

**THE RED CROSS
AND THE DANGER IN COMMERCE
OF BLOOD PRODUCTS**

The International Review for September 1975, under the foregoing title, carried an article on the grave problem presented, to quote a resolution adopted by the 28th World Health Assembly, by "the extensive and increasing activities of private firms in trying to establish commercial blood collection and plasmapheresis projects in developing countries". The monthly bulletin Transfusion, published by the League of Red Cross Societies, has now published (No. 5) details of recent activities of this kind that have given cause for concern:

During the recent World Health Assembly held in Geneva in May 1975, a resolution was passed on the Utilization and Supply of Human Blood and Blood Products, which requests the Director-General to study further the practice of commercial plasmapheresis including the health hazards and ethical implications, to increase assistance to Member States in the development of national blood services and to assist in establishing co-operation between countries to secure adequate supply of blood and blood products based on voluntary donations. The XXIIInd International Conference of the Red Cross, held in Teheran in 1973, adopted resolution XVIII which fully endorses the principle of voluntary donation of blood and makes similar recommendations to those of the World Health Assembly. Finally, at a symposium organized last July in Helsinki by the International Society of Blood Transfusion (ISBT), the League and WHO during the XIVth Congress of the ISBT, these recommendations were strongly supported.

The WHO and the League therefore decided to convene a group of international experts in the field of utilization and supply of human blood and blood products in order to assist and advise health organizations in the planning and implementation of their activities

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following the resolutions referred to above. Invitations were sent to experts from Algeria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Ecuador, Finland, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Hungary, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, United Kingdom, the United States of America, and to the Council of Europe and the ISBT. Observers from pharmaceutical firms took part in the meetings.

This meeting, which took place in Berne thanks to the generous hospitality of the Swiss Red Cross, and its Central Blood Transfusion Laboratory, was preceded by a consultation of a small working group in the WHO headquarters in Geneva (December 1-5) to study the possibilities of establishing guidelines for good manufacturing practices.

HENRY DUNANT INSTITUTE

The Henry Dunant Institute will shortly publish in its series "*Collection scientifique*", a book of more than 500 pages entitled *Guérilla et droit humanitaire* which it will sell at a special subscription price up to 30 April 1976.¹ This book by Michel Veuthey, a member of the ICRC staff, contains a preface by Jean Pictet, ICRC Vice-President, Associate Professor at Geneva University and Director of the Henry Dunant Institute.

The chapter headings are: humanitarian law, guerrilla warfare, inadequacy of humanitarian law, application of humanitarian law, methods and means of fighting, the wounded, prisoners, civilians, application agencies, conclusions. The main themes are defined by the editor in the following manner:

Guerrilla warfare and humanitarian law, a long-shot in five words ! How can law prevail in warfare, and humanity in guerrilla warfare ? With due regard for the legal aspects of the application of humanitarian

¹ Subscriptions price Sw.fr. 47.—. From 1 May, price in bookshops Sw.fr. 69.—. Subscriptions to: Henry Dunant Institute, 114 rue de Lausanne, 1202 Geneva.