AUTOCRACY, DESPOTISM AND DEMOCRACY
An Historical Approach to the Relationship between Orthodoxy and Politics

PART 5: THE AGE OF THE ANTICHRIST (to 1945)

Vladimir Moss

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You deserve to die, because you have not guarded your master, the Lord’s Anointed.  
I Samuel 26.16.

An evil will shortly take Russia, and wherever this evil goes, rivers of blood will flow.  
It is not the Russian soul, but an imposition on the Russian soul. It is not an ideology, nor a philosophy, but a spirit from hell.  
Elder Aristocles of Moscow and Mount Athos (1911).

From the day of [the Tsar’s] abdication, everything began to collapse. It could not have been otherwise. The one who united everything, who stood guard for the truth, was overthrown…  
St. John Maximovich.

Revolution is a most intense, furious, desperate class struggle and civil war.  
Lenin.

For liberation, something more is necessary than an economic policy, something more than industry. If a people is to become free, it needs pride and will-power, defiance, hate, hate and once again hate.  
Hitler.

The nation, this collective organism, is just as inclined to deify itself as the individual man. The madness of pride grows in this case in the same progression, as every passion becomes inflamed in society, being refracted in thousands and millions of souls.  
Metropolitan Anastasius (Gribanovsky) of New York.

State? What is that? Well then, open your ears to me, for now I shall speak to you about the death of peoples. State is the name of the coldest of all cold monsters. Coldly it tells lies too, and this lie crawls out of its mouth: “I, the state, am the people.” This is a lie!  
Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra (1883).

Totalitarianism probably demands a disbelief in the very existence of objective truth.  
George Orwell.

Democracy has nothing to do with freedom. Democracy is a soft variant of communism, and rarely in the history of ideas has it been taken for anything else.  
Hans Herman Hoppe, Reflections on State and War.

The idea of progress, the universal religion of the masses in the 20th century, develops in a very similar way to bipolar disorder, historically known as manic-depression. And just as manic symptoms differ in different people, so societies can experience different kinds of disturbance: reforms, wars, revolutions - social, political and sexual.  
Daniil Kotsyubinsky (2012).
## CONTENTS

### INTRODUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PART 1: THE GREAT WAR AND THE REVOLUTION (1914-22)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE FALL OF EUROPEANISM</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE BALFOUR DECLARATION</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUSSIA IN THE GREAT WAR</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE ABDICATION OF THE TSAR</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUAL POWER</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SPIRIT OF LENINISM</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE CHURCH AND THE REVOLUTION</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE JEWS AND THE REVOLUTION</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE MURDER OF THE TSAR</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE RED TERROR</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERSAILLES: THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FROM SERBIA TO YUGOSLAVIA</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FROM WAR COMMUNISM TO NEP</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELF-DETERMINATION IN THE RUSSIAN BORDERLANDS</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE RUSSIAN CHURCH IN EXILE</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SECOND GREEK REVOLUTION: (1) VENIZELOS</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SECOND GREEK REVOLUTION: (2) METAXAKIS</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PART 2. THE RISE OF THE DICTATORS (1922-1933)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIBERALISM, COMMUNISM AND FASCISM</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALITARIANISM AND RELIGION: (1) FASCIST ITALY</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALITARIANISM AND RELIGION: (2) NAZI GERMANY</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALITARIANISM AND RELIGION: (3) SOVIET RUSSIA</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE RISE OF STALIN</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FROM THE VOLGA FAMINE TO THE “LIVING CHURCH”</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW CALENDAR</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE FALL OF RENOVATIONISM</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE RUSSIAN CHURCH DECENTRALIZED</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE DECLARATION OF METROPOLITAN SERGIUS</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE BIRTH OF THE CATACOMB CHURCH</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE VATICAN AND RUSSIA</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STALIN’S WAR ON RUSSIA</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KING ALEXANDER I OF YUGOSLAVIA</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE OLD CALENDARIST MOVEMENT</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE RUSSIAN DIASPORA</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE RISE OF HITLER</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PART 3. THE SECOND WORLD WAR (1933-1945)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPEASEMENT: FROM ABYSSINIA TO MUNICH</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE GREAT PURGES</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE FRUITS OF SERGIANISM</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A PARABLE OF SOVIET REALITY</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SERBS AND THE CONCORDAT</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROCOR AND ECUMENISM</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSECUTION IN ROMANIA</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE MOLOTOV-RIBBENTROP PACT</td>
<td>404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE BALKANS AND THE FASCISTS</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE NAZIS INVADE RUSSIA</td>
<td>422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE RUSSIAN CHURCH DURING THE WAR</td>
<td>426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE STALIN-SERGIUS PACT</td>
<td>434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE BIG THREE</td>
<td>449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE BALKANS AND THE COMMUNISTS</td>
<td>456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE MOSCOW COUNCIL OF 1945</td>
<td>463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VICTORS’ JUSTICE</td>
<td>478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPILOGUE: THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN HOLOCAUST</td>
<td>491</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of demons, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Revelation 16.13-14.

This book is a continuation of my earlier books in the series entitled Autocracy, Despotism and Democracy: Part 1: The Age of Faith (to 1453), Part 2: The Age of Reason (to 1789), Part 3: The Age of Revolution (to 1861) and Part 4: The Age of Empire (to 1914).

The French revolution gave birth to three evil ideologies, or secular religions: liberalism, or, as I shall call it, humanrightism, communism and nationalism. During the “long” nineteenth century that lasted from 1812 to 1914, these three ideologies were checked and restrained from taking control of the whole of Europe by the mighty Russian Empire. But after Russia had been weakened by the Crimean War and fell during the First World War and the Russian revolution, these three evil spirits spread their pernicious influence throughout almost the whole world.

The first spirit, humanrightism, which was born during the first, liberal phase of the French revolution, was seemingly the most innocent, the least violent and the closest to Christian values – which is why it has deceived such vast numbers of Christians who regard it as the natural political expression of Christian values. The second, communism, which was born in the second, Jacobin (and Babeuvian) phase of the revolution, is the most obviously antichristian – but still captured the minds of very many intellectuals to a greater or lesser degree in the period up to the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, and still has an uncanny ability to re-appear in mature liberal societies and take them over, as we see in the European Union today. The third, nationalism, was born in the last, Napoleonic phase of the revolution (while being anticipated in the first), and is heartily despised by internationalist liberals and communists, and yet has proved again and again to be the scourge of liberal hopes and apparently irradicable even by communist methods of persuasion…

In what Philip Bobbitt in an important work has called “the Long War” (1914-1990)¹, the three spirits fought against each other for supremacy over each other and for spiritual leadership over “the international community” of states. As a result of the First World War, at Versailles in 1919, humanrightism claimed the victory – but prematurely, because two of the most important states, Germany and Russia, rejected the liberal consensus. After the defeat of

German Nazism in 1945, nationalism was universally discredited, and the two internationalist variants of the nation-state, humanrightism and communism, fought it out in the third and final phase of the Long War – the Cold War. Finally, in 1990, Russian communism surrendered, and, according to Bobbitt, the Long War came to an end with the final victory of humanrightism and parliamentary democracy. I believe that this conclusion, too, is premature, because Russia, China, and most of the Muslim world reject this consensus, even while paying lip service to the ideals of humanrightism and democracy.

It is rejected also by the Orthodox Christian nations whose holocaust – much greater than the Jewish or any of the other better-known holocausts of the period - constitutes the single most striking and important fact of the period from both a spiritual and a purely statistical point of view. That is why, contrary to most histories of the period, I have devoted so much space in this book to an analysis of the internal ecclesiastical and political problems of Orthodox Eastern Europe. For while, after 1917, the Orthodox Autocracy was not resurrected (the Orthodox Balkan states were monarchies, not the Autocracy), there were still many millions of Orthodox Christians for whom the Autocracy was still part of the furniture of their minds. And while the Great Powers tried to impose on them democracy, fascism or communism, many of them remained unconvinced by any of these alternatives. Thus, like the ghost in Hamlet or the Commendatore in Don Giovanni, the Orthodox Autocracy remained in the subconscious of the Orthodox peoples, and its return was fervently desired by many, especially in Russia. Such a return depended on two conditions: first, the revival of the truly Orthodox Christian faith on a large enough scale to make its political expression, Autocracy, a realistic possibility, and secondly, the manifest bankruptcy and/or destruction of the despotic and democratic regimes which, as previous volumes in this series have demonstrated, have always opposed the Autocracy. Neither of these conditions was fulfilled in the period covered by this book, nor do they look close to being fulfilled at the time of writing. However, if Bobbitt is right, and the nation-state, even in its parliamentary, democratic variant, is now in decay, then we should not rule out the possibility of the revival of the Orthodox Autocracy in a modernized form. But if that fervently desired possibility is ever to become reality, we must understand the mistakes of the past; we must analyse the history of the fall of the Autocracy and the corruption of the Autocratic consciousness in the period under discussion; and it is this that constitutes the main aim of this volume...

January 14/27, 2013.

Apodosis of the Theophany.

East House, Beech Hill, Mayford, Woking, Surrey. GU22 0SB.
PART 1: THE GREAT WAR AND THE REVOLUTION (1914-22)

THE FALL OF EUROPEANISM

The unprecedented destructiveness of the Great War had been predicted by Engels as early as 1887: “Prussia-Germany can no longer fight any war but a world war; and a war of hitherto unknown dimensions and ferocity. Eight to ten million soldiers will swallow each other up and in doing so eat all Europe more bare than any swarm of locusts. The devastation of the Thirty Years War compressed into the space of three or four years and extending over the whole continent; famine, sickness, want, brutalizing the army and the mass of the population; irrevocable confusion of our artificial structure of trade, industry and credit, ending in general bankruptcy; collapse of the old states and their traditional statecraft, so that crowns will roll by dozens in the gutter and no one can be found to pick them up. It is absolutely impossible to predict where it will end and who will emerge from the struggle as victor. Only one result is absolutely certain: general exhaustion and the establishment of conditions for the final victory of the working class.”

The First World War was the great watershed in modern European history. In 1914 Europe was a family of nations united by a single royal dynasty and a cosmopolitan elite confessing what most considered, according to ecumenist fashion, to be a single Christianity, albeit divided into Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant varieties, that tried to maintain the pax Europaica throughout the world. The family was German in origin, being made up of branches of the Saxe-Coburg dynasty. Thus even the matriarch of the family, Queen Victoria, once told King Leopold of the Belgians: “My heart is so German…” For many generations, the Russian tsars and princes had taken brides from German princely families; Nicholas II, though thoroughly Russian in spirit, had much more German blood than Russian in his veins; and the Tsaritsa Alexandra and her sister Grand Duchess Elizabeth were Hessian princesses. However, as Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky) pointed out, the sisters were more English than German in their tastes and upbringing, taking after their English mother rather than their German father.

Many hoped that the family links between the Kaiser and the Tsar would prevent war. For, as the London Standard had observed twenty years before, “the influence of the Throne in determining the relations between European Powers has never been disputed by those at all familiar with modern politics,

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it is sometimes lost sight of or ignored by the more flippant order of Democrats...”6 And the royals did talk with each other, even after the outbreak of war. But to no avail, because in the last resort the cosmopolitanism of the European royal family counted for less than the militarism of the generals. For the kings (apart from Nicholas II) were constitutional monarchs, not real autocrats, and, as Ferguson points out, “the monarchs, who still dreamed that international relations were a family affair, were suddenly as powerless as if revolutions had already broken out”.7 Even the Kaiser, nationalist and warmonger though he was, suddenly had cold feet in August, but was not able to stop his generals. Only the Tsar, true autocrat that he was, could have stopped the war – but only by allowing Serbia to be betrayed and destroyed. This, quite rightly, he could not do...8

The confessional links between the family members also proved unable to stop the war. Tsar Nicholas II became the godfather of the future King Edward VIII at his Anglican baptism9 – and in 1904 Kaiser Wilhelm was invited to be godfather of the Tsarevich Alexis.10 But these spiritual links counted for less than the Orthodox faith: Tsar Nicholas went to war with Catholic Austria in order to defend his Orthodox Serbian co-religionists. And in this we may see one providential reason for the war. It was not so much a war between Slavdom and Germanism, as between Orthodoxy and Westernism, and saved the Orthodox, not only from violent conquest by those of another race, but also, and primarily, from peaceful, ecumenist merging with those of another faith.

The religious nature of the war was understood by many Russians. In 1912 the country had celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Borodino, and in 1913 – the three-hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the Romanov dynasty. These were patriotic celebrations, but also religious ones; for both the commemorated events had taken place on the background of great threats to the Orthodox Faith from western nations. When the Tsar, however reluctantly, declared war on August 1, 1914, this was again seen as the beginning of a great patriotic and religious war.

Thus on that day, as Lubov Millar writes, “large patriotic crowds gathered before the Winter Palace, and when the Emperor and Empress appeared on the balcony, great and joyful ovations filled the air. When the national anthem was played, the crowds began to sing enthusiastically.

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7 Ferguson, op. cit., p. 107.
8 His Foreign Minister Sazonov said: “Russia could not leave Serbia in the lurch. No government could follow such a policy here without seriously endangering the Monarchy” (Ferguson, op. cit., p. 102). But the Tsar supported the Serbs, not to save his own throne, but because it was right...
9 Carter, op. cit., p. 137.
10 Ferguson, op. cit., p. 100.
“In a sitting room behind this balcony waited Grand Duchess Elizabeth, dressed in her white habit; her face was aglow, her eyes shining. Perhaps, writes Almedingen, she was thinking, ‘What are revolutionary agents compared with these loyal crowds? They would lay down their lives for Nicky and their faith and will win in the struggle.’ In a state of exaltation she made her way from the Winter Palace to the home of Grand Duke Constantine, where his five sons – already dressed in khaki uniforms – were preparing to leave for the front. These sons piously received Holy Communion and then went to the Romanov tombs and to the grave of Blessed Xenia of Petersburg before joining their troops.”

The great tragedy of the war was that this truly patriotic-religious mood did not last, and those who rapturously applauded the Tsar in 1914 were baying for his blood only three years later...

That the war was indeed a religious war was asserted in 1915 by Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kharkov: “Germany and Austria declared war on us, for which the former had already been preparing for forty years, wishing to extend its control to the East. What then? Should we quietly have submitted to the Germans? Should we have imitated their cruel and coarse manners? Planted in our country in place of the holy deeds of Orthodoxy piety the worship of the stomach and the wallet? No! It would be better for the whole nation to die than to be fed with such heretical poison!

“We have swallowed enough of it since the time of Peter the Great! And without that the Germans have torn away from the Russian nation, from Russian history and the Orthodox Church its aristocracy and intelligentsia; but in the event of a total submission to the German governmental authority, in the end the simple people would have been corrupted. We already have enough renegades from the simple people under the influence of the Germans and of German money. These are above all those same Protestants who so hypocritically cry out for peace. Of course, they were not all conscious traitors and betrayers of their homeland, they did not all share in those 2,000,000 marks which were established by the German government (and a half of it from the personal fortune of the Kaiser) to be spent on the propagation of Protestant chapels in Russia…”

In the defeat of Germany and Austria, we must see the judgement of God against those who were, after all, the aggressors and initiators of the conflict. But all the participant nations, with the possible exception of the United States, were significantly weaker, spiritually as well as politically, as a result of it. In a deeper sense, however, the judgement fell hardest on the Orthodox, for “judgement begins at the household of God”.

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Thus the Russians were deprived of victory by revolution from within, and came to almost complete destruction afterwards; the Serbs suffered proportionately more than any other country, even if they were on the winning side in the end; the Romanians were crushed by the Germans before also appearing on the winning side; the Bulgarians betrayed their Russian benefactors but still appeared on the losing side. Only the Greeks emerged from the war relatively unscathed – but their judgement would come only a few years later, in the Asia Minor catastrophe of 1922-23. So the First World War was a judgement on the whole of European civilization, and first of all on the Orthodox nations who had allowed Europeanism to replace their God-given inheritance…

It was also a judgement on the failure of the Orthodox nations – with the exception, of course, of the Russo-Serbian alliance - to unite with each other during the war to secure victory for the interests of Pan-Orthodoxy. Instead, territorial aggrandizement – often at the expense of Orthodox neighbours – was their main motivation. Thus Bulgaria, still thirsting for control of Macedonia, united with Germany, Austria and the Ottoman empire against Orthodox Russia and Serbia... Romania, after much vacillation, entered the war only in August, 1916, during the Brusilov offensive, when it looked as if Russia was going to win the war, and only after she had been offered Transylvania, the Romanian-inhabited part of Bukovina and even a large part of Hungary. But the Romanians forces only operated in Transylvania, and did not coordinate with the Russian command. They were promptly crushed by the Germans. But then, on November 10, 1918, more than eighteen months after the fall of the Tsar, they re-entered the war and occupied the lands they coveted… The Greeks vacillated for even longer than the Romanians – and for similar reasons. They wanted Epirus, Thrace, western Anatolia, certain Aegean islands and Cyprus. It was not until there was already an Allied army in Salonika, and a British and French fleet was gathered at the Piraeus, that the Germanophile King Constantine resigned and the Cretan revolutionary Venizelos led the country into war on the Allied side.

The First World War was, for the Serbian Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich, a struggle between the All-Man, Christ, and the Superman of Nietzsche, between the doctrine that Right is Might and the opposite one that might is right. For German Christianity with its all-devouring scientism and scepticism had already surrendered to Nietzscheanism: “I wonder... that Professor Harnack, one of the chief representatives of German Christianity, omitted to see how every hollow that he and his colleagues made in traditional Christianity in Germany was at once filled with the all-conquering Nietzscheanism. And I wonder... whether he is now aware that in the nineteen hundred and fourteenth year of our Lord, when he and other destroyers of the Bible, who proclaimed Christ a dreamy maniac [and]
clothed Christianity in rags, Nietzscheanism arose [as] the real religion of the German race.\textsuperscript{13}

The Germans were not only penetrated with Nietzscheanism: they had adopted the doctrine of Social Darwinism. Thus Conrad von Hőtzendorff, chief of the Austrian general staff at the outbreak of war believed that the struggle for existence was “the basic principle behind all the events on this earth”. Militarism was the natural consequence of this philosophy: “Politics consists precisely of applying war as method”.\textsuperscript{14}

In another place Bishop Nikolai spread the blame more widely on Europe as a whole: “The spirit was wrong, and everything became wrong. The spirit of any civilization is inspired by its religion, but the spirit of modern Europe was not inspired by Europe’s religion at all. A terrific effort was made in many quarters to liberate Europe from the spirit of her religion. The effort-makers forgot one thing, i.e. that no civilization ever was liberated from religion and still lived. Whenever this liberation seemed to be fulfilled, the respective civilization decayed and died out, leaving behind barbaric materialism in towns and superstitions in villages. Europe had to live with Christianity, or to die in barbaric materialism and superstitions without it. The way to death was chosen. From Continental Europe first the infection came to the whole white race. It was there that the dangerous formula [of Nietzsche] was pointed out: ‘Beyond good and evil’. Other parts of the white world followed slowly, taking first the path between Good and Evil. Good was changed for Power. Evil was explained away as Biological Necessity. The Christian religion, which inspired the greatest things that Europe ever possessed in every point of human activity, was degraded by means of new watchwords: individualism, liberalism, conservatism, nationalism, imperialism, secularism, which in essence meant nothing but the de-christianization of European society, or, in other words, the emptiness of European civilization. Europe abandoned the greatest things she possessed and clung to the lower and lowest ones. The greatest thing was – Christ.

“As you cannot imagine Arabic civilization in Spain without Islam, or India’s civilization without Hinduism, or Rome without the Roman Pantheon, so you cannot imagine Europe’s civilization without Christ. Yet some people thought that Christ was not so essentially needed for Europe, and behaved accordingly without Him or against Him. Christ was Europe’s God. When this God was banished from politics, art, science, social life, business, education, everybody consequently asked for a God, and everybody thought himself to be a god… So the godless Europe became full of gods!

“Being de-christianized, Europe still thought herself as civilized. In reality she was a poor valley full of dry bones. The only thing she had to boast of was her material power. By material power only she impressed and frightened the unchristian (but not antichristian) countries of Central and Eastern Asia, and depraved the rustic tribes in Africa and elsewhere. She went to conquer not by God or for God, but by material power and for material pleasure. Her spirituality did not astonish any of the peoples on earth. Her materialism astonished all of them… What an amazing poverty! She gained the whole world, and when she looked inside herself she could not find her soul. Where has Europe’s soul fled? The present war will give the answer. It is not a war to destroy the world but to show Europe’s poverty and to bring back her soul. It will last as long as Europe remains soulless, Godless, Christless. It will stop when Europe gets the vision of her soul, her only God, her only wealth.”¹⁵

The disciple and admirer of Bishop Nikolai, Archimandrite Justin (Popovich), attributed the cause of God’s wrath against Christian Europe in the two world wars to its betrayal of True Christianity and its embracing an antichristian humanistic metaphysics of progress. The end of such a metaphysic could only be death, death on a massive scale, death with no redeeming purpose, no resurrection in Christ: “It is obvious to normal eyes: European humanistic culture systematically blunts man’s sense of immortality, until it is extinguished altogether. The man of European culture affirms, with Nietzsche, that he is flesh and nothing but flesh. And that means: I am mortal, and nothing but mortal. It is thus that humanistic Europe gave itself over to the slogan: man is a mortal being. That is the formula of humanistic man; therein lies the essence of his progress.

“At first subconsciously, then consciously and deliberately, science, philosophy, and culture inculcated in the European man the proposition that man is completely mortal, with nothing else left over… Humanistic man is a devastated creature because the sense of personal immortality has been banished from him. And without that sentiment, can man ever be complete?

“European man is a shrunken dwarf, reduced to a fraction of man’s stature, for he has been emptied of the sense of transcendence. And without the transcendent, can man exist at all as man? And if he could, would there be any meaning to his existence? Minus that sense of the transcendent, is he not but a dead object among other objects, and a transient species among other animals?

“… [Supposedly] equal to the animals in his origin, why should he not also assimilate their morals? Being part of the animal world of beasts in basic nature, he has also joined them in their morals. Are not sin and crime increasingly regarded by modern jurisprudence as an unavoidable by-

product of the social environment and as a natural necessity? Since there is nothing eternal and immortal in man, ethics must, in the final analysis, be reduced to instinctive drives. In his ethics, humanistic man has become equal to his progenitors, monkeys and beasts. And the governing principle of his life has become: *homo homini lupus*.

“It could not be otherwise. For an ethic that is superior to that of the animals could only be founded on a sentiment of human immortality. If there is no immortality and eternal life, neither within nor around man, then animalistic morals are entirely natural and logical for a bestialized humanity: let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die (cf. *I Corinthians* 15.32).

“The relativism in the philosophy of European humanistic progress could not but result in an ethical relativism, and relativism is the father of anarchism and nihilism. Wherefore, in the last analysis, the practical ethic of humanistic man is nothing but anarchy and nihilism. For anarchy and nihilism are the unavoidable, final and apocalyptic phase of European progress. Ideological anarchism and nihilism, ideological disintegration, necessarily had to manifest themselves in practical anarchism and nihilism, in the practical disintegration of European humanistic man and his progress. Are we not eyewitnesses to the ideological and practical anarchism and nihilism that are devastating the European continent? The addenda of European progress are such that, no matter how they might be computed, their sum is always anarchism and nihilism. The evidence? Two world wars (actually European wars).

“European man is stupid, catastrophically stupid, when, while disbelieving in God and the immortality of the soul, he still professes belief in progress and life’s meaning and acts accordingly. What good is progress, if after it comes death? What use are the world, the stars, and cultures, if behind them lurks death, and ultimately it must conquer me? Where there is death, there can be no real progress. If there is any, it can only be the cursed progress of the mill of death, which ought to be demolished totally and without a trace…”

Such was the war from the point of view of the Orthodox nations. But what was the war for the non-Orthodox combatants? For the west, writes Golo Mann, it was “a war between peace-loving Western democracy and Teutonic barbarism… [But] if this was the generally accepted view of the situation in Britain and France, a view which also became increasingly popular in the United States, there was no such common line of thought in Germany. Here everything, the origin of the war, the means with which it should be fought, its aims abroad and its effects at home, was judged on the basis of party loyalty, personal sympathy, desire and caprice.

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“The Allies had only one enemy, Germany (the fact that Austria had actually started the affair was quickly forgotten). The question which the Germans were soon asking themselves was who was their chief enemy. Hardly France; only for the older generation who remembered 1870. Russia? That was the view of the German left, of all those whose thinking was inspired by the tradition of 1848, who saw despotic Russia as the enemy of a progressive, democratic ‘greater’ Germany. Or Britain? That was soon the most widely and ardently held belief. The belief of the pan-Germans, of the navy, of the patriotic professors, of the right in general, and then, under the impression of the blockade, probably also the mass of the people. The war, which the Germans had imagined as a continental war in the style of Moltke, was transformed by Britain into a world war; it deprived the German victories on land of their importance by isolating them. Britain brought into play the full strength of its national character, the whole force of its worldwide organizations and connections, of its dominions overseas; it was the bridge to America, and the channel through which all essential war material reached Germany’s enemies in an uninterrupted stream. France and Russia had both been defeated more than once in modern times and had adapted themselves to defeat; Britain never. That was its glory, and its efforts were correspondingly great. Seen from that angle Britain was the fiercest of Germany’s enemies. As Germany had nothing that Britain could want and as even the pan-Germans did not intend to make conquests at Britain’s expense, it followed that the struggle between Britain and Germany was one of life and death. It was not a question of this or that possession but of survival. As the Germans saw it Britain envied Germany its new splendour, its industry, its trade, its power in Europe and over Europe; there were pre-war quotations from the British press to prove the point. Quietly, busily Britain had spun the poisonous web of the coalition; with unctuous words Lügen-Grey (liar Grey [the British Foreign Secretary]) had drawn it tight at the opportune moment.

“[As the German song put it:] “What do we care about Russians and Frenchies; we repay shot with shot and blow with blow. We fight with bronze and with steel, and some day we shall make peace. But you we shall hate with lasting hatred and we shall not relent; hatred on the seas and hatred on land, hatred of the mind and hatred of the hand, hatred of the hammer and hatred of the crowns, strangling hatred of seventy millions. United in love and united in hatred they have only one enemy: ENGLAND.”17

The First World War was a major watershed not only in modern world history but also in the history of the Orthodox Church. For the Orthodox, it exposed the terrible spiritual scourges on the Body of the Church which the comparative power and prosperity of the previous era had partially covered up – ecumenism, democratism, socialism, nationalism, renovationism, etc. It removed “him who restrains” the appearance of the Antichrist, the Orthodox

Christian Emperor, and with his removal all the islands of Orthodoxy throughout the world began to tremble and contract within themselves. Also gone by the end were the German, Austrian and Ottoman empires... And so the very principle of monarchy was fatally undermined, surviving for a short time only, and in a reduced form, in the Balkan countries.

Christianity as a whole was thrown onto the defensive. In most places it became a minority religion again, and in some, especially Russia, it was fiercely persecuted. It was as if the Edict of Milan had been reversed and a new age of the catacombs had returned. States everywhere became more powerful and more all-encompassing. Politics took the place of religion as religion was gradually forced back into the sphere of private life (and even further than that in Russia). The rule of the people – or rather, of the mob – became the rule; and before this great populist tsunami true political rule, rule in accordance with the commandments of God, rule for the people rather than by the people, was swept away. The pax Europaica of the pre-1914 age, based on a debased but still powerful common legacy of the Christian Faith and monarchical rule, had been succeeded by a new age of barbarism, in which nations were divided within and between themselves, and the neo-pagan ideologies of Communism, Fascism and Democratism held sway. Christian leaders attempted to make compromises with each of these ideologies. But you cannot serve two masters, God and mammon; and the attempt to do so only hastens the victory of mammon...

