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FATHER DE BUGGENOMS AND SANTO DOMINGO:  
THE END OF THE MISSION, 1868-1870

SUMMARY

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The Holy See's dealings with the emerging Dominican Republic through Father Louis de Buggenoms have been the subject of previous articles in *Spicilegium historicum*<sup>1</sup>. Fortified with the resounding title of Vicar Apostolic of the Archdiocese of Santo Domingo, the unhappy negotiator had met with little but frustration, culminating in his rather summary deportation. That is the state of things as we now take up the story.

Reporting his expulsion to the Secretary of State, Cardinal Antonelli, Father de Buggenoms made it plain that he was if

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Spic. hist.*, 35 (1987) 97-135; 415-459. As in the earlier articles, material is now drawn from the following archives:

- ASV: Archivio Segreto Vaticano.  
SS: Segreteria di Stato.
- ACAP: Archivio del Consiglio per gli Affari Pubblici della Chiesa, formerly Sacra Congregazione degli Affari Straordinari della Chiesa.
- AGR: Archives of the Redemptorists in Rome. The pertinent material is found in VI, prov. Belgica, Vice-prov. Antilles, I, B.
- De Buggenoms papers: These documents are to be found in the Archives of the province of Brussels North. They have been copied by Rev Guillermo Soto Montero of Santo Domingo, and through the efforts of members of the province of San Juan, especially of Fathers John Gauci and Rafael Torres, photocopies of these documents are available in AGR and in the archives of the province of San Juan as well as in Santo Domingo in the keeping of Father Soto Montero.

anything pleased at being able to give undivided attention to his duties as superior of the Redemptorist mission on the island of St. Thomas<sup>2</sup>. A succession of disasters, hurricane, earthquake, tidal wave and cholera, had so stirred the people that the little community was quite overwhelmed with work, gratifying to their pastoral spirit, even though reducing them to exhaustion. And the superior's delight could not be concealed as he reported the constant round of confessions, instruction of converts and rectification of marriages which amply compensated for the sad task of burying the many victims of the epidemic that raged for weeks on end.

Even though Father de Buggenoms had earnestly begged Antonelli to have him released from the office of Vicar Apostolic, he could have entertained little hope of being left undisturbed on St. Thomas. The Government on Santo Domingo, which had refused him acceptance, was on the verge of collapse even as he wrote. It had been the story of the new Republic from the beginning that one government should succeed another, usually by means of civil war, so frequently as to keep the populace in a constant state of fear, confusion and crushing poverty. The party of José Cabral, which had expelled de Buggenoms, was under attack by the deposed Buenaventura Báez, who had returned with the formidable support of the neighbouring Republic of Haïti. Trying to rally the devout, long-suffering Dominicans to his support, Cabral was already negotiating for the return of de Buggenoms. It was too late. The invading army was already mopping up what remained of the opposition; and on 2nd May 1868 the victorious General Báez for the fourth time took the oath as President<sup>3</sup>. With his advent began what has been called by historians of the Republic *The Six Years' Government*, a name that is eloquent of itself. It was with Báez for a second time that the Vicar Apostolic, confirmed in office, was to treat.

By the time the revolution had triumphed de Buggenoms had been in fact informed that Rome thought it best that he remain in office, particularly since it seemed that Cabral was in a better frame of mind<sup>4</sup>. By way of encouragement the Secretary of State assured

<sup>2</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 28th Feb. 1868. Copy in AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14; de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>3</sup> C. Nouel, *Historia Eclesiástica de Santo Domingo*, III, Santo Domingo, 1979, 317. In the previous articles the president's name was spelt as in the French form used by de Buggenoms in his reports. In the present we have thought it better to follow the Spanish spelling, Báez.

<sup>4</sup> Antonelli to de Buggenoms, 6th April 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

him that the Holy Father would tell the Rector Major to reinforce the community in St. Thomas. Ironically, the letter was received on 2nd May, the very day on which Báez took his oath of office.

### 1. - *The Restored Government of Báez*

The inauguration of Báez as President was celebrated with much liturgical pomp, as was promptly reported to de Buggenoms<sup>5</sup>. The sermon on the occasion was preached by a certain Miguel Zubiría, "appointed no doubt by Báez himself." The new President was represented as "the champion of the Holy See", in marked contrast to Cabral, whose downfall was attributed to his having exiled the Vicar Apostolic, the Holy Father's representative. The preacher, Zubiría, was described as "nothing but a political agitator of unpriestly conduct", who had fallen out with his ecclesiastical superiors. But whatever his merits or demerits, he did gauge and express accurately the mood of the people. Even the exiled Cabral and his supporters, lodged in two hotels on St. Thomas, were loudly voicing their regrets over the banishment of the Vicar Apostolic, declaring that should they recover power, they would defend all the rights of the Church. On the occasion of his first visit Father de Buggenoms had occasion to observe and praise the simple faith of the Dominican people, unshaken by clerical scandals and by long years of warfare and impoverishment<sup>6</sup>. He had been right in seeing them as the hope of the Church in Santo Domingo. The political rivals were vying with each other to appear to the people as loyal sons of the Church.

It was a chastened President who was sworn in on 2nd May. The venerable See, the first to be erected in the New World, was still without an archbishop; and the people had been outraged when the Vicar of Christ had been prevented when he wished to provide for their spiritual needs. It was essential that Báez show at once that he was on the side of Rome in procuring pastoral care for the Archdiocese. He lost no time in declaring to the Pope his ready support. His letter, dated 6th May, was answered by Pius IX with assurances of his gratification at such evidence of Catholic spirit and urging the President to put forth every effort to assist "Louis

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<sup>5</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 13th July 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Spic. hist.*, 35 (1987) 118.

Buggenoms, whom as you know We have appointed Vicar Apostolic of the Diocese”<sup>7</sup>.

Shortly after he had announced to Rome his installation the President heard from the Vicar Apostolic. He and de Buggenoms were old acquaintances, having travelled from Europe together in 1859 and having treated the ecclesiastical problems of Santo Domingo on an official level two years earlier. Their associations on the previous occasions had been amicable enough, even though de Buggenoms as Papal Legate to the Republic in 1866 had found occasion to speak of the President as “a caricature of Napoleon III”<sup>8</sup>. Now Báez found he had to deal with a man who was still smarting at the cavalier treatment he had received at the hands of the Cabral Administration.

Father de Buggenoms had just received from Rome notification that his request to be relieved of his charge had been refused by the Pope “in his sovereign wisdom”<sup>9</sup>. On the contrary, he was required to take up once more his negotiations about the Archdiocese. Sympathising with his difficulty in caring at the same time for the busy mission of St. Thomas, the Holy Father authorised him to appoint a Vicar General, suitably provided with faculties, to attend to the needs of Santo Domingo, relieving him of permanent residence. It was thought well to caution that the man chosen « *non sia discaro al governo* ».

Immediately after receiving this formal renewal of his commission, de Buggenoms drafted a careful letter to the new President<sup>10</sup>. He informed Báez that he had been confirmed as Vicar Apostolic “or immediate representative of the Supreme Pontiff”. In view of his many duties in St. Thomas, he added, he was empowered to act through a Vicar, chosen by himself, but “who should merit your Excellency’s approval”. That was not quite as he had been authorised, and the phrasing was in time to be quoted against him. Most of the communication was expressed, rather typically, it must be confessed, in terms of a fatherly admonition. The Vicar Apostolic pointed out how unfounded was the motive alleged by the fallen Government for his deportation, namely that the Republic could not admit any outside influence. Such a principle, he flatly declared,

<sup>7</sup> Pius IX to Báez, 9th July 1868. Copy in de Buggenoms papers: C. Nouel, *op. cit.*, 317.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *Spic. hist.*, 132.

<sup>9</sup> Antonelli to de Buggenoms, 6th April 1868. Copy in de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>10</sup> De Buggenoms to Báez, 8th May 1868. Copy in de Buggenoms papers.

could never apply to the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church, which was one by reason of the obedience all the faithful, lay and clerical, owed to the Vicar of Christ. That applied to nations too, as history showed that those who challenged that bond of obedience fell into heresy or schism. The new President was urged to give to Caesar the things that were Caesar's and to God the things that were God's. The lesson was hammered home by appeal to the Books of Judges and of Kings in the Old Testament, "an unbroken series of proofs that God raises or casts down nations according to their fidelity to His divine law".

To this protracted, and to the President no doubt, galling homily de Buggenoms added his conditions. He required of the President a declaration "as frank and complete as possible" that he would not impede what should be undertaken "in his own interests as well as those of the Church". He added that before granting what had been refused to "the narrow and exclusively political aims of the Cabral Government" the Holy See would continue with the *status quo*. The warning was clear. The provisional regime of the Vicar Apostolic would continue as long as political manoeuvring would seem to interfere with the regular appointment of an archbishop.

Father de Buggenoms attached the greatest importance to continuing the *status quo* and delaying as long as possible filling the vacant See, as he explained to his Superior General. "I cannot doubt that the policy of the Holy See is the wisest possible, since by keeping me as Vicar Apostolic it maintains the *status quo*; and that is preferable to any other imaginable measure"<sup>11</sup>. He explained, as he had done so often since his first visit to Santo Domingo two years earlier, that there was simply no candidate whom he could honestly recommend. But he had to add: "God alone knows how long this *status quo* can last"! The position was insecure in the extreme, since "the President (like his predecessors) will not dare risk the displeasure of the priests who helped his return to power, and who are decidedly opposed to my influence, direct or indirect". While de Buggenoms pinned his hopes on the piety of the faithful, he had experience enough of the thirty or so clergy of the archdiocese, most of whom played at politics. As he wrote, he had with him in St. Thomas a number of Cabralist priests exiled by Báez, who

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<sup>11</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 12th May 1868. AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I.B., 14.

were busily plotting a new revolution. The provisional regime of Vicars Apostolic, which he called the *status quo*, was to remain a firm principle for de Buggenoms. On another occasion he wrote: "The *status quo*, I hope, will prove a salutary lesson for the government of this Republic, and will make it more amenable to the arrangements the Holy See thinks proper for the organisation of the Archdiocese"<sup>12</sup>. In time the Holy See came to fall in with the views his successors shared with him, as it was not until 1884 that an archbishop would be appointed.

The President replied to de Buggenoms in a courteous letter in which he protested the good Catholic sentiments of himself and all the members of his Government. They were ready to do as the successor of St. Peter commanded, in accordance with what they had been taught since childhood<sup>13</sup>. He added that in token of his submission to the Church he was sending on to Rome a copy of the letter he had received from de Buggenoms<sup>14</sup>.

This first courteous exchange did not for long satisfy the Government. In St. Thomas de Buggenoms with plenty to occupy him was content to interpret the *status quo* in a very literal and perhaps extended sense; but in Santo Domingo things were seen quite differently. Báez considered that his expressions of good will should have sufficed as a formal invitation to the Vicar Apostolic to come to the Republic. When more than a month passed without a response his Minister, Gautier, wrote again to Rome, this time with a complaint<sup>15</sup>. After speaking about his neglecting his charge, the Minister went on to attack de Buggenoms for "threatening" to continue with the *status quo*, showing himself insensitive to the grave needs of the people, so long deprived by war of regular pastoral care.

This complaint was communicated to Father Mauron, Superior General of the Redemptorists, who defended de Buggenoms, speaking from his own knowledge of the situation<sup>16</sup>. He suggested that it

<sup>12</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 22nd May 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>13</sup> Báez to de Buggenoms, 19th May 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>14</sup> The copy of the letter together with one of the reply by Báez was forwarded by Manuel Maria Gautier, Minister of the Interior and of Police, with a covering letter addressed to the Secretary of State. Gautier to Antonelli, 19th May 1868, ASV, SS, 1868, 279, fasc. 4, f. 14-19.

<sup>15</sup> Gautier to Antonelli, 4th July 1868, ASV, SS, 1868, 279, fasc. 4, f. 36-37.

<sup>16</sup> Mauron to de Buggenoms, 8th August 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

could well be that Báez had good political reasons for wishing to have the Vicar Apostolic in Santo Domingo. Cabral and his exiled Cabinet were in St. Thomas, and it could well be that the new President was uneasy about their dealings with de Buggenoms<sup>17</sup>. In any case, he told Antonelli, even if the President had really invited the Vicar Apostolic, it would not have been possible to leave St. Thomas any earlier. Immediately after hearing Mauron's assurances Antonelli wrote to de Buggenoms, urging him to go as soon as possible to Santo Domingo. The President, he said, seemed to have excellent dispositions; and besides the Archdiocese was in desperate need of his services<sup>18</sup>.

The Cardinal's letter reached St. Thomas early in September together with one despatched by Father Mauron the same day. Father de Buggenoms told his Superior General that he would leave for Santo Domingo on the next available steamer, which would be about the middle of the month<sup>19</sup>. He appreciated, he said, Father Mauron's having explained so accurately the main reasons for his delay. And he added that in any case he had been slow to trust the president's assurances of willingness to accept him as representative of the Pope. He was particularly unimpressed by the protestation of loyalty to the Holy See as inculcated since childhood in the Catholic education of all his Government. He had been informed by trustworthy persons, he declared, and he knew that "all these gentlemen" were freemasons and concubinaries and other things besides. It can scarcely be doubted that he had good reasons for what he said and for approaching his task with serious reservations. His was a character that reacted vigorously to opposition<sup>20</sup>, and it rather seemed that he fully expected to find himself opposed.

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<sup>17</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 13th July 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov., Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>18</sup> Antonelli to de Buggenoms, 8th August 1868, ASV, SS, 1868, 279, fasc. 4, f. 40. Copy in de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>19</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 10th September 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *Spic. hist.*, 35 (1987) 106.

## 2. - Father de Buggenoms and the Báez Government

The Vicar Apostolic returned to Santo Domingo on 19th September and found himself plunged into a whirl of activity which « it would require a full volume to repeat it in detail »<sup>21</sup>. He wrote to Father Mauron in the somewhat elevated style that was usual with him when things seemed to be going well. "I have carried on a real campaign, whose success was humanly speaking impossible, but *nihil impossibile apud Deum, et Ipse fecit in anima mea virtutem*". In fairness it must be admitted that he had good reason for satisfaction over his first bout with the government, even though a more modest reporting would have been preferable. After a reception that would have daunted another de Buggenoms remained firm (he was later to be called arrogant<sup>22</sup>) until the President and his Cabinet granted him, at least for the time, all the support he had demanded. He looked forward to some rewarding pastoral activity in the Archdiocese that was his charge.

The beginning of his visit was far from encouraging. As soon as he had received Antonelli's letter telling him to return to Santo Domingo he had written to both the President and his own sub-delegate, Rev. Francisco Xavier Billini, telling them when to expect him<sup>23</sup>. He discovered later that Billini had not warned anyone of the Vicar Apostolic's return until the steamer had actually arrived<sup>24</sup>. There was no one to meet him, let alone any token of respect for the representative of the Holy See. He was, in fact, momentarily embarrassed, as he had no one to tell him where he was to stay. The uncertainty was brief enough, as two distinguished American fellow passengers, General Caznau and Judge O'Sullivan, took him to his old friend, Don Domingo de la Rocha, a wealthy merchant, who at once installed him comfortably in a furnished house near his own<sup>25</sup>.

The fact that the clergy had been so indifferent did not take

<sup>21</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 8th October 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>22</sup> Leopoldo da Acguasanta to Antonelli, 10th February 1870, ASV, SS, 1870, 251, fasc. 2, f. 176-11. The Franciscan Vicar Apostolic who replaced de Buggenoms reported the way Báez had spoken about his predecessor.

<sup>23</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 10th September 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>24</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 8th October 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14. The account to his Superior General is rather more vivid than the lengthy report to Cardinal Antonelli, and for that reason the letter to Mauron has been the principal source for what follows.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* Domingo de la Rocha was a devout and wealthy man who had been for

him at all by surprise. He had been expecting hostility, as he had told Father Mauron as early as May<sup>26</sup>. The priests of the Archdiocese, as he had often had occasion to observe, were too much involved in politics; and now, having lent their support to Báez, they were hopeful of keeping out the Vicar Apostolic. Father de Buggenoms had heard "from many a good source", he told his superior, that the priests were "more determined than ever to exclude from the Archdiocese every outside influence". He had been told by his informants that there was even an agreement between the clergy of both Haïti and Santo Domingo "to oppose measures of the Holy See to this effect". The Vicar Apostolic had always represented himself as just such a measure of the Holy See, and he came to Santo Domingo fully expecting to meet with hostility.

After the cold reception de Buggenoms was settled into his home so promptly that within a few hours he was able to call on the President for an interview that "gave little satisfaction", as he duly reported to Antonelli<sup>27</sup>. Báez received him formally in the company of four members of his Cabinet. So far from being satisfactory, this first meeting was "as stormy as possible", as de Buggenoms put it in his rather blunter report to his own superior<sup>28</sup>.

The Vicar Apostolic came well prepared, he told Father Mauron, because he had experience of "the character of these governments". He demanded "categoric assurances" on three points: 1° that he would be received unambiguously as delegate of the Holy See and Vicar Apostolic, and should he not remain permanently, he would be allowed to exercise jurisdiction and appoint a Vicar dependent on himself, according to what the Pope had ordained; 2° that the government would not require him to confer any important office on a priest involved in politics; 3° that the Government lend its support in imposing obedience on refractory priests<sup>29</sup>.

The three demands were described a little differently in the report to the Secretary of State<sup>30</sup>. He had required, he said, plain

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some years a useful source of information concerning Church affairs in the archdiocese. Cf. *Spic. hist.*, 35 (1987) 118-119.

<sup>26</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 12th May 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>27</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 9th October 1868. Copy in AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>28</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 8th October 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 9th October 1868. Copy in AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14. The emphasis is of Father de Buggenoms.

assurances 1° that what the president had written to him on behalf of the Council, namely that *they would honour and fulfil to the letter the orders of the Successor of St. Peter* would not remain mere words but show itself in deeds; 2° that the government have him recognised in his capacity of Vicar Apostolic; and 3° that should the need arise the Government lend a strong hand against recalcitrant priests.

The meeting lasted two hours, during which he received nothing but the evasive answers he had expected<sup>31</sup>. The storms came from Báez, who on a couple of occasions seemed to stir himself up quite deliberately, delivering harangues on his own frankness and the Vicar's lack of trust. Father de Buggenoms remained calm, he said, and brought the meeting to a close repeating that he would do nothing until he had been given a categorical answer on his three points. It was arranged that they would come together again on the 21st, that is in two days' time<sup>32</sup>. This first interview left de Buggenoms somewhat puzzled, sensing something unspoken underlying the President's show of passion. For the time being he consoled himself with the reflection that it probably implied no more than the consciousness of being in the wrong. When he met the Cabinet the second time things became clearer.

