

NEW YORK TIMES - Saturday, June 3, 1967

## Red Cross Links Gas To Yemeni Deaths

By THOMAS J. HAMILTON  
Special to The New York Times

GENEVA, June 2—The International Committee of the Red Cross announced today that "many" inhabitants of a village in North Yemen died by asphyxiation after a bombing attack last month. It added that a Red Cross medical team had found "various indications pointing to the use of poison gas bombs."

The bombing took place several days before the medical team arrived on May 15 and 16 to treat the survivors, the announcement said. It explained that the team had been delayed because its truck convoy was bombed while on its way to the village.

The all-Swiss committee, which has the controlling voice in International Red Cross activities, did not say whose

Continued on Page 9, Column 2

## Use of Gas Linked to Yemeni Deaths

Continued From Page 1, Col. 5

planes were responsible. In response to questions, a spokesman said only that the village was "probably" in Royalist territory.

Reliable sources here said afterward that the United Arab Republic, which has stationed an expeditionary force believed to total up to 50,000 men in Yemen to support the republican regime against the Royalists, carried out the attack. Later in May, they said, other gas attacks by the United Arab Republic killed at least 75 persons in two other Royalist-held villages.

### Plea to War Participants

The International Committee appealed today to all the authorities concerned in the Yemeni civil war to "take the solemn engagement not to resort in any circumstances whatever to the use of asphyxiating gases or any other similar toxic substances."

The appeal was addressed to the Yemeni Royalist Government and to Saudi Arabia, which is supporting it; to the Yemeni Republican Government and to the United Arab Republic.

The International Committee of the Red Cross is an independent body that works in association with national Red Cross organizations to check

the observance of international treaties prescribing rules for treatment of prisoners and civilian war victims by belligerents. The committee's announcement today said that it was "extremely disturbed and concerned by these methods of warfare which are absolutely forbidden by codified international and customary law."

Since 1928, the Egyptian Government and its successor, the United Arab Republic, has been a party to the Geneva Convention of 1925, which prohibits the use of poison gas.

Last February, the International Committee, acting on reports that poison gas had been used, sent an appeal to the belligerents in Yemen to respect their international commitments. At the time, according to sources in close touch with the committee, it felt that it could do no more because it lacked evidence.

### Team Visited Village

Concerning the latest incident, however, the International Committee was positive. It said that its medical team, despite the delay resulting from the air attack, reached the village on May 15 and 16, treated some of the wounded "and collected various indications pointing to the use of poison gas."

It was understood that more details were contained in reports sent to the four Gov-

ernments. By a coincidence, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia is now in Geneva at the Intercontinental Hotel, a few hundred yards away from the International Committee headquarters.

According to other sources, the village cited by the International Committee is probably Balt Maran, which they said was attacked by United Arab Republic planes on May 6.

These sources said that the relief convoy was displaying Red Cross markings when it came under attack and that the attack was intended to prevent it from giving help. The Red Cross medical personnel jumped out of the trucks when the first bomb dropped and hid among rocks until the United Arab Republic planes flew away, they said.

### Other Attacks Reported

The exact number of victims was not disclosed, but on May 11 an attack by United Arab Republic forces on Gahr, another village in northern Yemen, was reported to have resulted in more than 50 dead. An attack on Gadafa, the same day was reported to have killed about 25, and Gadafa was reported to have been attacked again on May 17.

However, a bombing raid on still another village, Kitaf, on Jan. 5 was reported to have produced the much larger toll of 150 killed. It was understood that this was the attack that produced the earlier appeal by the International Committee.

According to these sources, the United Arab Republic has mostly used mustard gas, which attacks the skin and lungs, but has also employed a nerve gas that kills by paralyzing the central nervous system. Phosgene gas, a severe irritant to the lungs, is also reported to have been used.