This was (with the possible exception of the Napoleonic wars) the first of the total wars, making possible the appearance of the totalitarian age. Its length, the unprecedented numbers of killed and wounded, and the sheer horror of front-line combat succeeded in depriving it, after the patriotic élan of the first month or two, of any chivalric, redemptive aspects – at any rate, for all but the small, truly Orthodox minority who fought for Faith, Tsar and Fatherland. Just as the main motive for the war (at any rate, on the German side) was hatred, so its main legacy was simply hatred – hatred of the enemy, hatred of one’s own leaders, hatred of all that is old and venerable. This hatred did not die after the war’s end, but was translated into a kind of universal hatred that presaged still more total wars to come...
THE BALFOUR DECLARATION

One of the most unexpected, but most far-reaching consequences of the war was the establishment, by the British Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour, of a National Homeland for the Jews in Palestine.

The Balfour Declaration, so called after the British Foreign Secretary Lord Arthur Balfour, who published it on November 2, 1917, was one of the most portentous documents in world history, whose consequences are still being played out today – and not only in the Arab-Israeli conflict. It ranged one of the great powers of the time – the power, moreover, that was about to conquer Jerusalem in the following month – in alliance with Zionism, thereby laying the foundation for the creation of the modern State of Israel in 1948 and tying in the interests of what is now called “the international community” with the interests of Israel. But, as we shall see, its significance was still greater than that.

“The Balfour Declaration,” writes Jonathan Schneer, “was the result of a process that some consider practically inevitable. Certainly it is true that conditions created by the war enabled Chaim Weizmann and his colleagues to work wonders. During 1914-17 they gained access to the elite among British Jews and converted some of them to Zionism. They defeated advocates of Jewish assimilation, such as Lucien Wolf of the Conjoint Committee, whose raison d’être, lobbying the Foreign Office on behalf of foreign Jews, especially Russian and Romanian, had been swept away by the war. They gained entrance to British governing circles and converted some of their most important members too.

“During this period Weizmann and those who worked with him acted as inspired opportunists. Finally they could argue convincingly that a community of interest linked Zionist aspirations with those of the Entente. Zionists wanted the Ottomans out of Palestine; Britain and France wanted them out of the Middle East altogether. Zionists wanted a British protectorate in Palestine; Britain did too (although initially Sir Mark Sykes had bargained it away in negotiations with Georges-Picot of France).

“More generally, Weizmann and his colleagues persuaded powerful men in Britain, France and Italy that support of Zionism would benefit their wartime cause and the peace to follow. ‘International Jewry’ was a powerful if subterranean force, they claimed..., whose goodwill would reap dividends for the Allies. Specifically, they suggested that Jewish finance in America and Jewish influence upon anti-war forces in Russia, could help determine the conflict’s outcome. Weizmann warned the Foreign Office that Germany recognized the potential of Jewish power and had begun to court it already. He advised the Allies to trump their enemy by declaring outright support for Zionism. His arguments worked upon the minds of anti- and philo-Semites...
alike among the British governing elite, who were desperate for any advantage in the wartime struggle. Eventually, to gain Jewish backing in the war, they promised to support establishment of a homeland for Jews in Palestine…”18

“The Balfour Declaration,” wrote the Zionist Jew Samuel Landman in 1936, “originated in the War Office, was consummated in the Foreign Office and is being implemented in the Colonial Office”19. This sounds as if it were entirely a British governmental idea; and it is true that without the enthusiastic support of certain Gentile Englishmen in the British government, especially Sir Mark Sykes, Under-Secretary at the War Cabinet and co-author of the famous Sykes-Picot Agreement, the Declaration would probably never have come into being. Nevertheless, the real motors behind the coup were two Russian Zionist Jews living in Britain – Chaim Weizmann and Nathan Sokolow.

They had an uphill task ahead of them. For until well into the war the British government was not interested in Zionism – and had in any case semi-officially promised Palestine to the Arabs in exchange for their support against the Ottomans. Also, the leaders of British Jewry, the “Conjoint Committee” led by Lucien Wolf, who initially had the ear of the government, were fiercely opposed to Zionism since it endangered their goal – secure assimilation within western society. Moreover, the Zionists themselves were divided into the politicals under Weizmann and the practicals or culturalists under the Romanian Moses Gaster. The political Zionists were looking to create a Zionist state, while the culturalists wanted only to strengthen Jewish culture and the Hebrew language in Palestine and throughout the Diaspora.

In April 1915 an important debate took place between the Zionists and the Assimilationists. Schneer describes it thus: “[The Russian Zionist] Tschlenow, in a long introductory speech, pointed out that at the peace conference following the war, even small nationalities such as Finns, Lithuanians and Armenians would ‘put forward their demands, their wishes, their aspirations.’ He then asked his anti-Zionist friends: ‘Shall the Jewish “people”, the Jewish “nation”, be silent?’

“Note here that Wolf, in his written account of the meeting, placed the words ‘people’ and ‘nation’ in quotation marks. Those tiny vertical scratches signalled the profound chasm separating the two camps. Wolf believed that asserting that the Jews constituted a distinct nation would fatally undercut his argument that British Jews really were Jewish Britons. It would deny the possibility of a genuine Jewish assimilation in Britain or anywhere else. It

contradicted his liberal assumptions. He refused to make the required assertion.

“Tschelnow further argued that Turkish entry into the war had upset all previous calculations. For if the Allies defeated the Ottomans, then ‘there is a good chance that Palestine may fall to England and that England may hand it over and give it to the Jews’. It was now or never: ‘If the Jews do not develop Palestine and make it populous and cultivated and civilized and flourishing, others will do so.’ He envisioned a ‘big Jewish Commonwealth… 5,000,000 souls… or more… [as] in days of old’. To which Moses Gaster added, ‘The Zionists intended to go in and work for “the whole hog”. Nothing less than a Commonwealth would satisfy them.’

“So much for cultural Zionism! On what basis, then, might political Zionists and the Conjoint Committee find common ground? Tschlenow contended that the Zionist goal of a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine and the Conjoint Committee’s desire to ameliorate conditions for Russian Jews were complementary, not antagonistic. Once the Jews possessed Palestine and could immigrate freely to that place, ‘there would be fewer Jews in Russia’, and a smaller Jewish community would be perceived as a lesser threat and therefore attract less persecution. Gaster added that ‘when the nations knew a Jew could go off to his own country they would persecute him less’. And Sokolow chimed in: ‘If Palestine was a British protectorate, and if England held it as a legally secured home for the Jews, England would be more interested in preventing the persecution of the Jews elsewhere and in obtaining rights for them’. But the Zionists insisted on the primacy of their own political program. Efforts to improve the Jewish lot, as noble and useful as they might be, ‘would and never could be the solution of the Jewish problem. That solution lay only in Zionism.

“Wolf and his colleagues seem to have been unsurprised by the jettisoning of the cultural program, which greatly reduced the possibility of meaningful cooperation between the two groups. They asked their guests two pertinent questions: ‘How would Palestine become a Jewish country?’ and of equal importance: Would ‘special rights… be asked for the Jews’ once they had entered into it?

“The Zionists did not mince words in reply. Special rights would be asked for and would be necessary, Gaster explained, ‘till the Jews were so numerous, and in so large a minority, that they would predominate by weight of numbers’. As to how the Jews should enter Palestine, a Jewish Chartered Company with Britain’s backing, ‘would take care that Jews should be the prevailing settlers.’ Sokolow added that if Britain established some form of control over Palestine, ‘she would clearly and obviously take such necessary steps as to secure that the Jews should be the predominant people in Palestine [and] that it should be their country. The one point followed from the other.
“It was an uncompromising performance, albeit politely delivered. The Conjoint Committee promised to consider it and to respond. Within days Wolf wrote a fourteen-page encapsulation of his own optimistic liberal creed: ‘The whole tendency of the national life in Eastern Europe is necessarily towards a more enlightened and liberal policy…. The present war, through the preponderance of Great Britain and France on the side of the Allies, must give a great impulse to liberal reforms in Russia… Sooner or later the statesmanship of the countries concerned will, for their own protection, deal with [the Jewish problem] in the way in which it has been successfully dealt with in Western Europe and America… There is no solid ground to despair of eventual success.’ Therefore, Wolf argued, the Conjoint Committee must reject the Zionist approach. Not even unrestricted Russian Jewish emigration to Palestine, he argued, would improve conditions for the majority who must stay behind; after all, the massive Russian Jewish emigration to America had not done so. Moreover, far from improving things, the establishment of a Jewish commonwealth would ‘at once relieve persecuting countries of much of their present incentive to pursue a policy of emancipation.’ Like Edwin Montagu, Wolf believed that anti-Semitism would increase, not decrease, upon establishment of a Jewish commonwealth. The Zionist approach ran ‘counter to all experience and probabilities, and is essentially reactionary’.

“So much for Zionist tactics. Wolf then dismissed the Zionist fundamental premise: ‘The idea of a Jewish nationality, the talk of a Jew ‘going home’ to Palestine if he is not content with his lot in the land of his birth, strikes at the root of all claim to Jewish citizenship in lands where Jewish disabilities still exist. It is the assertion not merely of a double nationality… but of the perpetual alienage of Jews everywhere outside Palestine.’ Thus political Zionism threatened to undermine even the most assimilated Jews. It threatened to make strangers of Jews like himself, and his colleagues on the Conjoint Committee, in the land of their birth, England.

“Wolf went on to reject the Zionist claim to special privilege for Jews once they had arrived in Palestine. Britain, the likely future suzerain power in Palestine, specifically barred special privilege based upon religion. Moreover, ‘nothing could be more detrimental to the struggle for Jewish liberties all over the world,’ than for Jews to claim special privileges anywhere. ‘How could we continue to ask that the Russian government make no distinction between… Jews and Christians?’ he asked.

“In sum, the Zionist scheme if implemented, ‘would not only aggravate the difficulties of unemancipated, and imperil the liberties of emancipated Jews all over the world, but in Palestine itself it would make for a Jewish state based on civil and religious disabilities of the most mediaeval king, a state, consequently which could not endure and which would bring lasting reproach on Jews and Judaism. Indeed it could not be otherwise with a
political nationality based on religious and racial tests, and no other Jewish nationality is possible.’ The main lines of disagreement could hardly have been more clearly stated. The Zionists replied to Wolf on May 11, 1915; exactly one month later the Conjoint Committee wrote a rejoinder, ending with the pious hope ‘that the progress of events may lead to such an approximation of the views of the two parties as to render some useful scheme of cooperation yet possible’.

“It would not happen. On the crucial issue of Jewish nationality, neither side budged. Consultation and discussions would continue, and memoranda would be written from both sides, but the gulf remained unbridgeable. Henceforth their competition for the ear of the government would grow increasingly fierce. And although Wolf began from the better-established and therefore more advantageous position, Weizmann was an absolute master of the political game…”

The triumph of Weizmann and the Zionists was the result of many factors. One, undoubtedly, was the personal charm of Weizmann himself. According to A.N. Wilson, “the importance of personal charm in history is sometimes forgotten. Chaim Weizmann had it in abundance, and this largely explains Arthur Balfour’s 1917 Declaration.” However, no less important was the particular character of Russian, as opposed to Western Jewry – and the peculiar conjunction of political circumstances in 1914-1917.

Russian Jewry, unlike its West European counterparts, lived as a state within a state, a self-created ghetto, enslaved, not so much by the Russian authorities as by its own rabbinic kahal and the multiplicity of rules imposed on them by the Talmud, seeking no contact with Gentiles and despising them. This Jewish isolationism is recognized by Jews and Gentiles alike. As such, the Russian Jews were naturally drawn to Zionism, to emigration to Palestine and the formation of a state within a state there – with the Arabs, rather than the Russians, as the despised Goyim whom they would exclude from their political ghetto, making them, like their Old Testament Canaanite enmies, into mere hewers of wood and carriers of water...

20 Schneer, op. cit., pp. 147-151.
22 Thus, on the one hand, Sir Isaiah Berlin writes: “They had, unlike their Western brothers, grown to be a kind of State with a State, with their own political, social, religious and human ideals... They were surrounded by Russian peasants, against whom they felt no hatred, but whom they regarded as a species of lower being with whom their contacts were restricted” (“The Origin of Israel”, in The Power of Ideas, p. 14). On the other hand, M.O. Menshikov, wrote: “The real Ghetto of the Jews is Judaism itself, an old creed that congeals its followers in a serfdom heavier than that of ancient Egypt” (Monthly Review (London), February, 1904; in David Vital, A People Apart: The Jews in Europe, 1789-1939, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 535).
However, Zionism would never have succeeded at this time without the endorsement of the British; and the British endorsed it primarily because they thought that in this way they could buy the financial support of the American Jews, and especially of the leading American Jewish banker, Jacob Schiff, the head of the New York bank of Kuhn, Loeb & Co. Schiff was a Zionist who financed several Zionist projects in Palestine. He also, like most Zionists, had a visceral hatred of Russian tsarism: in 1904 he had given a huge loan of $200 million to the Japanese in their war with Russia, for which the Japanese gave him several awards, and as a result of which they became among the most fervent believers in the idea that the world was ruled by the Jews... Later, after the fall of the Tsar, he was to finance Lenin and Trotsky...

At the beginning of the war, however, it was by no means certain which side he would back. After all, America did not join the side of the Allies (France, Britain and Russia) until April, 1917: before then she had adopted a posture of strict neutrality. Moreover, there was a powerful minority, the German Americans, whose sympathies were naturally with Germany, and another powerful minority, the Irish Americans, whose feelings (especially after the Dublin Uprising of 1916) were decidedly anti-English. Now Schiff was a German Jew. Therefore it was reasonable to expect that not only his anti-Russianism but also his German roots would incline him towards favouring the Germans.

Another important factor here was the policy adopted by the Russian generals during their retreat through Poland in 1915 of evacuating the Jewish population from the front line areas towards the East on the grounds of their unreliability. There were some grounds for the Russian decision. Apart from the well-known hostility of the Jews to all things Russian, which had led to the murder of thousands of Russians in pogroms since 1881, the largest Jewish organization in Russia, the Bund, had signed Trotsky’s Zimmerwald Manifesto in September, 1915 against the war – an action that contrasted with the strongly patriotic support of almost all Jews in other warring countries for the country in which they lived. Nevertheless, as we have seen, the policy was disastrous. First, it inflicted unjust suffering on many innocent Jews (several hundreds of them were shot as spies). Secondly, it clogged up the transport system in Western Russia, thereby hindering the war effort at a critical time. And thirdly, it for the first time involved the transportation of large numbers of discontented Jews beyond the Pale and into Central and Eastern Russia, thereby raising the revolutionary temperature there.

No less seriously, reports of their ally’s actions seriously embarrassed the efforts of the French and the English to raise loans in America. As the French Professor Basch reported from there: “The great point of departure is now religious persecution [in Russia] and it is the two million Jews of America, a million and a half of whom are to be found in New York, and a million and a half of whom are Russian and Polish Jews who have escaped pogroms, who
lead the campaign against Russia. The organs of anti-Russian propaganda are
the Yiddish-language newspapers.; the popular speakers; the rabbis; and
finally the great bankers of Wall Street headed by the greatest financial force
of all in America, Jacob H. Schiff....”

Even anti-Zionist Jews like Lucien Wolf recognized that the Allies had to
do something to elicit the sympathy of the Jews if they were to offset the
Russian factor. “‘In any bid for Jewish sympathies today,’ he told Lord Robert
Cecil [on December 16, 1915], ‘very serious account must be taken of the
Zionist movement. In America the Zionist organizations have lately captured
Jewish opinion, and very shortly a great American Jewish Congress will be
held virtually under Zionist auspices.’ He wished to make it clear that he
himself ‘deplored the Jewish National Movement. ‘To my mind the Jews are
not a nationality. I doubt whether they have ever been one in the true sense of
the term.’ But he did not doubt that this was ‘the moment for the Allies to
declare their policy in regard to Palestine’ and to do so in a spirit that was
acceptable to Zionist ears. The Zionists probably recognized that the Allies
could not ‘make a Jewish State of a land in which only a comparatively small
minority of the inhabitants are Jews’. But Britain and France could say to
them ‘that they thoroughly understand and sympathise with Jewish
aspirations in regard to Palestine, and that when the destiny of the country
came to be considered, those aspirations will be taken into account’. He
thought too that assurances of ‘reasonable facilities for immigration and
colonisation’, for the establishment of a Jewish University, and for the
recognition of Hebrew ‘as one of the vernaculars of the land’ could be given.
Were all that done, the Allies, Wolf did not doubt, ‘would sweep the whole of
American Jewry into enthusiastic alliance to their cause’. It was true that this
still left the question fo the political disposition of the country itself open. The
Zionists, he had reason to believe, would look forward to Great Britain
becoming ‘the mistress of Palestine’. No doubt, as he himself recognized, it
might be difficult for the British themselves to touch on the subject in view of
the well-established French claims to Syria and the equally well-established
French view that Palestine itself was part of ‘Syria’. But again, if the
assurances about Britain’s sympathy for Zionism and its willingness to
guarantee rights of immigration and settlement in Palestine to Jews that he
proposed were proclaimed, the purpose immediately in view, namely the
attachment of American Jewry to the Allied cause, would be achieved.”

By March, 1916 the Foreign Office was converted to Wolf’s “Palestine
idea”. “The Russians and the French were invited to join Britain in
considering ‘an arrangement in regard to Palestine completely satisfactory to
Jewish aspirations’. The definition of ‘Jewish aspirations’ Wolf had offered to
the Foreign Office, was forwarded to the Allied governments for examination
as it stood along with the terms on which the Foreign Office itself proposed

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that an offer to the Jews be made. Wolf’s terms were modest: ‘In the event of Palestine coming within the sphere of Great Britain or France at the close of the war, the Governments of those Powers will not fail to take account of the historic interest that country possesses for the Jewish community. The Jewish population will be secured in the enjoyment of civil and religious liberty, equal political rights with the rest of the population, reasonable towns and colonies inhabited by them as may be shown to be necessary.’

“The Foreign Office, however, wished the French and the Russians to know that they themselves favoured a substantially stronger formulation: ‘We consider... that the scheme might be made far more attractive to the majority of Jews if it held out to them the prospect that when in the course of time Jewish colonies in Palestine grow strong enough to cope with the Arab population they may be allowed to take the management of the internal affairs of Palestine (with the exception of Jerusalem and the Holy Places) into their own hands.’

“The Russian response turned out to be friendly. Sazonov, the foreign minister, told the British ambassador (Buchanan) that Russia welcomed the migration of Jews out of Russia to Palestine or anywhere else. Their only proviso was that the (Christian) Holy Places be placed under an international regime. In contrast, the French response was ferociously negative, first and foremost because it seemed to them that the ‘Palestine Idea’ touched impermissibly, even if only obliquely (but perhaps not unintentionally), on their own strategic and colonial ambitions in the area…”

This Anglo-French rivalry over Palestine recalls the similar struggle at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Napoleon, having been hailed as the Messiah by the Jewish Sanhedrin (for which he was anathematized as Antichrist by the Russian Holy Synod in 1806), set out to conquer Palestine from Egypt. He was foiled by Admiral Nelson’s destruction of his fleet at the battle of the Nile. And now it was a British army under General Allenby that would set out from Egypt to conquer Palestine to install another – this time, Jewish - Antichrist in Jerusalem...

For a while, however, the British put aside the Palestine Idea so as not to endanger relations with France. But in December, 1916, the British acquired a new Prime Minister in Lloyd George and a new Foreign Secretary in Lord Balfour, and the Palestine Idea was resurrected... The decisive factor here was the close friendship between Lloyd George and Weizmann. The two men had in common that neither was English, but both had a passionate belief in the civilizing mission of the British empire. Together, therefore, they were able to overcome the fear of antagonizing the French that had prevailed heretofore in British government circles.

Other Zionists helped to persuade the sceptics: Sokolow in Paris, Supreme Court Justice Brandeis in Washington. They in turn were helped by a changing political situation in 1917. First, with the fall of the Tsar in February, it was now necessary to secure the support of the newly-emancipated Jews inside Russia, many of whom wanted the Provisional Government to conclude a separate peace with Germany. Secondly, the emancipation of the Jews in Russia removed one of the main obstacles to Schiff wholeheartedly supporting the Allies with his money – and also eased the way for the entry, not only of American money, but also, still more importantly, of American troops, into the war on the Allied side. Thirdly, “approval of Zionism accorded neatly... with what was now the accepted western view of the matter of nationalities. By this stage of the war there was no question at all in either of the major Allied capitals that when the time came for a general political settlement it would be necessary, as Balfour put it to the cabinet on one occasion, to set about ‘the rearranging of the map of Europe in closer agreement with what we rather vaguely call “the principle of nationality”’.

Unlike the French, members of the English political class had never been reluctant to think of the Jews of Europe (when they thought of them at all) in terms analogous to those in which they thought of the other submerged nations of the continent, and also increasingly, by extension, of the peoples of the Near East as well.”

There was still frantic opposition from anti-Zionist British Jews such as Edwin Montagu (who was a minister), Montefiore, Wolf and others. And among the leading English Gentile sceptics was Lord Curzon. Thus “the matter of the true seriousness and popularity of Zionism, the known poverty of Palestine itself (as Curzon stated: ‘A less propitious seat for future Jewish race could not be imagined’), and the question of the country’s other inhabitants (Curzon asking: What was to happen to them? Were they to be

26 “During the critical days of 1916 and of the impending defection of Russia, Jewry, as a whole, was against the Czarist regime and had hopes that Germany, if victorious, would in certain circumstances given them Palestine. Several attempts to bring America into the War on the side of the Allies by influencing influential Jewish opinion were made and had failed. Mr. James A. Malcolm, who was already aware of German pre-war efforts to secure a foothold in Palestine through the Zionist Jews and of the abortive Anglo-French démarches at Washington and New York; and knew that Mr. Woodrow Wilson, for good and sufficient reasons, always attached the greatest possible importance to the advice of a very prominent Zionist (Mr. Justice Brandeis, of the US Supreme Court); and was in close touch with Mr. Greenberg, Editor of the Jewish Chronicle (London); and knew that several important Zionist Jewish leaders had already gravitated to London from the Continent on the qui vive awaiting events; and appreciated and realized the depth and strength of Jewish national aspirations; spontaneously took the initiative, to convince first of all Sir Mark Sykes, Under-Secretary to the War Cabinet, and afterwards M. Georges Picot, of the French Embassy in London, and M. Goût of the Quai d’Orsay (Eastern Section), that the best and perhaps the only way (which proved so to be) to induce the American President to come into the War was to secure the cooperation of Zionist Jews by promising them Palestine, and thus enlist and mobilize the hithterto unsuspectedly powerful forces of Zionist Jews in America and elsewhere in favour of the Allies on a quid pro quo contract basis.” (Landman, op. cit.)
27 Vital, op. cit., p. 689.
got rid of?) were all brought up as the cabinet moved towards a decision. Balfour, Sykes providing the arguments, assured his colleagues that the Jews would be able to work out their own salvation there and were anxious to do so. And such anxiety as there was about the fate of the existing Arab population was met by the insertion of a clause affirming that ‘nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities’. No one suggested that the political rights of the ‘existing non-Jewish communities’ deserved discussion, let alone assurance...”

The final draft of the Balfour Declaration was secretly approved by the American president on October 19, 1917, and then approved by the British cabinet on November 2. It read: “His Majesty’s Government views with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use its best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.”

Meanwhile, General Allenby was advancing on Jerusalem. Desperate to retain the support of his Arab allies under Prince Feisal, he suppressed news of the Declaration. At the same time, he allowed the Jewish legion under Zhabotinsky to force the passage of the Jordan...

On December 11 he entered Jerusalem (on foot, as a sign of respect). On October 1, 1918 he conquered the whole of Palestine at the Battle of Megiddo, and by the end of the month the Ottoman Empire had surrendered on all fronts. In 1919, at the Versailles peace conference, Palestine was made a British mandate territory, and the Sykes-Picot Agreement was amended (by the Franco-British Convention of December 1920) so that the Jewish National Home should comprise the whole of Palestine.

The British were now the masters in the Holy Land, and were in a position to put its highly ambiguous provisions into effect... But they soon found that the Jews were determined to throw both them and the Palestinian Arabs out, and in 1948 they were forced to withdraw... However, in the longer term and on a global scaled their bargain with the Zionists was very profitable to them. The Germans fully appreciated the value of this bargain to the Allies. As Ludendorff is alleged to have said to Lord Melchett that the Balfour Declaration was the cleverest thing done by the Allies in the way of propaganda, and that he wished Germany had thought of it first...

29 Wilson, op. cit., p. 141.
31 Landman, op. cit.
However, the real significance of the Balfour Declaration was concealed in its timing. Divine Providence drew the attention of all those with eyes to see to this sign of the times when, in one column of newsprint in the London *Times* for November 9, 1917, there appeared two articles, the one announcing the outbreak of revolution in Petrograd, and the other – the promise of a homeland for the Jews in Palestine (the Balfour declaration). This showed that the two events were different aspects - the internationalist-atheist and nationalist-theist aspects respectively, - of a single event, the *Jewish revolution*. In fact, both the Bolshevik and the Zionist revolutionaries came from the same region of Western Russia, often from the same families. Thus Weizmann’s own mother was able to witness Chaim’s triumph in Zionist Jerusalem, and that of another son – in Bolshevik Moscow... As M. Heifetz pointed out, “a part of the Jewish generation goes along the path of Herzl and Zhabotinsky. The other part, unable to withstand the temptation, fills up the band of Lenin and Trotsky and Stalin...”

The events of 1917-18 were only the beginning. With the removal of “him who restrains” the coming of the Antichrist, the Orthodox Christian emperor (II Thessalonians 2.7), and with anti-Christian Jewish power established in both East and West, in both Russia and America and Israel, there was now no earthly power in existence that could stop the onslaught of Jewish power throughout the world – unless the Orthodox empire could be restored. The Battle of Megiddo (Armageddon) was aptly named – the last times had begun...

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RUSSIA IN THE GREAT WAR

The first year of the war went badly for Russia. In August, 1914, the army advanced too quickly into East Prussia in order to relieve pressure on the French in the West, and was heavily defeated. A year later, after a series of further defeats caused mainly by arms shortages, the Tsar took control of the army as Supreme Commander. Almost everyone was appalled at the decision. But “God’s will be done,” wrote the Tsar to the Tsaritsa after arriving at Stavka, army headquarters. “I feel so calm” – like the feeling, he said, “after Holy Communion”.

“In the autumn,” writes Robert Massie, “the Tsar brought his son, the eleven-year-old Tsarevich, to live with him at Army Headquarters. It was a startling move, not simply because of the boy’s age but also because of his haemophilia. Yet, Nicholas did not make his decision impetuously. His reasons, laboriously weighed for months in advance, were both sentimental and shrewd.

