

XIXTH INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS CONFERENCE

New Delhi, October–November, 1957

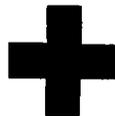
SUMMARY

of

the Report on the Organization and Activities of

The Japanese Red Cross Society

1953–1956



The Japanese Red Cross Society.



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1. INTRODUCTION

The Japanese Red Cross Society consumed and lost an immense property during the Pacific War. After Japan capitulated, the whole territory was occupied by the Allied Forces. It was already devastated. All the cities, big and small, were destroyed by the indiscriminate bombardments during the War without exception. The whole population was half starved. There was no food. The Army was disbanded. Millions of ex-servicemen, wounded or sick, came back to this reduced and overpopulated land and disbanded one after another. The new constitution was promulgated forbidding the maintenance of regular army. The social unrest prevailed everywhere. It was under such circumstances that the Japanese Red Cross Society, half paralysed in itself, had to pursue its most difficult but sacred mission to assist the suffering people of the whole nation under foreign occupation. It is not astonishing, therefore, if it had taken much more years before the Japanese Red Cross Society could be rehabilitated successfully overcoming these difficulties.

When the San Francisco Peace Treaty was at last signed in 1951, it provided that Japan should adhere to the Geneva Conventions of 1949. It was for this very requirement that, for the first time in its history, a special independent law was promulgated in 1952, to define the position and the sphere of action of the Japanese Red Cross Society.

A new era of the Society has dawned. Since then a remarkable achievement has been in progress. The Japanese Red Cross Society started to incorporate juridical persons in its regular membership. It rebuilt and modernized its famous over 150 medical institutions. It helped the victims in exceptionally great number of disasters after the War caused due to the lack of adequate maintenance of the lands. It helped the repatriation of the Japanese remaining abroad. Blood banks and an A-bomb Disease Hospital were established closely following the evolution of the science. Through the popularization of the Red Cross First Aid Courses, Home Nursing Course, Maternity Clinics, Services for Disabled Persons, Volunteer Services, Junior Red Cross, College for Nursing, etc., the Japanese Red Cross Society has penetrated deep in the life of the nation. Never in its history its credit and reputation are so high as at the present moment.

2. STRUCTURE

During a civil war, overcoming the opposition of the legal government of that time and strongly supported by the Imperial Family, the Japanese Red Cross Society was first founded by Count Tsunetami Sano and Mr. Yuzuru Ogyu on May 1st, 1877 under the name of the "Hakuai-sha" (Philanthropy Society). The emblem was the Rising Sun with a Red Underline at that time. As Japan joined the Geneva Convention, on November 15th, 1886, the name of the Hakuai-sha and its emblem were changed to the Japanese Red Cross Society and the Red Cross, on May 20th, 1887, after many discussions.

According to the Japanese Red Cross Law established in 1952 and promulgated on August 14th of the same year, the structure of the Society was changed on February 13th, 1953. It remains the same since then. The objective of the Japanese Red Cross Society is to pursue "the humanitarian mission, the ideal of the Red Cross, in conformity with the Red Cross Convention and Resolution of the International Red Cross Conference" (Art. 1). Its autonomy is strongly protected by the Law and in fact it is not receiving any instruction from the government side in its proper fields.

The Japanese Red Cross Society has the honour of having H.M. the Empress as Honorary President and the Crown Prince Akihito, Princess Chichibu, Prince and Princess Takamatsu and Prince and Princess Mikasa as Honorary Vice-Presidents. The Imperial Family is a strong and benevolent protector of the institution from the beginning.

The officials of the Society are one President, less than 2 Vice-Presidents, less than 61 Directors and less than 3 Auditors. At present, Tadatsugu Shimadzu is President and Yoshisuke Kasai and Taizo Ishizaka are Vice-Presidents. All the officials are elected at the Board of Delegates Meeting.

The deliberative organ of the Society is the Board of Delegates and such businesses as the approval of the budgets, the operational programs, the settlement of account, the revision of charter, etc. have to be done after the decision made by this Board of Delegates. Members of the Board of Delegates are elected at the Council of each Prefectural Chapter.

The Society has 46 chapters on prefectural level and under them are branches and sub-branches.

The total of paid personnel working at the National Headquarters, chapters, branches, sub-branches and medical institutions mentioned above is 13,084 and that of non-paid personnel is 207,218.

The Welfare Ministry of the Japanese Government is the supervisory authorities of the Japanese Red Cross Society. (It was formerly the Ministry of War.)

