

SECOND INTERSESSION: DECEMBER 1963 TO SEPTEMBER 1964

#1: Paul's trip to the Holy Land – Jan 4 to Jan 6 – was a real sensation. The high light of the trip was the meeting with Athenagoras Patriarch of Constantinople. It gave rise to new hopes for the council especially in its document On Ecumenism

#2: The Dopfner Plan - Paul hoped that this third session would be the last session. To speed things up they adopted what was to become the Dopfner Plan – this was a plan to reduce the documents to six: on the church, on bishops, on revelation, on the laity, on ecumenism and on the effective presence of the church in the world. The other original schemas ... on religious life, on the missions, on the clergy, would be reduced to a set of propositions that could be voted on without discussion. However this met with opposition almost immediately upon the return of the fathers of the council

#3: Paul's Thirteen Suggestions - The schema On the Church continued to have problems – especially with regard to collegiality. The minority concern was that doctrine contained a change in the teaching of Vatican I on papal primacy, and perforce entailed a diminution of papal authority and freedom to act. They felt that this concept was a betrayal of the tradition of the church.

By May this schema had gone through a complete revision. But then Paul intervened and sent them 13 “suggestions” regarding collegiality. This was to become what would be termed the “red-pencil” of Paul. What perturbed most in the commissions working on this document was that he waited until the document had been completed to deliver his suggestions. The commission ended up rejecting Paul's limitation. He had stated that the authority of the college of bishops be exercised according to the prescriptions of the head (the pope). The commission stuck to its broader definition that the college of cardinals would never be exercised independently of the Roman Pontiff. And as for Paul's description of the pope as “head of the church”, (another of his suggestions) the commission preferred “visible head” or “supreme pastor” since Christ was the head of the church. They also rejected the idea where Paul had stated that the pope was “responsible only to the Lord” – because he was “responsible to revelation to the fundamental structure of the church, to the sacraments, to the definitions of previous councils, etc. – a gentle correction to a revealing misstep in theology.

#4: September 13, Cardinals Memo to the Pope - The day before the council opened Paul received a letter signed by 25 cardinals (16 from the Curia) and by 13 superior generals of men's orders – including McIntyre of Los Angeles – warning that the teaching of chapter three, on episcopal consecration and collegiality, posed a mortal danger to the church and undermined its monarchical structure. It was written by Cardinal Larraona and sought the other signatures.

“The Church would be changed from monarchical to ‘Episcopalian’ and collegial, and would do so, supposedly by reason of divine ordinance and in virtue of episcopal consecration. The very best that can be said about the chapter, is that it is a novelty – a novelty supported by vague and illogical arguments.”

The Pope had to intervene. He should take the two subjects off the agenda, submit them to a commission of theologians of his own choosing, suspend the council indefinitely after this third period, and then, after hearing the report of the theologians, conclude the council with a fourth and final period at some future date. The letter put the full burden for the council on the pope's shoulders.

Paul was furious...not only at the timing ... but what because it was based on debatable arguments. He received other memoranda both for and against chapter 3. Later as the vote on Chapter 3 would draw near, he asked Felici whether it might be advisable, given the consternation, to postpone it. Felici responded with the advice that "In the end it is necessary to have faith in the consciences of the council fathers, in the force of truth, and above all in the leap of the Holy Spirit." Paul dropped the request.

#5: August 6 – Paul's Encyclical "Ecclesiam Suam" – Paul's Encyclical "On the Church". In it he avoided the hot button topics (collegiality); and only once used the expression "People of God". It was the first encyclical actually written by a pope – rather than a theologian for him. It has a direct impact on the council in its use of the term "dialogue" – an idea that Paul picked up from Martin Buber. In the encyclical it occurs 77 times. In the original document "On Ecumenism" it is absent; in the final draft the word "dialogue" is found throughout.

#6: Other documents were also having problems

A. On Ecumenism: The first three chapters were secure. The two chapters now detached ... on the Jews and on Religious Freedom ... were meeting fierce opposition.