“The Russian army, battered and retreating after a summer of terrible losses, badly needed a lift in morale. Nicholas himself made constant appearances, and his presence, embodying the cause of Holy Russia, raised tremendous enthusiasm among the men who saw him. It was his hope that the appearance of the Heir at his side, symbolizing the future, would further bolster their drooping spirits. It was a reasonable hope, and, in fact, wherever Alexis appeared he became a center of great excitement…”

Taking advantage of the Tsar’s absence, the liberals formed a “progressive bloc” designed to force him to concede “a government responsible to the people” – that is, a government that they would control. However, while things got worse in the rear they got better at the front. Thanks to organizational changes introduced by the Tsar, the crisis in supplies that had contributed so significantly to the defeats of 1915 was overcome. In 1916 the Brusilov offensive threw back the enemy, and the British military attaché in Russia said that Russia’s military prospects were better in the winter of 1916-17 than a year before. This estimate was shared by Grand Duke Sergius Mikhailovich, who was at Imperial Headquarters as Inspector-General of Artillery. As he said to his brother, Grand Duke Alexander: “Go back to your work and pray that the revolution will not break out this very year. The Army is in perfect condition; artillery, supplies, engineering, troops – everything is ready for a decisive offensive in the spring of 1917. This time we will defeat the Germans and Austrians; on condition, of course, that the rear will not deprive us of our freedom of action. The Germans can save themselves only if they manage to provoke revolution from behind…”

“By 1916,” writes David Stevenson, “Russia, exceptionally among the belligerents, was experiencing a regular boom, with rising growth and a bullish stock exchange: coal output was up 30 per cent on 1914, chemicals output doubled, and machinery output trebled. Armaments rode the crest of the wave: new rifle production rose from 132,844 in 1914 to 733,017 in 1915, and 1,301,433 in 1916; 76mm field guns from 354 to 1,349 to 3721 in these years; 122mm heavy guns from 78 to 361 to 637; and shell production (of all types) from 104,900 to 9,567,888 to 30,974,678. During the war Russia produced 20,000 field guns, against 5,625 imported; and by 1917 it was manufacturing all its howitzers and three-quarters of its heavy artillery. Not only was the shell shortage a thing of the past, but by spring 1917 Russia was acquiring an unprecedented superiority in men and materiel.”

As. F. Vinberg, a colonel of a regiment in Riga, wrote: “Already at the end of 1916 and the beginning of 1917 many knew that, insofar as it is possible to calculate the future, our victories in the spring and summer of 1917 were guaranteed. All the deficiencies in the material and technical sphere, which had told so strongly in 1914 and 1915, had been corrected. All our armies had every kind of provisions in abundance. While in the German armies the insufficiency in everything was felt more strongly every day…”

“The price of this Herculean effort, however, was dislocation of the civilian economy and a crisis in urban food supply. The very achievement that moved the balance in the Allies’ favour by summer 1916 contained the seeds of later catastrophe.” Fr. Lev Lebedev cites figures showing that the production for the front equalled production for the non-military economy in 1916, and exceeded it in 1917. This presaged complete economic collapse in 1918; so if Russia did not defeat Germany in 1917 she was bound to lose the war...

Nevertheless, from a purely military point of view there were good reasons for thinking that Russia could defeat her enemies in 1917. Thus Dominic Lieven denies that there was “any military reason for Russia to seek a separate peace between August 1914 and March 1917. Too much attention is usually paid to the defeats of Tannenburg in 1914 and Gorlice-Tarnow in 1915. Russia’s military effort in the First World War amounted to much more than this. If on the whole the Russian army proved inferior to the German forces, that was usually true of the French and British as well. Moreover, during the Brusilov offensive in 1916 Russian forces had shown themselves quite capable of routing large German units. Russian armies usually showed themselves superior to Austrian forces of comparable size, and their performance against the Ottomans in 1914-16 was very much superior to that

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38 Stevenson, op. cit., p. 237.
39 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1997, p. 465.
of British forces operating in Gallipoli, Egypt and Mesopotamia. The Russian defence industry performed miracles in 1916 and if there were legitimate doubts as to whether this level of production could be fully sustained in 1917, the same was true of the war economies of a number of other belligerents. It is true that Rumania’s defeat necessitated a major redeployment of troops and supplies to the southern front in the weeks before the revolution and that this, together with a particularly severe winter, played havoc with railway movements on the home front. Nevertheless, in military terms there was absolutely no reason to believe that Russia had lost the war in February 1917.

"Indeed, when one raised one’s eyes from the eastern front and looked at the Allies’ overall position, the probability of Russian victory was very great, so long as the home front could hold. Although the British empire was potentially the most powerful of the Allied states, in 1914-16 France and Russia had carried the overwhelming burden of the war on land. Not until July 1916 on the Somme were British forces committed en masse against the Germans, and even then the British armies, though courageous to a fault, lacked proper training and were commanded by amateur officers and generals who lacked any experience of controlling masses of men. Even so, in the summer of 1916 the combined impact of the Somme, Verdun and the Brusilov offensive had brought the Central Powers within sight of collapse. A similar but better coordinated effort, with British power now peaking, held out excellent prospects for 1917. Still more to the point, by February 1917 the German campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare made American involvement in the war in the immediate future a near certainty: the Allied superiority in resources would thereby become overwhelming.

"Once stalemate set in on the battlefield in 1914, the First World War became as much as anything a contest over which belligerent’s home front would collapse first. This fate befell Russia in large part because even its upper and middle classes, let alone organized labour, were more hostile to the existing regime and less integrated into the legal political order than was the case even in Italy, let alone in France, Germany or Britain in 1914. In addition, opposition to the regime was less divided along ethnic lines than was the case in Austria-Hungary, and Russia was more geographically isolated from military and economic assistance from its allies than was the case with any of the other major belligerents. Nevertheless, unrest on the domestic front was by no means confined to Russia. The Italian home front seemed on the verge of collapse after the defeat of Caporetto in 1917 and the French army suffered major mutinies that year. In the United Kingdom the attempt to impose conscription in Ireland made that country ungovernable and led quickly to civil war. In both Germany and Austria revolution at home played a vital role in 1918, though in contrast to Russia it is true that revolution followed decisive military defeats and was set off in part by the correct sense that the war was unwinnable.
“The winter of 1916-17 was decisive not just for the outcome of the First World War but also for the history of twentieth-century Europe. Events on the domestic and military fronts were closely connected. In the winter of 1915-16 in both Germany and Austria pressure on civilian food consumption had been very severe. The winter of 1916-17 proved worse. The conviction of the German military leadership that the Central Powers’ home fronts could not sustain too much further pressure on this scale was an important factor in their decision to launch unrestricted submarine warfare in the winter of 1916-17, thereby (so they hoped) driving Britain out of the war and breaking the Allied blockade. By this supreme piece of miscalculation and folly the German leadership brought the United States into the war at precisely the moment when the overthrow of the imperial regime was preparing Russia to leave it…” 40

Russia was not defeated militarily from without, but by revolution from within. And yet the losses sustained by Russia in the war significantly helped the revolution. For in the first year almost all the old cadres, from privates to colonels, that is, the best and the most loyal to the Tsar, were killed. The prerevolutionary officer class was decimated in the first two years of the war. 41 From 1916, to fill up the losses in the ranks of the junior and middle commanders, the officer schools were forced to take 9/10ths of their entrance from non-noble estates. These new commanders were of much lower quality than their predecessors, who had been taught to die for the Faith and the Fatherland. Especially heavy losses were suffered in the same period by the military chaplains. The older generation of clergy had enjoyed considerable spiritual authority among the soldiers. But they were replaced by less experienced men enjoying less authority. 42

The critical factor was the loss of morale among the rank and file. In general, the appeals of the socialists and Bolsheviks before the war that the workers of different countries should not fight each other had not been successful. Patriotic feelings turned out to be stronger than class loyalties. However, the terrible losses of the war, the evidence of massive corruption in arms deliveries, the propaganda against the Tsar and the return of Bolshevikagitators began to take their toll.

“… Evidence suggests that many soldiers were convinced by 1915 that they could not beat the Germans, and that by the end of 1916 they were full of despondency and recrimination against the authorities who had sent them into war without the wherewithal to win. The evidence that victory was as

41 Sergius Vladimirovich Volkov, “Pervaia mirovaia vojna i russkij ofitserskij korpus”, Nasha Strana, N 2874, August 29, 2009, p. 3.
remote as ever, despite Brusilov’s initial successes and another million casualties, produced a still uglier mood. Soldiers’ letters revealed a deep anxiety about the deteriorating quality and quantity of their provisions (the daily bread ration was reduced from three pounds to two, and then to one, during the winter), as well as anger about rocketing inflation and scarcities that endangered their loved ones’ welfare. Many wanted to end the war whatever the cost, and over twenty mutinies seem to have occurred in October-December 1916 (the first on this scale in any army during the war), some involving whole regiments, and in each case taking the form of a collective refusal of orders to attack or to prepare to attack.”

The Germans were well aware of this, which is why they smuggled Lenin and a lot of money into Russia in a sealed train “in order to create... the greatest possible chaos. We should do all we can... to exacerbate the differences between the moderate and extremist parties, because we have the greatest possible in the latter gaining the upper hand”. This plan went back to 1915, when Alexander Helphand, code-named Parvus, a German agent, persuaded the German Foreign Ministry that they might engineer a mass strike in Russia. In March, 1917, Arthur Zimmermann convinced the Kaiser and the army that the Bolsheviks’ leader, Lenin, who was living in exile in Switzerland, should be smuggled back into Russia.

The Germans must have known that if Lenin, a sworn enemy of all governments, and especially of monarchist ones such as Germany’s, were to succeed in Russia, they would have created a scourge for their own backs. But they also knew that the Russian offensive of spring, 1917, if combined with simultaneous attacks from the west, would be very likely to be successful. So their only hope was the disintegration of Russia from within – which is what happened...

If the Germans knew that in supporting Lenin they were creating a scourge for their own backs, they at least had the excuse that they were fighting against Russia. Much less comprehensible was the attitude of the English and the other western states, who, while relying on the Russians as allies in the war, were prepared to plot against the Tsar. But the overthrow of the Tsar, and the consequent collapse of the Russian army, was compensated by the entry of America into the war at approximately the same time. This obscured the madness of attempting to overthrow a powerful ally in time of war. And for what? For democracy... And with what result? The installation of the most anti-democratic and tyrannical regime in the history of the world...

43 Stevenson, op. cit., p. 218.
44 Count Brockdorff-Rantzau to the German Foreign Office, April 2, 1917; in Cohen and Major, op. cit., p. 726.
45 Strachan, op. cit., p. 256.
THE ABDICATION OF THE TSAR

We have noted that at the beginning of the war, the family of European monarchies were already drastically weakened: “the monarchs, who still dreamed that international relations were a family affair, were suddenly as powerless as if revolutions had already broken out”.46 By the end of the war, the weakened structure had already begun to collapse completely. In 1917-18 the dynasties of the defeated nations: Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary were destroyed; Bulgaria’s king abdicated in favour of his son. Within a decade monarchy was destroyed or severely weakened in several other nations, such as Turkey, Italy and Greece. Where it survived, monarchy existed in a distorted form, shackled to parliaments and constitutions, unstable and prey to extremist movements from the right and the left.

Together with the closely related phenomenon of the fall from official favour of the Orthodox and Catholic churches (which was followed by the fiercest and widest persecution of the Orthodox Church in the whole of her history), the fall of monarchism represented the final collapse of the hierarchical principle in European public life. This is the principle that all legitimate power, both ecclesiastical and secular, comes from above, from God, and is filtered down from God to the kings and bishops and from them to the lower orders. Against it, especially from 1789, was raised the revolutionary principle, which asserts, by contrast, that all power comes from below, from the people, whether “the people” is understood as the ethnic nation or the general will as expressed in the ballot box. Since the revolutionary principle is against all hierarchy, its final aim is to dethrone God Himself, as several of the revolutionaries themselves admitted. The whole of “the long nineteenth century” (1789-1914) may be seen as one long war between these two opposing principles. By 1914 it looked as if the hierarchical principle had triumphed. But then the States of Europe turned against each other in the greatest and most destructive war in history to that date, enabling the revolutionary principle to claim the victory. Of course, the First World War did not begin as an ideological struggle between democracy and monarchy. On the social and psychological planes, it was primarily a war between Slavdom and Germanism, on the spiritual plane - between Orthodoxy and the western heresies. Even when the Germans invaded France, they did so primarily not out of ideological antipathy or nationalist envy, but so as to be able to turn the full strength of their armed forces against Orthodox Russia without having to worry about her western allies attacking from the rear. As for the masses in all the warring countries, they joined the war for very similar motives, in patriotic defence of king (whether autocratic or constitutional) and country...

46 Ferguson, op. cit., p. 107.
However, as time passed, the incongruity of the alliance between Republican France and Liberal Britain, on the one hand, and Autocratic Russia, on the other, began to trouble political consciences. Embarrassment increased as opposition to the Tsar increased in Russia, and democratic America with her anti-Russian Jewish bankers joined the war on the Allied side. Moreover, by 1917 Britain had a new and radical Prime Minister, Lloyd George, who had built his reputation on his opposition to the aristocrats and promotion of the welfare state. People were thinking about the post-war settlement, and the advancement of the liberal-socialist revolution, were again becoming important. Thus in the all-important propaganda war, the Germans were no longer denounced just for their cruelty, greed and Prussian militarism, but also for the fact that they had a monarch – albeit a grandson of Queen Victoria who spoke excellent English and was fascinated by England. As for Russia, she had been long condemned as “the prison of the peoples” ruled by a tyrannical tsar. Such an image had been repressed when the Tsar was the ally of Britain and France; but now, at the beginning of 1917, his people were deserting him, and a new ally had come to the fore – America’s President Woodrow Wilson, who was determined to make the world safe for democracy and apply his anti-monarchical and anti-imperialist vision of national self-determination...

Of course, the Allies still desperately wanted to keep Russian troops in the field against the Germans. But they would have been much happier if they had not been led by the “despotic” Tsar, staunch and faithful ally though he was. And so, they plotted to depose him...

The Tsar’s abdication was the product of a Masonic plot comprising about 300 members of Russia’s highest elites, and supported by Masonic lodges in France and England. They began putting their plans into action in January, 1917. In that month, there arrived in Petrograd an Allied Commission composed of representatives of England, France and Italy. After meeting with A.I. Guchkov, who was at that time president of the military-industrial committee, Prince G.E. Lvov, president of the State Duma Rodzyanko, General Polivanov, Sazonov, the English ambassador Buchanan, Milyukov and others, the mission presented the following demands to the Tsar, which amounted that to demanding that he resign altogether from public life:

1. The introduction into the Staff of the Supreme Commander of allied representatives with the right of a deciding vote.
2. The renewal of the command staff of all the armies on the indications of the heads of the Entente.
3. The introduction of a constitution with a responsible ministry.

He replied firmly and courageously:
1. “The introduction of allied representatives is unnecessary, for I am not suggesting the introduction of my representatives into the allied armies with the right of a deciding vote.”

2. “Also unnecessary. My armies are fighting with greater success than the armies of my allies.”

3. “The act of internal administration belongs to the discretion of the Monarch and does not require the indications of the allies.”

When the reply of the Tsar was made known there was a meeting in the English Embassy attended by the same people, at which it was decided: “To abandon the lawful path and step out on the path of revolution”. On February 14, Kerensky proclaimed this decision more or less openly at a session of the Duma: “The historical task of the Russian people at the present time is the task of annihilating the medieval regime immediately, at whatever cost... How is it possible to fight by lawful means against those whom the law itself has turned into a weapon of mockery against the people?... There is only one way with the violators of the law – their physical removal.”

Although the February revolution had been hatched in the English embassy, the English leaders themselves were far from uniformly hostile to the Tsar. The ambassador himself, Sir George Buchanan, was devoted to him. King George V loved his cousin – but still refused to give him asylum in England. For it was the King who could “not help doubting... on grounds of general expediency whether it is advisable that the Imperial Family should take up their residence in this country.”

Even the new British Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, though the most radical and left-wing politician ever to lead the country, was ambiguous about the Tsar and the plot to overthrow him. Thus “initially,” writes Roy Hattersley, “Lloyd George had regarded the overthrow of the Tsar as ‘worth the whole war and its terrible sacrifices’\(^\text{50}\), but within a month he had changed his mind. On 17 March... he

\(^{47}\) Armis (a Duma delegate), “Skrutaia Byl’” (A Hidden Story), Prizyv’ (Summons), N 50, Spring, 1920; in F. Vinberg, op. cit., pp. 165-166. “The English Embassy,” wrote Princess Paley, “on the orders of Lloyd George, became a nest of propaganda. The liberals, and Prince Lvov, Milyukov, Rodzianko, Maklakov, etc., used to meet there constantly. It was in the English embassy that the decision was taken to abandon legal paths and step out on the path of revolution” (Souvenir de Russia, 1916-1919, p. 33; in Yakobi, op. cit., p. 96).

\(^{48}\) Kerensky, in Voprosy Istorii (Questions of History), 1990, N 10, p. 144


\(^{50}\) Also, he “sent a telegram congratulating the revolution, ‘the greatest service that the Russian people have yet made to the cause for which the Allies are fighting.’ It demonstrated ‘the fundamental truth that this war is at bottom a struggle for popular government as well as for liberty.’”(Carter, op. cit., p. 467) It demonstrated nothing of the sort. In fact, during the war democratic institutions had been to a large extent suspended in all the warring states. As Stuart Miller writes, “By August 1916, Germany was subject to a semi-dictatorship by Hindenburg and Ludendorff. In Britain the ‘shelling shortage’ crisis of December 1916 started the centralisation of policy-making by Lloyd George and a War Cabinet [which was very small and ruled effectively by three or four men]. France had a military dictatorship by Joffre and Nivelle before 1917, but after the mutinies Clemenceau established a strong civilian
told Lord Riddell that Russia was ‘not sufficiently advanced for a republic’. [As regards the Tsar seeking asylum in Britain], Lloyd George was surprisingly sympathetic towards a man he called a ‘virtuous and well-meaning Sovereign [who] became directly responsible for a regime drenched in corruption, debauchery, favouritism, jealousy, sycophantic idolatry, incompetence and treachery’."\(^51\) This contradiction he made no effort to resolve... But his friend Winston Churchill made a better, more accurate tribute: “Surely to no nation has Fate been more malignant than to Russia. Her ship went down in sight of port... Every sacrifice had been made; the toil was achieved... In March the Tsar was on the throne: the Russian Empire and the Russian army held up, the front was secured and victory was undoubted. The long retreats were ended, the munitions famine was broken; arms were pouring in; stronger, larger, better equipped armies guarded the immense front... Moreover, no difficult action was no required: to remain in presence: to lean with heavy weight upon the far stretched Teutonic line: to hold without exceptional activity the weakened hostile forces on her front: in a word to endure – that was all that stood between Russia and the fruits of general victory... According to the superficial fashion of our time, the tsarist order is customarily seen as blind, rotten, a tyranny capable of nothing. But an examination of the thirty months of war with Germany and Austria should correct these light-minded ideas. We can measure the strength of the Russian Empire by the blows which it suffered, by the woes it experienced, by the inexhaustible forces that it developed, and by the restoration of forces of which it showed itself capable... In the government of states, when great events take place, the leader of the nation, whoever he may be, is condemned for failures and glorified for successes. The point is not who did the work or sketched the plan of battle: reproach or praise for the outcome is accorded to him who bears the authority of supreme responsibility. Why refuse this strict examination to Nicholas II? The brunt of supreme decisions centred upon him. At the summit where all problems are reduced to Yea and Nay, where events transcend the faculties of men and where all is inscrutable, he had to give the answers. His was the function of the compass needle. War or no war? Advance or retreat? Right or left? Democratise or hold firm? Quit or persevere? These were the battlefields of Nicholas II. Why should he reap no honour for them?... The regime which he personified, over which he presided, to which his personal character gave the final spark, had at this moment won the war for Russia. Now they crush him. A dark hand intervenes, clothed from the beginning in madness. The Tsar departs from the scene. He and all those whom he loved are given over to suffering and death. His efforts are minimized; his actions are condemned; his memory is defiled...”\(^52\)

\(^{51}\) Hattersley, op. cit., p. 436.

\(^{52}\) Churchill, World Crisis, 1916-1918, London, 1927, volume 1, p. 476. Churchill was first Lord of the Admiralty and a Mason since 1902 (Master, “Rosemary” lodge no. 2851).
“In the middle of 1916,” writes Fr. Lev Lebedev, “the Masons had designated February 22, 1917 for the revolution in Russia. But on this day his Majesty was still at Tsarksoye Selo, having arrived there more than a month before from Headquarters, and only at 2 o’clock on the 22nd did he leave again for Mogilev. Therefore everything had to be put back for one day and begin on February 23. By that time special trains loaded with provisions had been deliberately stopped on the approaches to Petrograd on the excuse of heavy snow drifts, which immediately elicited a severe shortage of bread, an increase in prices and the famous ‘tails’ – long queues for bread. The population began to worry, provocateurs strengthened the anxiety by rumours about the approach of inevitable famine, catastrophe, etc. But it turned out that the military authorities had reserves of food (from ‘N.Z.’) that would allow Petrograd to hold out until the end of the snow falls. Therefore into the affair at this moment there stepped a second very important factor in the plot – the soldiers of the reserve formations, who were in the capital waiting to be sent off to the front. There were about 200,000 of them, and they since the end of 1916 had been receiving 25 roubles a day (a substantial boost to the revolutionary agitation that had been constantly carried out among them) from a secret ‘revolutionary fund’. Most important of all, they did not want to be sent to the front. They were reservists, family men, who had earlier received a postponement of their call-up, as well as new recruits from the workers, who had been under the influence of propaganda for a long time. His Majesty had long ago been informed of the unreliability of the soldiers of the Petrograd garrison and had ordered General Alexeyev to introduce guards units, including cavalry, into the capital. However, Alexeyev had not carried out the order, referring to the fact that, according to the information supplied by the commandant of the Petrograd garrison General Khabalov, all the barracks in the capital were filled to overflowing, and there was nowhere to put the guardsmen!... In sum, against 200,000 unreliable reservists who were ready to rebel the capital of the Empire could hardly number 10,000 soldiers – mainly junkers and cadets from other military schools – who were faithful to his Majesty. The only Cossack regiment from the reserves was by that time also on the side of the revolution. The plotters were also successful in gaining the appointment of General Khabalov to the post of commandant of the capital and district. He was an inexperienced and extremely indecisive man. Had Generals Khan-Hussein of Nakhichevan or Count Keller been in his place, everything might have turned out differently…”

53 There is conflicting evidence on this point. Sedova writes: “Later Guchkov said that the coup was planned for March-April, 1917. However his comrades in the plot were more sincere. In Yekaterinoslav, where Rodzyanko’s estate was situated, there came rumours from his, Rodzyanko’s house that the abdication of the Tsar was appointed for December 6, 1917. At the beginning of 1917 Tereschenko declared in Kiev that the coup, during which the abdication was supposed to take place, was appointed for February 8” (“Ne Tsar’, a Ego Poddanie Otvetsvenny za Fevral’skij Perevorot 1917 Goda” (Not the Tsar, but his Subjects were Responsible for the Coup of 1917”), Nasha Strana, N 2864, March 14, 2009, p. 3). (V.M.)
54 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1997, pp. 477-
At the beginning of March (according to the old, Julian calendar), the noose around the Tsar was tightened. He was effectively “ambushed” in a little railway station called Dno (“Dno” in Russian means “Bottom”, signifying the lowest point in Russia’s history), isolated from all those loyal to him, and then, on March 2, forced to abdicate by the leading generals and the leading Duma delegates Rodzyanko, Guchkov and Shulgin…

Archpriest Lev Lebedev argues that the Tsar agreed to abdicate because he believed that the general dissatisfaction with his personal rule could be assuaged by his personal departure from the scene. But he never saw in this the renunciation of the Monarchy and its replacement by a republic; he never thought this would mean the destruction of the Monarchy, but only its transfer to another member of the Dynasty – his son, under the regency of his brother. This transfer, he thought, would placate the army and therefore ensure victory against the external enemy, Germany.

The first evidence of the Tsar’s real intentions is contained in his diary-entry for March 2/15: “My abdication is necessary. Ruzsky transmitted this conversation [with Rodzianko] to the Staff HQ, and Alexeyev to all the commanders-in-chief of the fronts. The replies from all arrived at 2:05. The essence is that for the sake of the salvation of Russia and keeping the army at the front quiet, I must resolve on this step. I agreed. From the Staff HQ they sent the draft of a manifesto. In the evening there arrived from Petrograd Guchkov and Shulgin, with whom I discussed and transmitted to them the signed and edited manifesto. At one in the morning I left Pskov greatly affected by all that had come to pass. All around me I see treason, cowardice, and deceit.”

Commenting on these last words, Fr. Lev writes: “The Tsar was convinced that this treason was personally to him, and not to the Monarchy, not to Russia! The generals were sincerely convinced of the same: they supposed that in betraying the Tsar they were not betraying the Monarchy and the Fatherland, but were even serving them, acting for their true good!... But betrayal and treason to God’s Anointed is treason to everything that is headed by him. The Masonic consciousness of the generals, drunk on their supposed ‘real power’ over the army, could not rise even to the level of this simple spiritual truth! And meanwhile the traitors had already been betrayed, the deceivers deceived! Already on the following day, March 3, General Alexeyev, having received more detailed information on what was happening in Petrograd, exclaimed: ‘I shall never forgive myself that I believed in the sincerity of certain people, obeyed them and sent the telegram to the commanders-in-chief on the question of the abdication of his Majesty from the Throne!’ ... In a similar way General Ruzsky quickly ‘lost faith in the new government’ and, as was written about him, ‘suffered great moral torments’ concerning his conversation with the Tsar, and the days March 1 and 2 ‘until the end of his life’ (his end came in October, 1918, when the Bolsheviks finished off Ruzsky in the Northern Caucasus). But we should not be moved
by these belated ‘sufferings’ and ‘recovery of sight’ of the generals (and also of some of the Great Princes). They did not have to possess information, nor be particularly clairvoyant or wise, they simply had to be faithful to their oath – and nothing more! One of the investigators of the generals’ treason, V. Kobylin, is right is saying that no later ‘regrets’ or even exploits on the fields of the Civil war could wash away the stain of eternal shame from the traitor-military commanders. ‘The world has never heard of such an offence,’ he writes. ‘After that, nothing other than Bolshevism could or should have happened... The Russian Tsar had been betrayed... The whole of Russia had been betrayed... The Army had been betrayed, and after this it would also betray. As a consequence of the acts of Alexeyev and the commanders-in-chief there would be ‘Order N 1’ (of the Soviet), which was carried out to the letter by the same Alexeyev...’ The whole of this ‘chain reaction’ of betrayals and deceits was determined, according to the just word of N. Pavlov, ‘by the connection of the Tsars with Orthodoxy and the people and the act of anointing by God. Before... the past and the future (of Russia) his Majesty stood alone,’ says Pavlov. ‘On no other Monarch had the burden of such a decision ever been laid, since there is no greater or more important country than Russia...’ Archimandrite Constantine (Zaitsev) adds: [Russia] ‘in general ceased to exist as a certain conciliar [sobornaia] personality’ – an exceptionally important observation! Although, in spite of the thought of Fr. Constantine, this did not happen immediately, at the moment of abdication.

“The whole point is that to the mysticism of Tsarist power as the ‘Head’ of Russia there corresponded the mysticism of its people’s ‘Body’. If you cut off the head of an ordinary person, then the body, like the head, is doomed to a rapid dying. But it was not like that with the mystical ‘Body’ of the people, Great Russia as a Conciliar Personality! This ‘Body’, this Personality was able in similar cases to generate a new Head in the form of a new Tsar, as had already happened more than once, for example in 1613! His Majesty Nicholas II knew this well. Therefore, in abdicating from his power personally, he firmly believed and knew that this power would be inherited by another Monarch, and in no other way, and he was completely right! A thousand times right! And wrong are those who rebuked (and to this day continue to rebuke) Nicholas II for ‘not thinking’ about the people, the Fatherland and Russia, and that by his abdication he ‘doomed’ them to something terrible. Nothing of the sort! After the inevitable period of a new Time of Troubles, the Great Russian people, that is, more than 80% of the population, which was deeply monarchist in the whole of its nature and psychology, could not fail to engender a new Orthodox Autocrat and nothing other than a restored Orthodox Kingdom!...

