

IN THE RED CROSS WORLD

WORLD RED CROSS DAY

World Day, which is an annual event, has as its purpose to stress the important role played by the Red Cross in its humanitarian action, which knows no frontiers. It is indeed a factor for peace and understanding between peoples. This anniversary day is also an occasion for recalling the spirit of fellowship and mutual aid uniting some 190 million men, women and children under the same flag and to appeal to all who have not yet joined their efforts in the work which the Red Cross tirelessly pursues without distinction of race, religion or public opinion in its attempts to alleviate human suffering.

No frontiers for the Red Cross is the theme chosen for May 8, 1966¹. The principle of universality will thus be emphasized which Mr. Jean Pictet in his basic work on "Red Cross Principles" has defined as follows: "The work of the Red Cross must extend to all men and all countries". Mr. Henrik Beer, Secretary-General of the League, addresses the following message on the subject to the world of the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun:

In its narrowest sense, Red Cross is an idea around which we have built an organizational structure. In its widest sense, Red Cross represents the only ideal to which all men everywhere can subscribe without violating other allegiances.

There is no doubt that ours is the most universal of all organizations, but we must question whether we are taking full advantage of this factor of universality. Our symbol for World Red Cross Day is a bridge. A bridge is not a resting place; it is a means of crossing more easily over difficult areas. Never before in history has Red Cross been faced with such monumental problems. Yet never before have we been as confident as we are today.

¹ See *International Review*, November 1965.

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We must remember that each of us has an influence not only in our communities and nations but throughout our world. This is the greatness of Red Cross. Our hope for World Red Cross Day 1966 is that we can communicate to all in our areas of influence the true meaning of "No Frontiers for Red Cross."

The 8th of May is certainly the splendid occasion each year to draw attention to the work accomplished under the sign of the red cross, red crescent and the red lion and sun, as well as to the aims of our movement in the near future. The theme chosen for 1966 will doubtless inspire all members of National Societies as much as that of last year which, it will be recalled, was: "Red Cross Youth: Tomorrow's Strength Today" and which had wide effect.

Wishing to demonstrate the importance which the anniversary of Henry Dunant's birth has now assumed, we give some details below of the 1965 commemoration as supplied to us by the League of Red Cross Societies:

Radio and Television Coverage. — Many Societies arranged television and radio programmes, often in the form of interviews with Junior Red Cross leaders, to make better known the aims of the movement for young people. In their own radio programme on 9th May, children in Pakistan put questions concerning Junior Red Cross to their Field Officer. In Sierra Leone, a typical link meeting was demonstrated on Children's television. The Finnish School Radio devoted one hour to international Junior Red Cross activities. The Red Cross Day ceremony in Togo, at which a wheelchair was presented to a crippled girl, was recorded by the Government Information Service Newsreel. A similar newsreel was taken in Dahomey depicting a World Red Cross Day ceremony at which gifts were received from the American and French Red Cross Societies. In Uruguay, a demonstration of First Aid and Home Nursing was televised.

A programme on Swedish Radio covered different Red Cross activities both past and present and put emphasis on actual commitments and plans for the future. The Bulgarian Red Cross for the first time took part in the Red Cross International Broadcast from Radio-Geneva, in which the Radio Services of Beirut, Berlin,

Berne, Brussels, Budapest, Lugano, Luxemburg, Madrid, Monte Carlo, Montreal, Moscow, Munich, Prague, Rome, Toronto, Vienna, Warsaw and Zagreb also participated, and followed it up with a programme on the International Red Cross and the National Society.

On 9th May the sermon delivered by the Bishop of Oslo, in which he mentioned the Norwegian Red Cross and urged his fellow countrymen to support the Society, was both televised and broadcast. In the Syrian Arab Republic, an 8th May television interview covered the significance of the Red Cross and Red Crescent emblems and the growing interest in Junior activities.

