



H.S.H. Prince Rainier III, invited by Rear Admiral RICHIE, President of the Directing Committee, unveiling the bronze plaque commemorating the 50th anniversary of the laying of the Foundation Stone of the IHB Headquarters.



The bronze plaque above the Foundation Stone on the S.W. pillar of the IHB building. The bolt in the centre of the plaque marks its position in the World Geodetic System 1972.

**FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAYING
OF THE
FOUNDATION STONE OF THE IHB'S HEADQUARTERS**

On Friday, 20 April 1979, the fiftieth anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone of the Bureau building, His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III unveiled a commemorative bronze plaque on the pillar above the foundation stone.

In welcoming His Serene Highness, the President of the Directing Committee, Rear Admiral G.S. RITCHIE, spoke as follows :

Your Serene Highness,

The Directing Committee and the Staff of the International Hydrographic Bureau welcome you here today in the name of the 45 Member States of the International Hydrographic Organization. We wish to thank you, Sir, for the generous and true hospitality which has been extended to the Bureau by the Princely Government ever since the first Directing Committee was installed in a building on the Avenue du Port nearly 60 years ago.

Today is of special significance because it is exactly 50 years since your august Grandfather, His Serene Highness Prince Louis II, laid this Foundation Stone of the building which his Government was to provide especially for the use of the International Hydrographic Bureau, and which has been maintained for this purpose by the Government of Monaco ever since.

Sir, we know that you were present here on that day and it is thus particularly gratifying to us that you have graciously consented to unveil a commemorative plaque which we have placed above the foundation stone.

The Bureau was in 1929 a technical agency of the League of Nations, and in a speech before the unveiling ceremony His Excellency the Minister of State, Monsieur Maurice PIETTE, appropriately said :

“My wish is that the work of the Hydrographic Bureau — now rendered easier by better and permanent quarters — may make safer the sealanes of the oceans which serve as the means of communication between peoples and draw them closer together.”

I hope, Sir, when you have the opportunity to visit the Bureau later this morning that we shall be able to demonstrate to you

that the International Hydrographic Organization is pursuing with persistence this same course in an ever-changing maritime world.

The plaque is not only commemorative but also serves a modern purpose. The bolt in the centre marks with great accuracy the position based on the 'World Geodetic System-1972' to which satellite observations for ship fixing are related. Thus surveying and research vessels, which are increasingly using satellite observations for the location of their ocean soundings and other researches, may check the precision of their satellite navigation receivers against this known position whenever they visit the Port of Monaco.

Your Serene Highness, may I now ask you most respectfully to unveil the commemorative plaque.

After unveiling the plaque His Serene Highness paid a 45-minute visit to the Bureau where he met the Directing Committee and members of the staff. The more important projects currently being progressed by the IHO were described to him.

His Serene Highness later informed the Directing Committee of his great interest in the work of the Organization and his satisfaction with what he had seen.

(See also 'Fifty Years Ago ...', pages 143-147).