



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI
TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION
ON DRUG ABUSE AND CONTROL***

Saturday, 20 November 1976

Dear friends,

we extend a cordial welcome to all of you who make up a United States Congressional Delegation on drug abuse and control.

Convinced as we are of the many deleterious effects of narcotics on society, we have on various occasions spoken on this topic. And today we wish to express our sincere encouragement of your efforts directed at the extirpation of drug abuse.

This reality of our day has truly ravaged society, and in particular our youth. At stake is the very question of human dignity. The problem is one of multiple human dimensions, in which the person is profoundly affected in the exercise of intellect and will, in the fulfillment of his or her true role as a human being, and finally in the attainment of a high spiritual destiny.

For these reasons we willingly lend our support to the endeavours that are aimed at combatting this evil and at providing those services that are so necessary for rehabilitation. Likewise deserving of attention are the important factors of prevention and timely education.

As the roots of the whole complex problem are studied, there emerges more clearly than ever the need for severe legal measures to be taken against those who traffic systematically in drugs for the sake of profit. We have already expressed the conviction that the narcotic problem would not exist "at least in its present proportion if there did not also exist a whole network of responsible conspirators: the clandestine producers and drug peddlers" (PAULI PP. VI *Allocutio diei 18 decembris* 1972). And in our own Bicentennial Message to the American Bishops we reiterated the

“hope that the immense forces of good would exert pressure against the unworthy activities of those who are greatly responsible for the corruption of youth” (AAS 68 (1976) 413).

Of supreme importance is the mobilization of public opinion, coupled with the wide diffusion of accurate information on the many ramifications of drug abuse. The time has come to unite all the powers at our disposal, in order to put an end to this scourge that is such a real danger for the future of humanity.

We hope that you will be able ever more effectively to coordinate your efforts with those being made outside your own country. May the combined forces of the international community of this generation be remembered as history records the incessant struggle for true human dignity.

And because we know that human efforts are insufficient in themselves, we ask Almighty God to bestow his light and strength on you and on all who are working for this great cause.