

**From the Congressional Record of 1961 of the House of Representatives**

Introduced by Congressman Abraham J. Multer

Address of Hon. Edward D. Re, Chairman, Foreign Claims Settlement Commission  
in Honor of Charles J. Bonaparte, June 22, 1961

Mr. MULTER: Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, June 22, 1961, a commemorative ceremony in honor of Charles J. Bonaparte, the founder of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, took place in the Great Hall of the Department of Justice. The many distinguished guests present on that occasion witnessed the unveiling and presentation of a granite memorial to this dedicated and imaginative man who originally foresaw the necessity of a permanent investigative force in our Government. The ceremony, which also marked the 91st anniversary of the Department of Justice, was jointly sponsored by the Italian Historical Society of America and the Maryland Historical Society; the memorial was presented by Mr. John N. LaCorte, director of the Italian Historical Society, and was accepted by Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy on behalf of the Department of Justice.

The speakers of the day were the Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, U.S. Attorney General, Hon. Edward D. Re, Chairman of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission, Mr. John N. LaCorte, director of the Italian Historical Society of America, and retired Honorable George L. Radcliffe, president of the Maryland Historical Society.

Dr. Re's address, entitled *The Ideal to Which America Is Committed*, is particularly timely for all Americans. It calls the attention of all of us to the invaluable contributions of the FBI in preserving the American ideal of right and liberty for which its founder, Bonaparte, worked.

Dr. Re, as chairman of a commission dedicated to the protection of these American rights abroad, speaks with clarity and conviction. Prior to his appointment by President Kennedy, he was for 14 years a professor of law at St. John's University School of Law in New York. He is a member of the Board of Higher Education of the city of New York and has served as a special hearing officer for the Department of Justice. A recognized authority in international law, he is divisional vice chairman of the section of international and comparative law of the American Bar Association.

Dr. Re's address follows:

*THE IDEAL TO WHICH AMERICA IS COMMITTED* (Remarks of Hon. Edward D. Re, Chairman, Foreign Claims Settlement Commission, on the occasion of the ceremony in honor of Attorney General Charles J. Bonaparte, founder of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, June 22, 1961, in the great hall of the Department of Justice)

Mr. Attorney General, distinguished members of the judiciary and public officials, guests, and my fellow Americans:

We have assembled here today in order to pay tribute to a great American and to the remarkable institution that was the handiwork of his vision and labor. As patriotic Americans, proud of our common heritage and ideals, we welcome the opportunity to honor Attorney General Charles J. Bonaparte for his example of devoted service to our country and for his invaluable contribution to the American cause of freedom and the American way of life.

The biography of Charles J. Bonaparte reveals a man of great ability, profound perception, and unparalleled courage. Charles J. Bonaparte was born in Baltimore, Md., on June 9, 1851. He entered Harvard Law School in 1872, graduating with high honors 2 years later. His absolute integrity in the practice of law and his unbending dedication to the cause of Justice soon earned for him a nationwide reputation as a brilliant attorney.

No cause was too small, no client too poor, for Charles J. Bonaparte. He served them all with identical zeal and inexhaustible energy. However, in his heart, he was always primarily concerned with the public

interest and public causes. He campaigned against political corruption and was one of the founders of the Baltimore Reform League and the National Civil Service Reform League. This great interest in civil service reform brought him into contact with Theodore Roosevelt, who was then Civil Service Commissioner. When Theodore Roosevelt became President, he repeatedly sought the services of Charles J. Bonaparte, and in\* 1905 appointed him Secretary of the Navy.

The following year he was appointed Attorney General, and soon saw the necessity for a permanent Investigative arm within the Department of Justice. It was in 1908 that he succeeded in establishing the Bureau of Investigation within the jurisdictional framework of the Department of Justice.

