

HISTORY

The Hierosolymitan Knights

CONFERENCE – 7 MARZO 1992

FUTURE STRATEGIES OF THE ORDER OF MALTA

A series of lectures devoted to “The Hierosolymitan Knights” was held in Rome, in connection with the Course on European History for the Academic Year 1991-1992 organized by the Europeane Dragan Foundation, with the co-operation of the Order



Roma. Castello della Magliana.

S.A. Em.ma il Principe e Gran Maestro Fra' Andrew Bertie con il Conte Carlo Marullo di Condojanni e l'Ospedaliere, Conte Geraud Marie Michel de Pierredon, al Primo Seminario per le Future Strategie del dicembre 1988.

Rome. The Magliana Castle. H.M.E.H. the Prince and Grand Master Fra' Andrew bertie with Count Carlo Marullo and the Hospitaller, Count Geraud Marie Michel de Pierredon, at the First Seminar for Future Strategies in December 1988.

“It is difficult to speak of future strategies, or the future, without acknowledging to past and present times a precursory role in an evolution of events that, in the specific case of meritorious institutions, also become historic events.

The Order of Malta has progressed from its varied experiences in the limited sphere of the Mediterranean to become known, in this century, worldwide with intercontinental horizons and global humanitarian prospects. It would have meant little for the Order to govern a small territorial State today, when it has now become a charitable empire on five continents. What seemed at the time of the Napoleonic occupation to be a debacle was in fact the foundation for a radiant future which at this moment is experiencing great prospects of growth. And it was precisely with regard to these prospects that, with acute political foresight, the late-lamented Grand Master Fra' Angelo de Mojana di Colonia — at a particular moment of the Order's life — realized the anxieties and desire for strategic guidelines of the Order's peripheral and operational bodies and convened the Seminar for Future Strategies in 1987. This was to be his political testament, today carried on by the Grand Master Fra' Andrew Bertie who, a few months after his election, opened the Seminar in December 1988.

It was at this time that the hopes of the entire world in the Order were seen and the interests of the Order's members in humanitarian perspectives were felt and experienced in the periphery: it was a discovery of human resources.

Working groups were set up for examining the various sectors — spirituality, hospital works, civil defence, fund raising and distribution of resources, communications, unification of emblems — of the Order's future action in the framework of its humanitarian policy. Concrete results have been already achieved and substantial reforms are now underway in the field of communications, civil defence and the observance of constitutional rules within the Order.

The strategies have shown that it is fundamental for the Order to do its work within the framework of a joint venture among its own bodies and between these and the other humanitarian organizations existing worldwide. This should be based on the concept of a partnership in which the Order's more important bodies must take the responsibility for the minor ones or those just beginning their work, carrying on a programme which is consistent with the Order's policy.

Closely connected to this framework is the issue of fund raising, on one side, and the distribution of resources on the other; there are good prospects for fund raising worldwide and the specific lines which the strategies have pinpointed should also be followed here. The specific working group has studied and outlined programmes for fund raising on local, regional and international levels, recommending that each of the Order's bodies manage its own activities in its own territory. International projects should be managed bearing in mind the service performed in the co-ordination centres which take responsibility for them and who will thus actually carry them out, with funds also provided by national co-operation schemes and international agencies.

Thus, one of the main objectives of the strategies having a crucial importance is the establishment of a co-ordination centre for continental areas which must also have a monitoring board. The Grand Magistracy, which is neither a body of action nor guidance, should logically have the function of promotion of the co-ordination; hence the problem of ensuring that the strategies relate to the institutional life of the Order and the necessity to adjust the Order's own legislative instruments to the new requirements.

This, in brief is the outlook of the strategies which, in its globalism and with its problems, covers the Order's present situation and the topicality of its aims.

One of these aims is to put into motion a mechanism which, from the base upwards, will lead to the reform of the Order's Code and Constitutional Charter, in light of Vatican Council II and of the needs prompted by this same movement, looking towards the 21st century. It is not simply a statement, but a point of arrival which, through the concluding seminar on strategies, will produce a series of succinct and absolutely specific proposals on constitutional matters to be submitted to the next Chapter General in 1994, so that, based on this study, a restricted committee can be set up which will authorize a plan for a new Charter and a new Code to be discussed in a subsequent Extraordinary Chapter General.

There is no lack of hope - although willingness is needed in a "step by step" way of proceeding - but human resources are lacking. Programmes remain empty without people. And it is precisely here that the Order is suffering its drama. The Order must build up its managerial cadres, with an idea of a harmonious and well-balanced growth, in which opportunities for meeting those Knights who are working in the world must be created. A real training centre must be created for managerial cadres, those people who will then shoulder the responsibility of the Order's work world-wide.

To close the circle of this programmatic, but vitally important, exposition there is the need for constant and specific reference to the Order's religious and spiritual life. The strategies programme would have no sense if it were not speaking about an Order which has had religious continuity from the moment of its foundation to today. It is thus clear that, in the strategies, there is the attempt to find new lines of spirituality which establish the function of the Knights' membership in the Order, and especially of the lay members, who testify to their beliefs in their own lives — in their Christian way of life, in the highest meaning of the word. Through its lay members, the Order has great possibilities of access to those environments in which it is more difficult for the priests or the religious to enter. A new mission is opening in the field of spirituality strategies, if one brings to the sphere of the Order's laity that spirit and that training which is necessary for whoever enters a religious Order like that of St. John of Jerusalem. These are prospects which also involve the operational level, where one speaks of managerial cadres and of human resources.



Roma. Associazione Stampa Estera.

S.E. il Gran Cancelliere durante la conferenza stampa tenuta il 12 gennaio alla sede dell'Associazione Stampa Estera in Roma. Alla sua destra, il Segretario per le Comunicazioni, Gian Luigi Rondi Nasalli, alla sua sinistra il Presidente dell'Associazione Stampa Estera, Enrich Kusch.

Rome. H.E. the Grand Chancellor during the press conference held on 12 January in the headquarters of the Foreign Press Association in Rome. On his right, the Communication Secretariat, Gian Luigi Rondi Nasalli, on his left, the President of the Foreign Press Association, Enrich Kusch.