

SUMMARY

Let each community respond generously to this requirement of formation for its own good as well as that of the community.

In the coming six years let priority be given to the theme of "salesians" and to the study of the Constitutions.

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Provincial initiatives, promoted at least every three years and coordinated by the provincial conference or by the Regional Councilor with the provincials concerned.

Provincial conferences or linguistic groups must see to the provision of an adequate and up-to-date salesian bibliography in the vernacular. In addition it is hoped that study groups will be formed at regional level, which will be able to provide in due course salesian publications and other services.

OPERA PAS AND SALESIAN PONTIFICAL UNIVERSITY (UPS)

PRELIMINARIES

1. In accordance with the mandate of the SGC (ASGC, 705, i) the Superior Council presented the GC21 members with a summary of the evaluation of the performance of the PAS-UPS for the years 1972-1977, and stressed the feasibility for the Chapter to "propose practical guidelines for the attainment of the specific goal of this University, in view of which the Congregation supports and develops it." The GC21 has taken up this task in a responsible manner, within the framework of the verification of the life of the Congregation and its plans of action for the forthcoming years. Its intervention was also an expression of fraternal solidarity with the confreres at that highest salesian academic center who have been called to carry out the mission of the Society in a particularly meaningful manner.¹

Keeping in mind that at the SGC the term PAS comprised both the present Opera PAS and the UPS, the GC21 turned its attention to the entire religious and academic organization taken together. It considered it its duty however to show a preferential concern for the UPS in view of "an overall positive appraisal of the restructuring of the Opera PAS and of the progress made in the implementation of the AGC guidelines," such as were reported in the Superior Council Report (concl. b), while "it remains to carry out the delicate task of a unified restructuring in the academic field."²

¹ Const 2.

² For an exact understanding of this document it should be kept in mind that what was once called PAS today comprises:

- a. The Salesian Pontifical University (UPS), i.e. the academic center of studies made up of 5 Faculties (Theology, Canon Law, Philosophy, Educational Science, Classical and Christian Literature).
- b. The Delegation of the Opera PAS, or more simply Opera PAS, i.e. a selected group of confreres organized in communities in the Roman section of the Piazza dell'Ateneo Salesiano 1, for the specific purpose of carrying on the mission of our

344 2. In fulfilling its task of evaluation and orientation, the GC21 members had an ample documentation at their disposal. In particular they had available:

- 2.1 the *practical directives* of the SGC referring to the PAS (702-5);
- 2.2 the letter of the Rector Major, Grand Chancellor, to the Rector of the UPS, dated Jan. 10, 1977;
- 2.3 the *Report of the Superior Council on restructuring the PAS, 1972-77* (GC21 1/6.7 Rome, Dec. 1, 1977); in particular:
 - a. the conclusions of the postcapitular commission,
 - b. the subsequent deliberations of the Superior Council and some changes already made,
 - c. the data relative to the canonical visitation of Fr. Egidio Viganò and to the first capitular assembly of the Gesù Maestro Community,
 - d. the information on the setting up of the special Delegation of the Opera PAS and its present structure,
 - e. the results and deliberations of the 1976-77 Chapter of the Delegation,
 - f. all the studies (still incomplete) on the academic restructuring of the UPS;
- 2.4 the precapitular schemes, nn 466-467;
- 2.5 a summary made by a study group consisting of capitulars (GC21 UPS group).

Congregation through the Pontifical Salesian University. It is governed by a Superior, delegated by the Rector Major, with specific powers, analogous to those of a provincial. A special "Delegation Statute" regulates the details of community life and work so that there is a harmonious relationship with the academic statutes.

c. Within the Delegation are found:

— *The communities of the personnel permanently attached to the UPS*: two in number, i.e. the "Gesù Maestro" Community and the "St. Dominic Savio" Community.

— *Residential communities for salesian students at the UPS*: today two in number, i.e. the "St. John Bosco" Community, and the "Blessed Michael Rua" Community. These two are communities for confreres not in the period of initial formation.

d. The young confreres who are students of the first cycle of philosophy and theology come to the University from formation communities which are independent of the Opera PAS Delegation.

