

70/33

Rome, October 23, 1970

To all Superiors General  
To their delegates for SEDOS  
To all members of the SEDOS groups

This week:

Page

## AFRICA:

751

We are circulating the full text of Fr. Van Asten's paper on the priesthood in Africa, prepared for the summer meeting of the Bishops of Africa and Madagascar. It is a long document but we did not think it wise to pass it around in instalments. Though it is directed to the priesthood, brothers and sisters can find in it inspiration on our common missionary endeavour in Africa.

## ITINERARIES OF SUPERIORS GENERAL AND ASSISTANTS:

771

## DIARY:

772

Please remember the following dates:

Dev. WG Task Force Justitia et Pax : 26-10-70, 11.00, Secretariat  
Haute Volta (in French - en Français) : 27-10-70, 16.00, Secretariat  
Education in the Missions : 28-10-70, 16.00, Secretariat

Sincerely yours,

Benjamin Tonna  
Executive Secretary.

AFRICA : THE CLERGY

The following is the text of Fr. Th. Van Asten's address to SECAM, the symposium of African Bishops, in August, 1970, in Abidjan.

Summary.

Limitations of Position Paper - scope and preparation time Unanimity  
on role of Church and priest

Three preoccupations that underly discussion

- realism, facing the facts
- pan-African approach
- solidarity with universal Church

The facts: Resources

- priests' numbers
- changing pastoral scene
- uneven distribution

The conclusions:

- need for agreed priorities
- using the laity's potential
- redistribution
  - making best use of priests
  - giving them peace of mind
- changes in training
  - : organization, content, discipline.
- material support
  - self-reliance not the foundation
  - solidarity with universal Church.

Excellencies,

Though I am conscious of the privilege accorded to me in the invitation to address this second Symposium of the African Hierarchy, I am also conscious of some feeling of inadequacy. However, my present position and work, and my past experience, are secondary in this conference to the answers, reflections, suggestions that come to me from the Bishops and the Senior Seminaries of Africa in response to the preliminary consultation which I had been asked to organise. I trust that the position paper which resulted from that consultation reached every Bishop in Africa; in it I set out what seemed to be the salient points regarding the present situation and future trends in recruitment, training and maintenance of

the clergy in Africa.

The position paper suffered from two main limitations: it had to embrace the whole Africa as far as that was possible, and thus cover a variety of situations that defy reduction to any series of common factors. If we consider only the difference between the problem of priestly work in established Christian communities and the same problem in areas where such communities are only emerging, we shall see that a synthesis is difficult and might even be misleading.

Secondly the position paper suffered from the inevitable time-lag in communications that forced us to be content with a questionnaire directed only to Your Lordships and to the staff of your Major Seminaries. It would have been much better, and it remains a possibility for the future, to consult also the priests themselves and even the whole population, both Christian and non-Christian, regarding the Catholic clergy in their midst.

In the perspectives outlined by the position paper, based mainly on responses received from all over Africa, there was, as Your Excellencies will have noted, remarkable unanimity in the concept of the priest and his role, and in the concept of the Church as the enduring presence of Christ, His sacrament and sign of salvation in the world. I say "remarkable" unanimity because, as we all know, the priest's life and the functions and influence of the Church in society vary greatly from one place to another. What emerges in general is that the priest as minister of the Church, and the Church as sacrament of Christ, have a primary, fundamental, necessary and vital (life-giving) function of witness and inspiration. They bear witness to the presence of Christ in His teaching, His sacrament, His love, and they inspire to service and sanctification in imitation of and in company with him.

The unanimity evinced in regard to these points is important, because it allows the whole of our attention to be devoted to related questions: can the Church's work be done without priests? Are we going to get the priests we need for it? What kind of training and assistance must we give them? Are we at present using our priests to the best advantage in view of the present and future needs of Africa and her people? Have we the material means to support them in their work?

Before we pass on to consider a few of the more pressing problems, I would like here to underline three main preoccupations which appeared in the answers we received, and which indicate perhaps a general line of approach to all the problems of the clergy in Africa.

There is first of all an insistence on realism: we have enough real problems without devoting time and attention to artificial ones.

There is a general wish for study and, if possible, solution of the problems on a pan-African scale.

There is thirdly a feeling that the African Church should live, should develop, in solidarity with the universal Church, a solidarity that will generate a two-way flow of benefits.

If we take a look at these points one by one we shall have laid a foundation for discussion and enquiry.

#### I. Necessity for Realism.

In any study of the questions concerning the clergy in Africa we have to be realistic: whether we are thinking of recruitment, formation, function, or personal maintenance of priests, or the distribution of those priests across the field of work, we have real problems. There is no need, as some Bishops remarked, to create artificial problems, and then give oneself the illusion of effective action by finding equally artificial solutions. Neither is there any need to import problems that do not exist locally; Africa has enough problems of its own.

