

The International Committee at once intervened through its delegation in Damascus, on behalf of 6 Israeli passengers regarded as being protected persons within the meaning of the Fourth Geneva Convention. On 1 September three Israeli women and a daughter of one of them were released by Syria and handed over to the ICRC delegation to be taken on to Athens.

The ICRC delegation in Damascus obtained permission to visit the two Israeli civilians held there, and did so on 8 September 1969.

## Switzerland

On 19 September 1969, the 3 Palestinians detained in Zurich for their attack on an El Al aircraft at Kloten airport last February were visited by delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross for the third time. They were visited previously on 13 May and 9 July 1969, as mentioned in our August issue.

Once again the ICRC delegates, François Payot and Dr. Reinhold Wepf, accompanied by a translator, talked in private with the detainees, noting their requests and enquiring thoroughly into detention conditions, regardless of the reasons for their arrest. Dr. Wepf examined the detainees.

As usual, the ICRC reported to the Detaining Power.

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IN GENEVA

## A German publication

The ICRC in 1967 published a brief work of some sixty pages entitled *The Principles of International Humanitarian Law*, which fills a gap, as can be seen, both as regards international public law and in the Red Cross world. It is in fact a synthesis of fundamental notions, often referred to but rarely defined, the proper under-

standing of which is of primary importance for anyone concerned in problems of humanitarian law and especially in its application within the Red Cross.

Going to essentials and giving complete and concise definitions of humanitarian law, in the broad sense, of the Hague and Geneva rules of war and also of the principles which are both the basis and structures of this law of humanity, this volume can be of service to the research specialist as well as being a basis of reflection for all belonging to the Red Cross community. The fruit of modern thought, it is an outline of humanitarian ethics valid for all men whatever their origins, form of civilization or outlook. From the various philosophies, the author has only retained that which is accepted by the greatest number, which can therefore claim to be universal. This is what gives it its originality and its worth.

This attempt at clarification was made inside the Institution itself whose work has not only prepared and encouraged the evolution of this law over the past decades, but also enabled the drawing up of codified texts which today bind nearly all States throughout the world. The author, Jean Pictet, member of the ICRC and Director-General, also wrote the *Red Cross Principles*.

An English version already exists and from today a German translation entitled *Die Grundsätze des humanitären Völkerrechts* is available from the ICRC in Geneva at Sw. fr. 8.—

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