3. The process of study and evaluation and the related proposals helped to achieve the following objectives: 345

3.1 to make an overall *check* of the PAS-UPS activity during the last 5-year period (1972-1977);

3.2 to focus, to improve and to bring up to date the practical directives of the SGC in view of future tasks.

1. LINES OF VERIFICATION

The GC21 points out that the SGC struck a responsive chord also in the PAS-UPS, with the realization of good results in many areas, despite the fact that a number of problems still remain open; the latter seem capable of solution in the near future.

Before pointing out some positive or problematic aspects, the GC21, taking into account the history of the PAS-UPS and its institutional goals as a whole, takes certain fundamental data for granted:

1.1 Main undisputed facts

1.1.1 The legitimate function of the UPS within the framework of the salesian reality, at the service of the Congregation and as a qualified expression of its mission in the Church, with its specific cultural and formational potential. 346

1.1.2 The existence of communities of confreres, who are expressly charged with the realization of the salesian mission within the UPS.

1.1.3 The structure of the UPS with its 5 Faculties and respective activities within the Church, which are basic to its title of Salesian Pontifical University, in harmony with the meaning given to it in the *Motu Proprio Magisterium Vitae* of Pope Paul VI (May 24, 1973) and with the declaration of the SGC.³ 347

1.1.4 The immediate consequences flowing from these facts, as already stated in several documents, and fundamentally in the ASGC, are:

a. commitment to service to the Church and in the Church, in fidelity to tradition and the Magisterium,⁴

³ ASGC 702.

⁴ ASGC 702 B.

- b. specific high-priority institutional service to the Salesian Congregation and to its mission,⁵
- c. openness also to external students, ecclesiastical and lay,⁶
- d. serious didactic and scientific university level, with relative academic autonomy, and the special traits of a scientific institution of the highest level, as set down in the Statutes,⁷
- e. a role of particular significance and responsibility, as regards salesian characteristics, of the Faculty of Educational Science, both with respect to its eminently pedagogical and catechetical contents and its methodology (didactic and formational aspects). The latter appear also from the letter of the Rector Major of Jan. 10, 1977 n. 21, and from the *Motu Proprio* which conferred the title of University on the Athenaeum and determined its special insertion in the life of the Church: "The Pontifical Salesian Athenaeum exists and works effectively throughout the world to promote at university level the formation of those who in turn must form others, according to the spirit of the Founder, which is expressed in the so-called 'preventive system' and which with divine inspiration draws its genuine nature and strength from the gospel."

1.2 Positive aspects

- 348 1.2.1 The setting up of the Opera PAS as a Delegation (June, 1975) after a laborious and lengthy process which began at the time of the suppression of the Province (October 1972), with communities of salesians working in a stable manner, directly or indirectly, for the UPS.
- 1.2.2 Insertion in the Delegation and reorganization of appropriate residential communities for salesian students who have completed the period of initial formation.
- 349 1.2.3 A deeper consciousness of the ecclesial and salesian university character of the UPS and recognition of its activities in accordance with the guidelines of the SGC and the new Statutes. In particular:
- a. revision and 'ad experimentum' approval of the new Statutes (Sept. 4, 1973) drawn up in harmony with the 'Normae Quaedam' and the new status of the PAS as a university;

⁵ ASGC 702 C.

⁶ ASGC 702 A.

⁷ ASUPS 1-3 & 6; ASGC 702 A.

- b.* elaboration by the Faculties of their objectives and programs in accordance with the new curriculum division into cycles; and activation of the various collegial assemblies decreed by the Statutes;
- c.* special salesian vitality and effectiveness of the sectors of spirituality and catechetics, as stated in the Rector Major's report;⁸
- d.* a perceptible increase in the student enrollment, especially salesians, in the second cycle of the Faculty of Theology, while the attendance of both ecclesiastical and lay students in the Faculty of Educational Sciences and of salesians in the catechetics sector remains satisfactory (though it is somewhat less satisfactory in the area of pedagogical methodology and school pedagogy);
- e.* a first restructuring of the various Institutes and Centers, reorganization of the Don Bosco Study Center and setting up of the Salesian Missions History Center (Centro Studi di Storia Missioni Salesiane) (both centers have special regulations to guarantee their special relationship with the Superior Council);
- f.* improvement of economic and financial administration with regular yearly budgets and reports, rigorously checked by the Administrative Council, the UPS Academic Council and the General Administration Council of the 'Opera PAS';
- g.* consolidation and growth of the salesian centers of theological studies (Messina, Verona, Cremisan-Bethlehem, Benediktbeuern, Barcelona, Salamanca, San Paolo-Brazil, Guatemala) affiliated to the Faculty of Theology (to which is annexed as one of its sections the theological study-center of Crocetta-Turin), and consequent upon directives from the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education of centers affiliated to the Faculty of Philosophy (Benediktbeuern, Guatemala, Los Teques - Venezuela);
- h.* increased publishing activity (first through the PAS-Verlag in Zurich and now through the PAS-Editrice in Rome), with marked emphasis on theological, philosophical, religious, pedagogical and salesian matters;
- i.* direct involvement or participation of the Faculties and professorial staff in meetings, study days and weeks and courses in on-going formation.

