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# How Culture Mattered at Vatican II: Collegiality Trumps Authority in the Council's Social Movement Organizations

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*The overwhelmingly progressive outcome of the Second Vatican Council in the Roman Catholic Church (1962 to 1965) changed Church doctrine on everything from the Latin mass to nuns' habits to openness to other faith traditions. This article examines a cause of this outcome by analyzing the informal organizations activist bishops built during the Council. Progressives' and conservatives' cultural understandings of authority determined what type of organization they built as well as how effectively that organization helped them to address their concerns. Progressives believed in the doctrine of "collegiality," that bishops convening together are as infallible as the Pope—a doctrine conservatives saw as threatening the primacy and authority of the Pope. Consequently, while progressives built a highly effective, consensus-based organization as soon as the Council began, conservatives were much slower to mobilize and, when they did so, formed a hierarchical organization that proved to be much less effective. Most studies of social movements do not have faith in the effectiveness of the progressives' consensus-based organization, which have typically found such organizations to be inefficient and subject to breakdowns. This study suggests that organizational effectiveness depends in part on how well activists' cultural understandings mesh with the environment in which they are enacted.*

The Second Vatican Council of 1962 to 1965 was a watershed event in the history of Roman Catholicism because of the multitude of changes it brought about. Vatican II ended the Latin mass; sent nuns from their cloisters and into the world; relaxed dietary restrictions, confessional obligations, and service attire for the laity; relinquished the Church's claim of being

the one true church; and officially renounced its claims to power in relation to nation-states. Though sociologists have examined the extensive effects of Council reforms (e.g., Dillon 1999; Greeley 1998; Casanova 1994; Finke and Stark 1992; Smith 1991), few studies have tried to understand how they came about.<sup>1</sup> This article demonstrates that much of Vatican II's pro-

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<sup>1</sup> An exception is Rocco Caporale's book (1964) based on interviews with 80 of the most important leaders of the Council. While his transcripts were an important data source for this article, he could not

gressive outcome can be explained by a simple sociological fact: progressives built a more extensive, flexible, and creative organization than their conservative counterparts, because of which they were better able to mobilize the majority of voting bishops to support progressive causes.<sup>2</sup>

These organizational differences derived from different cultural understandings of the locus of authority in the Roman Catholic Church. Progressives had a deep belief in collegiality, a doctrine that posits that the bishops, when convened as a council, are as infallible as the Pope. Because of this, progressives built a consensus-based organization that was well-suited to developing compromises that could be championed by their heterogeneous population of potential supporters. In contrast, conservatives' rejection of collegiality prevented them from communicating with the majority of the bishops, much less from developing compromises.

These findings are contrary to what would be predicted by an examination of the two groups' resources at the beginning of the Council, or by many studies of consensus-based organizing (e.g., Freeman 1970; Epstein 1991; Stevens 2001). This suggests that consensus-based organizations are not necessarily ineffective or inefficient, but rather that effectiveness depends on the fit between activists' cultural understandings and the environment in which the organization is enacted.

## ABOUT VATICAN II

By December 8, 1965, after three years of deliberations, Vatican II turned the Church on its head. A wide variety of sociological studies demonstrated that Vatican II had far-reaching effects on the doctrine, practices, identity, and strength of Roman Catholicism. Politically, the Council was cited as a central factor in the

development of Liberation Theology in Latin America (Smith 1991); as an important theological resource for progressive Catholics in the United States (Dillon 1999; Burns 1992); and a reason why the Church began to more actively engage in public debates over war and peace, capitalism, and economic redistribution (Casanova 1994; Burns 1990). Practically, the Council liberalized a wide variety of religious practices, such as dietary restrictions and marriage annulment procedures (Wilde 2001), changes that some theorists argue have created a less involved laity (Finke and Stark 1992; Sengers 2003).

To appreciate just how remarkable Vatican II was, one must understand that no one expected, could have predicted, or even hoped for what came from the Council. Councils are rare events, called only by the Pope, occurring less than once every century. The Church's last council before Vatican II was Vatican I, which ended prematurely in 1869 as a result of the Franco-Prussian war. Vatican I did little of note besides declaring papal infallibility. Prior to Vatican I, the Church had not held a council since the Council of Trent closed in 1563 (Bellitto 2002).

Councils such as Vatican II are officially called "ecumenical councils" because they involve the entire episcopate: all of the bishops, cardinals, heads of religious orders, and theologians of the Church (hereafter referred to as bishops). During councils, the episcopate gathers together, discusses issues of concern, drafts statements, and eventually votes on whether to ratify those statements. In the case of Vatican II, it took four years of preparations after John XXIII announced there would be a council for the 3000 members of the hierarchy to gather in Rome. Approximately 2,200 bishops voted on any one vote, but over the four years of the Council almost 3,000 bishops participated because of illness, death and replacement.

During the first stage of those preparations, Pope John XXIII asked all of the Church leaders to write down their concerns and send them to the Vatican. Their letters were then condensed, categorized, and given to committees that developed abbreviated statements of the Church's stance on the issues raised in the letters. On the surface, the plan seemed fair and efficient. Rather than arriving in Rome in a state of mass confusion, the bishops would come having already read documents that provided the plat-

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examine the outcome of the Council because it was still unfolding when he conducted his interviews.

<sup>2</sup> Not all Council decisions were progressive (birth control, priest celibacy, and women's ordination policies were all unchanged by Vatican II). Elsewhere, I examine why some reforms passed and others failed. In brief, progressives' priorities were largely a result of isomorphic pressures (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) connected to bringing the Roman Catholic Church into the Ecumenical movement (Wilde, forthcoming).

form for the Council debates; and they could amend or approve the documents and return home within a few months.

However, the preparatory committees' documents derailed Council preparations, and resulted in a Council that lasted three years, rather than a few months. The committees were comprised "entirely of acknowledged curialists" (Alberigo and Komonchak 1995:95), meaning members of the Roman Curia—the Vatican offices that govern the worldwide Church (Huebsch 1996:75)—and their allies. These individuals were, by virtue of their positions as Church administrators, invested in keeping the Church as unchanged as possible. Rather than assessing the possibilities for the Council, the preparatory documents reasserted Church doctrine and condemned those who had publicly questioned it (Alberigo and Komonchak 1995:166).<sup>3</sup>

Ironically, though conservatives seemed confident because of this advantage at the start of the Council, it proved to be their downfall. When progressive bishops received the preparatory documents, they were dismayed, finding that many of their ideas had been condemned or simply ignored, and they moved quickly during the very first day of the Council to counteract this conservative direction. In a tumultuous first few weeks, these progressives succeeded in changing the course of the Council and building an organizational structure that would serve them well throughout the three years and four sessions of the Council.

When it was over, the Council resulted in a wider variety of reforms than had ever been envisioned at its start. By comparing the informal organizations progressives and conservatives built at the Council, this article provides one important piece of the puzzle about why and how that happened. Of course, when examining an institution like the Roman Catholic Church and a political process as complex as Vatican II, it would be simplistic to argue that the outcome of the Council can be attributed solely to organizational differences between two informal

groups of activist-oriented bishops. I examine other important factors elsewhere (Wilde forthcoming; Wilde et al. 2003). Nonetheless, I argue that despite these other factors, the organizational differences examined in this article provided progressive bishops with resources far superior to conservatives', and without these differences, Vatican II would have had a less revolutionary outcome.

Before proceeding with this argument, two common alternative explanations for the progressive outcome of the Council need to be addressed. The first has to do with the role of the Pope in promoting these changes. There is no question that, because it takes a Pope to call a council, Pope John XXIII is an essential part of why Vatican II happened at all. The progressive nature and agenda of the Council was, to a large extent, due to his openness. In the terms of students of social movements, John provided the "political opportunity" necessary for any reforms to occur.

Nonetheless, while necessary, John's openness cannot explain the outcome of the Council. John died just weeks before the second of the four Council sessions was to start, after only one of the hundreds of reforms that came from the Council had passed. The vast majority of progressive reforms that resulted from the Council were finalized under John's much more conservative successor, Pope Paul VI.<sup>4</sup> But, like John, Paul's decision to continue the Council was essential to its occurrence and, therefore, to its ultimately progressive outcome.

In addition to calling a Council and keeping it going, the Pope had three ways he could direct the Council. At any point during the Council, the Pope could mandate that an issue be discussed or removed from discussion. Paul used this option twice, by removing birth control and priestly celibacy from the Council's agenda, despite many progressive bishops' stated desires to reform the Church's laws on these matters. Second, once a document was approved by the Council, the Pope had "veto" authority. He could mandate that the drafting committee

<sup>3</sup> Another problem was that the bishop's responses (called *vota*) were far from candid and consisted mostly of declarations to take part in the Council (Alberigo and Komonchak 1995:108, Komonchak 1994).

<sup>4</sup> Accused of having a "Hamlet-like complex" (*Time*, December 6, 1963) and named the "Pope of butts" by the press, Paul VI was generally "more timorous and cautious" than John XIII (Rynne 1968:430, 287).

amend any document, as Paul did most notably by qualifying the Council's statement on collegiality during the Third Session (Rynne 1968: 406).<sup>5</sup> Finally, the Pope could simply draft his own statements or encyclicals on any matter with which he disagreed with the Council. Paul did so in relation to the highly contentious issue of the Virgin Mary (discussed below) by referring to her in a speech closing the Third Session in terms progressive bishops had successfully kept out of Council documents (Rynne 1968: 425, 444; Alberigo and Komonchak 2000: 332).

Thus, there were a number of ways the Popes played a causal role in the Council: by calling and continuing it; allowing or preventing discussion of certain issues; mandating amendments to Council documents; and writing their own documents or speeches on occasion. But, the Popes' role should also not be overstated, at the risk that this analysis be turned into a "great man" theory of history. There were few moments where Paul actively intervened in the Council, though he might have intervened more often if he had not felt that this would jeopardize the Council and his authority (each of his interventions met with strong reactions from progressives). If Paul had intervened more actively undoubtedly the Council would have been less progressive, not more. Therefore, the Popes are a necessary, but insufficient explanation for the overwhelmingly progressive outcome of the Council. Their actions (or lack thereof) during the Council cannot explain why the majority of bishops decided to vote for progressive reform.

Alternatively, perhaps the majority of bishops were discontented progressives who seized the political opportunity posed by the Council to address issues of concern, and thus, no further examination of organizational differences is necessary? The terms progressive and conservative are used in this article as shorthand for general openness to change, with progressives

being much more so than conservatives. The majority of Council statements were ultimately approved by landslide votes, a fact which, on the surface, suggests overwhelming support for progressive causes. However, to use the progressive *result* of the Council votes as evidence of a *cause* of their outcome is misleading for a number of reasons.

First, Rocco Caporale's (1964) interviews with bishops reveal that when the Council was called, even the most powerful bishops who would rise to prominence once the Council began expected little—often stating that they had expected the Council to simply "rubber-stamp" the Curia's views. It took action on the part of progressive leaders for any bishops to be convinced that real changes could result from the Council (Wilde forthcoming).

