

BOOKS AND REVIEWS

GAIUS EZEJIOFOR: PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS UNDER THE LAW¹

The author, a professor of law at the University of Lagos, Nigeria, has written this book which is of considerable interest for lawyers and all who take an interest in problems connected with the protection of the individual in the world today. The first part deals with the problem, as a whole, of the protection of human rights from a legal point of view. It starts with an analysis of the individual's position in international law and a historical background which, in spite of its brevity, gives a useful outline of efforts over the centuries for the defence of the individual in national legislations.

Professor Ezejiofor is clearly a protagonist of the idea that it is not only States which have rights, but individuals also. The Red Cross shares this opinion, as the Geneva Conventions bear witness. In this connection we particularly have in mind one of the articles common to the four Conventions (No 7 in the first three and No 8 in the Fourth) which states that "wounded and sick... may in no circumstances renounce in part or in entirety the rights secured to them by those Conventions". It is unfortunate that the author made no mention of these humanitarian regulations whereof the spirit and the essential provisions could give further proof in support of his thesis. The very existence of these Geneva Conventions shows that international law is no longer, as used to be thought, an assertion of State rights but also of those belonging to the individual.

The author then goes on to deal with the defence of human rights pursuant to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights framed by the United Nations and of which the twentieth anniversary was recently celebrated. He also reviews the European Convention on Human Rights in respect of which the International Review recently published an article by Mr. K. Vasak², and he

¹ Butterworths, London, 1964, 278 p.

² See *International Review*, August 1965.

BOOKS AND REVIEWS

quotes a number of facts which demonstrate the slow but sure evolution in the field of protection for the rights of man.

Professor Ezejiyor recalls the work of the Interamerican Commission on Human Rights (O.A.S.) and also the planned African Convention of Human Rights drawn up by the African Commission of Jurists. Finally he points out the prospects of a World Convention at present being studied by the United Nations.

The future, according to the author, resides in the establishment of regional conventions whose scope would be limited to definite groups united by common ideals and common fundamental interests. On a practical plan, it is on the local level that solutions might be found rather than on the universal plan where ideas and ways of life vary and all too frequently diverge.

We would mention, in addition, that Professor Ezejiyor, in the second part of his book, outlines the major precepts of protection for the rights of man which are to be found in the various legislations in the Commonwealth.

J.-G. L.

The Red Cross World, League of Red Cross Societies, Geneva, 1965, No. 3.

In order to co-ordinate the assistance given between sister Societies, the League of Red Cross Societies has established a special Development Programme, with its own Section within the League's central administration. The Development Programme now has, in addition to its Administrative and Planning Officers, five Desk Officers. These officers have an accurate and detailed knowledge of the stage of development of all Societies in the main developing areas—and their needs. They can also provide information required by the League's technical experts regarding a developing Society. It is often this information that provides a sound basis for advice given to a Society.

In the field, the Programme has a varying number of delegates assisting National Societies in developing some aspect of their activities.