

REMARKS

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

TRI-FAITH CHAPELS PLAZA

JOHN F. KENNEDY AIRPORT

NEW YORK CITY

DECEMBER 18, 1966

Clergy
Reverend Dr. Pryor
Fellow Americans

Here, amidst the coming and going of men and women from all corners of the world -- and to all corners of the world -- it is good to have this place of peace and quiet meditation.

It is good to be reminded by this spacious plaza, giving access to the holy places of three great faiths, that all men are brothers -- and that they are equal in the sight of God, by whatever name and with whatever solemn ceremony they address him.

There was a time when the great author and preacher, Jonathan Swift, said in sorrow:

"We have just enough religion to make us hate,
but not enough to make us love one another."

↳ Happily, here in America, we have outgrown this
narrowness. We have learned, in the words of Emily Bronte
which you have chosen to express the purpose of this place,
that "faith shines equal."

The three great faiths of America -- Protestant,
Catholic, and Jewish -- are represented here in edifices
of distinctive design but of equal grace.

↳ Together with this ample plaza, they establish a
harmony in space more sublime than any of its parts -- just
as each of the many strands of which the American people
are woven contribute to the totality of our strength, and each
is the stronger for being interwoven with the others.

↳ We have here in America, ~~I assert~~, not the easy
kind of tolerance -- the least common denominator of those
who have ceased to care very much.

*one nation
under God
with liberty
and justice
for all*

↳ We have, rather, men and women believing deeply in their respective faiths, yet great enough in spirit to comprehend how much and how vital is that which unites them.

And it is the kind of faith that finds expression not only in words but in deeds -- as, indeed, the noblest spirits of every faith have always demanded of us.

Our faith in America -- Protestant, Catholic and Jewish -- is the kind of faith expressed in ^{the prayer of} St. Francis' ^{of Assisi} prayer:

↳ "Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace."

next Page ↳ Where there is hate, may I bring love; where offence may I bring pardon; may I bring union in place of discord; truth where once there was doubt; hope, for despair; light where was darkness; joy to replace sadness. Make me not to so crave to be loved as to love. Help me to learn that in giving I may receive; in forgetting self I may find life eternal."

LORD MAKE ME AN INSTRUMENT OF THY PEACE.

WHERE THERE IS HATRED, LET ME SO LOVE; WHERE THERE
IS INJURY, PARDON. WHERE THERE IS DOUBT, FAITH. WHERE
THERE IS DISPAIR, HOPE. WHERE THERE IS DARKNESS, LIGHT.
AND WHERE THERE IS SADNESS, JOY.

OH, DIVINE MASTER, GRANT THAT I MAY NOT SO MUCH
SEEK TO BE CONSOLED AS TO CONSOLE. TO BE UNDERSTOOD,
AS TO UNDERSTAND. TO BE LOVED, AS TO LOVE. FOR IT IS
IN GIVING THAT WE RECEIVE. IT IS IN PARDONING THAT WE
ARE PARDONED. AND IT IS IN DYING THAT WE ARE BORN TO
ETERNAL LIFE.

It is in this spirit that Americans of all faiths, led by their ministers, their priests, and their rabbis, have dedicated themselves to banish prejudice, discrimination, and poverty from our great and beautiful country. It is in this spirit that they have worked together ^{*Prayed Together*} and marched together.

Let this Tri-Faith Chapels Plaza, therefore, stand as a symbol and a pledge to those who come here from other nations -- a symbol of the essential unity of our great religions, and a pledge of their united determination to make this a better nation and a better world.

Let it also stand as a symbol of the ^{*understanding*} ~~peace~~ which prevails among us here in America, despite our diversity -- and as a pledge that we shall never cease to work for peace with justice and freedom throughout the world. For there is no quick and easy way to peace -- it must and will be built out of the cumulative

acts of men and women who dedicate their lives to the
service of their fellow-men -- and therefore to the service
of God.

#

TRANSCRIPT OF TAPE

TRI-FAITH CHAPELS PLAZA DEDICATION
John F. Kennedy International Airport
Jamaica, New York
Sunday, December 18, 1966

MR. SAMUEL F. PRYOR, Chairman

Mr. Vice President, may I ask all of us to stand while Reverend Doctor G. Barrett Rich, the Chaplain of our Protestant Chapel, offers us the Invocation.

