



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS PIUS XII
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE
OF THE COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION****

Friday, 31 October 1947

An American Congressional Committee on Immigration cannot but remind one of what history must always record as an incontrovertible proof that peoples of many nations and races can live as neighbours and work together in an orderly, peaceful, and prosperous society. It is the story of your country's rise and progress. No one would disclaim the vital part played in that story by the immigrants. Forced to flee from Europe they found across the seas a haven of large generosity and good-will, and at the same time set themselves to make their valiant contribution towards forging a national unity enriched by their age-old culture and hard-earned vigour. It is a stirring and encouraging story.

The question of immigration today however presents wholly new problems. As always the welfare of the country must be considered as well as the interest of the individual seeking to enter, and in the nature of things circumstances will at times dictate a law of restriction. But by the same token circumstances at time will almost cry out for an easing of the application of that law. Wise legislation will ever be conscious of humanity and the calamities, distress and woes to which it is heir.

Your short visit to Europe has unveiled to you something of humanity's crushing woes. Prompted by that spirit of sympathy with unfortunate, helpless suffering, so characteristic of your people, you will, We are sure, seek means to alleviate much of it.

God, We pray most earnestly, will bless you and your fellow-legislators for your determined efforts to assist a prostrate victim to regain strength and courage and thus brighten the hopes of an uneasy world. May His blessing descend also on all who are near and dear to you.

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