Second, though most Council issues passed with overwhelming support, several votes demonstrate that the bishops did not all arrive ready for change. For example, on the first vote on the Blessed Virgin Mary, the bishops were almost evenly divided; the progressives won by only 40 votes of approximately 2200. By the time of the final vote on Mary, two-thirds of those who voted conservatively the first time switched to the progressive side.

Third, even among bishops with a decidedly "progressive" outlook, there was great heterogeneity at the start of the Council. As the most important "master frame" (Snow and Benford 1992) among progressives became improving relations with Protestants, it became evident that many progressive bishops (particularly Latin Americans) had difficulty embracing this frame because they were experiencing increasing competition from Protestant missionaries in their countries (Wilde forthcoming). Without the open debate and compromise that occurred within the progressives' organization examined here, the Council's outcome could have been very different and much more conservative than it was.

## DATA AND METHODS

The story presented here is about the informal groups both sides built to bolster their interests once the Council began. The progressives were a group of 20 or so bishops who met weekly at the hotel called the *Domus Mariae* (House of Mary, DM hereafter). The conservatives were

<sup>5</sup> In the end, the Council validated collegiality, but did so with enough ambiguity (much of which was a result of these qualifications) to appease conservatives. This occurred long after both of the organizations examined here were created, and thus, long after their disparate views of collegiality (which are examined in detail below) had determined their organizational forms, strategies, and tactics.

the far less successful group of approximately 10 to 16 conservative "Council fathers and theologians" (Perrin 1997:179–80; Alberigo and Komonchak 1997:198) known as the *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* (International Group of Fathers, CIP hereafter).

Because they were not official organizations, but were formed solely at the behest of activist-oriented bishops, they most resemble traditional "social movement organizations." Both are widely cited as the most important of all such groups, mainly because they did not have a regional or otherwise limited focus (see Alberigo and Komonchak 1997:194–221 about other informal groups at the Council).<sup>6</sup>

The data for this study came from a variety of primary and secondary sources. The first primary data source is transcripts from interviews with 80 of the most important leaders at the Council. The interviews were conducted by Rocco Caporale (1964) for his dissertation research in sociology at Columbia University in 1962. Beginning with obvious leaders, Caporale asked his respondents to identify five of the most important people at the Council. He stopped snowball sampling after 80 interviews, when no new names were being volunteered. By interviewing the leaders of the Council, Caporale interviewed over half of the members of the DM and two important leaders of the CIP.<sup>7</sup>

The descriptions that Caporale's respondents gave of the DM and its connections to other organizations at the Council were invaluable in piecing this story together, as was the second source of primary materials: archival materials from both organizations, which include formal minutes from meetings, various correspondence, petitions, and other documents.<sup>8</sup> When gather-

ing these materials, I also focused on leaders, because doing so allowed me to obtain all of their available personal correspondence.

This focus on leaders admittedly overlooks the beliefs, activities, and opinions of the roughly 3,000 "rank and file" bishops who ultimately decided the outcome of Council reforms with their votes. I remedy this problem through analyses of Council votes that I obtained from the Vatican Secret Archive and entered into an electronic database. The voting data identify individual bishops, their dioceses, and their vote on 10 of the most contentious Council reforms (3 of which are examined here). With these data I assess national trends that were previously obscured because the Vatican only made summaries of the votes available to the public.

## ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND CULTURE AT VATICAN II

Though this is a case of religious change, theories of social movements are most relevant to the specific groups examined here. This is mainly because the sociology of religion, with a few notable exceptions (e.g., Chaves 1997; Finke 2004; Smith 1991; Wuthnow 1994; Zaret 1985), does not often explain religious change as a dependent variable. Instead, it focuses on religion's effects on other variables, or on religious growth, decline, or individual participation as a dependent variable. Such studies, though important, do little to help us understand the organizational resources, forces, and mobilization efforts involved in an event like the Council.

Though Vatican II is obviously different from traditional social movements, I am not the first to notice the importance religious organizations have had for many social movements (e.g., Morris 1984; Zald and McCarthy 1987; Smith 1996a and 1996b; Wood 2002; Young 2002); to use social movement theory in relation to pressures for change within religious organizations (e.g., Wood and Zald 1966) or the Roman Catholic Church specifically (e.g., Katzenstein 1998; Smith 1991); or to characterize Vatican

<sup>6</sup> For assessments of the DM see Alberigo et al. 2000:61–62; Caporale 1964:72–73; Grootaers 1981:133–65; Laurentin 1966:43–44; Noël 1997; Wiltgen 1967:129. For assessments of the CIP see Alberigo et al. 2000:170–75; Laurentin 1966:39–41; Perrin 1997; Wiltgen 1967:148–50, 274–78, 235–52.

<sup>7</sup> While Caporale's sample seems to have been representative of conservatives, he seems to have over-sampled progressive leaders. For more details see Table 1 in the *ASR* Web site supplement (<http://www.asanet.org/journals/asr/2004/toc040.html>) to this article.

<sup>8</sup> Descriptions and addresses of the archives cited in the article can be found in the Appendix, along with

a summary of the way I have abbreviated my citations of the archival materials. The archival materials were in Latin, French, Italian, English, German, Portuguese and Spanish. Whenever possible, I cite secondary sources that can be found in English, along with the primary sources I used.

II as a social movement (e.g., Seidler and Meyer 1989). The story presented here demonstrates that though the Council was not a case of grass-roots mobilization, it was a case where activist-oriented bishops attempted to, and eventually did, radically change their institution. In fact, many researchers cite Vatican II as an important resource for, and even partial cause of, more traditional social movements which took place after the Council (e.g., Tarrow 1988: 286; Ganz 2000: 1036). In this sense, Vatican II is a clear case of the “contentious politics” (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001) that social movement theorists seek to explain, and I will show that social movement theories may benefit from a systematic study of the factors that explain the progressive outcome of the Council.

Social movement theory helps us understand many aspects of the Council. For example, the DM was far more successful than the CIP at mobilizing a heterogeneous population of bishops to support a variety of causes, despite the fact that many bishops initially spoke with reluctance or suspicion in regards to the DM agenda. The DM was more successful at “framing” their issues in terms that a wide variety of bishops could support (Snow et al. 1986). In contrast, conservatives failed to ever develop an over-arching frame that the majority of bishops could support, and were left drawing on different populations of bishops from issue to issue.

Recent developments in social movement theory also help sociologists to understand the success of the DM and point to reasons why they had a far greater “strategic capacity” than the CIP (Ganz 2000). In his study of the Farm Workers Movement, Ganz (2000:1005) argues the following:

Strategic capacity is greater if a leadership team includes insiders and outsiders, strong and weak network ties, and access to diverse, yet salient, repertoires of collection action, and also if an organization conducts regular, open, authoritative deliberation, draws resources from multiple constituencies, and roots accountability in those constituencies.

The analyses presented in this article demonstrate that the DM encompassed virtually all of these factors, and the CIP, almost none.

In her study of six social movement organizations, Francesca Polletta (2002) finds definite advantages to consensus-based, or what she calls “participatory democratic,” organizing.

She argues that a focus on the deliberative process allows groups to build leaders, be more tactically innovative, own the decisions of the group, and create group solidarity. The analysis here highlights the fact that one of the greatest strengths of the DM was their focus on consensus-building and communication.

When the Council opened in 1962, few observers would have predicted that an informal organization of progressive bishops would prove to be far more successful than an organization of conservative bishops with close alliances with the Curia. Indeed, in many ways this case illustrates that resources are not the sole explanatory variable for social movement success. Activists use “models of action” (Polletta 2002), “political logics” (Armstrong 2002a), “cultural toolkits” (Swidler 1986; 1995), “repertoires” (Clemens 1993; Swidler 2001), or “schemas” (Sewell 1996) which are available and familiar (c.f. Stevens 2001), and these ideas and beliefs hold explanatory power (Weber 1978 [1956]). This study of the DM and CIP demonstrates that more than any other variable (resources, status, prestige, etc.), what explains the type of organization each group built, and therefore ultimately their effectiveness, was deeply cultural.<sup>9</sup> These cultural differences hinged around each groups’ view of the locus of authority in the Church.

## COMPETING VIEWS OF AUTHORITY IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Progressive and conservative bishops were able to hold very different opinions on the nature of authority because the Church’s stance on the issue was officially undecided. The First Vatican Council (1869–1870) closed prematurely by the Franco-Prussian war (Huebsch 1997:215)

<sup>9</sup> I use culture here to refer to both the religious beliefs held by these religious leaders, as well as the quite different worldviews and understandings of the Church these implied and supported. To some extent, these map along national lines, and so also encompass national cultures. Analysis presented below demonstrates that national cultures had a direct influence because bishops from Italy and Spain were decidedly anti-collegial in their outlooks when compared to bishops from France and Latin America who tended to favor associational or collegial models of authority.

with the declaration of Papal infallibility as its primary accomplishment. Papal infallibility refers specifically to doctrinal statements made by the Pope, which, more than being considered exempt from error, are technically exempt even “from the possibility of error” (The Catholic Encyclopedia 1908 [2003]; McCarthy 1994:120–25).

The doctrine of Papal Infallibility is not without controversy. At the time it was promulgated, critics argued that “neither a fallible individual nor a collection of fallible individuals can constitute an infallible organ” (The Catholic Encyclopedia 1908 [2003]). Most analysts agree that had Vatican I continued, the Church would have produced a corresponding doctrinal decree that would have augmented the doctrine of Papal infallibility by asserting that the college of bishops, when acting as a body, were just as infallible as the Pope. However, without any corresponding decree about the importance of the college of bishops, the Curia focused on the primacy of the Pope and his infallibility in the century between Vatican I and II (Pottmeyer 1998).

This accentuation of papal primacy and infallibility was of great concern to progressives. Augmenting the doctrine of infallibility with a decree about the importance of the college of bishops, or collegiality, thus became an important issue on the progressive agenda at the Council, and therefore an issue that came to deeply concern conservatives (Wenger 1996:118). The sides were divided by one simple question: Was the doctrine of collegiality, which in essence states that when acting together, the bishops also have ultimate authority and are infallible, legitimate Roman Catholic doctrine? Did it, in some way, hinder or qualify the primacy and infallibility of the Roman Pontiff? The DM and the CIP had sharply differing beliefs about the answer to this question.

