

*IN GENEVA***Mr. Eric Martin, Honorary Member of ICRC**

Upon his retirement as President of the International Committee of the Red Cross at the end of June, a position in which he had served since July 1973,¹ Mr. Eric Martin was elected an honorary member of the ICRC. The appointment was made by the ICRC at its meeting on 30 June. In granting him the honour, the Committee expressed its gratitude for the distinction and devotion he had displayed during his presidency, noting that he had carried out important missions in various countries and had worked unceasingly to increase respect, even in difficult situations, for the emblem of the red cross, a symbol of humanity.

Mr. Roger Gallopin, President of the Executive Board, speaking on behalf of the ICRC, said:

Among the members of our Assembly, I have been the one who, due to my responsibilities, has had the privilege of almost daily contacts with you since the beginning of your mandate. As this mandate comes to an end, it therefore behoves me to express the homage and tribute which you have earned.

Three years ago, Mr. Pierre Micheli and I were asked by the Assembly to visit you and try to persuade you to accept the Presidency of the International Committee which had been offered you by Mr. Petitpierre, expressing the unanimous voice of the Committee. You were very hesitant; you were surprised by that offer which you had no reason to foresee; you felt that you lacked the necessary preparation—in short, you believed it would have been desirable to be a member of the ICRC before assuming, unexpectedly, the supreme responsibility. In addition, the system

¹ See *International Review*, June 1976

of a two-tier presidency did not correspond either to your opinions or to your temperament.

Nevertheless, after a brief period of reflection, you decided to give an affirmative answer to our appeal. You did so without regard for your personal convenience, moved only by the desire to serve the institution which had called upon you.

The sacrifices you accepted were not destined to be in vain, for today you have the satisfaction of observing that an important work, highly positive and of great service to the beneficiaries, was carried out under your presidency, in a particularly turbulent period in international affairs, demanding unceasing efforts by the ICRC.

You have inspired and animated this work; you have supported it by your amiable but determined authority. To achieve this, a spirit of mind which is especially characteristic of you was essential, a spirit constantly seeking positive solutions, flatly refusing the possibility of failure, thus maintaining that conviction which is essential for success.

These three years of your presidency will therefore be lastingly marked by all that has been accomplished thanks to you and the noble conception you have had of your mission and of our institution. These three years, however, have constituted only one stage. Your colleagues have decided unanimously to appoint you as an honorary member of the International Committee, hoping that you will make full use of your right to take part in meetings of the Assembly, and in so doing that you will long continue to provide us with your invaluable counsel.

There is no question therefore of our taking leave of you, today or tomorrow, but, on the contrary, of looking forward to seeing you at our ensuing meetings, which we trust you will attend.

Finally, to give tangible form to our feelings, the Assembly has decided to offer you a souvenir, which I have the honour of presenting to you with the expression of our gratitude and affection.

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