“... At that time, March 1-2, 1917, the question was placed before the Tsar, his consciousness and his conscience in the following way: the revolution in Petrograd is being carried out under monarchical banners: society, the people (Russia!) are standing for the preservation of tsarist power, for the planned carrying on of the war to victory, but this is being hindered only by one thing
- general dissatisfaction personally with Nicholas II, general distrust of his personal leadership, so that if he, for the sake of the good and victory of Russia, were to depart, then he would save both the Homeland and the Dynasty!

“Convinced, as were his generals, that everything was like that, his Majesty, who never suffered from love of power (he could be powerful, but not power-loving!), after 3 o’clock in the afternoon of March 2, 1917, immediately sent two telegrams - to Rodzyanko in Petrograd and to Alexeyev in Mogilev. In the first he said: ‘There is no sacrifice that I would not undertake in the name of the real good of our native Mother Russia. For that reason I am ready to renounce the Throne in favour of My Son, in order that he should remain with Me until his coming of age, under the regency of My brother, Michael Alexandrovich’. The telegram to Headquarters proclaimed: ‘In the name of the good of our ardently beloved Russia, her calm and salvation, I am ready to renounce the Throne in favour of My Son. I ask everyone to serve Him faithfully and unhypocritically.’ His Majesty said, as it were between the lines: ‘Not as you have served Me…’ Ruzsky, Danilov and Savich went away with the texts of the telegrams.

“On learning about this, Voeikov ran into the Tsar’s carriage: ‘Can it be true... that You have signed the abdication?’ The Tsar gave him the telegrams lying on the table with the replies of the commanders-in-chief, and said: ‘What was left for me to do, when they have all betrayed Me? And first of all – Nikolasha (Great Prince Nicholas Nikolayevich)... Read!’”

As in 1905, so in 1917, probably the single most important factor influencing the Tsar’s decision was the attitude of his uncle and the former Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolayevich Romanov, “Nikolasha” as he was known in the family. It was indeed the case that there was very little he could do in view of the treason of the generals and Nikolasha. He could probably continue to defy the will of the social and political élite, as he had done more than once in the past – but not the generals...

E.E. Alferev writes: “Factually speaking, in view of the position taken by [Generals] Ruzsky and Alexeev, the possibility of resistance was excluded. Being cut off from the external world, the Sovereign was as it were in captivity. His orders were not carried out, the telegrams of those who remained faithful to their oath of allegiance were not communicated to him.

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The Empress, who had never trusted Ruzsky, on learning that the Tsar’s train had been help up at Pskov, immediately understood the danger. On March 2 she wrote to his Majesty: ‘But you are alone, you don’t have the army with you, you are caught like a mouse in a trap. What can you do?’

But let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that the Tsar had had a choice, and was able, as Nicholas I had been able in 1825, to suppress the rebellion by force. The problem was that the country had changed drastically since 1825: the rebels were now not one small and unrepresentative segment of the population, but the majority of the educated classes. The Russian Autocracy, with the exception of some of the eighteenth-century tsars, had never acted against the people or in conflict with the people’s ideal – this is what distinguished it from western-style absolutism. So now that the majority of the people were no longer in solidarity with the tsar, having exchanged his and Holy Russia’s ideal of Orthodox Christianity for the western idols of democracy and material goods, there was nothing that the Tsar could honourably do but abdicate. The people had renounced Orthodoxy and the Autocrat who stood on guard for Orthodoxy; so now God, honouring its free will, granted it to taste the bitter fruits of “freedom”…

What Lebedev calls “the first echelon” of the revolution, the Cadets and Octobrists, favoured the English model - a constitutional monarchy which preserved religion and the monarchy while allowing the people participation in government. They did not want the Tsar to abdicate (at first) but demanded from him a “responsible” government (i.e. one controlled by them).

The Russian Autocracy showed a spiritual consistency and purpose that was lacking in English constitutionalism. For all the Russian tsars consciously – albeit with differing levels of success – pursued the aim of the defence of Orthodoxy and the eternal salvation of all the people through Orthodoxy; whereas the English constitutional monarchy had no such spiritual purpose, and was in any case subject to parliament – which as a result of its “multimutinous” essence (Tsar Ivan IV’s word) could have no single purpose either. For in the last resort, in spite of many human failings, the Russian Autocracy tried to serve God, and precisely for that reason submitted to no other authority than God’s, seeing its authority as derived from God; whereas the English monarchy, after its fall from grace in 1066, served many masters, but first of all Mammon, and saw its authority as derived, not from God, but from man…

Democracy, of course, claims to guarantee the freedom and equality of its citizens. But even if we accept that “freedom” and “equality” are too often equated by liberals with licence and an unnatural levelling of human diversity, and that they had little to do with spiritual freedom or moral

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equality, England in 1914 was probably a less free and less equal society than Russia. As the call-up for the Boer war in 1899-1902 revealed, a good half of British conscripts were too weak and unhealthy to be admitted to active service. And things were no better in 1918, when the tall, well-fed American troops compared well with the scrawny, emaciated Tommies - the monstrously rich factory-owners and aristocratic landlords had seen to it that their lot remained as harsh as ever. But in Russia in 1914 greatly increased prosperity, rapidly spreading education among all classes, liberal labour laws and a vast increase in a free, independent yeomanry (especially in Siberia) were transforming the country.

The idea that autocracy is necessarily inimical to freedom and equality was refuted by the monarchist Andozerskaya in Alexander Solzhenitsyn’s novel, “October, 1916”: “Under a monarchy it is perfectly possible for both the freedom and the equality of citizens to flourish. First, a firm hereditary system delivers the country from destructive disturbances. Secondly, under a hereditary monarchy there is no periodic upheaval of elections, and political disputes in the country are weakened. Thirdly, republican elections lower the authority of the power, we are not obliged to respect it, but the power is forced to please us before the elections and serve us after them. But the monarch promised nothing in order to be elected. Fourthly, the monarch has the opportunity to weigh up things in an unbiased way. The monarchy is the spirit of national unity, but under a republic divisive competition is inevitable. Fifthly, the good and the strength of the monarch coincide with the good and the strength of the whole country, he is simply forced to defend the interests of the whole country if only in order to survive. Sixthly, for multi-national, variegated countries the monarch is the only tie and the personification of unity…”

For these reasons Nicholas II was completely justified in his firm attachment to the autocratic principle. And his choice was vindicated by his own conduct: no autocrat conducted himself with more genuine humility and love for his subjects, and a more profound feeling of responsibility before God. He was truly an autocrat, and not a tyrant. He did not sacrifice the people for himself, but himself for the people. The tragedy of Russia was that she was about to exchange the most truly Christian of monarchs for the most horrific of all tyrannies - all in the name of freedom!

The constitutionalists criticize the Orthodox autocracy mainly on the grounds that it presents a system of absolute, uncontrolled power, and therefore of tyranny. They quote the saying of the historian Lord Acton: “Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely”. But this is and

58 As he said to Count Witte in 1904: “I will never, in any circumstances, agree to a representative form of government, for I consider it harmful for the people entrusted to me by God.” (Fomin & Fomina, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 376).
was a serious misunderstanding. The Russian autocracy was based on the anointing of the Church and on the faith of the people; and if it betrayed either – by disobeying the Church, or by trampling on the people’s faith, - it lost its legitimacy, as we see in the Time of Troubles, when the people rejected the false Dmitri. It was therefore limited, not absolute, being limited, not by parliament or any secular power, but by the teachings of the Orthodox Faith and Church, and must not be confused with the system of absolutist monarchy that we see in, for example, the French King Louis XIV, or the English King Henry VIII, who felt limited by nothing and nobody on earth.

The Tsar-Martyr resisted the temptation to act like a Western absolutist ruler, thereby refuting those in both East and West who looked on his rule as just that – a form of absolutism. Like Christ in Gethsemane, he told his friends to put their swords, and surrendered himself into the hands of his enemies; “for this is your hour, and the power of darkness” (Luke 22.53). He showed that the Orthodox Autocracy was not a form of absolutism, but something completely sui generis – the external, secular aspect of the government of the Orthodox Church on earth. He refused to treat his power as if it were independent of the Church and people, but showed that it was a form of service to the Church and the people from within the Church and the people, in accordance with the word: “I have raised up one chosen out of My people… with My holy oil have I anointed him” (Psalm 88.18, 19). So not “government by the people and for the people” in a democratic sense, but “government by one chosen out of the people of God for the people of God and responsible to God alone”… Tsar Nicholas perfectly understood the nature of his autocratic power, which is why he never went against the Church or violated Orthodoxy, but rather upheld and championed both the one and the other. Moreover, he demonstrated in his personal life a model of Christian humility and love.

If we compare the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II in 1917 with that of the British King Edward VIII in 1936, then we immediately see the superiority, not only of the Tsar over the King personally, but also of Orthodox autocracy over constitutional monarchy generally. Edward VIII lived a life of debauchery, flirted with the German Nazis, and then abdicated, not voluntarily, for the sake of the nation, but because he could not have both the throne and a continued life of debauchery at the same time. He showed no respect for Church or faith, and perished saying: “What a wasted life!” While the abdication of Edward VIII only demonstrated his unfitness to rule, the abdication of Tsar Nicholas, by contrast, saved the monarchy for the future. For while continuing to fight for his rule would have been completely justified from a purely juridical point of view, it was not justified from a deeper, eschatological point of view. That is why Blessed Pasha of Sarov (+1915), who called him “the greatest of the tsars”, nevertheless called on him to step down. If he had been personally ambitious, or cared first for his own safety, he would have fought to retain his throne, but he abdicated, as we
have seen, in order to avoid civil war and guarantee his country’s victory in an external war against a powerful and heretical enemy. In this he followed the example of the first canonized saints of Russia, the Princes Boris and Gleb, and the advice of the Prophet Shemaiah to King Rehoboam and the house of Judah as they prepared to face the house of Israel: “Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren, the children of Israel. Return every man to his house…” (I Kings 12.24).

The Tsar at first abdicated in favour of his son Alexis, but then changed his mind and appointed his brother Prince Michael. But Michael, under pressure from the Masons under Kerensky, refused to accept the throne. When Tsar Nicholas heard, he was devastated…

However, writes Lebedev, “Michael Alexandrovich... did not decide [completely] as Kerensky and the others wanted. He did not abdicate from the Throne directly in favour of the Provisional Government. In the manifesto that he immediately wrote he suggested that the question of his power and in general of the form of power in Russia should be decided by the people itself, and in that case he would become ruling Monarch if ‘that will be the will of our Great People, to whom it belongs, by universal suffrage, through their representatives in a Constituent Assembly, to establish the form of government and the new basic laws of the Russian State’. For that reason, the manifesto goes on to say, ‘invoking the blessing of God, I beseech all the citizens of the Russian State to submit to the Provisional Government, which has arisen and been endowed with all the fullness of power at the initiative of the State Duma (that is, in a self-willed manner, not according to the will of the Tsar – Prot. Lebedev), until the Constituent Assembly, convened in the shortest possible time on the basis of a universal, direct, equal and secret ballot, should by its decision on the form of government express the will of the people. Michael.’ The manifesto has been justly criticised in many respects. But still it is not a direct transfer of power to the ’democrats’!”

Not a direct transfer of power, but an indirect transfer, nevertheless. For Tsar Michael had effectively given the people the final say in how they were to be ruled, thereby giving them the opportunity to destroy the monarchy. “The talk was not,” writes M.A. Babkin, “about the Great Prince’s abdication from the throne, but about the impossibility of his occupying the royal throne without the clearly expressed acceptance of this by the whole people of Russia.” However, the people of Russia was not allowed to express its opinion...

59 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 491.
In Deuteronomy 17.14 the Lord had laid it down as one of the conditions of the creation of a God-pleasing monarchy that the people should want a God-pleasing king. For, as Lev Alexandrovich Tikhomirov writes: "Without establishing a kingdom, Moses foresaw it and pointed it out in advance to Israel... It was precisely Moses who pointed out in advance the two conditions for the emergence of monarchical power: it was necessary, first, that the people itself should recognize its necessity, and secondly, that the people itself should not elect the king over itself, but should present this to the Lord. Moreover, Moses indicated a leadership for the king himself: 'when he shall sit upon the throne of his kingdom, he must... fulfil all the words of this law'."\(^61\)

So the Tsars could not continue to rule if the people did not want them. Just as it takes two willing partners to make a marriage, so it takes a head and a body who are willing to work with each other to make a Christian state. The bridegroom in this case was willing and worthy, but the bride was not...

As P.S. Lopukhin wrote: “At the moment of his abdication his Majesty felt himself to be profoundly alone, and around him was ‘cowardice, baseness and treason’. And to the question how he could have abdicated from his tsarist service, it is necessary to reply: he did this because we abdicated from his tsarist service, from his sacred and sanctified authority…”\(^62\)

In agreement with this, the philosopher Ivan Alexandrovich Ilyin wrote: “Faithfulness to the monarchy is a condition of soul and form of action in which a man unites his will with the will of his Sovereign, his dignity with his dignity, his destiny with his destiny... The fall of the monarchy was the fall of Russia herself. A thousand-year state form fell, but no ‘Russian republic’ was put in its place, as the revolutionary semi-intelligentsia of the leftist parties dreamed, but the pan-Russian disgrace foretold by Dostoyevsky was unfurled, and a failure of spirit. And on this failure of spirit, on this dishonour and disintegration there grew the state Anchar of Bolshevism, prophetically foreseen by Pushkin – a sick and unnatural tree of evil that spread its poison on the wind to the destruction of the whole world. In 1917 the Russian people fell into the condition of the mob, while the history of mankind shows that the mob is always muzzled by despots and tyrants...

“The Russian people unwound, dissolved and ceased to serve the great national work – and woke up under the dominion of internationalists. History has as it were proclaimed a certain law: Either one-man rule or chaos is possible in Russia; Russia is not capable of a republican order. Or more exactly: the

\(^61\) Tikhomirov, Monarkhicheskaia Gosudarstvennost (Monarchical Statehood), St. Petersburg, 1992, pp. 127-129.
\(^62\) Lopukhin, “Tsar’ i Patriarkh” (Tsar and Patriarch), Pravoslavnij Put’ (The Orthodox Way), Jordanville, 1951, pp. 103-104.
existence of Russia demands one-man rule – either a religiously and nationally strengthened one-man rule of honour, fidelity and service, that is, a monarchy, or one-man rule that is atheist, conscienceless and dishonourable, and moreover anti-national and international, that is, a tyranny.”

Archimandrite Constantine (Zaitsev) wrote that the tragedy of the last days of the Russian Empire consisted in the fact the people were ever more strongly attracted to the European path with its liberation from all paths hindering the attainment of ever greater prosperity and ever greater freedom. “In this striving for civil freedom, the Russian man lost the capacity and the readiness freely to submit to the power given by God, and rational freedom was transformed in the consciousness of Russian people into freedom from spiritual discipline, into a cooling towards the Church, into lack of respect for the Tsar. The Tsar became, with the civil flourishing of Russia, spiritually and psychologically speaking unnecessary. He was not needed by free Russia. The closer to the throne, and the higher up the ladder of culture, prosperity and intellectual development, the more striking became the spiritual abyss opening up between the Tsar and his subjects. Only in this way, generally speaking, can we explain the fact of the terrifying emptiness that was formed around the Tsar from the moment of the revolution.”

The demand for his abdication was “a sharp manifestation of that psychological feeling of the unnecessariness of the Tsar which took hold of Russia. Every person acted according to his own logic and had his own understanding of what was necessary for the salvation and prosperity of Russia. Here there might have been much cleverness, and even much state wisdom. But that mystical trembling before the Tsar’s power and that religious certainty that the Tsar and Anointed of God bore in himself the grace of God which it was impossible to distance oneself from by substituting one’s own ideas for it, no longer existed, it had disappeared…”

And so the Scripture was fulfilled: “We have no king, because we feared not the Lord…” (Hosea 10.3)

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63 Ilyin, Sobranie Sochinenij (Collected Works), Moscow, 1994, volume 4, p. 7; in Valentina D. Sologub, Kto Gospoden’ – Ko Mne! (He who is the Lord’s – to me!), Moscow, 2007, p. 53.
64 Zaitsev, in Zhitiia i Tvorenia Russkikh Svyatykh (The Lives and Works of the Russian Saints), Moscow, 2001, p. 1059.)
On March 2, at the Tauris palace in Petrograd, Pavel Milyukov announced the formation of a “Provisional” government to oversee the administration of the country until the convening of an elected Constituent Assembly. The “poisonous question” was put to him: “Who elected you?” Many years later Milyukov wrote: “I could have read out a whole dissertation in reply. We were not ‘elected’ by the Duma. Nor were we elected by Lvov in accordance with the tsar’s order prepared at Headquarters, of which we could not have been informed. All these sources for the succession of power we ourselves had consciously cast out. There remained only one reply, the clearest and most convincing. I replied: ‘The Russian revolution has elected us!’ This simple reference to the historical process that brought us to power shut the mouths of the most radical opponents.”

This explains why none of the leaders of the Provisional Government, from Milyukov to Lvov to Kerensky, offered any real opposition to the Bolshevik revolution in October, and were so easily swept into “the dustbin of history”, in Trotsky’s phrase. Indeed, as P. Novgorodtsev writes: "Prince Lvov, Kerensky and Lenin were bound together by an unbroken bond. Prince Lvov was as guilty of Kerensky as Kerensky was of Lenin. If we compare these three actors of the revolution, who each in turn led the revolutionary power, in their relationship to the evil principle of civil enmity and inner dissolution, we can represent this relationship as follows. The system of guileless non-resistance to evil, which was applied by Prince Lvov as a system of ruling the state, with Kerensky was transformed into a system of pandering to evil camouflaged by phrases about ‘the revolutionary leap’ and the good of the state, while with Lenin it was transformed into a system of openly serving evil clothed in the form of merciless class warfare and the destruction of all those displeasing to the authorities. Each of the three mentioned persons had his utopian dreams, and history dealt with all of them in the same way: it turned their dreams into nothing and made of them playthings of the blind elements. The one who most appealed to mass instincts and passions acquired the firmest power over the masses. In conditions of general anarchy the path to power and despotism was most open to the worst demagogy. Hence it turned out that the legalized anarchy of Prince Lvov and Kerensky naturally and inevitably gave way to the demagogic depotism of Lenin.”

The only possible source for the legitimate, ordered succession of power after the abdication of the Tsar was the Tsar’s own orders, given on the same day, transferring royal power to his brother, Great Prince Michael, and

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appointing – at the request of the Duma representatives Guchkov and Shulgin - Prince V.E. Lvov as President of the Council of Ministers and General L.G. Kornilov as Commander of the Petrograd military district. But the Duma politicians had no intention of accepting Great Prince Michael as tsar (Milyukov and Guchkov were in favour of a constitutional monarchy, but not a true autocracy), and soon compelled him, too, to abdicate. As for Lvov, he was made head of the Provisional Government, but not by virtue of any order of the Tsar, whose authority the Duma politicians rejected.

Since the legitimizing power of the Tsar’s orders had been rejected, there remained only the authority of a popular election, according to liberal theory. But the Provisional Government had not, of course, been elected. Rather, its purpose was to supervise the election of a Constituent Assembly which alone, according to liberal theory, could bring a legitimate government into power. So Miliukov resorted to a deliberate paradox: they had been “elected” by the revolution. The paradox consists in the fact that revolutions do not “elect” in accordance with established legal procedures; for the revolution is the violent overthrow of all existing procedures and legalities...

But if the Provisional Government came to power through the revolution – that is, through the violent overthrow of all existing procedures and legalities – it had no legal authority to suppress the continuation of the revolution through the violent overthrow of its own power. In this fact lies the clue to the extraordinarily weak and passive attitude of the Provisional Government towards all political forces to the left of itself. It could not rule because, according to its own liberal philosophy, it had no right to rule...

No such inhibitions were felt by the radical socialists, for whom might was right and the niceties of liberal political philosophy and procedure were irrelevant. Already the previous night the Duma had begged Himmer, Nakhamkes and Alexandrovich of the Petrograd Soviet to allow them to create a government; which showed that the Soviet, and not the Provisional Government, was the real ruler. And now, on March 2, in its very first act, “Soviet Order Number One”, it rubbed the government’s nose in the dust: “The orders of the military commission of the State Duma are to be obeyed only in such instances when they do not contradict the orders and decrees of the Soviet”. In other words, the Provisional Government that officially came into being on March 3, and which was formed from liberal Duma deputies, was to rule only by permission of the real ruler, the Soviet, which had come into being on March 1 and supposedly represented the soldiers and workers.

The immediate effect of Order Number One was to destroy discipline in the army, as soldiers refused to salute or obey their officers – or simply went home to join in the looting of landowners’ and church estates. And so the Tsar’s main purpose in abdicating – to preserve the army as a fighting force capable of defeating the Germans – was frustrated before the ink was dry on
his manifesto. The lesson was clear: if the Russians did not want to be ruled by the God-anointed Tsar, then, by God’s permission and as punishment for their sins, they would be ruled by the Satan-appointed Soviets...

The inequality of the “dual-power” system was evident from the beginning. Thus M.V. Rodzianko, who more than anyone had forced the Tsar to sign his abdication, was excluded from the list of ministers as being unacceptable to the masses; and Guchkov and Miliukov, the Ministers of War and Foreign Affairs, who had also played major roles in the abdication of the Tsar, did not last beyond the April Crisis after their continued support for the war became apparent. This left the government in the hands of a group of leftist Masons: Kerensky (the link with the Petrograd Soviet), Nekrasov, Konovalov, Tereshchenko and Efremov. Together with the Soviet, they immediately passed a series of laws: political prisoners and revolutionaries were amnestied, trade unions were recognized, an eight-hour day for workers was introduced, the Tsarist police was replaced by a “people’s militia”, and full civil and religious freedoms, including the removal of all restrictions on the Jews, were introduced.

This orgy of liberal freedoms – accompanied by an orgy of violence throughout the country - earned the government the plaudits, not only of deadly enemies of Tsarism such as the Jewish banker Jacob Schiff in New York, but also of the western governments, whose democratic prejudices blinded them to the fact that the revolution was turning Russia from their most faithful ally into their deadliest enemy... But as time passed and the chaos spread throughout the country, it became clear that neither the Provisional Government, nor even the Soviets, nor even a coalition between the two on a pro-war platform, would be able to control the revolutionary masses, who wanted peace at any price with the Germans abroad and the most radical social revolution at home. Of all the parties represented in the Soviets, it was only the Bolsheviks (for the soldiers and workers) and the Left Social Revolutionaries (for the peasants) who understood this, who had their fingers on the nation’s revolutionary pulse...

Anarchy was the order of the day, and the only “justice” was imposed by lynchings. Thus Gorky claimed to have seen 10,000 cases of summary justice in 1917 alone.67 The Church suffered particularly in this period...

I.L. Solonevich writes: “I remember the February days of our great and bloodless [revolution] – how great a mindlessness descended on our country! A 100,000-strong flock of completely free citizens knocked about the prospects of Peter’s capital. They were in complete ecstasy, this flock: the accursed bloody autocracy had come to an end! Over the world there was rising a dawn deprived of ‘annexations and contributions’, capitalism, imperialism, autocracy and even Orthodoxy: now we can begin to live! According to my

professional duty as a journalist, overcoming every kind of disgust, I also knocked about among these flocks that sometimes circulated along the Nevsky Prospect, sometimes sat in the Tauris palace, and sometimes went to watering holes in the broken-into wine cellars. They were happy, this flock. If someone had then begun to tell them that in the coming third of a century after the drunken days of 1917 they would pay for this in tens of millions of lives, decades of famine and terror, new wars both civil and world, and the complete devastation of half of Russia, - the drunken people would have taken the voice of the sober man for regular madness. But they themselves considered themselves to be completely rational beings…”

In an article written in 1923 G. Mglinsky explained why the government proved so weak in the face of this anarchy: “Understanding the absence of firm ground under their feet because of the absence of those layers of the population on which it was possible to rely, the new government fell immediately into dependence on the ‘Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies’ which had been formed even before the abdication of his Majesty the Emperor, and behind which there stood the capital’s working masses who had been propagandized by the same Russian intelligentsia. Although it did not really sympathize with the content of Order Number 1, which destroyed the army, and understood all its danger, the Provisional Government nevertheless allowed the carrying out of this order - so criminal in relation to the fatherland - by the hands of its Minister of War Guchkov.

“Fearing a reaction in the Russian people, which, as it well understood, would hardly be likely to be reconciled with the seizure of power by a bunch of intriguers, the Provisional Government from the very beginning of its activity tried hard to destroy the state-administrative apparatus. With a stroke of the pen all administrative power in Russia was destroyed. The governors were replaced by zemstvo activists, the city commanders – by city-dwellers, the police – by militia.

“But, as is well known, it is always easy to destroy, but very difficult to create. And so it was here: having destroyed the old state apparatus, the Provisional Government did not think of, or, more likely, was simply not able to create anything in its place. Russia was immediately handed over to itself and nepotism was introduced as a slogan for the whole of the state administration, and this at precisely the moment when a strong power was required as never before.

“When representatives of the old and new administrations came to the head of the Provisional Government, Prince [G.E.] Lvov, and demanded directions, they unfailingly received the same refusal which Prince Lvov gave

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68 Solonevich, in “Ot Ipatyevskogo Monastyria do Doma Ipatyevskogo” (From the Ipatiev Monastery to the Ipatiev House), Pravoslavnie Monastyri (Orthodox Monasteries), 29, 2009, p. 10.
to the representatives of the press in his interview of 7 March, that is, five
days after the coup. ‘This is a question of the old psychology. The Provisional
Government has removed the old governors and is not going to appoint
anybody. They will be elected on the spot. Such questions must be resolved
not from the centre, but by the population itself... We are all boundlessly
happy that we have succeeded in living to this great moment when we can
create a new life of the people - not for the people, but together with the
people... The future belongs to the people which has manifested its genius in
this historical days. What great happiness it is to live in these great days!’

“These words, which sound now like pure irony, were not invented, they
are found in the text of the 67th page of the first volume of A History of the
Second Russian Revolution written, not by any die-hard or black-hundredist,
but by Paul Milyukov ‘himself’, who later on the pages of his history gives the
following evaluation of the activity of the head of the government which he
himself joined as Minister of Foreign Affairs:

“‘This world-view of the leader of our inner politics,’ says Milyukov, ‘led
in fact to the systematic cessation of activity of his department and to the self-
limitation of the central authority to a single task – the sanctioning of the
fruits of what in the language of revolutionary democracy is called the
revolutionary creation of rights. The population, left to itself and completely
deprived of protection from the representatives of the central power,
necessarily had to submit to the rule of party organizations, which acquired,
in new local committees, a powerful means of influence and propagandizing
 certain ideas that flattered the interests and instincts of the masses, and for
that reason were more acceptable for them.’”

