemplate the entry of the ICRC Delegates into Assembly Centres for purposes of tracing as indicated by its official acceptance of the ICRC proposal mentioned above. Colonel Charles I. Schottland, at the time in the Displaced Persons Branch of G-5 SHA EF and later Chief of Relief Services in CIM, described the situation in the following terms:

"As regards the International Red Cross it is true that an agreement with them on the use of their tracing facilities was concluded by UNRRA with the approval of Combined Displaced Persons Executive (CDPE). But the method of using their facilities has not yet been settled. Mr. Byre Carter, during his assignment as Records Officer, went to Switzerland and drew a more

... be traced by their own National Security Council. There would be  
 a number, estimated at 500,000 to a million, non-identifiable and it was  
 proposed that the ICCC function as the General Security Council for Europe  
 and be the main responsibility for dealing with the security agencies of  
 member states. The Red Cross strategy form P. 40, 1947 in the case of  
 these languages, together with instructions, were to be distributed in the  
 Assembly Center by ICCC delegates and other delegates and membership  
 was to be transferred to Geneva. The General Security Council for this plan  
 was, according to the document, "the last step" by agreement bet-  
 ween SHARP, ICCC and the Committee of the International Red Cross the  
 document was as a central link in the system of "crossing national persons".  
 The document was, of course, correct in suggesting that this proposal accorded  
 with ICCC policy as it had been developed during the previous eighteen  
 months in ICCC with the full approval of the Standing Technical Sub-Committee.  
 The document reflected SHARP policy as at that time had been  
 though it was no doubt based upon the ICCC approval of the document  
 Commission between Displaced Persons and their families. However,  
 this document only related to the use of the ICCC facilities and no  
 mention had hitherto been made on detailed procedure for finding ex-  
 penses by Displaced Persons either at SHARP or in ICCC. Major Carter appears  
 to have overlooked the fact that it was SHARP and not ICCC that was to  
 pay the operation at that stage and that any detailed procedure would have  
 to receive the fullest concurrence of the various military authorities.  
 However, it is evident that SHARP at that time was ready to contemplate the  
 many of the ICCC delegates into Assembly Centers for purposes of training  
 as indicated in the official acceptance of the ICCC proposal mentioned  
 above, Colonel Charles I. Schottland, at the time in the Displaced Per-  
 sons Branch of G-5 DIA IV and later Chief of Relief Services in G-1, desert-  
 ed the situation in the following terms:  
 "As regards the International Red Cross it is true that an agree-  
 ment with them on the use of their training facilities was concluded by SHARP  
 with the approval of Combined Displaced Persons Executive (CDPE) but the  
 method of using their facilities has not yet been worked out. The  
 during his assignment as Health Officer, was so concerned as to find a more

detailed agreement without having the authority to do so. As a result, misunderstandings arose which are greatly to be regretted".

On July 4th, 1945 Miss H.P. Pollak, UNRRA Welfare Officer attached to SHAEF, sent to the ICRC on Col. Schottland's suggestion a brief memorandum outlining the main aspects of the Displaced Persons Operation in Germany with particular reference to the relationship of UNRRA to the military authorities and to Voluntary Agencies. In this memorandum some detail was given of the procedure which had to be followed in arranging for operations by Voluntary Agencies and asking the ICRC to submit full details of supplementary proposals. It was, however, acknowledged that the proposal for an International Tracing Bureau had already been admitted and duly approved, and the memorandum is unclear on whether the additional details required were intended to apply also to the International Tracing Bureau.

On July 23rd Dr. R. Marti, Chief ICRC Delegate in Germany, wrote to UNRRA saying that the ICRC Tracing Expert, Mr. Thudichum, had arrived on the previous Thursday with two lorries loaded with half a million ICRC Tracing cards, (P 10.027) and large quantities of instructions in fourteen languages. UNRRA was asked if the first distribution of this material in an Assembly Centre might take place in the presence of Mr. Thudichum. To this request UNRRA replied that they regretted it would not be possible to arrange for the immediate distribution of the ICRC Tracing Cards in Assembly Centres as CDPX had not yet issued the military directive governing such operations. Arrangements for tracing operations would be the subject of discussions between the military authorities, the ICRC and UNRRA in the near future.

