

THE EUROPE OF TOMORROW

A ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

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INTRODUCTION

Praised be Jesus Christ!

Let us turn to the Father of Light, to the God of Love and Life in the Lord's Prayer.

"Our Father..."

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Dear Friends!

1. The birth of a man is the moment of a special agreement between the Creator and the mother of the child. The Saviour of the world tells us about her pain, which is quickly relieved and gives place to "joy that a human being has been born into the world" (Jn 16 : 21).

The joy we experienced on 18 May 1920 has, with time, spread far beyond Wadowice and has now embraced the whole Church and the whole world.

There was the royal city of St. Stanislaus, Cracow, on his way, too. There was also the distinguished Catholic University. Then, on 18 May 1920, we cherished the "joy that a human being has been born into the world." Today, on 18 May 1994, we celebrate the fifteenth-anniversary of his pontificate, though the sixteenth-anniversary is already approaching, and the "joy that such a human being has been born into the world!"

2. Here, in the *milieu* of our Alma Mater, particularly in the John Paul II Institute, we felt a need to share in the Pope's concern about the future of Europe. This need was expressed during the three-day academic session, and today in the closing of the debate, in which we take up the following topic: "The Europe of Tomorrow."

Our speakers today will deal with this topic; they are eminent figures, chosen from all the countries of Europe. Europe is therefore one. And if it is still not so, let it happen. They will soon talk about Europe in a while, as well as about this *genius loci*, this, as it were, charisma of Lublin, a town standing as a bridge between the East and West of Europe. May this bridge widen and strengthen. May the words of Pope John Paul II come true through the ministering in this town, now and forever. We remember his address delivered on the Feast of Pentecost in 1979 in another town, a town also endowed with its

own unusual charisma, which possessed its own prominent *genius loci* as well, namely in Gniezno. The Pope said then: "Does not Christ want it, or the Holy Ghost ordain it, that the pope-Pole, the pope-Slav should right now unveil this spiritual unity of Christian Europe, a unity which consists of two great traditions: that of the West and of the East?" (3 June 1979).

3. "The Europe of Tomorrow" – this is a great topic. May "the Spirit of Truth" govern your words, dear speakers.

There is among you a common friend, Father Professor Tadeusz Styczeń. I would like to ask him to preside over your eminent panel.

May God bless him and you all, distinguished representatives of Europe!

Translated by *Jan Kłos*