When they came together on the 21st he came to realise that the clergy of the capital, led by his trusted subdelegate, Billini, had conspired against him. They had persuaded the Ministers that they would make themselves unpopular with the people, should they allow this foreigner to assume any authority<sup>33</sup>. The clergy even provided a specious, but very shallow argument for questioning the powers of the Vicar Apostolic. This was the first thing that struck de Buggenoms<sup>34</sup>. As he described the meeting to Father Mauron, he said it started off as though it was going to be a repetition of the former one, as one after another the Ministers told him that, having delegated his faculties to Billini, he now had the title of Vicar Apostolic without jurisdiction. So they had been informed on excellent authority, they assured him. This extraordinary argument had been provided by a scholar of blameless reputation for

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<sup>31</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 8th October 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 9th October 1868. Copy in AGR, V, Prov. Belg., vice-prov., Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>34</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 8th October 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

his piety if not for his scholarship. He was President of the Supreme Court of Santo Domingo, considered an expert in law, whether civil or canonical<sup>35</sup>. The meeting continued with the Vicar Apostolic pointing out how absurd the objection was. He succeeded, he reported, in demolishing, if not completely destroying the unfounded conviction of the Government<sup>36</sup>.

A hird interview followed shortly afterwards, and it found the Ministers in a chastened mood, to de Buggenoms' undisguised jubilation. "They made a complete surrender, promising in the plainest terms all the guarantees I had demanded"<sup>37</sup>. And the Vicar Apostolic went on to make some characteristic reflections on Divine Providence, protesting that he gave God alone the credit for what he had achieved. There remained the problem of the clergy; but he would meet that problem when the Lord showed him that the time was propitious.

That same day Gautier, Minister, of the Interior, addressed a formal request to de Buggenoms to the latter's evident gratification<sup>38</sup>. It showed that the Government was prepared to present him to the people in his quality of Administrator of the Archdiocese. The occasion was the national feast of the Republic, Our Lady of Ransom, 24th September. The Vicar Apostolic was requested to arrange the High Mass and other fitting ceremonies to mark the occasion.

Father de Buggenoms interpreted the letter as an invitation to preside and to preach on the feast. He accepted readily, expecting a large attendance, which would include all the members of the Government<sup>39</sup>. The Ministers were present indeed, and no doubt chafed considerably when they were told that "God created the world only for the sake of His Church, which is the society of all men of good will". The text of the sermon was printed in the official newspaper at the President's request, and it was also put at the beginning of the pastoral letter the Vicar Apostolic issued a few days later<sup>40</sup>. For his sermon he received marks of general satisfaction,

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<sup>35</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 9th October 1868. Copy in AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14. The High Court judge was Nepomuceno Tejera, who was prompt and humble in making his submission and promising to de Buggenoms his support for the future. Cf. de Buggenoms to Antonelli, 21st November 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> Gautier to de Buggenoms, 21st September 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>39</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 9th October 1868. Copy in AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* Copies of the pastoral, dated 3rd October 1868, printed together with one prepared for the earlier visit in 1866 are to be found in AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B. There is a French translation in de Buggenoms papers.

he informed Antonelli; but conspicuously silent were the priests of the city, "who only became the more hardened".

The day after the feast of Our Lady of Ransom Báez solemnly issued the *exequatur* of the Bull of 19th June 1866 appointing de Buggenoms Vicar Apostolic. This he did "by virtue of the faculties accorded him by article 25 of the Constitution and after taking the advice of the Ministers of State and following the direction of the honourable *Senatus Consultus*". By his decree he required that everyone should show Most Reverend Father Louis Joseph de Buggenoms all the honour and dignity that belonged to him<sup>41</sup>. This decree was promulgated in the *Boletín* which published the Vicar Apostolic's sermon<sup>42</sup>. At the end of his first week in his charge de Buggenoms had good reason to be satisfied that everything was shaping well. He had even more reassurance at having made the acquaintance of a man who was to prove a constant friend and most valuable supporter both in Santo Domingo and in Rome.

When he spoke of the priests of the city as being more hardened in their opposition, he went on to inform Antonelli: "There is one priest, Rev. Bartolomé Pinelli, whom God has without doubt sent to meet me"<sup>43</sup>. Pinelli was a stranger, having arrived in Santo Domingo after the previous visit of de Buggenoms two years earlier, no one having thought to advise the Vicar Apostolic of his arrival. He was a welcome ally. A man, now in the prime of life, de Buggenoms told Antonelli, he was a sound theologian, having studied eleven years in Rome and gained the licentiate at the Sapienza<sup>44</sup>. The newcomer persented himself in more than favourable contrast with Billini, the subdelegate on whom the Vicar Apostolic had pinned his hopes, only to be badly disappointed. Even when he chose Billini as his representative, he was well aware of his faults: he was only two years ordained, of meagre theological learning, already guilty of many imprudences, headstrong to such a degree as to cause one to fear that perhaps his irreproachable conduct was due rather to obstinacy than to genuine piety<sup>45</sup>. Now on his return de Buggenoms was to find his misgivings fully justified.

<sup>41</sup> A copy of the decree dated 25th September 1868 is in de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>42</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 8th October 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>43</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 9th October 1868. Copy in AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* Cf. also de Buggenoms to Mauron, 8th October 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>45</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 6th September 1866. Copy in AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 10.

Through Pinelli, whom he had chosen as his provisional Secretary, the Vicar Apostolic notified the clergy of the city that on Sunday he would confer the sacrament of Confirmation immediately after the High Mass. The priest in charge of the Cathedral was required to have everything in readiness, and the other priests were told to make themselves available in the confessionals<sup>46</sup>. A note in the margin of the circular records that the priest in charge of the Cathedral, Bernardino Pichardo, refused to comply, as did the other priests with the exception of Pinelli together with two others, José Maria Perdomo and Miguel Maria Zubiría.

### 3. - *The Schism that Failed*

Having won from the Government what seemed to be a complete surrender, the Vicar Apostolic gave his attention to the rebellious clergy. In that he had reason for confidence, since the Government had agreed to lend a strong hand against the recalcitrants. The summons to assist at the Confirmation was a challenge, which met with the expected defiance. The next step was to call the clergy to a meeting early in the morning of Monday 28th September<sup>47</sup>.

The priests duly assembled at 8.30 in the morning for a meeting which quickly degenerated into chaos<sup>48</sup>. The Vicar Apostolic after invoking the Holy Spirit began to address the assembly. After a few words his voice was drowned as several clamoured to be heard. The racket was heard in the street and in the neighbouring houses. At length de Buggenoms was able to impose silence sufficiently to deliver his prepared address. It lasted for about half an hour with frequent interruptions, mainly from Pichardo, the priest in charge of the Cathedral. He let them know in his usual forceful manner that in spite of their noisy assertions that having subdelegated his faculties he had none left, if they persisted in that attitude they would have to suffer the consequences. Having finally said what he intended, he allowed Pichardo to speak for the rest. It was simply a repetition of the argument that had been supplied to the Ministers; and it went on to add that after all, de

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<sup>46</sup> The notification signed by Pinelli and dated 26th September 1868 is in de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>47</sup> The notice of the meeting, dated 28th September 1868 is in de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>48</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 8th October 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14. The scene is also described in the report to Antonelli of 9th October.

Buggenoms was a foreigner. "Being unable to continue with this scandalous scene", declared the Vicar Apostolic, "I considered I should rise and declare suspended the eight priests who had resisted and insulted me".

The priests left the meeting in great excitement and at once drew up a formal statement signed by six of their number<sup>49</sup>. It is quite an extraordinary document, respectfully addressing the Vicar Apostolic and expounding their reasons for refusing to acknowledge his jurisdiction. It was, of course, the argument provided by the expert in law, Nepomuceno Tejera, that having subdelegated his faculties, de Buggenoms had none left. The declaration ended by declaring in all humility readiness to submit, should the signatories be shown to have been mistaken. This foolish document did not save the unfortunate rebels from drastic retribution.

Before the declaration had reached him the Vicar Apostolic had appealed to the Government for the "strong hand" it had promised against the recalcitrant clergy. He requested the Minister of the Interior to assist him by providing the means of serving on each of the rebels the notification of suspension he attached to the letter<sup>50</sup>. There is a note suggestive even of the Inquisition in the solemn Notification, when those who refuse to observe the suspension are warned that "they will be handed over to the secular power of the Government, duly informed". The notice was to be affixed to the doors of all churches open to the public.

It is possible to detect a large measure of satisfaction in the Vicar Apostolic's report that the Minister of War issued ammunition to the six hundred troops who posted the notice of suspension on the church doors<sup>51</sup>. The arrival of the Pope's representative may have caused little stir at first, but it was not long before it was offering drama in abundance.

The statement of the priests, which he received on the evening of the 29th, drew from de Buggenoms a devastating reply<sup>52</sup>. He set himself to show that what they had called a "duty in conscience" was in fact nothing short of denying that "the Pope is Supreme Pontiff of Rome, the Vicar of Jesus Christ, whom all are obliged to

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<sup>49</sup> The declaration, dated 28th September 1868, is in de Buggenoms papers. Billini who was not present at the meeting was going his own way, and Rafael García, his secretary, also failed to sign.

<sup>50</sup> De Buggenoms to Gautier, 28th September 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>51</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 9th October 1868. Copy in AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14. See also the letter to Mauron of 8th October.

<sup>52</sup> De Buggenoms to the suspended priests, 30th September 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

obey". Under seven simple headings he hammered out his lesson in the catechism. He concluded with the assurance that he would pray for them that God would help them to know His will and give them strength to fulfil it. The poor clergy, already aware of their little ecclesiastical science, were to be further humiliated, as they were to figure prominently in the pastoral letter that followed a few days later.

The second pastoral letter was printed and published under the direction of Pinelli together with the first pastoral prepared for the Vicar Apostolic's entering on his office a couple of years earlier<sup>53</sup>. Having quoted his sermon preached on the national feast, de Buggenoms went on to speak of what he described as his conflict with eight priests of the city. The strife, he said, served to emphasise the three reasons for hoping that the nation would enjoy God's blessing: the excellent dispositions of the Government, which had lent its aid in suppressing the revolt; the admirable behaviour of the people, who had not been moved by the scandal; and the triumph of order over schism. The happy outcome of the conflict was attributable to the Mother of Perpetual Help and St. Michael, on the vigil of whose feast, 29th September, the rebellious clergy had been successfully confronted by their ecclesiastical Superior. Father de Buggenoms placed the highest significance, exaggerated one would have to say, on the help he saw given by Our Lady and St. Michael. He concluded his formal report of the events by asking Antonelli to have the Holy Father send to Santo Domingo two banners, one of Our Lady of Perpetual Help with the date, 24th September 1868, to commemorate the national feast, and the other of St. Michael with the date, 28th September 1868, as a perpetual reminder of the defeat of the schismatical clergy<sup>54</sup>. The pastoral was certainly penned in an exalted frame of mind. It is matter of regret that it did not mention the fact that by its date, 3rd October, most of the clergy had already made their submission in varying degrees of humility. Needless to say, the Holy See did not cooperate with the Vicar Apostolic's self-glorification by sending him the banners he requested.

One of the first of the priests to submit was Pichardo, who was in charge of the Cathedral and who had been the spokesman at the turbulent meeting on the 28th September. On the very next day he

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<sup>53</sup> The two letters are in AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 10.

<sup>54</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 9th October 1868. Copy in AGR, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

addressed in execrable Latin what he called an *actus poenitentiae* to the "Reverendissime Vicarius Apostolicus ab hac Arquidiocesim"<sup>55</sup>. The penitent wished to be freed from his suspension, since he had an urgent Requiem Mass to celebrate. He was quickly followed by the others, who accepted the penance imposed, to make a good confession before celebrating Mass. Poor Billini in his confusion held out. He was ready to obey, but could not bring himself to admit that he had been at fault. He alone was left under suspension. Somewhat ungenerously, one must say, de Buggenoms rejoiced in the humiliation of the clergy, calling it *felix culpa*. Their being publicly shamed, he declared, had broken the hold they had too long maintained over the Government and the misguided people, occasioning sad disorders<sup>56</sup>.

Perhaps the most unfortunante casualty of this absurd schism, if indeed it deserves the name, was Billini. He seems to have been quite unable to face the humiliation that so suddenly confronted him. Not only had he experienced the exercise of authority, but he had acquired an admiring circle of devout penitents, of whom de Buggenoms pointedly, perhaps, wrote in the feminine<sup>57</sup>. He had always been outstanding for his blameless life, no great distinction in all truth in the company of his fellow priests, and his pious disciples had begun to honour him as a saint. It was probably this consideration which prevented him from asking forgiveness for his error, even though he was ready enough to acknowledge the Vicar Apostolic. If he should admit he had been wrong, he said, his poor mother would rise from her grave. He appealed in vain to the President to intercede for leniency on his behalf<sup>58</sup>. The poor man saw his following dwindle from about eighty to barely a dozen, who admitted that he had been seriously in error, but continued to praise his holiness, now so sorely tried by God's hand<sup>59</sup>. The Vicar Apostolic remained adamant, unfeelingly so, one fears.

Billini, rendered desperate, tried to defend himself in the eyes of the people. He published secretly a *Vindicación al Mundo Ca-*

<sup>55</sup> Pichardo to de Buggenoms, 29th September 1868, de Buggenoms papers. In the same collection are the submissions of Quesada and García.

<sup>56</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 9th October 1868. Copy in AGR, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> The conduct of Billini is noted in some jottings by de Buggenoms, no doubt made to assist his memory. They are in de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>59</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 21st November 1868, de Buggenoms papers. There is a good treatment of the edifying later career of Billini in J.L. Sáez S.J., *Cinco siglos de Iglesia Dominicana*, Santo Domingo, 1987, 85-101.

*tolico*, which he circulated widely outside the capital. As soon as Báez heard of the pamphlet, he descended on the printer in Santo Domingo and confiscated the remaining copies. Billini responded with a second manuscript which he sent to de Buggenoms<sup>60</sup>. This second work was a sorry screed which the Vicar Apostolic graced with the name of "a veritable libel". Billini in terms which were scarcely coherent, spoke of his persecutions at the hands of superiors, comparing them with the sufferings of the saints<sup>61</sup>. Then when he found that his attempts at self-defence were having no effect, he issued a third statement. This was a retraction of his *Vindificación*. It was thorough and abject. It did not, however, save him from a devastating response from the Vicar Apostolic, who analysed the little tract, finding it pharisaic and aiming only at preserving the culprit's dwindling reputation for sanctity<sup>62</sup>.

In the end Billini, a good man at heart, very much a victim of his own simplicity, made his full submission. Characteristically, it was done indirectly through Cardinal Antonelli. He wrote a penitent letter to Rome admitting his error and expressing regret for his conduct towards the Vicar Apostolic. The Secretary of State in his turn asked that de Buggenoms absolve him from the censures he had incurred<sup>63</sup>.

On balance, it is impossible to avoid the reflection that in the matter of this brief *stir de Buggenoms* had acted with far too heavy a hand. His own thoughts, perhaps, tell us more about himself than about what really happened. He spoke about how providentially schism was averted through the fact the the Government was not inclined to back Billini, as it would have been if one of its own favourites had been involved<sup>64</sup>. He drove home the more tellingly a point he never tired of making. The clergy of Santo Domingo were really hopeless in their ignorance. How else could they have been led astray by the sort of reasoning Billini had put into his two pamphlets? Everything pointed to the fact that until things changed authority in the archdiocese could not be entrusted to anybody but an outsider. His conclusions were doubtless sound; but in making them one wishes he could have been more humane.

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<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> There is a copy of the manuscript in de Buggenoms papers, where one may see also his own comments, dated 18th October 1868.

<sup>62</sup> The Retraction together with the comments it elicited is to be seen in de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>63</sup> Antonelli to de Buggenoms, 24th February 1869, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>64</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 21st November 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

A last reflection on the so-called schism is that besides being so short-lived it was confined solely to the capital. Almost as soon as he arrived in Santo Domingo the Vicar Apostolic was greeted by the man whose scheming and posturing had occupied almost the whole of his attention on the occasion of his first visit<sup>65</sup>. Benito Páez, now parish priest of Victoria de Ozama, wrote to "the most reverend Sir and my Friend" to speak of the "inexpressible delight of his heart" when he heard that the man who had so honoured him was coming back to the archdiocese<sup>66</sup>. That, expressed more moderately, was the spirit of the clergy away from the disturbances of the city, as the Vicar Apostolic was able to observe when he began to move about the Archdiocese.

#### 4. - *The Vicar General*

To the pastoral letter of 3rd October were appended four notifications. Of these the last announced the appointment of Pinelli as Vicar General, to whom all matters should be referred in the absence of the Vicar Apostolic. That appendix, solemnly sealed, was signed by Pinelli himself as Vicar General and Secretary. Since everyone knew that de Buggenoms would soon return to St. Thomas, it was plain that jurisdiction in the archdiocese was to be in the hands of Pinelli.

Pinelli, it must be emphasised, was a stranger in Santo Domingo. Father de Buggenoms himself had not known him until they met just a few weeks previously. With the record of the Republic for political clergy and suspicion of foreigners the nomination was bound to cause trouble. It came soon enough, and it brought with it in the end some considerable discomfiture for the Vicar Apostolic. Before that came about there was much negotiating with the government, always extraordinarily devious and sometimes quite noisy. The contest had not ended when de Buggenoms penned his report to Antonelli<sup>67</sup>.

Ten days after the publication of the pastoral letter the President asked de Buggenoms to name a Vicar General. When he was told that Pinelli had been named in the pastoral, he replied smoothly

<sup>65</sup> Cf. *Spic. hist.*, 35 (1987) 97-135.

<sup>66</sup> Páez to de Buggenoms, 23rd September 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>67</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 21st November 1868, de Buggenoms papers. The account of the dealings as follows is taken from this account.

that it was only a temporary appointment, but he wanted to know who was to exercise jurisdiction in the absence of the Vicar Apostolic. At once both began to hedge, each realising that in the end it would come to whether de Buggenoms would agree to appointing Calixto Maria Pina, the man Báez wanted to be Archbishop. Father de Buggenoms had already fought doggedly to prevent the appointment of Ferdinando Arturo Meriño, favoured by the defeated Cabral administration; and he assured Antonelli that Pina was an even more unworthy candidate. When discussion ended in stalemate de Buggenoms was asked to discuss the matter with the members of the Cabinet.

At the meeting the Ministers, no doubt acting according to plan, began by singing the praises of a Dominican priest, then resident in Cuba; Don Manuel Maria Valencia. He was known to de Buggenoms as a most agreeable character, learned and of blameless reputation. The Vicar Apostolic had no difficulty about accepting such a worthy candidate, keeping Pinelli to administer Church property. He was about to withdraw, when Báez mentioned that Valencia would not be able to reach Santo Domingo until about a fortnight's time, and he suggested that Pina be appointed to act as Vicar General until then. Father de Buggenoms agreed readily enough to allow Pina to exercise jurisdiction for a couple of weeks.

