

Zeitschrift: Annual report / International Committee of the Red Cross
Herausgeber: International Committee of the Red Cross
Band: - (1957)

Rubrik: Information - Press - Publications

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

Download PDF: 27.04.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

VII. INFORMATION—PRESS—PUBLICATIONS

The activity of the ICRC in the field of public information is of the utmost importance. It is essential for the International Committee to have the support of public confidence and public opinion in order to be able to carry out its task. It must therefore, by publicizing its rôle, establish an atmosphere which will help this confidence to spread, in order to increase the efficiency of the Red Cross in general and of ICRC delegates in particular. The press and information services of the ICRC maintain this liaison with public opinion.

* * *

In 1957, the ICRC Press and Information Section was reorganised ; a professional journalist ¹ has been appointed to direct it.

During the year, the press and information services were engaged in many varied activities :

(a) *Relations with the international Press.*

The ICRC is in constant touch with the services providing written, spoken and filmed news in every country. A large number of journalists visit the International Committee's headquarters at Geneva to obtain information. Close co-operation has been established both with the Swiss Press and with international Press representatives who are accredited in Geneva, and with the editorial offices of the principal newspapers in both hemispheres.

¹ Mr. Georges A. Fiechter.

It often happens that the ICRC is unable to give immediate publicity to some action undertaken by it, in the interests of the success of that particular action. But as soon as possible the Press is informed.

In 1957, 79 press releases were distributed, in French, English, German and Spanish. These communiqués, which all bear the indication "ICRCPRESS", were distributed to some 400 news agencies, newspaper correspondents and editorial offices, as well as to the diplomatic corps, the National Red Cross Societies and various international organisations. Transmission of press releases by teleprinter to the news agencies and the editorial offices of the principal daily newspapers enabled them to be published immediately over a wide area. The ICRC collected newspaper clippings containing a total of more than 200,000 lines, which reproduce all or part of its press releases.

During the XIXth International Red Cross Conference at New Delhi, a special Information Service was in operation. A series of news items concerning the discussions were prepared and were sent to Geneva by telegraph and subsequently transmitted to the Press by teleprinter from there.

On his return from New Delhi, Mr. Leopold Boissier, President of the ICRC, gave a press conference which was attended by a large number of journalists.

BROADCASTING AND TELEVISION

The Office of Humanitarian Activities and the Broadcasting and Television Office are responsible for the International Committee's activity in this field. They are under the responsibility of the head of the ICRC Information Section, they are administered by the Director of Radio-Genève¹, where they have their offices, and are directed by a board of directors composed of ICRC and radio officials.²

¹ Mr. René Dovaz.

² ICRC : Dr. E. Gloor, former Vice-president, Mr. J. S. Pictet, Director for General Affairs and Mr. G. A. Fiechter, Head of Press and Information Section.

Radio : Mr. R. Dovaz, Mr. R. de Reding, Mr. P. Borsinger, Radio advisers to the ICRC.

The Broadcasting and Television Office ¹ has been completely reorganised ; it now occupies the studios of the Intercroixrouge Group at Radio-Genève and collects the material required for ICRC radio and television programmes. It is also responsible for administering the ICRC wave-length and, in regard to broadcasting, maintains liaison between the ICRC, the National Red Cross Societies and other organisations. It also ensures rapid communication services, even in time of crisis, for the ICRC and the Central Information Agency.

The Office of Humanitarian Activities ² is responsible for the production and broadcasting of radio programmes of a humanitarian description.

In 1957, these two sections carried out the following activities :

1. Test Broadcasts 1957

The High Frequency Broadcasting Conference assigned to the ICRC a wave-length belonging to Switzerland—41 m. 61, 7210 kc. The Swiss Confederation also places the installations of the Swiss Short-wave Service at the disposal of the International Committee. This exceptional privilege would enable the International Committee to communicate with the rest of the world in case of conflict, in order to co-ordinate the work of its delegates from Geneva, to organise relief action, and to exchange news of prisoners of war and civilians. It also makes it possible to transmit by radio telephotography lists of detained, deceased and missing persons, and to remind the belligerents of the humanitarian principles of the Geneva Conventions.