1.2.4 Discussion and in-depth study of problems related to a better functioning of the academic structures set up in the wake of the new

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⁸ RRM 168.

Statutes. Such work was carried out by the UPS in constant dialog with the members of the Superior Council and has already produced feasible solutions (which are waiting for the directives that will be contained in the forthcoming Constitution of the Church on ecclesiastical studies, for their implementation).

Among the positive results of such collaboration may be noted:

- a. a declared readiness for inter-faculty collaboration;
- b. the commonly acknowledged usefulness of a departmental didactic organization aiming at making effective the collegial formative responsibility of the Faculties and the elimination of needless duplication in teaching and of courses of lesser importance as regards their contents;
- c. the advanced state of elaboration of several problems, already nearing the stage of actual solution as indicated in the practical directives.

1.3 Problematic aspects

- 351** There remain still some knotty issues which need practical consideration not only by the GC21 but by all who are responsible for the specific formational effectiveness of the UPS.

1.3.1 Activation of objectives and areas of specialization without adequate mutual coordination and with insufficiently motivated divisions (e.g. the two specializations in catechetics; the different options on youth pastoral work, catechetics, pedagogical methodology).

1.3.2 A not entirely satisfactory pedagogical characterization of the program of the psychology of education (courses, practical work, dissertations for the licentiate and doctorate); and an uncertain educational and pastoral goal in the teaching and research in the field of human sciences (biology, psychology, sociology).

1.3.3 Proliferation of Institutes and Centers, and inadequate insertion of some of them in the academic structure (UPS and its Faculties).

1.3.4 Lack of unity of formation, caused by insufficient correlation between material, courses and final objectives; the rigid concept of Faculty autonomy, not yet overcome by a growing exchange of courses and professors; this inevitably causes noticeable differences in mental attitudes among the respective students.

1.3.5 Difficulties in finding, preparing and qualifying salesian teaching and technical personnel, with negative consequences as regards reasonable mobility and the feasibility of collaboration and exchanges with other salesian study centers. **352**

1.3.6 Scarce enrollment of salesian students in some Faculties and non-utilization of some typical pedagogical courses, such as pedagogical methodology and school pedagogy.

1.3.7 Serious economic difficulties, resolved in the past only by sacrifices borne by all those connected with the PAS-UPS and by the Economer General's Department.

2. PRACTICAL DIRECTIVES

The GC21 considers it opportune to make its contribution to overcoming difficulties and enhancing present efforts to increase the vitality of the UPS and its effective credibility by formulating some *practical directives*. **353**

In this collaboration with the UPS, the GC21 agrees with the objectives laid down at the inception of the highest center of studies of the Congregation, and understands its history. These objectives and history were already authoritatively set out by the Rector Major and Grand Chancellor, Fr. Aloysius Ricceri in his letter to the Rector of the UPS of Jan. 10, 1977.

The following precise practical guidelines are designed to enable the rich potential of the UPS to reach still higher levels for the benefit of the Salesian Congregation and for the spreading of its specific mission in the Church.

2.1 Ecclesial and salesian clarity of goals

For a better practical understanding of the place held by the UPS in the Congregation and the Church, and keeping in mind that some perplexities and uncertainties have arisen even in recent years within and without the UPS, the GC21 intends to reaffirm the clearly ecclesial and salesian character which it must constantly exhibit. **354**

On this vital point the GC21 calls for a constant and coherent implementation of the General Statutes (in particular art. 2) and those of each Faculty.

