



The Holy See

*ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI TO THE AMBASSADOR OF CANADA ACCREDITED TO THE HOLY SEE**

Thursday, 20 October 1973

Mr. Ambassador,

We heartily thank Your Excellency for the generous words you have just addressed to us at the moment when you officially take up your duties as Ambassador to the Holy See.

We accept with pleasure the good wishes you express for our Pontificate, on your behalf and on behalf of the Canadian federal Government and People. Kindly express to them our gratitude and the fervent wishes that spring up in our heart and our prayer for the happiness, the prosperity and the glory of this great Commonwealth country.

In terms that held all our attention, Your Excellency kindly recalled some of the main lines of our action on the international stage. These aims must meet moreover, those of every civilized people, all the more so those whose Christian tradition points to a brother in every man. And we know that Canada willingly contributes to generous initiatives of peace and development, all over the world.

How can we fail to work, in fact, for gradual and controlled disarmament, when mankind remains under the threat of an accumulation of the most deadly engines of war? How can we fail to try to prevent people from having recourse to violence over differences that should always be settled by peaceful negotiations, according to reason and justice, without shedding blood, without amassing ruins, without increasing waste? But it is necessary to go further, to envisage the deep causes of many conflicts and tensions within the large human family: the violation of fundamental rights, the contempt for certain minorities, the undeserved fate in which countries whose development is difficult are kept. A general atmosphere of security cannot be established without constant concern for greater justice for everyone: it is for everyone to promote it, while strengthening the prestige and effectiveness of an international public authority.

On this path, the Holy See, on behalf of the whole Catholic Church, emphasizes two perspectives that Your Excellency has very happily stressed: the concern for universality which, above parties and blocks, seeks the right place for everyone in the concert of nations, and the concern for a full humanism, according to which economic and even cultural development seems radically insufficient without social progress and spiritual growth.

In this perspective, the Holy See appreciates the realistic efforts that Canada is making to meet the problems of our times: social integration of all populations together with respect for their particularity, fair participation in the responsibilities for the common good as a whole and in the benefits of progress; concern for the underprivileged, pursuit of quality of life and human relations beyond material prosperity; education for the requirements of freedom; deepening of the reasons for living and for hope. Is it not by envisaging these questions lucidly and undertaking courageously to solve them at home that a country qualifies itself to make a contribution to their international solution?

The Catholic Church, on her part, wishes to contribute to it according to her spiritual mission, by warning, forming and encouraging consciences. She addresses her faithful in the first place, but willingly extends her dialogue to others Christians, believers and men of goodwill. On this solemn occasion, we greet with particular affection our Brothers and Sons of the Catholic community of Canada; we appreciate their will to become rooted more and more deeply in faith, and we follow their pastoral effort with interest. We also express our friendship to their fellow-countrymen who share their Christian faith. And we assure all those who work to promote the full good of their human brothers of our esteem as well as our collaboration.

On them, on the whole Canadian people and on its rulers we implore the abundant Blessings of God the Saviour. And for yourself, Mr. Ambassador, we add our cordial good wishes for your new mission to the Holy See.

*ORa n.44 p.2.