

Curia Holds Cabinet Session

Vatican City (RNS) — Pope Paul VI met with heads of the departments of the Vatican's Curia — the central administrative arm of the Church — in what could be described as one of the first "stock-takings" of his cabinet since he called for its reform in 1967.

It was understood from an announcement that the pontiff heard reports from department officials. The announcement, however, failed to shed any light on one of the most discussed topics these days in Vatican circles — the resignation of Curia heads in line with a 1967 papal order that all such personnel will be expected to offer to resign after five years in office.

Up to the time of the papal decree Curia appointments

were for indefinite periods of time — many holding to their posts well into their 80s and even some into their 90s.

Although the cabinet meeting was billed as a highly important and informative one for the pontiff and the Curia heads, there was no mention of precisely what was discussed or what decisions were reached.

The meeting was held almost five years to the day after Pope Paul set down wide-ranging Curia reforms that he said would streamline the "Vatican cabinet" operation and bring it more in line with the directives handed down by Vatican II.

The announcement said 17

cardinals heading the various Vatican departments, along with key officials of the Secretariat of State, were called upon to give brief resumes of their moves and progress in the direction of updating and reform.

The Pope spoke to the group at the end of the session, the Vatican said. He noted the pleasant contrast to the acceptance of the Curia's actions since Council reforms, as compared to earlier years when the Curia often was condemned for political rather than religious motivation in its actions.

The Pope said the motives of the Roman Curia today are purely religious and have no connection with politics or diplomacy.

Vatican, Poland Agree on Land

Warsaw (RNS) — The Polish government has reached agreement with the Vatican on settling a long-standing question of Roman Catholic Church administration of Poland's western territories, according to informed sources here.

The sources said the Vatican is expected to announce its recognition of the former German lands as Polish now that Bonn has completed ratification of a goodwill treaty with Warsaw signed in December 1971.

In the treaty ratified by the West German Parliament last May, the two nations agree that the Oder-Neisse line is Poland's western frontier. This puts nearly 40,000 square miles of pre-war Germany inside Poland.

It still now pending an international agreement, the Vatican has refused to accede to requests from both the Polish Catholic hierarchy and the Polish government to appoint ordinaries that is permanent resident bishops to officially designated Polish dioceses in the western territories.

'Spirit of Sacrifice' Emphasized by Pope

Vatican City (RNS) — Pope Paul VI, in an address to representatives of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual (Franciscans), said that the renewal of religious life "as desired by the Second Vatican Council" entails "continual progress in charity in the spirit of sacrifice and in adherence to the work and cross of Christ."

"It is an hour of grace which will not easily be repeated," he said. "It is an invitation to follow the work of the Holy Spirit which we cannot refuse. It is an invitation which makes the conscience of believers feel the urge to do everything possible for the evangelization of the world."

But for some people unfortunately, the Pope added, "this anxiety to respond to the needs of the moment is often transformed into a restless agitation which embodies itself in a desire for release from the past in order to follow completely new ways or ways that have not been sufficiently tested."

Pope Paul went on. "The renewal of religious life, as desired

by the second Vatican Council, tends toward a wider discipline and a more modern way of coming into contact with today's society, but not to the detriment of the real and authentic meaning of religious life, which always involves continual progress in charity in the spirit of sacrifice and in adherence to the word and cross of Christ."

The "Way of the Cross," he said, is what gives "genuine significance" to a religious life in keeping with the example and teaching of Christ. Who said "He who wishes to follow Me must deny himself and take up his cross."

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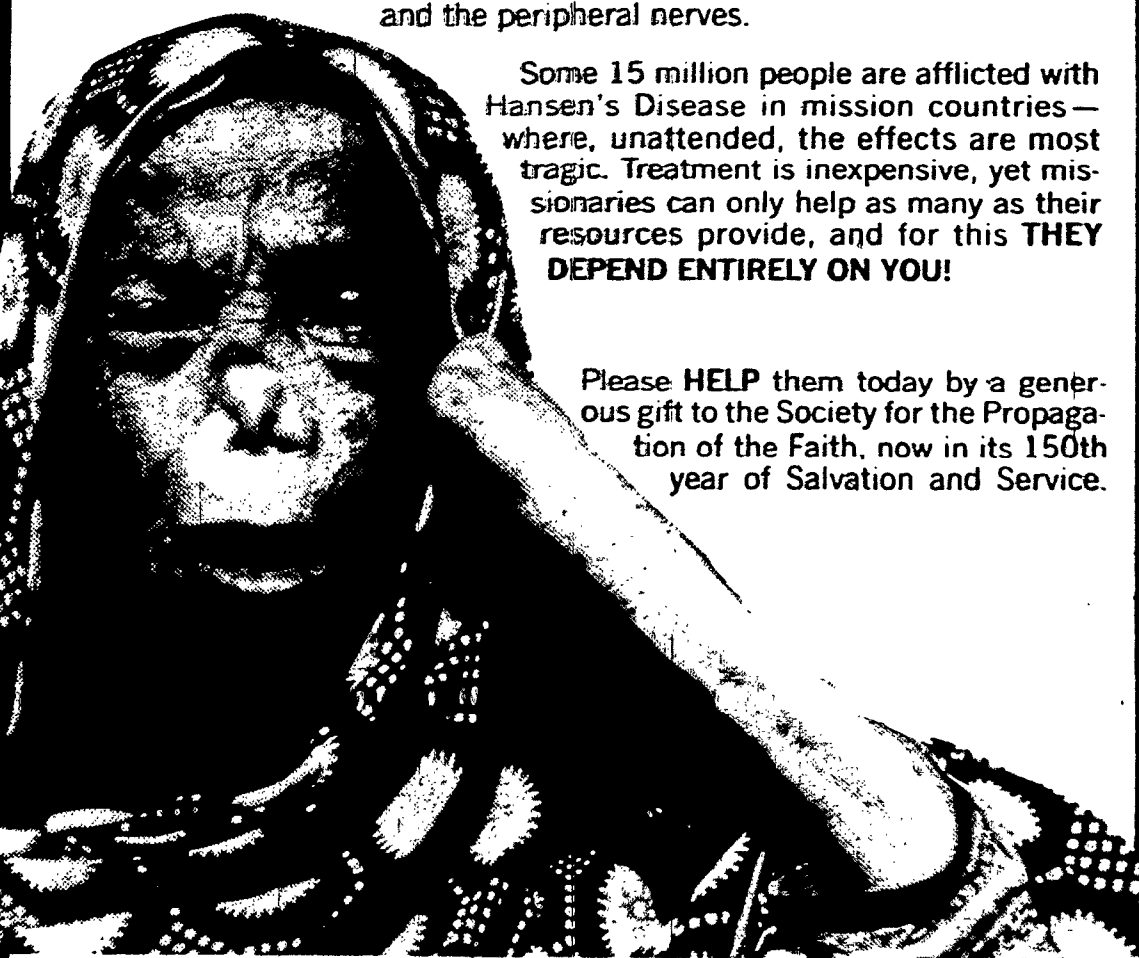
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Wednesday, June 21, 1972