### *THE DM'S BELIEF IN COLLEGIALITY*

Early in the Council, the DM wrote the following petition, demonstrating that they saw collegiality as a central priority for the Council:

The undersigned Fathers of the ecumenical Council of Vatican II, taking into consideration that the first Council of the Vatican, after it had defined the primacy and infallibility of the Roman Pope, parted without having been able to deal with the origin and powers of the Bishops, successors of the

Apostles, find that the determination of the origin and powers of bishops is of special importance for the discussion of other questions to be dealt with by the Council. . . . [We therefore] propose that the schema [on collegiality] be studied and decided upon first.<sup>10</sup>

Though progressives were successful in ensuring a vote on Collegiality during the Second Session, which did pass with majority support, the DM was not happy with how the drafting committee summarized the issue after the votes. They noted the following:

Although the Fathers keenly expressed what they felt . . . in regards to collegiality, these [progressive views] have still not been confirmed in the least in the [official Council] text. . . . Not a few deem that we must proceed to the end, for they consider collegiality to be, as it were, a truth that has been demonstrated and established.<sup>11</sup>

Already acting collegially, DM members were distressed when their views of collegiality were not initially incorporated into Council documents. When it became clear that the Council would come out with an acceptable statement, the DM noted, “Everyone rejoices at the thought that this decree of greatest importance will be promulgated by the most Holy Father.”<sup>12</sup>

### *THE CIP'S SUSPICIONS ABOUT COLLEGIALITY*

In contrast to progressives' strong prioritization of collegiality, conservatives (especially those involved in the CIP) adamantly opposed the less-hierarchical view of the Church promoted by the doctrine. Indeed, in the minutes from the first official CIP meeting, CIP theologian Berto stated that the group's primary purpose was to form and support “opposition to the idea of collegiality . . . adopting as a banner the defense of the rights of the Supreme Pontiff and, secondarily, those of each individual bishop.” (Perrin 1997:177)

CIP founder Bishop Carli told Caporale, “collegiality . . . unless we define it properly it is going to be a terrible headache for future councils and theologians. . . . They say they don't want to define new dogmas and here they are defining a new dogma of the utmost conse-

<sup>10</sup> Petition on Collegiality. Undated. ISR EA 1.5.11.

<sup>11</sup> DM Minutes 5:2, November 8, 1963, PC.

<sup>12</sup> DM Minutes 3:4, October 1, 1965, PC.



quences. What is this?" (CTC). Another CIP founder, Brazilian Archbishop Geraldo de Proença Sigaud, gave a forceful speech against the doctrine of collegiality prior to the first votes on the issue during the Second Session. When his speech failed to convince the majority of bishops to vote against collegiality, CIP leaders were dismayed. Cardinal Siri, a conservative Italian and key ally of the CIP, had harsh words about those first votes on collegiality. He told Caporale the following:

The famous vote on collegiality is not valid and I have proved it to them and to the Pope. . . . I felt like walking [up] to the four [Council] moderators and tear[ing] the IBM [punch] card right in their faces. . . . Of course, I voted no and make no secret about it. (CIC 6)

Letters from Berto to Carli referred to the votes as "disastrous," "peculiar,"<sup>13</sup> "unhappy," "hasty" and "secretive,"<sup>14</sup> and to the doctrine itself as a "false question" that rejects "the divine rights of the Roman Pope," as "that detestable, unrealistic . . . pseudo-theology," and as "bad faith" that is "refuted by the Sacred Scriptures, the Teacher, Tradition, 'theological reason'—common sense itself."<sup>15</sup> His primary concern was collegiality's threat to the primacy of the Pope. Less than a week after the votes, Berto wrote Carli the following:

The "so-called college" (at least as it is now argued) is "deadly" for the . . . Pope, for it shatters his Fatherhood. . . . If the Pope alone is the head of the Church because he is the head of the "College of Bishops," then the true Sovereign of the Church is that College. . . . I consider this view to be false . . . logically . . . the very name of "Holy Father," which was granted to the Pope, is not befitting; the true "Holy Father" is the "College of Bishops!"<sup>16</sup>

These competing views about the nature of just authority within the Church led the two groups of bishops to develop very different strategies,

and build and enact very different organizations—one of which was much better suited to a Council environment.

### *THE DOMUS MARIAE*

As the Council opened amid uncertainty and with conservative preparatory schemas as its only guide, two Latin American leaders<sup>17</sup> and a few progressive French bishops decided to create an organization that would allow them to communicate with all the bishops present at the Council. French theologian Roger Etchegaray (1995), who would become the DM's secretary, told the story of this decision years later:

Cardinal Lienart [a prominent and important French progressive] asked me at the opening of the Council, to make "useful contacts" with bishops of other countries. There had been little mutual contact, and meetings were even up to that point discouraged by Rome. . . . Thus, stimulated by the two bishops I met the first evening (Manuel Larrain and Helder Camara, both vice-presidents of CELAM [the Latin American Episcopal Conference]). . . . I was so bold as to invite a few bishops, as I met them, to meet regularly for an exchange of views on the proceedings of the Council. (p. 293)

From the beginning, their strategy was to assess the concerns of bishops from diverse places and develop an organization with, and platforms from, which to best address them.

### *THE DM'S STRATEGY: BUILDING COLLEGIALLY THROUGH CONSENSUS*

Early in the Council, Helder Camara told Caporale, "My dream is the formation of a collegial organization of bishops at the national and international level" (CTT). Their beliefs in col-

<sup>13</sup> Berto to Carli, January 1 and January 11, 1964, ISR (FCrI 15.32).

<sup>14</sup> Berto to Carli, December 9 and November 13, 1963, ISR (FCrI 15.31).

<sup>15</sup> Berto to Carli, January 1, 1964 (FCrI 15.32), December 9 and November 13, 1963 (FCrI 15.31), March 13, 1964, ISR (FCrI 17.1).

<sup>16</sup> Berto to Carli, November 6, 1963, ISR (FCrI 15.3).

<sup>17</sup> Though Latin American leaders were central to the DM's formation, structure and success and thereby to the progressive outcome of the Council, explanations for and assessments of the Council seem to have suffered from a "First World" bias. The bishops and theologians who are noted for their contributions to the Council are mainly Northern Europeans. This analysis suggests that that the Latin American leaders Manuel Larrain and Helder Camara were just as important to the progressive outcome of the Council.

legality had important strategic and organizational implications for the DM. Taken to a practical level, those who believed in the doctrine of collegiality saw consensus-building, creating knowledgeable bishops who were in agreement, as a holy enterprise.

The agenda for their third meeting stated that the members would discuss "what is felt by anyone concerning the meetings in the Domus Mariae and what results are expected from them."<sup>18</sup> Rather than coming together with a concrete agenda, the progressives who started the DM seemed open to figuring out the best course of action, form, and function of their group. In effect, they decided to create a "participatory democracy" (Polletta 2002) within the hierarchical and non-democratic structure of the Church that seems to have lasted throughout the Council. At the beginning of the last session, Etchegaray sent this flyer to the members:

It seems that it would be very useful for us to resume our weekly meetings without delay. We shall therefore meet together as one in the Domus Mariae, Saturday, September 17th 1965, at 5 p.m. precisely. There is a sufficient variety of questions that seem to require discussion at the beginning of this session. We intend to list them and to devise a better way to inform and help each other.<sup>19</sup>

The DM ensured that they would be able to "inform and help each other" by attempting to generate consensus on the issues they were discussing, with the minutes often noting that a decision or opinion had been expressed "unanimously."<sup>20</sup> This focus on consensus was vital to the DM because of the complex, but highly effective, organizational form within which it arose.

### THE DM'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: USING EPISCOPAL CONFERENCES

The linchpin of the DM's organization was the organizations of the bishops' episcopal, or national, conferences (Alberigo and Komonchak 1997:207–209). Episcopal Conferences (ECs)

generally consisted of all of the bishops and members of the hierarchy in a given country, or even continent (which at the time of Council was the case with the CELAM), who met annually to discuss issues of common concern to the Church and nation or region. Though the extent to which each EC was organized, and the frequency with which they met varied, they provided a natural solution and pre-existing organizational structure for the DM's conflicting desires to communicate with the bishops at the Council openly, but subtly and within limited time.<sup>21</sup>

ECs were important to the DM in a number of ways. When the Council began, ECs were inchoate; most were not recognized by the Vatican, and some countries did not even have one (Caporale 1964:51; Komonchak 1989; Noël 1997:95). This changed during the first few weeks of the Council,<sup>22</sup> when ECs were officially given the function of nominating candidates for the Council commissions (c.f. Grootaers 1981:134; Komonchak 1989) and was further crystallized in later Council schemas (Alberigo and Komonchak 2000:466–71). The Council's approval of ECs helped the DM gain validity, just as preexisting ECs, especially CELAM, provided organizational models or repertoires (Clemens 1993 and 1997; Polletta 2002) for the group (c.f. Grootaers 1981:136, n. 6; Falconi 1964:343).

Furthermore, ECs were seen as a way of enacting collegiality. So, while the bishops from France and CELAM (who founded the DM) had been meeting in their conferences for years, the bishops from Italy (who were infamous for their rejection of collegiality) never had a conference meeting until after the Council began and it was mandated by the Pope. Just as conservatives saw collegiality as threatening to the primacy of the Pope, they saw conferences of bishops acting "independently" of the Pope as potentially heretical. Thus, ECs became an

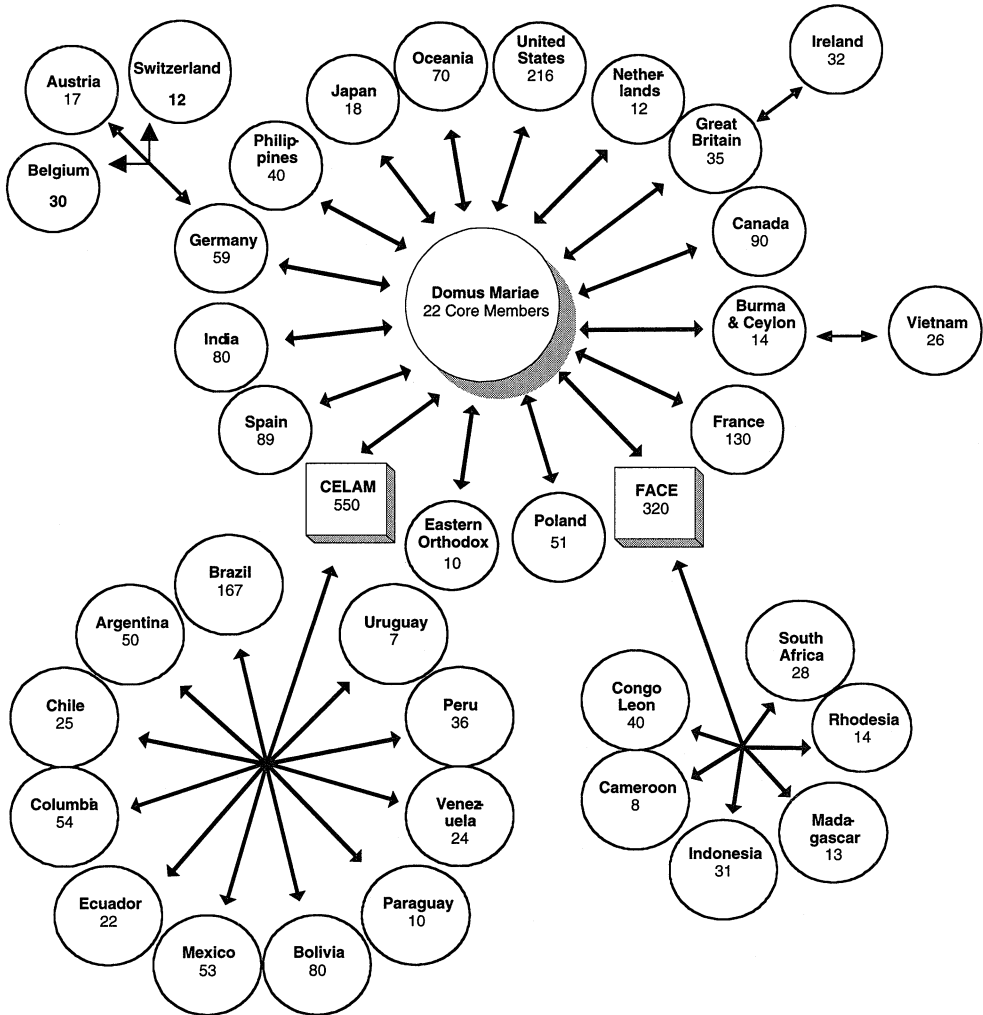
<sup>18</sup> DM Minutes 2:1, November 13, 1962, PC.

