

RABBI ARTHUR SCHNEIER

Thank you, Bill, for your generous comments. May I take this opportunity to express to you our gratitude and appreciation for chairing this magnificent event, and our gratitude goes also to Nick Camicia, a past recipient of the reward and co-chairman of the dinner. Thank you.

Angie Duke, my dear friend and colleague, wondered. "How can we top this particular event?" And let me tell you a secret, Baron and Baroness. If we want to top this event, Henry Kissinger and Angie Duke and Arthur Schneier would have to take another airplane trip because the idea of your nomination and designation occurred about 28,000 feet above ground on our flight from Casablanca to Rabat, and we thank the sponsor, we thank Dr. Kissinger for his presence here this evening, but certainly for his vote of confidence in Baron de Rothschild.

The other point that I'd like to make, when we nominated Baron de Rothschild and the Board approved his nomination, little did we think that we would be honoring the author of a bestseller in France. He has just published his book, Contraband Fortune, and little did we know that he will be featured in the New York Times' Sunday Magazine, "Starting All Over." So we are delighted. Little did we know that our distinguished Dr. Henry Kissinger at this time will assume the great challenge for presenting the present United States as Chairman of the Commission for Latin America. And we are extremely proud of you, Dr. Kissinger, as you assume this great task on behalf of the United States, on behalf of our President, for the sake of peace.

It is a great evening, and what makes it so outstanding is really the men and women representing a different faith, communities, different nationalities, different ideologies, and one cannot help but think that basically this is a microcosm of the world we live in. This is the world. And we'd better live together, because either we will live together or we will sink together. And this is what our greatest challenge is all about. To see on this dais the distinguished colleagues representing major faiths who were introduced to you, to have the pleasure of both the foreign minister of Austria, good friend Foreign Minister Luntz, who just assumed this post after serving as Minister of Interior of Austria, and Foreign Minister of Hungary, Dr. Varcuni (??), also recently designated as Foreign Minister. It is indeed a great pleasure and privilege. I also want to pay tribute to the founding Vice President, my beloved friend, Dr. David Reed, and also to our Secretary Treasurer, Congressman Francis Dorn, and to two members of our delegation that visited the Peoples Republic of China, Dr. Herb Anderson and Dr. Ralph Peterson. Also, Dr. David Randolph.

Friends, we live in a time of great strain and tension. We live in a world of heightened international tensions, a near freeze of the relationship of the super powers and we do face, in my opinion, another serious source of tension and conflict that no one talks about. Instead of religion trying to alleviate conflict, instead of religion trying to build better understanding and bridges, regrettably we find in different

parts of the world religious groups suffering at the hands of other religious groups. Hateful interreligious conflict seems to be the order of the day, and, just an example: Ambassador Duke, Father Campion, Dr. David Reed and I, in 1970, visited Ireland. And we came face to face in contact with that deep seated conflict between the Catholic and the Protestant community in Ireland. And let me just share with you an experience we had in Belfast back in 1970. We heard this true story of a Jewish department store owner in Belfast who found himself actually surrounded by many demonstrators who were ready to tear down his store. He appealed to the leader of the demonstration and he said, "Please, there must be a misunderstanding. I'm a Jew. Why do you attack my store?" And the leader responded and said, "Tell me, are you a Catholic Jew or a Protestant Jew?" This story in a way describes many, many conflicts in different parts of the world. We think of the Bahay in Iran, we think of religious tensions in India, we think of religious tensions in Lebanon, and you can tell the many, many other areas where these take place. It is my belief, friends, that the era we live in, if we survive it, could be known in history as the age of religious wars. Bahays, Catholics, Hindus, Jews, Moslems, Protestants and others have all suffered the consequences of violent sectarian strife and while these conflicts have social and economic roots, they have been exacerbated by and charged with religious hatred. In contrast, it is our belief that men and women associated with the Appeal of Conscience Foundation are united in the objective of religious freedom as an unalienable human right, a force for peace and understanding, and we do believe in unity and diversity. We respect each others beliefs and faith communities and this is the only way for united, unconcerted

action. I say to you on this very important evening, that while we talk about the threat of nuclear war, while we speak of the potential danger of super power confrontation, we have not addressed ourselves to the festering, ever-deepening religious conflicts that imperil world peace and that daily make victims of innocent men and women and children. A challenge to all of us here tonight and to people of good faith everywhere is clear: can we reduce and ultimately end the religious wars that plague our planet? And to meet this challenge the Appeal of Conscience Foundation will convene, in 1984, an international conference of religious leaders representing major faiths throughout the world on a theme of peace, tolerance and human dignity. The conference will seek to find ways to strengthen understanding, to reduce tensions, to reach some common appreciation that religion does not serve God when it fans the flame of war against men made in God's image.

Bill Marriott referred to my grandparents who met their death in the crematory of Auschwitz. As I look around this distinguished dais I must say that many of us have experienced the consequences of hatred, of religious bigotry, of war and many of us have come to these blessed United States to start life anew. So we speak from experience. This is not theoretical, this is not abstract, this is part of our frame of reference. I have no illusions, friends, that such a conference will resolve the religious hatred that has claimed so many lives in this century, but I do believe that such an appeal of conscience may give

pause to religious warlords who have not hesitated to invoke God's name to justify their hatred. Perhaps most important, working to reduce religious strife among men we will be contributing to the building of peace among nations. This is our prayer, this is our wish, and with your help we will be able to achieve this.

At this time it is my great pleasure and privilege to call upon a scholar, a man of intellect, a statesman. I want to stress that too many people think of Henry Kissinger strictly in terms of cerebral terms, the intellect, the architect of American foreign policy over the last quarter century, the man who seems to be very much with it. He is not stale. He is creative. He understands the dynamic processes of international relations. But I also want to salute the man of heart. It is not just the intellect. He is a man of heart who has given distinguished service to our nation and to the world. A Secretary of State twice and now, his new challenge: any president, any foreign minister, any statesman who tries to understand us checks in with Henry Kissinger during their visits to the United States. It is a great pleasure and privilege to introduce him to you for the presentation. And also, I must tell you, that Dr. Kissinger and his commission will leave on Sunday for their important task in Latin America. It is just because of his friendship for Baron de Rothschild and the Baroness and also because he believes in what the Appeal of Conscience Foundation is doing that this busy man took time out to spend this evening with us.

So he did not prepare a formal address, but I'm sure that whatever he will say is going to be extremely informative and stimulating. You will hear also from Baron de Rothschild and he will have a very important message this evening. On behalf of the foundation, on behalf of Angie Biddle Duke, on behalf of everyone here, Baron, we congratulate you for not just living on the laurels of your ancestors, for rendering great service to your people, to France, to the Jewish community in France, to this city that you have adopted, and we will salute you this evening for your great humanitarian service, because service is really your daily work. The only regret I have, that after you will hear Dr. Kissinger and the Baron, the only regret I have that I did not deliver these remarks in my flawless accent.

Thank you.