The former Secretary of State, the Honorable Cordell Hull, today awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo. The United States Ambassador to Norway, the Honorable Lithgow Osborne, accepted the Prize on behalf of Mr. Hull. Ambassador Osborne read the following message from Mr. Hull to the President and the Members of the Nobel Committee of the Storting:

"As I have already informed you, the present state of my health renders impossible my presence at Oslo on this most memorable occasion. Nothing would have given me greater pleasure and satisfaction. Please let me assure you, however, that the keen disappointment and regret which I feel in this regard serve only to enhance my profound appreciation of the great honor which you have done me and my sincere gratitude for your generous action.

"The Nobel Peace Prize has come to occupy a very special place in the thoughts and emotions of forward-looking humanity. It has become a supreme mark of distinction in the field of effort directed toward the attainment of man's highest aspiration—the establishment of enduring peace, based on justice and fair-dealing for all. I am proud to join the company of those whom you have thus far so honored.

"The problem of peace is uppermost today in the hearts and minds of all of us as the world emerges from the staggering ordeal of the most widespread and cruel war of all the ages. That war has brought with it a truly incredible development of means of destruction and a terrifying prospect of rapid and almost limitless development in that direction. Triumphant science and technology are only at the threshold of man's command over sources of energy so stupendous that, if used for military purposes, they can wipe out our entire civilization. Under the ominous shadow which the Second World War and its attendant circumstances have cast on the world, peace has become as essential to civilized existence as the air we breathe is to life itself. There is no greater responsibility resting upon peoples and governments everywhere than to make sure that enduring peace will this time, at long last, be established and maintained.

"Fortunately, the war has brought with it not alone a stark realization of what another war would mean to the world, but, as well, the creation of an international agency through which the nations of the world can, if they so desire, make peace a living reality. Within a few weeks, the organization for the maintenance of international peace and security, established by the San Francisco Charter, will be formally launched through the convocation of the first General Assembly of the United Nations.

"I fully realize that the new organization is a human rather than a perfect instrumentality for the attainment of its great objective. As time goes on it will, I am sure, be improved. The Charter is sufficiently flexible to provide for growth and development in the light of experience and performance. But I am firmly convinced that, with all its imperfections, the United Nations Organization offers the peace-loving nations of the world now a fully workable mechanism which will give them peace if they want peace.

"To be sure, no piece of social machinery, however well constructed, can be effective unless there is back of it a will and a determination to make it work. The crucial test for men and for nations today is whether or not they have suffered enough and have learned enough to put aside suspicion, prejudice, and short-run and narrowly conceived interests and unite in furtherance of their greatest common interest. That overwhelming and overshadowing common interest is embodied within the framework of which man's newly found powers of science and technology can be used to raise to undreamt-of heights the well-being of humanity.

"Alfred Nobel, were he alive today, would, I am sure, have joined with me in unshakeable faith that this crucial test will be met—that the gearing lessons of this latest war and the promise of the United Nations Organization will be the cornerstones of a new edifice of enduring peace and the guideposts of a new era of human progress."