

the country to organize local committees, teach first aid, organize Junior Red Cross in the schools and, above all, explain the general objectives of the Red Cross. In this way we opened 13 local chapters, distributed somewhat according to the administrative divisions of the country. Each chapter is made up of a Board of Directors, first aid services and Junior Red Cross. The Monrovia chapter has 50 members who have elected a representative to the Board of Governors.

What are the future plans of the Liberian Red Cross ?

Next summer, the Red Cross will train teachers in first aid. We have a five-year plan aimed at training a large majority of the students. The programme of disaster relief has begun, and it is planned to give local chapters the responsibility of furnishing a shelter for victims in their areas and distributing food and clothing.

In addition, to commemorate the Centenary, the Liberian Red Cross plans to train a theatrical group which will present scenes of Red Cross activities, or to give a parade on the theme " What is the Red Cross ? " There will also be special radio programmes, and a series of six Red Cross stamps will be issued.

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## United States

The American Red Cross held its 38th Annual Convention in May 1963 in Philadelphia at which more than 4,000 delegates were present. On that occasion, Mr. John F. Kennedy, President of the United States and Honorary President of the National Society, sent a message to the American Red Cross which was read out at the inaugural session, the purport of which was as follows :

I am very pleased to send greetings to the delegates and guests assembled for the 38th American Red Cross Convention. Your national convention has special significance this year, since it is held in observance

of the Centenary of the international Red Cross movement. Your meeting is thus an important link in a chain of commemorative events which will be held by nations throughout the world to honor Henry Dunant and the birth of the Red Cross humanitarian revolution.

As the world-wide Red Cross pays tribute to its founders, it is appropriate to reflect on the significance of the Geneva Conventions. In the history of international law, the Geneva Conventions are among the first codified laws freely subscribed to by all civilized peoples. The rights they guarantee are common to all men, without regard for nationality, race, or creed. They are the cornerstones of Red Cross, and have led, through the establishment of Red Cross Societies in some 90 nations, to an international force for unity which transcends all boundaries.

Red Cross is the medium through which all men are brothers. It is through the work of the League of Red Cross Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross that the alleviation of human suffering caused by natural disasters, war, and disease—anywhere on earth—becomes a shared responsibility of all mankind.

The American National Red Cross, with its flexible and growing program of service to the American people, and through its programs of mutual assistance with other Red Cross Societies, commands the respect of the entire world.

It continues to strengthen its programs of service to the Armed Forces and their families. It serves instantly and unflinchingly to lift the despair of those who suffer pain and loss through natural disasters. It works to train our youth to become part of the world community, and it works to teach young and old alike the methods of accident prevention and safety.

I congratulate the American National Red Cross for its past contributions to the American people. And, I commend its participation in the international activities of the League of Red Cross Societies.

As Red Cross moves into its second century of service to mankind, I wish you every success.

At the conclusion of the session, Mr. Adlai E. Stevenson, United States Representative to the United Nations, delivered an address to the delegates in Philadelphia of which we give the following main extracts :

... There is a community of interest between the UN and the Red Cross : both are organizations dedicated to alleviating, and ultimately eliminating, not only man's inhumanity to man, but suffering, pain and unhappiness no matter what the source.

Both the United Nations in its political and social fields, and the Red Cross in its volunteer humanitarian area, are progressing together toward the unification of men in international brotherhood. I know of no finer cause.

However, there is a basic difference. In instances of conflict between nations and within nations, the UN at times is called on to take sides. The Red Cross never. It always occupies the "in-between world of impartiality". And regardless how you define neutrality, the fact remains that in all political disputes, the Red Cross can and must stay independent, and aloof. "The rights and wrongs, the politics, are not its business . . . but the victims are." And long may it continue just that way!

So it is a great privilege to come to speak to you on this occasion celebrating the hundredth birthday of what must surely be the world's most respected and respectable veteran! It is also a unique privilege, for it is rare indeed to find oneself celebrating either people or organizations to whom public opinion has a wholly approving response.

You hardly need to be reminded on such an occasion of the vast scope of the work done by the Red Cross Society of America. You all know that it has brought comfort and help to millions of homes. Soldiers, prisoners of war, bewildered families, the aged, the neglected, communities caught overwhelmed by disaster—the list is endless of people to whom the uniform of the Red Cross workers is the beacon light of help and comfort effectively on the scene.

To talk of these familiar Missions of Mercy, to give any idea of its fruitfulness, would occupy us happily through several banquets. But it is only one half of the work, and I hope you will forgive me, as a diplomat laboring in the not always fertile vineyard of world politics, for concentrating on the supreme international significance of the work done for the world community by the Red Cross of America and its world-wide web of sister societies.

As I have suggested, the links between the International Red Cross movement and the United Nations itself are very close. In 1946, the General Assembly of the UN called on all its members to promote cooperation between their national Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies. The Geneva Conventions, sponsored and worked out by the Red Cross, support and complement the UN's own Declaration of Human Rights. Specialized UN agencies, such as the World Health Organization or the Children's Fund, work closely with the Red Cross. The UN itself has appealed to the Red Cross in many cases—in Palestine, in Hungary, in the Congo, in Cuba—where Red Cross action was clearly indispensable.

So, as United States Representative to the UN, I am proud to have this opportunity to salute this great institution whose work so closely parallels and indeed on occasion completes the activities of our world institution.

But the international significance of the Red Cross goes further than these facts and mechanics of cooperation. Its contribution is, of course, in part an extension of the humanitarian work it does here at home. But I believe the contribution goes further, for it underlines for us some of the most urgent problems faced by our insanely unstable world society and points beyond them, if not to solutions, then at least to something hardly less precious—to the possibility of solutions . . .

. . . The Red Cross' utter dedication to *his* service, the growing speed and sophistication of their means of action, the setting up of permanent disaster squads to meet human tragedy as soon as it arises—in all this, I confess, I see another “last best hope” that “one day the burdens will be lifted from the shoulders of all mankind”.

The work has begun. The devotion and dedication *must* prove infectious. In our Pandora-box of miseries still lives the fair spirit of hope. And it is for this above all, as the Red Cross begins its second century with new tasks and growing responsibilities opening up before it—it is above all for this contribution of enduring hope that we turn to it with gratitude, salute it with joy and wish for it a hundred more years as fruitful and rewarding as the last.

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### CORRECTION

In the February 1963 issue we mentioned the text of the message addressed by Mr. de Valera to the members of the Irish Red Cross Society, on the occasion of the Centenary Year of the Red Cross. We regret that an error crept into the English edition. Mr. Eamon de Valera is President of Ireland and President of the Irish Red Cross.