

M I S C E L L A N E O U S

IN MEMORY OF ELSA BRANDSTRÖM

A moving ceremony in Vienna's Arne Karlsson park on September 16, 1965, preceded the official opening of the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross. In the presence of Austrian civilian and military authorities, members of the Swedish colony, leaders of the Austrian Red Cross and many delegates to the XXth International Conference, a monument to Elsa Brandström was unveiled¹. This monument, by the sculptor Robert Ullmann, stands as a testimony of gratitude to the famous Swedish nurse's work for Austrian prisoners during the First World War.

After a musical rendering by the band and an address of welcome by the architect Mr. Hans Jaksch, Professor Hans Weiland described the life and work of she who was called "The Angel from Siberia". He himself had been one of the prisoners whom she had tended, comforted and saved.

As the monument was unveiled, a girl student declared, in the name of the youth of today, that she would be guided by her noble example, that the great values of charity and dedication to service for one's neighbour will remain alive. Then Dr. Hans Lauda, President of the Austrian Red Cross, gave an address in which he underlined one of Elsa Brandström's most cherished wishes: that men would learn to know and help one another more and more. She knew the value of the ties established among men and she desired their extension among the nations. It was in love for one's neighbour that she perceived salvation for future humanity. "Is it not moving", asked the speaker, "that after forty years and more, the men to whom this woman brought help have never forgotten her? Whoever has not known captivity, never existed for year

¹ *Plate*: Inauguration of the Elsa Brandström monument.

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after year without news of his mother, his wife or his children, cannot appreciate what Elsa Brandström did for Austrian prisoners of war in distant lands and what she did towards their repatriation ". She had, in fact, brought their mortality rate down to 18 % from the 80 % which it had reached before her activities began. It will be recalled that with the proceeds of her book *Bland Kriksfångar I Russland och Siberien* (With Prisoners of War in Russia and Siberia) she founded a rehabilitation centre for seriously wounded repatriated soldiers and converted property into a home for children.

Other speakers, were Mgr. May and Count Carl Gustav Bielke, the Swedish chargé d'affaires, who thanked the Association of Former Austrian Prisoners of War for having perpetuated his compatriots' name, and Dr. Glück who, on behalf of the Mayor of Vienna, expressed the city's gratitude.

After a song followed by a minute's silence, the crowd listened to the Swedish and Austrian anthems. Former prisoners thronged around the monument to gaze upon the likeness of she who had alleviated their distress in their darkest hour.

M. I.

INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUY ON THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

The General Secretariat of the Council of Europe had invited the International Committee of the Red Cross to send a representative to the Second International Colloquy on the European Convention on Human Rights.

The colloquy, organized by the Vienna University Faculty of Law in conjunction with the General Secretariat of the Council of Europe, took place in the Austrian capital from October 18-20, 1965.

The ICRC was represented by Mr. Jean Pictet, Director for General Affairs.