Even now, the ICRC studies the range of its wave-length so as to be fully acquainted with possible fluctuations and to be able to list them. At least eleven years are required for the preparation of a technical record like this, since the data in it depend on the normal permanent cycle of the solar system. This study is made by means of test broadcasts, made at different times throughout the year. Each test broadcast is announced and the ICRC sends out " report cards " to a large number of correspondents, some

¹ Directed by Mr. Georges Kuhne.

² Directed by Mr. Robert Ferrazino.

specialists and some not, who are prepared to assist the International Committee in this work. Once these report cards have been sorted, the exact range of each broadcast and the best time for reception in each area can be determined. Since 1951, the ICRC has been making test broadcasts of this kind over its wavelength. In 1957, they were made on June 25, 27 and 29 in the morning and at noon over a twin-poled omnidirectional antenna with a power of 100 kw. and in the afternoon and evening with a power of 25 kw. Some 150,000 listeners followed these broadcasts. The results were very satisfactory: the ICRC received a total of 2,875 listening reports and 44 recordings sent from 45 countries in five continents.

For the first time, a fairly large number of reports were received from the East European countries (from State institutions such as the national postal or broadcasting authorities).

The general public is not yet well aware of the existence of the Intercroixrouge wave-length and indeed its use involves considerable confusion. Certain transmitting stations use the 7210 kc. frequency, although they are not authorised to do so. They include the following:

Dakar	12 kw	6 am - 11 pm	GMT	
Congo	20 kw	4 am - 4 pm	„	
China				
Daventry	100 kw	12 pm - 12 am	„	
Rampishalm	100 kw	12 pm - 12 am	„	
Skelton	100 kw	„	„	
Wooferton	100 kw	„	„	
Lopik (Netherlands)	40 kw	12 am - 3 pm	„	According to season
and	100 kw	3 - 5 pm	„	
		5 - 8 pm	„	
		10 - 12 pm	„	
		8 - 10 am	„	
Calcutta	20 kw	12 pm - 1 pm	„	
Delhi	100 kw	1 am - 1 pm	„	
Tromsø (Norway) . .	5 kw	6 am - 7 pm	„	
		3 - 11 pm	„	

Hörby	100 kw	3 - 4 am	GMT	
		4 - 5 am	,,	
		5 - 6 am	,,	Acord-
		1 - 2 pm	,,	ing to
		2 - 4 pm	,,	season
		5 - 6 pm	,,	
		6 - 7 pm	,,	
		11 pm - 2 pm	,,	

This list, provided by the International Telecommunication Union, only includes the principal stations. The times shown are those announced by the administrations concerned, but they are not necessarily used during the whole year. This situation, which is frequently a hindrance in normal times, might well be catastrophic in time of conflict.

2. *International broadcasts for Red Cross Day*

As in previous years, the international broadcast for Red Cross Day took place on May 8, from 8.30 to 9 pm. It included the first performance of a work by the Swiss composer Pierre Wissmer. This work, entitled "CLAMAVI", was performed by the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, conducted by the composer. The programme was broadcasted simultaneously over sixteen stations broadcasting in French, German, Italian and Serbo-Croat.

A message from the President of the ICRC, Mr. Leopold Boissier, was also relayed. It was translated into several languages, recorded on magnetic tape and sent to fifty countries. It was then broadcast in those countries on Universal Red Cross Day.

These programmes were completed by special broadcasts prepared by the Swiss Short-Wave Service, which began with the French, German and Italian linguistic identification signals and were followed by programmes in English and Spanish.

The fact that this broadcast was transmitted over almost the whole European network, and also that it was translated into all the languages of the old world, resulted in a maximum listening audience, estimated at 30 million people.

