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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1949



REMARKS OF
J. HOWARD MCGRATH
ATTORNEY GENERAL
OF THE
UNITED STATES

PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
ON
STATUE OF LIBERTY DAY
BEDLOE ISLAND
NEW YORK CITY

UNDER AUSPICES
OF
NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CITIZENSHIP

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1949
12:30 P.M.

It is the custom to speak of statues as representing the dim and remote past. My friends, if there is any monument on this earth that belongs to the present and to the future, it is this **STATUE OF LIBERTY**.

As men and women of various religious faiths and nationalities, gather today on this hallowed spot, it is stirring to recall the deep and powerful urges that caused liberty-loving peoples to establish on these shores a nation dedicated to freedom, justice and opportunity. Standing at the gate of our country, no emblem so graphically symbolizes the heart and soul of our great Republic as this glorious shrine.

This little light sheds a grand lustre from these shores to all mankind. Its beams, burning eternally, disseminate a message in spirit to the farthest corners of the earth, notifying peoples everywhere that freedom is universal and is not alone the cherished possession, or the exclusive blessing, of the people of our own land. To us this magnificent Goddess of Liberty, dedicated here 63 years ago, is a vivid reminder of the beginnings of our nation.

This gift of the citizens of France to the citizens of the United States, is an unforgettable memento of the French contribution in ideals and practical aid that was so vital to creation and the building of our country. It especially recalls the immortal Lafayette who fought side by side with Washington throughout the dark, dismal days of our early struggle for independence.

Yes, Ambassador Bonnet, the sons of France not only brought to America ideals of freedom and sturdy devotion to its cause, but your people brought us

advanced ideas in education, science, music, sculpture and architecture. These contributions enriched our national life, making our democratic way an example to oppressed humanity.

Just as Lafayette's inborn yearning for liberty transcended the horizon of nationality, representatives of at least 15 other nationalities took prominent parts in the long war of suffering and sacrifice for a free America.

Brilliantly emblazoned across the pages of history ring out the names of such racially diverse heroes as Patrick Henry, John Paul Jones, Crispus Attwacks, Von Steuben, Pulaski, Haym Solomon, John Barry, Ethan Allen and legions of others of equal glory and service.

Today, over 100 nationalities, peoples from every corner of the earth, now citizens of the United States of America, are living side by side in peace and harmony, a concrete fulfillment of the promise made in the deeds of the men of the past to whom we do honor.

Mayor O'Dwyer, I wish that television were sufficiently advanced so that peoples throughout the world could get a glimpse of the daily life of the great metropolis of New York. Your city is a striking and teeming illustration of people living together in mutual understanding, mutual trust, mutual benefit - their deep-rooted prejudices erased in the workings of a true democracy. This is convincing evidence that our philosophy of government which guarantees liberty to all under the law meets the requirements of mankind.

Through the participation in this ceremony of President Jules Basdevant, President of the International Court of Justice, we see the global significance in the progress that mankind is making in striving to achieve international peace.

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The goddess of liberty holds in her hand a scroll with the inscription, "July 4, 1776", the date of our Declaration of Independence, this divinely inspired document declaring to the world that all men are created equal.

Proclaimed in the Declaration and guaranteed in our Bill of Rights, this sacred concept of human rights became the foundation upon which this nation was built and prospered.

All this may be read in the light that shines from this Statue.

Within a stone's throw of where we now stand there is rising a new monument - a world monument to liberty - the home of the United Nations. President Harry S. Truman participated in the laying of the cornerstone just a few days ago.

We hope and pray that the United Nations will proclaim an International Bill of Rights to guarantee the worth and dignity of mankind everywhere and bring the light of this statue to all peoples. With God's help, may this world organization establish a temple of brotherhood out of which will go forth philosophies of life that will banish war forever and bring about enduring and universal peace.