

Seminar in Hawaii

The American Society of International Law, in collaboration with the American Red Cross and the ICRC, organized in Honolulu, from 16 to 19 February, a seminar on international humanitarian law and armed conflicts. The ICRC representatives at this seminar were Mr. Rudolf Jäckli, member of the Committee, Mr. Gasser and Mr. Surbeck from the legal division and the dissemination division at the ICRC. All three played a very active part in the seminar, giving exposés and participating in the discussions. The President of the League, Mr. E. de la Mata, attended the first day of the seminar.

The public which participated in the work of the seminar was very varied: university professors, experts in international law, military men from the different branches of the American armed forces, students, journalists, members of the American Society of International Law and other specialized societies, members of professional associations and of the American National Red Cross Society.

The seminar programme consisted of three main subjects. The first was the Additional Protocols of 8 June 1977 and the United Nations Convention of 1980 on conventional weapons. The second was a corollary of the first, an analysis of the problems of implementation after ratification of the Geneva Conventions and the Protocols, i.e. their dissemination in the armed forces, in schools and among the public in general and their execution by the armed forces in case of armed conflict. The third subject was armed conflicts at sea.

To examine these different subjects, the seminar was divided into five study groups, which listened to exposés, then discussed them freely, striving to draw clear-cut, practical conclusions acceptable to all. In three plenary sessions summaries of the group discussions and the conclusions reached were presented to all the participants, so that each one was informed of the overall work of the seminar.

The quality of the exposés, the serious discussions, the interest shown by the participants and the presence of numerous personalities involved in the dissemination of international humanitarian law, all contributed to the remarkable success of the seminar whose repercussions will certainly be felt in various fields. The press also showed an interest in the work of this meeting and several articles appeared in the local papers.

The talks and discussions of the seminar will be published in the Pacific Basin Law Journal of the University of Hawaii.