



UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE

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to promote peaceful resolution to international conflicts

The Reverend Theodore Hesburgh USIP Headquarters Groundbreaking Ceremony June 5, 2008

Mr. President. Fellow members of the Institute of Peace, and my dear friends. I can promise you that this is going to be the briefest talk I've given in my whole life, and that's saying something. Because I've given a lot of talks and some of them have gone on and on.

But today I can't tell you how happy I am to be in this spot, and to be with the President of the United States, and the speaker of the House, and the leader of the Senate, and so many great people, secretaries of State; who have given time and effort for peace.

You know, it's a very, very important point to make that here, where we are reminded of so many men and women who have given their lives for peace, and you look at all the war memorials going back to the Revolutionary War. Hundreds and thousands of young people, and they have stepped up and given last full measure of devotion. I am proud to say that there are many great people here in America that are giving the last full measure of devotion to recreate peace in our times. And amidst all of these reliquaries of wars we are going to commend a temple of peace, where people can get together and work for peace. And what is that? There is a wonderful Latin adage, you got to excuse me a little Latin, 'Opus justitiae pax.' 'Peace is the work of justice.' And insofar as we create justice in the world as the President just said were working for peace. And I'm happy to say today that of all the things the government does, and I've been happy to be involved in very many of them over my 91 years. But I have to say that this particular activity has my heart because if there is one thing we can say when we greet each other it is simply peace.

Peace is totally good. It's against everything that's evil and wrong. It is somehow what we associate with heaven is a place of eternal peace

and we have to create a little of that heaven here on earth. I want to congratulate in a very special way Dick Solomon, and the people who have worked with him over these long years of preparation.

They have carried the water, and they have fought the good battle. And this is a day of triumph not only for them, but for the cause of peace, and when we drive down that Mall in the years to come and see if the end is a kind of fitting end. With all of the lives and martyrs who have given their lives for peace that are commemorated here, at the end is our memorial which means we are commended for peace in our times. And I ask the Good Lord to bless all of you especially those who work so hard for peace and to bring us all safely home. God Bless you all.