B. On the Bishops: Ended up being complete reworked, especially in light of Lumen Gentium

C. On Revelation: Had the humongous task of processing 2,481 recommendations.

D. On the Laity: almost threatened to become a series of propositions, continued to be worked on.

E. "Schema 17" (On the Church in the World) became "Schema 13" and was now called Gaudium et Spes. By this time there were several versions floating around and in competition with each other – a Roman text, a Malines text, a Zurich text, and a later Polish text (under the direction of Karol Wojtyla) – would be rejected as the basis for the document.

#7: Five new stipulations were incorporated in the Regulations.

- The old Council of Presidents still existed, but its function was now simply to ensure that the Regulations were respected.
- The Coordinating Committee supervised the revision of the schemas.
- The Ten Commissions actually did the revising of the documents, but again their membership was increased.
- The Moderators directed the action on the floor.
- The General Secretariat of the Council (Felici) was the liaison between the presidents, the Coordinating Committee, the moderators and took care of housekeeping chores.

But the old unresolved question of where the buck stopped continued to trouble the council. The papal apartments had begun to compete with the floor of St. Peter's as the council's center of gravity.

#8: On the opening day the periti received a stern warning to "shut up" and speak only when spoken to. They were not to "spread their ideas" and were not to speak to the press. This warning apparently came from Paul himself.

THIRD SESSION OF VATICAN COUNCIL II – 1964

OPENING PUBLIC SESSION - September 14, 1964

The Council opens with some 2,200 fathers present. Something new – the Pope Concelebrate Mass with twenty-four others bishops from nineteen different countries – an implementation of Sacrosanctum Concilium, the document on the Liturgy published at the end of the last session. After Mass Paul gave a long speech, with a focus on the relationship between the papal and the episcopal offices.

AGENDA ITEM #1: Lumen Gentium

- The first four chapters of the document had been thoroughly debated the previous year.
- Although Chapter 4, on the call to holiness, had begot two new chapters – on religious and on the laity – they too had in effect been debated and now just needed to be voted on.
- The only chapter still to be discussed were seven, on the eschatological character of the church, and then the final chapter on Mary.

When the authors of the September 13 memo realized that it had no effect on the course of this document agitated for re-opening debate. However the majority was against it; as were the Regulations. A compromise was proposed. Before the voting on Chapter 3 took place they were to hear three presentations arguing for the chapter; and one arguing against it (reflecting the proportion of votes over this issue the prior year)

September 15

Cardinal Browne introduces Chapter 7. Twelve speakers then approved; the next day three more – all with some minor qualifications and then the council voted in favor of the Chapter. Toward the end of the morning session, Felici announced how the voting on this Schema would proceed.

- For each of the chapters one, four, five and six there would be only one vote, on the chapter as a whole.
- On chapter two (people of God) there would be four votes on specific sections within the chapter, followed by a vote on the whole.
- On chapter three there would be, after the four presentations were made, thirty-nine votes on alternative wordings of specific sections, and only then a vote on the chapter as a whole.
- Voting on specific sections would be a simple “yes” or “no”.
- Voting on the chapter as a whole could be “yes”, “no” or “yes with qualifications” meaning further changes could be made.

September 16

The Council, after voting and approving of Felici’s plan (2170 yes 32 no), then also voted on Chapter One (2114 yes to 11 no). On subsequent days they would vote on Chapters Two, Four, Five and Six with similar favorable votes. The Fathers then moved to Chapter 8, “On Mary”.

AGENDA ITEM #2: ON THE BISHOPS

September 18

Having concluded their debated “On the Church”, they now moved to the schema “On the Bishops”. Assuming that Lumen Gentium would be accepted, the document begins by presuming collegiality. Chapter 5 calls for a body to make

collegiality a functioning reality – a rotating and standing committee of regional bishops to advise the pope and the Curia; which in turn called for a reform of the Curia in light of these developments. Discussion on the schema lasted only four days. Later in this period (November 4-7) it would be voted on – but received so many qualifications that it was sent back to eventually become a revised and expanded document.