That evening a messenger from Báez brought an unsealed letter that the President was about to send to Pina, parish priest of Santiago, de los Caballeros, 150 miles away. In it Pina was told to come at once to the capital to act as Vicar General, seeing that Valencia would take some time to come and take up his charge. Suspecting trickery, de Buggenoms had already made inquiries and very soon had discovered that there was no question of Valencia's returning to Santo Domingo. He was too ill, for one thing, and had refused on a previous occasion; and besides he would have to renounce a comfortable and remunerative post in Cuba.

He declared at once that he did not agree to having the letter sent. Sure enough, as he had expected, the next visitor was the President himself. He arrived about 9 p.m. and was in a rage. He heaped de Buggenoms with insults and threats, for which he duly apologised before leaving. The Vicar Apostolic, as he said, remained unruffled, declaring that he would never agree to any nomination that went against his conscience, but offering to hand on faithfully to Rome any objections against himself that the Government might care to raise.

The next afternoon de Buggenoms was invited to meet the President, who promised that he would not become heated, but wished to point out certain matters of which the Vicar Apostolic was evidently ignorant. The important communication proved to be concerned with the conduct of Pinelli, which was so infamous, declared the President, that he was reluctant to describe it. In reply de Buggenoms said that he himself had made diligent inquiries and had received nothing but the most favourable reports of the character and behaviour of Pinelli. In spite of the previous assurances the discussion now became definitely heated; but the more the President raged the calmer de Buggenoms remained. He was touched on the raw, however, when Báez told him he could never understand a Catholic people, coming as he did from a Protestant country like Belgium. He indignantly demanded by what authority the President so slandered his native land. Poor Báez said he had read it in a book by Proudhon, so delivering himself up to a devastating controversialist. He was treated to an exposition of the life and thought of Proudhon, amply illustrated from his biography and writings, which soon reduced the opposition to silence. When de Buggenoms courteously took his leave, he found the President in a state of exhaustion.

Before his final discomfiture Báez had uttered a threat which had to be taken seriously. If de Buggenoms appointed anyone but Pina, he declared, he would at once deport him and leave the archdiocese without jurisdiction. It was with this threat in mind that de Buggenoms next day received a formal letter from the Minister of the Interior<sup>68</sup>. It was a lengthy complaint that the Vicar Apostolic had not acted as he had been directed by the Holy See and ensured by due consultation that the Vicar General he named would not be unacceptable to the Government. As it was, he had chosen Pinelli, a man guilty of grave political indiscretions, a rather different charge from that made by the President. Gautier hoped that on more mature deliberation de Buggenoms would repair the harm he had done. Bearing in mind what Báez had threatened, de Buggenoms had his reply already prepared, as he informed the Secretary of State.

The lengthy reply was sent promptly, clearly intended to be a statement to the president and the government<sup>69</sup>. The Vicar Apostolic briefly stated that he would appoint Pina his Vicar General, adding

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<sup>68</sup> Gautier to de Buggenoms, 22nd October 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>69</sup> De Buggenoms to Gautier, 24th October 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

that he would retain Pinelli as his Secretary, with the added duties of preparing the *Ordo divini officii* for the following year and administering the property of the Church. This last duty was particularly important, as he would have to provide for the accommodation and support of a community of missionaries<sup>70</sup>.

Having given this curt notice of submission, the long letter went on to justify the conduct of de Buggenoms. It was pointed out in the first place how right he had been in requiring reassurance of the government's good will in his first communication in May. After all, it looked as though Báez was turning out little better, if at all, than Cabral, who had refused to accept the Pope's authority. Taking up the charges alleged against Pinelli, de Buggenoms showed how well he had investigated the case. There were three accusations: Pinelli had fought under arms in the revolution; he had scandalised the people by opening the tabernacle with a knife; and he demanded a higher stipend for administering the sacraments than that prescribed for the Archdiocese. The charges, in fact, had been made against another priest, a certain Pedro Tomás de Mena, a close friend of Pina himself. The relevant documents were available for inspection, should the members of the Government so wish.

The most important point made in the letter was its justification of the eventual appointment of Pina as Vicar General. Writing to Antonelli, de Buggenoms defended his action as being the lesser of two evils, seeing that Báez had threatened to exile anyone else<sup>71</sup>. In his statement to the government he compared himself to Samuel giving in to the people when they demanded a king. The demand of Pina as Vicar General was an act of contempt towards God rather than the humble Vicar Apostolic, who was quite confident that the Lord was capable of looking after His own interests.

After justifying himself with one of his ever-ready biblical parallels, de Buggenoms turned his attack on the Government. During that angry meeting a few evenings earlier there had been some rash claims made which were duly noted, and now the Vicar Apostolic refuted them one by one out of "a collection of encyclicals, allocutions and apostolic letters of the Sovereign Pontiff Pius IX, published in Latin with a French translation"<sup>72</sup>. Quoting the

<sup>70</sup> From the beginning of de Buggenoms dealings with Santo Domingo the founding of a Redemptorist community had been urged by Pius IX.

<sup>71</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 21st November 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>72</sup> The collection so described seems to have been the *Syllabus of Errors*, published 8th December 1864.

President and his companions against themselves, the letter pointed out that their errors were refuted by the Pope himself whom they had learned to venerate in the orthodox teachings in which they had been instructed since childhood. He went on to show from examples ready at hand how wrong Báez had been in suggesting that the Holy See never appointed bishops without the previous presentation to the government concerned.

In a concluding argument de Buggenoms spoke of his deep affliction over the false statements made on the authority of Proudhon, "the most detestable apostate with Renan to have disgraced France in this last century". It was, of course, the charge made on Proudhon's word that Belgium was a Protestant country that rankled. Now Proudhon was countered by "perhaps the most illustrious philosopher, orator and statesman of our century", Donoso Cortés, and the redoubtable Montalembert. Báez saw his "apostle of modern ideas" convicted of unspeakable and unbelievable blasphemies, dying in defiant impenitence and compared in the fervid eloquence of Montalembert with the fallen angels, confined forever in the abyss.

Father de Buggenoms was a formidable adversary. The sentiments expressed in his letter to Gautier would certainly prove most damaging, should they become known to the good Dominican people. They had an immediate effect on the members of the Cabinet<sup>73</sup>. Báez shed tears of humiliation when he realised he had laid himself open to such a devastating counter-attack. The first reaction was to try to persuade Pinelli to get de Buggenoms to withdraw what he had written. The French Vice-consul, a friend of Báez, was asked to invite Pinelli to a party at which all the Ministers would be present. When the day came, they made a great fuss of the man, embracing him as an old friend and apologising for having too easily believed the false reports about him, and asking him to forget the past and show himself their good angel guardian and use his influence with the Vicar Apostolic on their behalf. Pinelli had no trouble at all in agreeing to this request, knowing exactly what would be the reaction of de Buggenoms.

In the faint hope that the strategem would work, the Minister of the Interior wrote again to de Buggenoms, suggesting the terms of a new letter agreeing to the appointment of Pina and formally disavowing the letter of 24th October. Needless to say, de Bugge-

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<sup>73</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 21st November 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

noms refused; and Gautier in desperation declared he would resign unless the Vicar Apostolic withdrew what he had written. To his horror he discovered that the President agreed with him and that he would soon find himself out of the Cabinet. The outcome was that there was a small gain for each side. The Government had succeeded in getting their candidate, Pina, as Vicar General, but had to live with the danger of the people's getting to know of their duplicity and opposition to the Church<sup>74</sup>. It could be that there was a trace of malicious satisfaction in de Buggenoms' reporting to Antonelli that Pina, summoned to the capital by Báez, had fallen from his horse and was confined to his bed for more than a week.

Father de Buggenoms considered that his small victory had sufficiently cleared the air to allow him to attend to his pastoral duties<sup>75</sup>. He devoted the remaining couple of weeks of his stay to completing his visits to the more distant parishes, preaching to the people and conferring the sacrament of Confirmation. In San Cristobal, not far from the capital, he was warmly greeted by Jesús de Ayala, the good eighty-year-old parish priest, whom he had named his substitute when he was banished by Cabral. The old man had fifty candidates for Confirmation, all thoroughly prepared. In Santo Domingo itself there were 150 to be confirmed, including many soldiers and a few of the ubiquitous generals. General Damián Báez, the President's brother, acted as sponsor for a group of soldiers.

All told, the Vicar Apostolic found reasons to be satisfied when he left Santo Domingo on 14th November. He reported to Rome in a spirit of some optimism. None the less, one can detect some foreboding in a letter he addressed at the same time to his Superior General<sup>76</sup>. He spoke of Salnave, President of Haïti, who had supported Báez in his successful coup, and who had been under attack which for a time had made the position of his ally in Santo Domingo insecure. The danger had now passed, and both Republics were finally calmed. In fact, "everywhere in Santo Domingo there is peace such as has not been for a long time". The situation now was that with strong and ruthless men at the head of government in each place there was to be peace for a considerable time to come. Báez was to remain president for six years, his self confidence growing as the years passed. It may well be that de Buggenoms

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<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 21st November 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

had begun to doubt his triumph, as he wrote to Mauron: "What consoles me is that it has certainly been against my own will that I obeyed the Will of God, at least in what concerns Santo Domingo". It would be only a matter of days after his departure before the Government moved against his arrangements.

There was trouble in the parish of Santiago de los Caballeros, "the most lucrative in the Archdiocese", as de Buggenoms described it to Antonelli<sup>77</sup>. It was the second city of the Republic, with a population a little larger than that of the capital. Pina had gained possession of the parish and its revenues by barefaced intrigue<sup>78</sup>, and he made it plain that he wished to retain it while acting also as Vicar General. In this de Buggenoms was determined to frustrate him. In the appointment of Pina as Vicar General there was a clause added which assigned Santo Domingo as his place of residence<sup>79</sup>. In his place in Santiago was named Pinelli with the titles of parish priest and dean. "And so", delightedly reported de Buggenoms, "Pina *incidit in foveam quam fecit*".

As soon as the Vicar General was able to move about he went to complain to Báez that the office for which they had schemed was of no advantage to himself as long as he was deprived of his former income. The President had little consolation to offer, telling him curtly that he had already occasioned the Government trouble enough. And it was the same with each of the Ministers, none of whom had more than similar cold comfort to offer<sup>80</sup>. The counter attack passed to Pina's own very competent hands.

Pinelli himself gave the Vicar Apostolic in time a summary account of what happened<sup>81</sup>. Immediately after de Buggenoms left Santo Domingo Pinelli set off on the seven days' journey to his new parish. He was greeted warmly, and was particularly gratified when, after three days, there was what he described as a General Communion at the Solemn Mass to mark his inauguration. Then out of the blue disaster struck. Pina suddenly appeared on the scene, whereupon the governor sent Pinelli a passport with orders to leave the city within forty-eight hours for Puerto Plata and from there to take

<sup>77</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 21st November 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.* The nomination of Pina is in de Buggenoms papers with the date 30th October 1868. In the same collection and under the same date is the appointment of Pinelli as parish priest and dean of Santiago de los Caballeros.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> Pinelli to de Buggenoms, 9th February 1869, de Buggenoms papers.

the first ship out of the country. The order of banishment was dated 30th November, and on the same day Pinelli made a strongly worded protest, pointing out to the Governor, J.N. Núñez, that his conduct was disrespectful to the Vicar Apostolic appointed by Rome and threatening to close his church to the public, should he be forced to leave<sup>82</sup>. It was to no avail. A peremptory response threatened force; and the parish priest within a couple of days found himself on a ship bound for Hamburg. After a bitterly cold and turbulent passage he finally made his way to Rome, from where he wrote to the Vicar Apostolic.

Pina naturally had not delayed to send his own duly documented account of the incident in Santiago<sup>83</sup>. He had come to the city some four or five days earlier and found it necessary to rest, not having fully recovered it would seem from his fall a few weeks earlier. To his surprise, he had not been visited by the parish priest, Pinelli, even though he was Vicar General of the Archdiocese. He was, however, visited by the assistant priest, one Father Villas, who accused Pinelli of having imposed on him a sentence of suspension, alleging faculties received from de Buggenoms. Then shortly after hearing this complaint he received from the Governor official notification of the sentence of banishment served on Pinelli<sup>84</sup>.

Pina added a note dated the day following the word from the governor describing an interview from which he had just returned<sup>85</sup>. Núñez, he wrote, was adamant in refusing to relent, since the complaints about Pinelli were so serious that good order simply demanded that he be removed. Since then a very grave situation had arisen. Pinelli had locked the church and consumed the Sacred Species, so that it looked as though he was placing the city under interdict.

This disconcerting news reached the Vicar Apostolic in St. Thomas on 14th December, and he replied the following day in a carefully worded letter to Pina<sup>86</sup>. Without blaming or excusing anyone, he wrote, he had to say that the accusations against Pinelli were not unforeseen. They were like the ones he had himself investigated and found groundless when he had been in Santo

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<sup>82</sup> Copies of the communication of the governor and Pinelli's protest, both dated 30th November 1868, are in de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>83</sup> Pina to de Buggenoms, 30th November 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>84</sup> The copy of the sentence served on Pinelli is attached to Pinelli's letter in de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>85</sup> Pina to de Buggenoms, 1st December 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>86</sup> De Buggenoms to Pina, 15th December 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

Domingo. Having made that general protest, he could do little more than persuade the Vicar General to proceed with due regard to justice and peace. For his own part, he would pray for the troubled archdiocese, while he waited and hoped for instructions from the Holy See.

Father de Buggenoms waited a little longer before getting in touch with the President, little enough as he could have expected from that quarter. He wrote at the beginning of January, wishing Báez a happy New Year and expressing his surprise at the summary extradition of a parish priest appointed by himself<sup>87</sup>. Báez replied promptly, saying that he himself and his government were equally surprised at what had happened in Santiago<sup>88</sup>. As he understood it, the parish priest had fallen out with the local authorities, and instead of appealing to the government which would have protected him, he rashly put the city under interdict. He assured the Vicar Apostolic that he would look into the matter and see that justice was done. With Pinelli safely out of the way, in Europe, that was an easy promise to make.

##### 5. - *The Abbé Charbonneau*

Even before he settled on Pinelli as his Vicar General de Buggenoms had favoured another man, well known in Santo Domingo and Haïti. This was François Charbonneau, whom he mentioned in France before coming as a missionary to the west Indies<sup>90</sup>. He had as early as May 1868 to Antonelli<sup>89</sup>. The abbé had taught theology come to Guadeloupe before passing to Santo Domingo, where he had taught in the seminary. Among his students had been Meriño and Billini, whose names were familiar to the Secretary of State. He was parish priest for a time in Puerto Plata, about the time of the rebellion against Spanish rule. He had gone on to Haïti, where he had been parish priest of Jacmel. Early in May he had called at St. Thomas on his way to Europe, and he had readily agreed to go on to Rome to give a verbal report on the condition of things. He was a man of sixty-seven, of an agreeable disposition and sound judgment, de Buggenoms declared, and could be trusted implicitly

<sup>87</sup> De Buggenoms to Báez, 3rd January 1869, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>88</sup> Báez to de Buggenoms, 9th January 1869, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>89</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 21st May 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>90</sup> A. Boni, *In den Westindischen Archipel*, Bruges, 1944, 218-219.

in what he had to say about Santo Domingo. Asking his Superior General to give hospitality to the traveller, de Buggenoms described his journey to Rome by way of St. Thomas as "truly providential"<sup>91</sup>.

When the matter of the Vicar General was first broached with Báez and his Ministers de Buggenoms had at once suggested Charbonneau, to be met with a spontaneous rejection. The President informed him that the abbé was quite unacceptable, since he was a Cabralist<sup>92</sup>. After that first rebuff the case for Charbonneau seemed to be given encouragement by the Holy See.

He had reached Rome at about the same time as de Buggenoms arrived in Santo Domingo. Father Mauron, who gave this information, spoke of his interviews with all concerned with the mission, including the Pope himself, and of the most favourable impression he had made everywhere<sup>93</sup>. "He has given such explanations that I do not think your Reverence could have done better". He was urged to put himself at the service of Father de Buggenoms and was sent on his way with the title of Missionary Apostolic. He expected to leave Europe on 1st November, which would have him reaching St. Thomas just at the time when de Buggenoms would have been feeling his frustration over the deportation of Pinelli. He resolved to use this new ally, so opportunely presented.

Pina stayed on in Santiago as the weeks passed, as he had not yet recovered, so he informed the Vicar Apostolic, from that fall from his horse<sup>94</sup>. In the middle of January de Buggenoms formally appointed Charbonneau parish priest of Santiago de los Caballeros, Secretary and Procurator General, all the posts formerly held by Pinelli<sup>95</sup>. He was careful to draw attention to the fact that the new parish priest had the title of Missionary Apostolic conferred by the Holy See. Informing Pina of the appointment, he took care to emphasise the fact that he had attached an *ipso facto* suspension to any attempt to impede the parish priest in his charge and that in such a case the Church of Santiago would incur the penalty of interdict. At the same time he named an assistant, Francesco Pozzo,

<sup>91</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 22nd May 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>92</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 21st November 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>93</sup> Mauron to de Buggenoms, 5th October 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>94</sup> Pina to de Buggenoms, 2nd January 1869, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>95</sup> The nomination of Charbonneau and of Pozzo as assistant together with notification to the government and to Pina are in de Buggenoms papers.

an Italian priest who had been only recently incardinated into the Archdiocese.

Charbonneau reached St. Thomas in January, and on 17th passed on to Santo Domingo, from where he wrote late in February to say that he was being detained in the capital until Pina should return <sup>96</sup>. Báez had written, acknowledging receipt of notification of the appointment but warning that Charbonneau would have to be interviewed by the Minister of the Interior before being allowed to proceed to Santiago.

The meeting with Gautier took place about the middle of February, and it resulted in a statement by the Minister on 3rd March <sup>97</sup>. For weighty reasons, he declared, the Government could not allow him for the present to go on to Santiago. The people there still had unhappy memories of Pinelli. Besides, the Government could not have confidence in the good judgment of the Vicar Apostolic, which had already been sufficiently at fault in the appointment of Pinelli. After all, how could a stranger living in St. Thomas know what was best for Santo Domingo? The Government had, moreover, been most unfavourably impressed by the threat of suspension and interdict attached to the nomination. The Government knew very well, he went on, that the Church was infallible in doctrine, but would like to point out that in practice it should adapt itself to the changing needs of times and peoples; otherwise it would risk doing the gravest harm to its sublime mission. As regards Charbonneau himself, he was naturally most welcome in the Republic.

When he was informed of the events, de Buggenoms at the request of Charbonneau sent on the information to his Superior General, asking that it be communicated to the Holy See <sup>98</sup>. The real problem was that the Government favoured for the important and wealthy parish a candidate whom he would never accept. Charbonneau for the time being had to content himself with the small parish of San Carlos in Santo Domingo.

