

# International Tracing Service

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Inquiries were opened by the CTA, through its Santiago agency, with the object of obtaining news of detainees or of missing persons.

It also endeavoured to trace Chileans who had sought refuge in other countries and whose families in Chile were without news. Various bodies requested the CTA to intervene in a number of difficult cases involving the reuniting of families.

#### *At Santiago*

The Santiago agency kept up its extensive card-index, which proved to be of invaluable assistance to visiting delegates and was utilized to substantiate the merits of requests for aid made by the families of detainees.

Numerous cases of emigrants and persons wishing to be reunited with their families were also handled by the Santiago agency, in co-operation with the CTA, the Chilean authorities, COMAR (*Comisión de Ayuda a los Refugiados*) and representatives of specialized agencies. In this connection, the Santiago agency delivered travel papers to persons without passports.

\* \* \*

Finally, names of detainees visited by ICRC delegates in various African countries and in Indonesia were also filed by the CTA.

Besides these activities connected with current events or conflicts of recent origin, the CTA continued to reply to all requests still being received from authorities of the home countries, National Societies or private persons concerning persons who were made prisoner or who died during the Second World War. As in past years, the 38 million cards relating to the 1939/45 conflict held at the CTA constitute an irreplaceable source of information as evidence for the delivery of certificates in view of war pensions or for determining the fate of missing or displaced persons. These tasks were performed in close co-operation with the International Tracing Service at Arolsen, and depended to a great extent on the valuable aid furnished by National Societies.

### **INTERNATIONAL TRACING SERVICE**

The International Tracing Service (I.T.S.) at Arolsen, which has the task of gathering and utilizing its archives concerning concen-

tration camps and keeping a card-index of former detainees up to date, continued to be highly active in 1974.

Although the volume of mail handled in 1974 fell slightly compared with the particularly high figures of the previous year, there was still considerably more activity than in 1971 and 1972, as may be seen from the following table:

	<b>Inquiries received</b>	<b>Replies given</b>
1971	123,329	169,106
1972	127,872	187,007
1973	221,860	245,410
1974	210,465	228,583

The 1974 inquiries can be classified as follows: requests for incarceration certificates (26,053); for residence certificates (6,094); for death certificates (4,301); for documents relating to cases of sickness (3,241); for photocopies (3,058); for work certificates with a view to obtaining an annuity or pension (6,551); for information in connection with written tributes to the memory of victims of deportation (129,394); inquiries from record offices or relating to publications (3,758); requests submitted by attorneys-general (17,322); requests for individual searches (7,977); and requests for historical and statistical information (318).

In 1974, 1,250,483 new reference cards were added to the records, bringing the total number of cards up to 39,700,000. The I.T.S. completed the compilation of an extensive list of first names and their many variants, collected in an 841-page index containing over 48,000 names and variants.

Thanks to additional documents acquired by the I.T.S., positive information was supplied concerning numerous cases which had been submitted earlier. The documents acquired in 1974 originated *inter alia* from the "Central Commission for the study of Hitlerian crimes" in Warsaw, the Auschwitz State Museum, the "Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltung" in Ludwigsburg and the Austrian Resistance Archives in Vienna. The new acquisitions contain valuable information concerning in particular the Theresienstadt Ghetto and the concentration camps at Stutthof, Gross-Rosen,

Lublin, Mittelbau (Dora), Sachsenhausen, Neuengamme and Ravensbrück (both women's camp and men's camp).

Preparatory work on the second volume of the "Catalogue of places of detention", to supplement the first volume issued in 1969, was delayed by the thorough investigation made of the newly-acquired documents. The second volume will probably be ready this summer (1975).

It should be added that the "Special civil status registry office", which is empowered to register officially the deaths which occurred in the former concentration camps, on presentation of proof of death by the International Tracing Service, completed its twenty-fifth year of operation on 1 September 1974. Though it is a public service, independent of the ITS, the two bodies work in close co-operation in view of their common objectives.