

REMARKS BY THE VICE PRESIDENT  
AT THE RECEPTION  
FOR GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR  
ICY COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN  
June 2, 1965

First, may I say that I regret that I've denied myself the privilege of being with you a little earlier. I was tending to my business over in the United States Senate where according to the Constitution it says I'm the presiding officer and every once in a while I surprise them by presiding. Today I surprised them and they happily surprised us by passing the NASA Authorization Bill very promptly that gives the tools to do the jobs we need in our scientific explorations in outer space. I'm going to be very brief with you because, as the Secretary said, many of you have to catch your shuttles and return to your respective homes.

I first want to thank Bob Benjamin for his leadership, his great civic interest, and his sense of civic duty and responsibility. I want to express on behalf of the Department and on behalf of the Government the appreciation to each and every one of you for what you are doing individually and the organizations that you represent.

I was supposed to be with you, as I recall, last March. I'm a little late getting here. These are uncertain days and even the best laid plans of men go astray, but I'm happy to be here with you in June. I want to assure you that my interest in the ICY and the activities of the many organizations dedicated to the fulfillment of the ICY promise is true, sincere, and continuing.

Arnold Toynbee once said that our age will be remembered not for its horrifying crimes nor its astonishing inventions, but because it is the first generation since the dawn of history in which man dared to believe it practical to make the benefits of civilization available to the whole human race. I think that sort of sums up what our challenge is and also what we have as resources to fulfill that challenge.

I am a rather optimistic man and I'm delighted that I am, for my own peace of mind, because there are enough things that can discourage you these days. I start each day trying to believe that this day will be a little better than the one before. I came to the conclusion some time ago that man ought to live each day as fully as he can because you can never be sure how many more days you will have. It ought to be a rewarding day to your country, to your family, and to yourself. Above all it ought to be a day that adds some meaning to the convictions and the ideals that you hold.

I happen to be one who believes that the most courageous man in the world is one who gives himself to help others. Many people -- everybody, of course -- speak about peace and we'd like to believe that everybody was interested in the attainment of peace. But I think it can be said that this country has a record in history of being fully dedicated to peace in its truest sense because peace is not just the absence of war, as you know. Peace is progress. It is growth; peace is harmony -- man between man and man and his environment.

I've said many times and I think of no better simile or analogy than that the pursuit of peace or the process of peace is like the construction of a great cathedral. I've always been impressed by the beauty and the majesty -- the greatness -- of the cathedrals I have had the privilege to visit and to see. As I've studied these cathedrals -- which is something I'd like to do more -- I find that it took generations, sometimes centuries to build those cathedrals and some of them are yet unfinished, as for instance in our own great city here in the nation's capital -- the Washington Cathedral. Peace is that way too. You don't get it for wishing. It doesn't come because you're filled with good thoughts. It comes from work and plans. There must be a master architect -- a concept of the cathedral of peace that you want. Then we need the labors of many over a long and continuing period.

I believe that people who believe in peace and cooperation have to be people that have deep faith. You cannot be the kind of people that lose faith in mankind and lose it quickly or lose it cynically. You simply have to be people that have faith and not only faith but works. So the building of peace is like the building of a beautiful cathedral. It's a work that may not be done in my lifetime nor shall it be done in yours. But you ought to add a stone to it. There ought to be at least one spiral that is yours or one edifice that belongs to you. You ought to be able

to point to it and say that I helped place that building block in the cathedral of peace. I think that's what the International Cooperation Year is.

I've heard some people say there isn't much cooperation going on right now. Well there's a lot more than you think. We have many people reminding us of all the inadequacies of our time and I find that seems to be one of the biggest businesses in the world today. We have people who like to promote struggle, even amongst ourselves. But there is cooperation. There's a great deal of it. The United Nations, for example, is still alive and still functioning. Many people had it dead and buried. The UN-related organizations -- the World Health Organization, the FAO, and UNICEF -- are still very much alive and doing great work. Mankind is the better because of them. The committees of the UN are at work. The great voluntary organizations that are represented here are at work. So there is a great deal of cooperation.

Cooperation seldom makes headlines. Unity seldom makes headlines. Disunity makes them. The failure of mankind makes headlines -- not his success. So I want to say that in a very real way the achievements in international cooperation realized by the various organizations that you represent are fulfilling the promise that Toynbee spoke of -- the promise that the benefits of civilization might be available to the whole human race.

Now many of you represent groups that are deeply involved in peacekeeping operations. There are committees on peacekeeping machinery and on peaceful settlement of disputes. They are of critical importance since our ultimate goal is a world in which the direct use of national military strength will no longer be necessary in the time of crisis.

