

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

UPON RECEIVING THE

INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE'S

INTERNATIONAL FREEDOM AWARD

Washington, D. C.

August 4, 1977

It is a most humbling experience to join such a select group as the late Winston Churchill, Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky, AFL-CIO leader George Meany, and my distinguished friend and colleague Jacob Javits in being honored with the International Rescue Committee's Freedom Award.

The honor is particularly meaningful coming from an organization which has tirelessly devoted its efforts at easing the plight of millions of unfortunate people who have fled oppression worldwide.

The International Rescue Committee was organized in 1933 to assist victims of Hitler's oppression in Germany. It was to have been only a temporary organization to meet the needs of what many had hoped would be a temporary phenomenon.

Yet, sadly and tragically, the need for the International Rescue Committee did not end with the defeat of Nazi Germany. In fact, today the global situation has deteriorated to such an extent that there are more refugees fleeing political oppression than at any time in the history of man.

The International Rescue Committee continues to be in the vanguard of those humanitarian organizations giving assistance to refugees. And many of the refugees assisted by the Committee have immigrated to the United States. This is as it should be. It is within our finest tradition as a nation.

We have maintained fidelity to the hope inscribed on one of our greatest symbols of freedom and sanctuary -- the Statue of Liberty; that hope so eloquently stated by Emma Lazarus:

"Give us your tired, your poor.  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me:  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

What finer creed could any nation adopt? What higher calling in which to respond?

And yet, it has been the United States which has benefitted from this flow of humanity to our shores. What makes this country great is its tremendous cultural diversity. Immigrants have come, and they continue to come, to these United States. And in the process we have forged the greatest experiment in self-government the world has ever seen. We have drawn our strength from this diversity of cultures.

And as people continue to come to our shores, as they continue to become assimilated into our society, America's strength grows. Our foundation of liberty, human dignity and individual rights is strengthened. Our life's blood as a nation is renewed.

Again, I want to express my deepest appreciation for this honor you have bestowed upon me. It is an honor that I will treasure for many years to come.

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REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

UPON RECEIVING THE

*Letter from  
Carter*

INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE'S

INTERNATIONAL FREEDOM AWARD

WASHINGTON, D.C.

*Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr*

AUGUST 4, 1977

*Bob Byrd  
Majumdar*

*Leonard Marks*

*Lo Cherie*

*Brezina*

*Clairmont Bell*

*Ross Marshall*

*Henry  
Kings*

*OKA Freeman*

*Mays  
Washington*

IT IS A MOST HUMBLING EXPERIENCE TO JOIN SUCH A SELECT  
GROUP AS THE LATE WINSTON CHURCHILL, <sup>Willy Brandt</sup> AUSTRIAN CHANCELLOR

BRUNO KREISKY, AFL-CIO LEADER GEORGE MEANY, AND MY DISTINGUISHED  
FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE JACOB JAVITS IN BEING HONORED WITH THE  
INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE'S FREEDOM AWARD.

THE HONOR IS PARTICULARLY MEANINGFUL COMING FROM AN  
ORGANIZATION WHICH HAS TIRELESSLY DEVOTED ITS EFFORTS AT  
EASING THE PLIGHT OF MILLIONS OF UNFORTUNATE PEOPLE WHO HAVE  
FLED OPPRESSION WORLDWIDE.

THE INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE WAS ORGANIZED IN 1933  
TO ASSIST VICTIMS OF HITLER'S OPPRESSION IN GERMANY. IT WAS  
TO HAVE BEEN ONLY A TEMPORARY ORGANIZATION TO MEET THE NEEDS  
OF WHAT MANY HAD HOPED WOULD BE A TEMPORARY PHENOMENON.

✓ YET, SADLY AND TRAGICALLY, THE NEED FOR THE INTERNATIONAL  
RESCUE COMMITTEE DID NOT END WITH THE DEFEAT OF NAZI GERMANY.

✓ IN FACT, TODAY THE GLOBAL SITUATION HAS DETERIORATED TO SUCH  
AN EXTENT THAT THERE ARE MORE REFUGEES FLEEING POLITICAL  
OPPRESSION THAN AT ANY TIME IN THE HISTORY OF MAN.

✓ THE INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE CONTINUES TO BE IN THE  
VANGUARD OF THOSE HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS GIVING ASSISTANCE  
TO REFUGEES. ✓ AND MANY OF THE REFUGEES ASSISTED BY THE COMMITTEE  
HAVE IMMIGRATED TO THE UNITED STATES ✓ THIS IS AS IT SHOULD  
BE. ✓ IT IS WITHIN OUR FINEST TRADITION AS A NATION.

✓ WE HAVE MAINTAINED FIDELITY TO THE HOPE INSCRIBED ON ONE OF  
OUR GREATEST SYMBOLS OF FREEDOM AND SANCTUARY -- THE STATUE  
OF LIBERTY; THAT HOPE SO ELOQUENTLY STATED BY EMMA LAZARUS:

"GIVE US YOUR TIRED, YOUR POOR,

YOUR HUDDLED MASSES YEARNING TO BREATHE FREE,

THE WRETCHED REFUSE OF YOUR TEEMING SHORE,

SEND THESE, THE HOMELESS, TEMPEST-TOSSED TO ME:

I LIFT MY LAMP BESIDE THE GOLDEN DOOR,"

WHAT FINER CREED COULD ANY NATION ADOPT? WHAT HIGHER  
CALLING IN WHICH TO RESPOND?

AND YET, IT HAS BEEN THE UNITED STATES WHICH HAS BENEFITTED  
FROM THIS FLOW OF HUMANITY TO OUR SHORES. WHAT MAKES THIS COUNTRY  
GREAT IS ITS TREMENDOUS CULTURAL DIVERSITY. IMMIGRANTS HAVE  
COME, AND THEY CONTINUE TO COME, TO THESE UNITED STATES. AND IN  
THE PROCESS WE HAVE FORGED THE GREATEST EXPERIMENT IN SELF-  
GOVERNMENT THE WORLD HAS EVER SEEN. WE HAVE DRAWN OUR STRENGTH  
FROM THIS DIVERSITY OF CULTURES.

AND AS PEOPLE CONTINUE TO COME TO OUR SHORES, AS THEY  
CONTINUE TO BECOME ASSIMILATED INTO OUR SOCIETY, AMERICA'S  
STRENGTH GROWS. OUR FOUNDATION OF LIBERTY, HUMAN DIGNITY  
AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS IS STRENGTHENED. OUR LIFE'S BLOOD  
AS A NATION IS RENEWED.

AGAIN, I WANT TO EXPRESS MY DEEPEST APPRECIATION FOR THIS  
HONOR YOU HAVE BESTOWED UPON ME. IT IS AN HONOR THAT I WILL  
TREASURE FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.

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