

# The International Tracing Service

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With regard to Cuba, numerous Cuban families settled in Florida have appealed to the Central Agency in order to arrange for their relatives who have remained behind to obtain permission to leave Cuba to join them. The Central Agency is endeavouring to bring these cases to the attention of the Cuban Red Cross without, however, having met with any success so far.

It should also be mentioned that when circumstances require, e.g. following the interruption of normal postal services between two or several countries, the Central Agency organizes the transmission of messages between the dispersed members of families through the intermediary of the National Societies. In the course of the past year, the Central Agency has transmitted more than 10,500 such messages. The countries principally concerned were, on the one hand, Indonesia and the Netherlands, and on the other hand Israel and the Arab States. The transmission of messages between Israel and the Arab States involves the Central Agency in a considerable amount of work.

Events throughout the world are unceasingly bringing fresh cases to the Central Agency and it is thanks to the competence of its staff that it is able to reply daily to the innumerable anguished enquiries from people all over the world.

## **THE INTERNATIONAL TRACING SERVICE**

The ITS in Arolsen (near Kassel) is still the main documentary centre relating to persons deported, displaced or missing in Germany and countries occupied by the German armed forces during the Second World War. The administration of the ITS was entrusted to the ICRC under the terms of agreements concluded in Bonn on June 6, 1955 and renewed on May 12, 1960.

The activity of the ITS continued with undiminished intensity in 1962. The number of applications for enquiries and certificates rose to 154,988 as against 129,465 in 1961. These figures (1961 shown in brackets) include :

13,115 individual enquiries (27,272) ;



10,507 requests for photocopies, particularly of medical documents for the purpose of applying for pensions or compensation for physical injury (8,700) ;

11,425 requests for death certificates (13,752) ;

119,600 requests for certificates with a view to obtaining indemnity (78,700) ;

282 requests for information of an historical and statistical nature (181).

The number of certificates and reports issued by the ITS was 200,387 (186,311 in 1961), including :

42,648 positive and negative replies to individual requests for enquiries (47,621) ;

16,260 photocopies (13,787) ;

2,181 death certificates and reports (2,581) ;

81,689 certificates with a view to applying for compensation (73,363) ;

57,327 negative replies to requests for certificates (48,777).

The activity of the " central index " is summarized in 269,200 cards made out in 1962 and in 276,177 classified cards. The reason for the lesser number of cards made out in 1962 in comparison with 1961 (417,262) arises from the fact that the indexing of post-war documents acquired through the intermediary of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees necessitates a great amount of work.

Amongst the documents assembled, the microfilms of X-rays from the Auschwitz infirmary, which were made available to the ITS by the Auschwitz State Museum, are of particular interest. They give proof of the illnesses contracted during detention. For many cases this is the only record of detention at Auschwitz.

Other documents which the ITS has acquired include lists provided by the local authorities of several " Länder " of the German Federal Republic and concern movements within the

country, as well as migration and deportation of German Jews during the years 1933 to 1945. Work which may be carried out thanks to these documents will permit the assembly of details on all German Jews who died in the course of detention. Documents received up to the end of 1962 give information on some 38,000 persons. Some of this information is completely new to the ITS, other details providing additional data.

The municipality of Frankfurt-am-Main has handed to the ITS a voluminous original set of records concerning foreign workers. As these records were compiled in part by the police authorities, they prove, apart from the work carried out in Germany during the war, the location of detainees in specific camps.

The ITS is continuing the preparation of a revised edition of its catalogue of camps and prisons. It hopes, in addition, to complete in 1963 the examination of over 100,000 cases of deceased Soviet citizens in respect of whom documents have been gathered in the territory of the German Federal Republic.

## **TRAINING OF MEDICAL PERSONNEL AND ASSISTANCE TO THE WAR DISABLED**

The Statutes of the International Red Cross (article IV e) lay upon the ICRC the duty of contributing " to the preparation and development of medical personnel and medical equipment, in co-operation with the Red Cross Organizations, the Medical Services of the Armed Forces and other competent authorities ". The Medical Personnel Section of the ICRC, therefore, endeavours to collect all possible information on the situation of medical personnel in all countries, i.e. recruitment, training, organization and enrolment in case of necessity.

Although some countries are well organized in this connection, others—the majority—are in grave need of professionally trained medical personnel. It is therefore the task of the ICRC to encourage National Societies to train as many voluntary medical personnel as possible, so that in the event of conflict they would be able to fulfil the rôle of auxiliaries to the Army Medical Service. The Medical Personnel Section of the ICRC has distributed abundant