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PERSONNEL

Staff strength

To cope with the ever-increasing number of activities that it had to take on, the ICRC had to reinforce its headquarters staff, which rose from 406 on 1 January to 419 on 31 December. The proportion of persons whose work was directly related to field operations, principles and law, administration, personnel and the Central Tracing Agency remained virtually the same as in 1980.

The number of persons employed in the field (delegates, medical and paramedical personnel, various technicians) sent from Geneva to the different zones of ICRC activity remained practically stable: in January 269 and in December 272.

Principally because of the progressive disengagement of its delegation in Thailand, the ICRC has been able to bring down the number of medical and paramedical personnel put at its disposal by National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies from 172 in January to 85 in December.

The number of locally engaged personnel, essential for the proper working of ICRC delegations, had to be increased: from 518 in January to 901 in December.

During the year, 360 missions were performed by Geneva headquarters personnel.

Recruiting

In 1981, the Recruiting Division received some 900 enquiries from persons wishing to be considered for ICRC missions: 201 candidates were selected for an in-depth examination at headquarters, following which 94 persons were chosen to be trained for field work.

Training

Four introductory courses for the training of new delegates were given at the Cartigny Centre near Geneva, for the

94 candidates selected by the Recruiting Division. These courses provide the necessary grounding for delegates sent from Geneva into the field: history of the Red Cross; distribution of tasks between the League, the ICRC and the National Societies; finance; Geneva Conventions and Protocols; operations outside the scope of the Conventions; procedure of visits to places of detention; assessment of situations; role and tasks of the Central Tracing Agency; material relief; medical aid programmes; information; etc.

In order better to prepare the new delegates to carry out their tasks, some training courses were arranged at headquarters. During the year, 53 beginner delegates took these two to three month courses. These staff had the opportunity of getting to know, at headquarters, the files on operational zones, and the tasks of the Relief Division, the Central Tracing Agency, the administration, etc. Some new delegates were assigned to posts in the field.

The ICRC has organized a three-phase extra theoretical and practical training course for its heads of delegations enabling them to improve their working methods in the field and their leadership qualities. The two first phases of the course, in 1981, were attended by 24 heads of delegation.

In other fields, notably languages, 141 staff members took advantage of supplementary training to enlarge their range of knowledge relating to their professional activities.

As usual, introductory courses on the Red Cross were organized jointly by the League and the ICRC for their new staff. The two courses in 1981 were attended by 44 persons.

Delegations

At 31 December 1981, the ICRC had 26 delegations and 11 subdelegations in Africa, Latin America, Asia and the Middle East. A permanent delegation in New York allowed the ICRC to maintain contact with the United Nations Organization and its specialized agencies.

Taking into account special missions carried out by headquarters staff, the ICRC was active in more than 60 countries in 1981.