



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF PAUL VI TO THE MEMBERS OF THE INSTITUTE FOR INDUSTRIAL RECONSTRUCTION*

Thursday, 7 December 1972

We extend our cordial welcome to you, Prof. Giuseppe Petrilli, President of the Institute for Industrial Reconstruction; and we greet this qualified group of persons that you have brought here, renewing a meeting that has been repeated punctually every year, since 1965: the 95 technicians from various nations of East Central Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America, taking part in the XI specialization course for technical cadres of developing countries, organized by the Institute annually. This year they are accompanied, for the first time, by the 22 Latin-American executives, experts, in industrial maintenance, who are about to conclude the special course arranged for them – through the Italian Government with the Institute itself – by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). It is an initiative that does credit to those who conceived it, fostered it and put it into practice, in the framework of the implementations that aim at pooling among peoples the experiences and conquests of technique in the service of the common good and of public utility.

The picture you offer us is therefore a very consoling one. It presents, before our eyes, not only the image of the nations from which you come, so dear to us, and for which we express good wishes of prosperity and order, but also and above all the confirmation of what has been going on for years in the world, and which is gradually making headway: real international collaboration for the Promotion of human progress. This is a concern that distinguishes our times, well aware of the necessity of combined efforts to enable the peoples of the earth to benefit from constant and wisely planned development. In spite of obstacles and halts, the idea is gaining ground, and sinking its roots deeper and deeper in the conscience of men.

You know how much the Church encourages and upholds this aim. Certainly, as the Council said, "Christ gave His Church no proper mission in the political, economic, or social order.. The purpose which He set before her is a religious one. But out of this religious mission itself come a function, a

light, and an energy which can serve to structure and consolidate the human community according to the divine law... The Church further recognizes that worthy elements are found in today's social movements, especially an evolution towards unity, a process of wholesome socialization and of association in civic and economic realms" (*Gaudium et spes*, 42).

We ourselves have not failed to promote, with all the means at our disposal, this process of integration of the international community, exhorting to peace and to progress, which is the sign and the guarantee of peace today. "The Church – we wrote in the Apostolic Letter *Octogesima adveniens* – invites all Christians to the dual task of animation and innovation in order to bring about an evolution of structures and adapt them to real present needs" (n.50; AAS 63, 1971; p. 439).

You will understand, therefore, with what satisfaction and with what hope we view the initiatives in which you have been engaged, and by means of which, while treasuring the teaching received; you will not have failed, and will not fail, to acquire a precious completion of your professional formation, which will all serve for the benefit of your fellow countrymen, and for the increase of technical progress on the most active planes of the economic and social life of your countries. To this specific specialization is added the human and spiritual experience, simply incalculable, which, you derive from contact with different mentalities and places of origin, all united in the sole interest for man, and from the extraordinary atmosphere of a city like Rome; which offers the riches of its century-old historical and religious civilization like an inexhaustible casket, to those who appreciate them. And you are young, open and eager to learn.

May you benefit from all this: this is our warm wish for each of you, whom we follow with a fatherly greeting in the responsibilities that will be entrusted to you, when you return to your homelands, in the midst of your dear ones and your fellow countrymen, to whom we send an affectionate thought. And on you, on your teachers, and on the personalities present here, we invoke the continual assistance of God and the fullness of his blessings.

We would now like to add a word of welcome in English. We congratulate all those who are giving you the preparation and the technical formation which you will need to develop better your own countries. This is, after all, your right and also your great opportunity. Work that your people may keep pace with the world of today and enjoy the fruits of their labour and yours. Technical work, like any other work, can sometimes become dull and difficult. But remember that when you work you are not only fulfilling your own dream; you fulfil a part of God's plan for the world. With all the more reason then should you carry out your work well and with love. It is in the bond of love that we greet you and invoke God's blessing on what you do.

*ORa n.51, p.5.

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