This implies among other things:

2.1.1 working constantly and faithfully in the light of the Church's Magisterium and in harmony with the salesian Constitutions, with due respect to the differences demanded by the methodological autonomy of the various sciences;

2.1.2 fostering a particular sensitivity for christian and salesian community life, in which and for which the UPS exists and functions, and which ought to guide its choice of areas of work;

2.1.3 promoting an open-ended dialog between human and religious-theological sciences, already commonly found in all Catholic universities, and particularly necessary in ecclesiastical universities. This dialog will be strengthened by the specially deep salesian understanding of faith lived in the world of youth and the working classes, as Pope Pius XI remarked: "Spread abroad the gospel message by means of a living and real contribution through the channels of catechesis, pedagogy, psychology, and sociology" integrated with "the direct and personal apostolate in the world of the young, with particular attention and dedication to the poor, the needy, and the socially deprived."⁹

Such salesian and ecclesial clarity, which is demanded of every Faculty, is even more necessary for that of Educational Science, for it marks out our University in a special manner in the Church;¹⁰ and it was set up, in accordance with the express wish of Fr. Peter Ricaldone, "for the purpose of preparing... salesian confreres in an ever better way for their high mission of educators according to the 'preventive system' bequeathed to us by our holy Founder as a "precious heritage" and "for the purpose of enhancing and spreading Catholic pedagogical principles." "It is superfluous to add," said Fr. Ricaldone, indicating the extent of our commitment, "that catechetics will always have absolute pride of place both in the Institute of Pedagogy and in the houses of formation."¹¹

355 2.2 Special attention to the world of youth and the working classes

The salesian service rendered by our University to the Church will therefore fully reflect the content and the style of the mission of the

⁹ Paul VI to members of GC21, Jan. 26, 1978; n. 475.

¹⁰ RCS conclusion.

¹¹ ACS 106, Aug. 25, 1941.

Congregation itself according to our Constitutions and what is concisely stated in art. 2 of the General Statutes:

"To the effort of promoting scientific progress the UPS will add pastoral solicitude in dealing with the problems of youth and their education, having in mind the spirit and teaching of Don Bosco."¹²

In effect, "the pivotal point of the entire work is the organic setting up of a University aimed at a specialized service of our mission to youth and to the working classes throughout the world."¹³

2.3 Suitable programs

It follows that the UPS must program its courses with these goals in view; in other words, it must keep in mind the specific type of service which the Congregation wants to render. 356

This clear and determining criterion should be a constant guide in the choice of activities, in the setting up of courses, in the scientific and personal formation offered. Moreover, to further stress this ideal clarity of programs and services, the GC21 hopes that the UPS Faculties will see to it that courses on significant aspects of salesianity be included among those offered to salesian students.

2.4 The beneficiaries designated in the objectives and programs of the UPS

Those for whom the courses are intended, be they clergy or religious or lay people and whether they are members of the salesian family or not, are all those who accept the specific characteristics of the University i.e. that it is Pontifical and Salesian. But chief among them are salesians in preparation for special services which they will have to render in their own provinces. 357

2.5 Particular responsibility of the salesians

All this naturally puts a special obligation on the UPS, but it involves the entire Congregation as well. 358

2.5.1 On the one hand, the existence of the UPS is justified by its capacity to render an effective service in the first place in and to the

¹² To be integrated with art 1,2 of Statutes of Faculty of Theology; art 1 of Statutes of Faculty of Canon Law; art 1,2 of Statutes of Faculty of Educational Science.

¹³ LGC conclusion; ASGC 703; Sch Precap 198.

Congregation. Hence the need that salesian students be not absent from it, especially in those philosophical, pedagogical, theological and pastoral disciplines which pertain more closely to the salesian vocation and mission. Even though the UPS does not exhaust its purpose merely through its teaching activity, this is nevertheless its most visible *raison-d'être*, capable of directing and stimulating all its other forms of cultural apostolate.

