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Minutes from the meeting of January 30, 1976

New Jersey Catholic Historical Commission

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON THE PROPOSED HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC
CHURCH IN NEW JERSEY - FRIDAY, JANUARY 30, 1976

PRESENT: Bishop John Dougherty, Msgr. William Noé Field, Rev.
Carl Hinrichson, Rev. William Keller, Drs. Joseph
Mahoney, Peter Mitchell, Carl Prince and George Reilly

Bishop Dougherty reviewed the minutes of Wednesday, January 14
and used the minutes as an agenda for the remainder of the meeting.

- (1) Bishop Dougherty reported that the recommendation of the sub-
committee is Dr. Joseph Mahoney as Project Director. Dr. Reilly
moved the nomination, seconded by Father Keller, and the group
consented unanimously.
- (2) Dr. Mitchell suggested that before Bishop Dougherty brought up
the project with the ordinaries, Dr. Mahoney could prepare a
description of the proposed project to be sent out in advance
of the next meeting of the ordinaries (March 9). Bishop
Dougherty would then answer any questions directed to him on
the project at their meeting.
- (3) Discussion then moved to sponsorship of the project. Dr.
Prince spoke informally to Bernard Bush, Executive Director of
the New Jersey Historical Commission, about the project. He
was enthusiastic and would do what he could, including sponsor-
ing it. Dr. Prince felt and Committee members agreed that Mr.
Bush should be added to this Committee. Dr. Mitchell suggested
that Dr. Mahoney's description should go to the New Jersey His-
torical Commission and the New Jersey Historical Society
asking for their co-sponsorship or affiliation with the project.
The Committee could also invite Bernard Bush to serve as a mem-
ber of the advisory council for this project. This would be
postponed, however, until after the March 9 meeting.
- (4) As to the survey of the archives of the archdioceses, Fr.
Hinrichson has already done this in his dissertation. Dr.
Reilly also suggested secular newspapers as a source. Msgr.
Field volunteered to get the archives organized and have them
ready; Fr. Keller will assist him. Msgr. Field also suggested
Fr. Edwin Sullivan, who did the study on Bishop Bayley. Father
Seymour has a catalogue of what is in the Chancery; and in 1949-
50 a survey was undertaken by Fr. Walsh - 50 per cent is collec-
ted in the Chancery.

Dr. Prince stated that with the Livingston Papers, they had to
hire an outside historian to look over and evaluate the nature
of the material that they were asking funding for--certifying
that their project was worthwhile. No one connected with the
project could evaluate the materials. The Commission will want
to know what objective information we have that the information
is in the archives.

Dr. Mitchell stated that we would not want to bring in a con-
sultant until we have done the rough preliminary work. We

would want a person with a reputation in the field to certify the importance of the project; but not until we have done the rough work. Paul Horgan, previously suggested by Bishop Dougherty, would be an excellent suggestion.

Dr. Mitchell suggested that Dr. Joseph Mahoney coordinate the survey. He can avail himself of the services of Fr. Seymour, Fr. Keller, Fr. Hinrichson, Msgr. Field and Dr. Reilly. The project, coordinated through Dr. Mahoney, could include a survey of several parishes by Dr. Reilly, a survey of the Chancery by Fr. Hinrichson, and a survey of the archives by Fr. Seymour. The decision on the consultant will be postponed until after the March 9 meeting.

- (6) On the oral history section, Msgr. Field mentioned that Msgr. Theodore Bonelli is not well and not ready yet for the interview of Archbishop Boland; Dr. Mitchell thought Dr. Duff had spoken to Msgr. Watterson; and Fr. Hinrichson will interview Msgr. Tom Curry.

Msgr. Field mentioned that the woman who founded the parish in Cedar Grove would be ready to go at any time.

As far as oral history, Dr. Mitchell is in favor of going ahead with oral taped interviews in cases where people are very old or in ill health; but these steps must be taken carefully to make certain the Committee is laying the foundation properly. The Committee should look into seed money to get the program started as well as the ways in which we will proceed to request funding--initial funding and larger funding. Dr. Mitchell has taken the initial step in speaking to Lee Burke, Director of Grants and Research. A graduate assistant is working with Mr. Burke in spotting specific foundations whose purposes are compatible with the Committee's objectives. When the bishops are contacted, a single person would be designated as a liaison person with the Committee. We will identify documents in the State as well as the dioceses, and this will require the cooperation of the ordinaries. These small interviews would be a good idea, but Dr. Mitchell did not think the Committee should move too far ahead until it has established the foundation. Drs. Mahoney and Mitchell and Mr. Burke will work on a planning grant from private foundations. While the necessity of such a grant was questioned, Dr. Mitchell stated that funds are available for that specific purpose--to get programs off the ground.

The Committee decided to postpone inviting Professor Starr to a meeting but unanimously agreed to invite Msgr. Opdenaker to become a member of the Committee and to attend the next meeting.

Fr. Keller suggested that the Cardinal's secretary, Fr. Ted McCarrick, would be a good contact person in New York.

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(7) OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) Msgr. Field read the first draft of the agreement regarding the Chancery archives drawn up by Archdiocesan attorneys in Newark. He will follow through with the Archbishop's attorneys.
- (b) An announcement to the Advocate or the public press was also discussed but postponed so that the ordinaries would still be informed first. A news release or feature story in the New York Times, the Star-Ledger or the Advocate was also suggested.
- (c) The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, March 16, 1976 at 2:30 P.M.

February 9, 1976
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