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The International Tracing Service (Arolsen)

In 1970, the year of its 25th anniversary, the International Tracing Service (ITS), which has been run by the ICRC since 1955, received 123,329 requests. This is only slightly less than the annual average of the past fifteen years (149,381), the highest figure being 203,801 in 1957 and the lowest 100,799 in 1963.

Requests for incarceration and residence certificates relating to the Compensation Act, which came into effect in the Federal Republic of Germany in 1953, once again accounted for most of these requests (71,169). There were 7,173 requests for death certificates, 6,270 requests for documents relating to illness, 5,640 requests for tracing persons, and 2,208 requests for photocopies, the remainder (30,869) concerning requests for miscellaneous information.

Having examined all these requests, the ITS gave 169,106 replies in 1970. These took the form of incarceration and residence certificates, death certificates, documents dealing with cases of illness, reports, affirmative and negative replies, explanatory letters and photocopies.

The number of reference cards for old documents and those newly acquired swelled from 632,006 items in 1969 to 1,046,869 in 1970. The number entered in the central reference file was 1,075,265 (627,822 in 1969), this being the highest figure for fifteen years. By the end of 1970, the central reference index contained 30 million items.

Finally, we should mention the fact that we have acquired many new documents from the concentration camps, the Gestapo, prisons and other places of detention, as well as a very large number of documents of a general nature, as has been the case in previous years.

Supporting Services

DELEGATIONS SERVICE

In 1970, the ICRC set up a Delegations Service to recruit and train delegates.

During its first year of activity, the Delegations Service processed about 330 offers of services. Of these, 65 were chosen to take part