

SEVENTH AWARD OF THE HENRY DUNANT MEDAL

The Henry Dunant Medal, intended to constitute recognition and reward for outstanding services or acts of self-sacrifice in the cause of the Red Cross on the part of a member, was awarded this year to:

Mrs. Alexandra Issa-el-Khoury of the Lebanese Red Cross,
Mr. Ismael Reyes Icabalceta of the Nicaraguan Red Cross,
Mr. Melchior Borsinger, former ICRC delegate,
Mrs. Krista Djordjevic, of the Yugoslav Red Cross, posthumously.

The medal was presented to the first two recipients by Sir Evelyn Shuckburgh, Chairman of the Standing Commission of the International Red Cross, on 6 November 1981, at the Twenty-fourth International Red Cross Conference, at Manila. Mrs. Stefa Spiljak, member of the Presidency of the Yugoslav Red Cross, received the medal awarded posthumously to Mrs. Krista Djordjevic. In the absence of Mr. Melchior Borsinger, the medal awarded to him was handed to the President of the ICRC, Mr. A. Hay.

The following citations were made by the Standing Commission in respect of each of the recipients:

Mrs. A. Issa-el-Khoury

Mrs. Alexandra Issa-el-Khoury embodies a long tradition of heroic and devoted work in the service of the Red Cross in Lebanon. A member of the Central Committee of the Lebanese Red Cross since 1951, she succeeded her mother as President of the National Society. She was also elected Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the International Red Cross.

Under her inspired leadership, the Lebanese Red Cross succeeded in regaining and maintaining a truly unique position of impartiality and humanitarian spirit, respected equally by all parties involved in the tragic conflict in Lebanon. The absolute dedication of Mrs. Issa-el-Khoury to her Red

Cross mission, her courage and endurance, in a climate of constant anguish and danger, made her a person that few Red Cross leaders could match. There were many times when she did not attend international meetings of the Red Cross, because she felt that she ought not to abandon the front line, where lay danger and suffering.

The Standing Commission wishes to pay special tribute to the remarkable qualities that she has continually shown under exceptional circumstances and at great risk to her life.

Mr. Ismael Reyes Icabalceta

Mr. Ismael Reyes Icabalceta has been a member of the Nicaraguan Red Cross for the last fifteen years, during which time he served as President and later as Treasurer. He has supported and assisted the members of his National Society in all kinds of circumstances, sometimes in danger of his life, as was the case for example during the recent civil war in Nicaragua. The heroism that he showed in time of crisis earned him the respect not only of his fellow countrymen but also of international bodies engaged in humanitarian activities.

Recognizing the exceptional service that he has rendered in recent years, the Standing Commission of the International Red Cross awards him the Henry Dunant Medal.

Mr. Melchior Borsinger

During his forty years of service with the ICRC, from 1940 to 1980, Mr. Melchior Borsinger performed to the full the role of ICRC delegate, both at headquarters and in the field, shouldering responsibilities that required not only technical knowledge but also exceptional human qualities: sense of duty, discretion, endurance and courage.

To ensure that the Geneva Conventions are properly applied in time of war, in civil war, or in situations of tension and violence, ICRC delegates must be present at flash points and on all fronts. The list of missions carried out by Mr. Melchior Borsinger could be equally that of all the dramatic and violent conflicts that have plunged mankind into grief in the course of the past forty years. He carried out his tasks with a courage and intelligence that we have come to associate with the model ICRC delegate, and that give additional distinction to the whole Red Cross movement.

In awarding the Henry Dunant Medal to Mr. Melchior Borsinger, the Standing Commission also pays tribute to all those who work for the Red Cross in hazardous conditions and at risk to their lives.

Mrs. Krista Djordjevic

Mrs. Krista Djordjevic devoted all her life to humanitarian and cultural work in her country and was made an honorary life member of the Red Cross of Yugoslavia. She thus became a living symbol of the ideals of the Red Cross. As early as the period between the two world wars, she established mobile health centres and hospitals in rural regions. During the Second World War she played a leading role in the organization and development of the Yugoslav Red Cross, a task that she pursued for many years. Her beneficial and comforting presence was a genuine source of encouragement for her fellow citizens in all the disasters, whether man-made or natural, that befell her country during her long life.

A widely known personality in international and national circles, Mrs. Krista Djordjevic showed untiring devotion, remarkable energy and perseverance in the service of the Red Cross.

The Standing Commission wishes to pay homage, posthumously, to this outstanding Red Cross personality, for the contribution that she made to the development of social welfare in her own country and for the example that she set of exceptional humanitarian devotion.

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The first presentation of the Henry Dunant Medal was made in 1969, at the Twenty-first International Red Cross Conference at Istanbul.

In all, thirty-two medals have been awarded, eleven of them posthumously.
