

*IN GENEVA*

## **Geneva Conventions**

By an Act dated 20 February 1974, Australia notified the Swiss Government, depositary of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, of the withdrawal of the reservation formulated by the Australian Government at the time of its ratification, on 14 October 1958, of the Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

The reservation had been made in respect of Article 68 (2), of the said Convention with the object of safeguarding the Australian Government's right to apply the death penalty, whether or not the offences mentioned in that article were punishable by death under the law of the occupied territory in force before the occupation began, but subject to the other conditions of the article.

## **Guests of the ICRC**

On 30 September, twenty-five Belgian army judges and officers, accompanied by Mr. R. Vermeylen, General Administrator of the Belgian Red Cross, visited the ICRC to acquaint themselves with the work done in Geneva to ensure the dissemination of the principles of international humanitarian law. They were received by Mr. Eric Martin, President of the International Committee. They saw several films and heard statements. Finally they visited the Central Tracing Agency, and were thus afforded a quick survey of the ICRC's various present activities.

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In the course of a tour of Europe devoted to the subject of human rights, the grand Ulemas of Saudi Arabia, Muslim theologians versed in the interpretation of the Muslim legal system, visited in Geneva the International Committee, the League of Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies, and the Henry Dunant Institute.

The Saudi religious leaders, accompanied by a number of French notables, were received at the ICRC headquarters by Dr. Eric Martin, President, and Mr. Roger Gallopin, President of the Executive Board, together with other ICRC officials. At the League of Red Cross Societies, they were welcomed by Mr. Henrik Beer, Secretary General, and Mr. Bertil Petterson, Deputy Secretary General, with representatives of different League departments.

The visits underlined the relationship between the teachings of the Koran and the fundamental principles of the Red Cross — and the unity of thought and action characterizing the Red Cross movement under the diversity of its three different emblems.

## **Publications on the Geneva Conventions**

The ICRC has just published four new colour posters. One illustrates the evacuation of serious battle casualties, one the repatriation of prisoners of war, and two the protection of the civilian population. They are available with captions in Arabic, English, French, German or Spanish, or without any caption at all.

The complete set may be obtained from the Documentation and Dissemination Division of the ICRC at the price of Swiss francs 20.—.

In addition, the ICRC will soon have available a calendar evoking the Geneva Conventions in seven coloured illustrations. Two three-language versions will be available, one in English, German and Spanish, the other in Arabic, French and Russian. The cost of each will be Swiss francs 5.—.

The ICRC hopes that all National Societies will be interested in these publications.