



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI TO THE NATO DEFENCE COLLEGE*

Saturday, 31 January 1970

Dear Sirs,

We are deeply moved to see each year the Officials of the NATO Defence College desire this meeting and seek from Us some words of encouragement for the consolidation of a just peace which is Our wish for all peoples.

You are indeed concerned to perfect your technical, military or civil competence in order to assure better the defence of your respective countries, from one end of Europe to the other and on both sides of the North Atlantic. As you know, We have no competence whatever in this domain and no intention whatever to interfere in it. But how could We remain indifferent to the bonds that unite a constructive solidarity between the divers parts of the European continent characterized for so long a time by divisions and oppositions? Others are working actively to intensify economic and cultural exchanges. It pertains to you to assure to these exchanges the conditions of liberty and security, protected from all violence or unjustified intimidation.

How We would like to see these peaceful conditions realized everywhere: in Europe, in the Middle East, in Africa, in Vietnam and in South America. May no one no longer allow himself to oppress his neighbours or fellow-citizens; may all finally be enabled to transform their swords into ploughshares, according to the prophecy of Isaiah (Is 2, 4), understanding at last that reconciliation and development are the real ways to peace! You will not be surprised to hear Us speak in this manner, We whom the Lord appointed to repeat unceasingly to the world which forgets Him: "Happy the peacemakers; they shall be called the sons of God" (Mt. 5, 9).

You also, dear Sirs, in your position, are called to this eminent service. With all Our heart, We beseech the Lord to enlighten you and to give you strength so that you may always be witnesses

and instruments of justice and peace. May the Lord bless you, your families, your countries and all who are dear to you.

*ORa n.7 p.3.

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