



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS PIUS XII TO PRESS DELEGATION FROM THE UNITED STATES

Saturday, 27 April 1946

It affords Us great pleasure, indeed, to welcome to Our Vatican City so distinguished a representation of the Press of the United States.

Dedicated as you are to your profession, you are aware of its power, whether for good or evil, and your consequent responsibility under God to the people whom you serve. Because of the marvellous facilities at your disposal millions of readers take up your publications daily and in a few moments are informed of the world's happenings. You enter every home, you influence uncounted minds and hearts, you help immensely to mould the thought of the nation. How few will be qualified by character and education to evaluate your writings critically. Will not the vast majority accept the position you advance as their own, shape their philosophy accordingly?

The Press must, therefore, be undeviatingly loyal to the Truth, lest this tremendous influence be exercised amiss. The Truth of which We speak is the Truth of Vision, whereby you see events really as they happen, and the Truth of Presentation, whereby you report faithfully events as you have seen them, and interpret them by no other standards than those of justice and of charity.

Now Truth is dispassionate, not partisan; factual not fanciful. Truth is not venal; it does not fear to be known, but it asks only to be presented in the clear, white light of objectivity, not any spectral tint of prejudice or conjecture. Truth, too, is discreet and knows that reality must at times be circumscribed by reserve, that evil is not to be garnished while the good is slurred over. Truth is modest and aware that death may enter the soul through the windows of the eyes (cfr. *Jer. 9, 21*). Alas, does not experience teach that incalculable harm may come to domestic and civil society through an unethical Press that would lose sight of the demands of Truth?

Our heartfelt prayer for you, then, Gentlemen, and for your collaborators shall be that you may always exercise your profession in the Light of His countenance, Who is the Way, the Truth and

the Life, that thus, in keeping with your desires, you may fittingly discharge your momentous responsibility.

And may God's best blessings descend on you and your dear ones at home

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Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana

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