



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS PIUS PP. XII TO THE UNITED NATIONS COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION*

Sala del Trono - Martedì, 24 aprile 1956

Gentlemen, in response to your wish to have us speak, we want to say a few words about the importance that we attach to the office of public information, which is yours under various titles, for you must indeed accomplish a work of communication with influence and repercussions that can be considerable.

To supply exact information about international affairs is not an assignment of little importance. It demands intellectual and moral qualities of a high order. There is no question of simply publishing facts, statistics, the raw data of investigations: their objectivity has to be verified, their causes indicated, their consequences, if not measured, at least considered. In a word, data have to be clarified with apt commentary. Such delicate procedures presuppose intelligent prudence, capable of locating and identifying sources of possible errors, patience and perseverance in research, absolute honesty in exposition and the art of presentation that points up essentials without damaging truth or concealing what ought to be said or taking unfair advantage of people's ignorance or good faith. The moral aspect of all publication must never be passed over because the most objective report involves value judgments and influences decisions. An informant worthy of the name should not ruin anyone but try to understand and make understood mistakes and even misconduct. To explain need not mean to excuse but rather to suggest a remedy and consequently, to accomplish something positive and constructive.

Gentlemen, such is your noble work, we would almost say, your vocation, for everything that has to do with truth and the preservation of peace, which depends so directly upon truth, has a certain sacred character. That is why, in expressing our encouragement to you, we call down upon you the light and strength of Most High. Receive our apostolic blessing for yourselves, your families, and all who are dear to you.

**Paths to Peace* p.84.

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