

The “ Soldier’s Manual ”

To make the Red Cross principles more widely known throughout the world, the ICRC has produced a textbook entitled *The Red Cross and My Country*, which has already been issued in many languages. It is meant for schoolchildren and is now supplemented by the *Teacher’s Manual*. We might add that the ICRC has provided the illustrations and, in a number of cases, itself attended to publication.

These two booklets instil the fundamental humanitarian principles in young readers. Later it was realized that a handbook geared to the essential provisions of the Geneva Conventions proper should also be published for the armed forces. The ICRC studied the matter and, in 1969, brought out the first edition of the *Soldier’s Manual*, which was designed to rouse the interest and ascertain the reactions of the Governments to which the International Committee submitted it. As mentioned in an earlier issue,¹ the Manual is in the form of a 24-page brochure. The text is brief and simple, and it is illustrated by numerous drawings.

As in the case of the school textbook, it met with a very favourable response, and in 1971 the ICRC had almost 150,000 copies of the Manual printed in different languages: English, French, Spanish and Arabic. The ICRC’s aim in publishing it on such a large scale was to persuade the States or National Societies to which the booklet had been sent to have it translated into their own languages and to have it printed locally for distribution to their armed forces and police.

The ICRC was glad to see that its effort bore fruit. Broadly speaking, more than half the States and National Societies affirmed their interest in the publication. A further edition of 150,000 copies therefore came out early in 1972, in the same languages, plus a Portuguese edition of 6,000 copies.

¹ See *International Review*, August 1971.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

We mention below, by continent, the responses received after the despatch of the *Soldier's Manual*, up to September 1972.

Africa

Nineteen countries asked the ICRC to send them copies. They were: *Algeria* (200), *Botswana*, for its police force (60), *Burundi* (100), *Chad* (2,500), *People's Republic of the Congo* (500), *Ivory Coast* (5,000), *Kenya* (200)¹, *Madagascar* (100), *Malawi* (150), *Mali* (5,000), *Morocco* (100), *Niger* (100), *Nigeria* (100), *Senegal* (100), *Somalia* (6,000), *South Africa* (100), *Swaziland* (100), *Tunisia* (100), and *Upper Volta* (1,000).

The authorities of the *Arab Republic of Egypt* declared that they were interested in the Manual and would have it printed locally. The Government of South Africa proposes to have an Afrikaans edition published and distributed.

The Kenyan Ministry of Defence asked the ICRC to send the "negatives" of the illustrations through that country's Red Cross in order that the Manual might be printed locally, a Kiswahili translation being added to the English text. Six thousand copies of the booklet were published and distributed to officers and other ranks, and the International Committee has therefore recommended this Kiswahili version to the authorities in *Tanzania*.

Central and Latin America

The following countries requested the ICRC to send them copies: *Chile* (1,000), *Colombia* (1,500), *Costa Rica* (500), *Ecuador* (500), *El Salvador* (500), *Guatemala* (2,050), *Honduras* (1,900), *Mexico* (50), *Panama* (500), *Peru* (100) and *Trinidad and Tobago* (1,000).

The *Brazilian* Red Cross has received from the ICRC photolithographs of the Portuguese version of which that Society and the Brazilian Ministry of War propose to make the most widespread distribution possible. It has been decided to have 50,000 copies printed by the Ministry of the Navy.

¹ *Plate.*

Following the ICRC Delegate-General's visit to Latin America, the Colombian Ministry of Defence informed the ICRC that it proposed to have the Manual reproduced.

The Costa Rican Red Cross has taken the initiative of bringing out a 3,000-copy mimeograph edition, and, with the agreement of the Ministry of Public Security, has had it distributed to members of the civil guard and in barracks.

After our Regional Delegate's visit, Ecuador and Peru also expressed their intention of reproducing the Manual. The former has started publishing it in the official journal of the armed forces.

Asia

Thirteen countries requested copies: *Bahrain (1,000)*, *India (10,000)*, *Indonesia (1,000)*, *Iraq (1,000)*, *Jordan (25,000)*, *Khmer Republic (100)*, *Kuwait (2,000)*, *Lebanon (500)*, *Nepal (100)*, *Philippines (1,000)*, *Saudi Arabia (6,000)*, *Syria (700)* and *Yemen Arab Republic (5,000)*.

In New Delhi, the General Staff of the Indian Army has had the Manual printed in Hindi, with ICRC support; 60,000 copies have been distributed to members of the Defence personnel.

The Government of the Khmer Republic has had it translated into that country's language, and 25,000 copies are to be printed at an early date, with International Committee support.

Europe

A large number of European countries have already prepared and distributed their own manuals, and few requests for information have been received in Geneva.

*

The particulars given above show the interest which the ICRC initiative has roused in the world, and how important it is today to ensure the widespread dissemination of the *Soldier's Manual* among the armed forces of an ever-larger number of countries.