Governmental Support.—Many Societies sought the support and encouragement of the Education and Health Authorities. In Upper Volta, this was particularly valuable and a Red Cross Week has now been officially recognized. Daily broadcasts were given for a week and schoolchildren were allowed special leave on the afternoon of 8th May to attend Junior Red Cross functions. A march past was arranged in which athletes from each youth organization took part and an exhibition was held in the Town Hall. In Ghana, the Minister of Health and two deputies saw Junior Red Cross members off on a route march. The contingent numbered 250 and was accompanied by the Young Pioneers Band. Placards carried by Juniors read: "Join the Red Cross", "Serve One Another", "Be Prepared", "Give Aid to the Needy."

The King and Queen of Nepal and other members of the royal family took part in several Red Cross ceremonies and the King set an example by donating blood. In Tunisia, President Bourguiba received members of the Tunisian Red Crescent and showed special interest in the health activities of the Society and the co-operation between the Government and the Society in raising the standard of hygiene in the villages.

A message from Madame Kasa-Vubu, President of the Congolese Red Cross Society and wife of the President of the Republic, was broadcast in which she congratulated all the members of the Society on their work and mentioned the World Red Cross Day Theme.

Deeds as well as words.—National Societies, particularly the Junior Sections, were determined that their programmes should

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be positive and active, that, as well as words, there should be deeds to illustrate them. In Yugoslavia, Juniors were elected to several local Red Cross Committees and helped with the planning of activities. In Austria, Juniors filled 5,000 disaster relief kits, some of which have been distributed to the population in flooded areas of Yugoslavia. They also raised 70 % of the Red Cross Day funds. British Red Cross Juniors carried out special acts of service to the aged, sick and handicapped. In Ethiopia, a distribution of clothing was made to people in need. In Ghana, Greece, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Sierra Leone, Thailand and Yugoslavia, visits were made to hospitals and gifts distributed among the patients. In Hungary, gifts of First Aid and hygiene kits and school stationery were presented to a representative of Vietnamese children. At Tezpur, India, a public function was held to celebrate Red Cross Day at the refugee camp at Borgori where a distribution of 1,350 articles of used clothing received from the Federal Republic of Germany was made among the refugees and a group of 20 girl volunteers gave milk, biscuits and sweets to the children. In the Belgian town of Enghien, Juniors chose World Red Cross Day to present old age pensioners with garden chairs, tables and sunshades. In Luxembourg, Juniors collected pencils and notebooks to be sent to UNESCO to help in the campaign for literacy.

The Red Cross Societies of Ghana, Nigeria, India and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam organized working parties to go out and sweep streets, clear up litter and clean the market places. In Yugoslavia, Juniors repaired wells and drinking troughs. In South Africa, schoolchildren collected warm clothing and money with which to buy soup powder for distribution to poorer schools in the very cold areas of the Cape Region. In Syria, where, as yet, there is no established Junior Red Crescent, a ceremony was held at the Headquarters of the National Society in Damascus at which children were given small gifts.

In Ireland, concerts, sewing competitions and house to house collections organized by Juniors, raised a substantial contribution to the "Freedom from Hunger Campaign."

An ambitious one-day conference was arranged in Sydney, Australia, almost entirely by young people. Representatives from secondary schools were invited and the programme included talks

by students on the theme "Red Cross and Youth", the showing of colour slides, reports on club activities, tape recordings from youth leaders sent by the League and sketches on the life of Henry Dunant.

In Iran, Juniors chose three days in May and devoted each to activities concerning the three different aims.

First Aid and methods of Life Saving featured in many Junior Red Cross celebrations on 8th May. In Chile, Juniors demonstrated their skill in these domains in sports centres and swimming pools. In Belgium, the Cameroons, Lebanon and the U.S.S.R., there were First Aid competitions and displays of gymnastics and dancing.

Cadets of the Northumberland Branch of the British Red Cross organized holidays for handicapped children, 8th May celebrations in 1965 coincided with the tenth anniversary of this activity, and a special weekend was arranged to which were invited some of those who had attended the first camp.