It is moreover Africa as it exists today and as it will be in the years ahead that we are concerned with, an Africa that has its own peculiar personality, its outlook, its aspirations and its frustrations. Our concern is with its priests of today and those of tomorrow, with the People of God to whom their ministry is devoted in Africa....an entity that is sui generis in its own right.

In this connection one of the conditions for realistic action would seem to be a fairly general consultation of those who are most concerned with these problems, that is the priests themselves. Some consultations have already taken place under the patronage of the Hierarchy, both at diocesan and at national level; we can mention in passing those of Tanzania which are continuing in the S.S.Y. programme, and those of the Congo Kinshasa which have already yielded significant results. Their findings are of value not only because they clarify the problems we know exist, but also because they gather opinions, reveal the outlook and ideals of the clergy who work in joint responsibility with the Bishop.

Our insistence on realism should also take into account the times in which we live. It is not only in Africa, not only in the underdeveloped world that the pace of evolution is accelerated. We are all subject to it, everywhere. Situations change and needs multiply; adaptation and continual readjustment are inevitable if we are to achieve any aggiornamento. Nevertheless we should keep in mind that effective planning is based on the art of distinguishing what is possible. We may be planning for the future, but in terms of effective decisions we should perhaps confine ourselves to the foreseeable future, and take as our departure point what we have been taught by experience.

Every Bishop can have an idea of the growth of his diocese over, let us say, the next ten years. He can foresee from government reports the development areas in his territory; he can anticipate the extension possible in fields of education and medicine, of literacy and so on ..... he can foresee realistically the possible numbers and quality of his clergy and other pastoral associates.

This is not to say that we are passively subject to the conditions and predictable pattern of development. In every phase of planning there is besides, an element of rearrangement and an equally important element of creative influence.

The process of development becomes personal and creative at the point where the Hierarchical authorities select objectives establish priorities and lay down guide-lines. It continues to be personal and objective when the African specialists with the Bishops' authorisation elaborate projects for the future on the basis of what is culturally acceptable today. And thus there will be achieved that African atmosphere which is objectively desirable for the healthy personal growth of the Church in Africa as an African Church.

## II. A pan-African approach to the Problems.

In the papers I forwarded some time ago to Your Lordships, I quoted the Kampala Symposium Report about the need for seeing for keeping in mind the whole Church in Africa. Surely this is an additional and not an exclusive vision.

Every Bishop knows his own diocese. He sees his people and he sees the priests among them. He sees their strengths and achievements with satisfaction, their weaknesses and needs with anxiety. He is surely preoccupied with them, for they are that part of the People of God over whom he has been given charge, for whom he has responsibility. But he knows that no diocese can be a mere island; he knows that the problems of his clergy cannot be solved independently of those of his neighbour's.

If every Bishop fosters this sense of solidarity with the rest of the Church in Africa, it will be a powerful inspiration in Episcopal Conferences, a powerful stimulus towards the outward-looking missionary spirit that the Holy Father called for. The solidarity of the Hierarchy is its strength.

What was asked for in the replies from Bishops and Seminaries to the consultation which I conducted, was the wish that this solidarity should not be something merely theoretical, but that it should be translated into positive action. For example, the Bishop of a diocese where the Christians are numerous and influential, where the Church is established as a force, is asked to keep in mind his brother-Bishops whose Christian community is small and weak in an environment unhealthy or unpromising. The Bishops who has enough priests and to spare is asked to remember that elsewhere and perhaps on the borders of his diocese are deprived and understaffed dioceses where institutions vital

for the future might be saved by a timely helping hand - the loan of one specialist or the services of an experienced team.

One asks too all the members of Africa's Hierarchy to share with their brother-Bishops the fruit of their experience in Church-State relations, to share with them the secrets of inspiring confidence and friendship <sup>men</sup> with of power inside and outside the Church, and the secret of doing this without being tied politically.

Might there not be advantages for all if those Bishops who have <sup>more</sup> facilities for and better grounds for profitable relationships with the older Churches and the Roman authorities shared with their less favoured colleagues, especially with those younger in the episcopate, what they have discovered?

These are practical applications of collegiality, which extend even beyond the limits of episcopal conferences. There is need for continual and wider and more confident communication between Bishops. They are asked to be truly pan-African in outlook, so that the dynamism of their outward-looking mission may communicate itself to priests and people.

### III. Awareness of Solidarity with the Universal Church.

One other, the third, dominant preoccupation of the Bishops was to feel solidarity with the universal Church in their study on the clergy. The Holy Father at Kampala insisted on this Catholic solidarity. In the responses that come to us from Africa there was no difficulty here; it was a conviction that made itself evident, taken in conjunction with the equally evident desire for the African Church to be truly African.

I would like here to draw Your Excellencies' attention to another aspect of this solidarity, the factual aspect, which has two facets.

