

Information and public relations

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Secretary-General. Later in the year, he was in very close touch with those concerned with developments in Angola.

From the autumn to the end of the year, the delegate to the international organisations and his colleagues were kept busy mainly by the discussions of the thirtieth session of the United Nations General Assembly. The main subjects discussed were Timor and Western Sahara; the human rights situation in Chile and the territories occupied by Israel; Cyprus; racial discrimination and problems in southern Africa; disarmament and the question of napalm and other incendiary weapons; and the work of the Diplomatic Conference. During the same period, ICRC observers were closely following the deliberations of the Security Council on these matters.

Among the other meetings, conferences, assemblies or congresses followed by the ICRC were:

- the 31st session of the United Nations Economic and Social Council Human Rights Committee (discussing human rights in Chile, the Israeli occupied territories, Rhodesia, South Africa and Namibia);
- the 58th session of ECOSOC (report of the Human Rights Committee);
- the General Assembly of the World Health Organization (medical situation in the Israeli occupied territories where an ICRC medical delegate carried out a long mission in 1975 (see p. 22));
- the 5th United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Delinquents;
- various meetings of non-governmental organisations concerned with human rights and the problems of disarmament and international humanitarian law.

The Congress on Crime Prevention, held in Geneva and attended by a thousand experts (criminologists, police, heads of prison services, etc.), offered the ICRC a chance to make some useful contacts and to explain to the delegations present the ICRC activities in prisons especially in connection with political detainees. The Congress also discussed torture and the President of the ICRC took the opportunity offered by a meeting of Amnesty International to deliver an address on the subject of "Torture, the application and diffusion of minimum rules".

The ICRC delegate to the international organisations also followed the work of the second session of the Diplomatic Conference in Geneva before returning to New York to see what effect those discussions had in the United Nations.

VI. INFORMATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public opinion, which in 1975 had been stirred by the conclusion of the wars in Cambodia and Vietnam, by the conflicts in Angola, Timor and Lebanon and by the events in Eritrea and Iraqi Kurdistan, had many opportunities to observe the opera-

tions being carried out by the ICRC around the world on the scenes of both new and earlier conflicts or events, such as those in the Middle East, Chile and Cyprus.

The Press and Information Division in Geneva also had its rush periods, especially during the final stages of the conflicts in Cambodia and Vietnam. They issued nearly 40 press releases and held four press conferences at headquarters.

Information delegates were sent to Phnom Penh, Saigon and Angola to gather information for the ICRC and donors and to act at the same time as spokesmen to inform the many journalists who had come from far and wide to cover those events. Photographers, too, were sent to Indo-China and Angola.

Two 16 mm films showing relief operations in Cambodia (produced by INDSEC) and in Vietnam (shot by the Swiss TV) just before the end of the conflicts have been added to the ICRC film library.

Publications and other productions

The "ICRC in Action", a publication meant mainly for Red Cross Societies and governments but also distributed to the press, appeared regularly throughout 1975, as did "Contact", a joint League-ICRC publication for the press services of National Societies.

On the occasion of the September collection among the Swiss public, the ICRC published an information leaflet entitled "The ICRC in 13 questions" of which more than a million copies were distributed to Swiss households.

Information to National Societies on current operations was accompanied by many photographs illustrating all the aspects of ICRC activities.

Apart from radio reports on current operations, the ICRC Broadcasting Service continued throughout 1975 to transmit a series of programmes meant mainly for the Third World and transmitted every two months on a frequency of 7,210 kHz, which is reserved for the Red Cross, and also over the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation's short wave frequencies via Swiss national transmitters.

Finally, a film entitled "In the beginning . . . Solferino", put together from records in the ICRC film library and the Swiss film library, was made by the ICRC and has been included in the catalogue of films that may be purchased or borrowed. It exists in Arabic, English, French, German and Spanish.

Public relations

The main instrument of ICRC public relations in Switzerland was the widely distributed leaflet, "The ICRC in 13 questions".

