

Zeitschrift: Annual report / International Committee of the Red Cross
Herausgeber: International Committee of the Red Cross
Band: - (1965)

Rubrik: Europe

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 15.08.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

day visit to Guadalajara enabled the ICRC President to become acquainted with the activities of one of the National Red Cross Society's State branches.

5. EUROPE

Reuniting of families.—Throughout the year the ICRC continued its work with a view to reuniting families whose members had been dispersed as a result of past and present conflicts and tensions in various parts of the world.

This activity, of which the ICRC was the promoter shortly after the Second World War, has altered somewhat over the years. At the beginning, the ICRC itself undertook most of the negotiations with the authorities and handled the practical aspects of travel arrangements, whereas nowadays it only deals with the many individual enquiries which it receives from the families involved. Thanks to its wide experience of the problem and of circumstances in each country, it has been able to handle these requests by negotiations with the relevant authorities on the basis of its 1962 appeal on behalf of this category of victims.

With this experience behind it, the ICRC co-operated in the drawing up of a draft resolution on the reuniting of dispersed families. This draft was submitted to the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross in Vienna which accepted it unanimously. It urges that human contacts between members of dispersed families be facilitated until family reunion is achieved.

From the outset of this activity, the ICRC has co-operated closely with National Red Cross Societies in the countries concerned. As a result, over 15,000 persons previously separated from their families by barriers which were insuperable for them alone, have been reunited with their relatives in the course of the year under review.

Poland

The ICRC continued to act as a neutral intermediary for the remittance of financial assistance which the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany offered to victims of pseudo-medical

experiments in German concentration camps under the National-Socialist regime. At the beginning of 1965, the members of a further mission to Poland, Mr. Jean-Pierre Maunoir, delegate, and Dr. Jacques de Rougemont, doctor-delegate, examined a further group of 70 victims of such experiments. Their investigation included the thorough study of the files and interviews with each of the victims and with the Polish doctors who treated them. The mission then put forward proposals for consideration by the Neutral Commission of Experts appointed to decide on compensation to victims.

This commission met at ICRC headquarters in April. It comprised Mr. Jean Graven, President of the Court of Appeal and Professor at the Geneva University Faculty of Law; Dr. Alex. F. Muller, Professor of physiopathology at the University; and Dr. Sylvain Mutrux, Assistant Medical Director of the University Psychiatric Clinic. The Polish Red Cross was represented by two observers, Miss Danuty Zys, Head of Foreign Relations, and Dr. Jerzy Nowkunski. In addition, a German doctor, Dr. Götz, an expert in compensation procedure, was present at the discussions as an observer.

After examining the files prepared by the Polish Red Cross, the Commission requested further information on several cases. The ICRC is endeavouring to obtain this information with the assistance of the Polish Red Cross.

Germany

Although the ICRC did not take part in the negotiations for family visits between East and West Berlin, it pleaded the cause of some hundreds of thousands of persons wishing to visit their families in one or the other section of the divided town and it welcomed the agreement which was reached whereby such visits were permitted during the Christmas and New Year holidays.

With the agreement of the Bonn Ministry of Justice, the ICRC delegate went to 10 prisons where he was able to interview 26 political detainees without witnesses. As in previous instances, the Federal and "Länder" authorities greatly facilitated these visits. Similarly in West Berlin, with the agreement of the Senate, the ICRC representative was able to visit two penal establishments

where he talked in private with seven political detainees of his own choosing.

In the course of the year the ICRC delegate had extensive discussions with Mr. von Lex, President of the German Red Cross in the Federal Republic of Germany, Professor Ludwig, President of the German Red Cross in the Democratic Republic of Germany, and with their colleagues, as well as with Mr. Stibi, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs in East Berlin, Mr. Krone, Minister of Foreign Affairs in Bonn, and Mr. Spangenberg, Director of the Senate in West Berlin.

Bulgaria

In the course of a journey to Sofia, an ICRC delegate, Mr. H. G. Beckh, again received permission from the Government ¹ to visit the Stara-Zagora prison where there were political detainees. He talked in private with eight of these detainees chosen by himself. Some cases were the subject of special study.

This mission was greatly facilitated by Dr. Kolarov, President of the Bulgarian Red Cross, by Mr. Voynov, First Vice-Minister of Justice, and by their staff.

Rumania

During a visit to the Rumanian Red Cross, an ICRC delegate, Mr. H. G. Beckh, was able to discuss with Mr. Moisescu, the President, and with his colleagues, problems concerning resolutions adopted by the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross, such as the reuniting of families. In respect of this particular question, the solving of a number of cases was facilitated.

Yugoslavia

Whilst on a visit to the Yugoslav Red Cross, Mr. Beckh, together with the Secretary-General of the Yugoslav Red Cross, Mrs. Mara Rupena-Osolnik and her colleagues, examined certain matters concerning the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross.

¹ See 1964 Annual Report, p. 33.

He also went to a recently modernized detention centre near Titograd, and he enquired about the political detainees he had previously visited and who had since been released.

6. SPECIAL SERVICES

Central Tracing Agency, Geneva

Twenty years after the end of the Second World War, this service is still one of the most important of the ICRC and its activity has shown only a slight tendency to decrease. In 1965, the Agency received 54,203 enquiries and various communications (61,449 in 1964) and the mail it sent out comprised 59,616 items (60,987). It instituted 15,907 investigations for which it received 8,000 replies, of which some 5,000 were positive.

In the year under review the Agency issued 2,278 certificates of captivity in respect of prisoners of the 1939-45 war. These certificates are generally issued to veterans or former resistance fighters nearing retiring age who, to supplement the pensions to which they are entitled, must give proof that they were prisoners of war or interned civilians. The records of the Agency are often the only possibility of obtaining such proof, especially in the case of countries whose archives have been destroyed or dispersed.

The Agency's work is generally carried on in close co-operation with the Information Bureaux of National Societies. In 1965, for instance, the Agency had copious correspondence with the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR and with National Societies of other Eastern European countries. In many cases, this co-operation produced positive results.

Some conflicts have set the Agency special tasks. This was particularly the case in the Indo-Pakistani conflict. During that conflict, the Agency notified the names of 510 Pakistani prisoners of war in India and of 566 Indian prisoners of war in Pakistan. It also transmitted the relevant capture cards and notified the names of 550 interned Pakistani civilians and 51 Indian civilians. These figures, which increased considerably during the first few weeks of 1966, do not fully convey the amount of work which