In these days of rapid communications, problems on one side of the <sup>earth</sup> produce repercussions on the other. This is true of the best, and of the worst ideas and events. Cardinal Garrone said in 1962 when he was still Archbishop of Toulouse: "What we do not allow to enter at the door will come in by the window, and even through the walls, which the ether does not heed." And in the Acts of the First Missionary Congress, at which he was speaking, we find: "It is the world horizon that consciences have to wake up to today."

This is true for the problems of the clergy. If questions are put in Rio de Janeiro or in Warsaw, there will be repercussions in Abidjan and Dar es Salaam as well as in Rome.

Despite differences of culture and context, there is an international interest in problems and their solutions that we can not escape.

International questions; international answers; international repercussions. These also are aspects of the Catholic solidarity that we mentioned.

Which all applies to this Abidjan Symposium. It is not simply an African event; it is an event in the universal Church. The whole Church will follow your discussions and findings not only with sympathy but also with a feeling of involvement. On the theory of the priesthood your contribution is precious also in practice. Perhaps just because for the most part you are representing the young Churches, there may be something new and original and enlightening in what you can contribute to the development of doctrine and tradition. And here we see the extent of your Hierarchical responsibility.

Solidarity in practice; solidarity for mutual support; solidarity for growth and development. Africa does not live and will not develop in isolation; neither does the African Church. The growth of the Church in Africa is the growth of the Universal Church, and the means and resources in material and personnel, in thought and prayer are at its disposal. It would be a kind of missionary suicide to withdraw into exclusive isolation and cut off the resources one may need.

These three elements that we have outlined:

- a realistic approach to problems
- a pan-African angle on them
- a consciousness of solidarity with the Church all over Africa and with the universal Church

should allow us to maintain, in considering some questions in greater detail, the balanced view that was desired by many of the Bishops and Seminary directors who responded to the consultation.

In the position paper I underlined the Pop's exhortation to the African Church - "be missionaries to yourselves". He undoubtedly had in mind first of all the Bishops and then the priests, though it is clear that his thought has wider implications. What I wish to do here is to highlight

- some inescapable facts that must be considered
- some ~~tentative~~ conclusions that might be useful

in respect of the African Church creating its own future, guiding its own destiny.

We are dealing here with what is in essence a practical problem; it involves surveys and assessments, planning and priorities, policies and decisions, destined to assure more effective structures for the future. Underlying the structures we find a cornerstone, RESOURCES, that is, personnel in the first place, and in the second place the funds that maintain them and provide them with the intellectual and material equipment for their work.

Our first concern is with the priests. There is however, a need to keep in mind several other considerations: the growth of the population in general

and of the Catholic population in particular, the diversity too of pastoral and associated works which for one reason or another the clergy have undertaken.

It seems evident, and I tried to summarise the evidence in Appendix B, p.6. of the circulated dossier, that African recruitment is not actually proportionate to pastoral needs, nor even to the requirements of desirable Africanisation. There is an average perseverance rate of about 10% among presumptive candidates for the priesthood. Among those ordained more and more must be expected to spend further years in acquiring special skills and experience before being advanced to key-positions in the Church.

Statistics too, in so far as they indicate future trends and so not merely record results, tell us clearly that recruitment of expatriate missionaries is declining, and that we must face the possibility of reorganising priestly functions to have them performed by much smaller numbers within the next ten years.

A,1.

There has been a lot <sup>of</sup> publicity given to what was called "phasing out", as though Africanisation should be imposed on the hierarchy by a gradual, systematic withdrawal of expatriates. This is not my view. The initiative for Africanisation, I think, should be entirely free, and come from the Africans themselves. We are at their service to do what they want, as and when they want it done, for as long as they need us.

There is bound to be an increasing tempo of change in the patterns of pastoral activity; if we consider merely the rapid process of urbanisation, or the growth of centres of higher education, it will be clear that certain areas, certain activities, certain clerical posts that were formerly of little significance, now merit much greater attention.

A,2; A,3.

Your Excellencies must be aware of the gross inequalities that exist between neighbouring dioceses, some with enough men, well-established institutions, regular and ample supplies of funds, and others where the struggle to survive is continual. In some places the hardships phase is transitory and may be expected to pass away in the course of political and civic development; in others it is endemic, due to enduring factors such as climate and physical environment. Elsewhere it has been exacerbated by the influx of refugees or migration to more favourable areas.

A,4.

These factors: African recruitment to the priesthood  
 : the downward trend in expatriate help  
 : the changing pastoral exigencies  
 : the uneven distribution of the Church's resources

seem to me to be the factual essential of the Church's problem in terms of the priesthood in Africa. Can we now perhaps in the light of what they suggest move towards a few tentative conclusions.

