

### **Tribute to Mr. Jean Pictet**

On 2 September 1984, Mr. Jean Pictet celebrated his seventieth birthday; his family, friends and colleagues congratulated him and conveyed their good wishes.

Mr. Pictet joined the ICRC as legal secretary in 1937. He was later appointed Director, then Director-General; he became a member of the International Committee in 1967 and a Vice-President in 1971. Having reached retirement age, he stepped down in 1979 after 42 years of service, but remained a member of the Assembly.

Through his work, his publications and his lectures, Mr. Pictet is probably the person who, in our lifetime, has made the largest contribution to the development of international humanitarian law and Red Cross thought and doctrine.

On 7 November, the members of the International Committee and many ICRC employees attended a function held in his honour at ICRC headquarters. In his speech, Mr. Alexandre Hay, President of the ICRC, paid tribute to Mr. Pictet's fertile career and presented him with the ICRC Gold Medal—an exceptional distinction which had so far been awarded only on seven occasions.

At its meeting of 12 December 1984, the ICRC Assembly named Mr. Pictet Honorary Vice-President for life by acclamation—again a very unusual honour which had not been granted for many years.

In October 1984, to celebrate Jean Pictet's seventieth birthday, the ICRC and publishers Martinus Nijhoff issued a volume of *Studies and Essays on International Humanitarian Law*. This new and unique publication is a collection of writings by some eighty eminent figures of the Red Cross and specialists in international humanitarian law; it fully reflects the scope, influence and diversity of Jean Pictet's activities as a legal scholar, teacher, Red Cross man and outstanding author. It is prefaced by Mr. Max Petitpierre and Mr. Pierre Graber, former Presidents of the Swiss Confederation, and by Mr. Alexandre Hay, President of the ICRC.

Geneva University, where Mr. Pictet has been teaching since 1965, paid tribute to him at its meeting of 16 November 1984 which was chaired by Mr. Charles-André Junod, Dean of the Law Faculty, and attended by representatives of the Swiss and Genevese authorities, of the Federal Tribunal and of the European Office of the United Nations. The very large audience was addressed by Mr. Junod. Mr. Jean-Paul Buensod, Vice-President of the Swiss Red Cross and President of the Henry Dunant Institute, and Mr. Alexandre Hay, President of the ICRC. Mr. Pictet was then presented with the first edition of *Studies and Essays on International Humanitarian Law*. He closed the ceremony by giving a lecture on "The formation of international humanitarian law" which will be published shortly in the Review.

Mr. Pictet, who also taught at the Hague Academy of International Law and in Strasbourg under the auspices of the Council of Europe and of the University, is a doctor *honoris causa* of the Universities of Leyden, Zurich and Louvain.

The press, in Switzerland and Germany especially, marked Mr. Pictet's seventieth birthday celebrations by publishing laudatory articles written by eminent legal scholars and Red Cross personalities.

The *International Review of the Red Cross*, which owes so much to Mr. Pictet, takes this opportunity to convey to him its sincere congratulations and to wish him many happy returns of the day.

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### **A new building for the Central Tracing Agency**

The opening ceremony for the new building of the Central Tracing Agency took place at the ICRC on 29 October 1984.

During the inauguration about one hundred guests were addressed by Mr. Pierre Aubert, Federal Councillor and head of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Jacques Vernet, Vice-president of the State Council of the Republic and Canton of Geneva, Professor Jean-Werner Huber, Director of the Federal Buildings Office, and Mr. Alexandre Hay, President of the ICRC.

Made possible by a donation of 15 million Swiss francs from the Swiss Government, the co-operation of the Office of Federal