REV. DR. G. BARRETT RICH, III, Protestant Chaplain

Eternal God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, we worship Thee. Thou art very great. We cannot by searching find Thee out. But, Thou Who art very great art also very close to each of us. As the wind which blows all around the world yet fans our cheek, so art Thou. As the sun which draws all the planets in its train yet lights our eyes, so art Thou. Let each of us say in his own heart, "O God, Thou art my God." Whatever our name or creed, we worship Thee and we are grateful for these three Chapels, which witness before the world, in an ecumenical manner, that we in America recognize Thee as our Heavenly Father - that we are not only interested in jet planes, or in wealth, power or pleasure, but we are also a God-fearing people who chant -

"Our Father's God to Thee,
Author of Liberty,
To Thee we sing.
Long may our land be bright,
With Freedom's holy light.
Protect us by Thy might,
Great God, our King."

We ask Thy blessing upon the President of the United States and the Vice President, Hubert H. Humphrey, who has honored us by his presence this morning.

Since Thou art our Father, all men are brethern, and we pray that brotherhood may prevail. Lift us up into magnanimity and generosity, into justice and Christlike care, intense and passionate for what happens to the sons of men. At this season, we pray that the song of the angels may come true of peace on earth and good-will to men. Amen.

MR. SAMUEL F. PRYOR, Chairman

Mr. Vice President and Reverend Clergy ... Honored guests on the platform, and I'd like to begin on my extreme right and take the privilege of introducing to you all - first, Mr. Lester F. Avnet, President and Chairman of the Board of Avnet Company and member of the Tri-Faith Chapels Campaign Executive Committee; Mr. William A. Shea, Attorney and member of the Tri-Faith Chapels Campaign Executive Committee; the Honorable Frank O'Connor, President of the City Council of the City of New York; the Most Reverend Joseph P. Denning, Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Brooklyn; Rabbi Edward Sandrow, President of the New York Board of Rabbis; Honorable Charles H. Silver, President of the International Synagogue; and Honorable Abraham J. Multer of the House of Representatives of the 13th Congressional District of the State of New York; and Right Reverend - I will leave the Chaplains until later, when I present also our very honored guest - and I will begin on my extreme left - Mr. Harry Van Arsdale, President of the City Central Labor Council; Reverend Doctor Dan M. Potter, Potter is the Executive Director of the Protestant Council of the City of New York; Honorable Rabbi Harold Gordon, the Executive Vice President of the New York Board of Rabbis; Mr. Austin J. Tobin, the Executive Director of The Port of New York Authority; Honorable Joseph P. Addabbo, House of Representatives of the 7th Congressional District of the State of New York and the District in which our airport is located; and Mr. Charles C. Tillinghast, Jr., the President of Trans World Airlines and member of the Tri-Faith Chapels Campaign Executive Committee, and I might say, the most generous and first to help us with this project; and Representative Tenzer of New York; and on the platform, Mr. W. Richard Cogan, the Assistant Vice President of the First National City Bank and Chairman of the John F. Kennedy International Airport Campaign Committee; and also you many more distinguished people here out in front, and ladies and gentlemen:

- - more - -

MR. SAMUEL F. PRYOR, Chairman (continued)

On this eventful moment in the history of our nation, I welcome you on behalf of the New York Board of Rabbis, sponsor of the Jewish Chapel; the Protestant Council of the City of New York, sponsor of the Protestant Chapel; and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn, sponsor of the Catholic Chapel.

Standing side by side as spiritual beacons here at the air gateway to America, these three Chapels occupy the Tri-Faith Chapels Plaza site to which we come today to dedicate. On these three acres of land, leased from The Port of New York Authority, the three major faiths of our nation, in the spirit of the Ecumenical Era in which we are now living, have joined together in brotherhood - in understanding - in building houses of worship at John F. Kennedy International Airport, the busiest airport in the world.

The Tri-Faith Chapels program is extraordinary. There is none like it at any other air terminal in the world. This gives evidence to all people and to all nations that ours is still a nation "under God." It symbolizes to all people and to all nations America's commitment to the freedom of worship. It shows to all people and to all nations that the greatness of these United States lies in its spiritual vitality. It demonstrates to all people and to all nations that we do have religious freedom, tolerance and cooperation in our beloved country.

But, the Tri-Faith Chapels Plaza is something more than a symbol. It has a very practical value. The three Chapels provide religious services administered to more than 34,000 people who work here at the airport, to more than 16 million travelers who pass through the airport, and millions more who come to visit. And, these numbers are increasing with the passage of time.

