

The President of the ICRC received by the Pope

His Holiness Pope Paul VI granted the President of the International Committee a private audience in the Vatican on 12 May 1972.

In the course of the audience, the Holy Father expressed to the President of the ICRC his appreciation of the activities which the ICRC was pursuing and which the Church intended to support to the fullest possible extent.

Mr. Naville referred to the ICRC's tasks in many parts of the world. He described the difficulties which the Red Cross was encountering in its humanitarian action but also recalled the gratifying results of ICRC activities in various countries.

The High Pontiff assured the President of the ICRC of his approval of the work done and said that the neutral character of the ICRC and of the activities of its delegates was universally recognized. There was nothing that could replace the Red Cross, he added, and the effectiveness of its action must be safeguarded.

Following the Hijacking of an Aircraft

On 10 May 1972, the ICRC issued the following press release:

The International Committee of the Red Cross was asked to act on behalf of the passengers and members of the crew of a Boeing of the Sabena air line held hostage by a Palestinian commando at Tel Aviv airport. With the agreement of the Israeli authorities and of the Palestinian commando and solely with the purpose of coming to the aid of innocent persons threatened with death, it agreed to serve as intermediary between the two parties.