



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF POPE PAUL VI TO THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE*

Monday, 5 May 1975

It is a joy for us to receive this morning the Commission charged, within the parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, with relations with the national Parliaments and public opinion. We are anxious first of all to tell you our esteem thinking of your responsibilities and your great conscientiousness in exercising them.

Today is the fifth of May. Twenty-six years ago, the Conference of the Ten, meeting in London, founded the Council of Europe and approved its statutes. This happy anniversary seems really worthy of being stressed. How could we fail to recall, in fact, the ground covered since that date, under the early drive of particularly clear sighted statesmen, such as the late Robert Schuman, Alcide de Gasperi and Konrad Adenauer? It was a question, immediately after the world war, of constructing European unity, establishing it on the solid foundations of brotherhood and cooperation in all fields in order to ensure the condition for peace and progress.

Hence the insistence of the Organization of which you are the qualified representatives, to give precedence to promotion of freedom and respect of the rights of the human person. Hence its careful attention manifested on several occasions quite recently, to social problems: for the harmonization of labour legislations made indispensable by the circulation of workers from one country to another, is unquestionably beneficial and contributes to a better justice. Hence the interest also of your Organization in the world of the young, in the moral principles that must preside over action in favour of the development of the under-privileged nations. It would be possible to continue to enumerate the numerous subjects submitted to your consideration and discussions. Let us just say that we are struck by their highly humanitarian character. Yes, you have a magnificent laboratory of ideas in Strasbourg and we are happy that you apply yourselves, to pass them on gradually to the authorities that gave you your mandate.

It seems to us that there is a convergence between all these efforts and what the Church is trying to do in conformity with the guidelines of the Gospel. These efforts in fact, cannot but contribute to the union of peoples as rich in ideals traditions and energies as are the peoples of Europe, even if their divergences and divisions prevent them, alas from playing the important world role and from exercising the high responsibility that belongs to Europe because of these very particular riches. These same efforts, geared immediately to the construction of a united Europe, also contribute indirectly but effectively, to the coming of the reconciliation among all men and among all peoples for which the Church on her side makes a special appeal in this Holy Year.

Allow us, therefore, to feel deep satisfaction and to renew the encouragement that we have already had the opportunity to address to your Commission on previous occasions. May the Lord enlighten and bless your pursuit of unity, and may He assist you in your noble task.

* *L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly Edition in English*, n.20, p.12.
