

## France

*It is known that several National Societies are responsible for the training of air hostesses and the International Review has already mentioned this new activity by quoting the Lebanese Red Cross in its varied work. The French Red Cross also gives most useful instruction in this sphere as can be seen below.<sup>1</sup>*

Many young girls hesitate to spend a considerable number of years in preparing for a future of which they sometimes cannot see the outcome clearly, but try to find material independence in a profession which can also satisfy their taste for outside contacts and give them enthusiasm and a certain ideal.

These can be found in careers connected with the air and amongst them that of air hostess, a specifically female profession.

The first hostesses placed on aircraft by civil airlines were Air Nurse Pilots and Air Hostesses (IPSA) and naturally the Red Cross took charge of their training.

The School of Air Hostesses of the French Red Cross has been in existence since 1951, but it was the inheritor of a long tradition, as the Red Cross had, as early as 1934, set up an air service intended for the training of future airborne female personnel.

If the professional quality of its instruction is one of the School's principal aims, it has made a point of maintaining and developing the vocational character necessary for the choice of a career in the air.

The School trains the following:

- air hostesses
- air escorts
- airport hostesses

and automatically ensures their being placed.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Vie et Bonté*, official review of the French Red Cross, Paris, 1968, No. 187.

To this end, all candidates pass an entrance examination during which members of the board, consisting of representatives of airlines and airports, give their views and the assurance of employment on the termination of training.

*Air hostesses.*—On board they greet, install and see to the passengers' comfort and to safety instructions. They carry out services with friendliness and dexterity, help mothers with their families and look after children etc. . . .

*Air escorts.*—This is the oldest established specialization. These young women, all State registered nurses, have escorted the sick and wounded in military aircraft since 1945. Their occupations have changed since the end of military operations and at present they are above all air hostesses on board army transport aircraft. Should occasion arise, however, they can immediately return to their duties as trained nurses capable of giving the necessary care in medical air transports.

*Airport hostesses.*—These are in fact guides for passengers who have lost their bearings in the complicated maze in airports. They give information, help and find solutions to difficult situations. As tourist advisers they arrange the reception of foreign visitors.

These careers would appear to fulfil the many aspirations of youth today: a liking for travel and contacts in work outside the usual pattern, interest in people and things, the development of a certain international sense linked with the generosity of youth.

However, it must be pointed out that these are careers which demand a great deal in return in the way of discipline and selflessness, requiring at the same time excellent health, since the work is physically exacting.