<sup>19</sup> Flyer titled, "Meeting of Delegates from ECs," Fourth Session, PC.

<sup>20</sup> For example, see DM Minutes 2:1, November 13, 1962, PC.

<sup>21</sup> The method of appointing a DM representative seems to have varied with each EC, with some simply volunteering or being invited because of network connections, and others elected by their conference.

<sup>22</sup> Brouwers notes that the number of ECs which existed and began to meet regularly almost doubled, from forty to more than seventy, during the course of the Council (1993:360; c.f. Noël 1997:96).



**Figure 1.** The Organizational Structure of the Domus Mariae: Estimated Number of Bishops Reached Weekly Approximately 1,800

important resource for the DM that helped to offset conservatives’ greater institutional resources because the CIP avoided them.

Most importantly, the ECs linked the 22 DM members<sup>23</sup> to the vast majority of bishops at the Council who would ultimately decide the outcome of the Council when issues were voted on in the Council Hall. Figure 1<sup>24</sup> shows an esti-

mate of how many and which bishops the ECs helped the DM to reach, including only those ECs that met at least once a week (the vast majority did so) or were closely connected to a DM representative.

The DM’s wheel-like organizational structure allowed them to quickly build consensus about their agenda and strategies in a small group of 22. But the structure also helped to

<sup>23</sup> See the *ASR* Web site supplement and Table 2 for details on DM members.

<sup>24</sup> The numbers in Figure 1 represent the number of bishops in each country at the start of the Council. For more details on the ECs and number and proportion of the episcopate they represented, see Table 3

in the *ASR* Web site supplement. Sources: regarding meeting frequency, Caporale’s interview data; regarding the number of potential votes for each EC: *Acta* (Series I, Index, 1960–61:209–406).

convey that information to, and get feedback from, more than 1,800 or two-thirds of the voters—all within a week.<sup>25</sup>

Etchegaray described how he saw the relationship between the DM and ECs in a letter he wrote to Cardinal Suenens, a prominent progressive theologian, during the First Session:

I send you the list of the 22 regular participants . . . all [of whom] more or less represent their own episcopacy according to the structure and degree of "collegial conscience" of their EC. While they are naturally not able to engage their colleagues in debates, they nevertheless reflect the more general thought of their episcopacy and in turn . . . report on all that is said in the meetings of the Domus Mariae. (Quote in Grootaers 1981:141)

Communication between the DM and the ECs lasted throughout the four Council sessions. At the beginning of the Fourth Session, the DM again summarized their impressions of this relationship in their minutes:

Almost all the delegates have been able to consult their own Conferences on a weekly basis, to gather suggestions about the tasks to be accomplished. . . . Those who did not hold a meeting, have sought the opinions of several members from their conference.<sup>26</sup>

Many of the leaders interviewed by Caporale identified their DM representative or told him that they knew someone from their conference was attending the DM meetings. The American hierarchy received weekly reports from their representative, Bishop Ernest Primeau, who summarized the DM's meetings and recommendations for votes or other action. The DM minutes often closed by stating that points covered in the report "are submitted to the Bishops for study, discussion and decision at the next [EC] meeting,"<sup>27</sup> in the hopes that by getting

feedback from their ECs, the DM members would be able to provide "suggestions that are more thought-through and clear."<sup>28</sup>

With regular contact with at least 1,800 bishops, if the ECs represented at the DM did nothing more than meet and inform their members on Council issues, the DM would still have been successful in educating enough bishops to better their chances when issues came to a vote (early documents had to be approved by a majority of the bishops [about 1,200], and final documents needed at least two-thirds approval [about 1,500]). Yet such a structure would not have helped the DM to "develop suggestions that are more thought-through and clear." To do this, they needed feedback. A central resource that ensured that the DM did get useful feedback was that many ECs tried to reach consensus themselves, or at least polled their members about Council issues. Their EC's position was then communicated to the DM through their representative, as Bishop DeProvencheres, a progressive from France, told Caporale:

I was charged with the liaison task with other episcopates. . . . First [we] consulted among ourselves . . . to decide what position to take and what to say at the international meeting. (CIC 2)

The ECs that worked to develop a consensus were also those that believed in collegiality. Bishop Elchinger, a French progressive, told Caporale that the French EC had "organized a research committee of bishops in order to study the ways and means to realize and put into practice the idea of collegiality, and thus, reorganize the EC" (CIC 1). However, even those ECs that did not work for consensus provided important information for the DM. DM minutes from the Second Session reminded the participants that:

Everyone is invited to present observations made at his own Episcopal Conference, by indicating what may or ought to be emended, as experience has shown this to be better.<sup>29</sup>

This feedback from the ECs allowed the DM to develop compromise positions that they could be relatively sure would be supported by the diverse episcopates they represented. As the DM decided on their agenda and strategies,

<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, the DM did not rely unilaterally on the EC structure. During the Second Session they noted that because they "very much desired" to "feel connected with other conferences, which are not represented," or which "do not have a 'continental' structure," a subcommittee of DM members was going to meet to consider the best way to communicate with unrepresented bishops (DM Minutes 2:2 October 11, 1963; PC).

<sup>26</sup> DM Minutes 2:4, September 24, 1965, PC.

<sup>27</sup> "Report to the U.S. Hierarchy of the DM," September 18, 1964 (DOH 3(5)).

<sup>28</sup> DM Minutes 1:4, September 17, 1965, PC.

<sup>29</sup> DM Minutes 5:2, November 8, 1963, PC.

each episcopate's representative could communicate these to all of the bishops from their country, gauge their reactions and estimate support for progressive reforms when they came to a vote.

The DM benefited not only from its relationship to individual episcopal conferences, but also from strong links between episcopal conferences. Returning to Figure 1, note that Great Britain's representative also communicated the news to the Irish Episcopate, and Germany's representative communicated to the Austrians, the German-speaking Belgians, and the Swiss.<sup>30</sup> Two supra-episcopal conferences were crucial in providing both numbers and models for enacting collegial organization for the DM: the Latin Americans, who were organized under CELAM prior to the Council (and whose leaders spearheaded founding the DM along with the French), and the African bishops (Federation of African Episcopal Conferences, or FACE)<sup>31</sup> who began meeting during the First Session (Falconi 1964:185). Through these two organizations alone, the DM was able to reach approximately 870 (or almost 40 percent) of the 2,200 bishops who could vote on any reform.

Bishop Blomjous, one of the two FACE representatives to the DM, described to Caporale how FACE worked and its relationship to the DM:

We started the Federation of African ECs in order to help the Council. At the meetings of the individual conferences we discussed topics which later turned up at the Federation [meetings]. [FACE] is a board of twelve bishops representing different

<sup>30</sup> Irish Bishop Conway told Caporale, "We did not attend the informal group meetings, the bishops of England substituted for us, and we were kept informed by them (CIC 2). German Bishop Hengsbach told Caporale, "Each Monday we had a meeting of German and Austrian Bishops [and other] German-speaking bishops: bishops from Switzerland, the missionary German bishops . . . and some bishops from Nordic countries" (CIC 2).

<sup>31</sup> Unlike CELAM, FACE was not shorthand used at the time of the Council, but is my own abbreviation. Figure 1 shows only those countries mentioned by Caporale's respondents as participating in CELAM or FACE. For details on CELAM and FACE membership see Table 4 in the ASR Web site supplement (<http://www.asanet.org/journals/asr/2004/toc040.html>).

Ecs. . . . Two bishops [Zoa and myself] act as secretaries. . . . We participated at the meetings of the intercontinental conference at the *Domus Mariae*, every Friday. . . . The purpose is mutual information; usually the same people participate. (CIC 2)

CELAM vice-president and DM founding member Bishop Camara, from Brazil, was aware of the power CELAM wielded within the assembly. He told Caporale the following:

There are nearly 600 bishops from South America. . . . We thought, "how can we carry out these contacts and implement them; even after the Council?" We started CELAM. (CIC 2)

Camara recognized that CELAM provided other groups with an example of a collegial organization that they might adopt themselves, and he seems to have encouraged bishops from other areas to mimic their organization. He told Caporale, "We hope to form a secretariat for Asia, to organize the Church on a continental scale" (CTT). Such an organization would be in addition to the "friendly representation of the bishops of the whole world" whom he told Caporale were already meeting "each week as voluntary members" at the *Domus Mariae* (CTT). The following description of how Camara's EC evaluated support for issues among its members provides a good example of how CELAM and FACE combined to provide educated and mobilized bishops for the DM:

The Brazilian bishops met twice a week. The four periti would analyze and study selections and brief them on what position to take. *A trial vote would be taken to feel the attitude of the crowd and a decision would be made as to the total voting trend of the Brazilian Episcopate.* (Guglielmi CHT, emphasis added)

No doubt because of this deliberative process, many council observers felt that CELAM and FACE were "absolutely monolithic" during Council votes, as Bishop Raymond, a progressive from India, told Caporale (CIC 2). Just as the DM's focus on consensus-building was a result of their belief in collegiality, the focus on deliberation and democracy within CELAM and FACE were a result of a deep belief in it as well. Cardinal Zoa, the other FACE representative to the DM, told Caporale that, "The concept of collegiality was for me the consecration of my most cherished idea. . . . We felt very seriously about it" (CIC 7).