- In this final version it would emphasize the formation of episcopal conferences.
- It would stress the collaborative relationship between bishop and priests
- It would recommend establishing diocesan councils to help the bishop administer his diocese

September 20

Larraona sent another note to Paul warning about the dangers of Chapter 3 in Lumen Gentium

September 21

The four presentations “for” and “against” Chapter 3 of Lumen Gentium were held

Cardinal Franic spoke against the chapter and pointed out three problems:

- a. that the office of bishop was the fullness of priesthood to which the candidate was sacramentally ordained
- b. that the bishops formed a college with responsibility for the whole church
- c. that the office of permanent deacon be reinstated without imposing the discipline of celibacy.

Cardinal Konig, Archbishop Parente, and Bishop Louis H. Henriquez Jiminez spoke in favor of the chapter. When they had done, it was announced that the 40 votes for this chapter would take place from September 21 to September 30.

Once again Larraona sent another note to Paul praising Franic’s presentation – again arguing against Chapter 3. He also informed that Pope that there was a rumor going around that Paul wanted the chapter to be approved and so not wanting to “displease Your Holiness” they were going to vote for it even though they were not convinced of its soundness.

As the votes for individual idea would take place, they were all exceedingly supported, with the minority never managing to get more than 15% of the voters to say “no”. The only question that was defeated was the provision for ordaining “young men” to the diaconate not bound by celibacy. (Married men were okay).

Then it came time for voting for the entire chapter. Again the minority managed to wrangle a new twist – in calling for two votes – a vote o the part of the chapter dealing with collegiality; a vote on the part of the chapter dealing with the diaconate. But again both votes were overwhelmingly affirmative. And so all that now needed was to polish up the chapter based on the final set of qualifications presented.

AGENDA ITEM #3: ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

September 23

The document came to the floor and the opposition was strong and seemingly more widespread among the bishops than the opposition to collegiality. It was seen as having grave consequences for how the church dealt with governments. For Americans the declaration in its final form seems almost obvious. For the Catholic Church however the document ran counter to theories and practices stemming back to the reformation of the Peace of Augsburg (1555)

– cuius regio, eius religio - whoever rules decides the religion of the state

The basic tenet of this view was that only truth has a right to freedom; and that “error” has no rights.

- If the majority of the citizens were Catholics, the state had the duty to profess the Catholic faith and to do all it reasonably could to promote and defend it. It was duty bound to discourage or even suppress other religions, which might include denying their adherents some civil rights.
- In certain situations, in order to avoid greater evils, it might be necessary to tolerate other religions and thus allow their free practice.
- When Catholics are a minority, the state has the duty from natural law to guarantee them full citizenship and free practice of their religion because the state must foster the pursuit of truth, which the Catholic Church possesses.

This had all been challenged by John Courtney Murray – more concerned to the Curia than any other theologian – because it struck at the heart of how they viewed their diplomacy with other nations. He had advocated for separation of Church and State

- In 1951-52 he entered into a public debate over the issue with two other American theologians who defended the above traditional ideas
- In 1953 Cardinal Ottaviani gave a speech at the Lateran University attacking Murray's ideas
- In 1955 forced Jesuits to get him to stop publishing
- In 1960 his idea resurfaced in the election of the first Catholic as president

When the American Bishops came to the Council they advocated the new changes (à la Murray) – to the point where this almost came to be seen as an “American Issue”. Murray was appointed a peritus for the council.