Later in the year, after continued frustration Charbonneau gave his own description of these events to the Holy See <sup>99</sup>. When he

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<sup>96</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 14th May 1869, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>97</sup> Gautier to Charbonneau, 3rd March 1869, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>98</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 22nd March 1869, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>99</sup> The statement of Charbonneau sent from Sant'Alfonso, Rome with the date 24th September 1869 is in ACAP, A, III, Santo Domingo, 1867-1871, fasc. 504, f. 30-32. The date is most probably of the annotation added by de Buggenoms before handing on the document.

presented himself to the Minister of the Interior, Gautier greeted him with "Why did you stop at St. Thomas? You are known well enough here. Why do you need documents signed by Father de Buggenoms"? He was told then that he could go to his parish only when approved by the Vicar General. The Government, he was told, did not wish to have any further dealings with Father de Buggenoms: everything was to be arranged through the Vicar. Charbonneau later challenged Pina: "Who is in charge of the Church? You"? He simply answered "No". This was in February 1869, by which time it was clear that the Government wanted to exclude the Vicar Apostolic from all influence, for which reason, Charbonneau reported, he was being represented as being solely responsible for the continuing confusion in the Church. By then de Buggenoms was already feeling the effects of the official hostility. That seemed to him to explain the difficulties he was experiencing in his dealings with the Roman authorities.

#### 6. - *Rome and Santo Domingo*

By the time Charbonneau reached St. Thomas, de Buggenoms was chafing at not having received even so much as an acknowledgement, let alone comments, on the two lengthy reports forwarded to the Holy See in the previous October and November<sup>100</sup>. Both he and Charbonneau, he told Father Mauron, were convinced that in Rome they were too ready to believe the Government and unreliable informants. He had heard the sort of rumour that must be reaching Rome. The Administrator of the Diocese of Curaçao, for example, a good man but quite uninformed, spoke of what a fine Vicar General de Buggenoms had in Pina, the very man whose devious ways were so exasperating the Vicar Apostolic. As the months passed with no word from Rome except Antonelli's brief intervention in favour of Billini the sense of frustration became increasingly intolerable.

In April Father Mauron suggested one possible explanation of the apparent neglect by the Roman authorities<sup>101</sup>. Mgr. Luigi Matera, who had been so zealous and attentive in dealing with the affairs

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<sup>100</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 21st January 1869, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>101</sup> Mauron to de Buggenoms, 8th April 1869, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

of Santo Domingo, had just before Christmas been attached to the Nunciature in Lisbon. The business was now in the hands of Mgr. Marino Marini, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Extraordinary Affairs<sup>102</sup>. In the same letter Mauron mentioned that Pinelli had been in Rome for some time and had been having interviews with all concerned with Santo Domingo, including the Pope. Pinelli himself wrote to de Buggenoms describing his dealings with the Roman authorities, and what he had to say must have done little to raise the Vicar Apostolic's spirits<sup>103</sup>.

He had been in Rome for three months, he wrote, and had nothing to show for it. He had been to speak with Marini several times, but with no result. All he was told was not to leave Rome, as his Excellency was hoping for an answer any day, "always full of mystery". Antonelli had said to him: "Ah! The Dominican government is unwilling to receive Father de Buggenoms now". In answer to Pinelli's statements the Cardinal replied: "What can we do? There are so many letters, we no longer know who is to be believed. We must send a Visitor and then judge". Pius IX was no more encouraging. When Pinelli asked for a blessing on the Vicar Apostolic, the Pope said at once: "Ah! Father Buggenoms. That Government is making trouble about receiving him". Pinelli, a blunt man in any company, gave as his opinion that what the Government of Santo Domingo wanted was not a good priest but a revolutionary. "That We cannot do", said the Pope. The audience continued with many an interjection of "*Povera Santo Domingo*" and concluded with the Pope's saying that the Secretary of State was thinking of a Visitor in the near future.

In further interviews with Marini, Pinelli learned that letters had come to Rome from the Government in Santo Domingo insisting that de Buggenoms should not be allowed to deal any further with the Republic. He had the impression that Marini in fact had washed his hands like Pilate of the business of de Buggenoms. Another disturbing development was that accusations had been received against Charbonneau, said to be meddling in politics and scandalously interested in making money. Asked by Marini if the abbé was wealthy, Pinelli replied that he had never seen inside the man's

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<sup>102</sup> Marini was a long-time curialist. At the time he was Bishop of Orvieto, having previously been titular Bishop of Palmyra since 1857. In 1871 he resigned from Orvieto to be appointed once more to Palmyra. Cf. R. Ritzler & P. Seffrin, *Hierarchia Catholica medii et recentioris aevi*, VIII, Padua, 1978, 436.

<sup>103</sup> Pinelli to de Buggenoms, 3rd May 1869, de Buggenoms papers.

purse, but he had an excellent reputation. He had tried hard, he told de Buggenoms, to convince Marini what rogues there were in the Government. In the end he was given permission to leave Rome with the promise that a Visitor would probably be despatched in July.

Pinelli's information alerted de Buggenoms to the fact that Rome was receiving from the Dominican Government communications presenting a different story from that of his reports. This was particularly true with regard to the appointments of Pinelli and Charbonneau to Santiago. Gautier had written to Antonelli giving the Government's account of the difficulties<sup>104</sup>. He frequently returned to the subject of the unsuitability of de Buggenoms for exercising authority in Santo Domingo because of his being unable to understand the country<sup>105</sup>. Speaking more freely to the Apostolic Visitor, Father Leopoldo da Acquasanta, Báez put more uncompromisingly the Government's objections to the Vicar Apostolic<sup>106</sup>. The President was reported to have said that the clergy and people could not accept de Buggenoms as ecclesiastical superior because of his arrogance and because their Catholic sentiments were offended by having over them a man from a Protestant country. It was also a grievous insult to the venerable Church of Santo Domingo that the priest of the little chapel on St. Thomas should be placed at its head. This was, of course, the sort of thing de Buggenoms had heard from Báez on the occasion of his visit. And it was the view of him that to some extent remained. Carlos Nouel speaks of him as a giant when he was acting as a zealous foreign missionary on the island of St. Thomas, but an absurd pigmy when he tried to act in the same way in Santo Domingo<sup>107</sup>.

There was certainly among the Roman authorities an unwillingness to act on the suggestions of de Buggenoms, whether or not the contrary reports of Gautier were being believed. The result was that de Buggenoms suffered greatly from frustration at not knowing what was happening to his reports. As early as January 1869 he wrote querulously: "Although I am not impatient, I did hope just the same to have received at least by the last steamer a

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<sup>104</sup> C. Nouel, III, 327-335 gives letters of Gautier to Antonelli dated 6th November 1868, March 1869 and 18th March 1869.

<sup>105</sup> Cf., for example, the letter of 6th November 1868, *ibid.*, 328.

<sup>106</sup> Leopoldo da Acquasanta to Antonelli, 10th February 1870, ASV, SS, 1870, 251, fasc. 2, f. 176-177.

<sup>107</sup> C. Nouel, 319-320.

word of the reception of certain important letters addressed to the Holy See towards the end of November"<sup>108</sup>. Patience was not really characteristic of him; and the little he had at the best of times was sorely tried as the months passed without word from the Holy See. More and more he complained that he did not know how he was expected to proceed, while he remained chagrined over his failure to make effective his appointments to Santiago de los Caballeros.

He was not entirely without directions from the Holy See. Almost as soon as he took over the affairs of Santo Domingo from Matera, Marini sent word by way of Mauron that de Buggenoms was not to go again to the Archdiocese without explicit permission<sup>109</sup>. Before long he was expressing a wish to go to Rome and put his views by word of mouth. His Superior General was unwilling to agree, arguing that he could not leave St. Thomas without formal permission of the Holy See. In desperation de Buggenoms retorted that he simply could see no way of getting his message across to those in charge without making a full report in person<sup>110</sup>.

Pinelli had reported to de Buggenoms that Mgr. Marini had mentioned the likelihood of an Apostolic Visitor to look into the affairs of Santo Domingo, as had also Cardinal Antonelli. Shortly afterwards Father Mauron was able to suggest a probable name. He had heard that the Apostolic Delegate to Ecuador, Mgr. Tavani, was being replaced, and it was being said that he would probably be instructed to travel to Europe by way of Santo Domingo<sup>111</sup>. It was welcome news to de Buggenoms, who had met Tavani in St. Thomas when the latter was on his way to Ecuador<sup>112</sup>. Further rumours led him to believe that Tavani's replacement in Ecuador would be the Visitor, personally briefed before his departure from Rome<sup>113</sup>. That was the way it turned out. Early in September Archbishop Vannutelli called at St. Thomas on his way to Santo

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<sup>108</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 21st January 1869, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov., Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>109</sup> Mauron to de Buggenoms, 6th January 1869, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>110</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 12th May, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>111</sup> Mauron to de Buggenoms, 8th April 1869, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14. Francesco Tavani of Modena was Apostolic Delegate to Ecuador, Peru, New Granada and Venezuela from 1863. Cf. R. Ritzler & P. Sefrin, VIII, 398.

<sup>112</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 12th May 1869, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>113</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 12th June 1869, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

Domingo<sup>114</sup>. He listened attentively to what the Vicar Apostolic had to say, and he in his turn had information about the Roman superiors, which confirmed what de Buggenoms had long suspected. No doubt it had to do with the correspondence between Gautier and Antonelli. He warmly supported de Buggenoms in the latter's determination to go to Rome and treat personally of the business, which every day became more obscure and complicated. The outcome was that the report of Vannutelli did nothing to change the situation. In time there would be a further Visitor, who would replace de Buggenoms as Vicar Apostolic. For the present there was nothing to do but muster what patience he could for just a little longer.

### 7. - *Father de Buggenoms in Rome*

From the beginning of 1869 when he began to chafe at the silence that was the only response to his reports the Vicar Apostolic frequently expressed the wish that he be allowed to come to Rome, at least to get clear comments on his initiatives and instructions for the future. Father Maurron was slow to countenance the voyage, advising that permission could come only from the Holy See. Eventually, in August de Buggenoms wrote to Antonelli asking for leave to come to Europe to discuss important matters concerning St. Thomas and if desirable to come to Rome to speak of the affairs of his charge in Santo Domingo<sup>115</sup>. There were, indeed, serious matters affecting the overworked community on St. Thomas; but there is no doubt that what was uppermost in de Buggenoms' mind was the continuing problem of Santo Domingo. He mentioned to the Secretary of State that he was still waiting for official word as to his conduct.

In his summary of the events written for the provincial chronicler de Buggenoms gave four reasons which had moved him to go to Rome and seek interviews with those responsible for the

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<sup>114</sup> De Buggenoms to Mauron, 12th September 1869, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14. Serafino Vannutelli of Genazzano was consecrated Archbishop of Nicea in 1869 and sent to a wider charge than that of Tavani, being Apostolic Delegate also to the republics of Central America. Cf. R. Ritzler & P. Sefrin, VIII, 411.

<sup>115</sup> De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 22nd August 1869, ACAP, A. III, Santo Domingo, 1867-1871, fasc. 504, f. 28. The letter with the date of 23rd August is also in the de Buggenoms papers.

affairs of Santo Domingo<sup>116</sup>. They reveal the mixed feeling with which he set out from St. Thomas on 14th October.

1° The total silence of the Holy See after the reports at the end of 1868. He had sent in all three formal letters to Antonelli, not one of which had been acknowledged, and he had been fretful over the neglect since January.

2° The well founded suspicion of correspondence between Báez and the Holy See accusing himself of having made himself unacceptable. It was really more than suspicion, since he had been informed by both Pinelli and Charbonneau of their experiences in Rome. And he was not a man who would remain silent under criticism.

3° The wish to clarify his own position as to what the Holy See expected of him, and to justify himself by explaining the intrigues between the clergy and the Government.

4° The matter of the Redemptorist foundation. It had been mentioned at the time of his being commissioned in 1866, but had long since become impossible of achievement. Now he wished to point out that, whatever about the attitude of Government and clergy at present, it would become a very real possibility, should the Republic be annexed by the United States. It is not improbable that de Buggenoms hoped to promote the cause of the annexation.

Before he left St. Thomas he received a letter from Father Mauron which was far from encouraging<sup>117</sup>. For one thing, it was likely with the Vatican Council about to begin, the curial officials would be too busy to attend to him. "I am sur no attention will be given to your business before the end of the Council". It did not turn out to be quite as bad as that; but it was hard enough to bear for one as bustling as de Buggenoms. Arriving in Rome, he had an interview with Marini on 14th November<sup>118</sup>. It did little more than confirm the suspicions he had already formed: the Secretary was too ready to believe Báez.

A few days later he presented to Marini the report on Santo

<sup>116</sup> Cf. AGR, *Chronica Provinciae et Collegiorum Provinciae Belgicae*, VII, 253-254. The reasons are summarised in A. Boni, 227.

<sup>117</sup> Mauron to de Buggenoms, 12th September 1869, AGR, VI, Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 14.

<sup>118</sup> AGR, *Chronica*, VII, 254.

Domingo compiled by Charbonneau, which he had brought from St. Thomas<sup>119</sup>. It was very much an *Apologia* for de Buggenoms. Pointing out briefly how ecclesiastical life had degenerated between 1853 and 1866, when there had been no fewer than ten different persons in charge of the Archdiocese, the statement was devoted to the excellent initiatives attempted by the Vicar Apostolic, which had led to his being persecuted by the Government. The President and his Ministers had met with a priest who had said to them fearlessly: *Non licet*, and that "caused surprise, which led to anger and then in turn to vengeance". To this defence of himself by his good friend and admirer, de Buggenoms added his own comments<sup>120</sup>. He drew attention to the insincerity of the President. Báez, he pointed out, blamed Cabral for exiling the Vicar Apostolic and then was doing his utmost to rid himself of the same man. The only sane policy to be adopted, he concluded, was to maintain the *status quo*.

That in effect was as much as he was able to accomplish by his visit. The *status quo*, the provisional regime for the Archdiocese, was in his view the only way to avoid a quite disastrous appointment of an archbishop, who would prove to be nothing but a creature of the Government. Having made his point, he could do no more than wait, as the months passed. Marini had his own hopes of solving the problems of Santo Domingo.

On 8th December Marini commissioned Father Leopoldo da Acquasanta of the reformed Franciscans to investigate the situation in Santo Domingo and arrange for a seminary to be conducted by Franciscans<sup>121</sup>. It looked like the familiar ground de Buggenoms had known so well himself, so that when Marini told him it would be necessary to wait until a decision could be formed on the basis of the new report, he understood perfectly how much further his patience was to be tried. From Rome he wrote to his Provincial in Belgium: "The time the Lord has given me to remain here is good for my soul and for the beast that bears it"<sup>122</sup>.

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<sup>119</sup> The statement dated 24th September 1869 is in ACAP, A, III, Santo Domingo, 1867-1871, fasc. 504, f. 30-32. There is an accurate summary in AGR, *Chronica*, VII, 254-255 and in A. Boni, 229-230.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 32-33.

<sup>121</sup> AGR, *Chronica*, VII, 255. Leopoldo Angelo Santanchè O.F.M. Ref. of Acquasanta in the diocese of Ascoli had been parish priest of Pera in Constantinople. Created titular Bishop of Achrida in 1871, he was Vicar Apostolica of Santo Domingo and Apostolic Delegate to Santo Domingo, Haïti and Venezuela. Cf. R. Ritzler & P. Seffrin, VIII, 73.

<sup>122</sup> De Buggenoms to Kockerols, 9th January 1870, de Buggenoms papers.

The Visitor, Father Leopoldo, was in Santo Domingo as early as January of 1870, and was diligent in reporting his impressions and dealings with the President. So it continued in the familiar pattern with Báez becoming more and more insistent on having his own way. In February he reported that the President was adding menaces to his demands. The nomination of Pina as Archbishop, he was quoted as declaring, was a matter of life and death<sup>123</sup>. If the Holy See should not appoint Pina but some "vagabond", as had happened in Puerto Rico, said Báez, he would use the powers given him by the Constitution and refuse the *exequatur*. For Marini the final straw was when he himself received from Báez a demand that went over the Visitor's head, proposing terms for a concordat that the Secretary considered quite outrageous, and insisting that Pina be named Archbishop<sup>124</sup>. Marini took such offence at the communication that he decided not to answer the President.

After Marini informed him of these developments just before Easter, de Buggenoms could see nothing to delay him any longer in Rome. As he saw it, the Secretary had fallen in with what he had long considered the essential policy for Santo Domingo, namely to continue with the *status quo*, the provisional regime of Vicar Apostolic, putting off as long as possible the nomination of an Archbishop. He presented his resignation on 1st May, and three days later Cardinal Antonelli informed him that the Pope had released him from his by now thoroughly distasteful charge<sup>125</sup>. Before he left Rome he was received by Pius IX, who presented him with a chalice as a memento of his duties in Santo Domingo<sup>126</sup>.

### 8. - *The Mission of Father Leopoldo*

The Visitor sent, as Marini had said, to make an independent assessment of the situation in Santo Domingo left Rome in December 1869, and by the following January was reporting first impressions to the Secretary of State<sup>127</sup>. There is a familiar ring

<sup>123</sup> Leopoldo da Acguasanta to Antonelli, 23rd February 1870, ASV, SS, 1870, 251, fasc. 2, f. 183-184.

<sup>124</sup> AGR, *Chronica*, VIII, 1.

<sup>125</sup> Copies of the petition of de Buggenoms, dated 1st May 1870 and of Antonelli's response of 4th May 1870 are in AGR, VI. Prov. Belg., vice-prov. Antilles, I, B, 12 and in de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>126</sup> AGR, *Chronica*, VIII, 3.

<sup>127</sup> Leopoldo da Acguasanta to Antonelli, 28th January 1870, ASV, SS, 1870, 251, fasc. 2, f. 165-168,

about his description of the warm reception given him by Báez. His predecessor, de Buggenoms, had similarly begun with the highest hopes raised by the President's undoubted charm. The newcomer was warned that the clergy would not like to see themselves as "slaves of Propaganda", which suggests most probably the way the office of Vicar Apostolic was being represented. Much of the report is taken up with describing the deplorable state of "*questa disgraziata città*". There is again a familiar note about the report that "ecclesiastical jurisdiction is in every respect at the service of politics and the parties". One thing that is surprising in this long report is that there is no mention of de Buggenoms, either in blame or in praise.

In spite of Fathers Leopoldo's new broom policy, he soon found himself involved in the long familiar problems. Just a month later he was writing to Antonelli in quite another tone about the bullying attitude Báez was starting to adopt<sup>128</sup>. This was the report that warned Marini at last of what de Buggenoms had long been trying to say to him, that it was not possible to trust the Government.

