

*DISSEMINATION OF  
THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS*

**ITALY**

*At the request of the International Committee, the Italian Red Cross has informed the latter of the work so far undertaken for the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions in Italy. We are pleased to inform our readers of this work which, the National Society has stressed, is to be not only maintained but intensified.*

Pursuant to Resolution No. XXI of the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross, to the wishes expressed by National Societies at the meeting in The Hague in February 1971, and to Resolution No. 1 of the Council of Delegates which met in Mexico City in October 1971, the Italian Red Cross has carried out the following work in order to disseminate the 1949 Geneva Conventions, in accordance with an ICRC plan drawn up for that purpose.

In order to reach young children in primary and secondary schools in addition to those belonging to the Junior Red Cross, the Italian Red Cross plans to have the school textbook entitled "The Red Cross and My Country" translated into Italian for distribution to primary schools. The "Teacher's Manual" is likewise being translated, for distribution to teachers in the end class of primary schools. Subsequently and in accordance with ICRC recommendations, the National Society will carry out a long-term plan, in agreement with the Ministry of Education, to provide teachers with guidelines on the Red Cross and instructions on the use of the school textbook.

Further instruction is to be provided on the Red Cross, its principles and its work, to children entering secondary school, at which age their critical outlook tends to develop. Difficulties have arisen, however, in connection with translation and the commissioning of new drawings, so that this work is expected to take some time.

Following the recommendation of the first World Council of the Junior Red Cross on the dissemination of the Conventions, the Pioneers of the Italian Red Cross have undertaken the following measures:

- (1) The inclusion of a lesson on the Geneva Conventions in all first-aid courses for students and would-be Pioneers.
- (2) Roneo reproduction and distribution to Pioneer Groups of the ICRC booklet (Summary for members of the armed forces and the general public) entitled "Le Convenzioni di Ginevra".
- (3) Translation into Italian of the Course of Five Lessons on the Conventions prepared by the ICRC. This was completed in February of this year and copies are distributed to Pioneer leaders or any members of the public wishing to know more about the Geneva Conventions.
- (4) Preparation of meetings and debates among members of each group on the structure of the International Red Cross and on the Conventions, with the participation of experts who are not members of those groups.
- (5) Distribution to Italian Pioneer Groups of three sets of posters on the Conventions put out by the ICRC, which have proved most useful for dissemination purposes.
- (6) Lectures on the international structure of the Red Cross and on the 1949 Geneva Conventions at the opening and closing sessions of Pioneer Training Courses; similar lectures will be given at the end of the Medical Instruction Course for Teachers, organized by the Italian Junior Red Cross.

It should be noted that in the larger provincial inspectorates of voluntary nursing services, the local nursing inspector invariably gives a lesson on the structures of the International Red Cross.

The Manual "Rights and Duties of Nurses under the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949," has been translated by the chief nursing inspector responsible for voluntary nursing services throughout the country. The manual is to be printed and distributed to all voluntary and professional nurses belonging to the inspectorates of Voluntary Nurses, Professional Nurses Training Schools and the Association of Professional Nurses.

## IN THE RED CROSS WORLD

The Senior Inspectorate of the Military Medical Unit of the Italian Red Cross has decided to carry out a large-scale campaign to disseminate the Conventions, together with relevant documents, to officers and non-commissioned officers of the Military Medical Unit of the Italian Red Cross and to senior ranks of the armed forces on leave of absence in order to attend courses of instruction, in particular those attending courses on medical care in anti-atomic, chemical and biological warfare, civil defence and air rescue operations.

In addition, the Italian Red Cross has approached military authorities (i.e. the offices of the Minister and Secretary-General at the Ministry of Defence, and general staffs) to arrange for the distribution of the "Soldier's Manual"—at present being translated into Italian—to members of the armed forces. The military authorities have responded very favourably to these approaches. The National Society has also contacted the Police and *Carabinieri* authorities for the same purpose.

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## NEW ZEALAND

*The New Zealand Red Cross recently informed the ICRC that it was endeavouring to make the Geneva Conventions known in that country and that it had approached the New Zealand Government to that effect. We have now received from the Government some information about the efforts it has undertaken in agreement with the National Society to disseminate the Conventions, and we publish it as of undoubted interest to our readers.*

### Military

In New Zealand, the 1949 Geneva Conventions are disseminated to the various branches of the Military as follows.

#### *Navy*

New recruits receive basic tuition by film and lectures on the rights of prisoners of war. The overall training programme is as follows:

- (a) Officers: All officers hear lectures on the subject of the Geneva Conventions during initial training;
- (b) Senior Ratings: Lectures are included in the syllabus of the Leadership Course which all Petty Officers undertake shortly after promotion to the rank;
- (c) Seagoing Personnel: Approximately once in each commission the ship's company of every sea-going ship is lectured on the Articles of the Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea, of August 12, 1949.

Instruction to personnel on capture by the enemy is promulgated by Navy Order.

### *Army*

Army training on the Geneva Conventions is undertaken as part of what is known as "Code of Conduct" training. Specific features of training on the Geneva Conventions are:

- (a) Training is given annually by units;
- (b) Although training in Code of Conduct is given at recruit level, the details of the Geneva Conventions are not taught until soldiers are posted to their permanent units;
- (c) Officers also receive training on the subject as above and in addition:
  - (i) at the Royal Military College, Duntroon or the Officer Cadet School, Portsea;
  - (ii) during the general professional discussions which form part of career courses;
- (d) Specialist units, such as Medical and Military Police personnel, receive additional training as required;
- (e) The training material used by the New Zealand Army consists of:
  - (i) A Code of Conduct/precis/directive;
  - (ii) The Geneva Conventions Handbook (1961) which is widely distributed among Army units;
  - (iii) A summary of the Geneva Conventions (1960) which also has a wide distribution;
  - (iv) A course of five lessons on the Geneva Conventions (1963) which has a limited distribution.

## IN THE RED CROSS WORLD

### *Air Force*

All RNZAF personnel from basic recruit to junior command and staff levels are given training on the Geneva Conventions. Material on the Conventions forms part of standard RNZAF training manuals. In addition, the subject is covered thoroughly during overseas departure courses for those personnel posted to overseas units. Specific publications used for training on the Conventions are:

- (a) South East Asia Standardization Agreement 2074;
- (b) Red Cross Pamphlet D5725—The Four Geneva Conventions, 12 August 1949;
- (c) British War Office publication number 6637—Regulations for Treatment of Prisoners of War—Geneva Conventions.

The treatment of sick and wounded in the field is covered by the First Aid Instruction given to all personnel.

For all the military services, interpretation of, and comment on, international legal documents is available from the legal services of the Ministry of Defence.

### **Civilian**

In addition, the New Zealand Department of Education has published a booklet entitled "The Red Cross in the World Today" which has a section explaining the Geneva Conventions. This publication is distributed to all schools in New Zealand for particular use by students in the 9 to 12 years age group.

The Conventions also form part of the course followed, at New Zealand universities, by students of International Law.

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