The schema when presented was based on two fundamental principles:

- Human beings, created in the image and likeness of God and raised to an even higher dignity by the redemption Christ effected, are called by that very fact to seek and follow the will of God in their lives as that is made manifest to them through their consciences. No government has the right to obstruct that project so long as it does not infringe on the rights of others or hinder the common good.
- This idea is based on the church's perennial teaching that the act of faith, to be genuine, must be free and sincere, not coerced. The freedom to follow one's conscience in religious matters is possessed by everybody, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. Governments are forbidden, therefore, to impose civil disabilities on citizens because of their religion and to persecute them for it. Rather they should indirectly foster the religious life that, according to the dictates of their consciences, the citizens lead.

This document more than any other gives evidence of the three main approaches adopted by the Second Vatican Council: resourcement, aggiornamento, and evolution of ideas.

OPPONENTS:

After the document was presented Ruffini stood and proclaimed simply: “Since by definition there is only one true religion, it does not admit freedom of choice.” He was followed by Cardinal Fernando Quiroga y Palacios, archbishop of Santiago de Compostela: “The doctrine proposed here is not evolution but revolution.” Bishop Jose Lopez Ortiz of Tui Vigo, Spain: He simply refused to accept a fundamental assumption of the declaration, that governments were incapable of judging between true and false religions. Cardinal Ottaviani asserted that freedom of conscience was an expression introduced to legitimate religious indifferentism. “I do not understand why a person who errs is worthy of honor. I understand that the person is worthy of consideration, of tolerance, of cordiality, of charity. But I do not understand why worthy of honor.”

DEFENDERS:

Cardinal Cushing of Boston, Cardinal Meyer of Chicago, Cardinal Spellman of New York, Cardinal Ritter of Saint Louis. But not only Americans. Bishops from behind the Iron Curtain who often were against other documents were highly in favor of this one. On September 28 debate ended. It had stretched over four days, with forty-four speeches. And at this point Murray become involved in rewriting the document, along with Pietro Pavan, who had written *Pacem in Terris* for John XXIII

AGENDA ITEM #4: ON THE JEWS AND NON-CHRISTIANS

This schema arose because of John XXIII who in 1960 told Cardinal Bea to deal with the relationship with the Jews. This he wanted specifically because of his own personal witness to the results of the Holocaust and WWII. He had been greatly influenced by the Jewish scholar Jules Isaac (published a work entitled *Jesu et Israel*, which undermined the traditional teaching on the Jews within the church.

- That the dispersion of the Jews was a providential punishment for the crucifixion
- That Jewish religion at the time of Christ had degenerated into legalism without a soul
- That the Jews had committed deicide
- That these “facts” justified anti-Semitism

In addition there had been a real concerted effort on the part of theologians to have the topic discussed.

In 1961 word leaked out that a document on the Jews was being prepared. It greatly concerned the Arab countries – that the Vatican would recognize the state of Israel as part of its work. The World Jewish Congress got wind of this and acting on its own appointed Chaim Wardi as an “unofficial observer” to the council. This was confirmed by Israel’s Foreign Ministry and Ministry of Religion. All of which was now to politicize the topic. Wadi never became an observer and in 1962 Cicognani removed the schema from the agenda.

However after the first session Cardinal Bea presented memoranda to John XXIII arguing to have it reinstated. The World Council of Churches had recently called on all Christians to condemn anti-Semitism. How could the Catholic Church stand aloof from such a humanitarian call.

Complication arose because during the first interval between Sessions I and II the play, “The Deputy” came out. The affair deeply disturbed the Vatican, especially Paul, a personal friend of Pius XII. Would work done at the council somehow validate this tarnished reputation of Pius XII.

In addition, there was the plain “anti-Semitism” of John’s gospel – which cannot be denied.

After much discussion and debate it became clear by the fall of 1963 that the council could not treat the Jews without treating other non-Christian religions, especially Islam, which like Christianity and Judaism, descended from the patriarch Abraham. And bishops from the new churches also wanted Buddhism and Hinduism to be treated. And so was presented a much expanded document.

Two main issues that caused the most concern:

The question of deicide – did the Jews (then or collectively) kill God?