There was no real opposition to this wanton destruction of old Russia
because the forces on the right were in a state of shock and ideological
uncertainty that left them incapable of undertaking any effective counter-
measures. We search in vain for a leader, in Church or State, who called for
the restoration of the Romanov dynasty at this time. Perhaps the deputy over-
procurator, Raev, who called on the Synod to support the monarchy, was an
exception to this rule, or the only Orthodox general who remained faithful to
his oath, Theodore Keller. Or perhaps Archimandrite Vitaly (Maximenko) of

69 Mglinsky, “Grekhi russkoj intelligentsii” (The Sins of the Russian Intelligentsia), Staroe
Vremia (Old Times), 1923; in Prince N.D. Zhevakov, Vospominania (Reminiscences), Moscow,
1993. Zhevakov, who was assistant over-procurator during the February Revolution,
comments on these words: “If Milyukov, who took the closest participation in the overthrow
of Tsarist Power in Russia, could talk like this, then what was it like in reality! ‘Things were
no better in other departments. Everywhere complete chaos reigned, for none of the
departmental bosses, nor the government as a whole, had any definite, systematically
realizable plan. They broke down everything that was old, they broke it down out of a
spectral fear of a return to the old. Without thinking of tomorrow, with a kind of mad haste,
they broke down everything that the whole Russian people is now beginning to sorrow
over...’ (Staroe Vremia, December 18/31, 1923, No 13).” (op. cit.)
Pochaev monastery, the future Archbishop of Eastern America, who, “having found out about the emperor’s abdication… travelled to the Tsar’s military headquarters in Mogilev in order to plead with the sovereign to rescind his abdication. He was not allowed a meeting…”

Orthodox monarchism, it seemed, was dead… The abdication of the Tsar was greeted with joy by people of all classes – even the peasantry. As Oliver Figes writes, “the news from the capital was joyously greeted by huge assemblies in the village fields. ‘Our village,’ recalls one peasant, ‘burst into life with celebrations. Everyone felt enormous relief, as if a heavy rock had suddenly been lifted from our shoulders.’ Another peasant recalled the celebrations in his village on the day it learned of the Tsar’s abdication: ‘People kissed each other from joy and said that life from now on would be good. Everyone dressed in their best costumes, as they do on a big holiday. The festivities went on for three days.’ Many villages held religious processions to thank the Lord for their newly won freedoms, and offered up prayers for the new government. For many peasants, the revolution appeared as a sacred thing, while those who had laid down their lives for the people’s freedom were seen by the peasants as modern-day saints. Thus the villagers of Bol’she-Dvorskaya volost in the Tikhvinsk district of Petrograd province held a ‘service of thanksgiving for the divine gift of the people’s victory and the eternal memory of those holy men who fell in the struggle for freedom’. The villagers of Osvyishi village in Tver province offered, as they put it, ‘fervent prayers to thank the Lord for the divine gift of the people’s victory… and since this great victory was achieved by sacrifice, we held a requiem for all our fallen brothers’. It was often with the express purpose of reciprocating this sacrifice that many villages sent donations, often amounting to several hundred roubles, to the authorities in Petrograd for the benefit of those who had suffered losses in the February Days.”

This confusion of the values of Christianity with those of the anti-Christian revolution was also evident in contemporary literature – in, for example, Blok’s poem The Twelve, in which Christ is portrayed at the head of the Red Guards. The prevalence of this confusion among all classes of society showed how deeply the democratic-revolutionary ideology had penetrated the masses in the pre-revolutionary period. For those with eyes to see it showed that there could be no quick return to normality, but only a very long, tortuous and tormented path of repentance through suffering...

THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

The abysmal failure of the Russian army’s offensive in June, 1917 made the Bolshevik coup possible. Order number one (issued under pressure from the Soviets by Guchkov in his capacity as Minister of War) and the success of the Bolshevik propaganda against the war deprived the army of the minimum discipline required for any successful offensive. In the event, while General Alexeyev calculated that the losses would be about 6000, they turned out to be 400,000. An offensive that had been designed by Kerensky and the liberals to bolster the state and the forces of law and order by bringing all classes together on a patriotic wave ended by opening the path to the final destruction of the state.

The coup began with the setting up of a separate government by the Bolshevized sailors of Kronstadt, which precipitated a confused “semi-insurrection”, in Trotsky’s words, in early July. But the insurrection failed, Kerensky became prime minister and a crackdown on the Bolsheviks began. Lenin fled into hiding in Finland, and many party members were arrested: it was left to Stalin and Sverdlov to keep the party afloat inside Russia.

The Mensheviks and other socialists to the right of the Bolsheviks also helped at this critical point. Believing that there were “no enemies to the Left”, and fearing a counter-revolution, they protected the Bolsheviks from treason charges. A year later, the Bolsheviks proved their ingratitude by imprisoning the Mensheviks...

In spite of this setback, support for the Bolsheviks continued to grow, especially after they adopted the SR slogan, “Land to the Peasants!” recognizing the peasants’ seizure of the landowners’ estates as in keeping with “revolutionary legality”. As their wars against the peasantry in 1918-22 and 1928-1934 were to show, the Bolsheviks were never a pro-peasant party, and really wanted to nationalize the land rather than give it to the peasants. This was in accordance with Marxist teaching, which saw the industrial proletariat as the vanguard of the revolution, but looked down on the peasants, with their religiosity, old-fashioned ways and rejection of state interference, as being relics of the old order. However, towards the end of his life, in 1881, Marx had entered into correspondence with the narodnik Vera Zasulich, and had recognized the possibility that the revolution in Russia could begin with the agrarian socialists. So Lenin had some precedent in making tactical concessions to the SRs at this point – concessions he was soon to take back once he was in power. It paid off: many Left SRs joined the party, and others voted for the Bolsheviks in the Soviets.

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72 Figes, op. cit., p. 408.
73 Figes, op. cit., p. 436.
In late August, alarmed by the increasing power of the Bolsheviks, and by the German advance on Petrograd, which was creating chaos in the rear, General Kornilov, the new commander-in-chief of the Russian armies, ordered his troops to march on Petrograd in order to restore order. As he said on August 11: “It is time to put an end to all this. It is time to hang the German agents and spies, with Lenin at their head, to dispel the Council of Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies and scatter them far and wide, so that they should never be able to come together again!” Right-wing forces in politics (Rodzyanko, Guchkov, Milyukov), in business and in the army (the Officers’ Union and the Union of Cossacks) soon rallied around him, hoping to prevent the Russian revolution from following the pattern of the French revolution and passing from a bourgeois, liberal phase to a Jacobin, terrorist one. It may be that Kerensky originally invited Kornilov to save the Provisional Government from the Bolsheviks. Be that as it may, Kerensky soon renounced Kornilov, and Kornilov renounced the Provisional Government. But on the approaches to Petrograd, Bolshevik agitators and railwaymen managed to infiltrate Kornilov’s troops and persuade them to give up the coup attempt.

Figes writes: “The social polarization of the summer gave the Bolsheviks their first real mass following as a party which based its main appeal on the plebeian rejection of all superordinate authority. The Kornilov crisis was the critical turning point, for it seemed to confirm their message that neither peace nor radical social change could be obtained through the politics of compromise with the bourgeoisie. The larger factories in the major cities, where the workers’ sense of class solidarity was most developed, were the first to go over in large numbers to the Bolsheviks. By the end of May, the party had already gained control of the Central Bureau of the Factory Committees and, although the Menshevik trade unionists remained in the ascendancy until 1918, it also began to get its resolutions passed at important trade union assemblies. Bolshevik activists in the factories tended to be younger, more working class and much more militant than their Menshevik or SR rivals. This made them more attractive to those groups of workers – both among the skilled and the unskilled – who were becoming increasingly prepared to engage in violent strikes, not just for better pay and working conditions but also for the control of the factory environment itself. As their network of party cells at the factory level grew, the Bolsheviks began to build up their membership among the working class, and as a result their finances grew through the new members’ contributions. By the Sixth Party Conference at the end of July there were probably 200,000 Bolshevik members, rising to perhaps 350,000 on the eve of October, and the vast majority of these were blue-collar workers.”

75 Kornilov, in Cohen and Major, op. cit., p. 727.
76 Figes, op. cit., p. 457.
Similar swings to the Bolsheviks took place in the city Duma elections of August and September, and in the Soviets. “As early as August, the Bolsheviks had won control of the Soviets in Ivanovo-Voznesensk (the ‘Russian Manchester’), Kronstadt, Yekaterinburg, Samara and Tsaritsyn. But after the Kornilov crisis many other Soviets followed suit: Riga, Saratov and Moscow itself. Even the Petrograd Soviet fell to the Bolsheviks… [On September 9] Trotsky, appearing for the first time after his release from prison, dealt the decisive rhetorical blow by forcing the Soviet leaders to admit that Kerensky, by this stage widely regarded as a ‘counter-revolutionary’, was still a member of their executive. On 25 September the leadership of the Petrograd Soviet was completely revamped, with the Bolsheviks occupying four of the seven seats on its executive and Trotsky replacing Chkheidze as its Chairman. This was the beginning of the end. In the words of Sukhanov, the Petrograd Soviet was ‘now Trotsky’s guard, ready at a sign from him to storm the coalition [between the Soviet and the Provisional Government]’.”

On October 10 Lenin returned secretly to Petrograd. He was determined that the Bolsheviks should mount an armed insurrection now, even before the convening of the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets on October 20; for he did not want to share power with the other parties represented at the Congress. On October 10, by a margin of ten to two (Zinoviev and Kamenev voted against) his views prevailed in the Central Committee, and on October 16 Trotsky set up the Petrograd Revolutionary Military Committee, which was theoretically under the control of the Petrograd Soviet but was in fact designed to be the spearhead of the Bolsheviks’ seizure of power.

Trotsky’s support for the Leninist line was crucial to the success of the revolution. For a long time he had not seen eye-to-eye with Lenin. Originally a Menshevik, in 1904 he accurately summed up Lenin’s dictatorial aims: “The party organization is substituted for the party, the Central Committee is substituted for the party organization, and finally a ‘dictator’ is substituted for the Central Committee.” And as late as March, 1917, Lenin had expressed his wariness of Trotsky: “The main thing is not to let ourselves get caught in stupid attempts at ‘unity’ with social patriots, or still more dangerous… with vacillators like Trotsky & Co.” Nevertheless, by 1917 there were no major differences between the two revolutionaries, so it was logical that Trotsky should join - it was probably his vanity and ambition that prevented him from surrendering to the party he had criticized for so long. And now his oratorical power to sway the mob, and the key position he occupied in the Petrograd Soviet and in its Revolutionary Military Committee, supplied the vital element that propelled the Bolsheviks to power.

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77 Figes, op. cit., p. 459.
78 Trotsky, Our Political Tasks (1904); in Cohen and Major, op. cit., p. 679.
Figes continues: “The rising fortunes of the Bolsheviks during the summer and autumn were essentially due to the fact that they were the only major political party which stood uncompromisingly for Soviet power. This point bears emphasizing, for one of the most basic misconceptions of the Russian Revolution is that the Bolsheviks were swept to power on a tide of mass support for the party itself. The October insurrection was a coup d’état, actively supported by a small minority of the population (and indeed opposed by several of the Bolshevik leaders themselves). But it took place amidst a social revolution, which was centred on the popular realization of Soviet power as the negation of the state and the direct self-rule of the people, much as in the ancient peasant ideal of volia. The political vacuum brought about by this social revolution enabled the Bolsheviks to seize power in the cities and consolidate their dictatorship during the autumn and winter. The slogan ‘All Power to the Soviets!’ was a useful tool, a banner of popular legitimation covering the nakedness of Lenin’s ambition (which was better expressed as All Power to the Party). Later, as the nature of the Bolshevik dictatorship became apparent, the party faced the growing opposition of precisely those groups in society which in 1917 had rallied behind the Soviet slogan…”}

The lack of opposition to the Bolshevik coup was almost farcical. First, the Bolsheviks decreed that the Petrograd garrison should go to the front, which so enraged it that it mutinied, leaving the government no substantial forces in the capital. Then, on the night of the 24th, Kerensky fled in a stolen car. The rest of the ministers huddled in the Winter Palace guarded by some Cossacks, cadets and 200 women from the Shock Battalion of Death – about 3000 in all. But such was their lack of morale that by the evening only 300 of these were left. Very little fighting actually took place.

The Bolsheviks’ most potent weapon was the blank round fired by the cruiser Aurora at 9.40 p.m. “The huge sound of the blast, much louder than a live shot, caused the frightened ministers to drop at once to the floor. The women from the Battalion of Death became hysterical and had to be taken away to a room at the back of the palace, where most of the remaining cadets abandoned their posts.”

When the Bolsheviks finally stormed into the Palace, their first act was to break open the wine cellars and get drunk…

The only real drama took place at the Soviet Congress, which finally convened at 10.40 p.m. The delegates at first supported the formation of a Soviet government, which, if the Bolsheviks had really believed their slogan: “All Power to the Soviets!” should have stopped their coup in its tracks. Martov proposed the formation of a united democratic government based upon all the parties in the Soviet: this, he said, was the only way to avert a civil war. The proposal was met with torrents of applause. Even Lunacharsky

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80 Figes, op. cit., pp. 460-461.
81 Figes, op. cit., p. 488.
was forced to admit that the Bolsheviks had nothing against it – they could not abandon the slogan of Soviet Power – and the proposal was immediately passed by a unanimous vote. But just as it looked as if a socialist coalition was at last about to be formed, a series of Mensheviks and SRs bitterly denounced the violent assault on the Provisional Government. They declared that their parties, or at least the right-wing sections of them, would have nothing to do with this ‘criminal venture’, which was bound to throw the country into civil war, and walked out of the Congress hall in protest, while the Bolshevik delegates stamped their feet, whistled and hurled abuse at them.

“Lenin’s planned provocation – the pre-emptive seizure of power – had worked. By walking out of the Congress, the Mensheviks and SRs undermined all hopes of reaching a compromise with the Bolshevik moderates and of forming a coalition government of all the Soviet parties. The path was now clear for the Bolshevik dictatorship, based on the Soviet, which Lenin had no doubt intended all along. In the charged political atmosphere of the time, it is easy to see why the Mensheviks and SRs acted as they did. But it is equally difficult not to draw the conclusion that, by their actions, they merely played into Lenin’s hands and thus committed political suicide…”

Trotsky shouted after the departing delegates: “You are miserable bankrupts, your role is played out; go where you ought to go – into the dustbin of history.” Then he proposed a resolution condemning the “treacherous” attempts of the Mensheviks and SRs to undermine Soviet power. The mass of the remaining delegates (Bolsheviks and Left SRs) fell into the trap and voted for the motion, thereby legitimating the Bolshevik coup in the name of the Soviet Congress.

At 2 a.m. the ministers in the Winter Palace were arrested and cast into the Peter and Paul fortress. Kamenev announced the arrest of the ministers to the Congress.

“And then Lunacharsky read out Lenin’s Manifesto ‘To All Workers, Soldiers and Peasants’, in which ‘Soviet Power’ was proclaimed, and its promises on land, bread and peace were announced. The reading of this historic proclamation, which was constantly interrupted by the thunderous cheers of the delegates, played an enormous symbolic role. It provided the illusion that the insurrection was the culmination of a revolution by ‘the masses’. When it had been passed, shortly after 5 a.m. on the 26th, the weary but elated delegates emerged from the Tauride Palace. ‘The night was yet heavy and chill,’ wrote John Reed. ‘There was only a faint unearthly pallor stealing over the silent streets, dimming the watch-fires, the shadow of a terrible dawn rising over Russia…”

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82 Figes, op. cit, pp. 489-490.
83 Figes, op. cit, p. 492.
“We have it on the authority of Trotsky himself,” writes Richard Pipes, “that the October ‘revolution’ in Petrograd was accomplished by ‘at most’ 25,000-30,000 persons – this in a country of 150 million and a city with 400,000 workers and a garrison of over 200,000 soldiers.

“From the instant he seized dictatorial power Lenin proceeded to uproot all existing institutions so as to clear the ground for a regime subsequently labelled ‘totalitarian’. This term has fallen out of favour with Western sociologists and political scientists determined to avoid what they consider the language of the Cold War. It deserves note, however, how quickly it found favour in the Soviet Union the instant the censor’s prohibitions against its use had been lifted. This kind of regime, unknown to previous history, imposed the authority of a private but omnipotent ‘party’ on the state, claiming the right to subject to itself all organized life without exception, and enforcing its will by means of unbounded terror...”

In the elections to the Constituent Assembly, which took place in November, Russians voted in large numbers for the main socialist party of the SRs (59%). The Bolsheviks polled only 25%, and the Cadets – 5%. Many also voted for nationalist parties. Most of the Jews voted for Zionists. Thus Solzhenitsyn writes: “‘More than 80% of the Jewish population of Russia voted’ for Zionist parties. Lenin wrote that 550,000 were for Jewish nationalists. ‘The majority of the Jewish parties formed a single national list, in accordance with which seven deputies were elected – six Zionists’ and Gruzenberg. ‘The success of the Zionists’ was also aided by the [published not long before the elections] Declaration of the English Foreign Minister Balfour [on the creation of a ‘national centre’ of the Jews in Palestine], ‘which was met by the majority of the Russian Jewish population with enthusiasm’.” Thus in many cities there were festive manifestations, meetings and religious services.

The Constituent Assembly was convened in January, 1918. On the first day, “between 3 and 4 a.m. on the 6th, the Chairman of the Assembly and leader of the SRs, Victor Chernov (1873-1952), was trying to pass a law for the abolition of landed property when he was tapped on the shoulder by a sailor, the commander of the Bolshevik Guard. ‘I have been instructed to inform you that all those present should leave the Assembly Hall,’ the sailor announced, ‘because the guard is tired’.” So the supreme authority in the Russian republic disappeared because the guard was tired... And with it disappeared the last chance that the Russian people would have in a peaceful and orderly fashion to reinstate the monarchy and avoid the great catastrophe that now overtook them...

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85 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 5, 149.
86 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 73.
THE SPIRIT OF LENINISM

Lenin, a hereditary nobleman of Russian, German and Jewish origins, was a professional revolutionary who lived on party funds and income from his mother’s estate. Choosing to live in the underground\(^{88}\), he had very little direct knowledge of the way ordinary people lived, and cared even less. “According to Gorky, it was this ignorance of everyday work, and the human suffering which it entailed, which had bred in Lenin a ‘pitiless contempt, worthy of a nobleman, for the lives of the ordinary people... Life in all its complexity is unknown to Lenin. He does not know the ordinary people. He has never lived among them.”\(^{89}\)

Lenin hated his own country. “I spit on Russia”, he said once; and his actions showed his contempt for Russians of all classes. Nothing is further from the truth than the idea that Lenin’s revolution was carried out for the sake of Russia or the Russians: it was carried out, not out of love for anybody or anything, but simply out of irrational, demonic, universal hatred...

For a revolutionary, Lenin lived a relatively simple, even ascetic life, and had only one known affair - with Inessa Armand. But, as Oliver Figes writes, “asceticism was a common trait of the revolutionaries of Lenin’s generation. They were all inspired by the self-denying revolutionary Rakhmetev in Chernyshevsky’s novel What Is To Be Done? By suppressing his own sentiments, by denying himself the pleasures of life, Lenin tried to strengthen his resolve and to make himself, like Rakhmetev, insensitive to the sufferings of others. This, he believed, was the ‘hardness’ required by every successful revolutionary: the ability to spill blood for political ends. ‘The terrible thing in Lenin,’ Struve once remarked, ‘was that combination in one person of self-castigation, which is the essence of all real asceticism, with the castigation of other people as expressed in abstract social hatred and cold political cruelty...”

“The root of this philistine approach to life was a burning ambition for power. The Mensheviks joked that it was impossible to compete with a man, such as Lenin, who thought about revolution twenty-four hours every day. Lenin was driven by an absolute faith in his own historical destiny. He did not doubt for a moment, as he had once put it, that he was the man who was to wield the ‘conductor’s baton’ in the party. This was the message he brought back to Russia in April 1917. Those who had known him before the war

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\(^{88}\) In What is to be Done? (1902), Lenin argued that in the conditions of Tsarist Russia it was impossible for the party to live openly among the people, but had to be an underground organization with strictly limited membership. “In an autocratic state the more we confine the membership of such a party to people who are professionally engaged in revolutionary activity and who have been professionally trained in the art of combating the political police, the more difficult it will be to wipe out such an organization” (in M.J. Cohen and John Major, History in Quotations, London: Cassell, 2004, p. 678).

noticed a dramatic change in his personality. ‘How he had aged,’ recalled Roman Gul’, who had met him briefly in 1905. ‘Lenin’s whole appearance had altered. And not only that. There was none of the old geniality, his friendliness or comradely humour, in his relations with other people. The new Lenin that arrived was cynical, secretive and rude, a conspirator “against everyone and everything”, trusting no one, suspecting everyone, and determined to launch his drive for power.’…

“Lenin had never been tolerant of dissent within his party’s ranks. Bukharin complained that he ‘didn’t give a damn for the opinions of others’. Lunacharsky claimed that Lenin deliberately ‘surrounded himself with fools’ who would not dare question him. During Lenin’s struggle for the April Theses this domineering attitude was magnified to almost megalomaniac proportions. Krupskaya called it his ‘rage’ – the frenzied state of her husband when engaged in clashes with his political rivals – and it was an enraged Lenin whom she had to live with for the next five years. During these fits Lenin acted like a man possessed by hatred and anger. His entire body was seized with extreme nervous tension, and he could neither sleep nor eat. His outward manner became vulgar and coarse. It was hard to believe that this was a cultivated man. He mocked his opponents, both inside and outside the party, in crude and violent language. They were ‘blockheads’, ‘bastards’, ‘dirty scum’, ‘prostitutes’, ‘cunts’, ‘shits’, ‘cretins’, ‘Russian fools’, ‘windbags’, ‘stupid hens’ and ‘silly old maids’. When the rage subsided Lenin would collapse in a state of exhaustion, listlessness and depression, until the rage erupted again. This manic alteration of mood was characteristic of Lenin’s psychological make-up. It continued almost unrelentingly between 1917 and 1922, and must have contributed to the brain haemorrhage from which he eventually died.

“Much of Lenin’s success in 1917 was no doubt explained by his towering domination over the party. No other political party had ever been so closely tied to the personality of a single man. Lenin was the first modern party leader to achieve the status of a god: Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler and Mao Zedong were all his successors in this sense. Being a Bolshevik had come to imply an oath of allegiance to Lenin as both the ‘leader’ and the ‘teacher’ of the party. It was this, above all, which distinguished the Bolsheviks from the Mensheviks (who had no close leader of their own)…”

Lenin’s ascent to power began during the First World War, when he enrolled as a German agent. Thus on December 29, 1915 the German agent Parvus (Gelfond) recorded receiving a million rubles in Russian banknotes to support the revolutionary movement in Russia from the German envoy in Copenhagen. Still larger sums were given by Jewish bankers in the West.

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91 Istoki Zla (Tajna Kommunizma) (The Sources of Evil (The Secret of Communism)), Moscow, 2002, p. 35.
However, until 1917 the German and Jewish investment in Lenin did not seem to have paid off. His message that the proletariat should turn the war between nations into a civil war between classes had not been listened to even by other socialist parties. But the February revolution – which took Lenin, who was living in Switzerland, completely by surprise – changed everything.

“The German special services guaranteed his passage through Germany in the sealed carriage. Among the passengers were: Zinoviev, Radek, Rozenblum, Abramovich, Usievich, and also the majors of the German General Staff, the professional spies Anders and Erich, who had been cast in prison for subversive and diversionary work in Russia in favour of Germany and the organization of a coup d’état. The next day there arrived in Berlin an urgent secret report from an agent of the German General Staff: ‘Lenin’s entrance into Russia achieved. He is working completely according to our desires.’…”

Although History had not revealed to her acolyte what had been obvious to many, that the Russian empire at the beginning of 1917 was on the verge of collapse, Lenin made up for lost time by trying to jump ahead of History on returning to Russia. Ignoring Marxist teaching that the proletarian revolution must be preceded by a period of bourgeois rule, he called for non-recognition of the Provisional Government, all power to the Soviets and the immediate cessation of the war. Even his own party found his position extreme, if not simply mad – but it was what the maddened revolutionary masses wanted… For, as Douglas Smith writes, the foot soldiers of the revolution “had no understanding or even interest in Marxist theory, nor were they concerned with what the new Russian society would look like. Rather, they were motivated by one thing: the desire to destroy the old order…”

It was precisely the madness of Lenin that made him the man of the moment, the politician best suited for those mad times. The word “madness” here is not used in a wholly metaphorical sense. Of course, in 1917 he was not mad in the sense that he had lost contact with ordinary, everyday reality – his clever tactical manoeuvring and his final success in October proves that he was more realistic about Russian politics than many. But the photographs of him in his last illness reveal a man who was truly mad – post-mortems showed that his brain had been terribly damaged by syphilis. Moreover, in a spiritual sense he was mad with the madness of the devil himself: he was demonized, with an irrational rage against God and man, an urge to destroy and kill and maim that can have no rational basis.

93 Istoki Zla, pp. 35-36.
As the SR leader Victor Chernov wrote in 1924: “Nothing to him was worse than sentimentality, a name he was ready to apply to all moral and ethical considerations in politics. Such things were to him trifles, hypocrisy, ‘parson’s talk’. Politics to him meant strategy, pure and simple. Victory was the only commandment to observe; the will to rule and to carry through a political program without compromise that was the only virtue; hesitation, that was the only crime.

“It has been said that war is a continuation of politics, though employing different means. Lenin would undoubtedly have reversed this dictum and said that politics is the continuation of war under another guise. The essential effect of war on a citizen’s conscience is nothing but a legalization and glorification of things that in times of peace constitute crime. In war the turning of a flourishing country into a desert is a mere tactical move; robbery is a ‘requisition’, deceit a stratagem, readiness to shed the blood of one’s brother military zeal; heartlessness towards one’s victims is laudable self-command; pitilessness and inhumanity are one’s duty. In war all means are good, and the best ones are precisely the things most condemned in normal human intercourse. And as politics is disguised war, the rules of war constitute its principles...”

Archpriest Lev Lebedev writes that Lenin “understood the main thing in Marx and Marxism and created not simply a political revolutionary party on the basis of the economic and social ‘scientific’ theory of Marxism: he founded a religion, and one, moreover, in which ‘god’ turned out to be himself! In this lies the essence of all the disagreements between Lenin and the legal Marxists like Struve and Plekhanov, and the Mensheviks – that is, all those who through naivety and evident misunderstanding took Marxism to be precisely a ‘scientific’ theory able to serve the ‘radiant future’ of humanity, beginning with Russia... For Lenin, as for Marx, the only thing that was necessary and important was his personal power with the obligatory deification of his own person, regardless not only of objections or criticisms, but even simply of insufficient servility. Lenin (like Marx) considered himself to be nothing less than the ‘Messiah’ – the ‘teacher’ and ‘leader’ not only of Russian, but also of world significance. This was the psychology of the Antichrist, which was reflected both in Lenin’s teaching on ‘the new type of party’, and in the ‘world revolution’, and in the construction of socialism in Russia, and in his ‘philosophy’, and in his methods of ‘leadership’, when he and his ‘comrades’ came to power. In the sphere of politics Lenin was always, from the very beginning, an inveterate criminal. For him there existed no juridical, ethical or moral limitations of any kind. All means, any means, depending on the circumstances, were permissible for the attainment of his goal. Lies, deceit, slander, treachery, bribery, blackmail, murder – this was the almost daily choice of means that he and his party used, while at the same time preserving

for rank-and-file party members and the masses the mask of ‘crystal honesty’, decency and humanity – which, of course, required exceptional art and skilfulness in lying. Lenin always took a special pleasure in news of murders, both individual and, still more mass murders – carried out with impunity. At such moments he was sincerely happy. This bloodthirstiness is the key to that special power that ‘the leader of the world proletariat’ received from the devil and the angels of the abyss. In the sphere of philosophy Lenin was amazingly talentless. How to lie a little more successfully – that was essentially his only concern in the sphere of ideas. But when he really had to think, he admitted blunders that were unforgivable in a ‘genius’...

