



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI TO THE MEMBERS OF THE NATO DEFENCE COLLEGE*

Saturday, 4 February 1978

Dear friends,

This year again we have the pleasure of welcoming you to the Vatican and of spending a few moments with your families. As always, it is a special joy to see the children. We are also pleased to have the opportunity to express some brief considerations that your presence evokes from us on the subject of peace. Yes, as we said in our Message for the World Day of Peace last year, we consider ourselves “a messenger of a fixed idea”; and so we do not hesitate to bring you our “usual proclamation” of Peace.

Some of you have known personally the violence of war and its effects on families like your own, and this memory will certainly linger with you for life. All of you, by your occupation, are well aware of the possibilities of war, the dreadful consequences of modern war, and the frailty of peace in our day. At the same time we believe that you realize the need for creating a new mentality in regard to the relations between peoples—a mentality that does not admit recourse to war and weapons, but envisions civilization as the expression of justice and fraternal love.

On our part we are once more advocating “the universal mentality of human oneness” (PAUL VI, *Message for the World Day of Peace 1975*), and we earnestly hope that the young generation, symbolized and represented by the children here today, will be completely imbued with it. This new mentality rejects war outright, as well as all forms of violence and injustice, for they so methodically and effectively prepare the way for war.

Here this morning we see an expression of the harmony that can exist between peoples of different countries and different backgrounds; we experience together the oneness and peace of families in the greater family of humanity, under the fatherhood of God.

May these ideals motivate all your activities and sustain you in helping to build a better world for the children of today and of tomorrow.

**Insegnamenti di Paolo VI*, vol. XVI, p.108-109;

OR 5.2.1978, p.1;

ORa n.7 p.11.

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