With the clergy Father Leopoldo preferred to choose his own path. He did not start well. To Santiago de los Caballeros he appointed Páez of all men<sup>129</sup>, and very soon had reason to regret the choice. True to his form, the irrepressible Páez began to dabble in politics and had himself once more deported. It was a shamefaced Visitor who repented the unhappy outcome of this first exercise of his authority<sup>130</sup>. Charbonneau was able to report to de Buggenoms that his own relations with the Visitor, which had been cool enough, had improved and he was once more in Santiago, where he had been warmly received by the people<sup>131</sup>. It had been an unhappy experience for Father Leopoldo. As he wrote to Antonelli, he had imagined he could at least trust a priest as elderly and respectable as Páez. He could only conclude that the local clergy could offer no one suitable for ecclesiastical office. The judgment was one that had been heard before. Further trouble unfortunately developed in Santiago. Charbonneau had been sent there with the agreement of Pina, Vicar General, but a dispute arose when he began to act on

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<sup>128</sup> Leopoldo da Acquasanta to Antonelli, 23rd February 1870, *ibid.*, f. 183-184.

<sup>129</sup> AGR, *Chronica*, VIII, 2.

<sup>130</sup> Leopoldo da Acquasanta to Antonelli, 10th March 1870, ASV, SS, 1870, 251, f. 2. f. 185-186.

<sup>131</sup> Charbonneau to de Buggenoms, 20th March 1870, de Buggenoms papers.

faculties given him by de Buggenoms<sup>132</sup>. Father Leopoldo surely exaggerates when he describes this disagreement as schism. If the incident proves anything it is that the state of confusion had become endemic in the Archdiocese.

Writing to de Buggenoms of his dealings with the Visitor, Charbonneau spoke also of a change in the fortunes of Pina. "Your Vicar General has become preoccupied and gloomy"<sup>133</sup>. The Government was showing signs of having lost confidence in him, and before long there was word of his having definitely fallen from grace. In May Father Leopoldo, writing from Haïti, reported to Marini a rumour that had reached him by way of Father Schneider, Superior of the Redemptorists in Saint Thomas. It was being whispered that Pina had been arrested on suspicion of having been involved in an assassination attempt<sup>134</sup>. On his return to Santo Domingo the Visitor was able to give more accurate information. The rumour had been greatly exaggerated, but it was true that Báez had definitely broken with Pina<sup>135</sup>. By that time Father Leopoldo had become thoroughly disillusioned, and he wrote on the same date to Antonelli of the *povera chiesa* which was suffering under the increasingly oppressive rule of the President<sup>136</sup>. Pina, it appears, from the same report, had meddled once too often in politics and had brought down on himself the iron hand of Báez. By this time the authorities in Rome had lost all hope of anything to be gained from Father Leopoldo's visit. In the following year he was appointed Vicar Apostolic with episcopal orders. The *status quo*, the main plank in the platform favoured by de Buggenoms, was confirmed, and it was to continue under a successor to Father Leopoldo.

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<sup>132</sup> Leopoldo da Acquasanta to Antonelli, 10th June 1870, ASV, SS, 1870, 251, fasc. 2, f. 197-198.

<sup>133</sup> Charbonneau to de Buggenoms, 20th March 1870, de Buggenoms papers.

<sup>134</sup> Leopoldo da Acquasanta to Marini, 17th May 1870, ASV, SS, 1870, 251, fasc. 2, f. 193. Father John Schneider, a German by birth, had been attached to communities in England, Ireland and the United States before coming to St. Thomas to assist in work in the English language. He is frequently mentioned as a difficult character in the correspondence of de Buggenoms, who left him in charge of the mission during his own absence in Europe.

<sup>135</sup> Leopoldo da Acquasanta to Marini, 10th June 1870, *ibid.*, f. 195.

<sup>136</sup> Leopoldo da Acquasanta to Antonelli, 10th June 1870, *ibid.*, f. 197-198.

## 9. - *The End of the Mission*

It can scarcely be doubted that it was with a huge sense of relief that de Buggenoms received word in May that he was set free of his responsibilities. Father Boni concludes his fine account of the Redemptorist involvement in Santo Domingo by saying that de Buggenoms had been a victim of Josephism<sup>137</sup>. He quotes the letter of de Buggenoms himself to Gautier on 24th October 1868 as unmasking the government's thinly concealed Josephism. In all truth, however, it would be undeservedly flattering to "those gentlemen" to grace them with such a name. Nor is it fair to go to the other extreme and speak of them as contemptuously as did de Buggenoms on more than one occasion as nothing but "a caricature of great European nations". The unhappy country, still newly independent, had not yet put its house in order. It was a prey to rival factions, which pursued their own selfish purposes, ignoring the suffering and impoverishment of the people. When the Holy See tried to bring some sort of order into Church affairs it found itself entangled in the intricate politics of self interest. And to make it worse, the clergy themselves were among the very worst of the political intriguers. Rome had depended for some years on reports coming mainly from outside the country; and they could only be qualified as rumours. Father de Buggenoms was deputed to gather information, and that he did very well indeed. When his first mission was followed by the far more difficult charge of bringing order into the chaotic Church affairs, he found himself frustrated by the politicians, lay and clerical. Those who succeeded to his charge fared little better; but it is fair to say that the character of de Buggenoms made his task all the more difficult.

The historian of the Church in Santo Domingo describes de Buggenoms, not unfairly, as a good pious man but entirely lacking in tact or diplomatic skill<sup>138</sup>. He makes his point at some length, describing the bad impression left on some by the conduct of the Vicar Apostolic. Both Báez and Gautier complained to the Holy See of the arrogance of de Buggenoms, expressing themselves with some exaggeration. It must be admitted, though, that there was a considerable measure of truth in their complaints. His was an abrasive character, impatient of opposition and intolerant, even

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<sup>137</sup> A. Boni, 229.

<sup>138</sup> C. Nouel, 320.

scornful of those who disagreed with him. His fellow Redemptorists knew him well and, while ready to recognise his gifts of intellect, did not always find him congenial company. One at least expressed fears as to what might come of his task, should it call for patience<sup>139</sup>. With his difficult temperament he did perform most creditably on his first mission in 1866. The circumstances must have tried him sorely, but he kept his wrath under control and was rewarded with much valuable information to send on to the Roman authorities.

When he came back to Santo Domingo in 1868 Father de Buggenoms was even less prepared to be patient. The peremptory letter to Báez in May was far from being conciliatory, and the president resented it. It was an unfortunate start which, however, it is fair to excuse. St. Thomas had barely emerged from several months of successive disasters, two hurricanes, an earthquake, a tidal wave and finally an epidemic of cholera, which even carried off one of the small Redemptorist community. He was physically a very tired man when he was sent back to face the shifty politicians and rebellious clergy of Santo Domingo. He deserves that at least that much be said in his excuse; but he did carry things with a high hand. The letter in October to Gautier and intended for the President and his Cabinet was written in a condescending tone which stung the Government and was undoubtedly a reason for complaining of his arrogance. Even his reports to Antonelli show a spirit of intolerance, which may well have occasioned their not being answered.

It is not hard, in fact, to find fault with de Buggenoms. But that need not be taken as implying that his mission was badly performed. Father Leopoldo was sent to check up on him, and he finished within a few months recommending the same policies as de Buggenoms. The abbé Charbonneau, who was thoroughly acquainted with the Church in Santo Domingo, having taught in its seminary, considered that de Buggenoms was just the sort of man needed to deal with its many problems. In the end one may safely allow de Buggenoms himself to give an assessment of his work, a thankless task as he must have found it, between 1866 and 1870. Before returning to St. Thomas he left a summary of his work in Santo Domingo for the chronicler of the Belgian province<sup>140</sup>.

In the methodical fashion so typical of him he summed up point by point what had been achieved by his dealings with the

<sup>139</sup> Cf. *Spic. hist.*, 35 (1987) 106.

<sup>140</sup> AGR, *Chronica*, VIII, 2-3.

Church and Government in Santo Domingo. On reading his review it is easy to agree that his final judgment is perfectly justified.

1° The Holy See found out the real condition of the clergy, their ignorance and their political intrigues.

2° The Holy See discovered how useless it was to rely on diplomatic procedures with a Government which was "no more than a parody of the great European nations". This is the familiar de Buggenoms speaking, and no matter how we may wish him to be diplomatic, he did speak the truth in saying it was useless to rely on diplomacy alone in dealing with men like Cabral and Báez.

3° It had been shown that on account of the bad faith of the Government it was far better for the Church to rely on the simple goodness of the people.

He concluded his survey by saying: "I did not fail to say as much to the Holy See, nor did the abbé Charbonneau and the abbé Pinelli, who are entirely in agreement with me". And we may safely add at the end, nor did Father Leopoldo, who finished up entirely in agreement with Father de Buggenoms.

## DOCUMENTS

## 1. De Buggenoms to Báez, 8th May 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

Excelencia,

Tan luego como tuve noticia de la retirada del ex-Presidente Cabral y del regreso de V. Ex. al poder de la República, me apresuré a comunicar este cambio de gobierno a la S. Sede y al mismo tiempo a solicitar de nuevo mi descargo de la Administ. de la Arquidiócesis de Santo Domingo.

La respuesta del Ssmo. Padre con fecha 6 de Abril me fue enviada por el último vapor y su tenor es que S.S., en lugar de exonerarme, quiere que indague del nuevo gobierno de la República si está dispuesto a recibirme convenientemente, es decir, como Vicario Apostólico o Representante inmediato del Sumo Pontífice. Tomando en consideración mis observaciones con respecto a los inconvenientes de mi prolongada ausencia de esta misión de San Thomas, S.S. me permite nombrar un Vicario en Sto. Domingo, el cual, bajo mi dependencia, ejercerá la jurisdicción eclesiástica, pudiendo yo entonces volver aquí, no obstante que tendré que transportarme a Sto. Domingo cada vez que mi presencia allá fuere necesaria. Cuidaré de elegir para mi Vicario a un sacerdote que merezca la aprobación de V.Ex.

Con referencia a mi persona, procedo desinteresadamente, como V. Ex. lo sabe, pero este desprendimiento mismo me obliga a ceñirme estrictamente a las intenciones del Ssmo. Padre, porque es el único medio de conseguir la asistencia de Dios, como lo dice el Profeta: « Si el Señor no edificare la casa, en vano trabajan los que la edifican » (Ps. 36).

El sistema de exclusion de toda influencia extranjera, que fué el único pretexto de mi destierro del territorio de la República, no puede nunca aplicarse a la organización de la Santa Iglesia Católica, Apostólica y Romana, porque esta Iglesia, sin embargo de lo difundida que está por todo el orbe, permanece siempre *una* en virtud de la unidad de autoridad doctrinal y gubernamental que subordina a los fieles, laicos o sacerdotes, a los Obispos y los Obispos al Vicario de Jesucristo, como los varios miembros de un mismo cuerpo, unidos por un mismo espíritu y subordinados a una misma cabeza.

La obediencia al Vicario de Jesucristo, cabeza de todos los miembros de la Iglesia militante, es la condición *sine qua non* del catolicismo. La historia prueba que todas las naciones que han rechazado la autoridad del Vicario de Jesucristo, han caído en el cisma y la herejía.

Hay una influencia cuya exclusion convendría infinitamente, y es la de los que son rebeldes a la autoridad del Padre común de la Iglesia, porque faltándoles este freno, pueden ser también rebeldes a la autoridad de todo gobierno civil establecido.

Es una verdad bastante probada que la *conservación del orden* es la garantía de todo buen gobierno; pero la raíz y salvaguardia del orden en un gobierno es la *justicia*, que Nuestro Señor Jesucristo ha definido cuando dijo a los fariseos: « Dad, pues, al César lo que es del César y a Dios lo que es de Dios » (San Lucas, XX, 25), lo que significa que los que Dios instituye en poder para gobernar una nación deben antes de todo y sobre todo buscar la protección de Dios, haciéndose los defensores de los derechos de Dios, es decir, procurando que las leyes de la Iglesia de Dios sean escrupulosamente respetadas, y Dios entonces será el defensor de los derechos de los que gobiernan a tal nación.

Los libros de los Jueces y de los Reyes del Antiguo Testamento son una serie no interrumpida de pruebas de que Dios eleva o deprime a los príncipes y a las naciones según que sean celosos o traidores a sus divinos derechos. « Si no hubieras hecho esto, dijo Samuel a Saúl, el Señor desde ahora hubiera establecido tu reino

sobre Israel para siempre, mas tu reino no sostendrá por cuanto no has guardado lo que el Señor te mandó » (I Sam, XIII, 13).

La voz del Señor se ha hecho ya oír con respecto a la organización de la Iglesia de Sto. Domingo; como Representante del Sumo Pontífice cumplo con un deber sagrado, declarando que, como sería temeridad rehusar conformarse a la voz de Dios, no hay mayor sabiduría que aceptar todo lo que ha mandado o mandará por su Vicario.

Suplico, pues, a V. Exc. se sirva honrarme con una contestación la más franca y completa posible para evitar la renovación de demoras sin límites y dañosas a la buena marcha de sus propios intereses, así como a los de la Iglesia; en la inteligencia de que, antes de conceder al presente gobierno lo que fué rehusado a las miras estrechas y exclusivamente políticas del Gobierno Cabral, la S. Sede mantendrá el *Status Quo*.

Ruego a Dios guarde la vida de V. Exc. muchos años y la colme de sus riquísimas bendiciones; y con sentimientos de alta consideración me suscribo, San Thomas 8 Mayo 1868.

De V. Exc. Humilde Servidor en J.C.  
S. Ex. Señor General B. Báez  
Presid.te de la República de St. Domingo

L. de Buggenoms C.SS.R., V.A.

2. Báez to de Buggenoms, 19th May 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

*Reverendísimo Señor,*

En posesión del oficio de V.S. fecha del que cursa, he visto con detenimiento el lastimoso historial de los pasados sucesos que hasta ahora han entorpecido la misión de V.S. y las piadosas soberanas disposiciones de Su Santidad.

En cuanto á mí, la respuesta que V.S. desea será tan franca y decisiva como acostumbro darlas en todas ocasiones; esto es: que el Gobierno actual de la República Dominicana se halla muy dispuesto a recibir al Enviado inmediato de Su Santidad, y a acatar y cumplir textualmente las órdenes del sucesor de San Pedro, como resultado necesario de las doctrinas ortodoxas que por dicha fueron inculcadas desde la infancia a los miembros todos que le componen.

Además, habiendo tenido la dicha de visitar la Corte de Roma y de oír de los propios labios del Sumo Pontífice sus disposiciones sobre la Yglesia Dominicana y su régimen espiritual, he creído conveniente dar cuenta a Su Santidad de lo acontecido, remitiendo al Vaticano las copias certificadas de la nota de V.S. a que me refiero y de esta respuesta, como testimonio de mi sumisión a las supremas resoluciones de la Santa Sede.

Com sentimientos de distinguida consideración tengo la honra de suscribirme de Vuestra Señoría.

Santo Dominco a 19 de Mayo de 1868.  
Atento seguro servidor, q.b.s.m.

Buenaventura Báez

3. De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 21st May 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

Prince Eminentissime,

Quelques jours après la réception de la lettre de Votre Eminence du 6 avril j'écrivis au Général Báez, Président actuel de la Rép. de Sto. Domingo, afin de sa-

voir de lui si son gouvernement était disposé à me recevoir comme il convient. Depuis environ une semaine que j'ai expédié cette lettre, des événements aussi sérieux qu'inopinés ont rendu la position du nouveau Président, B. Báez, très précaire, c'est-à-dire que le chef du Gouvernement Haïtien, Salnave, qui avait prêté la main à Báez pour renverser le Gouvernement Cabral, vient d'être mis en complète déroute par un parti très nombreux d'insurgés, et ce même parti veut maintenant prêter la main aux partisans de Cabral pour culbuter derechef Báez. Ceci me fait présumer que je ne serai pas encore très prochainement dans l'occasion d'aller à St. Domingo. Quoi qu'il en soit de l'avenir de cette République dans le rapport du gouvernement civil, je crois ne pas me tromper en présageant que ces révolutions à contrerévolutions successives auront du moins le bon résultat de mettre fin au monopole du clergé national. Les Prêtres et les généraux qui se trouvent à St. Thomas exilés par Báez le disent même hautement et affirment qu'ils useront désormais de toute leur influence pour faire abolir cet article de la Constitution Dominicaine qui a servi trop longtemps de prétexte pour éliminer du gouvernement de l'Archidiocèse tout prêtre qui ne serait pas littéralement créole du territoire de la République.

Voici une circonstance providentielle qui me fait espérer que les affaires de l'Eglise de Sto. Domingo prendront bientôt une meilleure tournure. Un vénérable ecclésiastique, l'abbé Charbonneau, vient de passer à St. Thomas où il s'est arrêté un jour avant de s'embarquer pour l'Europe. Il compte se trouver à Rome pour la fête des SS. Apôtres Pierre et Paul. Ce digne prêtre que je ne connaissais que de réputation et avec lequel je désirais depuis longtemps m'aboucher, est bien certainement l'homme le plus capable de seconder les efforts du S. Siège pour l'organisation de l'Eglise de Sto. Domingo. En effet l'abbé Charbonneau a exercé les fonctions de Recteur du Séminaire et de Missionnaire à S. Domingo de 1853 à 1863. A cette époque, qui coïncide avec l'incendie de Puerto Plata et l'expulsion des espagnols, les troubles politiques l'obligèrent de passer dans l'autre partie de l'île nommée Haïti, où il a en dernier lieu exercé la charge de curé à Jacquemel. Bien qu'agé de 67 ans, l'abbé Charbonneau jouit d'une santé vigoureuse et outre qu'il a eu des relations avec la plupart des prêtres et des notables de Santo Domingo, il a l'avantage d'avoir eu sous sa tutelle au séminaire une grande partie du clergé créole d'où il peut parler sciemment. Il a eu notamment pour élèves les prêtres Meriño, Billini et le P. Pedro Suazo, Vic. Forain d'Azua, et comme les talents qui distinguent l'abbé Charbonneau sont rehaussés par une conduite irréprochable et une grande aménité de caractère, il est vénéré de tous ceux qui ont eu des rapports avec lui.

Le jugement qu'il porte sur les affaires de l'Eglise de S. Domingo s'accorde avec les rapports que j'en ai fait au S. Siège, avec cette différence en faveur, qu'il en peut dire beaucoup plus que moi et avec toute l'assurance d'un témoin. Il a de très bon coeur accepté, si tel est le bon plaisir du Saint Père d'être mon Vicaire à Santo Domingo, et je ne puis que faire des voeux pour qu'il en puisse être ainsi, et que cette mesure ne soit qu'un bref acheminement à sa nomination à la charge d'Archévêque de Sto. Domingo.

Je me suis hâté d'écrire cette lettre à V. Em. afin de la prévenir de l'arrivée de cet excellent prêtre et de faciliter de prime abord son accueil auprès du S. Siège.

Je prie V. Em. d'agréer de nouveau l'assurance de ma soumission et de mon dévouement sans réserve aux ordres du Saint Siège, et pénétré du plus profond respect, j'ai l'honneur de me dire, Prince Eminentissime,

St. Thomas 21 mai 1868.