3. *Broadcasts for the ICRC collection*

In 1957, some fifteen broadcasts were prepared in order to facilitate and to support, over the radio, the annual ICRC collection in Switzerland.¹

4. *End of year Message 1957*

The end of year message of Mr. Leopold Boissier was broadcast in six languages.²

5. *Broadcasts to Hungary*

At the beginning of 1957, following the resumption of telegraph, telephone and postal services between Hungary and the rest of the world, the ICRC Broadcasting Section suspended its special

¹ RADIO SOTTENS

Slogans (Geneva-Lausanne) : end August to September 15.

Broadcast play (Geneva) : September 2 (Operation Freedom).

Current events (Geneva) : September 2 (« Instants du Monde », Mr. F. Siordet, Mr. P. Gaillard).

Les Institutions et les Hommes (Geneva) : September 6 (Red Cross Principles, Mr. J. Pictet).

Les Institutions et les Hommes (Geneva) : September 13 (Mr. C. Ammann).
Programme of poetry dedicated to Mr. Boissier : September 15 (Isabelle Villars).

RADIO BEROMÜNSTER

Slogans (Zurich) : from September 1 to 15.

Current events (Zurich) : August 30 (Mr. G. Rutishauser).

Current events (Zurich) : September 6 (Mr. M. Thudichum).

Current events (Zurich) : September 11 (Mr. R. Gallopin).

RADIO LUGANO

Slogans (Lugano) : From August 31 to September 21.

Current events (Lugano) : adaptation of interview with Mr. F. Siordet and Mr. P. Gaillard.

Broadcast play (Lugano) : September 17. Adaptation of "Operation Freedom".

² *In French* : Switzerland, France, Belgium Luxembourg, Monte-Carlo, Canada, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia ; Swiss short-wave.

In German : Switzerland, Germany, Berlin, Austria ; Swiss short-wave.

In English : Australia, New Zealand, India, Pakistan, Canada ; Swiss short-wave. (The United Kingdom and the Dominions received French and English texts by post.)

In Spanish : Spain ; Swiss short-wave. (Latin American countries received French and Spanish texts by post.)

In Italian : Switzerland, Italy ; Swiss short-wave.

In Arabic : Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Saudi Arabia.

broadcasts to that country. Only messages addressed by Hungarian refugees to their families still in Hungary were broadcast. By the end of January 1957, when this service was suspended, 27,000 messages had been broadcast. This was the first time that the wave-length assigned to the ICRC—41 m 61— had actually been used.

6. News Broadcasts

In 1957 the ICRC Broadcasting Section produced 174 programmes of various kinds. These programmes, which filled 70 hours of radio time and were transmitted in 62 countries in five continents, could be heard by almost 330 million listeners.¹

7. Broadcasts in Spanish

In 1957, Mr. J. J. Gomez de Rueda presented 26 programmes in Spanish to listeners in Latin America. These programmes were broadcast by the Swiss Short-Wave Service, under the auspices of the ICRC. Mr. de Rueda has a thorough knowledge of Red Cross concepts and these programmes have aroused great interest. Most of them are subsequently reproduced in the Latin American press or in National Red Cross Societies' magazines.

8. Broadcasts in Arabic

After several years of preparation, weekly broadcasts in Arabic are now being given by the ICRC, with the assistance of the Swiss Short-Wave Service. It was not easy to add an additional language to the programmes broadcast by this station, but this was finally achieved thanks to the co-operation of Mr. Paul Borsinger, Director of the Swiss Short-Wave Service and radio adviser to the ICRC.

The ICRC prepares, records and takes full moral responsibility for its broadcasts in Arabic, which are transmitted by the Swiss Short-Wave Service. The first broadcast in Arabic took place on July 12, 1957, over the following wave-lengths : 16 m 93, 17720 kc. and 25 m 28, 11865 kc. ; the power of the transmission was 100 kw.²

¹ Number of listeners computed on the basis of statistics of the European Broadcasting Union.