Yes, these Chapels are for people. These Chapels, in a true sense, belong to the air industry. They came into being because the people wanted them.

MR. SAMUEL F. PRYOR, Chairman (continued)

Because much still remains to be done to complete the Tri-Faith Chapels program, the three faiths, for the first time, have united in a campaign to raise at least \$1-million. Because of the significance of the Tri-Faith Chapels program, we are confident that business and industry, especially those that are air carriers and aviation-oriented, will contribute in a special way to the campaign.

We are pleased - indeed, honored - to have with us today to dedicate Tri-Faith Chapels Plaza a man whose words and actions have continually demonstrated his deep feelings concerning the importance of the religious, the spiritual character of our nation. It is our special privilege to ask him to speak to us and to share with us his thoughts on this special occasion.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

Thank you, my friend, Mr. Sam Pryor. Reverend Clergy of the three great faiths that are represented here in this Temple this morning and my fellow Americans.

As I was listening to Mr. Pryor, there are many thoughts that leaped into my mind, the many times I have participated in moving ceremonies relating to the religious life of our people, the people of this great land. This is the season, as we say, of joy - for our Jewish brethren, the Festival of Lights and Channukah - for those of the Christian faith, of Christmas - and I suppose that it might be well just to say "schbot shalom" and "glad tidings" to each and every one.

Here, amidst the coming and the going of men and women from the corners of this wonderous world of ours and, too, all corners of the world, I am sure that you will agree with me that it is good, yes, it is good, to have this place of peace and of quiet meditation. It is good, too, to be reminded by this spacious Plaza, giving access to the holy places of the three great faiths, that all men are brothers

.....
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY (continued)

not just in the word but in the spirit, and they are equal, equal in the sight of God by whatever name and with whatever solemn ceremony they address Him. This, of course, is a fundamental part of our American commitment, and it is also a very integral and fundamental part of our basic faith.

There was a time when the author and preacher, Jonathan Swift, said in sorrow, "We have just enough religion to make us hate but not enough to make us love one another." What sad words and, yet, I suppose in his time, words of truth. But, happily here in America, in at least more recent days, we have outgrown this narrowness or should I say that we are in the process of outgrowing it.

We have learned in the words of Emily Brontë, which you have chosen to express the purpose of this place, that "FAITH SHINES EQUAL" and what a great definition of equality! The three great faiths of America - Protestant, Catholic, Jewish - are represented here in edifices of distinctive design but of equal grace, and I am sure all pleasing to Divine Providence.

Together with this ample Plaza, they establish a harmony in space more sublime than any of its parts, just as each of the many strands of which the American people are woven contribute to the totality of our strength and each of us is stronger for being interwoven with the others. There are so many phrases in American History that underscore this unity from diversity that one is sometimes hard put to choose or to select.

But, I must say that of all the simple and yet profound and moving statements of our land, none is more significant to me of both the secular and spiritual than that pledge of which we ask our children to make everyday of their lives literally in school, and which I hope that each of us makes in our own way every day of our adult lives in our work: "... one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY (continued)

I can't think of any phrase, any paragraph that more succinctly and concisely describes and depicts and, indeed, emphasises the meaning of America and its commitment not only to the richness, the material richness of our life, the oneness of our nation and also of our spiritual commitment and our sense of brotherhood. We have here in America, I'm happy to tell you, not the easy kind of tolerance, the least common denominator of those who have ceased to care very much. We have, rather, men and women believing deeply in their respective faiths, yet great enough in spirit to comprehend how much and how vital is that which unites them.

This is the meaning of the ecumenical movement, this is what this service commemorates and symbolizes - men and women deeply committed to their respective faiths, yet great enough in spirit to comprehend how much and how vital is that which unites them rather than that which divides. And, it is this kind of faith that finds expression not only in words but in deeds, as, indeed, the noblest spirits of every faith have always demanded of us.

Our faith in America - Catholic, Protestant, Jewish - is the kind of faith expressed in my favorite prayer, in the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, and let me repeat it for you because I think it stands well for all times:

"Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace. Where there is hate, may I bring love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy. O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as consoler; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to return to eternal life."

Now, it is this spirit that Americans of all faiths, led by their ministers, their priests, and their rabbis, have dedicated themselves to banish prejudice and discrimination and poverty from our great and beautiful country. It is in this spirit that they have worked together, prayed together, and marched together.