Their beliefs in collegiality led DM leaders to enact a consensus-based form of participatory democracy where they discussed their concerns, listened to Church leaders from areas with problems quite different from their own, and developed compromise solutions to those concerns in a small group of 22 bishops. This resulted in a learning experience that DM members felt intellectually and spiritually. The Philippines representative to the DM, Bishop Olalia told Caporale the following:

Personally, I widened my horizons of ideas. I came with my own little ideas, thinking that they were the best. Instead, I saw that others had better ideas than I had. (CIC 7a)

Reflecting on the Council, Bishop Primeau, the US representative to the DM, wrote the following:

Contact with the bishops of the world has widened my horizons, made me more appreciative of the ideas and problems of others, more sensitive to their needs, spiritual and material. . . . Before collegiality [was formally approved by the Council]. . . . I had already profoundly experienced [it].<sup>32</sup>

More than simply a voting machine or political mobilizing structure (though those functions should not be discounted), the DM was, in effect, a school where bishops went to learn about issues and returned to their episcopates with greater knowledge and understanding than they had before, and thus, an even deeper belief in collegiality. In fact, DM member Bishop McGrath, wrote that CELAM and the DM were "a formative school for our bishops" that provided "a practical lesson" in "episcopal collegiality" (McGrath 1997:140). As the DM developed their positions, each representative was able to communicate them to the bishops who were members of their EC sincerely, and help the DM develop and employ effective tactics. These tactics and their successes will be examined in detail below, after the reader is

<sup>32</sup> Primeau to Tiro, February 4, 1966, PC 21(7). While Primeau does not explicitly refer to the DM, it seems likely that he was thinking of it (nowhere else did he come into such regular and direct contact with bishops from other parts of the world), especially since he was writing the letter for publication—and the DM was careful to never refer to themselves by name publicly (Alberigo and Komonchak 1997:208).

introduced to the strategy and organization of the CIP.

## THE COETUS INTERNATIONALIS PATRUM

In contrast to the DM, conservatives were slow to organize outside of the official organizations of the Church and Council. This hesitation was in large part due to their already substantial resources and access to the centers of power in the Church, the Roman Curia and the Pope at the start of the Council; and to the overwhelmingly conservative tone of the preparatory schemas distributed at the start of the Council. However, as the Council progressed, and conservative schemas were defeated or watered down time and time again, they grew increasingly alarmed.

Sometime early in the Second Session,<sup>33</sup> three prominent conservatives, Brazilian Archbishop Geraldo de Proença Sigaud, French Superior General<sup>34</sup> Marcel Lefebvre, and Italian Bishop Luigi Carli, began corresponding with each other and with their personal theologians with the intention of slowing down, if not stopping, the progressive momentum of the Council. This correspondence provides an interesting picture of their growing concern, and the strategies these conservative leaders devised and eventually implemented in their organization.

## CIP STRATEGY

Just after the Second Session began, Lord Berto, who would eventually become one of the CIP's main theologians, wrote to Carli that he felt "dreadful sorrow" at the First Session defeat of

<sup>33</sup> Estimates of the exact time Sigaud and Lefebvre began strategizing vary from the first week of the First Session (Wiltgen 1985: 89) to mid-way through the First Session (Alberigo and Komonchak 1997:197); but sources agree that Sigaud and Lefebvre did not officially form a group with Carli until the beginning of the Second Session (Wiltgen 1985:89; Alberigo and Komonchak 1997:197–98; Perrin 1997:175).

<sup>34</sup> Superior Generals are the heads of religious orders. Lefebvre, also an archbishop, was the Superior General of the Holy Ghost Fathers (Alberigo and Komonchak 1997:197).

the conservative schemas,<sup>35</sup> complaining that progressives seemed to have a “monopoly” on Council “discourse.”<sup>36</sup> As the Second Session closed however, Berto began to feel more than sorrow and frustration. He and other conservatives began to see that their numerous defeats were the result of some kind of progressive organization:

I cannot avoid a frightening question: “who stands behind the curtain? . . . Who is the author of this colossal deception? Thus it is that all the texts of the new “schemata” have been written according to . . . the “progressive” direction? Is there a “mafia” within the Church?” I certainly do not ask for a response from your Excellence! But, the question is on my mind and I cannot drive it away.<sup>37</sup>

A few months later, just before the Third Session was to begin, Berto wrote Carli that the progressives’ plan to impose “a *substantial* change of Catholicism” was making “itself more manifest each day.”<sup>38</sup> This created a sense of real urgency and alarm among conservatives. Lefebvre wrote Carli just before the start of the Fourth Session:

We are faced with an enterprise of subversion of the doctrine of the Church of a kind that the Church has never seen throughout its history. Fortunately, God inspires brave defenders of the faith.<sup>39</sup>

Conservatives began realizing that their schemas were being defeated and their views ignored, because “progressives” had a plan and some kind of organization (whether mafia-like or not) through which to implement that it. This realization encouraged them to attempt to develop their own organization, with which they hoped to prevent these changes from being instituted. They eventually organized under the name *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* (International Group of Fathers, or CIP) (c.f. Laurentin 1996: 39–40; Perrin 1997: 174–175), hired office staff, bought a printing press (Wiltgen 1967: 149), and held weekly meetings that were attended by a core group of sixteen bishops

(Alberigo and Komonchak 1997:198). Yet even though they became a full-fledged organization, they never figured out a way to communicate with the majority of bishops at the Council without seeming too “collegial.” A central reason for this failure had to do with the CIP’s relationship to ECs.

***THE CIP’S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: ANTI-COLLEGIAL, SUSPICIOUS OF ECs AND ISOLATED***

In contrast to the DM, for whom the ECs were essential, the CIP was not able to utilize ECs for two reasons. First, the ECs that most closely aligned with the CIP agenda (Italy and Spain) were less effective conferences for such purposes because they were not deliberative. Second, the CIP had little contact with the ECs that were deliberative because they viewed such organizations as a direct threat to the Pope’s authority.

The only complete CIP petition left in the archives, which sought a conciliar condemnation of communism, circulated two weeks into the Fourth Session (Wiltgen 1967:274). The petition gives a good indication of the nationalities of CIP sympathizers.<sup>40</sup> Though they drew from a wide variety of countries, more than a third of the 435 signers were serving in or originally from Italy or Spain. While such support from Spanish and Italian bishops could be seen as a CIP advantage, characteristics of the ECs of these countries hindered communication, and therefore CIP effectiveness.

Descriptions of the Italian and Spanish ECs suggest that they were far less communicative or vital than ECs more closely affiliated with the DM. In fact, though it was the largest national conference at the Council, the Italian EC had never held a meeting with all of the members present, a situation which led Caporale to conclude that, “Prior to the Council, the Italian episcopate, nearly 400 strong, had never known what an EC was” (1964:56). Bishop Valerii, an Italian who participated in the DM, told Caporale the following:

<sup>35</sup> Berto to Carli, November 13, 1963, ISR (FCrI 15.31).

<sup>36</sup> Berto to Carli, November 6, 1963, ISR (FCrI 15.?).

<sup>37</sup> Berto to Carli, March 13, 1964, ISR (FCrI 17.1).

<sup>38</sup> Berto to Carli, August 5, 1964, ISR (FCrI 15.35).

<sup>39</sup> Lefebvre to Carli, May 3, 1965, ISR (FCrI 15.2).

<sup>40</sup> ISR, FSig 3.7. For more details see Table 5 in the *ASR* Web site supplement (<http://www.asanet.org/journals/asr/2004/toc040.html>).

The Italian EC is very disorganized. . . . The Italian bishops did not meet many foreign bishops. I did, because I was here at the DM. . . . The other Italians stay at home and meet nobody. . . . The Brazilians, on the other hand, are very well organized. . . . (CIC 1)

CIP leader Bishop Carli told Caporale, "The Italian Episcopate delegated some participants to other conferences, but they never reported to us" (CIC 2). Bishop Calabria, confirmed Carli's impressions:

[Italian links to other ECs were] a great deficiency. We appointed commissions of representatives to other episcopates, but they never reported to us in our general session . . . [and] we never exchanged impressions . . . [or] reported or heard any report, although theoretically all the ECs were covered by our delegations (CIC 1).

Though the Spanish EC, which met at least twice a week, was one of the most active, frequent meetings were not enough to ensure good communication, or to generate consensus. Like the Italians and unlike bishops from other countries, none of the four Spaniards interviewed by Caporale mentioned the DM or their DM representative. When explaining the structure and function of his EC to Caporale, Bishop Morcillo, a progressive Spaniard, told Caporale the following:

Never did one bishop speak for all the Spanish bishops. I did it once, but exaggerated representation, [and] I spoke only in the name of "many" Spanish bishops. (CIC 2)

The fact that Spain and Italy did not achieve this level of consensus (when most other ECs had at least on occasion (Caporale 1964:75-77)) by the Second Session is indicative of a central weakness of their ECs for the CIP's purposes. There was simply less "exchanging of impressions" (as Bishop Calabria put it) when they met.

These characteristics were rooted in a central ideological characteristic of the Italian and Spanish ECs. Recall that when Etchegaray wrote to invite Cardinal Suenens to attend a DM meeting, he noted that the participants' ability to represent their episcopacy depended upon the "structure and degree of 'collegial conscience'" of their EC (Quote in Grootaers 1981:141). There is no doubt that the Italian EC was foremost on Etchegaray's mind when he made that qualification, and that Spain was close behind.

Simply put, they were suspicious of collegiality.

Some indications of this are presented in the voting data. Of the 408 bishops who voted on the most progressive statement on collegiality, more than half were from Italy. Italians were infamous for their anti-collegial stances. Bishop Raymond, a progressive from India, told Caporale that "with regard to collegiality, we have mostly Italians against us" (CIC 1). Together, bishops from Italy and Spain made up more than 60 percent the bishops who voted against collegiality (see Table 6 on the *ASR* Web site supplement, <http://www.asanet.org/journals/asr/2004/toc040.html>), though again, bishops from those two countries constituted less than a quarter of the voting bishops. In other words, bishops from Italy and Spain were two and a half times as likely as their proportion in the episcopate would indicate to vote against collegiality. No other countries came close to such a disproportionate showing.

However, and more importantly, conservatives were hurt not only by the fact that the bishops in their sentiment pool (Snow et al. 1986:467) were from less collegial ECs, but CIP members were reluctant to use the structure of the ECs at all because collegiality within ECs was particularly troubling to them. All three of the CIP leaders made disparaging comments about ECs in and outside of the Council Hall. Lefebvre told an interviewer that he regarded ECs "as a threat to the teaching authority and pastoral responsibility of individual bishops," and referred to the tendency of some ECs to issue joint statements as "a new kind of collectivism invading the Church" (Wiltgen 1967: 89-90). And during the Second Session, the two other major CIP leaders, Carli and Sigaud, made formal interventions in the Council Hall against further institutionalization of ECs. Carli's primary concern about ECs was their institutionalization of collegiality. Speaking for a number of CIP leaders and sympathizers,<sup>41</sup> he argued that ECs "should not be based on the supposed principle" of

<sup>41</sup> Carli reported that he spoke in the name of "thirty fathers from various nations," but Alberigo and Komonchak report that when the list of signatures was checked it contained only nine: Sigaud and Lefebvre and seven of their closest allies (2000:149 n.109).