I would think that first of all there is an urgent need for Bishops in concert to establish agreed priorities in the functions to which priests are destined. There will be different formulae according to varying circumstances: where there are vast numbers of baptised Christians, where there are large urban centres, where there is a high level of literacy the approach will be other than that where these factors do not yet impose themselves. Where there is, or is going to be, a real shortage of priests, and even where the available priests are to be used to the <sup>best</sup> advantage, the considerations should perhaps turn on what are the essential priestly functions: presiding at the eucharistic celebration, and together with the Bishop giving leadership in what is currently termed the prophetic role.

In this connection I would like to quote a Bishop who wrote from Rwanda Burundi: "Whether or not the so-called shortage of priests is providential, at least it forces us to consider withdrawing them from those functions that are not altogether priestly, and to consider handing over to the ranks of religious and the laity those activities which they will perform as the royal priesthood of the faithful."

A,5.

We do not turn to the laity as a mere substitute for priests, but because they have their own apostolate de jure and because they are more than willing to exercise it de facto. Guinea may provide inspiration in this connection.

A,6.

Furthermore there is the largely untapped reserve of talent and influence in the communities of African brothers and sisters, they already dedicated laity. Should we not give them opportunities to prepare themselves, and provide them with better means to do their work?

Turning in this way to the religious and the laity for greater cooperation will in no way undermine the priest's position and influence; He is not always the best leader in any case, but the Catholic population at large place enormous reliance on his functions. What the Church in Africa has the opportunity to do however is to avoid the worst of clerical domination and avoid too retaining all initiative in clerical hands.

Priorities embrace not only the functions to which priests are destined; they must also cover the redistribution, even the territorial redistribution of priests, so that all, both African and expatriate may be used to the best advantage. In connection with the search for ways of making better use of the clergy, two suggestions that have come from the African clergy seem to me to require special mention here.

I heard, that in Tanzania there is a feeling both among priests and students for the priesthood, and it is in line with the political aim of fostering national unity, that priests could and should be incardinated not merely in a diocese but rather in an episcopal conference or even in the national church as such. This has interesting and far-reaching implications.

Then there is the idea that a specifically African missionary institute should be established, to provide from a nucleus of African priests the pioneers for new projects or for old recalcitrant problems. Your Excellencies will perhaps be aware of the projects that have been outlined in Burundi and in Uganda to this end. The aim would be a pan-African Institute. It seems to me to be an inspired initiative and I should like to give it all possible encouragement and practical help.

A,7.

Given a realistic appraisal of the changing situation, the redistribution of clergy to be at the points of most effective action will not cause undue misgiving. Given the establishing of agreed priorities, much of the insecurity that complicates at times the relations between local and expatriate clergy will tend to disappear. It seems that there is increasing awareness that the expatriate missionary is still needed, and that he is a valuable link with the Universal Church. His task has always been to help establish a church that would eventually dispense with his services. Nowadays, more than ever, he has to adapt himself to the exigencies of a changing political and social scene and know how to accept a modified place in the pastoral field where the local priest has so much more to give.

There are still signs that the African clergy are willing to leave most of the thinking and speaking and writing to their expatriate colleagues. The supposition (often enough ill-founded) is presumably that the expatriate are better endowed or better equipped. They are not better equipped, no matter how highly trained they are, to deliberate on future trends in African Catholic development. The role of the clergy in general is services; the role of the expatriate missionary in particular is service, but service in subsidiarity.

It asks courage and confidence for African clergy to tell us what we should be doing to help them and serve their people; but that is what needed if the Holy Father's aspiration for a missionary African Church is to be fulfilled. Even Your Lordships may at time ask help that at given moment we may not be in a position to provide - but if the request is made, we know what is required.

To resume a little: with the aim of making the best use of the available priests, to assure conditions where they can work both happily and effectively, some redistribution is needed. To effect this we need a reappraisal of the work priests do to see where the real priorities lie, followed by redistribution to ensure that the habits and structures of the past do not obstruct our ability to satisfy the pastoral needs of today.

A,8; A,9.

Current development and the foreseeable needs of the future imply changes in priestly training, changes in the organisation, in the content and in the discipline of training. Cardinal Garrone's letter on Priestly Studies of January 6th 1970 reaffirmed Vatican II's "Seminaria necessaria esse", but the whole letter indicated lines of improving their standard; it clearly applies to the African situation, and may be a timely reminder to us of what the seminary is and should be. There is a danger that in bringing seminaries up to date we would be left with something that is half-cloister, half-university. It is indeed the balance between these two elements that makes a good seminary, but always in the correct measure. The function of a seminary is to provide a suitable environment for intellectual and moral development to candidates for the priesthood. It does not give them all they need to know for the rest of their lives; it does not take away their human weakness or guarantee them against temptation. But it should give them the Catholic outlook, the mind of the Catholic priest, and it should give them the moral fibre they require to pursue their ideal in a spirit of service to the People of God, ready to adapt themselves to the providential exigencies of an ever-changing, evolving environment.