A Nordic "contact-camp" was arranged in Sweden for handicapped Junior Red Cross members between 15 and 21. Groups of two Juniors and one handicapped came from all over Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Iceland and lived in small cottages for two weeks. The programme of the camp was a kind of Olympic Games: each cottage represented a nation and competed for its colours.

For the Ivory Coast Red Cross, 8th May 1965 was particularly important. The Junior Section had only recently been formed in one school and numbered 40 members. A delegation of Juniors came from their town of Bouaké ville (north) to present the Junior Red Cross to more than 1,000 schoolchildren in Abidjan and to outline five different activities in the school. The press, radio, and television gave coverage to the different aspects of Junior Red Cross work.

The Swiss Red Cross concentrated most of its Junior activities in connection with the World Red Cross Day theme on raising money to have a special bus built for handicapped children. Schools all over Switzerland contributed. They earned money by digging up potatoes, window-cleaning, picking apples, sweeping up leaves and a variety of other useful jobs.

International Aspects. The international aspect of the Red Cross was illustrated in Liberia by a popular bazaar where stalls were set up for different countries and by a concert of music from various parts of the world performed by artists of different nationalities. In Tanzania, an imaginative float symbolizing international friendship was part of a colourful 8th May procession.

International art exhibitions of work by Junior Red Cross members were very popular in the United States and in Pakistan. The exhibition held in Karachi displayed paintings from 22 countries.

8th May, 1965, held a double significance for Greece. It was also the 80th anniversary of the founding of a Swiss consulate in Patras. The links between Greece and the country of the Red Cross Founder were particularly emphasized at a ceremony arranged in Patras at which the Swiss Ambassador was present.

Conferences and Training Courses.—Conferences and Leadership Training Courses were organized throughout the world in connection with the theme of Red Cross Youth. In Tokyo, the Japanese Junior Red Cross National Convention was opened on 8th May in the presence of the Crown Prince and the Crown Princess and lasted for three days. Some 370 people from all over the country attended and the Crown Prince encouraged the Junior Red Cross members in their efforts towards the "realization of World Peace and the Happiness of Mankind." The first National Seminar for Junior Red Cross Leaders was organized in Nicaragua and a special congress was held on 8th May in Panama. At an International Educators' Meeting in Ulm, Federal Republic of Germany, lecturers spoke of the influence of the Junior Red Cross movement on pedagogy and humanity as a whole in the future.

For the first time since the formation of the National Society, two-day Junior Leadership Training courses were held in the three provincial branches of the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society. Each was opened by the Education Officer attached to the Ministry of Education of that province. The aim of the courses was to give teachers in primary schools an understanding of the Red Cross both at the national and international levels with emphasis on Junior Red Cross. All national conferences arranged by the British

Red Cross Society in 1965 at the Training Centre at Barnett Hill used the theme of World Red Cross Day. A seminar broadcast from Amman wound up the 8th May activities for the Jordan Red Crescent Society after delegates had visited Branches throughout the country.

The commemoration of World Red Cross Day therefore achieved great success last year. It is to be hoped that the 1966 event will succeed as well, if not better.

Thailand

The Thai Red Cross has sent us a most interesting communication on health centres which we have pleasure in publishing below.

One of the main tasks of the Thai Red Cross Society during the early twenties was to provide medical services to those people who inhabited the remote parts of the country where disease was rife and communications and transportation facilities left much to be desired. Not only government hospitals and health stations were then non-existent but local doctors and nurses as well. Thus sick people were in a sad plight, and great concern had been aroused by their suffering.

The Thai Red Cross then saw the need for providing them with suitable health services, and the first Red Cross Health Centre was opened in 1925 followed by eight more centres during the next decade in different parts of the country where the need for them appeared¹.

Since then the government health authorities have set up hospitals and health stations in all provinces in order to render invaluable medical services to the rural population. In consequence, it is likely that the Thai Red Cross may close down some of its health centres in certain areas where health services are now readily obtainable at the government hospitals or health stations.

¹ *Plate.* Red Cross Health Centre, Bangkok.