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY (continued)

So, let this Tri-Faith Chapels Plaza, therefore, stand as a symbol and a pledge to those who come here from other nations - a symbol of the essential unity of our great religions, and a pledge of their united determination to make this a better nation, not just a richer one, and a better world, not just one with more fruits of the land and the soil.

Let it also stand as a symbol of the understanding which prevails among us here in America; yes, and the peace that should be ours despite our diversity - and as a pledge that we shall never cease to work for the highest calling of man which is peace on earth, peace with justice and freedom throughout the world. For you know and I know, there is no quick and easy way to peace. Like a mighty cathedral or a great temple or a beautiful church, it must be built patiently, lovingly, and perseveringly. It must and will be built out of the cumulative acts of men and women, giving men and women, who dedicate their lives to the service of their fellow-men and in so doing, dedicate their life to the service of their God.

MR. SAMUEL F. PRYOR, Chairman

Thank you, Mr. Vice President, for that moving talk to us all. And, now, may I introduce Monsignor FitzGibbon, Chaplain of the Catholic Chapel, to present the plaque to our Vice President on this memorable day. Monsignor FitzGibbon.

RIGHT REVEREND MONSIGNOR FRANCIS X. FITZGIBBON, CATHOLIC CHAPLAIN

Mr. Vice President, distinguished guests, members of the Clergy, and friends:
This is an occasion that we of the Tri-Faith Chapels Appeal have been awaiting for some time. We believed from the moment that we inaugurated our program that we had a unique appeal to make to the people of America. We felt from the beginning that the people of our country in general, and the members of this airport community in particular would agree with us that a new spirit of ecumenity was sweeping

MONSIGNOR FITZGIBBON (continued)

throughout the world - that our fellow Americans were no longer embarrassed by the name religion - that all men and women were conscious of the need for a spiritual understanding of America.

Speaking for my Protestant and Jewish cooperators as well as for myself, I can say that we've been both enthused by what we've found in some areas and disappointed in what we've found in others. We have realized that our appeal for support has been without precedent, but it has been informative to many and has probably started a process of thinking which will benefit some other appeals coming after us, which will benefit from the hours of instruction that we have expended on the value to America on many levels for the support of religious freedom as a message that our country can give to the world.

Mr. Vice President, we are deeply indebted to our government for the recognition which it has given to this symbol of religious freedom which we have endeavored to set up here at Kennedy Airport. You are our country's representative and by your presence here this morning, we feel that you think as we do - that America is an empty word without its spiritual background, that its humane programs of the present are doomed to failure if it does not reach to the inner man whom it wishes to help and serve, that it will pass from the scene long before its time unless it raises the eyes of men from the earth below to the hills and skies above.

Mr. Vice President, we ask you to accept this plaque as a token of our appreciation of your presence today and as a pledge of our cooperation in the task of making the true meaning of America known and appreciated by the children of God throughout the world.

Monsignor FitzGibbon presents the plaque to the Vice President
Vice President Humphrey: "I am very honored."

MR. SAMUEL F. PRYOR, Chairman

Thank you, Monsignor FitzGibbon. And now, may I ask Rabbi Mowshowitz to give us the benediction.

- - more - -

RABBI ISRAEL MOWSHOWITZ, JEWISH CHAPLAIN

Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. Our God and Father in Whom and through Whom we are brothers, one to the other, we lift our hearts in thanksgiving unto Thee for this, our dedication of the Tri-Faith Chapels Plaza, has a noble symbol and expression of our love of Thee and faith in our country's commitment to freedom of worship and conscience. May the three Chapels erected to Thy greater glory serve as a reminder that all Thy children are bound together by a common destiny and common humanity.

We ask, now, Thy traditional benediction upon all assembled here this morning. The Lord bless us and keep us; the Lord cause His face to shine upon us and be most gracious unto us; the Lord cause His divine presence to dwell in our midst and grant us the most precious of all of His benedictions, the blessing of peace...peace in our hearts, peace in our homes, peace in our communities, and peace in the world. Amen.

MR. SAMUEL F. PRIOR, Chairman

May I ask all to remain seated while we here have the privilege of escorting the Vice President out to the ribbon-cutting ceremony, and then we have the privilege of taking him to the Protestant Chapel and then to the Catholic Chapel. But, I would like to ask you to wait 'till we go out.

E N D



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