

ICRC Radio-Communications

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of the information supplied by the ICRC's *Review*: Algeria, Australia, Cambodia, Cameroun, Chile, Dominican Republic, Great Britain, Honduras, India, Iraq, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, Upper Volta, USSR, Vietnam Republic. News of meetings of International Red Cross leaders was also published promptly in the *Review*.

We might also mention a number of reports not directly related to the Red Cross but adumbrating major efforts on the international level to promote essential human rights, health, hygiene. In addition, with various other features and a large bibliographic section, the *Review* is clearly a lively periodical which keeps abreast of the times.

The English edition, which is in principle identical with the French, continues to be a success, with a constantly increasing demand. The circulation of the French edition has also increased due to the larger number of young National Societies for which the review is a valuable source of information. The Spanish and German supplements which are also issued monthly contain the main articles which are published in the *Review*. They also contain information on the very diverse activities and missions carried out by the ICRC and National Societies.

6. ICRC RADIO-COMMUNICATIONS

Emergency radio-communications

The daily contact with the ICRC's field hospital at Uqhd, near the Northern border of the Yemen, ceased on February 4, 1966. Until then, from December 1963, the ICRC radio-communications service had maintained a continual two-way connection with this medico-surgical unit isolated in the desert.

During the year under review, the ICRC delegated four mobile medical teams to North-East Yemen. They were equipped with portable radios to enable them to keep in touch with one another and with ICRC headquarters in Geneva. Thus, after conclusive

experience of regular contact with the fixed station at Uqhd, small teams constantly on the move over difficult terrain have now proved that with light but powerful transmitters and receivers they can co-ordinate their work and maintain contact over long distances with their base.

One aspect of this network which was of particular interest to specialists was its regular and economical operation. The transmitters in the Yemen operate on power of only one hundred watts, compared to commercial stations with a power one hundred to a thousand times greater.

In addition, the central transmitter HBC 88 continued its trial broadcasts to transmitting-receiving units accredited by National Societies in various parts of the world. Each of these radio connections was a step forward towards the emergency International Red Cross network for co-operation in relief organization in case of need.

At present the ICRC has ten mobile stations, six of which are operating in the Yemen. The central station, HBC 88, is equipped with an emergency transmitter and receiving set. The total cost of the ICRC's emergency radio-communications system since its inauguration in 1963, inclusive of mobile stations, does not exceed 50,000 Sw.frs.

It will be recalled that the International Committee of the Red Cross had recourse to the Swiss Radio service for the first time during the latter phase of the Second World War for the transmission of family messages. These enabled thousands of people to resume contact with missing relatives.

In order the better to discharge this task incumbent on it under the Geneva Conventions, the ICRC was assigned a frequency of 7210 kilocycles (wave length 41.61 m.).

As in previous years, the ICRC broadcast trials on this frequency to check on efficiency of transmission and reception. To judge from the reception reports and recordings received from five continents, the ICRC, in case of need, could count on co-operation from most of the official stations and from innumerable individual listeners for forwarding messages.

In January 1966, 289 correspondents in 23 countries were on the register; by the end of the year there were 760 in 36 different

countries. 1550 reception reports and 61 recorded tapes give a clear picture of the effective scope of the broadcasting.

The International Committee of the Red Cross takes pleasure in expressing to the Swiss Telephone and Telegraph authorities, the Swiss Short-Wave Broadcasting Studio in Berne and all who listen to its trial broadcasts, its gratitude for their efficient and selfless co-operation.

