

THE JAPANESE RED CROSS SOCIETY

SUMMARY REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

1. Introductory Remarks

As war atmosphere became prevalent during this period, the Japanese Red Cross Society was required by the Japanese Government to devote its attention to the development of primary medical and nursing services for the Armed Forces. The Society was also kept busy, during the period, in disaster medical and nursing relief work for frequently occurring natural calamities.

After the war, Japan, under her new Constitution of November 3, 1946, renounced war forever, with the result that the land, sea, and air forces of Japan were dissolved. In consequence, the Society, under the new Statutes passed by the members' general meeting held on December 10, 1946, ceased to serve as an auxiliary agency for the medical service of armed forces and immediately started the task of reorganizing its services for peace-time activities.

Let us describe briefly the organisation of our Society under the new Statutes, its activities during the past ten years and its current situation.

2. Organisation of the Japanese Red Cross Society

The Society, founded on May 1, 1877, has its "Board of Councillors" equivalent to the Central Committee, consisting of 45 councillors, 30 of whom shall be elected at large from among the Society members, and 15 appointed by the President of the Society from among learned and experienced persons as well as the representatives of interested government offices and bodies concerned.

While under its new Statutes, the Society is completely free of government control and direction, it works closely with the Welfare Ministry and provides for governmental representation on its National and Chapter Prefectural Administrative Boards.

53 honorary officials are in the National Headquarters, and 42,123 in the local chapters and medical facilities, while salaried personnel count 154 in the National Headquarters, and 5,591 in the local chapters and Red Cross medical institutions.

There is one local chapter in each of the 46 Prefectures in Japan. In addition, there are Red Cross Branches and Sub-Branched in each of the cities, towns and villages.

The President of the Society is elected by the members' general meeting on the recommendation of the Board of Councillors.

3. Membership and Financial Conditions

The members of the Society are of three classes:

- (1) Regular members - those who make an annual subscription of Y30.
- (2) Special members - those who have been recommended as such by the Board of Councillors on account of the assistance rendered by them either to the work or to the funds of the Society
- (3) Honorary members - those who have been deemed as having rendered some unusually meritorious service in the interest of the Society, and recommended by the Board of Councillors.

As for the number of the members, the year 1945 is marked the highest in recent years amounting to 15,211,279, whereas it remarkably dropped down to 10,177,500 in 1946, by reason of loss of territories, and other reasons.

The funds necessary for operating the Society's activities consist chiefly of members fixed subscriptions and volunteers' contributions.

The Society, however, has been facing a financial crisis because of huge relief expenditures during the war, the expense of reconstruction and rehabilitation of medical and other Red Cross installations damaged during the war, and financial difficulties caused by the post-war inflation. The fact that the public in general has showed little concern for post-war Red Cross activities cannot be ignored. We are glad to say, however, that as time passes, its financial condition has improved gradually. It is to be added that in the Fall of 1947 a fund-raising campaign was carried out on a nation-wide scale with a goal of Y300,000,000, and approximately 70 % of the goal was attained.

4. Activities in Time of War

During the war, our Society was obliged to devote itself mostly to the medical and nursing relief work for the sick and wounded soldiers. Therefore, no remarkable progress was made in the sphere of public hygiene and health activities.

Since the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese Conflict in 1937, the Society despatched relief squads to Army and Navy hospitals and hospital-ships located both in Japan and abroad. Some of the domestic Red Cross hospitals were converted to Army and Navy hospitals.

After the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941, our relief activities were extended to such a degree that a Relief Headquarters was set up in the National Headquarters and the Relief Detachments in every Local Chapter.

From the beginning of the Sino-Japanese Conflict until the end of the Pacific War, 1,132 relief squads with 37,090 persons were despatched. Those who lost their lives numbered 843, and severely injured or fell ill 3,341.

In 1942, the Relief Committee for War Prisoners was organized in the National Headquarters, and in close cooperation with the Japan Delegation of the International Red Cross Committee and Japanese governmental offices concerned, engaged in relief work for prisoners of war, investigation of whereabouts of missing persons, and the processing of Red Cross Messages.