From that time onwards, the ICRC was virtually excluded from the field of civilian tracing. On September 7th, 1945, CDPX wrote to the ICRC informing them that they had set up a Tracing Records and Communications Unit incorporating a Central Tracing Bureau (CTB) and a Central Records Office. It was proposed that all enquiries received by the CTB referring to Allied military personnel should be passed on to Geneva, and similarly all civilian enquiries unsuitable for field tracing or on which negative results had been obtained, The ICRC, for its part, was asked to pass civilian enquiries regarding persons missing in Germany to the CTB and to inform the CTB of the

62

...detailed agreement without having the authority to do so. As a result, misunderstandings arose which are hereby to be corrected.

On July 4th, 1945, Mrs. H.M. Lohr, Chief of the IGOB, advised the IGOB that she had received a letter from the IGOB on July 3rd, 1945, regarding a draft memorandum outlining the main aspects of the proposed IGOB operation in Germany with particular reference to the relationship of IGOB to the military authorities and to Voluntary Agencies. In this memorandum it was stated that the IGOB was given of the procedure which had to be followed in arranging for operations by Voluntary Agencies and asking the IGOB to submit full details of supplementary proposals. It was, however, acknowledged that the proposal for an International Trading Bureau had already been drafted and duly approved, and the memorandum is unclear on whether the additional details required were intended to apply also to the International Trading Bureau.

On July 23rd, 1945, Chief IGOB Delegates in Germany, wrote to IGOB saying that the IGOB Trading Report, Mr. Thindman, had arrived on the previous Thursday with two further loads with half a million IGOB Trading Cards, (P 10,000) and large quantities of instructions in fourteen languages. It was noted that the first distribution of this material in an Assembly Centre might take place in the presence of Mr. Thindman. To this request IGOB replied that they regretted it would not be possible to arrange for the immediate distribution of the IGOB Trading Cards in Assembly Centres as they had not yet issued the military directive governing such operations. Arrangements for trading operations would be the subject of discussion between the military authorities, the IGOB and IGOB in the near future.

From that time onwards, the IGOB was virtually excluded from the field of civilian trading. On September 7th, 1945, IGOB, GERM wrote to the IGOB stating that they had set up a Trading Bureau and Germanization Office incorporating a Central Trading Bureau (CTB) and a Central Bank Office. It was proposed that all enquiries received by the CTB referring to Allied military personnel should be passed on to GERM, and similarly all civilian enquiries should be passed on to IGOB, for its part, was asked to pass civilian enquiries to IGOB and to inform the CTB of the

records concerning Displaced Persons either held by them or whose location was known to them. The ICRC appears still to have entertained some hopes of playing a definite part in the tracing business and expressed this point of view at meetings held in Paris on August 1st and 17th. But in fact no more consideration was given to using the ICRC facilities. In January 1946, Col. Bowring, Director of CTB, visited Geneva and asked the ICRC to place its facilities at the disposal of UNRRA. In reply the ICRC stated that it would announce that the centralisation of enquiries concerning, and the search for, Displaced Persons in Germany had now been taken over by the CTB in cooperation with the National Tracing Bureaux. The ICRC would place at the disposal of the CTB and the NTB's all future and existing data regarding tracing enquiries and information.

In March and April, Miss S.J. Warner, ERO Tracing Consultant, visited Germany and Switzerland and proposed that the ICRC should be asked on a commission basis to analyse the vast number of lists of former inmates of concentration camps and others in Germany by means of its mechanical filing machines. This proposal, however, was not taken up by UNRRA.

Since a quadrupartite tracing organisation was contemplated, including the Russian Zone, it was evident that the ICRC could not play an active part owing to the lack of diplomatic relations between Switzerland and the USSR. Unfortunately, CDPX and UNRRA both approved of a plan for the active participation of the ICRC in tracing, and this obvious error on the part of CDPX which had the responsibility for the decision no doubt only contributed towards the general misunderstanding. All these circumstances cooperated to produce an atmosphere of misunderstanding and irritation of which the ICRC was the largely innocent victim. It was, however, inevitable in the circumstances that the decision was eventually made to place the responsibility for tracing activities on the shoulders of CDPX.

### 3. MILITARY PLANS FOR TRACING

Since, during the first half of 1945, responsibility for Displaced Persons rested upon SHAEF, it was natural that on the liberation of Allied territories and the occupation of enemy territory a large number of enquiries should be directed to SHAEF by anxious relatives of Displaced