The issue of political interference – Zionism, the State of Israel, Palestinians, Arabs

Discussion opened on September 28 and continued for two more days. Bishops from the Arab countries pleaded that it be withdrawn. Ruffini commented: "We do not need exhortations to love the Jews. They need exhortations to love us." At the end of the discussions it was decided that the schema needed to be re-written.

October 9

The bomb dropped. The Secretariat held a meeting to review what had been done concerning the two declarations (Religious Liberty and Jews and Non-Jews). At the meeting Bea read two letters he had just received from Felici.

In the first Felici informed him that the pope wanted a new text drafted on religious liberty – written by a mixed commission. Four persons were to be added to the commission: Browne, Marcel LeFebvre, Fr. Fernandez (Master General of the Dominicans) and Colombo – all publically opposed to the document.

In the second Felici inform him that the pope wanted the subject of the Jews to go back and be a part of Lumen Gentium as it had originally started and under the heading of "people of God", and not as a separate declaration; and that this too would be written by a mixed commission made up of members of the Secretariat chosen by Bea and the Doctrinal Commission chosen by Ottaviani. Almost immediately word of Felici's two letters reached the media, which exploded with conspiracy theories.

What happened? For sure the Pope had intervened. He was under great pressure from all quarters (and could not handle pressure well). Confounding the situation is that Felici was the go-between and was not the most objective of participants when talking to either sides of the issue. Cardinal Bea wrote immediately to the Pope. Thirteen leading figures of the council (Frings, Lienart, Alfrink, Konig, Dopfner, Meyer and Ritter) also sent Paul a letter. It was short and blunt. That this was a violation of the procedures and freedom of the council. Within a few days the matter was settled and everything returned to the way it was before Cardinal Bea had received the two letters. No one apologized; no one explained anything. The schema were safe.

AGENDA ITEM #5: ON REVELATION

On September 30 this document was reintroduced.

Change: In the original document revelation consisted of truths or doctrines; in this document revelation is defined as God's self-manifestation which expressed itself in God's action in history as well as in pronouncements. It asserted that God is the source of revelation – not Scripture or Tradition. It asserted that the church's magisterium is "not above the word of God but acts as its servant." The new text the minority found deeply distressing. The key question for them was – are there truths in Tradition that are not contained in the Scriptures? For them the answer was yes – and they wanted the text to say so explicitly. The crucial paragraph was paragraph 8 – where tradition was presented in a more dynamic way – as a symbiotic relationship to Scripture and as the vital principle of transmission and interpretation of what God had revealed. – so the question for the majority became not so much what tradition contained as how it operated.

October 6

Debate on the text ended. It looked as if it would pass. A few days after the end of the debate, Cardinals Ruffini, Siri, Browne, Larraona and Santos of Milan met to assess the situation and devise a strategy for the withdrawal of the text.

AGENDA ITEM #6: ON THE LAY APOSTOLATE

It was introduced to the council by Cardinal Cento. His closing comment: “The laity are not simply in the church, but with us they are the church.” During the interval and according to the Dopfner plan it was to be relegated to a series of propositions. However, since then it had grown to a full blown document of five chapters.

The expanded version affirmed that the laity had an apostolate in the church, which had its sacramental basis in their baptism and confirmation. The laity thus participated in the “royal priesthood of Christ and in his mission”. Their apostolate had two aspects:

Working to help others for their progress toward God

Working to bring justice and love into the milieu

All in collaboration with other Christians and with all persons of good will.

It was basically a non-controversial document – although Cardinal Browne asked that an explicit statement be added that lay people were obliged to obey their parish priest. One intervention raised eye-brows when Bishop Bauerlin of Croatia defined “the first and principal task” of the lay apostolate to be the begetting of children.

October 13 discussion ended with an intervention by Patrick Keegan, the first ever layman to speak at a general session of the council. He supported and praised the schema.

AGENDA ITEM #7: ON THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF THE PRIESTHOOD.