² This wave-length was subsequently changed, and the programmes are now transmitted over 16 m 87 (17784 kc.) and 19 m 60 (15365 kc.).

Mr. Ibrahim Zreikat is responsible for preparing and recording these 15-minute programmes, which are broadcast each Saturday at 7.15 pm (Swiss time) and are heard by thousands of listeners.

9. Reporting

During the XIXth International Red Cross Conference there was close co-operation between the ICRC, Radio-Genève and the Swiss Short-Wave Service. The latter two organisations were represented in New Delhi by one English and one French reporter.

The French language reporter ¹ broadcast eleven commentaries over the Radio-Suisse Romande wave-length. These were re-broadcast in German and Italian by the Italian and German services of the Swiss radio, and some of them were also re-broadcast by other European stations.

The commentaries by the English language reporter ² were broadcast by the Swiss Short-Wave Service to all the British Commonwealth countries, the United States and Canada.

Some ten feature programmes about the ICRC were also broadcast by the Indian Radio.

Lastly, on his return from New Delhi, the President of the ICRC gave an interview which was broadcast nine times by the Swiss Short-Wave Service.

10. Television Programme on May 8, 1957

For Universal Red Cross Day, May 8, a 16-minute film was prepared, illustrating the activities of the ICRC and the League of Red Cross Societies during the events in Hungary. It was transmitted by television in the following 15 countries :

Austria	Japan	Portugal
Belgium	Jugoslavia	Spain
Denmark	Luxemburg	Sweden
France	Monaco	Switzerland
Italy	Netherlands	United Kingdom

¹ Mr. R. Ferrazino.

² Mr. Russel Henderson.

BROADCAST FOR THE ICRC COLLECTION

In support of the Swiss annual collection for the ICRC, in September 1957, the Swiss Television Services in French and German transmitted four interviews of ICRC delegates.¹

REVUE INTERNATIONALE DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

The events which shook the world in 1957 had repercussions on the International Committee's activities which have been reported at length in the *Revue Internationale*², the official organ of the International Committee. In articles or in the "News Items" section, it has recounted the various phases of the tremendous relief work which was undertaken by the Red Cross at the time of the events in Hungary and at Suez. It has included reports on missions by delegates in Germany and the East European countries, particularly in connection with the re-uniting of families, as well as in the Near East, North Africa, Cyprus and Kenya.

Mr. X. Leclainche, Director General of Public Assistance in Paris, contributed a noteworthy article entitled "Il faut humaniser l'hôpital", and Mr. P. Villetorte, Chief Commissioner of the French Police, provided a memorandum on the application by the police of a convention protecting persons in case of internal disturbances. Mr. B. de Rougé, Secretary General of the League, wrote an excellent article on that organisation's action in behalf of Hungarian refugees. Mention must also be made of an article on the Swiss Aeronautical Rescue Guard.

The *Revue Internationale* has published a number of articles written specially by National Red Cross Societies concerning their work, which illustrate the devotion and ingenuity with which these Societies carry on their campaign against suffering.

The *Revue Internationale* published reports on the preparatory work for the XIXth International Red Cross Conference. The

¹ FRENCH LANGUAGE TELEVISION

Sept. 2	Geneva :	Interview —	Mr. M. Thudichum
Sept. 9	"	"	Dr. L. Gaillard

GERMAN LANGUAGE TELEVISION

Sept. 6	Zurich :	Interview —	Mr. M. Thudichum
Sept. 11	"	"	Mr. R. Gallopin
			Dr. Redli

² Editor : Mr. J. G. Lossier.

resolutions adopted by that Conference were also published. In 1957, publication of the "Draft Rules for the Limitation of the Dangers incurred by the Civilian Population in Time of War", which were presented at New Delhi, was completed. An important article by Mr. C. Pilloud on reservations to the Geneva Conventions also appeared in the *Revue Internationale*.

