

NEWS OF NATIONAL SOCIETIES

Formerly: International Bulletin of Red Cross Societies, founded in 1869

Philippines

We have received the Annual Report 1960 of the Philippine National Red Cross, so that we can now outline some of this National Society's activities, among which the disaster relief action occupies the foremost place. For the past ten years, each year has brought its share of ruin to the archipelago: typhoons, tornadoes, floods, tidal waves, volcanic eruptions, earth tremors, fires, etc. Taking only 1960 as an example, these disasters resulted in over 500 dead and 1,500,000 persons receiving emergency relief from the Red Cross.

The rehabilitation programme undertaken by the Philippine National Red Cross on behalf of families stricken by the floods of 1960 included, among other things, a project called "Seeds for Survival": a collection of vegetable seeds of all kinds was organized, with the support of the public schools, and the yield distributed among the disaster-stricken families. It is easy to imagine the importance of this action. We should also like to point out that, according to its Charter, this Society is bound to "establish and maintain a system of national and international relief in time of peace and in time of war"; it is also responsible for implementing, throughout the country, the emergency relief programme during the period immediately following a national catastrophe.

In such a situation of continual watchfulness, not only the needs of the victims, but also of the wounded must be anticipated; the blood programme is therefore one of the major concerns of the Red Cross Society. In 1960, it was possible to fulfil new plans thanks to the inauguration of four new blood-bank extension services, each one of them representing, for the wounded and sick, the guarantee, as it were, that the Red Cross is able to meet the

requirements at any given moment. In addition, a gift of 39 refrigerators has now enabled this Society to set up a blood service in nearly every province and city of the country. Thus, during 1960, a total of 45,241 bottles of blood were collected and given free to 21,897 patients in 299 hospitals.

The action of the Safety Services is no less important, due to the large number of victims in need of first aid following accidents : 35,000 to 45,000 each year. Safety courses are held free of charge by a paid staff of 35 members ; in addition, the Red Cross has also started to conduct free courses for the general public for instruction in accident-prevention, first aid and life-saving, which also includes swimming lessons. By the end of 1960, these services included 33,440 volunteer safety instructors ; 425 courses had been conducted, ensuring free training for 6,647 persons, of whom 1,746 became qualified volunteer instructors in order to train other volunteers in safety education.

The Red Cross Nursing Service brings its gospel of health to the poorest parts of the town ; its staff wage an energetic fight against contagious diseases, in particular tuberculosis, which takes a heavy toll among the population, especially among the children. Over 5,000 persons living in these parts of the towns have been instructed in Mother and Child Care and Care of the Sick and Injured at Home by Red Cross staff.

Another important part of the Red Cross activity is the Military Welfare Service. According to its Charter, the Philippine National Red Cross must " furnish volunteer aid to the sick and the injured in time of peace and in time of war " and " act in matters of voluntary relief and in accord with the authorities of the Armed Forces as a medium of communication between the people and their Armed Forces ". In 1960, the nine service units of this section acted on nearly 6,000 cases. Moreover, the service arranged recreational activities in hospitals from which a total of over 74,000 patients benefited.

Finally, the Volunteer Service, which numbers over ten million members, 4,850,000 of whom are Juniors, rendered a total of about 36,000 hours of service during the year.

We do not wish to miss this opportunity of reminding our readers that the Philippine National Red Cross held its biennial

National Convention in Manila from August 25 to 27, 1961. The plenary session, which was presided over by the Society's Chairman, opened with a ceremony attended by numerous personalities, among whom General Alfred M. Gruenther, President of the American National Red Cross, who spoke on " The Red Cross and our time ". At the third plenary meeting, a magistrate gave a speech on the four Geneva Conventions. During the closing ceremony, rewards were distributed and the ICRC delegate in Manila, Mr. Mittner, had the pleasure of presenting the Florence Nightingale Medal to a Philippine nurse, Miss Julita V. Sotejo.

U.S.S.R.

Among the many interesting articles published in the *Soviet Red Cross* (1961, No. 1), the bulletin of the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, one is of particular interest since it describes a new initiative taken by this National Society.

Under the title " The Nurses' Bureau in action ", we learn of an activity which social conditions have placed in the forefront of our present-day problems : home nursing. In the Soviet Union, as in many other countries, a sick person, living alone and dependent on himself, presents the humanitarian institutions with a problem which numerous efforts have been made to solve during the last few years ; various National Societies have indeed solved it successfully, as the *International Review* has already mentioned. It is interesting to see how the Alliance is now performing this task, following on a decision of its Executive Committee.

This decision planned the setting up of a " Red Cross Nurses' Bureau " for the purpose of providing personnel trained in home nursing. After attending nursing courses, these young women are attached to the Policlinic of this Society where they carry out periods of volunteer work in a surgical ward or in the dispensary. The article stresses the fact that these candidates are given a warm