“But the question is: how could a teaching that conquered millions of minds in Russia and throughout the world be created on the basis of such an intellectually impoverished, primitive basis?! An adequate answer can never be given if one does not take into account the main thing about Marxism-Leninism – that it is not simply a teaching, but a religion, a cult of the personality of its founders and each of the successive ‘leaders’, that was nourished, not by human, but by demonic forces from ‘the satanic depths’. Therefore its action on the minds took place simultaneously with a demonic delusion that blinded and darkened the reasoning powers. In order to receive such support from hell, it was necessary to deserve it in a special way, by immersing oneself (being ‘initiated’) into Satanism. And Lenin, beginning in 1905, together with his more ‘conscious comrades’ immersed himself in it (in particular, through the shedding of innocent blood), although there is not information to the effect that he personally killed anybody. The ‘leader’ had to remain ‘unsullied’... By contrast with certain other satanic religions, the religion of Bolshevism had the express character of the worship of the man-god (and of his works as sacred scripture). This was profoundly non-coincidental, since what was being formed here was nothing other than the religion of the coming Antichrist. Lenin was one of the most striking prefigurations of the Antichrist, one of his forerunners, right up to a resemblance to the beast whose name is 666 in certain concrete details of his life (his receiving of a deadly wound and healing from it). Lenin was not able to create for himself a general cult during his lifetime, since he was forced to share the worship of the party and the masses with such co-workers as, for example, Trotsky. But the ‘faithful Leninist’ Stalin was able truly to take ‘Lenin’s work’ to its conclusion, that is, to the point of absurdity... He fully attained his own cult during the life and posthumous cult of personality of his ‘teacher’. Lenin, who called religion ‘necrophilia’, was the founder of the religion of his own corpse, the main ‘holy thing’ of Bolshevism to this day! All this conditioned, to an exceptional degree, the extraordinary power of Lenin and his party-sect...”96

The Bolshevik party was indeed more like a religious sect than a normal political party. While members of other parties, even socialist ones, had a private life separate from their political life, this was not so for the Bolsheviks

96 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1997, pp. 445-447.
and the parties modelled on them. Thus Igor Shafarevich writes: “The German publicist V. Schlamm tells the story of how in 1919, at the age of 15, he was a fellow-traveller of the communists, but did not penetrate into the narrow circle of their functionaries. The reason was explained to him twenty years later by one of them, who by that time had broken with communism. It turns out that Schlamm, when invited to join the party, had said: ‘I am ready to give to the party everything except two evenings a week, when I listen to Mozart.’ That reply turned out to be fatal: a man having interests that he did not want to submit to the party was not suitable for it.

“Another aspect of these relations was expressed by Trotsky. Having been defeated by his opponents, in a speech that turned out to be his last at a party congress, he said: ‘I know that it is impossible to be right against the party. One can be right only with the party, for History has not created any other ways to realize rightness.’

“Finally, here is how Piatakov, already in disgrace and expelled from the party, explained his relationship to the party to his party comrade N.V. Valentinov. Remembering Lenin’s thesis: ‘the dictatorship of the proletariat is a power realized by the party and relying on violence and not bound by any laws’ (from the article, ‘The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky’), Piatakov added that the central idea here was not ‘violence’ but precisely ‘not being bound by any laws’. He said: ‘Everything that bears the seal of human will must not, cannot be considered inviolable, as being bound by certain insuperable laws. Law is a restriction, a ban, a decree that one phenomenon is impermissible, another act is possible, and yet another impossible. When the mind holds to violence as a matter of principle, is psychologically free, and is not bound by any laws, limitations or obstacles, then the sphere of possible action is enlarged to a gigantic degree, while the sphere of the impossible is squeezed to an extreme degree, to the point of nothingness... Bolshevism is the party that bears the idea of turning into life that which is considered to be impossible, unrealizable and impermissible... For the honour and glory of being in her ranks we must truly sacrifice both pride and self-love and everything else. On returning to the party, we cast out of our heads all convictions that are condemned by it, even if we defended them when we were in opposition... I agree that those who are not Bolsheviks and in general the category of ordinary people cannot in a moment make changes, reversals or amputations of their convictions... We are the party consisting of people who make the impossible possible; penetrated by the idea of violence, we direct it against ourselves, while if the party demands it, if it is necessary and important for the party, we can by an act of will in 24 hours cast out of our heads ideas that we have lived with for years... In suppressing our convictions and casting them out, it is necessary to reconstruct ourselves in the shortest time in such a way as to be inwardly, with all our minds, with all our essence, in agreement with this or that decision decreed by the party. Is it easy violently to cast out of one’s head that
which yesterday I considered to be right, but which today, in order to be in complete agreement with the party, I consider to be false? It goes without saying – no. Nevertheless, by violence on ourselves the necessary result is attained. The rejection of life, a shot in the temple from a revolver – these are sheer trivialities by comparison with that other manifestation of will that I am talking about. This violence on oneself is felt sharply, acutely, but in the resort to this violence with the aim of breaking oneself and being in complete agreement with the party is expressed the essence of the real, convinced Bolshevik-Communist… I have heard the following form of reasoning… It (the party) can be cruelly mistaken, for example, in considering black that which is in reality clearly and unquestionably white… To all those who put this example to me, I say: yes, I will consider black that which I considered and which might appear to me to be white, since for me there is no life outside the party and outside agreement with it.”

Having completely surrendered their minds and wills to the party, much as the Jesuits surrendered their minds and wills to the Pope (Chernov compared Lenin to Torquemada), the Bolsheviks proceeded to shed blood on a scale never previously seen in the history of the world, unrestrained by any kind of morality.

Thus Lenin called for “mass terror against the kulaks, priests and White Guards”. And Trotsky said: “We must put an end, once and for all, to the papist-Quaker babble about the sanctity of human life”. Again, Gregory Zinoviev said: “To overcome our enemies we must have our own socialist militarism. We must carry along with us 90 million out of the 100 million of Soviet Russia’s population. As for the rest, we have nothing to say to them. They must be annihilated…” Again, the first issue of the Kiev Cheka, Krasnij Mech (The Red Sword) for 1918 proclaimed: “We reject the old systems of morality and ‘humanity’ invented by the bourgeoisie to oppress and exploit the ‘lower classes’. Our morality has no precedent, and our humanity is absolute because it rests on a new ideal. Our aim is to destroy all forms of oppression and violence. To us, everything is permitted, for we are the first to raise the sword not to oppress races and reduce them to slavery, but to liberate humanity from its shackles… Blood? Let blood flow like water! Let blood stain forever the black pirate’s flag flown by the bourgeoisie, and let our flag be blood-red forever! For only through the death of the old world can we liberate ourselves from the return of those jackals!”

99 Zinoviev, in Smith, op. cit., p. 5.
In view of the fact that communism is by a wide margin the most bloodthirsty movement in human history, having already killed hundreds of millions of people worldwide (and we are still counting), it is necessary to say a few words about this aspect of its activity, which cannot be understood by reference to its ideology – which in any case was closer to Bakunin’s anarchism than Marx’s dialectical materialism. According to Lebedev, the essence of the movement was “devil-worshiping”. For the blood it sheds is always ritualistic, it is a sacrifice to demons. St. John Chrysostom wrote: ‘It is a habit among the demons that when men give Divine worship to them with the stench and smoke of blood, they, like bloodthirsty and insatiable dogs, remain in those places for eating and enjoyment.’ It is from such bloody sacrifices that the Satanists receive those demonic energies which are so necessary to them in their struggle for power or for the sake of its preservation. It is precisely here that we decipher the enigma: the strange bloodthirstiness of all, without exception all, revolutions, and of the whole of the regime of the Bolsheviks from 1917 to 1953.”

That communism, a strictly “scientific” and atheist doctrine, should be compared to devil-worshipping may at first seem strange. And yet closer study of communist history confirms this verdict. The communists’ extraordinary hatred of God and Christians, and indeed of mankind in general, can only be explained by demon-possession – more precisely, by an unconscious compulsion to bring blood-sacrifices to the devil, who was, in Christ’s words, “a murderer from the beginning” (John 8.44)...

The trigger of this demonic bacchanalia, in the firm conviction of the True Orthodox Church, was the rejection by most of Orthodox Russia, and of the Orthodox world in general, of the person and idea of the Orthodox Autocracy, “he who restrains” the coming of the Antichrist.

Thus “in October 1917,” writes Lebedev, “a satanic sect came to power in Russia that formed a secret conspiracy within the communist party (of the Bolsheviks). The threads leading to the centre of this sect’s administration went far beyond the ocean… At the base of this organization there lay the Masonic principle of many-levelled initiation. Thus ordinary communists knew absolutely nothing about the real aims of their leaders, while those, in their turn, did not know the aims of the ‘high-ups’… Thus the RCP(B)-CPSU was a party-werewolf from the beginning: it was one thing in its words, its slogans, its declarations and its official teaching of Marxism-Leninism, but in fact it was completely the opposite. This party created a state-werewolf in its image and likeness: according to the constitution, the law and its official decrees it was one thing, but in essence, in spirit and in works it was something completely different!

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101 I.P. Goldenberg saw Lenin as the successor of Bakunin, not Marx, and his tactics those of “the universal apostle of destruction” (in Robert Service, Lenin, 2000, p. 267).
102 Lebedev, op. cit., p. 429.
“There has never been any such thing in the history of humanity! There have been cruel, unjust or lying rulers, whose works did not accord with their words. But never have there been rulers, or governments, which set as their aim the annihilation of a people and a people’s economy that came into their possession! But this is precisely what they began to do in Russia.

“There are now various estimates of the victims of the Bolshevik regime (higher and lower). It goes without saying that it is impossible to establish exact figures. We have tried to take a middle course. And according to such middling estimates, from 1917 to 1945 in one way or another (through shooting, camps and prisons, the two famines of the beginning of the 1920s and 1930s, the deliberately ‘Pyrrhic’ victories in the Second World War) up to 80 million Great Russians only were annihilated (not counting Ukrainians, Belorussians and other nationalities of the former Russian empire). In all, up to 100 million. From 1917 to 1926 20 million were simply shot. We must think that from 1927 to 1937 not less than 10 million. Under ‘collectivization’ 4 million were immediately shot. So that out of the 80 million who perished by 1945 about 30-40 million were simply executed. These figures could not have been made up of political enemies, representatives of the ‘former ones’ (landowners and capitalists), nor of ‘their own’, that is, those communists who for some reason or other became unsuitable. All these together constituted only a small percentage of those who perished. The main mass – tens of millions – were the ‘simple’ Russian People, that is, all the firmly believing Orthodox people who, even if they did not oppose the new power, could not be re-educated and re-persuaded... These were simple peasants and town-dwellers, who in spite of everything kept the Orthodox faith. And these were the overwhelming majority of the Russian People. Among them, of course, there perished the overwhelming majority of the clergy and monastics (by 1941 100,000 clergy and 205 bishops had been annihilated).

“At the same time, from 1917 to 1945, from the offspring of the offscourings of the people, but also from unfortunate fellow-travellers for whom self-preservation was higher than all truths and principles, a new people grew up – the ‘Soviet’ people, or ‘Sovki’, as we now call ourselves. From 1918 children in schools no longer learned the Law of God, but learned atheist filthy thinking (and it is like that to the present day). After 1945 it was mainly this new, ‘Soviet’ people that remained alive. Individual representatives of the former Russian, that is, Orthodox People who survived by chance constituted such a tiny number that one could ignore them, since they could no longer become the basis of the regeneration of the true, real Rus’…”\(^\text{103}\)

One can quarrel with some details of this analysis. Thus Lebedev’s figures for those killed count among the higher rather than the middling estimates.

Official figures for those condemned for counter-revolution and other serious political crimes between 1921 and 1953 come to only a little more than four million, of whom only about 800,000 were shot. This, of course, excludes those killed in the Civil War and other armed uprisings, and in the great famines in Ukraine and elsewhere. Again, already in the 1920s and 1930s a larger proportion of the population was probably genuinely Soviet and anti-Orthodox than Lebedev admits, while more genuinely Russian and Orthodox people survived into the post-war period than he admits.

Nevertheless, his words have been quoted here because their main message about the Russian revolution is true. Too often commentators in both East and West have tried to push the Russian revolution into the frame of “ordinary” history, grossly underestimating the unprecedented scale of the tragedy and equally grossly overestimating the continuity of the Russian revolution with “the true, real Rus’” that preceded it. The fact is that the Russian revolution brought to an end the Christian period of history, characterized by mainly monarchical governments ruling – or, at any rate, claiming to rule – by Christian principles, and ushered in the Age of the Antichrist…

The terms “Antichrist” and “The Age of the Antichrist” need to be defined. St. John of Damascus writes: “Everyone who confesses not that the Son of God came in the flesh and is perfect God, and became perfect man after being God, is Antichrist (I John 2.18, 22; 4.3). But in a peculiar and special sense he who comes at the consummation of the age is called Antichrist. First, then, it is requisite that the Gospel should be preached among all nations, as the Lord said (Matthew 24.14), and then he will come to refute the impious Jews.”

Archimandrite Justin (Popovich) writes: “The Antichrist will be, as it were, an incarnation of the devil, for Christ is the incarnation of God. The Antichrist will be the personification of evil, hatred, lying, pride and unrighteousness, for Christ is the personification of goodness, love, truth, humility and righteousness. Such will be the chief Antichrist, who will appear before the Second Coming of the Lord Christ, and will stand in the place of God and proclaim himself to be God (whom He will destroy at His glorious Second Coming with the breath of His mouth (II Thessalonians 2.4)). But before him there will be forerunners, innumerable antichrists. For an antichrist is every one who wishes to take the place of Christ; an antichrist is every one who wishes, in place of the truth of Christ, to place his own truth, in place of the righteousness of Christ – his own righteousness, in place of the love of Christ – his own love, in place of the Goodness of Christ – his own goodness, in place of the Gospel of Christ – his own gospel…

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104 GARF, Kolektsia dokumentov; Popov, V.P. Gosudarstvennyj terror v sovetskoj Rossii. 1923-1953 gg.; istochniki i ih interpretsia, Otechestvennie arkhivy, 1992, № 2. p. 28. For commentaries on these figures, see http://mitr.livejournal.com/227089.html; http://community.livejournal.com/idu_shagayu/2052449.html.

“In what does his main lie consist? In the rejection of the God-Man Christ, in the affirmation that Jesus is not God, not the Messiah=Christ, not the Saviour. Therefore this is the work of the Antichrist. The main deceiver in the world is the devil, and with him – the Antichrist. It goes without saying that a deceiver is every one who in anyway rejects that Jesus is God, the Messiah, the Saviour. This is the main lie in the world, and all the rest either proceeds from it, or is on the way to it.”

So anyone who rejects the Divinity of Christ is an antichrist, while the Antichrist, or the chief Antichrist, will appear as an evil world-ruler towards the end of the world. In the first sense, of course, there have been multitudes of antichrists long before 1917. As the Holy Apostle John said already in the first century: “Children, it is the last times, and as you have heard that the Antichrist will come, so even now there are many antichrists” (I John 2.18). As for the Antichrist, he has not appeared yet. So in what sense could the Antichrist be said to have appeared in the period surveyed in this book?

In order to answer this question we need to turn to a prophecy of the Holy Apostle Paul concerning the Antichrist: “You know what is restraining his appearance in his time. The mystery of iniquity is already at work: only he who restrains will continue to restrain until he is removed from the midst. And then the lawless one will be revealed” (II Thessalonians 2.6-8). Now the unanimous teaching of the Early Church, as of more recent commentators such as St. Theophan the Recluse, is that “he who restrains” is the Roman emperor, or, more generally, all legitimate State power on the Roman model. In the pre-revolutionary period this legitimate State power was incarnated especially in the Russian Tsar, the last Orthodox Christian Emperor, whose empire was known as “the Third Rome”. Thus his “removal from the midst” would be followed, according to the prophecy, by the appearance of the Antichrist.

Now in 1905 the Tsar’s October Manifesto, which significantly limited his autocratic power and therefore his ability to restrain “the mystery of iniquity”, or the revolution, was followed immediately by the appearance of the St. Petersburg Soviet led by Lev Trotsky. In 1917, when the Tsar abdicated, the Soviets again appeared, and in October won supreme power in the country. The Church had existed without a Christian Emperor in the first centuries of her existence, and she would continue to do so after 1917. Nevertheless, “from the day of his abdication,” as St. John Maximovich writes, “everything began to collapse. It could not have been otherwise. The one who united everything, who stood guard for the truth, was overthrown.”

So if we expect the Antichrist to appear after the removal of

106 Popovich, Interpretation of the Epistles of St. John the Theologian, Munich, 2000, pp. 36, 38.
“him who restrains”, the Orthodox emperor, then the significance of the appearance of Soviet power under the leadership of Lenin immediately after the removal of the tsar is obvious.

Of course, it is also obvious that neither Lenin nor Stalin was the Antichrist for the simple reason that the Antichrist, according to all the prophecies, will be a Jewish king who claims to be the Messiah and God, whereas Lenin was not only not mainly Jewish (although most of his leading followers were Jewish), but also an atheist and an enemy of all religions, including the Jewish one. Moreover, the Soviet Antichrist was not the only Beast in this period. Whether in imitation of him, or in reaction to him, but using essentially the same methods, a number of Antichrist tyrants appeared around the world. This phenomenon has been called “totalitarianism”, a term that has received criticism but which seems to us to be a more or less accurate characterization. For what all these Antichrists had in common was a desire to possess the totality of man. For those living under one of the totalitarian dictators of the twentieth century there was no private space they could retreat to in order to get away from the pressure of public politics. Everything – politics, religion, science, art, even personal relationships – came under the scrutiny of the totalitarianism in question, and was subject to its extremely harsh judgement.

If we define totalitarianism as a form of political power that seeks to abolish (i) private property, (ii) the family and (iii) religion (except the cult of the god-king or vozhd or Führer himself), then Ancient Egypt and Babylon were totalitarian regimes, as Igor Shafarevich has demonstrated. But since the rise of Christianity with its characteristic distinction between the things of God and the things of Caesar, truly totalitarian regimes have been rare and short-lived. Perhaps the only significant exception is the Papacy – hence the link which Dostoyevsky traced between the Papacy and the revolution.

The spirit of Leninism was not confined to the Soviet Union, but can be found wherever communism triumphs. To illustrate this point, let us take the example of Mao-Tse-Tung – with Stalin, the foremost disciple of the Leninist faith, who came to maturity at precisely this time. Mao’s biographers, Jung Chang and Jon Halliday, write: “In the winter of 1917-18, still a student as he turned twenty-four, he wrote extensive commentaries on a book called A System of Ethics, by a minor late nineteenth-century German philosopher, Friedrich Paulsen. In these notes, Mao expressed the central elements in his own character, which stayed consistent for the remaining six decades of his life and defined his rule.

“Mao’s attitude to morality consisted of one core, the self, ‘I’, above everything else: ‘I do not agree with the view that to be moral, the motive of one’s action has to be benefiting others. Morality does not have to be defined in relation to others… People like me want to… satisfy our hearts to the full, and in so doing we automatically have the most valuable moral codes. Of course there are people and objects in the world, but they are all there only for me.’

“Mao shunned all constraints of responsibility and duty. ‘People like me only have a duty to ourselves; we have no duty to other people.’ ‘I am responsible only for the reality that I know,’ he wrote, ‘and absolutely not responsible for anything else. I don’t know about the past, I don’t know about the future. They have nothing to do with the reality of my own self.’ He explicitly rejected any responsibility towards future generations. ‘Some say one has a responsibility for history. I don’t believe it. I am only concerned about developing myself… I have my desire and act on it. I am responsible to no one.’

“Mao did not believe in anything unless he could benefit from it personally. A good name after death, he said, ‘cannot bring me any joy, because it belongs to the future and not to my own reality.’ ‘People like me are not building achievements to leave for future generations.’ Mao did not care what he left behind.

“He argued that conscience could go to hell if it was in conflict with his impulses:

“‘These two should be one and the same. All our actions… are driven by impulse, and the conscience that is wise goes along with this in every instance. Sometimes… conscience restrains impulses such as over-eating or over-indulgence in sex. But conscience is only there to restrain, not oppose. And the restraint is for better completion of the impulse.’

“As conscience always implies some concern for other people, and is not a corollary of hedonism, Mao was rejecting the concept. His view was: ‘I do not think these [commands like “do not kill”, “do not steal”, and “do not slander] have anything to do with conscience. I think they are only out of self-interest for self-preservation.’ All considerations must ‘be purely calculation for oneself, and absolutely not for obeying external ethical codes, or for so-called feelings of responsibility…’

“Absolute selfishness and irresponsibility lay at the heart of Mao’s outlook.

“These attributes he held to be reserved for ‘Great Heroes’ – a group to which he appointed himself. For this elite, he said:
“Everything outside their nature, such as restrictions and constraints, must be swept away by the great strength in their nature... When Great Heroes give full play to their impulses, they are magnificently powerful, stormy and invincible. Their power is like a hurricane arising from a deep gorge, and like a sex-manic on heat and prowling for a lover... there is no way to stop them.’

“The other central element in his character which Mao spelt out now was the joy he took in upheaval and destruction. ‘Giant wars,’ he wrote, ‘will last as long as heaven and earth and will never become extinct... The ideal of a world of Great Equality and Harmony [da_tong, Confucian ideal society] is mistaken.’ This was not just the prediction that a pessimist might make; it was Mao’s desideratum, which he asserted was what the population at large wished. ‘Long-lasting peace,’ he claimed, ‘is unendurable to human beings, and tidal waves of disturbance have to be created in this state of peace... When we look at history, we adore the times of [war] when dramas happened one after another... which make reading about them great fun. When we get to the periods of peace and prosperity, we are bored... Human nature loves sudden swift changes.’

“Mao simply collapsed the distinction between reading about stirring events and actually living through cataclysm. He ignored the fact that, for the overwhelming majority, war meant misery.

“He even articulated a cavalier attitude towards death:

“‘Human beings are endowed with the sense of curiosity. Why should we treat death differently? Don’t we want to experience strange things? Death is the strangest thing, which you will never experience if you go on living... Some are afraid of it because the change comes too drastically. But I think this is the most wonderful thing: where else in this world can we find such a fantastic and drastic change?’

“Using a very royal ‘we’, Mao went on: ‘We love sailing on a sea of upheavals. To go from life to death is to experience the greatest upheaval. Isn’t it magnificent!’ This might at first seem surreal, but when later tens of millions of Chinese were starved to death under his rule, Mao told his inner ruling circle it did not matter if people died – and even that death was to be celebrated. As so often, he applied his attitude only to other people, not to himself. Throughout his own life he was obsessed with finding ways to thwart death, doing everything he could to perfect his security and enhance his medical care.

“When he came to the question ‘How do we change [China]?’, Mao laid the utmost emphasis on destruction: ‘the country must be... destroyed and then re-formed.’ He extended this line not just to China but to the whole world –
and even the universe: ‘This applies to the country, to the nation, and to mankind... The destruction of the universe is the same... People like me long for its destruction, because when the old universe is destroyed, a new universe will be formed. Isn’t that better!’”

THE CHURCH AND THE REVOLUTION

Why did the Church not intervene at this great crisis, as she had intervened on many similar occasions in Russian history? After all, on the eve of the revolution, she had canonized St. Hermogen, Patriarch of Moscow in the Time of Troubles, as if to emphasize that, just as St. Hermogen had refused to recognize the false Demetrius as a legitimate political authority, so the time was coming when it would again be necessary to distinguish between true and false political authorities. So surely the Church would stand up against Bolshevism and in defence of the monarchy as St. Hermogen did then?

In recent years, historical research by M.A. Babkin\textsuperscript{110} has revealed unexpected facts about the degree of the Russian Church’s acquiescence in the Russian revolution. Some, such as Bishop Diomedes of Aladyr and Chukotka, have seen in this acquiescence a betrayal so serious that the Church lost grace already in 1917. Let us look at the facts…

In the abortive revolution of 1905, hierarchs such as Metropolitan Vladimir of Moscow, the future hieromartyr, had spoken openly in defence of the Tsar and Tsarism. And as late as the eve of the February revolution, such voices were still to be heard. One was that of Bishop Agapetus of Yekaterinoslav, who on February 21, together with members of the Union of the Russian People, wrote to the chancellery of the Over-Procurator: “The gates of hell will not prevail over the Church of Christ, but the destiny of Orthodoxy in our fatherland is indissolubly bound up with the destiny of the Tsarist Autocracy. Remembering on the Sunday of Orthodoxy the merits of the Russian Hierarchs before the Church and the State, we in a filial spirit dare to turn to your Eminence and other first-hierarchs of the Russian Church: by your unanimous blessings and counsels in the spirit of peace and love, strengthen his Most Autocratic Majesty to defend the Sacred rights of the Autocracy, entrusted to him by God through the voice of the people and the blessing of the Church, against which those same rebels who are encroaching against our Holy Orthodox Church are now encroaching.”\textsuperscript{111}

Tragically, however, the hierarchy did not respond to this call: at its session of February 26, near the beginning of the February revolution, the Holy Synod refused the request of the assistant over-procurator, Prince N.D. Zhevakhov, to threaten the creators of disturbances with ecclesiastical punishments.\textsuperscript{112} Then, on February 27, it refused the request of the over-procurator himself, N.P. Rayev, that it publicly support the monarchy. Ironically, therefore, that

\textsuperscript{110} See especially Dukhovenstvo Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi i Sverzhenie Monarkhii (The Clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Overthrow of the Monarchy), Moscow, 2007.
\textsuperscript{111} Tatyana Groyan, Tsariu Nebesnomu i Zemnomu Vernij (Faithful to the Heavenly and Earthly King), Moscow, 1996, pp. CXX-CXXI.
\textsuperscript{112} A.D. Stepanov, “Mezhdu mirom i monastyrem” (“Between the World and the Monastery”), in Tajna Bezzakonia (The Mystery of Iniquity), St. Petersburg, 2002, p. 491.
much-criticised creation of Peter the Great, the office of Over-Procurator of the Holy Synod, proved more faithful to the Anointed of God at this critical moment than the Holy Synod itself...

“On March 2,” writes Babkin, “the Synodal hierarchs gathered in the residence of the Metropolitan of Moscow. They listened to a report given by Metropolitan Pitirim of St. Petersburg asking that he be retired (this request was agreed to on March 6 – M.B.). The administration of the capital’s diocese was temporarily laid upon Bishop Benjamin of Gdov. But then the members of the Synod recognized that it was necessary immediately to enter into relations with the Executive committee of the State Duma. On the basis of which we can assert that the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church recognized the Provisional Government even before the abdication of Nicholas II from the throne. (The next meeting of the members of the Synod took place on March 3 in the residence of the Metropolitan of Kiev. On that same day the new government was told of the resolutions of the Synod.)

“The first triumphantly official session of the Holy Synod after the coup d’état took place on March 4. Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev presided and the new Synodal over-procurator, V.N. Lvov, who had been appointed by the Provisional government the previous day, was present. Metropolitan Vladimir and the members of the Synod (with the exception of Metropolitan Pitirim, who was absent – M.B.) expressed their sincere joy at the coming of a new era in the life of the Orthodox Church. And then at the initiative of the over-procurator the royal chair… was removed into the archives… One of the Church hierarchs helped him. It was decided to put the chair into a museum.