As part of a series of articles concerning outstanding figures in the history of the Red Cross, a lengthy study by Mr. R. Boppe was published in several instalments in the *Revue Internationale*, as a tribute to Dr. Louis Appia, an eminent member of the "Committee of Five" which launched the Red Cross movement.

Various other feature articles were also published.

The Supplements, which appear in English, German and Spanish reproduced some of the articles published in the *Revue Internationale*, as well as the principal news items concerning the traditional activities of the ICRC.

FILMS

The ICRC prepared a short film on its recent activities. The material for the film, which will be shown to the public in 1958, was compiled by the Press and Information Section. It was produced and directed by Charles Duvanel.

With the co-operation of the Indian Government, a film was made during the XIXth International Red Cross Conference. It was made available to the distributors of news films, through the good offices of the *Chambre Syndicale de la Presse filmée* and was included in a large number of news programmes.

Many calls were made on the ICRC film library during the year. Films about the International Committee's activities were shown to groups of visitors on more than 200 occasions and were made available to various National Societies, Embassies or organisations who had requested them.

Lectures and requests for documentation

A large number of lectures and talks were given on the activities, the history and the structure of the ICRC, either to groups visiting the ICRC headquarters (e.g.: to groups of students from the *Institut Universitaire de Hautes Etudes Internationales*) or on

the occasion of congresses, meetings and seminars in Switzerland or other countries.

Mr. J. S. Pictet, Director for General Affairs of the ICRC, gave two talks in Berne to young members of the Swiss Federal Political Department.

On May 22, Mr. Leopold Boissier gave an important lecture to the International Assembly of the Rotary Club, which was held at Lucerne. He also gave a talk entitled "In the days of Florence Nightingale and Henry Dunant" at the opening of the medical days at Brussels.

The Press and Information Section replied to some 350 requests for documents.

PHOTOGRAPHS

The ICRC expanded its photographic service. A new filing system was set up for the 80,000 photographs which are in its archives.

In addition, thanks to a gift from the Wetzlar firm of Ernst Leitz, early in 1958 the ICRC photographic laboratory will be equipped with modern apparatus for reproducing and enlarging photographs and documents.

In 1957, more than 500 photographs supplied by the ICRC were published in the Swiss press.

EXHIBITIONS

The ICRC prepared a series of posters and photographic exhibits illustrating its various activities. These were included in the exhibition at New Delhi, which was opened by the leader of the Swiss Government Delegation, Mr. Paul Ruegger, on the occasion of the XIXth International Red Cross Conference.

The Press and Information Section prepared and presented the ICRC exhibit in the International Red Cross Pavilion, at the Brussels Exhibition.

PUBLICATIONS

The following documents were published by the ICRC during the year :

Annual Report for 1956—(in French, English and Spanish, German edition mimeographed)—Geneva 1957, 90 p.

Les Réserves aux Conventions de Genève de 1949, by Claude Pilloud, head of the Legal Department of the International Committee of the Red Cross—Geneva, 1957, 29 p. (in French).

Report on the Relief Action in Hungary, October 1956—June 1957 (in French, English, Spanish and German) — Geneva 1957, 58 p.

Resolutions adopted by the XIXth International Conference of the Red Cross, held at New Delhi, October-November 1957 (in French, English and Spanish)—Geneva, 1957, 25 p.

In addition, the International Committee has entrusted a former member of its staff¹ with the task of preparing a History of the origin and activities of the ICRC. This work is to be published at the time of the Red Cross Centenary celebrations in 1963.

CAMPAIGN FOR ICRC COLLECTION IN SWITZERLAND

In co-operation with the organiser of the annual ICRC collection in Switzerland², a series of radio and television broadcasts was arranged³, various articles were written and published and photographs were made available to the Swiss daily and weekly newspapers. Documents were also prepared for direct distribution to the public.

¹ Mr. Pierre Boissier.

² Mr. Charles Ammann.

³ See p. 74.