2.5.2 On the other hand, its university structure is not independent; it exists and functions, in the final analysis, by the will of the Congregation which is responsible for running it. It is therefore the concern of the Congregation through its deliberative organs (General Chapter, Rector Major, Superior Council) to exercise an influence on the nature of its programs and services according to the needs of the provinces and also according to the desire to develop through the UPS this or that aspect of the salesian mission in the Church and in the world in harmony with its institutional and constitutional tasks.

359 2.6 Objectives and programs

With regard to the UPS teaching organization, the GC21, while it acknowledges the good results achieved thus far, wishes that:

2.6.1 the type and the number of licentiates, doctorates, and diplomas to be conferred by the Faculties in the immediate future be jointly decided by the University and the Superior Council as soon as possible. On this matter the opinion of provincials would be appreciated;

2.6.2 the internal structural organization be similarly decided, so as to clearly define the duties of professorial staff and others and so make effective planning possible, as regards the qualification of personnel, the economic sector, etc.;

2.6.3 the complete ordinances of each Faculty and of the University as a whole be drawn up and approved according to the norms of the Statutes.

360 2.7 Restructuring in the field of didactic organization

It is likewise the conviction of the GC21 that the UPS will achieve still better results and a better unification of course-content and scientific, ecclesial and salesian inspiration, if it can achieve as soon as possible a more rational organization of programming and teaching.

The following are high-priority requirements:

2.7.1 The principle of interdisciplinary and inter-departmental organization should be made effective also on the structural and statutory level. While the Faculties will remain the academic organisms for programming and administration, a more comprehensive control will guarantee the unity of formation.

2.7.2 The matter to be taught should be accurately selected, so as to be truly suited to the goals to be achieved by each group of students according to their own legitimate requirements. It will thus also be possible to maintain a relative distinction between a professor's field of scientific research which may not completely coincide with his teaching activity, and the matters actually taught, which are addressed to specific students of different cultural and formation levels, who are at varying points in academic cycles and have well-defined objectives.

2.7.3 The various teaching cycles, all equally necessary for the life of the University, should be preserved with their specific character, objectives and formative aspects. In fact the first cycle too has its precise overall function, essential not only for the students' organic cultural development, but also for the unity of the intellectual formation itself.

2.7.4 The enrollment in the first cycle of confreres who on account of their religious and intellectual qualities seem to be particularly suited for specific tasks in the Congregation should be encouraged. To them the UPS will be able to offer a solid foundation in their formation and education in view of their eventual specialization, while at the same time suitable formative communities will contribute to their overall maturation.¹⁴

2.8 Non-academic courses

As provided in the Statutes and the Ordinances of the University, alongside the academic curricula, the UPS will offer shorter courses aimed at the qualification or requalification of salesians, particularly those involved in the active life.

Courses of special interest for the Congregation would be:

- Annual or biennial courses in spirituality and pedagogy.
- Annual updating courses in ecclesiastical, pastoral and educational sciences.

¹⁴ RCS 12 d.

- Concentrated courses for special groups: Rectors, Masters of Novices, confreres directly in charge of salesian formation, parish priests, provincial secretaries, animators, catechists, teachers, etc...
- Annual or summer courses on salesianity, possibly linked with language courses in Italian.
- Correspondence courses (also with academic credit) either at the UPS or in various regions of the Congregation could be offered in the future.

2.9 Exchanges

- 362** Moreover, in accordance with the decisions of the SGC nn 703-704, the UPS with its qualified personnel, recently improved quantitatively and qualitatively, will intensify its collaboration with the provinces and study centers in the areas of research and formation, affiliations, exchange of professors, animation work, assessment of books and scientific institutions, liaison with past pupils and friends. The "Opera PAS" and the UPS will be actively available for periodic meetings with the regional superiors and provincials for the exchange of information and the evaluation of issues of common interest.