**Table 1.** Votes on CIP Communism Petition, by Support for Collegiality

CIP Petition Asking Council to Condemn Communism <sup>a</sup>	Vote on the Fourth Point on Collegiality <sup>b</sup>		
	Conservative	Progressive	Totals
Did Not Sign, n	296	1492	1788
Row (%)	(17)	(83)	(100)
Column (%)	(73)	(87)	(84)
Signed, n	112	225	337
Row (%)	(33)	(67)	(100)
Column (%)	(27)	(13)	(16)
Totals, n	408	1717	2125
Row (%)	(19)	(81)	(100)
Column (%)	(100)	(100)	(100)

Note: CIP = *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*

<sup>a</sup> FSig. 3.7, ISR.

<sup>b</sup> Second Session, October 30, 1963, *Suffragationes*, Volume XX: No. 104.

collegiality, “even if the ‘alleged’ collegiality” was approved by the Pope and Council (Alberigo and Komonchak 200: 149–50). Sigaud stated that ECs could limit “the powers of individual bishops” or “even destroy them” (Noël 1997: 113).

Despite their negative feelings toward ECs, CIP leaders did recognize their utility for any group wishing to communicate with the “rank and file.” Sigaud reportedly wanted to establish a “Conference of Presidents of ECs,” because he thought the CIP would “gain in vigor and size if it were based on pre-existing structures” (Perrin 1997:177; Alberigo and Komonchak 1997:197). However, there is no record of Sigaud or any other CIP leader attempting to communicate with the bishops through the ECs. It seems they were simply too disturbing a form of organization for these conservative leaders.

Instead of using the ECs, CIP leaders communicated with what seems to have been only a select few allies. For example, writing to Sigaud just before the Third Session, Lefebvre stated, “I am sending these documents to you with the hope that when possible you will give them to the Council fathers who will look upon them favorably.”<sup>42</sup> And, just before the start of the Fourth Session, Lefebvre wrote Carli:

I think in addition to our three names you could add that of [three others]. . . . Regarding sending it to the 200 Fathers who are not Italian, I hope that

you will be able to obtain the list through [the Cardinal’s secretary]. . . . They must, I think, have kept the names of those who signed the documents at the end of the last [session].<sup>43</sup>

The CIP’s commentary on collegiality was disseminated only to those they knew to be sympathetic to their cause. Lefebvre closed the form letter seeming to recognize that such communication was less than ideal, stating:

Perhaps you may be able to find even other Fathers who agree with these principles, and who will be able to undersign them and who thus may confer the greatest authority on this petition. On this we congratulate you.<sup>44</sup>

Communicating only with sympathizers was a flawed strategy because the CIP often failed to bring their various sympathizers together. Table 1 presents a cross-tabulation of bishops who signed the CIP petition asking the Pope to condemn communism with the bishops’ votes on collegiality.

Nearly three-fourths (73%, see column percents) of the bishops who voted conservatively on collegiality did not sign the communism petition, and two-thirds of those who signed the petition voted progressively! In contrast to the DM, who brought diverse groups of bishops together to support their causes, the CIP was left

<sup>43</sup> Lefebvre to Carli, December 27, 1964, ISR (FCrI 15.13).

<sup>44</sup> Lefebvre to Carli and other CIP sympathizers, February 14, 1964, ISR (FCrI 15.27).

<sup>42</sup> Lefebvre to Sigaud, August 5, 1964, ISR (FSig 1.9).

appealing to fractured populations from issue to issue.

As a consequence, the CIP's regular meetings were usually attended by only "five or six Council fathers" and "four to six theologians." Though they occasionally opened their meetings to the general public, the highest turnout reported at any of those meetings was "eighty Council fathers" (Perrin 1997: 179–180). CIP leaders seemed to recognize that their organizational choices had left them isolated. Caporale wrote notes after his interviews summarizing his impressions of his respondents. What he wrote about Carli is fascinating:

What impressed me was his good sense of humor, his readiness to talk and he did so very extensively, his realization that he was considered reactionary, and yet his feeling of doing his duty even at the cost of martyrdom. He was very open and frank, but it was evident that he had had very few contacts and was at the margin of life at the Council (CTT).

Even after the CIP had formed, Sigaud, in a statement that highlights the importance of regular feedback to an organization's strategic capacity (Ganz 2000), complained to Lefebvre that, "Here in Brazil we have little news on the process of [Council] work and for that reason we cannot plan anything for the Third Session" (quoted in Perrin 1997: 182). It is hard to imagine a DM member making a similar statement at any point during the Council. Indeed, as Sigaud was complaining about a lack of information, the DM was busily corresponding, drafting schemas and making plans for the Third Session.

#### **TACTICS IN COMMON: PETITIONS, VOTES AND THE MODI**

In many ways, especially in their strategies, the DM and the CIP could not have been more different. Yet these differences should not obscure their many similarities: both held weekly meetings, corresponded between Council sessions, consulted theologians and had substantial administrative help, with staff, printing presses or organizations willing to print their materials.

In addition to these similarities, certain long-institutionalized Council rules dictated the tactics available to both groups. Council documents would be drafted by Council commissions,

voted on in intermediate stages, and eventually ratified or not by the more than 2200 bishops. Correspondingly, both groups attempted to influence the Council agenda, the membership of the drafting committees,<sup>45</sup> the tone of documents to be voted upon, and the voters. There were two primary tactics used by each group to achieve these: they wrote and submitted petitions to the Council moderators and the Pope, and authored amendments (*modi*) for Council documents which they attempted to get their supporters to submit along with their votes.

#### **PETITIONS**

Both the DM and the CIP used petitions, or formal requests to the Pope or Council Moderators, to indicate their displeasure when an issue had been kept off or removed from the Council's agenda. The DM submitted a number of petitions over the course of the Council. Their use of petitions illustrates the advantages the ECs gave them, as well as how their views of ECs and collegiality freed them to employ similar tactics more efficiently than the CIP. For example, during the Third Session, the DM grew concerned that important schemas were not going to receive the attention and debate they deserved due to time constraints. However, rather than circulate a petition to all of the bishops at the Council, the DM was comfortable allowing Veillot, as moderator of the group, to write "in the name of the Bishops *representing twenty-seven conferences or groups of ECs from the five continents*."<sup>46</sup> They saw themselves as legitimate representatives of almost all the bishops at the Council.

In contrast, and because they could not stomach such reliance on ECs and were not a collegial organization themselves, when the CIP wanted the weight of the entire episcopate behind them, they disseminated petitions to all of the bishops at the Council through the

<sup>45</sup> In fact, the DM spent a great deal of time during the Second Session using the episcopal conference structure to compile lists of candidates to be elected to the commissions. Noël categorizes their efforts in this regard as "the most significant success that was reported" by the DM (1997: 112).

<sup>46</sup> Veillot to Council Moderators, October 14th 1964, ISR (EA 5.4).

mail.<sup>47</sup> Just before the Fourth Session, Lefebvre wrote the following to Carli, which illustrates how and why they eschewed the more collegial, and efficient, petitioning used by the DM (c.f. Alberigo and Komonchak 1997: 198):

It is clear that the Holy Father thinks [we are] an organization or a highly organized association with members that are enrolled . . . , a Council, a president, etc. We are, however, far from this organization and it seems to me of little import . . . now that we know each other, whether we have a title or not. Instead of saying "international meeting" we can say "some Fathers in various nations." . . . We have no official or public organization. *What we do together has value only through the signatures of the Fathers who are very willing to grant them to us, when we ask them; more often even, they ask us.*<sup>48</sup>

Their two petitions were the only two occasions during which the CIP attempted to communicate with the entire episcopate (c.f. Perrin 1997: 179).

## THE MODI

Another important tactic employed by both groups were the *modi*. When a bishop was voting on Council documents, especially those in their final stages, he had three options. He could vote to reject the document outright, accept it, or accept it with certain conditions. These "conditions" were called the "*modi*," as the proper term for them was *juxta modum* (or "with modifications"). If more than one-third of the episcopate rejected or submitted *modi* on a document, the drafting committee had to take the bishops' suggestions into account during revision. The DM and the CIP both recognized the value of the *modi* and tried to use them to their advantage.

Mobilizing enough bishops to submit *modi* was an effective tactic for the DM when they risked losing because they could not muster enough votes, when a document was not bad enough to reject entirely but needed revision, or when they were simply running out of time. DM minutes from the Fourth Session note *modi*

being prepared on nine separate schemas. The following press release is an example of how this tactic was effective for the DM:

ROME, Nov. 16—This correspondent has learned that as many as 400—if not more—of the 712 affirmative votes with modifications submitted five days ago on the vital Fifth paper of the Missions schema contained an identical amendment. . . . The amendment was recommended by five leading cardinals from North America, South America, Africa and Europe, and by six high ranking bishops and arch-bishops, four of whom are presidents of extensive ECs. As a result of this amendment, [the document] received less than the necessary two-thirds straight "yes" ballots required, which means that the Missions Commission must revise the paper in view of the various amendments submitted.<sup>49</sup>

This is only one of many instances where the DM was successful (the schema on missions had been a very contentious one) but kept their role in the victory obscured, so that not even the conservative author of the press release seemed aware of the careful planning and mobilization behind it. Instead of attributing the *modi* to the DM, who were surely behind them, he attributed them to the individual efforts of some prominent leaders (all of whom were DM members) and while an alliance between them on this one issue was obvious, their over-arching agenda and efficient organization remained behind the scenes.

Like the DM, the CIP gave its members *modi* to submit when they were voting on schemas.<sup>50</sup> However, because they failed to contact bishops beyond those whom they knew to be conservative sympathizers, they always failed to get the necessary one-third of the bishops to submit *modi* (c.f. Laurentin 1966: 123).

The CIP's continued failures on the *modi* were not, however, due to a lack of conservative sympathizers. Though the Mary petition is incomplete (researchers estimate that 510 signed it [Wiltgen 1967:241], but I found a list with

<sup>47</sup> Sigaud and de Castro Mayer to Council Fathers, September 15, 1964. ISR (FSig 2.19).

<sup>48</sup> Lefebvre to Carli, August 20, 1965, ISR (FCrI 15.11) French, emphasis added.

<sup>49</sup> Divine Word News Service, Wiltgen, "Composition of Propaganda Congregation Made More Precise By Three Clauses," November 16, 1965 (DOH 4(13)).