3. MEMBERSHIP SYSTEM AND FUND RAISING CAMPAIGN

The major sources of the funds of the Society are the membership dues and the funds raised through campaign (commonly known as the White Feather Campaign) held in May every year. The Red Cross hospital construction and operation funds come from three sources: the funds of the Society, the reimbursement from the State through the State Welfare System, and the individual patient's fee when they can afford it.

(1) Membership System

There were three kinds of memberships, that is, the regular membership, special membership and honorary membership, but after the change of structure in February, 1953 there is only one kind of membership. Special and honorary memberships are only nominal ones now. These titles are given to those members who have made some remarkable contribution to the Society or are recognized as having an important relation to the Society. There are about 6,252,000 members, plus 10,000 juridical persons and 3,500 foreign citizen members.

(2) Fund Raising Campaign

To supplement the regular membership dues, the Society holds a nation-wide fund raising campaign (White Feather Campaign) for one month beginning on May 1st every year.

As for the means of this White Feather Campaign, there are the on-the-street campaign, big-sum campaign, school campaign, special campaign beside the door-to-door campaign.

Being a corporate juridical person, the Japanese Red

Cross Society should have its financial source come from membership dues, therefore it is trying to increase members while the fund raising campaign has a tendency to decrease.

4. WORK FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL AND RESERVISTS

At present no work is required or done in this field by the simple reason that Japan has given up Military Forces.

5. VARIOUS ACTIVITIES

(1) Disaster Relief

The Society is obliged to cooperate in the relief activities carried out by Governors of prefectures under the Disaster Relief Law and is entrusted by Governors to render services regarding medical care and baby birth at the time of disaster. At the same time, under the Japanese Red Cross Law, the Society is responsible for providing relief staff.

The Japanese Red Cross Society has 440 standing medical relief teams (one team is composed of one doctor, one head nurse, 4 nurses, one clerk, one assistant clerk — 8 members in total) ready to be dispatched at any moment in case of disasters and, moreover, the Society has on-the-spot medical relief teams (one team consists of one doctor and 2 nurses) organized by agreements with the organizations of midwives, public health nurses and nurses.

Furthermore, the Society has 98 ambulances, 81 motor cars, 60 generators, 22 life-boats and 68 filters.

(2) Sanitary Work

The Society operates 91 general hospitals, 6 branch hospitals, 53 dispensaries, 5 maternity hospitals having 20,198 beds in total. These institutions are giving general treatments but, at the same time, are engaged in disaster relief, training of relief staff, blood programs, visiting clinics to the remote regions where no doctors live and to mining districts.

In April, 1952, with the donation of necessary medical equipments from the American National Red Cross, the Society started the first blood bank in this country in the Red Cross Central Hospital in Tokyo. Since then with the contribution through New Year's cards with gifts of the Postal Service Ministry, the program has made a great development and at present there are local blood banks operating at 33 Red Cross hospitals throughout the country and two Transfusion Laboratories in Tokyo and Osaka.

An Atomic Disease Hospital was established in Hiroshima in 1956. A similar hospital is under construction in Nagasaki. Both cities have suffered atomic bombardments. A special course for the treatment of atomic diseases is opened in the Central Hospital of Tokyo since this year.

(3) Nursing Service

Ever since 1893 the Society has been engaging itself in training of Red Cross nurses. After the enactment of the Japanese Red Cross Law, the Society is under the legal obligation to train nurses to provide relief personnel.

At present the Society operates 35 schools of nursing and one Red Cross College of Nursing.

The number of nurses trained since the year 1893 amounts to 43,158. These nurses have contributed a great deal to the development of nursing services in this country.

(4) Water Safety

The aim of this program is to give guidance to the general public on the methods to relieve victims of disasters by water. The program is composed of "Water Safety Course", "Accident Prevention in Water", "Swimming Course for Beginners" and "Swimming Course for Disabled Persons".

Since the initiation of this program in 1947, 40,709 persons have completed the courses until the end of fiscal year 1955.

(5) First Aid

This is a program to teach both the theoretical and the practical sides of the emergency relief methods which are

well worth knowing for everybody as common sense to provide against the case of hurts. Good points of Red Cross first aid of many foreign countries and those of traditional Japanese methods are included in this program.

The attendants to this first aid course are from various classes of the society of this country. At police schools and training schools for national railway workers and Self-Defence personnel, this course has been given as a regular course. During the period of fiscal years 1949-1955, 307,966 persons completed the course.

(6) Home Nursing

The aim of this program is to diffuse among the general public the knowledge and technics necessary for the care of the sick, health and hygiene, prevention of diseases at home. Part One of this course consists of methods for the care of the sick at home and in Part Two, methods for the care of pregnant women and infants are included.

During the period of fiscal years 1947-1955 there were 141,429 attendants to Part One and 11,417 to Part Two.