De Votre Eminence le très humble serviteur,

L. de Buggenoms C.S.S.R.

## 4. Antonelli to de Buggenoms, 8th August 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

R.mo Padre,

Il Sig. General Báez, dopoché è stato rieletto Presidente della Repubblica di Sto. Domingo, ha inviato al S. Padre una lettera con la quale esprime i sentimenti della sincera sua divozione verso il Supremo Capo della Chiesa, e la ferma sua decisione di favorire la Religione Cattolica nel suo paese; e nello stesso tempo ha fatto anche trasmettere copia della corrispondenza passata ultimamente fra esso e la P.tà. V. a Roma. Siccome dalla corrispondenza Sua Santità ha potuto conoscere la disposizione del Governo Domenicano di ricevere V. P.tà coi riguardi dovuti alla rappresentanza sua, non ha voluto tardare a rispondere all'atto ossequioso del menzionato Presidente colla pontificia risposta che nel foglio annesso Le trascrivo per ogni buon fine. Ora, mentre erasi dato corso a detta risposta del S. Padre, mi è sopraggiunta un'altra lettera del Sig. Ministro degli Affari Esteri della ricordata Repubblica, colla quale mi fa vivissime premure perché Ella si porti quanto prima a Sto. Domingo. Io pertanto, sebbene conosca le molte di Lei occupazioni ed il bene che sta operando a Santo Tommaso, a nome di Sua Santità debbo interessarla ad affrettare la sua partenza per quella capitale a senso delle istruzioni che antecedentemente Le ho dato; potendosi sperare molti vantaggi per quell'Archidiocesi grandemente bisognosa di chi ne prenda la cura con zelo ed impegno.

Intanto, con sensi di distinta stima mi confermo.

Roma 8 agosto 1868.

Di V. P.tà R.ma

G. Card. Antonelli

## 5. De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 9th October 1868, AGR, VI, Prov. Belgica, viceprov. Antilles, I.B., 14.

Prince Eminentissime,

La lettre que Votre Eminence a daigné m'adresser au nom du Très Saint Père en date du 8 Août m'est arrivée au commencement de Septembre et je me suis fait un devoir de me rendre à S. Domingo par le premier vapeur. Dès le jour de mon arrivée, le 19 7bre, j'ai eu une longue entrevue très peu satisfaisante avec le Président et ses quatre Ministres d'Etat. Sachant par expérience que ces Messieurs accommodent leur politique aux circonstances, et sachant surtout que la portion la moins édifiante du clergé n'a cessé de profiter de cette disposition du gouvernement pour contrecarrer les mesures que l'on a voulu maintes fois adopter pour réformer le clergé, j'ai voulu avant tout me faire donner par le gouvernement une assurance catégorique 1° Que les paroles que m'avait écrites le Président au nom de son conseil, c.à.d. *qu'il vénérât et accomplirait littéralement les ordres du Successeur de S. Pierre*, ne se borneraient pas à des paroles mais à des faits, 2° Qu'il me ferait reconnaître en ma qualité de Vic. Apostolique, et 3° Qu'il me prêterait au besoin main forte contre les prêtres récalcitrants. Je déclarai donc qu'à moins d'avoir reçu cette triple assurance d'une manière formelle je ne pourrais rien faire pour exécuter les ordres du S. Père. Cette première entrevue ne servit qu'à me prouver que j'avais bien fait de débiter par ces trois propositions, et je déclarai avec fermeté que je ne m'en par tirais pas.

La seconde entrevue qui eut lieu le lundi suivant aboutit à me faire découvrir le complot qu'avaient fait la plupart des prêtres de la capitale, ayant à leur tête le P. Billini, mon subdélégué, pour représenter au Président et à ses Ministres combien ils s'exposeraient à se rendre impopulaire s'ils attribuaient à un étranger la charge

suprême de l'archidiocèse, et en outre ils persuadèrent ces Messieurs qu'ayant subdélégué mes pouvoirs au R.P. Billini, mes pouvoirs étaient par cela même éteints! Ils avaient réussi à faire passer cette absurdité comme fondée sur le droit canonique, mettant en avant l'opinion d'un avocat de S. Domingo actuellement Président de la haute cour de justice, lequel a la réputation de savant en ces matières et d'autant plus qu'il est très dévot et reçoit fréquemment les sacrements. Je réussis à ébranler, sinon à détruire tout à fait, la conviction des membres du gouvernement si mal fondée. Après une troisième entrevue le Président et ses Ministres se rendirent complètement et me promirent toutes les garanties que j'avais réclamées. Je dois dire pour rendre gloire à Dieu que depuis le troisième jour de mon arrivée je m'étais senti rempli d'une confiance que je pouvais à peine comprendre, mais qui ne m'a pas quitté depuis, et je ne peux mieux l'expliquer qu'en disant que j'éprouvai toute l'efficacité des paroles qui furent adressées au Prophète Jérémie: *Noli dicere puer sum! quoniam ad omnia quae mittam te ibis; et universa quae mandavero tibi loqueris. Ne timeas a facie eorum, quia tecum ego sum ut eruam te, dicit Dominus.*

La conduite du clergé que je visitai et dont j'étais à peine visité, me fut une preuve de ce que j'avais appris des membres du gouvernement, mais je pris la résolution de ne pas user de mon autorité avant le moment favorable, que Dieu me ferait connaître. La veille de la Fête de La Merced, le 23 7bre je reçus une lettre officielle du gouvernement qui, me donnant tous mes titres, m'invitait à chanter la Grande Messe le 24 et à prêcher à cette occasion, vu qu'il y aurait grand concours du peuple et que tous les membres du gouvernement se trouveraient présents à la cérémonie. J'acceptai volontiers et je profitai de cette circonstance pour faire le discours que j'ai inséré au commencement de ma lettre pastorale du 3 Octobre. Ce discours me fut demandé par le Président pour être publié dans le journal officiel qui paraît chaque samedi. J'en fus généralement beaucoup remercié, à l'exception cependant des prêtres qui n'en devinrent que plus endurcis. Je dois me hâter de dire que parmi les onze prêtres qui sont actuellement à S. Domingo il en est un, le Rev. Bartolomé Pinelli, que Dieu a sans aucun doute envoyé à ma rencontre; dès notre première entrevue nous nous sommes donné une confiance mutuelle et il n'a cessé depuis de me servir d'aide de camp avec un zèle et une charité admirables. Il est dans ce pays depuis deux ans, et je n'avais reçu de renseignement sur son comte. Il est très bon théologien, ayant été promu avec honneur au grade de Licencié en Théologie à l'archigymnase de la Sapienza, ayant étudié 11 ans à Rome. Il est maintenant dans la force de l'âge. Comme V. Em. le verra à la fin de la Pastorale du 3 Octobre je l'ai nommé mon Vicaire général. Outre le P. Pinelli deux autres prêtres m'ont dès le commencement prêté l'obéissance, mais l'un et l'autre l'ont fait par ressentiment envers le subdélégué, qui les a rebutés *et pour cause*, car ils étaient sur le point de quitter l'archidiocèse lorsque je suis arrivé. Le 27 j'envoyai une lettre d'invitation formelle à chacun des onze prêtres, leur intimant qu'ils devaient tous se rencontrer à ma demeure le jour suivant à 8.30 du matin. Tous à l'exception du P. Billini l'ex-subdélégué, qui m'avait déjà deux jours auparavant refusé obéissance, se trouvèrent au lieu convenu à l'heure indiquée. Après avoir récité quelques courtes prières pour invoquer le St. Esprit, dès que je pris la parole plusieurs s'écrièrent à la fois de manière à être entendus dans la rue et par les voisins, qu'ils ne me reconnaissaient aucune faculté, vu que je les avais toutes déléguées. Après avoir réussi à imposer silence je leur parlai durant une petite heure afin de leur mettre sous les yeux les preuves les plus convaincantes de la futilité de leur assertion et de l'authenticité de mes facultés, ainsi que des conséquences qu'entraînerait leur refus de soumission. Après cela je permis au curé de la cathédrale, qui m'avait plusieurs fois interrompu pour me demander la parole, de me dire s'il persistait encore de soumettre. Il se mit alors à répéter que j'avais perdu mes pouvoirs, que j'étais d'ailleurs étranger au pays etc. Ne pouvant continuer cette scène scandaleuse, je crus alors devoir me lever et déclarer en vertu des pouvoirs dont j'étais muni suspens de toutes leurs fonctions les huit prêtres qui m'avaient résisté et même insulté, et ainsi je les congédiai, tandis

que de leur côté ils s'encourageaient les uns les autres à persévérer dans leur rébellion. J'informai le gouvernement de ce qui avait eu lieu, et après un moment d'hésitation tous me promirent de seconder les mesures que j'adopterais pour réprimer les récalcitrants. Je fis donc imprimer la *Notificación* dont j'envoie copie à V.E. et je priai le Ministre du Culte (la Religion Catholique est reconnue par la Constitution) d'envoyer à chacun des prêtres la même sommation afin qu'ils cessassent de dire la Messe etc., ce qui fut fait dès le soir même et dès le lendemain tous les habitants purent lire la *Notificación* placardée par le sacristain de la cathédrale sur les portes de chacune des dix églises ouvertes au culte dans la ville. Pas un habitant se remua pour prendre la défense des prêtres suspens qui la plupart tombèrent malades. Par mesure de précaution le ministre de la Guerre avait donné des cartouches à six cents soldats, la plupart improvisés en cas d'émeute. J'attribue cette victoire à S. Michel auquel j'avais tout particulièrement recommandé cette affaire qui éclata la vieille du 29 et fut gagné le 29 de Septembre. Les prêtres suspens crurent devoir m'écrire une lettre de soumission conditionnelle c.à.d. en renvoyant la décision de cette dispute au T. S. Père, et promettant dans l'entretemps de se soumettre. Cette lettre m'ayant remise par l'entremis du gouvernement, j'y répondis de même et le gouvernement fit insérer ma réponse dans le journal officiel. Cette réponse acheva la victoire, car tous ceux qui la lurent s'accordèrent à condamner les prêtres rebelles et à remercier Dieu de m'avoir envoyé ici pour enseigner aux prêtres leur catéchisme et le reste. J'envoie à V.E. le no. du *Boletín official* où a paru cette lettre. Enfin tous les cinq prêtres vinrent l'un après l'autre se soumettre implicitement, acceptant la pénitence que je leur imposai qui fut de faire une bonne confession avant de célébrer la Messe. Ce qu'ils firent tous à l'exception du P. Billini, mon ex-subdélégué qui tout en promettant d'obéir, refuse de se reconnaître coupable, et par conséquent reste suspens. C'est lui qui avait le plus de pénitentes dévotes qu'il faisait communier tous les jours. Ces dévotes ne le justifient pas maintenant, car heureusement la faute est trop palpable, mais elles disent que c'est néanmoins un saint homme, et que c'est à cause de ses mérites que Dieu a permis qu'il fut possédé du démon qui l'empêche de s'humilier! Véritablement je me suis comme réjoui du péché de ces prêtres dans le sens de l'Eglise au sujet d'Adam: O certe necessarium peccatum Adae! car ce péché nous a fourni l'occasion d'infliger à cette portion du clergé une humiliation publique et solennelle qui a rompu le prestige à l'aide duquel ils avaient aveuglé le gouvernement et faisaient peser sur ce bon et pauvre peuple les tristes conséquences de ses désordres. J'ai rédigé ma dernière lettre pastorale dans le sens qui m'a paru le plus efficace pour perpétuer la victoire que nous avons si providentiellement gagné après quelques jours d'orage. C'est pourquoi j'ai beaucoup et justement loué le gouvernement et plus justement encore le peuplé qui est le meilleur peuple que je connaisse et ne manque que de bons prêtres pour devenir des saints. Quelle belle moisson que celle de S. Domingo où il y a 250,000 âmes abandonnées! Et le territoire qui est deux fois celui de la Belgique serait bientôt plus peuplé si la paix pouvait y régner, car c'est le pays le plus privilégié selon la nature. Dieu qui ne fait rien à demi m'a fait déjà rencontrer plusieurs prêtres distingués par leur savoir et leur piété, qui sont venus d'Espagne avec l'Archevêque Monzon, maintenant Archevêque de Granada, et sont restés à Porto Rico, l'île voisine en attendant le moment de pouvoir venir évangéliser les habitants de S. Domingo. Puisque le doigt de Dieu se montre si évidemment dans tout ce qui vient de s'opérer, je crois qu'il convient que le S. Siège mette le sceau à cette oeuvre en adoptant aussitôt que possible des dernières mesures qui confirmeront mon installation dans l'archidiocèse. Je dois l'avouer, il m'en a coûté beaucoup de quitter St. Thomas à l'heure qu'il est et de n'avoir pu y retourner plus tôt, vu que ma présence y est matériellement nécessaire pour achever des travaux commencés et satisfaire aux dépenses qu'ils ont entraînés, mais je suis d'un autre côté heureux de pouvoir en ceci comme dans le reste faire des actes de confiance dans la Divine Providence. Je resterai encore un bon mois afin de consolider ce qui vient d'être fait à S. Domingo et de visiter l'intérieur du pays. Il n'y a pas de doute

que tous les autres prêtres dispersés et isolés dans les campagnes se soumettront, et j'ai même déjà reçu des lettres de soumission *de tous ceux* qui ont pu savoir ce qui s'est passé depuis mon arrivée. Ma lettre pastorale et une autre circulaire spéciale que j'enverrai en même temps à tous achevera ce qui reste à faire de ce côté. Je me trouverai à St. Thomas le 13 Novembre pour y attendre les ordres du T.S. Père. Il me semble nécessaire que je me rende d'abord à Rome dès que faire se pourra, car j'ai beaucoup de conseils à demander et beaucoup de choses à régler pour le bon gouvernement de cette Eglise où tout manque. La chose la plus importante sera l'établissement d'un séminaire: les sujets ne manqueront pas car ces jeunes beaucoup aspirent à embrasser l'état ecclésiastique. Impossible de se faire une idée de l'ignorance de la plupart des prêtres. Le curé de la cathédrale s'était plaint de ce que j'avais fait entendre de ce que beaucoup de prêtres ignoraient le latin, et pour me convaincre de l'injustice de mon assertion il s'est mis en devoir de m'écrire une lettre en latin que je conserve comme pièce de curiosité. Il la commence ainsi: *Reverendissime Vicarius Apostolicus Diocesim* et la continue jusqu'au bout dans le même style en m'assurant qu'il a été durant sept ans Professeur de latin et que c'est pour-quoi il en possède si bien la grammaire! On dirait que tous ces prêtres se sont donnés le mot pour me fournir d'une surabondance d'arguments ad hominem pour les confondre.

Je conclurai en soumettant à V.E. les suggestions suivantes qui me semblent propres à mettre à son comble les bons sentiments qui animent déjà le gouvernement et surtout le peuple à l'égard du S. Siège: Supplier le T.S. Père d'ajouter à la lettre qui sera une réponse à celle-ci une lettre adressée au gouvernement et au peuple de S. Domingo, leur donnant les louanges qu'ils méritent. Cette lettre serait publiée dans le journal officiel et ensuite reproduite dans d'autres journaux en Amérique et en Europe, ce qui servirait à inspirer de la confiance dans la stabilité de ce gouvernement et à déconcerter ceux qui voudraient le renverser. Pour la même raison j'ai pensé qu'il serait bien de faire deux grandes bannières portant l'une l'effigie de N.D. du secours Perpétuel avec la date du 24 7bre (époque de la fête nationale), l'autre portant l'effigie de S. Michel avec la devise *Quis ut Deus* avec la date 29 7bre 1868 (époque de la révolte des prêtres confondus) Bannières que le S.P. bénirait et que j'emporterais de Rome pour les présenter à mon retour au peuple. Cela servirait de signe de ralliement des amis de la justice et par conséquence de l'ordre, et au besoin les électriserait dans le combat pour repousser les ennemis de cet ordre, et ainsi la victoire déjà gagnée serait immortalisée. C'est aussi mon intention d'ajouter au sceau dont je me servirai et que je n'ai pu qu'ébaucher ici l'effigie de S. Michel avec la devise *Quis ut Deus* que j'ajouterais à l'autre: *Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini*.

Le Seigneur a déjà confirmé par la guérison soudaine d'un enfant qui se mourait l'efficacité de l'intercession de N.D. du Secours Perpétuel, comme il est dûment constaté dans le procès verbal que j'envoie au Rme. P. Général, de sorte que cette dévotion est déjà populaire. Il en est de même de la dévotion à S. Michel, car dès mon arrivée j'ai rassemblé les amis de Don Domingo de la Rocha qui m'a donné l'hospitalité pour réciter ensemble tous les soirs des prières en l'honneur de S. Michel et des SS. Anges, aussi bien qu'une neuvaine en l'honneur de N.D. du Secours Perpétuel, neuvaine qui a justement terminé la vieille de la solennité du Rosaire le 3 octobre. Il s'est déjà formé une société spirituelle de fidèles qui récitent ensemble à l'église le chapelet de S. Michel et des SS. Anges auquel je prierai le T.S. Père d'attacher des indulgences.

Enfin je pense qu'il serait bien que la pastorale du 3 Octobre précédée d'une introduction qui la ferait comprendre et apprécier fut publiée dans les journaux de langue italienne, française et anglaise aussi bien qu'espagnole, toujours afin d'inspirer envers le gouvernement actuel de S. Domingo une confiance qui lui a fait défaut jusqu'à présent à l'étranger comme au dedans et encourager d'autres Républiques de

l'Amérique du Sud à imiter le bon exemple que Dieu a déjà béni si admirablement.

En attendant les ordres du S. Siège que je remercie de m'avoir donné l'occasion de lui donner des preuves de mon obéissance et de mon dévouement, j'ai l'honneur de me dire avec le plus profond respect, Prince Eminentissime,

Santo Domingo 9 octobre 1868.

De Votre Eminence le très humble et soumis serviteur,

L. de Buggenoms C.S.S.R., V.A.

6. De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 21st. november 1868, de Buggenoms papers.

Prince Eminentissime,

Depuis le 17 Nov. je suis de retour de S. Domingo. Le 8 du mois passé j'ai eu l'honneur d'informer Votre Eminence de ce que par la miséricorde de Dieu j'avais pu faire pour m'acquitter de la mission dont le S. Siège a daigné me charger. J'espère que cette lettre ainsi que ma pastorale du 3 octobre et autres documents imprimés que j'expédiai en même temps auront été reçus à temps opportun. l'*exequatour* dont j'envoie maintenant copie, bien que daté du 25 Sept. ne m'a été remis que le 8 Nov. courant et par conséquent après ma lettre du 24 Oct. au Ministre de l'Intérieur chargé du département du culte, dont j'envoie aussi copie à V.E. parce qu'elle est la conclusion des nombreuses entrevues que j'ai eues avec le Président et ses Ministres et elle en est le résumé que je vais maintenant commenter par forme d'introduction.

