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May 20th, 1971

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SPIRITAN APPOINTMENTS

Provincial Superior-Switzerland: Father Jean Baptiste Coudray.

Principal Superior-Sá da Bandeira: Father José Fernandes.

Regional Superior of Dutch confreres in Germany: Father Martinus
van Oorschot.

District Councils:

Luanda
Frs.Avelino Pereira da Costa, José Maria Pereira,
Jean Rolland, Antonius van den Hurk, Casimiro Pinto de Oliveira,
Abilio Ribas, Antonio Laranjeira, Brother Luis Gonzaga Pontes, Fr.
José R.N.Araujo (Bursar).

Senegal

Frs.Robert Lein, Pierre Gross, Emmanuel Barras, Jean Bernard,
Daniel Pelcot, Jean Vast, Paul Grasser, Brother Paulin Minot, Fr.André
Terlet (Bursar).

THE GENERAL HOUSE

Special Report on the Provincials' Meeting: This month our special
report is devoted to
the meeting held in Rome for C.S.Sp.Provincial Superiors. Coverage
is provided in two sections: first comes a general report from the
Secretary, Father Moore; then we print the resolutions in full; as an
appendix we have added the list of mission priorities presented by
the Dutch Province as an aid to determining strategy and personnel
distribution.

1. REPORT ON THE MEETING OF PROVINCIALS: April 18th-25th,
held at the Generalate, Rome. 1971

The meeting was attended by thirteen of the fourteen provin-
cials; the Polish provincial was unable to attend. The main theme
of the meeting was that specified in CDD 224, to ensure "smooth
working relations between provinces and... realizing genuine unity
in the Congregation". It was planned that this theme should be
treated in the context of the rapidly accelerating decentralisat-
ion which has been taking place in the Congregation since the
General Chapter.

Because the meeting was envisaged as a single group of members working together, rather than as a confrontation of two groups - general council and provincials - it was decided that the week's proceedings would be arranged by a "Central Commission" and that there would be two chairmen selected from the whole group. On Sunday evening the first meeting was held to select the Chairman and the members of the Commission. One condition was laid down for filling these vacancies - that those selected have a real mastery of both English and French. The two chairmen chosen were Fathers O'Sullivan, General Assistant, and Maenen, Provincial of Belgium. It was then decided that these two chairmen along with Fr. Moore, the General Secretary, would constitute the Central Commission. In addition to the members already mentioned, the sessions were attended by Fr. Bouchaud, who acted as Secretary to the meeting, and by Fr. Rocha, the General Bursar, whenever there were financial questions on the Agenda.

Review of the Provinces: The first day, Monday, was devoted to a review of the situation in each province. By this is meant the practical implications of decentralisation in action. There was general agreement that decentralisation is an advantage; but, in order to promote a vital cohesive unity of forces, it was felt that by way of compensation, more centralisation might be called for in two areas: - the distribution of personnel, and the establishment of a central fund to help Provinces or Districts in real need.

Co-ordination of Personnel: For most of Tuesday and Wednesday the question of co-ordinating personnel was considered. Eventually, the conviction emerged that the complex details of actual situations could not be properly appreciated from the vantage point of a desk in Rome. It was noted that certain initiatives in the field were already bearing fruit and seemed to point the way to a more realistic solution. Already in certain regions, Spiritan religious superiors (or sometimes, all religious superiors - Spiritan and non-Spiritan) meet together and arrange the best distribution of personnel. As far as possible, a representative of the province or provinces which supply personnel attends, and, occasionally, a representative of the Generalate.

On these occasions, the list of personnel available is studied in relation to another list of "job descriptions" relating to positions to be filled. In this way, personnel immediately available is put to the best use, while those responsible for sending out missionaries get a clear idea of the requirements in the field. As can be seen from the list of decisions, it was decided that this kind of collaboration should be encouraged; and if, eventually, centralization should be decided upon, it should be an organic development of this procedure.