<sup>50</sup> For example see the CIP *Modi* on Religious Liberty, November 18, 1965 (ISR FCrI 1.84) or the CIP *Modi* on "The Church's Attitude Toward Non-Christians" (ISR FCrI 15.28).

only approximately 450 signers in the archive) and therefore provides a conservative estimate of sympathizers, 682 bishops signed either one or both of the CIP petitions [for details, see the *ASR* Web site supplement, <http://www.asanet.org/journals/asr/2004/toc040.html>]<sup>51</sup>—about 40 bishops shy of the one-third needed to sink a reform. However, this is by no means a complete picture of CIP sympathizers. Two hundred fifty bishops who voted conservatively on collegiality in the Second Session *did not sign either petition* (results not shown). At least 38 percent of the episcopate (841 bishops) was in some way a part of the CIP's sentiment pool. This figure is a conservative estimate. It does not include the 60 missing signatures from the Mary petition, because they may have voted conservatively on collegiality and therefore should not be double-counted. It also does not include the 31 bishops who voted conservatively on collegiality during the Second Session but who did not vote on the final vote on collegiality (which was taken during the same session as the communism petition, results not shown), because they were likely deceased or no longer participating. The CIP's sentiment pool was large enough to sink almost any reform through the modi—if they had been able to mobilize it.

### THE FIGHT OVER THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

The DM and CIP employed these strategies and tactics throughout the course of the Council, with consistent results. The full story of their efforts is beyond the scope of this paper, but one issue serves as representative example: the question of how the Council would treat the Blessed Virgin Mary. Devotion to Mary “has been a hallmark of the Catholic tradition” (McCarthy 1994:343), which has often served to differentiate Catholics and Protestants. At the time of the Council, conservatives wanted to further elevate Mary's status in the Church. Progressives resisted their efforts because one of their central goals for the Council was rapprochement with Protestants; and many Protestants saw Catholic devotion to Mary as inappropriate, and even verging on the heretical, because her status was often exalted to one which seemed to equal, or even surpass Jesus’.

Conservatives attempted to end the First Session by discussing (and hopefully approving) the Schema on Mary that had been prepared by

the conservative preparatory commission. Progressives resisted this move, and argued that Mary should not have her own schema, but should instead be incorporated into a schema on the Church, because (using savvy political language) “it was not possible to speak of the Church without speaking of Mary” (Rynne 1968: 159). A vote was not taken on the conservative preparatory schema, and the First Session closed without any decision. DM correspondence between the First and Second Session noted that revising the schema on the Church to include “the schema of the Blessed Virgin” was a first order of business.<sup>51</sup>

As the Second Session opened, Council moderators called for a vote on whether Mary should have her own schema or be included within the schema on the Church. The vote was the closest of the Council (1114 to 1074), with progressives winning by only 40 votes (Alberigo and Komonchak 2000:98; Fesquet 1967: 199; Rynne 1968:214). Ironically, this conservative near victory was not a result of their organization. As the Council was voting on Mary, CIP leaders were just beginning to correspond. In fact, this defeat, combined with the “disastrous” votes on collegiality the following day, is what probably spurred conservatives to form their organization. In contrast, the DM, and progressive bishops in general, had campaigned mightily in favor of putting Mary in the schema on the Church (Wilde, forthcoming).

After their defeat on Mary, apparently thinking that if the Council would not elevate Mary's status perhaps the Pope would, the CIP petitioned the Pope to consecrate the world to Mary.<sup>52</sup> This petition provides more evidence that the CIP failed to mobilize all of their sympathizers. The highest estimates report that only 510 bishops signed the petition (Alberigo and Komonchak 2000:175 n. 188). That they were

<sup>51</sup> Source: Primeau from Etchegaray, January 4, 1963, PC.

<sup>52</sup> Consecration, in general, is an act which makes something profane sacred; or “by which a person or thing is dedicated to the service and worship of God by prayers, rites, and ceremonies.” A consecration is similar to, but is more solemn and elaborate than a blessing. Consecrating the world to Mary would have indicated that she was capable of “taking care” of the entire world, and of making sure that the evils and problems of the world would be addressed by God and Jesus (The Catholic Encyclopedia 1908 [2003]).

**Table 2.** Consistency in Stances on the Blessed Virgin Mary

	Final Vote on Mary <sup>a</sup>			
	Conservative	Progressive	Modi	Totals
First Vote on Mary <sup>b</sup>				
Conservative, n	8	565	293	866
(%)	(1)	(65)	(34)	(100)
Progressive, n	2	741	147	891
(%)	(0)	(83)	(17)	(100)
Totals, n	10	1307	440	1757
(%)	(1)	(74)	(25)	(100)
CIP Petition Asking Pope to Consecrate World to Mary <sup>c</sup>				
Signed, n	1	208	109	318
(%)	(0)	(65)	(34)	(100)
Did Not Sign, n	9	1351	412	1772
(%)	(1)	(76)	(23)	(100)
Totals, n	10	1557	521	2090
(%)	(0)	(75)	(25)	(100)

Note: CIP = *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*

<sup>a</sup> Third Session, October 29, 1964, *Suffragationes*, Volume XLII: No. 215. Data are restricted to only those who voted on both votes on the Blessed Virgin Mary.

<sup>b</sup> Second Session, October 29, 1963, *Suffragationes*, Volume XIX: No. 97.

<sup>c</sup> FSig 2.8, ISR.

able to garner less than half of the number who voted conservatively on the first vote on Mary illustrates their inability to mobilize all of their sympathizers. Furthermore, and perhaps most importantly, the petition suggests that had the CIP been in tune with the assembly, the way the DM was through the ECs, they could have gained a victory on a very contentious issue. At least 101 bishops who signed the Mary petition<sup>53</sup> voted progressively on the first vote, more than enough sympathizers to have given them an important early victory.

In response to the petition, the Pope wrote to Sigaud (through his Secretary of State Cicognani) that though he would not consecrate the world to Mary, “nothing forbids the Diocese or religious institutions from carrying out their own consecrations.”<sup>54</sup> Sigaud’s reaction to the Pope’s refusal is instructive. As the Fourth Session was beginning, Sigaud wrote:

Unfortunately, the Council will end without the world’s consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. . . . After presenting our request, and having done everything possible in this sense, I feel that the homage that Our Lady requires of us at this

moment is to faithfully accept the decision of the Holy Father.<sup>55</sup>

The tone of resignation within Sigaud’s statement is due, no doubt, to the fact that he wrote it after conservatives suffered a second, and final, defeat on Mary in the Council hall. After the first vote indicated that Mary would not have her own schema, a final vote was called during the Third Session on the precise wording to be used to describe Mary in the schema on the Church. In the end, though the document was certainly a compromise, progressives succeeded in keeping the majority of the problematic terms used to describe Mary out of the schema. The final schema was approved midway through the Third Session by more than two-thirds of the voters. Analysis of the vote indicates that conservatives, *even once they had a full-fledged organization in the CIP that was actively working on elevating Mary’s status*, fared worse on the second vote than they had on the first.

Table 2 shows that of the 866 bishops who originally supported the conservative position on Mary (and who voted on the second vote), only 301 voted conservatively or submitted a

<sup>53</sup> ISR FSig 2.8.

<sup>54</sup> Cicognani to Sigaud, January 16, 1965, ISR (FSig 3.29) Latin.

<sup>55</sup> Sigaud to Frota, September 30, 1965, ISR (FSig 3.36) Portuguese.

(most likely conservative) modi on the final vote. In other words, conservatives were able to hold onto only 35 percent of their original sentiment pool. Fully 65 percent of those who voted conservatively the first time had swung over to the progressive side by the time the second vote on Mary was taken.<sup>56</sup> In contrast, progressives lost only two out of the 858 bishops who voted progressively the first time around. Table 2 also demonstrates that this happened not just for the bishops who voted conservatively the first time around, but also for those who were motivated enough to sign the CIP's petition on Mary, almost two-thirds of whom simply accepted the progressive final document. Because they were not in touch the entire episcopate, the CIP was most likely unable to identify those with similar views about Mary, and thus lost their closest chance for a conservative victory in the Council hall, not once, but twice.

### CONCLUSION: INSTITUTIONAL RULES, MODELS OF AUTHORITY, SEMI-MARGINALITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

When the Second Vatican Council opened in 1962, few observers would have predicted that an informal organization of progressive bishops would prove to be far more successful than an organization of conservative bishops with close alliances with the Curia. This case illustrates that resources alone do not explain social movement success. In combination with the conservative tone of the preparatory schemas and the power and resources of the Curia, conservatives should not have even needed an extra-conciliar organization, all else being equal.

<sup>56</sup> Though these two votes were not identically worded and had slightly different nuances, the core issue remained how much importance the Council would give Mary. While in the first vote, the question was whether she should have her own document, on the final vote, contention focused around three hotly debated titles: whether Mary would be called "Mother of the Church," "coredematrix," which means literally that Mary is one of the reasons why humans are saved (the other being Jesus Christ); and/or "mediatrix," which means that Mary can obtain grace for sinners (McCarthy 1994:351).

### INSTITUTIONAL RULES

One reason why conservatives' greater resources did not lead to victory at the Council was because Vatican II was an "unsettled time" (Swidler 1986) for the Roman Catholic Church, and the first few weeks of the Council demonstrated that all else was *not* equal; real changes in both the institutional rules and the legitimate power structure of the Church began the moment the Council opened. As researchers have noted, "changing environments generate new opportunities—and constraints" (Ganz 2000: 1041). New opportunities can lead to "collective creativity" and new organizational forms (Armstrong 2002b), though these are always generated within the confines of pre-existing cultural schemas and symbols (Sewell 1996).

The Council created new organizational opportunities within the Church because it changed the institutional rules of the game (albeit for a short and specified period of time), and provided a moment of democratic governance within a non-democratic and hierarchical structure. The progressives who had been outside of the power structure of the Church administration were quick to recognize this shift in institutional rules and to adapt their organization to suit it.

In contrast, instead of adapting to the new rules presented by the Council, conservatives, in no doubt partly because they realized the change in rules threatened their accumulated power, simply resisted them. Conservatives, particularly those within the Curia, began the Council insisting that votes were not binding, but were "recommendations" that the conservative drafting committees could take into account. There was no historical precedent for such an argument, council votes had always been binding (but this was easy to ignore because councils were such rare events), and conservatives quickly lost that battle. But, their refusal to recognize that the institutional rules had changed once the Council was underway provided progressives with their first advantage.

By immediately recognizing that they *needed* an organization if their concerns were going to be heard, and organizing around the new institutional rules surrounding votes, progressives were able to somewhat compensate for their initial lack of resources. This provides support for Ganz's argument that organization-

al “newness can be an asset” (2000:1043). He found that traditional union organizers

... selected for reasons that had little to do with the needs of the environment within which they were to work, developed strategy within an organizational setting better equipped to reproduce past routines than to innovate new ones. Ironically, the abundance of internal resources to which well-established groups have access may make it harder to innovate by making it easier for them to keep doing the same thing wrong. New groups, on the other hand, often lack conventional resources, but the richness of their strategic capacity—aspects of their leadership and organization . . . —can offset this.

Because they formed at the time of a Council, the DM was well-adapted to a Council environment where votes were binding, and where, in contrast to the normal machinations of the Church, more mattered than the Roman Curia’s and the Pope’s opinions.

