



—Photographic '49

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS CONFERENCE

A general conference view of the 18th International Red Cross Conference held in Toronto, July 23-August 9.

ing in Korea or elsewhere the functions for which it was created; why they rejected specific suggestions that Communist charges in Korea should be investigated by the ICRC, and why they refused to accept any of the articles in the Constitution of the International Red Cross (which came up for revision at this Conference) assigning powers and duties to the International Committee. The Communists have not, so to speak, "de-recognized" the International Committee, as they still acknowledge its existence as a component of the International Red Cross, but they have clearly indicated that they wish the Committee to have no functions and no powers.

This appears to be the present situation. The Communist states have expressed their unwillingness to allow the International Committee, which, through two World Wars, has been one of the two chief instruments for mitigating the hardships of war (the other is the institution known as the "Protecting Power") to fulfil its proper function of mediating in these matters between enemy states. This circumstance could prove tragic should the area of present hostilities increase. To discuss the reasons behind those given by the Communists is not within the scope of this article. The reader, if acquainted with the behaviour of the Russians towards prisoners during and after the Second World War and with current negotiations in Korea, can doubtless make a pretty good fist at this enquiry for himself.

The debates on the International Committee were characterized by a measure of subtlety in method and a degree of uncertainty in result. This can scarcely be said of the propaganda efforts of the Communist delegations, which were tedious, unimaginative, unskillful and of very little local effect. They were directed generally against the United States and centered on Korea, perhaps in a vain effort to estrange