

*IN GENEVA***For victims of pseudo-medical experiments**

The Commission of neutral experts appointed by the International Committee to examine the cases of victims of pseudo-medical experiments practised in concentration camps under the Nazi regime, to whom the Government of the German Federal Republic is prepared to pay compensation, again met in Geneva at ICRC headquarters on February 2 and 3, 1968. The President, Mr. William Lenoir, Judge at the Court of Justice of Geneva, was assisted by Dr. Sylvain Mutrux, Medical Assistant Director of the Bel-Air Psychiatric Clinic and Dr. Pierre Magnenat, Professor at the Faculty and assistant at the University Clinic of the Nestlé Hospital in Lausanne. The Polish Red Cross was represented by Miss Zys and Dr. Nowkunski, whilst Dr. Goetz represented the German Red Cross in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Dr. Jacques F. de Rougemont, Member of the ICRC, who had previously visited Warsaw to meet the victims and the doctors who had examined them, gave his observations to the neutral Commission which accepted 51 of the 79 cases submitted to it. Five claims were rejected and four others were set aside for further investigation, and decision on the remaining 19 cases was deferred until the next meeting of the Commission.

**At the Central Tracing Agency**

It has been shown necessary to undertake the restoration of the Central Agency's premises installed since 1950 near ICRC headquarters, in Geneva. The work has recently been completed whose importance we indicate by giving a few facts and figures. It should first of all be pointed out that a staff of 27 still work there and deal on an average each month with a volume of 6000 letters and communications.

The items deposited there are beyond price, for behind these card-indexes, how much anxiety will be relieved and how many inquiries can be answered. The very first consideration was to arrange and carry out preventive measures against fire which the most up to date technique enables to be more effective from now on. An electronic smoke detector has in fact been installed. With its extraordinary sensitivity it can ensure vigilant protection of the places where it is sited by almost instantaneous detection of the seat of a fire. Automatic alarms, both visual and sonorous, immediately warn fire-fighting and disaster teams. In addition, the permanent post of the Geneva fire brigade is alerted, if the flames have not been extinguished after three minutes.

These detectors, numbering 150, therefore watch night and day over the mass, impressive as well as irreplaceable, of over 45 million card-indexes the oldest of which date from the 1870 Franco-Prussian war. Their numbers continue to increase and the index covers more than 4000 sq.m. in shelves over three floors.

There used to be bad conditions of working in these decrepit rooms. These have been greatly improved with the construction of an insulated roof. On the other hand, fire-proof partitions with non-inflammable doors can isolate the various bays. Individual offices have also been reinstalled, furnishings renewed, walls painted in light colours and the floor covered in certain places with carpeting. The lighting has also been improved, especially in the bays containing the national card-indexes.

All these improvements were seen by the President of the ICRC, its principal collaborators and those of the Central Agency at the inauguration of the premises on February 9, 1968. The effectiveness of the new installations and the system of protecting the files are certainly of inestimable value.

### **Another ICRC Film**

The International Committee has just produced another colour film; it is entitled *They Are Still in Need*.<sup>1</sup> This film portrays the work carried out by the ICRC medical teams in the Yemen.

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<sup>1</sup> 16 mm., 18 mins.