From the inauguration of the Committee until the end of 1947, the number of inquiries concerning missing persons and the Red Cross Messages accepted by the Committee exceeded 350,000.

Speaking of war-damages caused to our Society's installations such as offices and hospitals, 40 buildings were totally and 6 partially burnt down by air-raids.

Rehabilitation of these war-damaged buildings is difficult due to the shortage of buildings materials and lack of available funds.

5. Present Situation of our Activities

Approved by the General Meeting in December 1946, new Statutes have been in force since January 18th, 1947. In accordance with the new Statutes, the regulations of our Society were revised and the organisation reformed.

Among the important changes provided in the new Statutes are the following:

- (1) The Society will no more serve as an auxiliary agency for the sanitary services of Armed Forces.
- (2) H.M. the Empress has been installed as Patroness of our Society and a Prince of the Imperial Family installed as Honorary President.
- (3) The President and Vice Presidents will be elected by the general meeting of members on nomination by the Board of Councillors. The former Statutes provided for their appointment by the Emperor on recommendation of the Ministers of Army and Navy.
- (4) The regulations and organisation of the National Headquarters and Chapters also have been revised along democratic lines and in accordance with principles enunciated by the League of Red Cross Societies.

The peace-time activities of our Society during the past 10 years are as follows:

Disaster Relief Work: During the period from 1938 to 1946, our Society rendered emergency relief service in more than 3,000 natural calamities.

One thing which is to be specially mentioned is that our Society has been charged, under the new Disaster Relief Law enforced from October 20th, 1947, with the mission to give medical treatments and maternity care in the event of natural calamities, and for the coordination of the activities of non-government agencies in time of disaster. Our Society is now preparing to carry out its national role in time of disaster in cooperation with responsible government agencies.

Moreover, a program for organizing the Red Cross Volunteer Services on a nation-wide scale has been started to implement disaster services as well as to carry on other Red Cross activities.

We must say, however, that the Society's activities are handicapped because of the shortage of relief materials including medicine, medical instruments, operating gowns, uniforms, footgears, etc., and transportation facilities as well as in adequate numbers of trained personnel.

Health and Hygiene Work

After the war, in order to elevate the standard of health and hygiene of the nation, the Society is endeavouring to redistribute able personnel in its various medical institutions, and to rehabilitate war-damaged health

establishments and materials. Our National and Chapter hospitals are working in close cooperation with responsible Public Health authorities.

Training of Nurses. During the war, necessity for a great number of nurses was felt. To meet this requirement, the Society reduced its normal nurses training course of three years, to two years and in addition, created a temporary short course of three months for special war-time training of non-Red Cross graduate nurses. But owing to the insufficiency of such war-time training program, it was abolished immediately after the war and training reestablished on a three year schedule.

In 1946, the Public Health and Welfare Section of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers inaugurated the Central Demonstration School of Nursing with the Japanese Red Cross Central School of Nursing and the St. Luke's College of Nursing as cooperating agencies. Under the guidance of an American nursing education staff assigned by the Public Health and Welfare Section, the faculties of the two Japanese schools have combined to introduce a modern course of nursing education based on recognized international standards of nursing and education. Since the inauguration of the project, the Japanese Red Cross Central School of Nursing has been re-incorporated as a college of nursing and now, with the St. Luke's College of Nursing; is one of the two recognized colleges of nursing in Japan. Standards of training and education demonstrated at the school are being closely observed and followed by the Red Cross Schools of nursing. Many improvements have thus been noted in the training programs for clinical, public health, and school nurses, and in the course for mid-wifery.

Of significance was the appointment in 1947 of a qualified nurse as the Chief of Nursing Education in our National Headquarters. Her appointment marks the first time that a nurse has been given administrative responsibility for the direction of the Nursing Education Program, including 31 schools of nursing in the Japanese Red Cross.

The constant interest and assistance of the Nursing Affairs Division of the Public Health and Welfare Section, SCAP, and the active assignment of an American Red Cross Consultant on Nursing Services have been positive aids to the Chief of Nursing Education and Headquarters and Chapter officials in developing and improving the Red Cross Nursing Program.