Financial Solidarity: The discussions of the first day had also drawn attention to a crying need of which most of the members present were only too keenly aware already - the lack of money to help confreres in need who cannot be supported by the "most abandoned" for whom they work. Many different groups come under this heading: those who would like to undertake "first evangelization" yet who cannot be guaranteed a minimum subsistence level; the needs of some principal superiors, the need to finance the beginnings of new provinces; the danger in the near future that some provinces may not be able to take care of their retired missionaries who are increasing in number while the number of young "wage-earners" is in decline.

For these and other reasons, the participants were all interested in knowing the financial state of the Congregation with the

intention of making provision for such a "Solidarity Fund" which it was decided, should rather be called an "Allocation Fund".

The financial report made clear what was already known - that since the Generalate depends on its share of the Personal Contribution to meet its expenses, there is very little surplus left to be distributed at the end of each year. Various resolutions along the lines of what is laid down in CDD were approved; but it was still obvious that the money available for "allocations" would not be very substantial. Already before the meeting, Fr. O'Sullivan had prepared a study on the possibility of extending our funding activities on a totally new scale to meet our overall needs. He outlined this plan which would concentrate especially on Foundations and Corporations which operate in Europe and in North America, and which make funds available for religious and other charitable purposes, especially in the Third World. It was felt that in the various countries, each province had concentrated perhaps too much on merely what it needed for itself to finance the works of formation. There is need of a study to find out what other sources might be available which might help the Congregation as a whole, or confreres from various provinces interested in a particular project which could win support if presented in the right quarter. Again, a detailed plan could not be worked out at a meeting such as this, but the project was well received, and machinery will be set in motion to see what can be done concretely.

New Structures for Old: Early in the meeting it was noticed that the General Chapter allocated new functions to the General Administration, but left the old structures in place! Accordingly the question was put: what changes of this kind, i.e. structure, should be envisaged at Headquarters to ensure that the General Council could fulfill its role in the Congregation, especially as a focus of unity and greater efficacy in terms of the apostolate and Spiritan life. A number of practical applications could be made of whatever the provincials might suggest. Since the resignation of Fr. R. Eberhardt, there has been a vacancy on the General Council. Should this place be filled by an American or by the representative of a geographical region as such? Or would it be better to select an Assistant who would be a specialist in one of the many areas allocated to the General Council - communications, missiology, development, pastoral planning, etc.? Another possible answer would be to assign such "experts" to the General Secretariate rather than to the General Council itself.

One area where the General Administration seemed to need re-inforcement was that of Development. The previous week, Fr. A. Byrne who is already carrying out certain experiments as a Social Development consultant in the field, had made a report to the General Council, and outlined a plan which he considered viable. Reactions were favourable, and the General Council is to study the proposals more thoroughly. Then, in the near future, it will present an ordered and detailed plan for a development service to the provincials.

Communications: Another "specialist" area where more needs to be done at Generalate level is Information. Most provincials declared themselves pleased with the efforts made (in the form of Newsletter-CSSP and Documentation-CSSP), but considered this service needed to be extended. The General Bulletin came in for some criticism but all agreed that it should be maintained, somewhat modernised perhaps, but basically a serious historical and administrative gazette.

The Generalate should be a place to which Superiors and the confreres can refer for reliable orientation on new trends in the Church concerning missionary theory and practice, as well as such practical issues as training, conditions of membership, forms of the apostolic and religious life, experiments in progress, contacts on various specialised topics, etc... This is a very ambitious programme, and it would be futile for the Congregation to try and "go it alone". Hence great stress was laid on collaboration with other Generalates who share our problems. Instead of having an inefficient service at each Generalate in Rome, it would be much better to combine forces; with all the experienced personnel then available, it should be possible to set up a service that would provide invaluable help to the front-line missionary.

Personnel for the Generalate: From the above it was quite obvious that new structures call for qualified personnel, and that there was a shortage of personnel at the Generalate to do all that should be done. Provincials were asked to consider making a sacrifice of competent men (in the specialist fields mentioned above) in order to strengthen the Generalate staff. It should be understood, at this stage, that the Generalate has no access to other personnel than that which is trained by the provinces. In the course of the week several provincials discussed this question with the Superior General, and suggested names of possible candidates. These will be considered later by the General Council who will select the personnel needed and formulate a plan of action. The American provinces found that they were not in a position to offer personnel for any of the particular functions mentioned, but promised to assist instead by financing lay help for the Secretariate. Hitherto the possibility of lay help had been more or less ruled out because of the shortage of available funds.