“The next day, March 5, the Synod ordered that in all the churches of the Petrograd diocese the Many Years to the Royal House ‘should no longer be proclaimed’. In our opinion, these actions of the Synod had a symbolical character and witnessed to the desire of its members ‘to put into a museum’ not only the chair of the Tsar, but also ‘to despatch to the archives’ of history royal power itself.

“The Synod reacted neutrally to the ‘Act on the abdication of Nicholas II from the Throne of the State of Russia for himself and his son in favour of Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich’ of March 2, 1917 and to the ‘Act on the refusal of Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich to accept supreme power’ of March 3. On March 6 it decreed that the words ‘by order of His Imperial Majesty’ should be removed from all synodal documents, and that in all the churches of the empire molebens should be served with a Many Years ‘to the God-preserved Russian Realm and the Right-believing Provisional Government’.”

But was the new government, whose leading members were Masons\textsuperscript{114}, really “right-believing”? Even leaving aside the fact of their membership of Masonic lodges, which is strictly forbidden by the Church, the answer to this question has to be: no. When the Tsar opened the First State Duma in 1906 with a moleben, the Masonic deputies sniggered and turned away, openly showing their disrespect both for him and for the Church. And now the new government, while still pretending to be Christian, openly declared that it derived its legitimacy, not from God, but from the revolution. But the revolution cannot be lawful, being the incarnation of lawlessness. How, then, could the Church allow her members to vote for Masonic or social-democratic delegates to the Constituent Assembly?

On March 7, with the support of Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) of Finland, the newly appointed Over-Procurator, Prince V.E. Lvov\textsuperscript{115}, transferred the Synod’s official organ, 

_Tserkovno-Obshchestvennij Vestnik (Church and Society Messenger)_

into the hands of the “All-Russian Union of Democratic Orthodox Clergy and Laity”, a left-wing grouping founded in Petrograd on the same day and led by Titlinov, a professor at the Petrograd Academy of which Sergius was the rector.\textsuperscript{116} Archbishop (later Patriarch) Tikhon protested against this transfer, and the small number of signatures for the transfer made it illegal. However, in his zeal to hand this important Church organ into the hands of the liberals, Lvov completely ignored the illegality of the act and handed the press over to Titlinov, who promptly began to use it to preach his Gospel of “Socialist Christianity”, declaring that “Christianity is on the side of labour, not on the side of violence and exploitation”.\textsuperscript{117}

\textsuperscript{114} This is also now generally accepted even by western historians. Thus Tsuyoshi Hasegawa writes: “Five members, Kerensky, N.V. Nekrasov, A.I. Konovalov, M.I. Tereschenko and I.N. Efremov are known to have belonged to the secret political Masonic organization” (“The February Revolution”, in Edward Acton, Vladimir Cherniaev, William Rosenberg (eds.), _Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution 1914-1921_, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997, p. 59).

\textsuperscript{115} Lvov was, in the words of Bishop Gregory (Grabbe), “a not completely normal fantasist” ((Russkaia Tserkov’ pered litsom gospodstvennichego zla (The Russian Church in the Face of Dominant Evil), Jordanville, 1991, p. 4). Grabbe’s estimate of Lvov is supported by Oliver Figes, who writes: “a nobleman of no particular talent or profession, he was convinced of his calling to greatness, yet ended up in the 1920s as a pauper and a madman living on the streets of Paris” (A People’s Tragedy, London: Pimlico, 1997, p. 449).

\textsuperscript{116} As Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) testified, “already in 1917 he [Sergius] was dreaming of combining Orthodox Church life with the subjection of the Russian land to Soviet power...” (“Preemstvennost’ Grekha” (The Heritage of Sin), Tsaritsyn, p. 7).

\textsuperscript{117} See Mikhail V. Shkarovskii, “The Russian Orthodox Church”, in Acton, Cherniaev and Rosenberg, _op. cit_, p. 417; “K 80-letiu Izbrania Sv. Patriarkha Tikhona na Sviashchennom Sobore Rossijskoj Tserkvi 1917-18gg.” (Towards the Election of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon
Also on March 7, the Synod passed a resolution “On the Correction of Service Ranks in view of the Change in State Administration”. In accordance with this, a commission headed by Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) was formed that removed all references to the Tsar in the Divine services. This involved changes to, for example, the troparion for the Church New Year, where the word “Emperor” was replaced by “people”, and a similar change to the troparion for the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. Again, on March 7-8 the Synod passed a resolution, “On Changes in Divine Services in Connection with the Cessation of the Commemoration of the Former Ruling House”. The phrase “formerly ruling” (tsarstvovavshego) implied that there was no hope of a restoration of any Romanov to the throne.

Then, on March 9, the Synod addressed all the children of the Church: “The will of God has been accomplished. Russia has entered on the path of a new State life. May God bless our great Homeland with happiness and glory on its new path... For the sake of the many sacrifices offered to win civil freedom, for the sake of the salvation of your own families, for the sake of the happiness of the Homeland, abandon at this great historical moment all quarrels and disagreements. Unite in brotherly love for the good of Russia. Trust the Provisional Government. All together and everyone individually, apply all your efforts to this end that by your labours, exploits, prayer and obedience you may help it in its great work of introducing new principles of State life...”

Now it is understandable that the Synod would not want to risk a civil war by displaying opposition to the new government. But was it true that “the will of God has been accomplished”? Was it not rather that God had allowed the will of Satan to be accomplished, as a punishment for the sins of the Russian people? And if so, how could the path be called a “great work”? As for the “new principles of State life”, everyone knew that these were revolutionary in essence...

Indeed, it could be argued that, instead of blessing the Masonic Provisional Government in its epistle of March 9, the Synod should have applied to it the curse pronounced in 1613 against those who would not obey the Romanov dynasty: “It is hereby decreed and commanded that God's Chosen One, Tsar Michael Feodorovich Romanov, be the progenitor of the Rulers of Rus' from generation to generation, being answerable in his actions before the Tsar of Heaven alone; and should any dare to go against this decree of the Sobor - whether it be Tsar, or Patriarch, or any other man, - may he be damned in this age and in the age to come, having been sundered from the Holy Trinity...”

at the Sacred Council of the Russian Church, 1917-18), 
Babkin writes that the epistle of March 9 “was characterised by B.V. Titlinov, professor of the Petrograd Theological Academy, as ‘an epistle blessing a new and free Russia’, and by General A.I. Denikin as ‘sanctioning the coup d’état that has taken place’. To the epistle were affixed the signatures of the bishops of the ‘tsarist’ composition of the Synod, even those who had the reputation of being monarchists and ‘black hundredists’, for example, Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow. This witnessed to the ‘loyal’ feelings of the Synodal hierarchs…” 118

Why did the hierarchs sanction the coup so quickly? Probably in the hope of receiving internal freedom for the Church. This is hinted at in a declaration of six archbishops to the Holy Synod and Lvov on March 8: “The Provisional Government in the person of its over-procurator V.N. Lvov, on March 4 in the triumphant opening session of the Holy Synod, told us that it was offering to the Holy Orthodox Russian Church full freedom in Her administration, while preserving for itself only the right to halt any decisions of the Holy Synod that did not agree with the law and were undesirable from a political point of view. The Holy Synod did everything to meet these promises, issued a pacific epistle to the Orthodox people and carried out other acts that were necessary, in the opinion of the Government, to calm people’s minds…” 119

Lvov broke his promises and proceeded to act like a tyrant, which included expelling Metropolitan Macarius from his see. It was then that Metropolitan repented of having signed the March 9 epistle. And later, after the fall of the Provisional Government, he said: “They [the Provisional Government] corrupted the army with their speeches. They opened the prisons. They released onto the peaceful population convicts, thieves and robbers. They abolished the police and administration, placing the life and property of citizens at the disposal of every armed rogue... They destroyed trade and industry, imposing taxes that swallowed up the profits of enterprises... They squandered the resources of the exchequer in a crazy manner. They radically undermined all the sources of life in the country. They established elections to the Constituent Assembly on bases that were incomprehensible to Russia. They defiled the Russian language, distorting it for the amusement of half-illiterates and sluggards. They did not even guard their own honour, violating the promise they had given to the abdicated Tsar to allow him and his family free departure, by which they prepared for him inevitable death...

“Who started the persecution on the Orthodox Church and handed her head over to crucifixion? Who demanded the execution of the Patriarch? Was it those whom the Duma decried as ‘servants of the dark forces’, labelled as enemies of the freedom of the Church?... No, it was not those, but he whom the Duma opposed to them as a true defender of the Church, whom it intended for, and promoted to the rank of, over-procurator of the Most Holy

118 Babkin, op. cit., pp. 3-4.
119 Babkin, Dukhovenstvo, pp. 195-198.
Synod – the member of the Provisional Government, now servant of the Sovnarkom – Vladimir Lvov.”  

Lvov was indeed thoroughly unsuited for the post of over-procurator – he ended up as a renovationist and enemy of Orthodoxy. In appointing him the Provisional Government showed its true, hostile attitude towards the Church. It also showed its inconsistency: having overthrown the Autocracy and proclaimed freedom for all people and all religions, it should have abolished the office of over-procurator as being an outdated relic of the State’s dominion over the Church. But it wanted to make the Church tow the new State’s line, and Lvov was to be its instrument in doing this. Hence his removal of all the older, more traditional hierarchs, his introduction of three protopriests of a Lutheran orientation into the Synod and his proclamation of the convening of an All-Russian Church Council – a measure which he hoped would seal the Church’s descent into Protestant-style renovationism, but which in fact, through God’s Providence, turned out to be the beginning of the Church’s true regeneration and fight back against the revolution…

Meanwhile, the Council of the Petrograd Religious-Philosophical Society went still further, denying the very concept of Sacred Monarchy. Thus on March 11 and 12, it resolved that the Synod’s acceptance of the Tsar’s abdication “does not correspond to the enormous religious importance of the act, by which the Church recognized the Tsar in the rite of the coronation of the anointed of God. It is necessary, for the liberation of the people’s conscience and to avoid the possibility of a restoration, that a corresponding act be issued in the name of the Church hierarchy abolishing the power of the Sacrament of Royal Anointing, by analogy with the church acts abolishing the power of the Sacraments of Marriage and the Priesthood.”

Fortunately, the Church hierarchy rejected this demand. For not only can the Sacrament of Anointing not be abolished, since it is of God: even the last Tsar still remained the anointed Tsar after his abdication. As Shakespeare put it in Richard II, whose plot is closely reminiscent of the tragedy of the Tsar’s abdication:

\[
\text{Not all the water in the rough rude sea}
\text{Can wash the balm off from an anointed king;}
\text{The breath of worldly men cannot depose}
\text{The deputy elected by the Lord.}
\]

However, the democratic wave continued, and the Church was carried along by it. The hierarchy made some protests, but these did not amount to a real “counter-revolution”. Thus on April 14, a stormy meeting took place between Lvov and the Synod during which Lvov’s actions were recognised to

120 Quoted in Groyan, op. cit., pp. 183-184.
121 Groyan, op. cit., p. 142. Italics mine (V.M.).
be “uncanonical and illegal”. At this session Archbishop Sergius apparently changed course and agreed with the other bishops in condemning the unlawful transfer of *Tserkovno-Obshchestvenniy Vestnik*. However, Lvov understood that this was only a tactical protest. So he did not include Sergius among the bishops whom he planned to purge from the Synod; he thought – rightly – that Sergius would continue to be his tool in the revolution that he was introducing in the Church. The next day Lvov marched into the Synod at the head of a detachment of soldiers and read an order for the cessation of the winter session of the Synod and the retirement of all its members *with the single exception of Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) of Finland.*

Thus in little more than a month since the coup, the Church had been effectively placed in the hands of a lay dictator, who had single-handedly dismissed her most senior bishops in the name of the “freedom of the Church”. Here we see a striking difference in the way in which the Provisional Government treated secular or political society, on the one hand, and the Church, on the other. While Prince G.E. Lvov, the head of the government, refused to impose his authority on anyone, whether rioting peasants or rampaging soldiers, granting “freedom” – that is, more or less complete licence – to any self-called political or social “authority”, Prince V.E. Lvov, the over-procurator, granted quite another kind of “freedom” to the Church – complete subjection to lay control...

On April 29, the new Synod headed by Archbishop Sergius accepted an Address to the Church concerning the establishment of the principle of the election of the episcopate, and the preparation for a Council and the establishment of a Preconciliar Council. This Address triggered a revolution in the Church. The revolution consisted in the fact that all over the country the elective principle with the participation of laymen replaced the system of “episcopal autocracy” which had prevailed thereto. In almost all dioceses Diocesan Congresses elected special “diocesan councils” or committees composed of clergy and laity that restricted the power of the bishops. The application of the elective principle to almost all ecclesiastical posts, from parish offices to episcopal sees, resulted in the removal of several bishops from their sees and the election of new ones in their stead. Thus Archbishops Basil (Bogoyavlensky) of Chernigov, Tikhon (Nikanorov) of Kaluga and

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122 According to I.M. Andreyev, “the whole of the Synod had decided to go into retirement. Archbishop Sergius had taken part in this resolution. But when all the members of the Synod, together with Archbishop Sergius, actually came to give in their retirement, the Over-Procurator, who had set about organizing a new Synod, drew Archbishop Sergius to this. And he took an active part in the new Synod” (Kratkij Obzor Istorii Russkoj Tserkvi ot revoliutsii do nashikh dnej (A Short Review of the History of the Russian Church from the Revolution to our Days), Jordanville, 1952, p. 74. Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) wrote: “I can remember the opinions of those who knew him and who considered him to be a careerist and the complaints of hierarchs that he promised to retire with other members of the Synod in protest against Lvov, then he changed his mind and became head of the Synod” (Letter of April 23 / May 6, 1992 to Nicholas Churilov, *Church News*, April, 2003, p. 9).
Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kharkov were removed. Archbishop Joachim (Levitsky) of Nizhni-Novgorod was even arrested and imprisoned for a time before being shot. The retirement of Archbishop Alexis (Dorodnitsyn) of Vladimir was justified by his earlier closeness to Rasputin. The others were accused of being devoted to the Autocracy.  

Although the spirit behind this revolutionary wave was undoubtedly anti-ecclesiastical in essence, by the Providence of God it resulted in some changes that were beneficial for the Church. Thus the staunchly monarchist Archbishop Anthony, after being forced to retire, was later reinstated at the demand of the people. Again, Archbishop Tikhon (Bellavin) of Lithuania was elected metropolitan of Moscow (the lawful occupant of that see, Metropolitan Macarius, was later reconciled with him), and Archbishop Benjamin (Kazansky) was made metropolitan of Petrograd. However, there were also harmful changes, such as the election of Sergius Stragorodsky as Archbishop of Vladimir.

In the countryside, meanwhile, “there was a strong anti-clerical movement: village communities took away the church lands, removed priests from the parishes and refused to pay for religious services. Many of the local priests managed to escape this fate by throwing in their lot with the revolution.” However, several priests were savagely killed – the martyrdom of the Church began, not with the Bolshevik coup, but with the liberal democratic revolution.

From June 1 to 10 the All-Russian Congress of clergy and laity took place in Moscow with 800 delegates from all the dioceses. As Shkarovskii writes, it “welcomed the revolution, but expressed the wish that the Church continue to receive the legal and material support of the state, that divinity continue to be an obligatory subject in school, and that the Orthodox Church retain its schools. Consequently, a conflict soon broke out with the government. The Synod protested against the law of 20 June which transferred the [37,000] parish church schools to the Ministry of Education. A similar clash occurred over the intention to exclude divinity from the list of compulsory subjects.”

The transfer of the church schools to the state system was disastrous for the Church because the state’s schools were infected with atheism. It would be one of the first decrees that the coming Council of the Russian Orthodox Church would seek (unsuccessfully) to have repealed...

123 Monk Benjamin (Gomareteli), Letopis' tserkovnykh sobytij Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi nachinaia s 1917 goda (Chronicle of Church Events, beginning from 1917), www.zlatoust.ws/letopis.htm, p. 8.
124 Figes, op. cit., p. 350.
125 Shkarovskii, op. cit., p. 418.
In general, the June Congress carried forward the renovationist wave; and although the June 14 decree “On Freedom of Conscience” was welcome, the government still retained de jure control over the Church. Even when the government allowed the Church to convene its own All-Russian Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in August, it retained the right of veto over any new form of self-administration that Council might come up with. Moreover, the Preconciliar Council convened to prepare for the forthcoming Council was to be chaired by the Church’s leading liberal, Archbishop Sergius...

With the Tsar gone, and the Church led by liberals and treated with contempt by the State, it is not surprising that the conservative peasant masses were confused. Thus a telegram sent to the Holy Synod on July 24, 1917 concerned the oath of loyalty that the Provisional Government was trying to impose on them: “We Orthodox Christians ardently beseech you to explain to us in the newspaper Russkoye Slovo what constitutes before the Lord God the oath given by us to be faithful to the Tsar, Nicholas Alexandrovich. People are saying amongst us that if this oath is worth nothing, then the new oath to the new Tsar is also worth nothing.

“Is that so, and how are we to understand all this? Following the advice of someone we know, we want this question decided, not by ourselves, but by the Governing Synod, so that everyone should understand this in the necessary way, without differences of opinion. The zhids [Jews] say that the oath is nonsense and a deception, and that one can do without an oath. The popes [priests] are silent. Each layman expresses his own opinion. But this is no good. Again they have begun to say that God does not exist at all, and that the churches will soon be closed because they are not necessary. But we on our part think: why close them? – it’s better to live by the church. Now that the Tsar has been overthrown things have got bad, and if they close the churches it’ll get worse, but we need things to get better. You, our most holy Fathers, must try to explain to all of us simultaneously: what should we do about the old oath, and with the one they are trying to force us to take now? Which oath must be dearer to God. The first or the second? Because the Tsar is not dead, but is alive in prison. And is it right that all the churches should be closed? Where then can we pray to the Lord God? Surely we should not go in one band to the zhids and pray with them? Because now all power is with them, and they’re bragging about it…”

The hierarchy had no answers to these questions...

What could it have done? It could and should have rallied round the sacred principle of the Orthodox Autocracy and used its still considerable influence among the people to restore monarchical rule. Thus M.A. Babkin writes that since, in March, 1917 “the monarchy in Russia, in accordance with

126 Groyan, op. cit., pp. CXXII-CXXIII.
the act of Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich, continued to exist as an institution”, the Synod should have acted as if there was an “interregnum” in the country.127

Again, Bishop Diomedes writes: “It was necessary in the name of the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church to persuade the Ruling House not to leave the Russian State to be destroyed by rebels, and to call all the rebels to repentance by anathematizing them with the 11th anathema of the Sunday of Orthodoxy.”128

A clear precedent existed: in the recently canonized Patriarch Hermogen’s call to liberate Russia from foreign Catholic rule and restore a lawful monarchy in 1612. Like Hermogen, the Holy Synod in 1917 could have called the Russian people to arms against those who had forced the abdication of both the Tsar and Great Prince Michael, and who were therefore, in effect, rebels against lawful authority and subject to anathema.

But the opportunity was lost through a combination of a commendable desire to avoid bloodshed and a less commendable lack of courage. Some hierarchs supported the revolution, others rejected it, and the Synod as a whole sided with its supporters; it was simply prepared to lead the people in such a way as to oppose the rebels and protect the monarchical principle. Nor did the Church approach any member of the Romanov dynasty with an invitation that he ascend the throne and end the interregnum.

Of course, following the example of St. Hermogen in this way would have been very difficult, requiring great courage. But it was not impossible. And we know the tragic, truly accursed consequences of the failure to follow it…

The weakness of the Church at this critical moment was the result of a long historical process. Having been deprived of its administrative independence by Peter the Great, the Church hierarchy was not ready to stand alone against the new regime and in defence of the monarchical principle in March, 1917. Instead, in the early days of March, it hoped that, in exchange for recognizing it and calling on the people to recognize it, it would receive full administrative freedom. But it was deceived: when Lvov came to power, he began to act like a tyrant worse than the old tsarist over-procurators. And then a wave of democratization began at the diocesan and parish levels which the hierarchs did not have the strength to resist… Thus was the prophecy of St. Ignaty (Brianchaninov) fulfilled: “Judging from the spirit of the times and the intellectual ferment, we must suppose that the building of the Church, which has already been wavering for a long time, will collapse quickly and terribly. There will be nobody to stop this and withstand it. The measures

undertaken to support [the Church] are borrowed from the elements of the world hostile to the Church, and will rather hasten her fall than stop it...”

And so we must conclude that in March, 1917 the Church – de facto, if not de jure - renounced Tsarism, one of the pillars of Russian identity for nearly 1000 years. With the exception of a very few bishops, such as Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow and Archbishop Andronicus of Perm, the hierarchy hastened to support the new democratic order. As Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) writes: “There were few who understood at that moment that, in accepting this coup, the Russian people had committed the sin of oath-breaking, had rejected the Tsar, the Anointed of God, and had gone along the path of the prodigal son of the Gospel parable, subjecting themselves to the same destructive consequences as he experienced on abandoning his father.”

However, the fact that Tsarism was renounced only de facto and not de jure means that Bishop Diomedes’ thesis that the whole Church lost grace in 1917 is false. The pusillanimity of individual hierarchs, however senior or numerous, does not amount to heresy. Nevertheless, that a very serious sin was committed in the name of the Church cannot be denied.

Fortunately, this was not the end of the story, and in the following years the great sin of the Church in 1917 began to be at least partially recognized...

Thus when, on the day after the Bolshevik coup, October 26 (old style), Lenin nationalized all land, making the Church’s and parish priests’ property illegal, the Local Council of the Russian Church which was then in session reacted strongly. In a letter to the faithful on November 11, the Council called the revolution “descended from the Antichrist and possessed by atheism”: “Open combat is fought against the Christian Faith, in opposition to all that is sacred, arrogantly abasing all that bears the name of God (II Thessalonians 2.4)... But no earthly kingdom founded on ungodliness can ever survive: it will perish from internal strife and party dissension. Thus, because of its frenzy of atheism, the State of Russia will fall... For those who use the sole foundation of their power in the coercion of the whole people by one class, no motherland or holy place exists. They have become traitors to the motherland and instigated an appalling betrayal of Russia and her true allies. But, to our grief, as yet no government has arisen which is sufficiently one with the people to deserve the blessing of the Orthodox Church. And such will not appear on Russian soil until we turn with agonizing prayer and tears of repentance to Him, without Whom we labour in vain to lay foundations...”

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130 Grabbe, op. cit., p. 4.
131 On the same day, however, the Council decreed that those killed on both sides in the conflict should be given Christian burials.
This recognition of the real nature of the revolution came none too early. On November 15, a Tver peasant, Michael Yefimovich Nikonov, wrote to the Council: “We think that the Most Holy Synod made an irreparable mistake when the bishops greeted the revolution. We do not know the reasons for this. Was it for fear of the Jews? In accordance with the prompting of their heart, or for some laudable reasons? Whatever the reason, their act produced a great temptation in the believers, and not only in the Orthodox, but even among the Old Ritualists. Forgive me for touching on this question – it is not our business to judge that: this is a matter for the Council, I am only placing on view the judgement of the people. People are saying that by this act of the Synod many right-thinking people were led into error, and also many among the clergy. We could hardly believe our ears at what we heard at parish and deanery meetings. Spiritual fathers, tempted by the deception of freedom and equality, demanded that hierarchs they dislike be removed together with their sees, and that they should elect those whom they wanted. Readers demanded the same equality, so as not to be subject to their superiors. That is the absurdity we arrived at when we emphasized the satanic idea of the revolution. The Orthodox Russian people is convinced that the Most Holy Council in the interests of our holy mother, the Church, the Fatherland and Batyushka Tsar, should give over to anathema and curse all self-called persons and all traitors who trampled on their oath together with the satanic idea of the revolution. And the Most Holy Council will show to its flock who will take over the helm of administration in the great State. We suppose it must be he who is in prison [the Tsar], but if he does not want to rule over us traitors,… then let it indicate who is to accept the government of the State; that is only common sense. The act of Sacred Coronation and Anointing with holy oil of our tsars in the Dormition Cathedral [of the Moscow Kremlin] was no simple comedy. It was they who received from God the authority to rule the people, giving account to Him alone, and by no means a constitution or some kind of parliament of not quite decent people capable only of revolutionary arts and possessed by the love of power… Everything that I have written here is not my personal composition alone, but the voice of the Russian Orthodox people, the 100-million-strong village Russia in which I live.”

Many people were indeed disturbed by such questions as: had the Church betrayed the Tsar in March 1917? Were Christians guilty of breaking their oath to the Tsar by accepting the Provisional Government? Should the Church formally absolve the people of their oath to the Tsar? The leadership of the Council passed consideration of these questions, together with Nikonov’s letter, to a subsection entitled “On Church Discipline”. This subsection had several meetings in the course of the next nine months, but came to no definite decisions…

133 M. Babkin, “Pomestnij Sobor 1917-1918 gg.: ‘O Prisyage pravitel’stvu voobsche i byvshemu imperatoru Nikolaius II v chastnosti’” (The Local Council of 1917-1918: On the Oath to the
On January 19, 1918 (old style) Patriarch Tikhon issued his famous anathema against the Bolsheviks: “By the power given to Us by God, we forbid you to approach the Mysteries of Christ, we anathematize you, if only you bear Christian names and although by birth you belong to the Orthodox Church. We also adjure all of you, faithful children of the Orthodox Church of Christ, not to enter into any communion with such outcasts of the human race: ‘Remove the evil one from among you’ (I Corinthians 5.13).” The decree ended with an appeal to defend the Church, if necessary, to the death. For “the gates of hell shall not prevail against Her” (Matthew 16.18).\(^\text{134}\)

The significance of this anathema lies in the fact that the Bolsheviks were to be regarded, not only as apostates from Christ (that was obvious), but also as having no moral authority, no claim to obedience whatsoever – an attitude taken by the Church to no other government in the whole of Her history. Coming so soon after the Bolsheviks’ dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, it indicated that now that constitutionalism had proved its uselessness in the face of demonic barbarism, it was time for the Church to enter the struggle in earnest…\(^\text{135}\)

It was important that the true significance of the anathema for the Church’s relationship with the State be pointed out. This was done immediately after its proclamation, when Count D.A. Olsufyev pointed out that at the moleben they had just sung ‘many years’ to the powers that be – that is, to the Bolsheviks whom they had just anathematized! “I understand that the Apostle called for obedience to all authorities – but hardly that ‘many years’ should be sung to them. I know that his ‘most pious and most autocratic’ [majesty] was replaced by ‘the right-believing Provisional Government’ of Kerensky and company... And I think that the time for unworthy compromises has passed.”\(^\text{136}\)

On January 22 the Patriarch’s anathema was discussed in a session of the Council presided over by Metropolitan Arsenius of Novgorod, and the following resolution was accepted: “The Sacred Council of the Orthodox Government in general and to the former Emperor Nicholas II in particular), http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/print.php?act=lib&id=2704.
\(^\text{135}\) On January 1, 1970 the Russian Church Abroad under Metropolitan Philaret of New York confirmed this anathema and added one of its own against “Vladimir Lenin and the other persecutors of the Church of Christ, dishonourable apostates who have raised their hands against the Anointed of God, killing clergymen, trampling on holy things, destroying the churches of God, tormenting our brothers and defiling our Fatherland” (http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page&pid=1775).
Russian Church welcomes with love the epistle of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, which punishes the evil-doers and rebukes the enemies of the Church of Christ. From the height of the patriarchal throne there has thundered the word of excommunication [preschenia] and a spiritual sword has been raised against those who continually mock the faith and conscience of the people. The Sacred Council witnesses that it remains in the fullest union with the father and intercessor of the Russian Church, pays heed to his appeal and is ready in a sacrificial spirit to confess the Faith of Christ against her blasphemers. The Sacred Council calls on the whole of the Russian Church headed by her archpastors and pastors to unite now around the Patriarch, so as not to allow the mocking of our holy faith.” (Act 67.35-37).

