

# The ICRC and its Departments

Objekttyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **Annual report / International Committee of the Red Cross**

Band (Jahr): **- (1955)**

PDF erstellt am: **08.05.2024**

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## THE ICRC AND ITS DEPARTMENTS

Early in 1955, M. Paul Ruegger, Minister for Switzerland and Member of the Standing Court of Arbitration, expressed a desire to relinquish the Presidency of the ICRC in the course of the year. He had performed his duties with great zeal for seven years, showing on all occasions his profound knowledge of men and life. His decision, which was deferred to with much regret, became effective at the end of August. Nevertheless, he remains a Member of the ICRC, to which he will continue to give the benefit of his knowledge of international affairs and of the problems which arise in connection with the development of the Geneva Conventions.

M. Léopold Boissier, President of the ICRC, took up his post on September 6, 1955. He had been a member of the organisation since 1946, was Chairman of the Legal Commission for several years, Vice-President of the ICRC from 1950 to 1953 and was re-elected to that office in 1955.

The new President, a son of M. Edmond Boissier, formerly Vice-President of the ICRC, was born in Geneva on July 16, 1893. He pursued his university studies in Geneva and Zurich and obtained the degree of Doctor of Laws. He was a member of the Swiss diplomatic service from 1917 to 1920, and later became Secretary-General of the *Interparliamentary Union*. He presided over the *Swiss League of Nations Association*, the *Swiss Council of Peace Association* and the *Federation of semi-official or private agencies* which had their headquarters in Geneva. M. Boissier holds a professorship in comparative constitutional law at Geneva University and is a Member of the Standing Arbitration Commission for questions concerning Norway and Switzerland. He is the author of various works on political science.<sup>1</sup> He is also a member

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<sup>1</sup> *Le principe de la séparation des pouvoirs dans l'établissement de la démocratie en Suisse*, Geneva, 1919. *Le contrôle parlementaire de la politique étrangère en Europe et au Canada*, Lausanne, 1926. *Regards vers la Paix : Nouveaux regards vers la Paix*, Neuchâtel, 1943 and 1944.

of the International Institute of Public Law and a corresponding member of the Institut de France.

The ICRC elected a new Member, M. Guillaume Bordier, born in Geneva in 1901, Certificated Engineer (Ecole polytechnique fédérale, Zurich), Master of Business Administration (Harvard University) and a partner of the Banque Bordier & C<sup>ie</sup>. The election of a business man, whose experience of economic and financial matters is well known, will be beneficial to the work of the Red Cross, in view of the heavy financial burden borne by the International Committee.

The International Committee is most grateful to M. René van Berchem, Member of the ICRC since 1946, for the important tasks he has carried out with competence and distinction, and sincerely regrets his decision to give up his office at the end of the year, as his professional duties will no longer allow him to pursue his close collaboration with the ICRC.

We wish to pay a tribute to the memory of M. Edouard Chapuisat and Dr. Alec Cramer, who died in 1955. They had been Members of the LCRC since 1938, and their departure is deeply felt by the ICRC, and by their colleagues who held them in great esteem.

No change occurred in the composition of the Directorate ; the various departments continued their work in Geneva, in Arolsen and with the twenty-eight ICRC delegations abroad, under the responsibility of the two Directors, M. Roger Gallopin, Executive Director, and M. Jean-S. Pictet, Director for General Affairs. Under their direction, the men and women of the Red Cross of all grades have given devoted service ; this is not forgotten and we are, indeed, grateful for their help.

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