Let me say this: during this time when many of us have deep concern and worry about developments in Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, Africa, and other places, that this country through its President, has offered the hand of cooperation repeatedly in Southeast Asia to friend and foe alike, to rebuild the whole area; to extend the span of life; to improve education and health; to improve agricultural production and industry. This is the great program of economic development which this country is prepared not only to endorse, not only to initiate, but to back.

We've offered the olive branch of peace with justice. We've offered the hand of fellowship and cooperation. We've offered it even to those who said they would destroy us, to North and South Vietnam, to Southeast Asia, in fact to all of Asia. I know of no other country that has offered quite so much and been so free and open about it. We are prepared to do our part, and then some, to walk the extra mile.

Sometimes I feel that we're so determined to be self-analytical and self-critical that we even forget what we tried to do constructively. I hope you shall not. It may be that on occasion we err in judgment -- and I suppose we do. But there's always new information coming to you and you can't wait forever. The three D's of Democracy are Debate, Discussion, and Decision. But sometimes you have to make a decision and you can't always wait for an eternity for information. But once we make a decision, we are prepared to follow through, to alter, or to adjust in light of the facts. We have made an offer of cooperation the likes of which no other country in the world has made in a time when its people are being harrassed, when its national honor, so to speak, is being tested.

Your efforts in the fields of medicine, public health, agriculture, education and training, I think, are of equal importance to any kind of diplomacy that we may have or exercise. They are of equal importance since they would help create a world of peace, order and prosperity, a world where the strong are just, and the weak secure and the peace preserved. They supplement and strengthen the work of AID. I see our friends from the AID administration here which I understand is represented on 25 of the 30 ICY committees.

I must say that I told a group yesterday the following: I said you know there are many commentaries and critics of our policies today and some commentators like to call some liberals and some conservatives. I think that's far too simple an analogy because it's rather difficult these days to identify just whom you're speaking of when you use those time-worn and seldom adequate and definitive descriptions. But if you prove to be a liberal and call yourself one, as I have through the years, then may I say that a liberal must understand that in the cause of peace and freedom sometimes it's necessary to use power. If

you prefer to be a conservative, as some prefer to call themselves, I would remind them that sheer military power alone in some world situations is counter-productive. What we need is the blend. What we need in these crises situations is to remember that people need a goal toward which to work. They need to have something in which to believe. If people are going to die, they want to die for a cause. We need to help mold that cause, to bring that cause into being by our actions and by our policies, and I think we are.

And above all we must remember that you cannot ever win a struggle unless people feel there is something better in the future once the struggle is won. If this idea of hope in America stands for the politics of hope, it is the hope, it is the promise and we must never forget that.

I think one of our greatest weapons in all of this struggle is our sense of idealism. But idealism alone and good works alone are not enough. Good words are not enough. You will sometimes have to have more than that. The works in agriculture and food, in education, in training, and in hospitals and in all the many things that are being done by these many groups -- these are the foundations, the building blocks upon which successful diplomacy and national security policies can build.

So let me emphasize here how vital all of this work is and what great importance your President attaches to it. The goal of peace -- this is our goal -- and I don't intend to let those who would destroy peace take the word of peace and make it theirs. The one thing that bothers me more than anything else is how the totalitarian has been able to take the words of freedom and -- like a robber in the night -- steal them from us. They talk about the democratic people's republic. They don't believe in democracy; people mean nothing; there's no sense of human dignity, and a republic is totally foreign to their concept of a government.

We are the democratic people. We believe in the republic, and so do millions more in other lands that hunger for freedom. We are the people of peace. We have never worshipped at the altar of war. We've never felt that war was really an instrument to gain our objectives. We've had it forced upon us. But we truly believe that peace is the task of honorable men. And this goal of peace and justice throughout the world is not one which can or should be pursued, as I say, solely by officials here in



Washington or in other capitals around the globe. It must be pursued by the people themselves by you. The suggestions, the new ideas and the programs of private groups that you represent are a welcome and most significant portion of the foreign policy-making process. You helped make this policy; you alter it; you adjust it. Your constructive words, your critical words, they all are a part of the making of American foreign policy.

So I want to thank you and I want to thank your leaders and each and every group for coming here. I know you've had a constructive meeting today of the Chairman of the International Cooperation Year Committees. Be of good cheer. The world's going to get along all right. I'm one of those who believe that we can do anything we want to do if we have the will to do it; I know we have the resources. Now what we need is the will, the perseverance, the patience, the faith, to do what we know is right.

Thank you.



# Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



[www.mnhs.org](http://www.mnhs.org)