It seems to me that the principle difficulties facing us in the rationalising of our seminary system lie in the areas of staff/student ratio, cultural adaptation, training for responsibility and pastoral involvement. Father Kalanda in his position paper for Lusaka suggested the setting up of Episcopal Committees for seminaries to ensure planning in the provision of staff, and in the training of staff for the future. He said "An appeal must be made to the Bishops to be more generous than they have been up to now<sup>in</sup> releasing priests earmarked for teaching in Seminaries.

There is a possibility that some training centres may have to be closed if the use of the best available staff is to be justified.

B,1.

Regarding Junior Seminaries we find a growing feeling both that they are not the only recruiting channel, and that the rapid development of state education in the primary and secondary sectors renders them less desirable. Nevertheless even while immediate restructuring may be indicated, not all regions can yet envisage an alternative to the existing system.

It is a necessity today in both Junior and Senior Seminaries to appoint sufficient trained African staff to take responsibility for the direction, and for the courses that are required in culture and customs. The African priest must be trained in the mentality of his own people.

B,1 (a)

It seems also desirable to establish links with secular universities so as

to obtain for the clergy the advantage of recognised diplomas and degrees.

The only way to develop a sense of responsibility is to give responsibility. This calls for training in the right use of liberty; it therefore demands more liberty for the student... as Father Kalanda said, not the abolition of rules, which are necessary to guide students towards maturity, but more opportunities for students to exercise self-determination in collaboration with their directors. The point is clearly made by Cardinal Garrone in para. 24 of his January letter. To put it another way we need some liberalisation and dialogue with a view to producing the conscientious, involved, adaptable priest-citizen that we need for tomorrow.

There is general awareness that more pastoral training is required for special areas of priestly activity... youth-work rural village parishes, contacts for dialogue with other Christians and with non-Christians. The priest must be trained to maintain, and after ordination must be given continual help to maintain, that outward-looking spirit that is the soul of dynamic Christianity. The priest of tomorrow cannot be limited by parish registers and parish boundaries. He has responsibility to all the people around him. He must be involved with them. He must be trained to be, to feel, to act, in involvement with everyone in his community. He must be trained to be a good priest and a good citizen too. This may of course be more easily achieved as the ranks of the priesthood take in more so-called late vocations, candidates of mature age and experience, who have already proved themselves in life and know what they are about.

#### B.1 (b)

It is obvious that the priest, as his involvement with the secular milieu increases, will need a strengthened foundation to ensure his perseverance. This too must enter into his preordination and into his ongoing post-ordination training for his work. For this reason there is serious questioning in some seminaries as to whether the classical type of seminary is still the best. The question will find an answer as our new and complex orientations emerge.

In my position paper and in the Appendix A (nos 38; 9 + 10) I already indicated how here and there in Africa various experimental alternatives to seminary training have been used for special cases such as mature-age candidates - particularly interesting was a species of apprenticeship under the guidance of a single priest or a group of priests.

The aim of the training, as indicated by the Holy Father is a clergy that is missionary-minded. Such a clergy, in collaboration with the Bishop will find no difficulty in answering the largely academic question as to whether care for the existing Catholic population can be combined, must be combined, with the approach to non-Catholic Christian and non-Christians. Each region is different. The need for contact and dialogue at the ecumenical or any other level is linked with established priorities and available resources.

B, 2; B,3.

It is unlikely that the young men of today as they become the priests of tomorrow will work either happily or effectively unless they feel a measure of co-responsibility with their Bishops. Their training along the lines indicated by Cardinal Garrone will lead them to expect it. The organisation for assuring co-responsibility exists in the presbyteral council which is gradually proving it potential.

Perhaps now, and as my final consideration I might refer to a point that I resumed briefly in the position paper. It is this: are enough changes being made in planning for the future to guarantee the material support of our priests and their helpers? It is certain, only to mention one point, that the regular supplies of Mass-stipends on which they relied in the past are now reduced. It may be that later on some priests will work for their livelihood in a gainful occupation; more and more students seek a readjustment that will free them from the distasteful need to beg for their personal upkeep. We must foresee their needs in advance so that inside and outside Africa the Church can muster necessary support from the faithful. I said earlier in passing that to cut off external support for the sake of a recognised conviction of the need for self-reliance would be missionary suicide. Self-reliance is fundamental but surely it cannot be the king-pin of development. It is a long-term aim. It is, if you like, a strategic objective; to make it a tactical necessity would be to deny in a way <sup>the</sup> solidarity of the universal Church with your own national or continental Church.

