

DISSEMINATION OF THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS

It is important that the Geneva Conventions should be as widely known as possible. We are therefore continuing to publish information received from National Societies regarding their efforts in this direction.

FRANCE

The French Red Cross has distributed a booklet on the Geneva Conventions to its local committees. It has also urged universities to include courses on international humanitarian law in their syllabus. Students in some faculties have already asked the Society for documents that may enable them to write about the national and international Red Cross. Such documents are supplied to any teachers or professors who apply for them.

First-aid courses are another effective means. Each course must include teaching about the Red Cross, its principles and the humanitarian Conventions. Moreover, in medical auxiliary training courses, information on the international Red Cross is imparted, and at the eight national centres for the training of first-aid leaders, half a day is devoted to international problems every year. We might add that the first-aid section has brought out a booklet entitled "*Historique et action internationale de la Croix-Rouge*" with a visorama.

A manual has been published for "school delegates". The first five chapters deal with the organization of the international Red Cross, the Conventions and humanitarian principles. The foreword to the manual reads thus: "By his instructions of 22 September 1971, opening the doors of educational institutions to the Red Cross, the Minister of Education has offered school-attending youth a vast field of action. Youth must not be disappointed, and the means must be devised for a prompt response to its generous impulses. Red Cross school delegates are the driving force for the desired co-operation".

More recently, the French Red Cross approached the Ministry of Education with a view to ascertaining to what extent and by what means information about the Red Cross and its work could be introduced in schools.

JAPAN

Mrs. Sachiko Hashimoto, who was formerly director of the Japanese Junior Red Cross, is now in charge of the Henry Dunant Study Centre, in Tokyo. The Centre recently published two pamphlets in Japanese to acquaint the public with the Red Cross and its principles. One of the pamphlets contains three historical studies, the first by Mr. Koji Kata on "The Unknown Henry Dunant", the second by Mrs. Hashimoto on "Florence Nightingale", and the third by Pierre Boissier on a subject which he had already dealt with in the *International Review* in his article "Florence Nightingale and Henry Dunant".

The second pamphlet, entitled "The Red Cross and the Geneva Conventions", explores a domain which there has so far been but little opportunity to consider: the application in the daily life of the individual of the Geneva Conventions and of the ideas from which they draw inspiration.

USSR

The Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR makes regular use of documents received from the ICRC in making the Geneva Conventions known through its review "Soviet Red Cross" and other publications issued by its Executive Committee. The Society devotes special attention to teaching and disseminating the practical aspects of the Geneva Conventions through its review, which has a 650,000 circulation. During 1974, the review published information on various problems of international humanitarian law.

An article entitled "Under the emblem of the red cross" clearly illustrates the provisions of the Convention with regard to the "amelioration of the condition of the wounded and sick in armed forces in the field". Under the title "For the protection of victims of war at sea", another article explains the meaning of the Convention on the "amelioration of the condition of wounded, sick and shipwrecked members of armed forces at sea". A third article deals with the laws and customs of war as established by the Hague Conventions and the Geneva Conventions.

“Soviet Red Cross” contains a detailed account of the proceedings of the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts. Notes on the teaching and dissemination of the Geneva Conventions are found in a special section edited by Professor I. Blishchenko, the Alliance expert on international humanitarian law.

HAITI

In February of this year, the official inauguration took place of the Blood Transfusion Centre at Jacmel, established by the Haitian Red Cross thanks to a gift from the ICRC. Among those taking part in the ceremony, under the honorary presidency of the Secretary of State for Public Health, were Dr. R. Germain, Under Secretary of State for Public Health, Dr. V. Laroche, President of the Haitian Red Cross, and Dr. A. Westerband, Director of Red Cross Blood Transfusion Centres. Others present included representatives of the civilian, military and religious institutions of the city of Jacmel.

Speakers drew attention to the significance of the Centre as a renewed effort to strengthen the public health infrastructure in the region and noted that the occasion marked the opening of a campaign leading to the celebration of the annual blood-transfusion day two months later. Dr. Westerband praised the Haitian Red Cross for its achievement in establishing in a very short period of time its first blood transfusion centre at Port-au-Prince, in November 1971, a second one at Cap-Haitien, in April 1972, a third at Les Cayes, in December 1972, and the fourth at Jacmel. He spoke of it as the fourth link in a network intended to cover all nine provinces of the country, with a refrigeration system and other equipment necessary for efficient operation.

Dr. Westerband emphasized that the new centre, like the others, would observe the principle of free blood from donors and to recipients. He called for a demonstration of human solidarity on the part of the population, by a mass turnout of blood donors at the centre, a symbol of the initiative and effectiveness of the Haitian Red Cross.