Our ceremony today assumes even greater significance because it also commemorates the 91st anniversary of the establishment of the Department of Justice by Congress on June 22, 1870. However, it is well to remember that in honoring Charles J. Bonaparte, the founder of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, we simultaneously honor the Bureau itself, as a great American institution that has come to play a major role in the maintenance of our security and our cherished liberties. In investigating violations of the law of the United States, and in protecting our Nation from subversion, the Bureau has performed a service of incomparable value to the safety and security of America. For these patriotic services, the men of the Bureau and its distinguished Director, J. Edgar Hoover, have earned the undying gratitude of all Americans.

It has been said that it is a sacred duty of every American to perpetuate our civil institutions and to avert the dangers which may threaten them. By these standards, Charles J. Bonaparte has truly earned our lasting tribute, as well as this memorial in his honor. Through the Bureau that he founded and nurtured, he helped America achieve the ideals to which we as a Nation are steadfastly committed. These ideals were enunciated clearly and beautifully at the very founding of our Nation. They are beautifully enshrined in our Declaration of Independence, which proclaims to the world for all time the truths and convictions which form the cornerstone of our national purpose. That great charter, with eloquent simplicity and dignity, proclaims our belief in the Creator and the equality of man.

The ideals and national goals to which we have always been dedicated are set forth within the framework of our original plan of government. They are designed to guard the rights of all persons, to ensure man's full development, and to guarantee equality of opportunity. These principles constitute the great American dream: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

It is most significant to note that the very purpose of government is stated to be the securing of these rights.

Although this was only the statement of an ideal in 1776, its achievement or realization has constantly been our national goal. And although we cannot say that we have fully realized that great ambition, we can justifiably affirm that with every generation we have indeed come closer to its complete achievement. In this process of growth, this striving for perfection, all Americans should be made aware of the role the Federal Bureau of Investigation has played in securing these cherished rights and liberties, and guaranteeing their complete enjoyment by all Americans, regardless of race, color, creed or previous national origin.

Therefore, in paying tribute to the spirit of Charles J. Bonaparte, we are honoring not only the man but the principles for which he stood and fought. And perhaps no greater homage can be paid than our realization that these very principles have been handed down and carried on by the valiant men of the Bureau who have followed in his historic path; those men who presently wage the difficult and dangerous battle to protect our rights and liberties—the rights and liberties of all Americans. These men today constitute a living and growing tribute to his memory. It is through their work that we have been brought closer to the realization and fruition of the great Ideals adopted by the founders of this

country—and expressed for all mankind in the Declaration of Independence. It is to them, too, that we must pay tribute.

It is also well to remember that it is by our ideals, and the genuineness of our efforts to attain them, that we are to be judged as a nation and not by scientific and technological achievements alone. Indeed, the advances of science cannot be regarded as true progress unless they are used to achieve our great national purpose. This purpose scorns both cynicism and despair. It reawakens all Americans to a realization of the spirituality of man and exhorts us to extend to all others those rights and privileges which we take so easily for granted.

It summons each of us to extraordinary personal responsibility and sustained effort in the National Interest. It inspires us in our struggle against injustice.

On this occasion, we wish to express our gratitude to the Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, the Attorney General of the United States, for his leadership, and to the Italian Historical Society of America, for its sponsorship of this ceremony. We are grateful for this opportunity to salute the Federal Bureau of Investigation for having given vitality to the philosophical principle and spiritual ideal which forms the backbone of this Nation.

And so, my fellow Americans, we have turned to the pages of our glorious past for the inspiration to rise to meet the challenges of our troubled age. And as we constantly bear in mind that the greatness of our Nation was made possible by the united wisdom and valor of people from all lands, let us on this solemn occasion rededicate ourselves to that lofty national goal that inspired the founding of our country and enabled it to meet the trials of nationhood and greatness. With patriotic zeal in the tradition of Charles J. Bonaparte and the men of the Bureau that he founded, let us strive today to do all within OUR power as private citizens, as leaders of our community, and as public servants to accelerate the day when the American ideal will be a total reality, not only for all Americans but also for all the peoples of the world.