At the present moment a large amount of the support, both in funds and personnel, needed by the Church in Africa, comes from outside. This is right and just. It would be wrong to lay too heavy a burden on the poorer Churches... even the infant Church of Jerusalem needed help. It would be wrong to load the young Churches with easily prestige structures which they will not in the foreseeable future be able to maintain. It would be wrong to train priests and then leave them without the tools to do their work. It would be unjust to put money into bricks and mortar and leave our priests unprovided or anxious about their old age.

C,1.

Maybe the financial insecurity is providential; it is, at all events, a reminder from God that the situation we see today and which we foresee tomorrow imposes on us the duty of good housekeeping.

Our priests have proved themselves capable of making sacrifices in the past; they will do no less in the future, but they have a right to expect planning and good administration.

Our faithful all over the world, not least inside Africa, have also shown that they understand how the Christian vocation involves them in the apostolic work of the Church; they too will do no less tomorrow, but they have a right to expect from us an acknowledgement of our solidarity with them in the love of Christ.

A,1.

Illustration

1966 - 1969	Decrease of	1,276	men for the Jesuits
		364	" " O.M.I.
		139	" " Holy Ghost Fathers
		138	" " White Fathers
		101	" " S.M.A.
		68	" " Paris Foreign Mission

("Missi", Oct. 1969)

With between 30 and 40 ordinations Annually I get requests for personnel FROM 60 DIOCESES.

In October 1966 the White Fathers had 279 students in Theology

In October 1969 " " " 150 " "

There is little or no hope of reversing this downward trend in the FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

A,2.

Illustration

Missionary Institutes and Bishops may be tempted to CLING TO OLD INSTITUTIONS IN THE BUSH while the population has already moved into URBAN CENTRES.

A FEW EXAMPLES illustrate the EXTRAORDINARY RATE OF GROWTH.

A B I D J A N By 1975 estimated population of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  million.  
 More than half will be under 20 years of age.  
 They will be "de-ruralised" by technology.  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  of the diocesan population will be "urbanised"

(SEDOS Report, 70/p.547).

D A R es S A L A A M : population in 1940 ~ 36,000  
1967 ~300,000  
estimate 1985 ~1,000,000

(L.W.Swantz, Vivante Afrique, Oct.'68;41)

A C C R A : Population in 1948 ~ 136,000  
then work started on deep-water harbour at Tema.

1960 ~ 430,000  
1967 ~ 600,000  
estimate 1980 ~ 1,000,000

(J. Dilworth, AFER 10,1968, p.321)

L U S A K A : Population 1963 ~ 195,000  
1969 ~ 343,000

and  $1/4$  of Zambia's population lives on the Copperbelt.

(Impact, Bulletin of Episcopal Conference, Zambia)

UNESCO says in Addis Ababa Report 1969 "Same all over Africa."

A,3.

### Illustration

The FUTURE ELITE is to be found in the UNIVERSITIES and the other INSTITUTES OF HIGHER LEARNING.

Congo-Kinshasa : 1962/3 ~ 1968/9

Increase in Universities	1,200	to 5,400	students
Institutes of H. Learning	800	to 2,900	"

(SEDOS Documentation 70/507 from DIA 5/6/70)

Are the Priests ready to meet the human spiritual needs of this educated laity?

Does Church planning include active participation of this educated, influential, laity?

A,4.

Illustration

If the situation is bad in 1970 it looks disastrous in the light of reasonable forecasts for A.D. 2000!

Adrian Hastings (AFER 1970, p.173) estimates that there will be a worse situation in Africa in the year 2000 than

THERE IS AT THE PRESENT MOMENT IN THE SOUTH AMERICA.

We may or may not be impressed by his reasoning but we must be impressed by the situation NOW.

Are we in fact guilty at least by omission, of what he calls

"RIGID ADHERENCE TO UNWORKABLE CHURCH STRUCTURES IN THE VERY TEETH OF THE EVIDENCE" ?

A,5.

Illustration

In connection with the establishment of PRIORITIES in the FUNCTIONS TO WHICH PRIESTS ARE DESTINED, Fr. Hertsens of Pro Mundi Vita has made what I think are interesting remarks:

"One of the knotty problems of the clergy seems to me to be the plurality of ministries.....", I prefer to say the Multiplicity of Services expected from the average priest: celebrant of the eucharist, minister of the sacraments, evangelist, he also has to give inspiration in social fields, to teach and administer, to be chairman of councils, advisor to those in trouble, dispenser of alms and liaison officer of the Church.

The figures I gave in Appendix B to the position paper were based on the NUMBERS OF PRIESTS PRESENT IN COUNTRIES.

B U T O F T H E S E

between 30% and 40% are busy with administration  
teaching  
and other work  
which removes them from Pastoral work and Evangelising.