Ce que j'avais prévu et manifesté dans ma lettre du 8 mai au Président qui en a envoyé copie au T.S. Père ainsi que la réponse qu'il m'y fit le 19 mai, fut trop bien confirmé une dizaine de jours après la publication de ma pastorale, c.à.d. que la promesse solennelle de vénérer et d'exécuter les ordres du Successeur de S. Pierre, conséquence inévitable d'un des paragraphes du *Manifeste de Monte Christi* proclamé par Báez le 13 fév. de cette année lors de la chute de Cabral et de sa rentrée au pouvoir, n'avait été suggérée que par les exigences d'une politique que heureusement continue à obliger le Président actuel à la maintenir. Pour le dire en un seul mot le gouvernement Báez voudrait avoir aux yeux de la masse de la nation dominicaine, véritablement catholique, le mérite et le crédit d'être filialement soumis au S. Siège, mais seulement à titre de sauf-conduit pour rentrer plus impunément dans l'ornière de la vieille politique moderne qui ne veut voir dans l'Eglise qu'une servante de l'Etat. Le Président débuta par me demander à qui je confierais la juridiction. Est que pendant mon absence et sur ma réponse que j'avais déjà publiée le choix que j'avais fait dans la personne du P. Bart. Pinelli, à la fin de ma pastorale du 3 oct., il s'écria que cela ne pouvait pas être et qu'il n'avait considéré cette nomination que comme mesure provisoire, devant être remplacée par une élection plus stable pour le temps de mon absence du territoire de la République. Je savais que le Président Báez n'a jamais visé depuis longtemps qu'à faire nommer archevêque son favori le P. C. Pina, or pour de trop justes raisons qu'il me répugne d'exposer par écrit, mais que je me réserve de faire connaître au S. Siège dès que je serai requis si je ne puis le faire de vive voix, ce prêtre est à la fois indigne et incapable d'occuper cette charge, plus encore que son rival F.A. de Meriño, l'élu du parti Cabral. Le Président Báez connaît depuis longtemps ce que je sais et pense de Pina et c'est pourquoi il n'a pas cru pouvoir me le proposer d'emblée, mais il espérait très certainement que vu la répugnance que j'ai toujours manifesté à accepter la charge de Prélat de l'Archidiocèse, je finirais par consentir pour m'en débarrasser à nommer Pina mon Vic. Gén. Je fis donc observer au Président que devant faire ce choix *en conscience* j'étais prêt non seulement à souffrir mais à mourir plutôt que de transiger ce que me serait enjoint par le T.S. Père auquel je rendrais toujours un compte exact de ma conduite. Avant de

nommer le P. Bart. Pinelli j'avais proposé au Président de décerner cette charge à l'abbé Charbonneau mais il y eut alors un mouvement spontané de la part du Président et de tous les Ministres qui tous à la fois protestèrent contre un tel projet, sous le prétexte qu'outre sa qualité d'étranger l'abbé Charbonneau avait témoigné publiquement son adhésion à Cabral et avait passé de S. Domingo à Haïti alors que ses services eussent été les plus utiles. Je réussis néanmoins à défendre sa cause en sa qualité de prêtre et j'obtins que le gouvernement ne s'opposerait pas à ce que je l'employasse dans le diocèse; mais non pour lui confier aucune charge éminente. Je demandai au Président de me nommer les prêtres qu'il croyait les plus dignes afin que je puisse du moins choisir; il me répondit que ceux que je voudrais choisir seraient probablement ses ennemis. Je prévis dès lors que j'aurais à soutenir une lutte sérieuse. C'est pourquoi j'imaginai d'écrire au Président lui proposant de rédiger un écrit dans lequel je résumerais les principaux points sur lesquels il importait que le gouvernement fut d'accord avec le S.S. pour faire un concordat, oeuvre depuis longtemps mise sur le tapis et non moins désirée de la part du S.S. que du gouvernement de la République. Il me répondit que pour lui il ne voyait qu'une question d'intérêt palpitant c.à.d. l'élection de mon V.G. pendant mon absence. Le même jour il me fit appeler pour assister à une réunion de ses Secrétaires d'Etat. J'y fus et la conférence commença par l'éloge d'un prêtre né à S. Domingo et résident depuis plusieurs ans dans l'île de Cuba. Je connaissais ce prêtre de réputation, il se nomme. O. Manuel Maria Valencia, a été avocat, marié, puis devenu veuf a embrassé l'état E.que. Il est réputé instruit, d'excellente conduite et très aimable. Le Président et son Conseil me firent donc entendre que ce serait l'homme le plus digne à me remplacer pendant mon absence. J'y consentis et on consentit aussi à ce que je conserverais Bart. Pinelli en qualité de V.G. jusqu'à mon départ et de Procureur Général, c.à.d. Administrateur de tous les biens de l'Eglise pendant mon absence. Nous avons convenu d'écrire, le Président et moi, au P. Valencia afin de lui donner connaissance de cette résolution et le prier de se rendre à son poste le plus tôt possible. Je voulus alors me retirer, mais le Président me fit observer que le P. Valencia ne pourrait probablement arriver à S. Domingo que 15 jours après mon absence et me demanda comme une faveur que je permisse au P. Pina d'agir en qualité de V.G. Je répondis que s'il ne s'agissait que de 15 jours j'y consentirais mais pas pour plus de 15 jours. Je me retirai alors et me mis incontinent à écrire comme nous en étions convenus au P. Valencia vu que le courrier pour Cuba devait partir le lendemain. Dans la soirée du même jour le secrétaire privé du Président vint m'apporter une lettre adressée par le Président au P. Pina, curé de Santiago de los Caballeros, à 150 milles de S. Domingo, mais non cachetée, le Président désirant que j'en fasse lecture avant de l'expédier par un exprès (un Général) qui allait se mettre en route. Je lus cette lettre et vis que le Président invitait Pina à se rendre au plus tôt à S. Domingo, vu que je l'avais nommé mon V.G. au cas que le P. Valencia ne put pas se rendre à son poste, celui-ci ayant été aussi nommé. Je vis aussitôt le piège et d'autant mieux qu'ayant déjà eu le temps de m'informer de la chance que j'avais de faire venir le P. Valencia à S. Domingo, j'avais appris qu'il n'y avait aucune chance probable de son acceptation pour trois raisons péremptoires: 1° Il avait déjà été appelé auparavant et avait refusé; 2° Parce qu'il se trouvait infirme et 3° Parce qu'il occupait un emploi dont le revenu lui était indispensable pour le soutien de sa famille. Je déclarai donc au secrétaire du Président que je ne donnais pas mon consentement à ce que la lettre proposée fut expédiée au P. Pina et que je motiverai mon refus. Le même soir vers les 9 h. je reçus comme je m'y attendais la visite du Président qui ne put dissimuler sa colère d'autant plus qu'il voyait son piège découvert. Il s'oublia alors assez pour me faire une foule d'aveus dont il se repentit avant même de prendre congé de moi ce soir. Je me bornai du reste à lui répéter que je ne pouvais pas transiger avec un devoir de conscience et l'exhortai à se mettre plus de confiance en Dieu, sans lequel rien ne réussit et avec lequel on a tout droit d'espérer. Le lendemain je fus de nouveau convoqué à une réunion des membres du gouvernement. Je tâchai

de m'en exempter comme auparavant en promettant de soumettre au jugement du S. Siège les objections que le gouvernement pouvait faire à mes propositions. Le Président parut d'abord satisfait, mais il n'eut pas patience et me dépâcha vers les 2 h. un des ministres pour me persuader de me rendre à 3 h. à son hôtel, me promettant qu'il n'y aurait aucune discussion trop chalereuse et qu'on me ferait certainement modifier mon écrit projeté. Je fus donc à cette conférence qui dura trois heures fortes. C'était un autre piège. Le Président commença d'abord par me dire que le P. Bart. Pinelli en qui j'avais mis confiance était en réalité un prêtre dont la conduite avait été tellement infame qu'il lui répugnait de m'en donner les preuves. Je répondis naturellement que je ne pouvais le condamner sans ces preuves qui devaient être bien positives, vu que je m'étais enquis de toutes les manières possibles de la conduite de ce prêtre et que tous les témoignages lui avaient été favorables. Je dis aussi que ce prêtre m'avait rendu un compte fidèle et bien prouvé de toute sa vie, que nous avions vécu depuis plus d'un mois dans la plus grande intimité et que je pouvais le juger et l'apprécier en vertu de l'expérience que j'avais acquise des hommes et surtout des prêtres. Comme j'exigeai ces preuves possibles, le Président fit fermer et sonna un de ces ministres qui s'était fait l'accusateur d'annoncer les crimes allégués. Je renvoie pour le reste V.E. à ma lettre du 24 oct. au Ministre de l'Intérieur.

Le Président et ses ministres voyant que je ne changeais pas d'opinion en faveur de B. Pinelli l'entrevue alors devint d'autant plus orageuse de la part du Président que je ne perdais pas mon calme. Ce fut alors un flux d'assertions et de propositions dignes d'un partisan rallié des idées *modernes*. Comme je réfutais chaque fois par des preuves positives, des faits recents et manifestement contraires à ce qu'il annonçait, l'irritation continua jusqu'à faire dire au Président que la Belgique était un pays protestant. Je lui demandai sur la foi de quel auteur il affirmait ce que moi, belge, savais être parfaitement gratuit; alors il se leva pour aller chercher cet auteur, l'homme le plus savant et le plus habile logicien de ce siècle selon lui — M. Proudhon! Je lui dis alors ce que je savais de Proudhon, dont j'ai lu la vie et j'ajoutai que s'il affirmait avec tant d'énergie une proposition que je savais être dénuée de fondement, il ne devait pas s'étonner de ce que je rétorquais en doute beaucoup d'autres assertions que j'avais dû réfuter. Là-dessus le Président sauta comme épuisé de son sofa et je me retirai pour prendre mon manteau et mon chapeau après quoi je vins avec politesse lui donner la main avant de quitter la place où tous les ministres gardaient un profond silence. Le lendemain je reçus une lettre du Ministre de l'Intérieur au nom du Président insistant pour que sans délai je fisse savoir si je consentais à la nomination de Pina V.G. Ma réponse était déjà prête et c'est cette lettre du 24 oct. déjà mentionnée et dont j'envoie copie à V.E. Entre autres choses pendant la discussion que je viens de rapporter le Président avait dit que si je nommais V.G. tout autre que Pina, il exilerait incontinent ce prêtre et laisserait l'archidiocèse sans juridiction E.que. C'est la parole que j'attendais pour pouvoir concilier le devoir de ma conscience avec ce que l'on exigeait de moi. De deux maux, il ne me restait plus qu'à choisir le moindre et dans ce sens ma condescendance a été une victoire. Je laissai s'écouler trois jours avant d'envoyer ma lettre du 24 en réponse à celle du 22 oct., lendemain de la conférence orageuse afin de donner au Président le temps de réfléchir et afin aussi de bien peser tout ce que je devais exprimer dans cette lettre. Elle fit d'abord une impression tellement forte sur le Président et ses ministres que d'après le témoignage d'un des confidants du Président celui-ci versa des larmes d'humiliation ou de regret d'avoir lui-même fourni l'occasion de lui dire des vérités auxquelles il n'y avait pas moyen de répondre. La première chose fut d'inviter le P. Bart. Pinelli à une soirée chez le Vice-Consul français, grand ami de Bâez. Tous les membres du gouvernement s'y trouvaient et lui demandaient pardon d'avoir écouté (ou plutôt d'avoir inventé) les calomnies que j'avais parfaitement confondues. Tous s'embrassèrent en le conjurant d'oublier de passé. Ils burent à sa santé et le proclamèrent leur ange tutélaire! Autre piège. Connaissant le bon coeur

de Pinelli, ils lui demandèrent de les aider à exercer sur moi son influence afin d'obtenir que je retirasse cette lettre, lui promettant de lui laisser exercer la fonction de Procureur Général pourvu que Pina eut la charge de V.G. pendant mon absence. Le P. Pinelli consentit à me proposer tout ce qu'ils désiraient les anticipant cependant que je ne ferais transaction à mon devoir. Le Ministre de l'Intérieur rédigea alors une lettre qui devait m'être proposée comme modèle ce celle que je lui adresserais pour l'autoriser à me renvoyer cette lettre du 24, trop difficile à digérer, et lui promettre d'y substituer une lettre où je me bornerais à parler de la subdélégation en faveur de Pina et de la confirmation de Pinelli dans sa charge de Procureur G. Il voulait en même temps que je déclarasse cette lettre du 24 *comme nulle et sans aucune valeur ni effet*, ce que je refusai vu tout au contraire cette lettre conservée par le gouvernement avait été très efficace et m'était une des pièces les plus nécessaires pour l'explication de ma conduite aussi que celle du gouvernement dans le compte que je devais rendre de l'une et de l'autre au S.S. J'écrivis donc dans ce sens au Ministre de l'Intérieur qui persista jusqu'à vouloir donner sa démission si je ne déclarais pas cette lettre du 24 nulle et sans valeur. Je tins ferme, et cette fois le Président et les ministres s'unirent pour obliger le Ministre de l'Intérieur à céder ou à perdre son portefeuille. Il céda donc et conserva son poste. Ce qui porta le Président et les autres ministres à agir de la sorte c'est la juste crainte qu'ils conçurent que s'ils ne se contentaient de ce que je m'offrais à faire, en égard des circonstances, ma lettre pourrait être pour eux une arme tellement puissante pour mettre au jour leurs vrais principes à l'égard du S.S. ainsi que leur mauvaise foi en recourant à la calomnie pour obtenir par la ruse ce qu'ils ne pouvaient obtenir de moi par justice. Depuis cela, c.à.d. le 30 oct. je n'ai plus été molesté par le gouvernement qui a semblé vouloir tout faire pour me faire oublier le passé. Le P. Pina que je n'avais pas appelé est arrivé le 2 nov. et tomba du cheval en entrant dans la ville, se faisant une forte contusion à la tête, qui l'obligea à prendre le lit pendant huit jours. De l'aveu même du Président c'est le P. Pina lui-même qui avait intrigué pour être nommé V.G. aspirant au même temps conserver son droit à sa cure de Santiago de los Caballeros qui est la plus lucrative de l'archidiocèse. Après de s'assurer cette cure il avait dénoncé comme hostiles au gouvernement de Báez les deux compétiteurs les plus puissants, c.à.d. l'ancien curé qui était en charge depuis 15 ans et son vicaire le P. B. Pinelli. Cette accusation calomnieuse à laquelle le Président donna crédit fuit cause que je trouvai à mon arrivée à S. Domingo le 19 sept. l'excellent P. Pinelli, qui a été pour moi l'ami le plus fidèle comme le plus utile que j'eusse pu rencontrer pour me seconder sans jamais me gêner. L'autre prêtre, le P. Quezada, après m'avoir refusé obéissance sans trop savoir pourquoi fut tout le premier à venir m'en demander pardon et me prier d'entendre la confession. C'est lui qui m'a aidé à confondre les calomnieux de Pinelli de la manière la plus péremptoire. C'est ainsi que Pina *incidit in foveam quam fecit*, car le même jour auquel je le nommai V.G. ad interim pendant mon absence, je nommai le P. Pinelli curé doyen de Santiago de los Caballeros, la place étant nécessairement devenue vacante par la clause que je mis dans l'acte de subdélégation à Pina, le nommant V.G. ad interim avec résidence à S. Domingo. Quant au P. Quesada je l'ai nommé curé de S. Barbara, deuxième paroisse de la capitale. Dès que le P. Pina put sortir il vint me voir pour me dire qu'il préférerait retourner à sa paroisse de Santiago que d'être seulement V.G. avec résidence dans la capitale et sans aucun droit aux biens E.ques dont Pinelli était déclaré administrateur. Je lui répondis que je ne pouvais modifier ce que j'avais résolu de faire à cet égard. Il s'en fut alors auprès du Président et des secrétaires d'état, mais au lieu d'en être écouté favorablement le Président le gourmanda en lui reprochant d'avoir été la cause du combat qu'il avait dû me livrer pour obtenir qu'il fut nommé V.G. et qu'il devait s'en contenter. Tous les ministres soumirent également le dos. J'ai rendu de tout ceci le compte le plus exact que j'ai pu afin que le S.S. fût bien instruit de la conduite du gouvernement aussi bien que de la mienne, mon unique consolation pour l'issue de cette affaire étant d'avoir été constamment guidé par le même esprit

qui a inspiré au T.S. Père la détermination de se servir de moi pour une mission que j'ai toujours reconnue comme étant disproportionnée à mes forces et que je n'ai acceptée que par pure obéissance, me tenant prêt toujours à la résigner en faveur d'un autre, au moindre signe du T.S. Père.

Pendant ces deux mois que j'ai passé à S. Domingo j'ai été constamment occupé à me mettre en rapport avec tous les prêtres dispersés dans les 30 paroisses environ de l'archidiocèse. Il y en a plus, mais elles sont vacantes, faute de prêtres. J'ai visité la paroisse de S. Christophe à 24 milles de la capitale où réside depuis 40 ans le prêtre le plus vénérable du diocèse, nom de Jesus Ayala que j'avais nommé mon subdélégué à l'époque de mon bannissement par Cabral. Ce prêtre m'a reçu avec une profonde joie et quoique je n'aie pu passer qu'une nuit dans cet endroit, j'ai pu administrer la confirmation à 50 personnes qu'il avait bien préparées. Ce vieillard m'a donné beaucoup d'informations qui ne peuvent être soumis par écrit. Il eut à regretter qu'il soit trop infirme et sous le poids de 80 ans bien comptés. J'ai pu confirmer dans la capitale 150 personnes, beaucoup de soldats surtout et quelques généraux qui se sont bien confessés auparavant. Le Général Damien Báez, frère du Président et Gouverneur de S. Domingo, a été le parrain d'au moins douze soldats ou généraux. Il y a au moins 500 généraux dans la République de S. Domingo et plut à Dieu que tous fussent semblables à ceux que je viens de citer. J'ai aussi profité des occasions qui m'ont paru favorables pour faire entendre la parole de Dieu d'une manière Apostolique ainsi j'ai fait célébrer une neuvaine devant la fête de tous les Saints, donnant chaque soir une instruction familière et j'ai fait de même chaque soir de l'octave des Trépassés. Il n'y a pas de doute que si je pouvais réunir assez de missionnaires parlants la langue espagnole on pourrait donner à S. Domingo avec assurance d'un plein succès les exercices d'une mission qui seraient pour ce pays décisives pour sa véritable régénération, car ouvrirait naturellement la voix pour missionner toutes les autres paroisses.

Tous les prêtres se sont soumis à l'exception de l'ex-subdélégué Billini, qui semble avoir été frappé d'obstination, car de tous les prêtres il était sans contredit quant à l'extérieur le plus pieux et il réunissait en sa faveur les vœux de tous ceux qui n'ayant pas de parti politique auraient voulu voir un prêtre créole à la tête de l'Eglise. Son obstination semble providentielle p.c.q. elle a désenchanté ceux qui me firent d'abord opposition et que je n'aurais pu convertir par aucun autre moyen. Le Président de la Cour de Justice, Nepomucène Tejera qu'était son plus puissant conseiller et que j'ai nommé dans ma lettre aux prêtres suspens, est venu se soumettre humblement en avouant son erreur et m'a promis son amitié pour l'avenir.

