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Title: "The Pontifical Russian College, Rome"

Source: Reference:

Source, Operational Data and Comments:

1. Attached is translated but unprocessed report entitled "The Pontifical RUSSIGUM College, Rome - Survey and Appreciation".
2. Date of Report 10 January 1949. Evaluation B-3.
3. The original Italian report has been retained in our files.

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The whole block of buildings bounded by Via Carlo Alberto, Via Carlo Cattaneo, Via Napoleone III., Via Gioberti and Piazza Santa Maria Maggiore, ~~Rome~~, belongs to the Holy See. In this ~~area~~ ^{area} ~~was~~ ^{was} located the Pontifical Oriental Institute, the Pontifical Lombard Institute, the Pontifical ~~Russian~~ ^{Russian} College and the Pontifical Archaeological Institute. The ~~Russian~~ ^{Russian} College ~~was~~ ^{is} located in building in Via Cattaneo, ~~which~~ ^{which} was formerly ~~used~~ ^{used} as a convent of monks of the ~~Augustinian~~ ^{Augustinian} order and later as a hospital.

In 1929, the ~~area~~ ^{area} bordering with the courtyard of the Oriental Institute was destined by Vatican officials for the ~~new~~ ^{new} Russian College. The old church dating from the 5th-6th century was transformed into a Byzantine-Slav temple. Next to it a modern building was erected to accommodate the college, which was solemnly inaugurated in autumn 1929 by the late Cardinal ~~Alberto~~ ^{Albino} ~~Alberto~~ ^{SINIGaglia}, then ~~head~~ ^{head} of the Oriental Congregation.

The first head of the college was a Slovak Jesuit, ~~Father~~ ^{Father} ~~JAVORKA~~ ^{JAVORKA}, ~~assisted~~ ^{assisted} by Father Giuseppe ~~SCHWELZE~~ ^{SCHWELZE} (an Austrian Jesuit), and Father ~~IYSCHENIC~~ ^{IYSCHENIC} (a Polish Jesuit). The school at first had six students, ~~including~~ ^{including} the ~~source~~ ^{source}. The others were a Russian, ~~one~~ ^{one} ~~Polish~~ ^{Polish}, Poles, Bielorussians and an Italian, ~~and~~ ^{and} PAVANI, who currently is in the Vatican Diplomatic Corps as representative at the Hague.

During that time Mgr. Michele D'HERBIGNY enjoyed great influence with Pope Pius XI. It was hoped that the Soviet regime would soon come to an end, and consequently an adequate number of missionaries were trained to be sent to Russia as soon as conditions ~~would~~ ^{would} allow it. At first the number of Russians attending the school was very limited, since most students were Italians, French, German, Dutch, etc., ~~who~~ ^{who}, ~~by~~ ^{by} letting their beard grow, ~~believed~~ ^{believed} in good

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faith that they were fitted to carry out ~~their~~ missionary work in Russia. and scientific
 The 1929-1933 period was spent in the ~~methodical~~ spiritual ~~training~~ ~~and~~ ~~scientific~~
 training of the pupils, and was undoubtedly profitable. Although not an
 exceptionally clever man, Father JAVORKA was at least an honest Slav and a
 good administrator.

Unfortunately, after the death of Cardinal SINCERO (an Italian), ~~his~~
 post was given to a Frenchman, Cardinal Eugenio ~~TISSERANT~~, who, in spite of
 his great culture and high moral standards, had all the faults of the typical
 French bourgeois, and above all, lacked ~~any~~ intellectual vision. In the place
 of Father JAVORKA he appointed a French Jesuit, Filippo ~~DE~~ REGIS, a man who
 notwithstanding his ~~shaming~~ ^{mean} manners, enforced an iron discipline in the
 college. Thus the essentially Slav atmosphere prevailing in the institute
 gradually gave way to a scholastic regime characterized by the worst type of
 French Jesuitism. As a result, many students left the college.

The new rector gave a new character to the school. Besides making it
 compulsory attending scientific courses at the Pontifical Gregorian University
 the curriculum acquired somewhat a political aspect. ^{By means of} lectures, exhibitions
 in 1932 (especially noteworthy that organized by Father ~~LETTI~~ a Canadian, against
 the Communist atheism), concerts, etc., every effort was made ~~ix~~ with a view
 to attracting under the influence of the college as many Russians then re-
 siding in Italy as possible. These activities did not escape the attention
 of people in Moscow, and a campaign started in the Russian press denouncing
 the policy of the executives of the Russicum College.