On the concrete question of who should replace Fr. Eberhardt, the question was left open; in fact, the decision belongs to the General Council. This is a point which perhaps should be stated clearly. The present meeting of provincials has no legislative authority; it is not a mini-chapter and has no power to make decisions strictly so-called, but merely reach agreement among those concerned. However, for cases which the General Council must decide, it is obvious that a clear orientation from the provincials would be of great assistance to the General Council in assessing what should be done. In the case of the vacancy on the General Council, the meeting would not insist that the total of six councillors must be maintained, nor that the assistant to be appointed should represent a geographical region. The meeting declared itself satisfied with the possible appointment of a specialist to deal with some aspect of the General Council's work.

Mass-Media and Missionaries: On Friday evening one of the Provincials considered that something should have been said about communications in the sense of the use of the "Mass-Media" during the discussion of new structures. There was time for only a brief discussion on this topic, but two resolutions couched in rather general terms were passed which aimed at showing that the meeting was sympathetic to initiatives in this direction. (We hope to provide some material on this subject in the present number of the Newsletter. Editor)

Concluding Sessions: For Saturday's meeting the agenda was still very heavy. First of all it was decided that the meeting of provincial and principal superiors, foreseen by CDD 225, (b), was urgent and should be held next year. The General Council is to study the question and make proposals concerning time

and place. Its terms of reference contained a special proviso that cost should be a determining factor and that every effort should be made to limit expense.

Priorities : The meeting then went on to consider priorities in the provinces, and exchanged experiences concerning the continued training and up-dating of personnel. This up-dating process was given top priority in the case of provinces which have not set about this very thoroughly as yet. Special emphasis was laid on the need to provide updating courses for the Brothers.

A discussion was also foreseen on priorities on the mission-field. In fact this was limited to a consideration of a document presented on this theme by the Dutch Province. (The list of priorities is published at the end of this special report. Editor) This document pinpoints certain areas where special attention is needed today. The meeting did not feel that it could or should go into details about actual priorities which might vary considerably from place to place, but it did recommend a serious study, on the part of all concerned, of the Dutch document which gives useful criteria for deciding what the priorities in a given area should be. One of those present asked for specific mention to be made of houses of formation when recommending this study.

Two other very important questions had been placed rather hopefully on the Agenda, but had to be omitted. One of these was a discussion on the integration of the Congregation into the local Church, with an examination of the possible implications for an international congregation such as ours. This topic had, in fact, been touched on in the course of the first day's "information session", when one or other provincial spoke of his relation with the national missionary institute in his country. It was stressed that integration into a national institute does not necessarily mean the end of provinces belonging to international institutes. In fact, much thought is being given to the theological and practical implications of participating in such national missionary institutes.

The other subject omitted was the attempt to describe our specific "Spiritual spirituality" which derives from our Founders, and which is the inspiration of our missionary action. The last word was left to the Superior General, Fr. Lécuyer, who reviewed the proceedings of the week, which he considered had been very valuable and fruitful.

Addenda on the Financial Report: For the sake of completion we add some details from the Report on the Generalate Finances. Since the International Scholasticate is not to be built, the money realised by the sale of the Corso d'Italia house could now be used to repay the debt on the new Generalate at Monte Mario. This would relieve provinces of their commitment to repay this debt, undertaken at a time when the building of an international scholasticate was considered a top priority. Nonetheless, it was decided that the General Council should continue to provide accommodation for CSSP students, either in the house at Via Machiavelli or elsewhere, if the provinces send students to Rome for higher studies.

