

Information and publications

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INFORMATION AND PUBLICATIONS

Continuing its activity intended to make better known throughout the world the principles, rôle and work of the ICRC, the Press and Information Department endeavoured to give improved efficiency to its methods and to adapt them to the frequently changing needs of the press, radio and television. It attempted also to supply national societies with more complete information on the founding body of the Red Cross and on its present-day tasks. To this aim it disseminated a considerable amount of documentary material, with illustrations, as well as films and series of colour slides.

Relations with the Press

The ICRC in 1964 was constantly in touch with the Swiss and foreign press, as its actions in various parts of the world aroused considerable interest among the public. Many daily newspapers, Red Cross reviews, and other periodicals have frequently reproduced items appearing in Topical Red Cross News, the ICRC's information bulletin of which it published 16 issues in four languages (French, English, Spanish, and German).

The Information Department also issued 17 press communiqués in 1964 as well as many news items likely to be of special interest to newspapers and news agencies. In addition it replied to a large number of oral and written questions which it had received from editors and press correspondents.

On special occasions the Information Department arranged for articles and reports to be published in the press in various countries. This was the case in particular with regard to the ICRC's action in the Yemen for which public opinion has displayed a lively interest. Several newspaper reporters have been out on the spot, even to the field hospital at Uqd, the good work of which they have made known to innumerable readers.

Films and Graphic Displays

The popularity of the film "Red Cross on a White Ground", produced by the ICRC on the occasion of its centenary, continued

in 1964, in the course of which the Information Department sold 67 copies (59.16 mm and 8.35 mm), mainly to National Societies. Apart from the French, English, German, and Spanish versions, there was also one in Arabic.

During the year under review, the ICRC produced a further 16-mm colour film entitled "Yemen, Land of Suffering." Filming at the Uqhd field hospital, on Royalist territory, was the work of Mr. J. P. Faure, a Swiss television reporter, while at Sanaa, in the United Arab Republic of the Yemen, the film was taken by a member of the ICRC delegation, Mr. J. Santandréa. Editing of the film was done by the ICRC Technical Department and production cost was kept to a minimum. Nevertheless, the film was at once a pronounced success, notably when it was shown to journalists in November, on which occasion the new President of the ICRC, Mr. S. A. Gonard, made his first contact with the press since taking office.

Advantage was also taken of exhibitions. At the Swiss National Exhibition at Lausanne from May to October, one of the stands was devoted to the activities of the ICRC. In the Health Pavilion, four large panels recalled this Institution's role in the framing and implementation of the Geneva Conventions. Showcases facing these panels as well as photographs depicted the origins of the Institution, some of the outstanding events in its history, and the latest of its actions, that which it was carrying out in the Yemen. Mounted on a mobile platform, the flags of all nations having a National Society symbolized the universality of the Red Cross movement.

In addition, panels and documents supplied by the ICRC contributed to the historic exhibition organized by the Italian Red Cross in Milan in October to commemorate its centenary.

Radio and Television

In 1964 the ICRC was continuously broadcasting, by radio and television, a number of reports, news items and comments on its activity and the Red Cross in general. For many of its programmes, it continued to use its Broadcasting and Television Office at the Headquarters of Radio-Genève.

Thanks to the co-operation of the Swiss Short-Wave Service in Berne, the ICRC continued transmitting test broadcasts on the " Intercroix-Rouge " wavelength (41.61 m, 7,210 kc). The purpose of these broadcasts is to give National Red Cross Societies, broadcasting stations and amateur radio enthusiasts the opportunity of developing the habit of listening to Geneva. In the event of war, this wavelength will be used for messages and communications of a humanitarian character. These tests are broadcast by a powerful transmitter from the Federal Station at Schwarzenbourg and reports on reception are sent in by appointed listeners in many countries in Europe and overseas. During the year under review, the Broadcasting and Television Office transmitted four series of programmes giving news of the ICRC and its activity.

Thanks to the facilities granted by Radio-Genève, the Broadcasting and Television Office, as in previous years, was able to organise the International Red Cross Broadcast under the auspices of the ICRC, the League of Red Cross Societies, the European Broadcasting Union and the International Broadcasting Corporation. This took place as usual on May 8, the anniversary of Henry Dunant's birth and World Red Cross Day. The 1964 programme comprised documentaries on the activities of the Red Cross at the national and international level in 13 countries. In all, more than 100 broadcasting stations took part in the May 8 commemoration.

Throughout the year, various subjects of topical interest to the ICRC were broadcast on a number of occasions by Switzerland and other countries. The Swiss Short-Wave Service continued to broadcast in French and other languages and an appreciable number of programmes concerning the Red Cross, such as the ICRC's weekly Arab language talks.

The Swiss Television Service also devoted appreciable time to the ICRC and its activities. It reported the ceremony which took place on August 22 at the Swiss National Exhibition in Lausanne to commemorate the centenary of the first Geneva Convention. Several countries included this event in their television programmes.

A number of radio and television studios have been interested in the ICRC's activity in the Yemen and sent reporters on the spot. One of the most important U.S. television companies, the National Broadcasting Company, sent a team to the Uqhd field hospital and

broadcast a highly successful report to millions of American television viewers, on this, one of the finest actions of the ICRC.

Visitors Section

Since the celebration of the Red Cross Centenary in 1963, the number of visitors to ICRC headquarters has been steadily increasing. It therefore became necessary to organise a Visitors Section, as part of the Information Department.

There were about 2,500 visitors to the ICRC in 1964. They included many of the leaders and members of National Societies as well as diplomats, representatives of international institutions or voluntary agencies, and particularly student groups or other youth movements desirous of learning about the ICRC and the Red Cross movement.

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF THE RED CROSS

In 1964 the *International Review of the Red Cross*, the official ICRC publication, gave the texts of some of the speeches delivered at Geneva University in the framework of public lectures organised in August 1963 on the occasion of the Red Cross Centenary. The series opened with the lecture entitled "A Unique Organization, Independent and United: The Red Cross," delivered by Mr. F. Siordet, member of the ICRC and President of the Centenary Commission of the Red Cross in Switzerland. This was followed by lectures by Mrs. S. Gabru, member of the Executive Committee of the Ethiopian Red Cross, Mrs. A. Magnussen, National Director of the American Red Cross Nursing Service, and Mrs. G. T. Pecson, former President of the Philippine National Red Cross; their subjects were respectively "The Amazing Development of the Red Cross," "Nurses in National Defence," "The Red Cross, Link Between Individuals and the Peoples of the World."

A number of articles were devoted to the anniversary of the first Geneva Convention which, as is common knowledge, was signed on August 22, 1864. In this connection, the August issue contains a study by Mr. J. Pictet, Director for General Affairs of the