### CULTURAL MODELS OF AUTHORITY

However, while it was new, the DM was not the *newest* organization examined here. The CIP actually formed later than the DM, and not until Council rules and debates were much more crystallized. If strategic capacity solely depended upon temporality, then the CIP should have been better adapted to the Council environment than the DM. This study suggests that despite the time at which it forms, an organization’s culture can harm its strategic capacity if that culture conflicts with the environment in which the organization is acting, as studies of movements as diverse as Women’s Liberation (Mansbridge 1986; Polletta 2002) and new-left home-schoolers (Stevens 2001) have illustrated.

The CIP’s paralysis in the face of progressives’ continuing success provides a powerful example of how culture can constrain the actions of individuals and groups. Even though they knew they were losing, and were aware of an alternative, effective organizational structure they simply could not stomach using the ECs. The ECs’ collegial organization directly contradicted their deeply held beliefs in the holiness of the hierarchical structure of the Roman Catholic Church and the primacy of the Pope; and thus their beliefs about the way things are, and the way things should be, within the Church, and by extension within the world as well.

In fact, their cultural model of authority hurt conservatives beyond their limited strategies in the CIP. This becomes obvious when the following question is posed: if the DM were so successful in communicating with the ECs, why did the CIP and conservatives in general often seem less than aware of the extent of the DM’s organization and agenda? There are three important points to the answer to this question.

First, conservatives from deliberative ECs had a different experience of their ECs than their progressive counterparts. For example, though Bishop Chaves, a prominent Brazilian conservative, and progressive Brazilians agreed about the frequency of their EC meetings, Chaves told Caporale that the Brazilian EC “had no relations with other Episcopates” (CIC 2). When the connections between Brazil, CELAM and the DM are considered, it is almost hard to believe Chaves was a member of the same EC as Helder Camara. This suggests that even if the CIP had used the ECs, they may have been less useful for conservatives, because their sympathizers were less engaged in them, or simply did not go to any “extra-conciliar” meetings. Chaves implied that such organizations, even those he felt allied with theologically, were simply not a priority. He told Caporale, “I was invited to join a group of those who are . . . more conservative (with a little smile) from all countries, but I never went because I am too busy” (CIC 2). For conservatives, organization outside of the formal groups of the Council was not viewed as necessary, or even as entirely legitimate, so it seems plausible that CIP sympathizers were simply more “out of the loop” than more progressive members of their episcopates.

Second, as Berto’s letters to Carli demonstrated, though they did not know precisely *how*, conservatives did recognize that a progressive organization existed and that they were dangerous. However, while they recognized the threat the DM posed, conservatives simply could not conceive of how or why the DM was so successful, because that success was not contingent upon hierarchical authority.<sup>57</sup> Collegial organizations were both mysterious and absolutely illegitimate to conservatives. In other words, they were a “mafia.” Thus, the DM was

<sup>57</sup> Berto to Carli, March 13, 1964, ISR (FCrI 17.1).

able to stay out of the limelight partly because conservatives were not sure exactly how they were doing what they seemed to be doing, if they were *not* using coercion.

DM members were aware of such criticisms, but as individuals who were “living collegiality” and thereby coming to (what they understood to be) a truer understanding of the Church, they almost completely disregarded them. Almost. They deflected the criticism by simply never claiming any victories, a decision that also gave them an advantage by protecting their semi-marginal status.

### SEMI-MARGINALITY

In her study of the growth of interest-based politics, Clemens (1997: 63) argues that successful groups have members who are marginal to the institution they are trying to change, but not too marginal. With unique positions as well-known and powerful bishops outside of the Roman Curia, the DM benefited from their semi-marginality in a number of ways.

As the rules by which the Council would proceed were being established, the structure and embodiment of authority in the Church were being questioned. By the time they were interviewed by Caporale (at the end of the Second Session), most of his respondents openly disparaged the Roman Curia’s power and refusal to embrace change, and called for radical revision to the structure of the Curia or its elimination all together (Wilde, forthcoming). Because they were entirely outside of the Curia, the DM was unharmed by this shift in legitimate authority, but were instead well-placed to be seen as legitimate leaders as “representatives” of the newly legitimated episcopal conference structure. Over three-quarters of the DM’s 22 members were eventually recognized as being among the most important people at the Council by Caporale’s respondents.

Furthermore, it is no coincidence that the founding members of the DM were French and Latin American—and not Italian, individuals who were geographically, administratively and theologically marginal to the Church.

### ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

On the surface this account contradicts most studies of consensus-based organizing which have found that they are less efficient and effec-

tive than other, particularly more hierarchical, organizations.<sup>58</sup> For example, Mitchell Stevens found that the conservative, hierarchical, not-consensus-oriented conservative Protestant homeschoolers were more successful than the consensus-based hippie homeschoolers because,

Sluggishness in decision making and unpredictable resource commitments are the downside of organizational forms that lend a lot of discretion to the individual. . . . Pure democracy can come at the cost of organizational survival. . . . Hierarchical divisions of labor and authority make the completion of complex tasks more efficient; (2002: 193).

Barbara Epstein (1991) found that the direct action movement’s reliance on consensus, lack of hierarchical leadership and distrust of power lead to unresolved conflicts, short-lived organizations and a lack of strategy, even while it produced strong feelings of solidarity among members.

The DM’s ability to avoid these problems was rooted in a few qualities of their organization. First, as Francesca Polletta notes, the most successful forms of participatory democratic organizations seem to be those which combine “aspects of collectivist forms with aspects of more conventionally bureaucratic ones” (2002:219). As an organization of *leaders* of episcopal conferences (and with clearly designated leaders within the group), the DM carefully wedded hierarchy (a familiar “organizational repertoire” (Clemens 1997)) with cooperation and participation. This allowed them to benefit from “the *solidary, innovatory* and *developmental* benefits of participatory democracy” (Polletta 2000: 2), but to avoid the problems associated with not having clear tasks and leaders.

<sup>58</sup> I should note here that the CIP was not completely ineffective. At a very basic level, the CIP demonstrates that any organization is better than none. Though they were ineffective at communicating with voters, they were successful in pressuring the Pope to qualify Council decisions, especially those which most conflicted with their theological views. The Pope acceded to their demands on both Mary and collegiality. Indeed, the CIP’s clearest victories are connected to these two issues (c.f. Rynne 1968:407), though both issues, especially Mary, were ultimately interpreted as progressive victories.



This careful melding of organizational forms was made more successful by the DM's focus on ensuring good communication. They made sure that the core group did not grow too large and that no ECs were over-represented at the DM—which could have hampered discussion and created power differentials.<sup>59</sup> They stressed the importance of regular attendance, mandating that anyone who could not personally be present at a particular meeting must have a substitute.<sup>60</sup> Finally, they attempted to ensure not only frequent, but *accurate, concise and consistent* communication, by providing bullet points for the representatives to read or disseminate to their ECs.<sup>61</sup>

The DM was not able to generate consensus on all issues (Grootaers 1981:161). Yet even when they failed to achieve consensus, they actively worked toward compromise positions everyone in the group could support and were careful to record divergent views in their minutes. In contrast, no divergent views were recorded in CIP minutes or correspondence. Compromise was not an option, and consensus not the goal for the CIP—asserting the Church's hierarchical teaching authority and the primacy of the Pope were. For the DM, give-and-take was key to their participatory democratic approach, while for the CIP and conservatives in general, to *compromise* their views of the Church was to compromise the Church itself. These contrasting cultures led one group to organizational success and the other to failure; and ultimately profoundly altered Roman Catholicism.

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<sup>59</sup> Only one delegate per EC was allowed, and members were asked to “invite no one to future meetings” without “the consent of all the members.” DM Minutes 2:1, November 13, 1963, PC.

<sup>60</sup> DM Minutes 1:2, October 4, 1963, PC.

<sup>61</sup> “Letter to representatives” from Etchegaray, October 12, 1963, PC.

## APPENDIX

### ABBREVIATIONS AND DESCRIPTIONS OF ARCHIVAL MATERIALS

*Archivio Segreto Vaticano* (Vatican Secret Archive), Cortile del Belvedere, 00120 Vatican City. The Council votes cited in this article are as follows:

- First Vote on the Blessed Virgin Mary, Second Session, October 29, 1963. 1114 placets, 1074 non-placets. (*Suffragationes*, Volume XIX: No. 97).<sup>62</sup>
- The Vote on the Fourth point on Collegiality: Second Session, October 30, 1963. 1717 placets, 408 non-placets. (*Suffragationes*, Volume XX: No. 104).<sup>63</sup>
- Final Vote on the Blessed Virgin Mary: Third Session, October 29, 1964. 1559 placets, 521 *Juxta modum*, 10 non-placets. (*Suffragationes*, Volume XLII: No. 215).

### Caporale's Materials

- CIC = Caporale Interview Note card: the number gives the category number by which the note cards are organized.
- CHT = Caporale Handwritten Transcript
- CT = denotes typed transcript that was not categorized in the note cards.

### Other Materials

- DOH = Daniel O'Hanlon Collection from the Graduate Theological Union, Flora Lamson

<sup>62</sup> The Vatican's official totals for this vote appear to be slightly inaccurate. Two bishops' whose votes were isolated on the last page of the vote were not included in the totals (one non-placet and one placet). I included them, and thus have 1,115 placets and 1,075 non-placets in all analysis of the first vote on the Blessed Virgin Mary.

<sup>63</sup> The last page of the vote on the Fourth Point on Collegiality seems to have been lost, because 15 bishops whose last names start with Z are missing. I extrapolated their votes using their votes on the Third Point on Collegiality (which occurred on the same day, at the same time, and was highly correlated with the Fourth Point). My numbers now match the official totals, so I use this approximation rather than excluding the missing bishops. Regardless, these bishops represent less than one percent of the voters, and inclusion or exclusion does not affect any substantive conclusions.

Hewlett library, Berkeley, CA. 3(10), for example, denotes Box 3 (file folder 10). The materials in this archive are in English, French and Latin as well as German and Dutch.

ISR = *Instituto Per Le Scienze Religiose - Giovanni XXIII*, Via San Vitale 114, Bologna, Italy. Documents from ISR are cited by the following:

- F (Fondo (Archive)) Sig (Sigaud), 1.84 (box and document). The majority of Sigaud's documents are in Latin, and correspondence in Portuguese or French (with Lefebvre).
- EA = Etchegary Archive, 5.4 (box and document). The majority of materials in this archive are in French or Latin and have been translated into Italian.
- F (Fondo (Archive)) CrI (Carli), 1.2 (box and document). The majority of Carli's correspondence is in Italian and French.

PC = Primeau Collection, Catholic University of American, Vatican II Archive, Washington, D.C. Primeau's materials are in English, Latin, French, and German. The majority of DM minutes cited in this article are available in this collection, in Latin or French. "Minutes of the x meeting at the Domus Mariae during the y Session" are abbreviated "DM Minutes x:y," followed by the date. "Report to the U.S. Hierarchy of the Meeting of the International Committee, September 18, 1964—*Domus Mariae*" is abbreviated as "Report to the U.S. Hierarchy of the DM," September 18, 1964.

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