2.10 Teaching staff

- 363** Aware of their special responsibility in the field of formation and this not only on cultural and scientific levels, the teachers will pay great attention to the university dimension of their salesian vocation and to their solidarity with the life of the Congregation and of the Church. In view of this they will be able to increase their scientific competence and their respective specialization, in a spirit of initiative and sincere faithfulness to their tasks in the University.
- 364** The GC21 emphasizes some aspects of this issue which seem more pressing:
- a. For the nomination of an associate professor the following conditions specifying the dispositions of art. 22,2 of the Statutes should be included in the Ordinances:
 - a period of experience in some specifically salesian activity,
 - the publication of some scientific work, carried out under the guidance of a professor.

b. The direct responsibility of the Congregation for the entire life of the UPS requires that it be established in the Statutes (or in the Ordinances) that the College of Professors be made up of salesians only. Others may collaborate as visiting professors.¹⁵

c. The religious character of the salesian professor should be made more explicit in the Statutes (or in the Ordinances) so as to make it clear that he is still at the disposal of his Superiors for other tasks in the Congregation.

d. The salesian professors at the UPS will not take up assignments of a prolonged and permanent character in other civil or ecclesiastical universities, or in other non-salesian organizations, without the previous and explicit consent of the Grand Chancellor. The same authorization is required before a UPS professor enters his name in a competition for a university chair or the like. This rule will be inserted in the Statutes (or in the Ordinances).

e. The competent authorities will take prompt action towards a progressive and thorough internationalization of the teaching staff and other personnel assigned to the UPS - Opera PAS.

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2.11 Financial aspect

While expressing sincere appreciation for the joint efforts of the Economer General's Department and the confreres working in the Opera PAS, the GC21 hopes that new ways and means of financing will be studied to help meet recurring difficulties with relative security, and to involve more deeply the Delegation of the Opera PAS and the Congregation in general. In particular, the GC21 recommends that in cooperation with the entire salesian family and other benefactors, scholarship funds be set up for students, especially salesians, who come from provinces in economic difficulties.

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2.12 Salesian communities and formation communities

Due to their different composition and location the UPS staff and students communities cannot all be organized in the same manner. The GC21 wishes however to make the following suggestions:

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a. The Staff communities should be so organized as not only to

¹⁵ SGUPS 20, 4.

provide the essentials of the salesian community for all, as required by the *Constitutions* and the *Regulations*, but also to promote effectively that "clearly salesian and ecclesial character" and that synthesis of life and learning, which make it possible for all who work at the PAS-UPS to live their specific scientific and formative mission to the full.

- 368 b. Particularly important for the preparation of well-trained salesian personnel are the communities for salesian students, both those inserted in the Delegation and those separate from it.¹⁶

Organized as true formation communities, they will promote, with safe and modern criteria, the education, i.e., the total growth of the person in all directions. Study, aided by the teaching at the UPS—well qualified as it is from a scientific, ecclesiastical and salesian standpoint—and by other integrative activities, is an element of decisive importance.

The religious superiors of these communities are responsible, together with the UPS teaching staff, for the complete formation of the students with regard not only to their academic progress but also to the maturation of their whole human, ecclesial, and salesian personality, and for their ecclesiastical formation in the case of candidates for sacred orders.

These superiors moreover can and must send to the competent authorities and through the proper channels, their observations, positive or negative, on the influence that the teaching at the UPS as a whole or in some particular respect exercises on the formation of the students; and the authorities at the UPS can express similar judgements on the maturity, adequacy and diligence of the subjects sent there for study and formation.

- 369 c. In the next few years the Superior Council, through the competent provincials, will see to it that the formation communities of salesian students existing outside the Opera PAS be well organized, and will promote their internationalization both with regard to students and those in charge of formation.

2.13 Modifications of the Statutes

- 370 Let the Superior Council study, in collaboration with the competent organs of the Opera PAS and the UPS, those modifications of the

¹⁶ RCS, 1c, 11c, 12d.

Statutes which in harmony with the guidelines of the Church concerning ecclesiastical Universities, may be deemed opportune and necessary to increase the scientific, ecclesial and salesian effectiveness of the work of the UPS.

a. Of particular urgency seem to be those modifications which concern some of the issues indicated in this document, and precisely the practical directives nn. 6a,b,c; 7a; 10b,c,d.

b. Moreover, in order to promote a more efficacious operational communication between the UPS and the Opera PAS, the ways in which the Delegate of the Rector Major could be meaningfully inserted into the structures of the UPS should be studied.

c. Lastly, for a more harmonious functioning of the UPS, an attentive revision and definition of the different areas of responsibility and competence, and of the forms of participation by the students in the collegial organs of government and management should be made.

OF THE
CONSTITUTIONS
AND REGULATIONS