Officially, the purpose of the school was the religious and scientific
 training of Catholic missionaries in liberated Russia. In effect, pupils were

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prepared for the fight against the Marxian doctrine and the Soviet regime. These intentions might ^{have} be laudable, but the methods employed ^{were} ~~are~~ decidedly wrong. The Vatican should know, for example, that the Jesuits are very much hated in Russia. The appellation of "Jesuit" is considered an offense by the Russians. Consequently, to appoint one as head of the school was undoubtedly a mistake from both a psychological and political point of view.

~~The course was ordained priest in May 1934, when he left the college to go to France. During the five years he spent at the college, he met the acquaintance of~~ ^{from 1929 to 1934 he stayed at the college} ~~only two Russians, Father Alessandro JULIO (currently in Paris) and Father Sergio BOLENSKI, RCM. All the other seminarists (about forty) belonged to other nationalities.~~ ^{was attended by} ~~On his occasional visits to Rome, the course got the impression that the college is gradually losing its importance, perhaps for the lack of financial funds and because of~~ ^{still in Rome} ~~the (hope of seeing the present Regime in Russia overthrown.~~ ^{from 1934 on} ~~the~~ ^{he declines in this}

In December 1947 the Rector, Father JE REGIS, ^{went to} ~~returned~~ Buenos Aires, to join the many Russians who had already left Rome for settling down in Argentina. Originally, his intention was to remain there only one year, but it seems that ^{now} he has no wish to return to Rome. His place has been taken by one of his pupils, Father Gustavo WETTER, an Austrian, who recently published a book entitled "Historical Dialectics On Marxianism", which was strongly attacked in an article which appeared in L'Unita'. Father WETTER's assistant is ~~Father~~ ^{now} Father IYSCHEVIC, now old, who likes to pose as a hermit, in the style of the Russian saints. The teaching of social and political subjects is entrusted to Father KOVALENKO, one of the very few Russian Jesuits. He is also the Pre-

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sident of the committee for the assistance to Russians.

DE REGIS' original intention was to ~~maintain~~ ^{make the Russicum} College a ~~major~~ ^{major} center for Russian political refugees in Italy. This plan, however, has completely failed inasmuch as the Russians prefer to ~~maintain~~ ^{attend} religious services at the Orthodox Church located in Via Palestro no. 71, ~~in Rome~~. In 1947 the college had only five or six pupils, all Italians. Some time later an elderly man, one von BOCK (?), a former member of the Tsarist diplomatic corps, ~~was~~ admitted in the college, and after only one year's training, was ordained priest. However, because of his advanced age, he will be merely exploited for propaganda purposes. ^{accom-} In view of the fact that the large building ~~occupies~~ ^{moderating} the school ~~is now~~ ^{is now} practically empty, the ecclesiastical authorities have decided to use it for other purposes. In fact, the fourth storey is currently occupied by the St. Damasceno College, ^{with} ~~there are~~ about thirty priests who wish to specialize themselves in some faculty at the local university. They belong to various ^Uoriental creeds (Chaldean, Maronite, etc.), and have very little contacts with the pupils of the Russicum College. Their school master is also a Jesuit, ~~whose name the source did not remember.~~

The Russicum College was founded because of the great interest which Pope Pius XI. had for the ^{propagation} ~~propagation~~ of Catholicism in Oriental countries. Pope Pius XII., however, feels differently about this policy, hence the present decline of that ^{institution} ~~organization~~. ^{should be discontinued} The Russicum college ~~is now~~ ^{is now} ~~attended~~ ^{attended} ~~at the courses of the Pontifical Gregorian University in Piazza della Pilotta, and study~~ ^{especially on problems connected with Russia.} ~~from this~~ ^{from this} The Pontifical Oriental Institute, located in Piazza Santa Maria Maggiore

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which
No. 7, is ~~located~~ *an advanced* high school for seminarists, who wish to specialize themselves not only in problems dealing with Russia, but ^{with} all the eastern countries ^{institution} as well. It is the oldest ~~organization~~ of its kind, and devotes a great deal of its attention to the political aspects of the life in the East, with the result that it has become ^{an actual} ~~a major~~ information center on ^{the} political and religious matters ^{regarding the} in ~~the~~ eastern countries. It also ~~attends to the publication~~ ^{of} theological, ~~and~~ philosophical and historic ^{of} treatises on problems connected with the East.

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