(Based on a report of the meeting prepared by the General Secretary, Father S. Moore. Editor)

PROPOSALS ADOPTED AT THE PROVINCIALS' MEETING, ROME,
April 18th to 25th, 1971

Personnel

- I. That the collaboration between the provinces in the distribution of personnel should be co-ordinated.
- II.a That the co-ordination of Spiritan personnel should operate, first of all, at the level of districts and provinces, in such a way that the Principal Superiors and the Provincial Superiors who operate in the same region should meet (every year or every two years, for example) to study and discuss the question of personnel, having in hand the list of candidates available and clear "job descriptions" of the needs to be met.
- b That the present assembly invites the General Council to promote this coordination at the level of districts and provinces, by activating the application of CDD no. 224, and, as far as possible, sending representatives to the meetings mentioned above, so as to guarantee that the distribution will be made in accordance with the real priorities.
- III. That this assembly requests the General Council to prepare a plan for extending the Development service.
- IV. That the provinces organise meetings or sessions for the updating of their propaganda personnel, and consider the possibility of inviting representatives of neighbouring provinces to attend; furthermore the General Council strongly recommends these meetings between the provincial directors of propaganda.

Information Service

- V. That the decision taken at the last General Chapter that each province and district should appoint a correspondent with the central information service at the Generalate, be implemented without delay where this has not already been done; and that the central service maintain regular contact with these correspondents; furthermore, that the provinces & districts send their publications to the Generalate.
- VI. That the Newsletter-CSSP (and Informations-CSSP) continue to publish news about the Congregation, and make a special effort to allocate space for the affairs of the minority language groups.
- VII. That the General Bulletin continue to be published.
- VIII. That this assembly strongly recommends the General Council to appoint without delay a full-time, permanent Director of the Information Service, having first clearly drawn up his terms of reference.
- IX. That this assembly wishes the General Council to collaborate with other Generalates towards organising a common service for general mission news and documentation.
- X. That this assembly requests the General Council to send a copy of motion no. IX to other Generalates and to SEDOS.

Finance

- XI. That the provincials ratify the use of the Corso account to repay part of the Monte Mario loan.

- XII. That the contributions made by the provinces up to December 31st, 1969 be considered final, and that this affair is now closed.
- XIII. That this assembly recommends the General Council to rule that, up till the next General Chapter, the proposals of the Chapter 1968-69 concerning the Allocation Fund be interpreted as applying to a Current Account, rather than to a Capital Fund (from the interest on which allocations would be made).
- XIVa. That the General Administration, in collaboration with the provinces devise means to find funds for this current account, and that specifically, the possibility of corporations and foundations as a potential means should be seriously studied by the provinces of North America and by the provinces of Europe.
 - b. That the General Administration, in collaboration with the provinces distribute these funds.
- XVa. That the annual surplus of the General Administration and a part of the annual surplus of the provinces and districts, if there be any, be paid into the Allocation Fund.
 - b. That the General Council distribute in the course of a year the sum which was collected the previous year.
- XVI. That a study be begun immediately to determine means of organising efforts to exploit sources as yet untapped to finance works of the Congrégation.

Communications

- XVII. That this assembly recommends Provincial and Principal Superiors to envisage the training of specialists in Mass-Media (Social Communications).
- XVIII. That this assembly recommends the General Council and the provinces to intensify "Public Relations" by communicating to different organisations information concerning their speciality.

Meeting of Major Superiors

- XIX. That a meeting of Provincial and Principal Superiors be held in 1972. The General Council will make enquiries, and proposals concerning the place and the time.

Evaluation

- XX. That a questionnaire concerning the present meeting of 1971 be sent to all the participants, with a view to elaborating a "value judgment" on the exercise.

Updating of Personnel

XXI. Brothers

That provincials, principals and local superiors pay serious attention to their responsibility for the updating of the Brothers, both from the professional and from the religious point of view, by recommending suitable courses to them, by providing suitable reading, and by caring for them in a truly pastoral spirit.

XXII. International teams

That the General Council support the efforts of the provinces, especially by means of meetings between neighbouring provinces, to form small international teams of specialists, with a view to the updating of the confreres on the missions.

XXIII. Local possibilities

That the General Council support the efforts of provincial and principal superiors to have confreres, both Fathers and Brothers, take part in courses organised in Africa and South America.

XXIV. Collaboration

That the list of updating courses organised in the provinces be communicated regularly to the provincials of provinces belonging to the same linguistic or geographical group.

