

Enquiry into the Violations of the Geneva Convention.

On January 3rd, the Central Committee of the Swedish Red Cross asked the International Committee to institute a juridical enquiry into the bombing of Malka Lidar. The International Committee replied on January 7th that, for an official enquiry to be undertaken, it would have to be requested by one of the belligerents, which had not been done so far.

In its letter of January 16th, the Italian Government declared that it could wish nothing better than that International Committee delegates, selected for the purpose, should proceed to the scene of operations, in order to ascertain whether, and if so how, the rules of the Geneva Convention are observed or violated by each of the parties.<sup>1)</sup>

This desire was also expressed by the General President of the Italian Red Cross.<sup>2)</sup>

The Ethiopian Government for its part, cabled on January 23rd, that it would welcome the sending of representatives selected by the International Committee to enquiry into the observance of the provisions of the Geneva Convention on both sides. The Ethiopian Government added that it would give our representatives every facility.

The International Red Cross Committee declared its willingness to accede to the desire expressed by the Italian and Ethiopian Governments and got into touch with both. A two-fold enquiry will call for the appointment of persons with legal and medical qualifications and entail expenditure which will greatly exceed the financial capacity of the Committee and which should be borne by the Governments concerned.

In contemplation of this enquiry, the International Committee is keeping before it the reports already received from its mission on the abovementioned bombing incidents, as well as on a number of facts of the same kind and on the alleged misuse of the Red Cross Emblem in Ethiopia.

Mission of the International Red Cross Committee.

The mission of the International Committee in Ethiopia has endeavoured to coordinate the work of the Red Cross in that country. In particular, it received the medical units sent by the National Red Cross Societies of neutral countries, and facilitated their organisation and their journey to the stations assigned to them.

One of the International Committee delegates, Mr. Sidney H. Brown, proceeded to Dessie, where he saw the first Italian prisoners of war and satisfied himself that they were well treated and able to correspond with their families.

Another delegate, Dr. Marcel Junod, travelled on two occasions from Addis Ababa to Dessie and in a medical service aeroplane piloted by the Swedish Airman, Count de Rosen, to Muggelli and Malka Lidar, to collect evidence concerning the bombing on December 30th.

1) Cf. Circular No. 323, p. 3.

2) " " " " p. 8.