

Red Cross Official Discusses World Efforts

(Editor's Note: The Red Cross movement began in 1853 and continues to grow throughout the world. This story explains the work being done today to strengthen Red Cross around the world.)

Making the world better for all mankind is the goal of many people, but few Americans have had a more concrete opportunity to make a real contribution in this direction than American Red Cross staff member William H. Dabney of Washington, D. C.

Dabney, deputy director of ARC International Services, recently returned from a six-month assignment to the League of Red Cross Societies

in Geneva, where he was administrator of the Development Program which coordinates technical assistance and other aid for new and emerging Red Cross societies.

"Today, there are five major development areas," Dabney said. "Latin American, North and mid-Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. In these areas alone, there are nearly 50 young, growing Red Cross societies — all making good progress, but needing assistance in many forms. The programs they are beginning are geared to the needs of the people in each particular area and country."

"IN A FEW short years," he added, "nearly 70 per cent

of the total world population will be living in these areas and the work being planned and carried out now is vitally necessary in view of the tremendous impact of this population increase."

Because of the prevalent economic conditions in many of the growing, emerging countries, the new Red Cross and Red Crescent societies are concentrating chiefly on activities in the health and welfare field. "The alleviation of disease, malnutrition, infant mortality, over-population, and illiteracy are receiving an all-out effort in these areas," Dabney said.

The aid is designed to give help directly to the people who need it, he explained.

One example he cited is a country in North Africa which has prevalence of glaucoma, a blinding eye disease that frequently hits children and adults if proper precautions are not taken.

THE RED Crescent society there, in cooperation with the public health officials, is planning to organize the youth of the country and train them in basic sanitary health measures. Red Crescent volunteers will be taught by qualified medical technicians and, in cooperation with educators, will participate in preventative programs in the school systems.

In Nigeria, the Red Cross is working closely with mass

media to disseminate health information to the population.

"This," he said, "and extensive use of posters throughout the country, have taught the rural villagers the danger of disease spread by flies and how to eliminate them. These are simple basic steps," the Red Cross official said, "but in areas of the world where 50 per cent of children are doomed to die before the age of 5 years, they are a vitally important beginning."

IN BRAZIL people are fighting a giant battle against malnutrition in some of the slum areas, Dabney said. "The Brazilian Red Cross, with the

technical assistance of the League of Red Cross Societies and thousands of dollars worth of food supplied by the U. S. government, is making tremendous progress," he added.

As part of the program, volunteers of the Brazilian Red Cross go into the slum areas where the need is greatest and teach the people how to prepare the food.

According to Dabney, technical assistance and aid are integral parts of most of the 106 Red Cross programs around the world. "This channel of aid between the League of Red Cross Societies of individual countries is a vital link in international help and understanding," he

said. Volunteers, he noted, are local people.

NOW BACK at his desk at the American Red Cross National Headquarters in Washington, D. C., Dabney follows with intense interest the development program he helped to build.

A native of Boston, he served there as chief of the Racial Relations Section of the Public Housing Administration from 1946 to 1953. Before World War II, during which he served with the Red Cross, he was a commissioner on the Massachusetts State Board of Pardons and Probation, a district supervisor for the U. S. Department of Commerce, and assistant to the Massachusetts state ad-

ministrators of the Works Progress Administration.

He is a member-at-large of the Delegate Assembly of the National Urban League and a member of the National Association of Intergroup Relations Officials.

Local Students On Dean's List

Five Torrance students were named to the dean's list for the spring semester at California Lutheran College, Thousand Oaks.

Students are LaVonne Lunde, Richard Mooney, Edmund Smenner, Gary Spies, and Robert Trevathan.

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