(7) Child Welfare

As child welfare institutions, the Society operates 9 baby homes, 2 nurseries, 2 orphanages, one home for weak children, one maternity clinic, 15 in total, and at present 587 babies and children are being taken care of at these Red Cross institutions.

Moreover, our Society opens summer nurseries every year. In farming seasons day nurseries are installed in scattered places in this country.

(8) Welfare Work for the Disabled

In December, 1949 the Society conducted the visiting repair service of artificial limbs for the disabled and this was the first of this kind in Japan. With the Welfare Law for the Disabled established in 1950, this kind of work became to be carried on very actively, and since 1951 when it was decided that the contribution through the New Year's cards with gifts would be used for the works of the Japanese Red Cross Society, the works of this kind made a great progress. At present medical and welfare service consultation

on the repair of artificial limbs, consultation on eye-opening operation, lending out of braille books, etc. are being carried on for the disabled by the Society.

(9) Red Cross House

In order to give the first-aid treatment to travellers and others who happen to meet various accidents in the compound of railway stations, our Society operates first-aid stations called "Red Cross House" in major national railway stations. In the Red Cross House volunteers are working with nurses.

6. JUNIOR RED CROSS

It is 35 years since the first Junior Red Cross in this country was organized in the Moriyama Primary School under the jurisdiction of our Shiga Prefectural Chapter in April, 1922, and at present there are 2,440 schools and 651,581 members joining Junior Red Cross in Japan and this is one of the leading youth organizations in this country.

Members are exchanging school correspondence albums with members of other countries to develop international friendship and also with members within this country. Since 1954 the Japanese Junior Red Cross ranked second in the world in the number of albums exchanged.

7. VOLUNTEER SERVICES

The Red Cross Volunteer Services were organized in 1947 and for the last 10 years the number of the units has increased to 9,790 and that of volunteer members to 5,218,956.

These volunteers are giving services for (a) emergency relief and rehabilitation in the case of disasters and assistance to disaster victims, (b) the prevention of diseases and other sanitary works, (c) social welfare institutions and the needy people, (d) public works, (e) other works necessary for the accomplishment of Red Cross ideal.

8. REPATRIATION OF JAPANESE NATIONALS FROM ABROAD

With regard to the repatriation of Japanese nationals held in the Soviet territories, China and other places, the Society had often asked, directly or indirectly, Sister Societies in countries concerned, to expedite the repatriation of our compatriots.

In January, 1953 representatives of the Japanese Red Cross Society and two other private organizations could visit Peiping to negotiate with the Chinese Red Cross Society and enabled to start the repatriation of Japanese nationals from the Chinese mainland.

In October of the same year an agreement was made between the Japanese Red Cross Society and the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the U.S.S.R. concerning the repatriation of Japanese nationals in the Soviet territories.

It was also in 1955 that an agreement on the repatriation of Japanese nationals was made with the North Korean Red Cross and thus Japanese nationals abroad returned successively.

Every time Japanese repatriation ships visited foreign lands to receive Japanese nationals, Japanese Red Cross delegates and nurses were dispatched aboard the ships to take care of repatriates and patients among them.

9. ASSISTANCE FOR THE FOREIGN NATIONALS

On the other hand, the Japanese Red Cross Society helped the repatriation of Chinese residing in Japan to their home country.

It is trying to do the same for Koreans, but without success until today. The Japanese Red Cross is much worried about the issue.

It is also watching closely the foreign detainees in the Omura and the Hamamatsu Camps. These questions should be settled quickly.

10. ASSISTANCE FOR FOREIGN DISASTERS

The Japanese Red Cross Society received many contributions from sister societies and the League in the case of its own disasters. It has done the same for foreign catastrophes. Recently it has been entrusted by the League to buy and send relief goods to Indonesia.

11. PUBLIC INFORMATION

The Japanese Red Cross Society transmitted several thousands of letters from the remaining families to the detained persons abroad together with relief parcels. They carried out research services for both Japanese and foreigners.

"The Red Cross Journal" and other periodicals are published to diffuse the Red Cross idea and to give publicity to Red Cross activities. It is endeavoring to diffuse the idea of the Geneva Conventions. It has a special program in the television. The Japanese Red Cross Society has tied up with amateur radio stations and helped the victims a great deal in the case of disasters.

The Japanese Red Cross Society operates a central Red Cross Library which has great authority and many small libraries throughout the country. It has also a Red Cross Sanitary Museum.

This year it celebrated the World Red Cross Day in the Tokyo Gymnasium. Foreign nationals in Japan paraded with their national flags representing the countries where the Red Cross exists.