

## BOOKS AND REVIEWS

---

**The Inter-American Human Rights Convention, *The Review, International Commission of Jurists*, Geneva, 1969, No. 2**

At the time when the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights was set up (in 1960), it was not possible to draw up a legal instrument defining the rights that the Commission was to protect and promote.

Although the principles of the Universal Declaration of 1948 have been recognised by the vast majority of States, its individual provisions are not binding on the countries that have adhered to it. It is for this reason that the European Convention on Human Rights of 1950 sets out the rights that are to be protected in binding provisions which are interpreted and applied by the European Commission and Court of Human Rights. In the absence of such a regional convention, the Inter-American Commission took as its guide the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, adopted at Bogota in 1948. This declaration has gradually gained legal force through its application by the Commission.

Next September, an Inter-American Conference of Experts is to be held at San José, Costa Rica, with a view to the discussion and signature of an Inter-American Convention on Protection of Human Rights. This long-awaited Convention, which has been drawn up by the Inter-American Commission, sets out the human rights that are to be protected and establishes detailed implementation procedures. Its signature by the American States will be an immense contribution to the effective protection of human rights at the regional level.

One general comment can be made here: the Draft Convention is much more modern in spirit than its European predecessor in that it gives substantial emphasis to economic, social and cultural rights, which form a new and genuine dimension of human rights today.

**The Geriatrics Hospital, by Dr. J.-P. Junod, *Revue suisse des Infirmières*, Soleure 1969, No. 10.**

In geriatrics a fatalistic attitude that old age explains everything must be discarded. The most outstanding quality of those who mingle with the aged is perhaps retention of the faculty for introspection and surprise. Old age is not an illness in itself and senility is often used as an explanation to justify a lack of interest in geriatrics.

The geriatrics hospital should provide the aged with good quality medical care. It should have the whole range of the usual diagnostic and