It is regrettable to note that the number of candidates for Red Cross schools of nursing has been on the decrease since the war owing to the difficulty of living conditions in general and to the fact that years of training are required to finish a regular course. However, with the improved standards of nursing education and the efforts being made to establish nursing on a firm professional basis, it

is expected that women will be more and more attracted to the field.

Junior Red Cross. As a matter of course, the war had also its effect upon Junior Red Cross activities. Especially, the international school correspondence program had to be curtailed. During the war members of the Junior Red Cross Groups turned their efforts chiefly towards the collection of funds and other articles to be contributed to the Army and Navy and the production of comfort items for officers, soldiers, and members of relief units at the front.

The reorganisation of the Junior Red Cross was immediately undertaken following the end of the war and by this time a completely revised program has been approved by the Public Health and Welfare Section and the Civilian Information and Education Section of SCAP for the re-establishment of Junior Red Cross as an in-school program. The new program picks up where pre-war Japanese Junior Red Cross program left off in 1938 but moreover, incorporates the modern concept that the Junior Red Cross program must serve as a contributing factor in vitalizing learning in the schools and in making Junior Red Cross function in the daily lives of the children in the home and in the community.

The revised program has been developed in close coordination with the Education Ministry and the advice of American education advisors in the Civilian Information and Education Section, SCAP. The constant advice and assistance of an American Red Cross Consultant on Junior Red Cross Services assigned through the Public Health and Welfare Section, SCAP, has been a great service to our Headquarters and Chapter staffs during this period.

Relations between the Society and the Imperial Family, Government Offices and the People.

The Society is being favored by the Imperial Family: H.M. the Empress accepted, in 1947, to be the Patroness of the Society and Prince Takamatsu, younger brother of the Emperor, took his post as Honorary President in 1945 to succeed the late Prince Kan-in.

The relations between the Society and the Government Offices are intimate: While we used to be under the supervision of the Ministers of Army and Navy, we are now completely free of direct government control or supervision. Our liaison is particularly close with the Ministries of Welfare and Education whose programs parallel those in which Red Cross is engaged.

Enthusiasm of the people for the Red Cross was dampened with the end of the war, but, by our efforts to spread the Red Cross spirit under the new principle, the Japanese people are showing a tendency to understand gradually the role of Red Cross in time of peace.

6.

Conclusion

Lastly, we should like to describe, in addition to the foregoing specific references, the relationship our Society has enjoyed since war's end with the Occupation Forces. The Public Health and Welfare Section as SCAP's responsible authority for supervising indigenous health and welfare agencies early recognised the problems faced by the Japanese Red Cross and our needs for assistance and advice in reorganisation from a war to a peace-time basis of operation. To assist the Section in its responsibility for guiding our reorganisation, SCAP requested the American Red Cross to assign several American Red Cross experienced personnel to the Public Health and Welfare Section, SCAP, to serve as consultants to the Section and our Society on matters relating to our reorganisation. In compliance with SCAP's request, American Red Cross Consultant Services have continued to be available to our Society since April 1946. Not only has the American Red Cross staff materially assisted us as an effective liaison between our Society and the Section on all administrative matters, but experienced Consultant Services have been at our constant disposal in the following important fields of the traditional Red Cross services in which we are interested. Disaster Relief, Junior Red Cross, Nursing Services, Volunteer Services, Water Safety, First Aid and Accident Prevention, Medical Social Work, Publicity and Public Relations, and Fund Raising. As our Society has slowly moved forward from the shock of immediate post-war adjustments, we have been able to make more and more positive use of the understanding and sympathetic help extended us through the Public Health and Welfare Section of SCAP and the American Red Cross International Activities Consultant Staff. We believe we are not overly optimistic in predicting that the essential reorganisation of our services will have been largely accomplished by the year's end and that we will again be on a firm organizational and administrative basis to carry out our traditional mission as defined in our new Statutes and the dynamic principles enunciated by the League of Red Cross Societies.
