

SUNDRY ACTIVITIES

News Items

Algeria

After having completed his mission, Mr. Jacques de Heller, ICRC delegate, returned from Algeria after visiting some fifty Moroccans held captive by the Algerian forces following the frontier conflict in the autumn of 1963.

Thus, both in Morocco and in Algeria, the ICRC has been concerned with prisoners captured during the hostilities in the Sahara. It has now undertaken negotiations with the authorities in both countries in order to arrange an exchange and the repatriation of prisoners.

Ruanda

Mr. G.C. Senn, delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross, who has been in Ruanda since January 26, was received at Kigali by the President of the Republic, Mr. Kayibanda. He was given a friendly welcome by the Head of the State of Ruanda, who declared that he was prepared to facilitate the delegate's mission by every possible means.

After this audience, Mr. Senn obtained general authorization from the Ministry of Justice to visit all prisons and examine conditions of detention. Shortly afterwards he started his tour of various regions of the country.

On the way the delegate also visited several Christian missions with whom Watutsi refugees had found asylum during the recent troubles.

The purpose of Mr. Senn's mission is first of all to study to what extent and how the victims of the events can be assisted. At the same time, the delegate is attempting to demonstrate that the Red Cross everywhere seeks to ensure respect for humanitarian rules. Experience has in fact sometimes shown that the mere presence of a representative of the International Red Cross can contribute to restoring peace and to help in the prevention of violence.

The President of Ruanda, during the course of the audience he accorded the ICRC delegate, showed his interest in the universal Red Cross movement and expressed the wish to see a National Society constituted shortly in his country. In 1963, the Ruanda administration issued a series of postage stamps commemorating the Red Cross Centenary.

Nurses and the Geneva Conventions

The members of the Association of directors of the 49 Mother-houses (Mütterhäuser) of the German Red Cross in the Federal Republic meet each year for a few days at Göttingen in order to discuss occupational problems affecting nurses and also questions of administration. In addition, lectures are organized on subjects of a scientific, artistic and cultural nature, followed by discussions.

The meeting which took place from February 3-8, 1964, was designed to commemorate the Centenary of the first Geneva Convention of 1864 and the ICRC was requested to delegate a representative to speak on the subject. This was undertaken by Miss A. Pfirter, Head of the Medical Personnel Section, who explained certain aspects of the Geneva Conventions of 1949. In particular, the rights and duties of nurses were illustrated by concrete examples. The lively interest aroused by the problems was displayed by the active participation of the whole audience. Although the greater part of those present were people of wide experience, they appreciated the opportunity offered on this occasion to discuss their responsibilities in the light of the actual texts of the four Conventions in order the better to prepare to instruct student nurses in their own schools in their obligations and rights under the Conventions.