Congo-Kinshasa 1967 - 25% of priests teaching in schools (Actes, VIIe  
Assemblée Plénière de l'Episcopat)

Rwanda 1968 only 212 (54.4%) priests in PARISH MINISTRY

Burundi 1968 " 252 (60.5%) " " "

That is, in both countries together, 464 out of 804

(Recherche Inter-Africaine sur Catéchistes, Centre d'Etudes Socio-Religieuses, Bujumbura 1970, p.20)

Position paper no 3 for LUSAKA STUDY CONFERENCE 1970 shows that in AMECEA countries 300 PRIESTS ARE IN JUNIOR SEMINARIES.

Is there a DISPROPORTION between : relative value of work  
: number of priests in it?

"A division of responsibility among functionaries other than the priest is REALLY, THEOLOGICALLY possible (cf I Cor 12,28 Ephes. 4,11) and SEEMS EVEN DESIRABLE in some African countries."

- Fr. Hertsens.

Making reference to Fr. K.Rahner's article "The essence of priestly ministry" in Concilium no.43 (1969) p.80, Fr. Hertsens goes on to suggest it would be more in accord with post-conciliar theology to envisage a diversified ministry based on the needs of Christian communities.....given official recognition alongside the priesthood. It was a system of this sort that left to us the so-called Minor Orders.

THEN, he says, THE QUESTION OF FINDING SOLUTIONS TO THE PRIEST SHORTAGE IS SEEN IN A NEW LIGHT:

- are we willing to give to non-priests the non-sacerdotal functions in the Church?

- are there enough priests to assure realistic frequency in the Eucharistic Celebration?

A,6.

#### Illustration

1967 Guinea Expatriate missionaries expelled.

Diocese of Nzerekore 30 White Fathers leave.  
2 African priests remain.

Catechists and other lay leaders take responsibility formerly exercised by ordained priests. The missionary spirit has been awakened.

SEDOS 70/767

WHY do we wait for a painful experience before giving greater responsibility to laypeople?

ARE THEY NOT WAITING only for

- recognition
- invitation
- support

in order to EXPRESS THEIR NEW IDENTITY in economic, political and intellectual fields?

IS IT TO BE partnership and creative collaboration OR frustration, discouragement and perhaps anti-clerical feeling?

IT IS AT THIS POINT I THINK THAT SOME REFERENCE MUST BE MADE TO THE VEXED QUESTION OF ORDAINING MARRIED MEN .

If I am well informed, the Bishops of Gabon, Tchad, the Central African Republic, Congo-Brazzaville and Cameroun have applied to Cardinal Villot for permission to ordain married men in order to meet the most urgent pastoral needs ( La Croix, 1/7/70, p.7)

The letter of His Holiness Pope Paul to Cardinal Villot opened the door to this solution.

I would not agree with those who think that this could solve the whole problem.

ARCHBISHOP MIHAYO'S Paper for Lusaka indicated the core of the question when he asked what frequency in Eucharistic Celebration is required to assure a vital Eucharistic Community.

IF, in spite of the laity taking over as I suggested, all possible non-sacerdotal functions, THE PRESENT NUMBERS OF PRIESTS CANNOT GUARANTEE SUCH REASONABLE FREQUENCY, then in my opinion serious consideration should be given to the possibility of having a married clergy.

Taking up suggestions made by Fathers Neels and Lorimier at Lusaka I ask myself WHETHER IN SOME PLACES THE ORDINATION OF MARRIED MEN would not respond better to the needs of the SOCIAL STRUCTURES we see evolving in Africa.

Such ordained ministers

- would provide for their own needs and so have more dignity
- and being more closely integrated in their community they would have a clearer title to leadership.

A,7.

#### Illustration

1969 Uganda : Congregation "Apostles of Jesus" founded.

August 1970 - first five novices to take vows.

1970 Burundi : ARCHBISHOP MAKARAKIZA is sponsoring an African Institute of Priests and Laypeople to be initiated in 1971 with three priests at Bujumbura.

The scope of both Institutes is pan-African. Their aims  
- to overcome tribalism in Church development  
- to prepare a pool of missionaries for emergency.

A,8.

Illustration

ARCHBISHOP MARK MIHAYO, Position Paper no 2 (AMECEA Lusaka) p.7

"All of our dioceses are 'poor' when compared to those of Europe and America; BUT EVEN IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES THERE ARE GREAT INEQUALITIES AMONG US. If better provided dioceses were able to share personnel and funds with their poor neighbours we could be MUCH MORE SELF-RELIANT. Why could we not have a clergy pool among dioceses and even between countries?..... IT SEEMS TO ME that his kind of exchange could be an important advance towards building a united Africa and breaking down tribalism.....

A, 9.

Illustration

Paul KALANDA, Rector of Katigondo: Position Paper no. 4 Lusaka.