Again according to the Dopfner plan the text had been greatly reduced. It was presented by Archbishop Marty of Rheims. He pointed out that the authors decided to emphasize the positive rather than dwell on the problems and dangers that priests faced today. It presented an ideal of the priest as following Christ in a path of poverty, chastity and obedience that sounded similar to the vows that members of religious orders pronounced.

The issue of celibacy was left out even though privately it was THE topic of conversation behind closed doors. It did call for an end to the benefice system.

The first speaker was Cardinal Meyer of Chicago and he presented the difficulty that most bishops had with the document. It seemed strange that the bishops and the laity got full treatment but that priests were dealt with in such meager measure. Forty more bishops spoke on the schema, with a variety of comments; but it became clear that the text would not pass muster.

October 15 the fathers voted to send the document back for revision. This marked the beginning of the end of the Dopfner plan – and hopes of ending the council with this third session.

AGENDA #8: ON EASTER CATHOLIC CHURCHES

The most fundamental point of the schema was the guarantee that their rites, procedures, and spiritual patrimony were to be respected and protected.

When the fathers began to rise and make comments, especially the Eastern bishops, they made certain points:

- Do not identify the Catholic Church with the Latin rite
- Do not continue the longstanding and continuing attempts to make the Eastern churches conform to the Latin rite
- Respect the patriarchates and remember how they functioned collegially with the bishop of Rome in the past.

After two days of discussion the schema was accepted and prepared for final approval at the end of the session.

AGENDA #9: ON THE CHURCH IN THE MODERN WORLD

Called schema 13 was introduced by Cardinal Cento on October 20. The debate and comments would last until November 21 – very close to the closing of this session.

Paul had announced that he was going to leave for the Eucharistic Congress in Bombay India at the beginning of December – so this session would have to be done by then.

The length of the debate pointed out how complex the document was and how important the bishops felt about it. It is unique in that it turned attention from what councils had always been concerned with- internal church affairs – to the world outside. It projected an image of the church as helpmate to all persons of good will, whether Catholic or not, whether Christian or not, and as a beacon of hope for a better world.

Coming out of the Doctrinal Commission Ottaviani distanced himself from the document. He expressed a real distaste for the whole thing.

The document had four short chapters (on the human vocation, on the church in service to God and humankind, on how Christians should conduct themselves in the world in which they lived, and on some special responsibilities of Christians in today's world) , plus an introduction and conclusion.

It then was also unique in that it had five appendixes attached: on the human person in society, on marriage and the family, on the promotion of culture, on economic and social issues, and on human solidarity and peace. This raised some questions as to whether they were or were not part of the text. When the document was returned in the fourth session, these appendixes would be re-admitted as Part II of the document itself.

The chief theme throughout the document was “dignity” and “human solidarity”. The relationship between the Church and the world is reciprocal: the church plays an important and even indispensable role in helping the world realize its best ideals and the world helps the church in being true to itself. This last part was unprecedented, given the long nineteenth century.

The first couple of speakers were positive; but then a number of bishops rose to offer suggestions, problems and criticisms. Not until the debate on Chapter Three, however was a fundamental concern raised that would assume considerable importance AFTER the council.

Ratzinger the first to raise the issue. Speaking in his name, Frings stated that the schema relied too heavily on a theology of the Incarnation and slighted the cross. The mystery of the cross cautions us about the world and impels us in our following of Christ to a life of sacrifice and of abstinence from worldly goods.

SPLIT IN THE MAJORITY:

Augustinian or eschatological tradition: German theologies – more negative on human capabilities and the possibility of the reconciliation between “nature and grace”. Luther the main proponent; Karl Barth theology the most current version. We are sinful and need the grace of God to be saved. Periti: Ratzinger and Rahner

Easter Father or sanctification tradition: French theologies – here the incarnation is the key mystery, through which all creation was reconciled and raised to a higher dignity. Aquinas was the principal spokesperson; Teilhard de Chardin theology the most current version. Periti: Congar and Danielou

There followed more than 150 speeches on the schema. Some of the other major themes discussed:

Repeated call for a condemnation of Marxism and the resistance that call elicited.

