



The Holy See

*Discurso al Embajador de ARGENTINA,
Excmo. Sr. Don Francisco Eduardo TRUSSO**

23 de marzo de 1992

Your Excellency,

1. I particularly appreciate your words, Mr. Ambassador, and they remind me of the Pastoral Visits I made to your country in 1982 and 1987, during which I was able to appreciate the most genuine values of the Argentine soul: human warmth hospitality, tenacity in adversity, and the aspirations to greater justice and fraternity that spring from a people inspired by the help of Christ's cross in the heart of the Church.

2. As is generally known, in the last few years important changes have occurred in international political life which are transforming the complex fabric of relations between peoples to a great extent. Such changes are affecting all countries, including the Argentine Republic, and offer them a real challenge to assume their own national identity, together with their own national historical heritage, in order to adapt to today's needs and integrate themselves more fully and efficiently into all the different levels of international life. A determined and generous effort is therefore essential for harmonizing the legitimate affirmation and preservation of national interests, through collaboration and brotherly solidarity for other peoples, those of Latin America in particular.

3. By virtue of the Christian roots and moral values that have fashioned its existence as a nation throughout history, the Argentine Republic can worthily devote itself to the noble task of strengthening the foundations of peaceful coexistence among peoples in the context of justice and mutual respect, always keeping a correct concept of human beings and their transcendent destiny as reference points. In fact, as Vatican II affirms, "For the faith throws a new light on all things and makes known the full ideal which God has set for man, thus guiding the mind towards solutions

that are fully human" (*Gaudium et spes*, n. 11).

4. In the context of the new situations and challenges, it is more necessary than ever to defend clearly the principle of the supremacy of the common good in the organization of society, and its importance in the heart of the national community. As the Magisterium of the Church proclaims over and over again, it is a question of attaining those conditions of life that grant individuals and families, and intermediary and associated groups as well, their fulfilment and the pursuit of their legitimate aspirations for integral progress.

5. In this regard it is necessary to ensure that the initiatives undertaken to promote financial stability and economic development always respect the principles of equity in the fair distribution of efforts and sacrifices by the different social groups. On the other hand, a model of social organization that, in the name of efficiency, would prevent the majority of the population from having access to better living conditions, could never be considered acceptable. In a special way, it is up to public authorities to ensure that the underprivileged sectors - the most vulnerable in times of economic crisis - do not become the victims of adjustment programmes nor remain alienated from the dynamism of growth to which they should make their responsible contribution.

6. Aiming to see that everyone fulfils his commitments within the political community, each one of its members should work to achieve the common good in the context of widespread participation in public life. Thus, it is particularly necessary to encourage and cultivate the human virtues, such as moral integrity, impartiality, a sense of responsibility, the spirit of sacrifice and solidarity that, together with creativity and technical expertise in the different fields, make it possible to overcome present difficulties, and thereby to reach new levels of prosperity and progress. In this area of civic virtue the exemplary behaviour of executives legislators and judges as well as of all those who play leading roles in society, will certainly be encouraging for future generations and will arouse a spirit of loyal participation in citizens. In this respect, Vatican II expressly affirms that: "Those with a talent for the difficult yet noble art of politics or whose talents in this matter can be developed should prepare themselves for it and, forgetting their own convenience and material interests, they should engage in political activity" (*Gaudium et spes*, n. 75).

7. On the threshold of the fifth centenary of the evangelization of the New World, the Church in Argentina, as in her other sister nations of this "continent of hope" is likewise preparing for a very great event with deep gratitude to the Lord for his precious gift of faith. She is aware of the immense work of evangelization and of human and cultural promotion being accomplished by so many men and women who dedicate their life to preaching the message of salvation, to the alleviation of pain, to instruction and education, showing self-denial for the benefit of those most in need.

8. Yesterday as today, with due respect for the autonomy of the civil institutions and authorities, the Church will continue tirelessly to promote and encourage all the initiatives that serve the cause

of humanity, its dignity and its integral progress, constantly encouraging the spiritual and religious dimension of the person in his or her individual, family and social life. The spiritual and religious nature of her mission enables her to accomplish this service over and above worldly motives or selfish interest, because, as the Second Vatican Council points out, "By her nature and mission the Church is universal in that she is not committed to any one culture or to any political bond between the various communities of men and nations, provided they have trust in the Church and guarantee her true freedom to carry out her mission" (Gaudium et spes, n. 42).

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