

NEWS OF NATIONAL SOCIETIES

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

Austria

In 1959, an emergency relief service was set up in order to take action in the event of natural disasters, and the Austrian Red Cross supplied each of its sections in the Länder with equipment including, as well as a tent, sufficient dressings to care for about 150 persons.

Complying with a request of the Austrian Red Cross, the Minister of the Interior, Mr. Afritsch, decided to make funds from the Civil Defence budget available to this Society, thus enabling it to acquire fourteen additional sets of equipment. He also agreed to the purchase of fourteen single-axle trailers to transport the new equipment, as well as ten more of these trailers for the equipment that had already been supplied to the regional sections.

This substantial contribution on the part of the Minister of the Interior enabled the Austrian Red Cross to provide a total of 24 regional sections with mobile units capable of taking the field at the shortest possible notice.

On the occasion of the twelfth General Assembly in December 1960, the equipment and trailers were formally handed over to the regional sections by Mr. Afritsch himself¹. The electrically driven cars belonging to the regional sections which had received equipment were assembled on the wide square in front of the Schwarzenberg Palace in Vienna; numerous spectators mingled with the chairmen and representatives of the regional sections who had attended the General Assembly.

In a short address, the Minister of the Interior reminded his listeners of the duties which the Red Cross would be required to

¹ *Plate.*

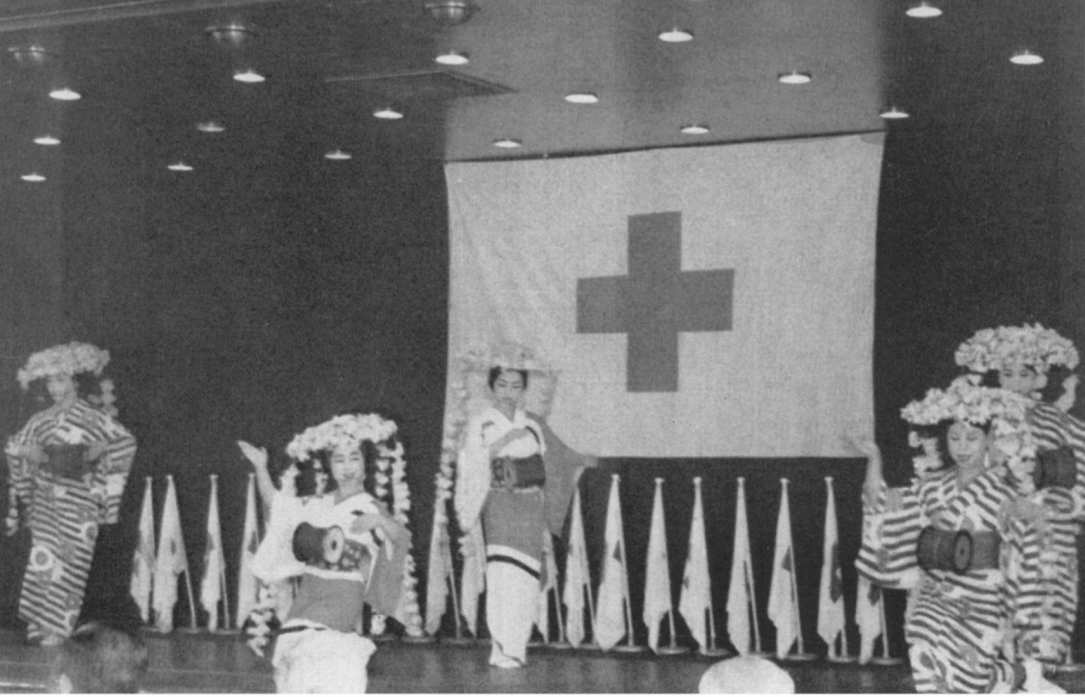


Dr. H. v. Lauda, President of the Austrian Red Cross Society (in front, on the left) thanking Mr. Afritsch, Minister of the Interior; Mr. Sevcik, Secretary-General (centre).

AUSTRIA

Vienna — Trailers and relief equipment being handed over to the Austrian Red Cross.





JAPANESE RED CROSS —

Display of folk-dancing during the Cherry Blossom Festival.



fulfil in connection with Civil Defence which is soon to be organized in Austria. The Austrian Red Cross, he stressed, must realize that it will have a leading rôle to play in protecting the civilian population. For this reason, and as a first step, the Minister decided to supply the Red Cross with the necessary equipment to ensure prompt action in time of need. Mr. Afritsch thanked the Austrian Red Cross and its helpers for the work they are accomplishing and urged them to continue their efforts and remain prepared to give assistance in all circumstances.

Dr. Lauda, in his turn, thanked the Minister for the aid given and the understanding attitude shown to the Society. The trailers and equipment were then handed over to the regional sections

Japan

The "Konju-Kai" Society, which was founded in Tokyo in 1960 for the purpose of developing the idea of the Red Cross with the Japanese public, decided to hold its first annual general meeting this year on April 10, on the Cherry-blossom Festival.

This Society consists of all those members of the Japanese Red Cross who have shown themselves to be particularly active and generous in Red Cross affairs and who are, as a result, entitled to wear the blue ribbon. The delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross on special mission in Japan was invited to speak on the Red Cross spirit. His speech which is published below, was translated simultaneously from the French into Japanese by Mr. Seibi Ota, liaison officer of the External Affairs Section of the Japanese Red Cross and was the subject of an article in the National Society's publication in English and in Japanese.

The celebrations also included an address by the President, Mr. Shigehisa Hagiwara, who expressed his satisfaction over the fact that the "Konju-Kai" Society had doubled its membership within a year and had contributed 33 million yen to the Japanese