Bishop Gerard Coderre, of Saint-Jean de Quebec speaking in the name of forty bishops dedicated his entire intervention stressing the obligation of the church to promote the position of woman in society.

The threat of nuclear warfare also weighed heavily on a number of bishops

Article 21 was entitled “The Dignity of Marriage and the Family” – which turned out to be highly explosive.

- It decided to avoid using the traditional terms of primary (procreation of children) and secondary (remedy for concupiscence and the mutual help of the spouses) ends of marriage. Instead it spoke at length about the holiness and goodness of the love that bound the spouses; only then did it mention children as the fulfillment of that love.
- It made the consciences of the spouses the deciding factor for the number of children they should have.
- It did not explicitly reaffirm a condemnation of birth control.

These ideas the minority could not accept. And underneath all of the discussion seethed the question of birth control; made now more urgent because of the pill. However this topic had been taken off the table for discussion – and the bishops were reminded of this three times between Oct 23 and Oct 29.

The majority argued that marriage had evolved like every historical reality and therefore the church could not just repeat old formulas. His Beatitude Maximus was more blunt – “I call your attention today ... to birth control.” It is a pressing problem that the council must confront. For the faithful it is a sad and agonizing issue, for there is a cleavage between the official teaching of the church and the contrary practice in most families. Let me speak frankly: do not the official positions of the church in this matter require revision in the light of modern research – theological, medical, psychological, sociological?

However it was Suenens speech that caused a sensation: He worried that a simplistic reiteration of Casti Connubii would carry the day. Two features of his speech caused a stir:

- He more than intimated that a change might be in order. We have learned a few things, he said, since Aristotle and Augustine. “I plead with you, brothers. We must avoid another ‘Galileo case’. One is enough for the Church.”
- At the very end of his speech he then called on Paul to make public the names of the members of the Papal Commission set up to study the issue.

When he finished applause broke out. (remember – not allowed)

The response: Paul was angry. Visibly upset in a very difficult audience with Suenens shortly afterward, he reproached him for lack of judgment and, without explicitly asking for it, made clear that he expected a retraction. About a week later, Suenens did .. affirming that the decision in the matter rested fully in the hands of the ‘supreme magisterium’.

THE TROUBLED LAST DAYS

AGENDA ITEM #10: ON THE MISSIONS

November 6 the fathers took up the schema on the Missions. Once more it had been reduced in size; once more the bishops said it required more; after three days of discussion it was sent back with a vote of 1,601 to 311.

A day before it was introduced Felici announced that the Pope would attend that session and speak to the subject. Surprise everyone – no pope had attended a working session. Still not clear why he did.

So after Mass in the Coptic rite, he gave a short address commending the schema to the council. This raised further questions – didn’t he know how wide spread the dissatisfaction was? So when the document was sent back Paul was mortified.

AGENDA ITEM #11: ON RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Many felt this document was superfluous because a chapter on this topic had been added to Lumen Gentium. But since the bishops, laity, and now priests had their own documents – so should the religious. While the document stressed the idea of agiornamento and it did pass 1155 to 822 – that was a sizeable objection. So the document was sent back for revision.

AGENDA ITEM #12: ON THE TRAINING OF PRIESTS

The document stressed the responsibility for spiritual formation of the priest; helping them to the call to holiness; gave primacy to Scripture as the ‘soul’ of theology; and put responsibility for their training in the hands of local episcopal conferences.

It also passed with a vote of 2074 to 41; and was sent back for revision. While there it would undergo elaboration and stylistic recasting.

November 16

A new “storm” hit the council...and would be called “the BLACK week”. Paul intervened on three schemas.

