

IN GENEVA

Testimony of gratitude

The ICRC has wanted to demonstrate its gratitude to Mr. Germain Colladon who left its service today, having reached the age limit after having been its delegate for over twenty years. It presented him with the institution's silver medal at a ceremony which took place at ICRC headquarters on March 31, 1966. Mr. Samuel Gonard, President, addressed him as follows:

A descendant of a relative of Henry Dunant's mother, and grand-nephew of the celebrated Dr. Daniel Colladon, you were perhaps destined to serve our institution and through it this city which gave it birth a hundred years ago.

You joined our ranks in January 1944, first of all in the Executive Division, then as delegate in France after the world war. You had above all, and in the absence of any protecting Power, to ensure the legal protection of German prisoners of war under sentence, a task which was both delicate and useful.

On your return to Geneva, you were then entrusted with periodic missions in Greece. These consisted of visiting persons detained as a result of the civil war and who remained for such a long time in captivity. Relief also had to be distributed to them. We would recall that in 1950 at a period when Greece was lacking in most commodities, there were no less than 56 detention camps on the Greek mainland and 24 in the islands.

You also represented the ICRC in Tunisia and Morocco in 1957 and 1958, when the International Committee undertook from its own resources a relief action on behalf of 55,000 displaced Algerian refugees, an action which was subsequently taken over by the League and extended, thanks to the help of National Societies.

Finally, quite recently, it was to you that were entrusted searches enabling compensation to be given to former prisoners, victims of ill-treatment during their captivity.

In all these tasks and missions, of which I have only mentioned the most important, you acquitted yourself with honour and in keeping with your conscience. They gave you the opportunity of putting to good use that devotion, generosity, patience and courtesy which are so characteristic of you. You thus earned the gratitude of very many unfortunate human beings. You deserved well of the Red Cross.

Therefore, in recognition of the distinguished services which you have rendered the cause of humanity, the ICRC has decided to award you its silver medal, a distinction which is rarely accorded. I now have pleasure in presenting you with it, hoping that you will have a happy retirement.

Mr. Germain Colladon thanked the International Committee for this testimony. He recalled the circumstances in which, after other activities, he devoted himself to the service of the Red Cross which is, he said, an institution "above which there rises, without any ulterior motive, clear, straight and full of purity, a spiritual flame". He concluded by mentioning "the motto which could be that of all delegates : Honour and Fidelity".