"WHAT HAS OFTEN HAPPENED TILL NOW AND WHAT IS STILL HAPPENING IN SOME COUNTRIES IS THAT EACH INDIVIDUAL BISHOP PLANS FOR HIS OWN DIOCESE AND PREPARES HIS MEN ACCORDING TO THE NEEDS HE HAS IN HIS DIOCESE. IT SO HAPPENS THAT MANY BISHOPS HAVE THE SAME NEEDS v.g. TO HAVE A THEOLOGIAN OR CANON LAWYER IN THE DIOCESE. THE RESULT OF THIS IS THAT WE GET TOO MANY MEN QUALIFIED IN ONE AND THE SAME SUBJECT WHERE THERE IS NO ONE IN OTHER FIELDS. THIS IS DUE IN GREAT PART TO LACK OF PLANNING."

B,1.

Illustration

In Appendix A on page 7 in the dossier I circulated, there were references to the reports on the Congo Seminaries..... FREQUENT STAFF CHANGES and consequent LACK OF STABILITY.

262 members of staff in four years in 17 seminaries which in the same period had 35 rectors.

I can think of seminaries both Junior and Senior where there were very few students, and yet a full staff was retained.

THERE HAVE BEEN REASONS FOR SUCH SITUATIONS

but have we to accept them still today?

- B,1 (a) Father Kalanda in Paper 4 for Lusaka indicated that there is immense importance in integrating Christian belief with African thought etc.

It calls for:

- Study of African traditional religions?
- Study of African moral values and social institutions
- Study of African world views, of cultural ideals?
- Study of Islamic contributions to African life?

- B,1 (b) I would like to quote here a passage from Father Bell's paper for the Lusaka AMECEA meeting:

"Some efforts are being made to broaden our vision by involvement of seminarians in so-called socio-pastoral activities, such as community development schemes, self-help projects, nation-building activities etc. But much more could be done in this line. I think it is in this perspective we must see the participation of seminarians in National Service. It can be an excellent pastoral preparation."

B,2

#### Illustration

The all-Africa Conference of Churches (Abidjan, 1969) noted WITH THANKFULNESS TO GOD the participation of four Roman Catholic official observers.

The Assembly urged their General Secretariate to develop contact with the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar TO DETERMINE THOSE AREAS OF COLLABORATION WHICH CAN REALISTICALLY BE INITIATED AND PROMOTED.....

- .....projects of Christian witness and service
- .....liturgical renewal
- .....ecumenical education of leaders and public.

The Secretariate for Promoting Christian Unity published in April 1970 the second part of its Ecumenical Directory. IT SHOWS HOW THE ECUMENICAL DIMENSION SHOULD BE PRESENT IN SEMINARY EDUCATION

(Tablet June 13th + 20th 1970, pp. 581, 605 Documentation Catholique 7/6/70 pp. 519 - 527)

Are we ready to authorise readjustment in Seminaries?

B,3

Illustration

THERE IS IN MANY PLACES MORE THAN ENOUGH WORK FOR THE PRIESTS LOOKING AFTER CHRISTIANS EVEN SO .....

Is it enough to say, as one Bishop said in answer to his colleague responsible for relations with non-Christians: "THERE ARE MOHAMMEDANS HERE, BUT THEY DON'T TROUBLE US."

We have I.P.E.A. but what is done in Seminaries to prepare priests for apostolate among non-Christians?

C,1

Illustration

In a CONFIDENTIAL Technical Report (no.1) 1969-70 for the Research Survey of Bukumbi Pastoral Institute, by Fr. Horan and Sr O'Connor, we find that LOCAL RESOURCES CAME TO 18% OF TOTAL REVENUE NEEDED FOR MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL EXPENSES, NOT IN ONE DIOCESE ONLY BUT IN THE WHOLE COUNTRY.

If I may quote:

"A major conclusion is that, as long as even operating costs remain at this level (approximately 37 million shillings per year) or anywhere remotely near it, it would be foolish to hope for local voluntary self-support in the foreseeable future, at least on this national level."

SEDOS 70/771

ITINERARIES OF SUPERIORS GENERAL AND ASSISTANTS

VERONA FATHERS: Fr. T. Agostoni already in Brazil.  
Returns 31 - 10 - 1970.  
USA : November.

Fr. O. Sina  
Portugal: 23/30 - 10 - 1970  
Spain : 24 - 10 - 1970 -- 10 - 11 - 1970.

DIARY

- 19 - 10 - 1970      Meeting of Sr. J. Gates, Sr. A.M. de Vreede,  
Sr. M. Michael, Fr. Tonna, Miss Capes to discuss  
preparations for the November Seminar on the  
role of Catholic in the Health Services in the  
developing Countries.
- 20 - 10 - 1970      Fr. Bano visits Sj. Secretariats.
- 21 - 10 - 1970      Meeting on China.  
  
Meeting of the Executive Committee.
- 22 - 10 - 1970      Fr. Aguilo works out the last details at the  
Secretariat, of the Mass Media directory.