1. He postponed the vote on accepting the schema On Religious Liberty as the base text.
2. He sent the council a list of nineteen emendations to the decree On Ecumenism
3. He proposed a “Preliminary Explanatory Note” as a preface to Lumen Gentium that interpreted the meaning of collegiality in Chapter Three.

1.....

What infuriated the bishops was that both the Decree on Ecumenism and On the Church were scheduled for final votes on November 21.

They were to vote on the individual chapters of On Religious Liberty. The problem came when it was turn to once again decide about Chapter 3 (collegiality). Three separate letters to the Council of Presidents objected that the document had been so thoroughly reworked that it was in essence a new text and should be treated as such – debated again.

On November 18 Felici announced this and said that the next day the bishops would vote whether to vote on the document or not.

November 19 Bishop Carli delivered a letter arguing that such a vote on the vote would violate the Regulations. A short while later, Cardinal Tisserant abruptly announced that a vote on the schema would be postponed until next year. The Assembly was shocked. The American Bishops lead a group to petition Paul.

When Bishop De Smedt proceed as scheduled to present the revised text he was repeatedly interrupted by sustained applause. When he finished, applause thundered through the basilica. It went on and on as if never to end. The longest ovation in the four years of the council ... the only way they knew how to express their anger.

November 20 the Paul announced that he would uphold the decision of the presidents. The vote would be postponed until the next year. The dismay in the basilica was almost palpable. In retrospect, despite the motives of the minority that instigated this move, it proved wise. The next text was indeed twice as long as the original and did need time to be studied.

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As for the 19 emendations to the text On Ecumenism, they seem to have come from a longer list of suggestions he received from sources that even today have not been identified. It was not so much the content of the emendations – but the procedural problems: having been submitted after the debates had taken place; so late in the day that they could not be discussed.

However the final vote was taken on November 20 – and even with the emendations received 2,054 to 64 votes. If his intent had been to win over the minority it failed – the number of negative votes had not changed from prior votes.

3 ...

As for adding the Explanatory Note to On the Church. It was introduced to the Fathers on November 16. It was the norm according to which chapter three was to be interpreted and understood. They were furious. It was if the pope was telling the council what the council meant in its own document.

Again the minority was ecstatic. Siri stated: "Everything is all right! The Holy Spirit has entered the council ... The pope has dug in his heels, and only he could have done it."

The father had no choice. They voted. It won, 2,156 to 5. So it did in fact sway the minority to vote for the document. But at a high price. It changed the very substance of the text the bishops had hashed out. No matter what the pope hoped to accomplish, he in fact gave those who opposed collegiality a tool they could – and would – use to interpret the chapter as a reaffirmation of the status quo.

SOME OBSERVERS ACTUALLY MARK THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL WITH THIS INTERVENTION.

November 21

The third session ends with a Public Session in the basilica attended by large numbers of dignitaries, special guests and others. During the session Paul solemnly promulgated three documents: On the Church, On the Oriental Church and On Ecumenism. There were now five documents standing as a result of Vatican II – these three and the two from the previous year (Session 2).

But there were still disappointed surprises to come. In his speech Paul proclaimed how he was pleased with Lumen Gentium. "The most important word to be said about the promulgation [of that document] is that through it no change is made in traditional teaching." As he went on to speak of the character of the church as both monarchical and hierarchical (rather than primatial and collegial) most were disappointed. "Monarch" does not appear once in the document.

Then he announced that he would be proclaiming a new title for Mary – she was declared to be "Mother of the Church". Again the father were aware that they had rebuffed attempts to ratify this title for Mary in the council; that it would displease the Protestants; but most fundamentally seemed to put Mary above the Church rather than within it, where she was the preeminent model for Christians. Philips interpreted the declaration made a deliberate assertion by the pope of his primacy.

That day Paul's face was grim. As he was carried out of the basilica through row upon row of bishops, some applauded perfunctorily, some not at all. No one doubted that the week had seriously damaged the relationship between the pope and the assembly.