Priorities in the Provinces

XXV. That the updating of all their members be placed high in the priority list of those provinces which have not already done so.

XXVI. That the list of priorities given in CDD no. 191, is adopted as still valid with the addition of:

- (i) distribution of personnel
- (ii) disengagement

Priorities in the Missions

XXVII. That this assembly recommends the General Council, and the Provinces - beginning with the houses of formation - to study seriously the list of priorities on the missions, as prepared and presented by the province of Holland.

Additional Points

XXVIII. Vacancy on the General Council

The assembly does not insist that there must be six councillors, nor that the vacancy be filled by an American nor does it have any objection that the vacancy be filled by a specialist rather than by a representative of a geographical region.

XXIX. House of Studies in Rome

The General Council assures the assembly that even if our house at Via Machiavelli is sold, accomodation will continue to be provided for students whom the provincials may wish to send to Rome.

XXX. Geographical regions

Agreement was reached on the establishment of three geographical regions as follows:-

- 1) Southern Europe: Spain, Portugal, France, Switzerland, Poland.
- 2) Northern Europe: Holland, Belgium, Germany.
- 3) English-speaking: U.S.A.-East and West, Canada, Trinidad, Ireland and England.

A chairman was appointed for each region as follows:

for Southern Europe: Father Seixas;

for Northern Europe: Father Biemans;

for the English-speaking region: Father Connors.

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PRIORITIES ON THE MISSIONS DETERMINING STRATEGY

(NB. These priorities have been formulated by the Dutch Province, and are presented as subjects for attention and reflection by the General Council and by the provinces.)

1. Indigenisation which implies:-

- a. disengagement (missionary asceticism; cf. Spiritus, no. 44)
- b. reintegration of the older confreres, who are caught in an impasse.

... of mobility of the young towards works of first evangelisation.

- 2) Missionary activity considered as a reciprocal exchange of human and religious values, being an enrichment of the local Church on both sides.
- 3) Pastoral of the missionary team: this means planning pastoral activity and follow-up on the part of Fathers, Brothers, Sisters and committed laypeople. It implies:-
 - a. updating in the sense of actualising all the potential of the people involved;
 - b. being concerned for the life of faith of the whole missionary team.
- 4) Integration of evangelization and development: This means full human promotion in practice as well as in theory.
- 5) Moderation in investment in buildings: priority should be given to the care of persons in terms of training, follow-up and social care.
- 6) Administration by the Principal Superior, especially in the financial field.
- 7) Training-periods ("Stages") by candidates, either in pastoral activity or in development work.
- 8) Reintegration of confreres who leave into pastoral activity, on condition that this is what they wish and that they conform to accepted standards.

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NEWS OF THE PROVINCES AND DISTRICTS

Poland: Assistant General visits Poland

Father Ledit, Assistant General, left Rome on April 2nd for the Province of Poland. Fr. Zaremba met him at Warsaw, and then began a series of visits to key personages in the Church and in the State departments concerned with religious affairs: Cardinal Wysinski, Polish Primate, Mgr B. Dabrowski, Secretary of the Polish Episcopal Conference, and Doctors Skarynski and Holowiez, both of the Department of Ecclesiastical Affairs. All were encouraging, and the civil authorities saw no objection to two young priests going on the missions within the near future.

On April 14th, the Provincial Chapter started. All confreres of the Province were there with the exception of two who give retreats, and consequently had to honour their engagement. It was said that this Chapter represented a matter of life or death for the Province. Could we hope to recruit young people into our ranks? The majority were convinced that a better planned form of propaganda put into action, more attractive community life and an effort to work throughout the Polish dioceses would enable us to make a new start.

The Province has become too "enclosed", dependent on a few communities which are not adapted to sound apostolic activity or missionary animation. This is understandable. Circumstances conspired to confine the confreres to their own country where little information reached them from outside. Consequently the Province is greatly in need of help from the Congregation as a whole; re-fresher courses and documentary aid are examples of what they need.

The Chapter decided to appoint a commission (permanent) to investigate and draw up a plan for propaganda and expansion on a national scale. The General House was asked to help send one

