

NOBEL PEACE PRIZE ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

Oslo, Norway

December 10, 1906

Acceptance by Herbert H.D. Peirce, American Envoy.

Since President Roosevelt was not present at the award ceremony on December 10, 1906, Mr. Herbert H.D. Peirce¹, American envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to Norway, accepted the prize on his behalf. Mr. Peirce's speech², which included the reading of a telegram from the President, follows:

I deeply regret that my residence in your capital has been as yet too brief to enable me to address you in your own vigorous language. But "had I a thousand several tongues", they would be inadequate to express to you the deep emotion with which I appear before you to receive, on behalf of the President of the United States, this distinguished testimonial of your recognition of those acts which stamp him as preeminent in devotion to the cause of peace and goodwill on earth.

I will not vainly attempt, by any words of mine, to add to the lustre of the name of Theodore Roosevelt. His acts proclaim him, and you, Gentlemen of the Norwegian Storting, by this award of the Nobel Peace Prize, a foundation conceived in God-like love of mankind, have blazoned to the world your recognition of his wise use of his great office in the best interests of humanity.

I quote President Roosevelt's words in a telegram from him, recently received by me, when I say that he regards the award of this prize as one of the greatest honors which any man, in any position, throughout the world, can receive.

Speaking for my countrymen, I may say that this award will deeply appeal to the hearts of our people and knit closer those bonds of sympathy which unite us in the brotherhood of nations.

To me, who have enjoyed the inestimable privilege of witnessing in the course of current affairs the earnest desire with which the chief magistrate of my country is imbued to promote the cause of peace, in the interest of all mankind, when peace comports with that honorable self-respect which nations as well as individuals owe to themselves, this award seems most markedly felicitous, and I rejoice greatly in the good fortune which permits me to be the medium of transmission of this token of your appreciation of the profound love for, and lofty sense of duty to his fellowmen which is the guiding principle of his official life.

The President has directed me to read to you, Mr. President, the following message which he has telegraphed to me for that purpose:

"I am profoundly moved and touched by the signal honor shown me through your body in conferring upon me the Nobel Peace Prize. There is no gift I could appreciate more and I wish it were in my power fully to express my gratitude. I thank you for it, and I thank you on behalf of the United States; for what I did, I was able to accomplish only as the representative of the nation of which, for the time being, I am president.

After much thought, I have concluded that the best and most fitting way to apply the amount of the prize is by using it as a foundation to establish at Washington a permanent industrial peace committee. The object will be to strive for better and more equitable relations among my countrymen who are engaged, whether as capitalists or as wage workers, in industrial and agricultural pursuits. This will carry out the purpose of the founder of the prize, for in modern life it is as important to work for the cause of just and righteous peace in the industrial world as in the world of nations.

I again express to you the assurance of my deep and lasting gratitude and appreciation.

Theodore Roosevelt

Mr. Knudsen then read the telegram in Norwegian, adding the following concluding remarks : "I am convinced, Gentlemen, that the words expressed here by the President of the United States and the aim for which he proposes to work, with the aid of the Peace Prize just awarded him, will gain worldwide approbation. It is incontrovertible, as President Roosevelt says, that peace in all its aspects, peace among mankind, peace between nations, peace between social classes, peace between individuals - all are equally important. The one cannot, so to speak, be divorced from the other. If we are to promote civilization and the well-being of mankind as a whole, we can do it most effectively by securing world peace, for the entire history of the world teaches us that war and devastation are inseparable. The ravages of war arrest the progress of nations culturally, materially, socially, and politically, perhaps for generations. This is why Alfred Nobel has by his testament erected a memorial that will live forever in the minds of men and that establishes him as one of the greatest benefactors of mankind."

http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1906/roosevelt-acceptance.html



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