ICRC representatives took part in many Red Cross meetings organised in Switzerland by the Central Committee of the Swiss Red Cross or by local sections.

Headquarters was visited by 4,558 persons who attended 220 film shows. The film showing the activities and history of the ICRC was shown 177 times.

Exhibitions

The second World Telecommunications Exhibition, *Telecom 75*, which was held in Geneva from 2 to 6 October, gave the ICRC a chance to show the public how it maintains radio contact between headquarters in Geneva and the delegates in the field. During the hours that the exhibition was open, all ICRC radio traffic came through the ICRC stand at the *Telecom 75*. This attraction was supplemented by a triple-screen film showing the importance of radio communications to ICRC operations and giving a summarized history of the ICRC Telecommunications Service (see p. 29).

The ICRC also played a more modest role in the Zurich, Boston, Montreal and Paris exhibitions (the last-mentioned being an exhibition on the Red Cross organised by the French Red Cross at French Broadcasting House).

VII. PERSONNEL

Despite the escalation of fighting in 1975, there was a slight reduction in ICRC personnel—not counting persons whose services were loaned by National Societies—as shown by the following figures:

		1975	(1974)
– headquarters	employees	238	(227)
– in the field	delegates	85	(126)
– total		323	(353)
– local staff		130	(220)

The reduction of staff in the field is accounted for mainly by the cutback from 45 to 3 in Cyprus as well as in Southeast Asia (activity in Cambodia ceased at the end of April) and in Latin America (with the reduction in relief work in Chile).

The fighting in Angola caused the figure for Africa to rise during 1975 from 5 to 25 delegates, not including scores of doctors, surgeons and nurses made available by the National Societies of Denmark, France, Great Britain, Sweden and Switzerland, for work in Angola.

Delegations: many applications

During 1975, there were more than 500 applications to become ICRC delegate, as compared with 360 in 1974. The economic recession probably contributed to this reawakening of interest in humanitarian work.

Of the 521 applications received, 129 came from non-Swiss who could not be considered as possible delegates. These applicants were advised to apply to their own National Societies.

Of the 392 Swiss applicants considered, 86 were accepted and 306 (78%) rejected.

Training course: 98 participants

The introductory course to initiate applicants into the function of a delegate, after which the final selection is made, was held in four sessions at the Conference Centre at Cartigny (Geneva). It was attended by 98 persons (of whom 17 were women) composed of applicants who had survived the preselection and some ICRC employees. Thirteen persons came from the ICRC Group for International Missions (GMI). The GMI, set up in Berne in 1962, is responsible for recruiting specialized staff to fill technical posts, doctors, radio operators, drivers, etc., who agree to accept missions of at least two months over a period of two years.

Personnel on mission

During the year, 179 posts in the field were filled or renewed, as follows:

- 11 heads of delegation
- 5 regional delegates
- 44 delegates
- 39 doctors, including 19 supplied by National Societies
- 11 agency delegates
- 7 administrators
- 29 male and female nurses, 21 from National Societies
- 5 secretaries
- 14 radio operators
- 14 technicians, including 7 from National Societies.

VIII. FINANCE

Fund-Raising

During 1975, the fund-raising delegate approached many governments to try to obtain either a considerable increase in existing contributions or regular contributions from governments which had not hitherto paid any.

These approaches formed part of an overall plan decided on by the Committee in 1972, the object of which is to obtain from the governments which have acceded to the Geneva Conventions regular annual contributions totalling 7.5 million Swiss francs so that the permanent structure of the ICRC may be financed half by the Swiss Confederation and half by other governments.

Although contributions are voluntary, they do nonetheless derive from Resolution XI of the 1949 Diplomatic Conference, which we quote below:

Whereas the Geneva Conventions require the International Committee of the Red Cross *to be ready at all times and in all circumstances to fulfil the humanitarian tasks entrusted to it by these Conventions,*