Le P. Billini a publié à l'insu des autorités qui l'en auraient empêché la *Vindicación al Mundo Católico* dont j'envoie un exemplaire et il a fait circuler cette pièce partout dans l'intérieur de l'île avant que le gouvernement le sut; car dès que le Président eut connaissance du fait il fit saisir tous les exemplaires qui se trouvaient encore chez l'imprimeur qui fut menacé d'être lui-même saisi, s'il ne s'abstenait à l'avenir d'imprimer furtivement d'autres écrits semblables. Ce n'était pas une menace inutile, car immédiatement après cette saisie le P. Billini eut la sottise ou l'imprudence de m'envoyer un autre manuscrit de 20 pages qu'il voulait aussi faire imprimer et afin d'y réussir il me pria d'y apposer mon approbation. C'était un véritable libelle en quatre chapitres en forme de considération sur les persécuteurs qu'il qualifiait de précurseurs de l'Antichrist, terminant par ces paroles: *A la mayor gloria de Dios*, portant la date du 19 octobre. Ce qui l'ont soutenu dans son aveuglement ce sont une douzaine de béates qu'il dirigeait et dont le nombre montait à mon arrivée à 80, qu'il faisait communier tous les jours. Un nombre s'est converti; d'autres restent en suspens et une douzaine le soutiennent et déclarent qu'il est leur véritable V.G. Ceci montre le danger d'un schisme et en effet il y avait déjà un schisme véritable dans la capitale si le gouvernement ne se fut déclaré contre Billini ou pour mieux dire si le gouvernement avait porté à Billini l'intérêt qu'il porte au P. Pina. La possibilité et même la facilité d'un schisme s'explique par l'ignorance des prêtres

tres, dont la *Vindicación al Mundo Católico* par le P. Bellini qu'on vénérât comme le plus spirituel est une preuve surabondante.

Plus que jamais je suis convaincu que le seul moyen de sauver la religion dans la République de S. Domingo c'est de refuser inflexiblement que le chef de cette Eglise soit un Prêtre créole; parce qu'à l'exception de deux vieillards, le P. Juan de Jesus de Ayala et le P. Gutiérrez, l'un et l'autre au terme de leur carrière, il n'y en a pas un seul éligible. Le P. Pinelli est italien et le seul prêtre vertueux, intelligent et d'âge propre à exercer la charge de V.G. parmi tous les prêtres du diocèse et cependant une des premières raisons mises en avant par le gouvernement pour s'opposer à l'élection que j'avais fait de ce brave prêtre fut qu'il était né hors de l'île! Dans la supposition que Báez ou tout autre mit à exécution la mesure de laisser l'archidiocèse sans juridiction plutôt que de reconnaître la juridiction d'un étranger nommé par le S.S. ou d'accord avec le S.S. il faudrait, j'ose le dire en soumettant mon jugement à l'appréciation du S.S. braver cette menace, p.c.q. le peuple saurait alors à quoi s'en tenir et ne tarderait pas à se prononcer contre un tel ordre de gouvernement de manière à le faire tomber, s'il ne se hâtait de se rétracter et de se soumettre au S.S. C'est cette voix du peuple qui a, selon Báez, fait tomber son prédécesseur Cabral. En voulant au contraire exiler le malheur d'un schisme par une condescendance dangereuse en faveur d'un prêtre créole qu'on nommerait prélat, on n'arriverait guère qu'au triste résultat d'éteindre plus lentement mais plus complètement le flambeau de la foi déjà trop languissant dans ce pays si digne d'être secouru.

Dans le no. du *Boletín* du 30 nov. V.E. verra, si Elle ne l'a déjà observé, une annonce portant que le gouvernement a nommé une commission pour examiner le projet d'une convention proposée par J.P. O'Sullivan, envoyé extraordinaire des Etats-Unis, pour l'établissement d'un service à vapeurs entre les ports des Etats-Unis et ceux de la République de S. Domingo et aussi d'Haïti et ne tardera pas à être mis en exécution. J'ai eu tout le loisir de m'entretenir de cette affaire avec Mr. O'Sullivan qui est un excellent catholique pratiquant et juge à New York, homme très instruit et versé dans la diplomatie. A mon avis ce service de vapeurs ne sera que le commencement d'une ère nouvelle pour S. Domingo et je nourris depuis plus de deux ans l'espoir qu'il partage avec moi que l'époque n'est pas éloignée qui fera de S. Domingo un nouvel appendice des Etats-Unis. Le même O'Sullivan fut député auprès du malheureux Maximilien au Mexique pour lui faire adopter le même projet d'un service à vapeurs entre les Etats-Unis et le Mexique et si ce projet avait pu être mis en exécution avant qu'il fut trop tard, il pense, et il l'a très bien démontré dans un mémoire que j'ai lu, que le Mexique et son Empereur eussent été sauvés.

Il me resterait encore beaucoup de choses à communiquer à V.E. mais je ne pourrais guère le faire que de vive voix, surtout qu'il me faudrait produire beaucoup de documents maintenant en ma possession et qu'il serait trop long de faire copier. En résumé, je dirai que ce qui reste maintenant de plus urgent à faire pour assurer tout à fait l'organisation du clergé de S. Domingo c'est de la part du S.S. d'adresser au Président de la République une lettre posant les conditions essentielles pour assurer la liberté requise du Chef futur de cette Eglise, soit dans la publication de ses lettres pastorales, soit dans la réception des lettres du S.S., dans l'élection de son V.G., le placement ou le déplacement des curés etc. A moins que le Président et son gouvernement ne souscrivent bien explicitement à ces conditions, l'envoi d'un Evêque ou Archevêque à S. Domingo ne serait que l'avortement d'un projet d'organisation. Il est vrai que j'ai publié ma pastorale sans demander congé au gouvernement et que j'ai fait de même l'élection de mon V.G. mais ce sont des coups d'état qu'on ne me permettait plus ou qui m'exposeraient à des luttes incompatibles avec les affaires d'une telle église. La Divine Providence a fait des miracles pour seconder mes efforts pendant cette visite de deux mois et j'aime à y voir un gage des plus consolants pour l'avenir, et cependant, l'avouerais-je? Je ne puis pas envisager la chance de mon retour à S. Domingo comme Chef de cette Eglise, que comme l'occasion d'un martyre

plus ou moins prolongé et d'un martyr que je redoute plus que celui de S. André. Je dirai donc en union avec Notre Divin Sauveur: *Pater, si possibile est, transeat a me calix iste, verumtamen non sicut ego volo sed sicut tu* ».

C'est dans ces sentiments qu'implorant la Bénédiction du Très-Saint Père, j'ai l'honneur de me dire avec le plus profond respect de Votre Eminence, Prince Eminentissime,

S. Thomas 21 nov. 1868.

Le très humble serv. en J.C.,

L. de Buggenoms C.S.S.R., V.A.

7. Gautier to Charbonneau, 3rd March 1869, de Buggenoms papers.

Reverendísimo Padre,

En contestación a la carta que V.R. se sirvió dirijirme en fecha 17 del pasado, tengo por conveniente confirmar lo que verbalmente participé a V.R. el 16 del mismo mes, y es que el Gobierno no está dispuesto a permitirle el paso a la ciudad de Santiago. Razones poderosas le aconsejan esta línea de conducta, y aun cuando no hubiera otras, las ocurrencias habidas allí últimamente a causa de la conducta observada por P. Pinelli, que ha dejado en sus habitantes un desagradable recuerdo, y ha resucitado otros, bastantes enojosos, harían desde luego inconveniente su ida a aquella ciudad.

Por otra parte, el Gobierno no puede aceptar que el Reverendísimo Padre Buggenoms, cuya falta de tino en la elección del P. Pinelli ha demostrado sus escasos conocimientos sobre la índole y necesidades de este país, esté desde Sn. Thomas dictando disposiciones sin saber o sin tener cuenta hasta dónde pueden ellas traer dificultades, ni hasta dónde llegarían sus consecuencias.

No puedo dejar de pasar en silencio la impresión harto desagradable que ha causado en el ánimo del Gobierno la cláusula conminatoria que se halla en el oficio de nominación de V.R. de 15 Enero ppdo., cláusula que en nuestros tiempos está casi en desuso, y juzgamos que esa amenaza de entredichar el Templo de Santiago es contraria a la piedad y moderación de la Iglesia.

El Gobierno de la República sabe bastante que la Iglesia de J.C. no transije ni puede transijir en materia de dogma; pero tambien que, con respecto a ciertas prácticas, no puede dejar de ser conciliante con la marcha de los tiempos y con las costumbres de los pueblos, so pena de exponerse, como en el caso actual, a ver turbada la paz social desvirtuando una de sus más grandes y sublimes misiones.

Ninguna prevención tiene el Gobierno contra V.R., por el contrario, vería con agrado que se utilizasen sus servicios en el país de un otro modo, lo que le convencerá que, en la resolución de que es objeto esta respuesta, no hay de nuestra parte otro móvil que el evitar contrariar el espíritu de nuestras poblaciones, de modo que pudiera ser perjudicial a la tranquilidad pública.

Aprovecho esta ocasión para manifestar a V.R. los sentimientos de alta consideración con que le distingo y con los cuales me suscribo de V.R.

M.A.S.S.

M. M. Gautier

8. De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 14th March 1869, de Buggenoms papers.

Prince Eminentissime,

Les affaires de la République de S. Domingo paraissent décidément en voie de subir un changement qui permettra de mettre en vigueur les mesures que le S. Sièze

a projetées pour l'organisation de cette Eglise. Après s'être assuré de la manière la plus explicite de l'assentiment des Députés des Etats ainsi que des membres les plus influents du Congrès de Washington, une Commission s'est organisée ayant à la tête le Général Banks dans le but de faire accepter au Président actuel de S. Domingo un projet d'annexion de cette République aux Etats-Unis. Le Colonel Fabens qui a été choisi pour aller négotier ce projet se trouve maintenant (pour cela) à S. Domingo et c'est lui-même qui à son passage par St. Thomas a cru devoir m'en informer et me demander au besoin une coopération, vu que cette annexion devra avoir lieu à l'aide d'un suffrage universel et que rien ne serait plus efficace pour garantir le succès de ce suffrage que l'assurance qu'on donnerait à la masse de la population qui est toute catholique de la haute approbation du S. Siège. Le Colonel Fabens a résidé assez longtemps à S. Domingo et n'ignore pas combien le clergé indigène s'est toujours montré jaloux de sa nationalité et intéressé à maintenir ce monopole qui a été l'unique motif de mon banissement en Septembre 1866).

Il est superflu de démontrer les avantages qui résulteraient de cette annexion pour les habitants de S. Domingo sous le rapport matériel et quant au spirituel je ne sais pas qu'il y ait moyen d'entrevoir un remède plus efficace aux difficultés qui ont empêché, jusqu'à présent, l'organisation de l'archidiocèse. Quoique le Président Báez soit considéré comme le plus habile des prétendants qui lui disputent le gouvernement de la République, il n'est nullement populaire, car il ne croit pas pouvoir se soutenir sans avoir recours à des voies de violence qui ne peuvent pas durer. Outre qu'il a incarcéré et chargé de fers un grand nombre de citoyens qui ont été hostiles à son gouvernement, il a exilé 120 individus, chefs ou membres de familles respectables pour la plupart innocents, mais qui lui ont inspiré de soupçons. Je connais moi-même plusieurs commerçants ainsi exilés qui végètent à St. Thomas et dans les Iles voisines condamnés parce qu'ils se trouvèrent être parents ou amis de certains hommes politiques. Il suffit même d'être dénoncé par quelqu'intrigant intéressé, auprès du gouvernement pour que sans forme de procès on soit immédiatement expulsé du territoire. C'est ainsi que trois des meilleurs prêtres de l'archidiocèse ont été arrachés aux paroisses qu'ils administraient fidèlement et à leur place on a substitué leur délateurs. Ces trois prêtres sont les Pères Nestor Figari, curé d'Higüey, B. Pinelli, curé de Santiago, et A. Gutiérrez, curé de Seybo. Les deux premiers sont italiens et le troisième espagnol, mais exerçant les fonctions dans l'archidiocèse depuis 30 ans sans avoir jamais mérité aucun blâme. Son exil est tout récent et a eu lieu simplement parce que quelques habitants de la paroisse ont tenté une révolte contre Báez. On l'a forcé de s'embarquer sans avoir subi aucun examen judiciaire sur un bateau faisant voile pour Liverpool et dans lequel il n'y avait pour lui de place que sur le pont. Heureusement le capitaine a eu compassion de ce vénérable vieillard et l'a débarqué à St. Thomas.

D'après ce que m'a dit ce prêtre le V.G. Pina que j'ai été obligé de nommer *ad interim* avant mon départ de S. Domingo, ne s'occupe nullement du sort du clergé qui lui est confié et se borne à souscrire à tous les actes du gouvernement et c'est pour quoi le gouvernement a voulu que je lui subdélégasse mes pouvoirs.

L'abbé Charbonneau que j'ai envoyé à S. Domingo le 17 janvier, afin d'y remplacer comme curé le P. B. Pinelli à Santiago de los Caballeros, m'a écrit en date 23 février qu'il ne lui avait pas encore été permis de se rendre à son poste, car bien que le gouvernement ne s'y soit pas opposé directement, on a exigé qu'il attendît le retour du P. Pina qui se trouva absent de la capitale et toujours pour veiller à des intérêts purement personnels ou servir la politique tortueuse du gouvernement.

Le prêtre Claudius Sebastiani, ex-curé de Léogane (Haïti) qui a été autorisé par le S. Siège à s'adresser à moi afin d'être jusqu'à nouvel ordre employé dans le diocèse de S. Domingo, est arrivé à St. Thomas venant de la Jamaïque, dépourvu de tout moyen de subsistence et me demandant asile. Comme il ne sait pas un mot d'espagnol je n'ai pu penser à l'envoyer à S. Domingo, mais après l'avoir hébergé de mon mieux pendant quelques jours je l'ai envoyé dans l'île voisine de S. Cruz

auprès du R.P. N. Figari (l'autre italien exilé de S. Domingo) qui y remplace ad intérim le curé qui se trouve absent depuis huit mois. Le P. C. Sebastiani m'a prié d'informer V.E. de son sort, mais comme il m'a dit d'avoir récemment envoyé au S. Siège un rapport des vicissitudes de sa mission à Haïti, c'est pourquoi je n'en dirai rien sinon que tout ce que j'ai appris de ce bon prêtre et d'autres exilés d'Haïti ne prouve que trop de besoin qu'à ce pays d'un remède semblable à celui qui seul peut rétablir l'ordre et partant la discipline à S. Domingo; et d'après les renseignements que m'a fournis le Colonel Fabens, l'annexion d'Haïti aux États-Unis est aussi à l'ordre du jour à Washington. Un service de bateaux est déjà en activité de New York à Port-au-Prince et de New York à S. Domingo dans le but d'accélérer cette double annexion. Le Général Grant, Président des États-Unis depuis le 4 courant a dit entr'autres choses, selon les termes d'un document officiel qui m'a été communiqué, qu'il considère cette annexion comme un projet mûr dont la réalisation est résolue et ne sera plus guère différée, c'est pour mieux la préparer que le gouvernement des États-Unis a secouru sous-main Sahnave contre la révolution dont les principaux chefs sont déjà ou morts ou réduits abais. (Et il en est de même de la conduite des États-Unis envers le Président Baez).

J'avouerai qu'il me serait très consolant de recevoir quelque nouvelle de S. Siège, les deux rapports que j'ai faits à V.E. de ma visite à S. Domingo étant restés sans réponse ainsi que la lettre annonçant l'envoi de l'abbé Charbonneau que j'ai substitué aux charges devenues vancantes par le bannissement du J. B. Pinelli. Je désirerais surtout savoir si la conduite que j'ai tenue dans les divers incidents qui ont eu lieu durant les dix derniers mois a été conforme aux intentions du T. S. Père. Le *status quo* de ma position de Vic. Ap. de S. Domingo et supérieur de la mission de St. Thomas m'assujettit à un conflit de besogne et de soucis qui me déconcertent d'autant plus que je me trouve comme livré à moi-même et je sens le besoin d'être rassuré, craignant de porter des faux coups.

Dernièrement j'ai dû encourir le mécontentement de Mgr. l'Evêque de Roseau en ne me rendant pas sur son invitation à l'assemblée synodale que S.G. a tenue à Roseau dans le courant de janvier.

Je ne cesse du reste d'implorer la miséricorde de Dieu avec d'autant de confiance que la mesure des maux qui affligent son Eglise est telle qu'elle semble faire pressentir le temps d'un prochain délivrance.

C'est dans ces sentiments et animé du plus sincère dévouement envers le S. Siège, que j'ai l'honneur de me dire avec le plus profond respect de V.E., Prince Eminentissime,

St. Thomas, 14 mars 1869.  
Le très humble Serviteur,

L. de Buggenoms C.S.S.R., V.A.

9. De Buggenoms to Antonelli, 23 August 1869, de Buggenoms papers.

Prince Eminentissime,

L'objet de cette lettre est de prier V.E. d'avoir la bonté de me faire savoir 1° s'il m'est permis de m'absenter de St. Thomas pour aller en France et en Belgique où ma présence est nécessaire pour y négocier certaines affaires qui languissent depuis plus de six mois au détriment des intérêts de la mission de St. Thomas, dont je continue d'être chargé; 2° si V.E. désire qu'à cette occasion je me rende à Rome.

Ayant fait cette double demande au Rme. Père Général auquel j'expliquai plus catégoriquement la gravité des motifs qui me portent à ne plus différer ce voyage, Sa Paternité m'a répondu en date du 21 juillet qu'il n'osait pas m'y autoriser *parce que, comme Vicaire Apostolique de S. Domingo je dépends du S. Siège*, duquel je

dois recevoir une semblable autorisation. Sa Paternité m'avertit en même temps que je recevrai bientôt une lettre du S. Siège au sujet des affaires de S. Domingo; mais quelle que soit la teneur de cette lettre non encore arrivée, ma présence à St. Thomas ne sera guère nécessaire tant que le gouvernement actuel de S. Domingo sera debout, et quand même sa chute serait plus prochaine qu'elle ne me paraît l'être maintenant, j'ai la conviction que si je pouvais communiquer personnellement au S. Siège toute ma pensée au sujet des affaires de S. Domingo, cela achèverait d'éclaircir ce qui reste encore de douteux sur la question de l'organisation du clergé de cette Eglise.

Dans l'espoir que V.E. daignera m'accorder la faveur d'un mot de réponse qu'il me tarde de recevoir, j'ai l'honneur de me dire avec le plus profond respect, Prince Eminentissime,

St. Thomas 23 août 1869.  
De V.E. le très humble serviteur,

L. de Buggenoms C.S.S.R., V.A.