

SENATOR ROBERT MORGAN
American Red Cross Presentation
Sheraton Convention Center
Southern Pines, North Carolina
October 31, 1980

AWARD TO MR. R. V. WALTERS

Today we are here to award a citation to Mr. R. V. Walters for "selfless and humane action in saving the life of a near-drowning victim."

This is the highest award given by the American Red Cross to a person who saves or sustains a life by using skills and knowledge learned in a volunteer training program offered by the Red Cross in first aid, small craft, or water safety. This, then, is a solemn ceremony and one of great significance.

There comes a time when a person is placed in the position of acting positively or ignoring the plight of a fellow human being. Until that test comes, none of us know how we will react. This choice has fascinated philosophers and thinkers throughout our civilization, for basically, what is decided is the difference between the coward and the hero.

That is why the achievement of Mr. Walters is so significant. On June 15, 1980, Mr. Walters was SCUBA diving in a lake when

he and other swimmers noticed a large number of air bubbles breaking the surface of the water approximately 100 feet away. Fortunately, Mr. Walters was trained in Red Cross lifesaving, and he immediately swam toward the bubbles. He made a surface dive, but on the first attempt he was unsuccessful in finding the victim. Eventually, he did locate the victim in approximately 12 feet of water and brought him to the surface.

The victim was unconscious and had stopped breathing. But Mr. Walters took the victim to the shore and immediately administered mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Fortunately, after a brief period the victim resumed breathing and regained consciousness. There is no doubt but that the rescue by Mr. Walters saved the victim's life.

It is for this act of heroism that Mr. Walters has been named to receive the Red Cross Certificate of Merit. This certificate bears the original signatures of the President of the United States, who is the Honorary Chairman, and Jerome H. Holland, Chairman of the American Red Cross.

This action exemplifies the highest ideal of concern of one human being for another who is in distress.