

whole and without any ambiguity the will to avoid armed conflicts and to ensure to all human beings decent conditions of life in which the natural environment would be respected was clearly asserted. The ICRC was much stimulated by this Congress to pursue increasingly extensive activities towards peace.

The Congress had the opportunity to listen to an address by Mr. Leonid Brejnev, Member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, who spoke in general terms on the situation in the world today, underlining, among other points, the need for peaceful co-existence.

In Moscow, Mr. Huber and the League representatives met the President of the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the USSR, Mrs. Troyan, and its Vice-President, Professor Zakharov, and visited the Alliance's headquarters building.

NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

In its December 1972 issue, *International Review* published an account of the twenty-second Annual Congress of the Association for the Study of the World Refugee Problem (AWR), held at Geneva in October 1972. A draft resolution, submitted by the Association's President, Mr. H. G. Beckh, called upon him and his colleagues to contact international jurists, with the aim of organizing together with them round-table conferences whose purpose would be to reconcile the different doctrines relating to the notion of State sovereignty. It was considered that, when exercised absolutely and in an excessively rigid fashion, State sovereignty was often at the root of the appearance of refugees.

Following the resolution, a round-table meeting was organized in August 1973 at Vaduz, under the patronage of H. R. H. the Prince

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of Liechtenstein. A number of prominent jurists, including Professors G. I. A. D. Draper, P. de la Pradelle, J. H. Kaiser and J. Patnogenic, were invited to take part in the meeting, to whom Mr. Pictet, ICRC Vice-President, sent the following message: "I wish you all success in your discussions on a question of such importance. I feel that the time has now come to undertake a study of this problem and to seek a solution that will be fully consonant with the vital interests of mankind."

The round-table participants agreed to pursue their deliberations and to study in depth the problem of the relation between national sovereignty and human rights. Action was envisaged along the following lines:

To constitute a study group—to set up an administration centre in Vaduz—to collect and perhaps publish documents on the matter—to organize round-table meetings with the participation of experts on various subjects—to co-operate with government and non-governmental organizations and with educational and research institutions.

Accordingly, a study group was constituted; it was decided that the nucleus of the group would consist of those who took part in the round-table meeting. Its intention is to undertake a widespread enquiry, the results of which will be submitted to government and non-governmental organizations and will undoubtedly be of assistance to them in their humanitarian work.
