



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS PAUL VI TO A GROUP OF AFRICAN AUTHORITIES*

Friday, 20 June 1969

Gentlemen,

A few days ago, We received here, in Our dwelling, the group of E.N.I. technicians taken prisoner in the course of a painful episode in the Nigerian conflict and who had just been set free. You know how much the Authorities and public opinion and We Ourselves had been concerned about their fate. And on Our side We had learned of the interventions on their behalf made not only by different European Authorities, and particularly, as was right, by those of Italy, but also by the Governments of Gabon and of the Ivory Coast.

We are really happy that We have today the opportunity of meeting high ranking representatives of these two countries and of sharing with them Our sentiments of joy and gratitude for the success that crowned common efforts. And We express the most heartfelt wishes that peace may be restored among the African populations, which are all so dear to Us.

When it is a question of saving human lives, no effort is too great, no initiative must be spared. It is to the honour of your Governments that you have understood this and have acted opportunely and generously. Their intervention has been rewarded. It deserves the gratitude of all feeling men. It is worthy, too. We think of God's blessing, and We thank him with all Our heart with you and invoke his powerful protection on your persons, your families and your Governments.

*ORa n. 27 p.5.

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