

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS

8th OF MAY

World Red Cross Day is celebrated on May 8 in many countries. For certain of the National Societies, particularly in Africa, 1964 was the first year in which this event took place.

This Day, instituted in 1948, has become the occasion when the general public is reminded of the humanitarian work of the Red Cross, the innumerable activities of the 102 National Societies and the rôle of some 175 million volunteer members.

The theme chosen this year, *Red Cross—bond of solidarity and factor of world understanding*, brings to the fore the rôle of the Red Cross in promoting among men that harmony which is a prerequisite to peace and an essential problem of our time. It was this which inspired the May 8 celebrations by the National Societies to which Mr. H. Beer, Secretary-General of the League of Red Cross Societies, sent a message introducing the theme of the World Day and saying, in particular :

... How could the Red Cross, which by its very nature is familiar with every form of human distress, fail to make every effort to imbue all the peoples of the world with the spirit of solidarity and thus to encourage understanding individually and collectively, which is one of its raisons d'être? ... How could the Red Cross fail to reach all men of goodwill, as its sole aim is to combat suffering without any discrimination of race, religion and political opinion? ...

... The Red Cross Movement in full progress and with its methods adapted to new and always urgent necessities will be more than ever before a factor of human understanding through fellowship. It needs the co-operation of all to attain this goal and invites your association to this end.

Moreover, as in previous years, and for the fifteenth time, Radio-Genève broadcast an international 8 May programme which

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has become a tradition under the auspices of the ICRC, the League, the European Broadcasting Union and the International Broadcasting Corporation. This broadcast (either direct or recorded) enables nearly one hundred countries throughout the world to mark World Red Cross Day.

This year a new approach was adopted. The ICRC Broadcasting and Television Office at Radio-Genève requested all transmitting stations taking part to broadcast documentary programmes, including genuine on-the-spot recordings of events in which the Red Cross had played a part. Then, having copied these documentaries, it sent them to all stations co-operating in the 8 May programme. Each transmitting station (or any one station of a particular language) could then draw up to suit the listening public its own programme based on the documentation received from Geneva.

This year, Radio Monte-Carlo broadcast to French-speaking listeners a programme entitled: *Red Cross, year 1, second century*, after the usual " Multiplex " had enabled the countries participating by direct transmission to announce their presence on the air.

The broadcasting service of several countries gave programmes on the Red Cross. The Swiss Television Service based its programme on the Red Cross participation in the Swiss National Exhibition at Lausanne.