

## BOOKS

This "new sound" recalls the declaration according to which "once the enemy has been beaten, the enemy wounded must be treated as well as our own". Other illustrations evoke the different stages in the life of "the man in white".

This work could therefore be of interest to young people, inspire them to greater things and attract a large public.

J. Z.

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### FORTY YEARS OF INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES<sup>1</sup>

This 29 page booklet summarizes the main outlines of the development of what has become the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which has its headquarters in Geneva.

In the introduction to this booklet the author goes back to Fridtjof Nansen who, as long ago as 1921 (the year he was nominated on the recommendation of the International Committee of the Red Cross to the post of League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), gave this institution its international character. For thirty years he was to serve as an example to those engaged on this action. In a few lines, the booklet recalls that there already existed at this time different groups of refugees and, in order to lend them assistance, recourse was necessary to organized outside aid. It was then "that the moral force and determination of one man, Nansen, successfully carried through the first internationally organized attempt at solving a humanitarian problem of this nature.

"Since then," the author continues, "refugee problems have become a continuous concern of the international community." He points out that it was not until 1950, however, that the statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was drawn up, which granted a mandate establishing definite regulations which would permit the settling, within the framework of this

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva, 1961.

mandate, of many problems arising from sometimes tragic situations created by the enormous mixing of populations, particularly after the Second World War.

It is important to note that this booklet, which reflects great credit on international mutual aid, is only speaking of refugees who have benefited from the common endeavours of nations. It leaves aside the millions of people who, uprooted from their natural surroundings, have had to seek asylum elsewhere, even on the territory of their own country, and have benefited from the support of the laws and the care of national governments in Germany, India, Pakistan and other countries.

The introduction points out that today, as in Nansen's time, the work of assistance to so-called international refugees would be impossible without the co-operation of international and national voluntary agencies (numbering more than 90 during the World Refugee Year, 1959-60). The eleven chapters which follow mark each successive stage in the protection of international refugees. One is struck by the amplitude of this action, both in time and distance. This account gives the reader a condensed picture of the extension of a work whose numerous ramifications spread even to the Far East, to bring order, comfort and also hope to the millions of people whom fate had struck a cruel blow.

This booklet vividly recalls the difficulties that had to be overcome to achieve this end. We hope that it will be given a warm welcome by the general public, for whom it is intended. The limitless disasters which war can cause can never be too highly stressed nor the efforts of reconstruction which then have to be made.

We do not wish to end without quoting some figures taken from statistics reproduced in this booklet. Incomplete as they are, they give some idea of the enormity of the task accomplished. From July 1, 1947 to December 31, 1952 nearly six million refugees received aid. Some 240,000 were repatriated and about three million were resettled.

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