In April the feast of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors was instituted. In July the Tsar and his family were killed. But just as the Council had paid no attention to him during his life, not calling for his release from prison, so now they did not glorify him after his death – although the Patriarch did condemn his murder.

On April 15 the Council decreed: “Clergymen serving in anti-ecclesiastical institutions... are subject to being banned from serving and, in the case of impenitence, are deprived of their rank”. On the assumption that “anti-ecclesiastical institutions” included all Soviet institutions, this would seem to have been a clearly anti-Soviet measure.

Unfortunately, however, on August 15, 1918, the Council took a step backwards, declaring invalid all defrockings based on political considerations. They applied this measure particularly to the eighteenth-century Metropolitan Arsenius (Matsevich) of Rostov, and Priest Gregory Petrov. Metropolitan Arsenius had indeed been unjustly defrocked for his righteous opposition to Catherine II’s anti-Church measures. However, Fr. Gregory Petrov had been one of the leaders of the Cadet party in the Duma in 1905 and was an enemy of the monarchical order. How could his defrocking be said to have been unjust in view of the fact that the Church had officially prayed for the Orthodox Autocracy, and Petrov had worked directly against the fulfilment of the Church’s prayers? The problem was: too many people, including several hierarchs, had welcomed the fall of the Tsarist regime. If the Church was not to divide along political lines, a general amnesty was considered necessary. But if true recovery can only begin with repentance, and repentance must begin with the leaders of the Church, this decree amounted to covering the wound without allowing it to heal.

As Bishop Dionysius (Alferov) of Novgorod writes, the Council could be criticized for its “its legitimization of complete freedom of political orientation and activity, and, besides, its rehabilitation of the Church revolutionaries like Gregory Petrov. By all this it doomed the Russian Church to collapse,

137 Deiania, op. cit., vol. 6, p. 36.
presenting to her enemies the best conditions for her cutting up and annihilation piece by piece.

“That this Council... did not express the voice of the complete fullness of the Russian Church is proved by the decisions of two other Councils of the time: that of Karlovtsy in 1921, and that of Vladivostok in 1922.

“At the Karlovtsy Council remembrance was finally made of the St. Sergius’ blessing of the Christian Sovereign Demetrius Donskoj for his battle with the enemies of the Church and the fatherland, and of the struggle for the Orthodox Kingdom of the holy Hierarch Hermogenes of Moscow. The question was raised of the ‘sin of February’, but because some of the prominent activists of the Council had participated in this, the question was left without detailed review. The decisions of this Council did not receive further official development in Church life because of the schisms that began both in the Church Abroad and in the monarchist movement. But the question of the re-establishment of the Orthodox Kingdom in Russia had been raised, and thinkers abroad worked out this thought in detail in the works, first of Prince N.D. Zhevakhov and Protopriest V. Vostokov, and then, more profoundly, in the works of Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev), Professor M.V. Zyzykin, Archimandrite Constantine Zaitsev, V.N. Voejkov and N.P. Kusakov...”
THE JEWS AND THE REVOLUTION

We need to distinguish between at least three levels at which the revolution took place. First, there was the level of the out-and-out revolutionaries, intelligently who were supported by many from the industrial proletariat and the revolutionary-minded peasantry, who were aiming to destroy Russian tsarism and Russian Orthodox civilization completely before embarking on a world revolution that would dethrone God and traditional authority from the hearts and minds of all men everywhere. This level was led by Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin; it was composed mainly of Jews, but also contained numbers of Russians, Latvians, Georgians, Poles and other nationalities. They were possessed by the revolutionary faith to the greatest extent, and owed no allegiance to any nation or traditional creed or morality.

Secondly, there was the level of the Freemasons, the mainly aristocratic and middle-class Duma parliamentarians and their supporters in the country at large, who were not aiming to destroy Russia completely, but only to remove the tsar and introduce a constitutional government on the English model. This level was led by Guchkov, Rodzyanko and Kerensky; it was composed mainly of Russians, but also contained most of the intelligentsia of the other nations of the empire. They believed in the revolutionary faith, but still had moral scruples derived from their Christian background.

Thirdly, there were the lukewarm Orthodox Christians, the great mass of ordinary Russians, who did not necessarily want either world revolution or a constitutional government, but who lacked the courage and the faith to act openly in support of Faith, Tsar and Fatherland. It is certain that if very many Russians had not become lukewarm in their faith, God would not have allowed the revolution to take place. After the revolution, many from this level, as well as individuals from the first two levels, seeing the terrible devastation that their lukewarmness had allowed to take place, bitterly repented and returned to the ranks of the confessing Orthodox Christians.

Liberals ascribed the revolutionary character of the Jews to antisemitism, and, in the Russian case, to pogroms and the multitude of restrictions placed on them by the tsars. However, as we have seen in volume four, far fewer Jews died in the pogroms than Russian officials in terrorist attacks (1845 by the year 1909), while the restrictions were placed on the Jews in order to protect the Russian peasant, who was ruthlessly exploited by them. For, as Solzhenitsyn points out, these restrictions “were never racial [as they were in Western Europe]. They were applied neither to the Karaites [who rejected the Talmud], nor to the mountain Jews, nor to the Central Asian Jews.” Rather, as the future Hieromartyr John Vostorgov said in 1906: “The Jews are restricted in their rights of residence... as a predatory tribe that is dangerous

in the midst of the peaceful population because of its exploitative inclinations, which... have found a religious sanction and support in the Talmud... Can such a confession be tolerated in the State, when it allows its followers to practise hatred and all kinds of deceit and harm towards other confessions, and especially Christians? ... The establishment of the Pale of Settlement is the softest of all possible measures in relation to such a confession. Moreover, is it possible in this case not to take account of the mood of the masses? But this mood cannot be changed only by issuing a law on the complete equality of rights of the Jews. On the contrary, this can only strengthen the embitterment of the people...”

In other words, restrictions were placed only on those Jews who practised the Talmudism, with its vicious anti-Christianity and moral double standards. Moreover, the restrictions were very generously applied. The boundaries of the Pale (a huge area twice the size of France) were extremely porous, allowing large numbers of Jews to acquire higher education and make their fortunes in Great Russia – to such an extent that by the time of the revolution the Jews dominated Russian trade and, most ominously, the Russian press. Stolypin wanted to remove the restrictions on the Jews. But in this case the Tsar resisted him, as his father had resisted Count Witte before him.

This was not because the Tsar felt no responsibility to protect the Jews; he spoke about “my Jews”, as he talked about “my Poles”, “my Armenians” and “my Finns”. And his freedom from anti-semitism is demonstrated by his reaction to the murder of Stolypin by a Jewish revolutionary, Bogrov, in Kiev on September 1, 1911. As Robert Massie writes: “Because Bogrov was a Jew, the Orthodox population was noisily preparing a retaliatory pogrom. Frantic with fear, the city’s Jewish population spent the night packing their belongings. The first light of the following day found the square before the railway station jammed with carts and people trying to squeeze themselves on to departing trains. Even as they waited, the terrified people heard the clatter of hoofs. An endless stream of Cossacks, their long lances dark against the dawn sky, rode past. On his own, Kokovtsev had ordered three full regiments of Cossacks into the city to prevent violence. Asked on what authority he had issued the command, Kokovtsev replied: ‘As head of the government.’ Later, a local official came up to the Finance Minister to

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140 As Witte recorded in his Memoirs: “‘Are you right to stand up for the Jews?’ asked Alexander III. In reply Witte asked permission to answer the question with a question: ‘Can we drown all the Russian Jews in the Black Sea? If we can, then I accept that resolution of the Jewish question. If not, the resolution of the Jewish question consists in giving them a chance to live. That is in offering them equal rights and equal laws.’” (Edvard Radzinsky, The Last Tsar, London: Arrow, 1993, p. 69). But Witte’s reply misses the point, as if the choice lay between killing all the Jews or giving them complete equality. No State can give complete freedom to a section of the population that does not respect the law and endangers the lives or livelihoods of the majority.
complain, ‘Well, Your Excellency, by calling in the troops you have missed a fine chance to answer Bogrov’s shot with a nice Jewish pogrom.’ Kokovtsev was indignant, but, he added, ‘his sally suggested to me that the measures which I had taken at Kiev were not sufficient... therefore I sent an open telegram to all governors of the region demanding that they use every possible means – force if necessary – to prevent possible pogroms. When I submitted this telegram to the Tsar, he expressed his approval of it and of the measure I had taken in Kiev.’”

In the end, the Pale of Settlement was destroyed, not by liberal politicians, but by right-wing generals. In 1915, as the Russian armies were retreating, some Jews were accused of spying for the enemy and were shot, while the Jewish population in general was deemed unreliable. So a mass evacuation of the Jews from the Pale was ordered. But the results were disastrous. Hordes of frightened Jews fleeing eastwards blocked up vital roads along which supplies for the front were destined. Landing up in large cities such as Moscow and Petrograd where there had been no large Jewish population before, these disgruntled new arrivals only fuelled the revolutionary fires. And so was created precisely the situation that the Pale of Settlement had been designed to avert. As the Jews poured from the western regions into the major cities of European Russia, they soon acquired prominent executive positions in all major sectors of government and the economy...

As Alexander Solzhenitsyn wrote, the February revolution brought only harm and destruction to the Russian population. However, “Jewish society in Russia received in full from the February revolution everything that it had fought for, and the October coup was really not needed by it, except that cutthroat part of the Jewish secular youth that with its Russian brother-internationalists had stacked up a charge of hatred for the Russian state structure and was rearing to ‘deepen’ the revolution.” It was they who through their control of the Executive Committee of the Soviet – over half of its members were Jewish socialists – assumed the real power after February, and propelled it on – contrary to the interests, not only of the Russian, but also of the majority Jewish population, to the October revolution.

Nevertheless, at the time of the October revolution only a minority of the Jews were Bolsheviks (in the early 1900s they constituted 19% of the party). “At the elections to the Constituent Assembly ‘more than 80% of the Jewish population of Russia voted’ for Zionist parties. Lenin wrote that 550,000 were for Jewish nationalists. ‘The majority of the Jewish parties formed a single national list, in accordance with which seven deputies were elected – six Zionists’ and Gruzenberg. ‘The success of the Zionists’ was also aided by the [published not long before the elections] Declaration of the English Foreign Minister Balfour [on the creation of a ‘national centre’ of the Jews in

141 Massie, op. cit., p. 229.
142 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., pp. 41, 43.
Palestine], ‘which was met by the majority of the Russian Jewish population with enthusiasm [in Moscow, Petrograd, Odessa, Kiev and many other cities there were festive manifestations, meetings and religious services].”

The unprecedented catastrophe of the Russian revolution required an explanation... For very many this lay in the coming to power of the Jews, and their hatred for the Russian people. However, Archbishop Andrew of Ufa, the future hieromartyr, wrote: “In defence of the Russian people, they try to say that the people have been confused by the Jews, or deceived by their own leaders... A bad excuse! It’s a fine people and a fine Christian religious disposition that can be confused by any rogue that comes along!”

Nevertheless, that the revolution brought power to the Jews, who had been plotting against the Russian state for decades, if not centuries, is undeniable. “In 1917,” writes the pro-Semite David Vital, “five of the twenty-one members of the Communist Party’s Central Committee were Jews, and it has been estimated that at the early post-1917 congresses between 15 and 20% per cent of the legates were Jewish”. These percentages remained fairly stable: by 1922 Jews constituted 15% of Bolshevik Party membership (Russians constituted 65%).

But these are conservative estimates: some give much higher estimates, especially in the higher reaches of the Party and Government apparatus. Thus Douglas Reed writes: “The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, which wielded the supreme power, contained 3 Russians (including Lenin) and 9 Jews. The next body in importance, the Central Committee of the Executive Commission (or secret police) comprised 42 Jews and 19 Russians, Letts, Georgians and others. The Council of People’s Commissars consisted of 17 Jews and five others. The Moscow Che-ka (secret police) was formed of 23 Jews and 13 others. Among the names of 556 high officials of the Bolshevik state officially published in 1918-1919 were 458 Jews and 108 others. Among the central committees of small, supposed ‘Socialist’ or other non-Communist parties... were 55 Jews and 6 others.”

Richard Pipes admits: “Jews undeniably played in the Bolshevik Party and the early Soviet apparatus a role disproportionate to their share of the population. The number of Jews active in Communism in Russia and abroad was striking: in Hungary, for example, they furnished 95 percent of the

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143 Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 73.
144 Vital, op. cit., p. 703.
146 However, Lenin was partly Jewish. His grandfather was called Israel before his baptism by an Orthodox priest, and his great-grandfather’s name was Moishe Blank. See Lina Averina, "Evrejskij koren'" (The Jewish Root), Nasha Strana (Our Country), January 22, 1997; Michael Brenner, “Lenin i ego yevrejskij praded” (Lenin and his Jewish Great-Grandfather), http://inosmi.ru/history/20110228/166930202.html.
147 Reed, The Controversy of Zion, Durban, South Africa, 1978, p. 274.
leading figures in Bela Kun’s dictatorship. They also were disproportionately represented among Communists in Germany and Austria during the revolutionary upheavals there in 1918-23, and in the apparatus of the Communist International.\textsuperscript{148}

The London \textit{Times} correspondent in Russia, Robert Wilton, reported: ”Taken according to numbers of population, the Jews represented \textit{one} in ten; among the commissars that rule Bolshevik Russia they are \textit{nine} in ten; if anything the proportion of Jews is still greater.”\textsuperscript{149}

The Jews were especially dominant in the most feared and blood-thirsty part of the Bolshevik State apparatus, the Cheka, which, writes Brendon, “consisted of 250,000 officers (including 100,000 border guards), a remarkable adjunct to a State which was supposed to be withering away. In the first 6 years of Bolshevik rule it had executed at least 200,000. Moreover, the Cheka was empowered to act as ‘policeman, gaoler, investigator, prosecutor, judge and executioner’. It also employed barbaric forms of torture.”\textsuperscript{150}

So complete was the Jewish domination of Russia as a result of the revolution that it is a misnomer to speak about the “Russian” revolution; it should more accurately be called the Russian-Jewish revolution\textsuperscript{151}, or even the Jewish revolution. That the Russian revolution was actually \textit{Jewish}, but at the same time part of an \textit{international} revolution of Jewry against the Christian and Muslim worlds, is indicated by an article by Jacob de Haas entitled “The Jewish Revolution” and published in the London Zionist journal \textit{Maccabee} in November, 1905: “The Revolution in Russia is a Jewish revolution, for it is a turning point in Jewish history. This situation flows from the fact that Russia is the fatherland of approximately half of the general number of Jews inhabiting the world… The overthrow of the despotic government must exert a huge influence on the destinies of millions of Jews (both in Russia and abroad). Besides, the revolution in Russia is a Jewish revolution also because the Jews are the most active revolutionaries in the tsarist Empire.”

But \textit{why} were the Jews the most active revolutionaries? What was it in their upbringing and history that led them to adopt the atheist revolutionary teachings and actions of Russia’s “superfluous young men” more ardently than the Russians themselves? Hatred of Christ and the Christians was, of course, deeply imbedded in the Talmud and Jewish ritual – but the angry young men that began killing thousands of the Tsar’s servants even before the revolution of 1905 had rejected the Talmud as well as the Gospel, and even all religion in general.

\textsuperscript{149} Reed, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 276.
\textsuperscript{151} Reverse translation from the Russian text in Lebedev, \textit{Velikorossia}, p. 421.
“The motivation of those Jews who worked for the Cheka was not Zionist or ethnic. The war between the Cheka and the Russian bourgeoisie was not even purely a war of classes or political factions. It can be seen as being between Jewish internationalism and the remnants of a Russian national culture... What was Jewish except lineage about Bolsheviks like Zinoviev, Trotsky, Kamenev or Sverdlov? Some were second- or even third-generation renegades; few even spoke Yiddish, let alone knew Hebrew. They were by upbringing Russians accustomed to a European way of life and values, Jewish only in the superficial sense that, say, Karl Marx was. Jews in anti-Semitic Tsarist Russia had few ways out of the ghetto except emigration, education or revolution, and the latter two courses meant denying their Judaism by joining often anti-Jewish institutions and groups.”  

This can be illustrated from the deathbed confession of Yurovsky, the murderer of the Tsar: “Our family suffered less from the constant hunger than from my father’s religious fanaticism... On holidays and regular days the children were forced to pray, and it is not surprising that my first active protest was against religious and nationalistic traditions. I came to hate God and prayer as I hated poverty and the bosses.”

At the same time, the Bolshevik Jews did appear to sympathize with Talmudism more than with any other religion. Thus in 1905, as we have seen, the Jewish revolutionaries in Kiev boasted that they would turn St. Sophia cathedral into a synagogue. Again, in 1918 they erected a monument to Judas Iscariot in Sviazhsk, and in 1919 - in Tambov! And when the Whites reconquered Perm in 1918 they found many Jewish religious inscriptions in the former Bolshevik headquarters – as well as on the walls of the basement of the Ipatiev House in Yekaterinburg where the Tsar and his family were shot.

Moreover, while officially rejecting the Talmud and all religion in general, the revolutionaries did not reject the unconscious emotional energy of Talmudic Judaism, which was concentrated in a fiercely proud nationalism that was more passionately felt by virtue of the Jews having once truly been the chosen people of God. Having fallen away from that chosen status, and been scattered all over the world by the wrath of God, they resented their replacement by the Christian peoples with an especially intense resentment.

152 Rayfield, op. cit., p. 72.
153 Yurovsky, in Radzinsky, op. cit., p. 177.
154 The Danish writer Halling Keller was present at the unveiling of the monument to Judas in Sviazhsk. He wrote: “The local Soviet discussed to whom to raise a statue for a long time. It was thought that Lucifer did not completely share the idea of communism. Cain was too much of a legendary personality, so they decided on Judas Iscariot since he was a completely historical personality. They represented him at full height with his fist raised to heaven.” (M. Nazarov, “Presledovania Tserkvi i dukhovnaia sut’ bol’shevizma” (The Persecutions of the Church and the spiritual essence of Bolshevism), in Vozhdiiu Tret’ego Rima (To the Leader of the Third Rome), chapter 3)
155 See Leningradskiaia Panorama (Leningrad Panorama), № 10, 1990, p. 35.
Roma delenda est – Christian Rome had to be destroyed, and Russia as “The Third Rome”, the Rome that now reigned, had to be destroyed first of all. The atheist revolutionaries of the younger generation took over this resentment and hatred even while rejecting its religious-nationalist-historical basis...

L.A. Tikhomirov wrote: “It is now already for nineteen centuries that we have been hearing from Jewish thinkers that the religious essence of Israel consists not in a concept about God, but in the fulfilment of the Law. Above were cited such witnesses from Judas Galevy. The very authoritative Ilya del Medigo (15th century) in his notable Test of Faith says that ‘Judaism is founded not on religious dogma, but on religious acts’.

“But religious acts are, in essence, those that are prescribed by the Law. That means: if you want to be moral, carry out the Law. M. Mendelsohn formulates the idea of Jewry in the same way: ‘Judaism is not a revealed religion, but a revealed Law. It does not say ‘you must believe’, but ‘you must act’. In this constitution given by God the State and religion are one. The relationships of man to God and society are merged. It is not lack of faith or heresy that attracts punishment, but the violation of the civil order. Judaism gives no obligatory dogmas and recognizes the freedom of inner conviction.’

“Christianity says: you must believe in such-and-such a truth and on the basis of that you must do such-and-such. New Judaism says: you can believe as you like, but you have to do such-and-such. But this is a point of view that annihilates man as a moral personality…”\(^{156}\)

Thus Talmudism creates a personality that subjects faith and truth to the imperative of action. That is, it is the action that is first proclaimed as necessary – the reasons for doing it can be thought up later. And this corresponds exactly both to the philosophy of Marx, for whom “the truth, i.e. the reality and power, of thought must be demonstrated in action”\(^{157}\), and to the psychological type of the Marxist revolutionary, who first proclaims that Rome (i.e. Russia) must be destroyed, and then looks for an ideology that will justify destruction. Talmudic Law is useful, indeed necessary, not because it proclaims God’s truth, but in order to secure the solidarity of the Jewish people and their subjection to their rabbinic leaders. In the same way, Marxist theory is necessary in order to unite adherents, expel dissidents and in general justify the violent overthrow of the old system.\(^{158}\)


\(^{157}\) Marx, Eleven Theses on Feuerbach, 1845.

\(^{158}\) This point has been well developed by Pipes: “Important as ideology was,… its role in the shaping of Communist Russia must not be exaggerated. If any individual or a group profess certain beliefs and refer to them to guide their conduct, they may be said to act under the influence of ideas. When, however, ideas are used not so much to direct one’s personal conduct as to justify one’s domination over others, whether by persuasion of force, the issue becomes confused, because it is not possible to determine whether such persuasion or force
So the Russian revolution was Jewish not so much because of the ethnic composition of its leaders as because the Satanic hatred of God, Christ and all Christians that is characteristic of the Talmudic religion throughout its history was transferred from the nationalist Talmudic fathers to their internationalist atheist sons.

serves ideas or, on the contrary, ideas serve to secure or legitimize such domination. In the case of the Bolsheviks, there are strong grounds for maintaining the latter to be the case, because they distorted Marxism in every conceivable way, first to gain political power and then to hold on to it. If Marxism means anything it means two propositions: that as capitalist society matures it is doomed to collapse from inner contradictions, and that this collapse (‘revolution’) is effected by industrial labor (‘the proletariat’). A regime motivated by Marxist theory would at a minimum adhere to these two principles. What do we see in Soviet Russia? A ‘socialist revolution’ carried out in an economically underdeveloped country in which capitalism was still in its infancy, and power taken by a party committed to the view that the working class left to its own devices is unrevolutionary. Subsequently, at every stage of its history, the Communist regime in Russia did whatever it had to do to beat off challengers, without regard to Marxist doctrine, even as it cloaked its actions with Marxist slogans. Lenin succeeded precisely because he was free of the Marxist scruples that inhibited the Mensheviks. In view of these facts, ideology has to be treated as a subsidiary factor: an inspiration and a mode of thinking of the new ruling class, perhaps, but not a set of principles that either determined its actions or explains them to posterity. As a rule, the less one knows about the actual course of the Russian Revolution the more inclined one is to attribute a dominant influence to Marxism...” (op. cit., pp. 501-502)
THE MURDER OF THE TSAR

The Bolsheviks had been very fortunate. At one time the Party had once been so thoroughly penetrated by Tsarist agents as to make its success extraordinarily improbable.\(^{159}\) Again, Kornilov’s attempted coup, and Kerensky’s reaction to it, had played into their hands at a critical time.

But it was one thing for the Bolsheviks to have won power: it was quite another thing to keep it. Everybody was against them, even the other socialist parties, who felt – rightly – that they had been tricked into surrendering power to them at the Congress of Soviets in October.

That the Bolsheviks hung on to power in their first year was probably owing to three factors. First, they decided very quickly not to nationalize the land that the peasants had seized from the landowners, thus neutralizing the appeal of their main political opponents, the Social Revolutionaries. Secondly, on December 20, 1917 the Cheka, with Feliz Dzerzhinsky at its head, was founded in order to defend “the fruits of October” by all means possible, including the most extreme cruelties. And thirdly, in spite of strong opposition within the Party and throughout the country, Lenin moved to neutralize the external threat coming from the Germans.

In March, 1918 the Bolsheviks took Russia out of the First World War in the most shameful way possible: they signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany, depriving Russia of about a quarter of her territory, a third of her population and a half of her industry. It was immediately denounced by Patriarch Tikhon, but justified by Lenin on the grounds that now Soviet Russia could recuperate while Germany and the Western Powers fought each other. The Tsar had promised that he would never sign a unilateral truce with Germany – and kept his promise. Lenin promised to take Russia out of the war – and did so on the worst possible terms, in order to turn the international war into a civil war fought, not against Germans (of whom Lenin was, after all, a paid agent\(^{160}\)), but against Russians. That war had already begun in the south of the country, where the White armies, having survived a difficult first winter, were gathering their strength.

\(^{159}\) Alan Bullock writes: “One of the most celebrated Okhrana agents, Roman Malinovski, became Lenin’s trusted chief agent in Russia and led the Bolshevik deputies in the Fourth Duma. In 1908-10, four out of five members of the Bolsheviks’ St. Petersburg Committee were Okhrana agents. Persistent rumours that Stalin was one as well have never been confirmed...” (Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives, London: HarperCollins, 1991, p. 435, note)

\(^{160}\) Even after smuggling Lenin and his men into Russia in the sealed train, the Germans continued to pay him vast sums of money. Thus a “top secret” document of the Reichsbank in Berlin dated January 8, 1918 informed the Foreign Affairs Commissar that 50 million rubles were to be sent to the Sovnarkom (Istoki Zla, op. cit., p. 39).
The critical question was: were the Whites going to fight under the banner of Orthodoxy and Tsarism or not? Tsarism meant, not Tsar Nicholas necessarily, who had abdicated, but the monarchical principle. However, the physical presence of Tsar Nicholas, whether as the actual ruler or as the senior representative of the old dynasty, was important. As long as the Tsar was alive, the possibility of a just and successful war against Bolshevism under the banner of Orthodoxy and Tsarism still existed. That is why the attempts to rescue the Tsar from captivity were not romantic side-shows, but critically important. And that is why the Bolsheviks proceeded to kill the Tsar... For, as Trotsky wrote: “In essence this decision was inevitable. The execution of the tsar and his family was necessary, not simply to scare, horrify and deprive the enemy of hope, but also to shake up our own ranks, show them that there was no going back...” 161

And so, on the night of July 17, 1918 Blessed Maria Ivanovna, the fool-for-Christ of Diveyevo, began to shout and scream: “The Tsar’s been killed with bayonets! Cursed Jews!” That night the tsar and his family and servants were shot in Yekaterinburg in a decidedly Judaist-ritualistic manner. Strange cabbalistic symbols were found on the walls of the room where the crime took place which have been deciphered to mean: "Here, by order of the secret powers, the Tsar was offered as a sacrifice for the destruction of the state. Let all peoples be informed of this..." 162

The Royal Family had given a wonderful example of truly Christian love in their lives. And in their deaths they showed exemplary patience and love for their enemies. Thus Martyr-Great-Princess Olga Nikolayevna wrote from Tobolsk: "Father asks the following message to be given to all those who have remained faithful to him, and to those on whom they may have an influence, that they should not take revenge for him, since he has forgiven everyone and prays for everyone, that they should not take revenge for themselves, and should remember that the evil which is now in the world will be still stronger, but that it is not love that will conquer evil, but only love..." And in the belongings of the same holy martyr were found these verses by S. Bekhteyev:

Now as we stand before the gates of death,
Breathe in the lips of us Thy servants
That more than human, supernatural strength
To meekly pray for those that hurt us.

162 See Nikolai Kozlov, Krestnij Put' (The Way of the Cross), Moscow, 1993; Enel, "Zhertva" (Sacrifice), Kolokol' (Bell), Moscow, 1990, № 5, pp. 17-37, and Michael Orlov, "Ekaterinburgskaya Golgota" (The Golgotha of Yekaterinburg), Kolokol' (Bell), 1990, № 5, pp. 37-55; Lebedev, op. cit., p. 519; Prince Felix Yusupov, Memoiary (Memoirs), Moscow, 1998, p. 249. However, some doubt is cast on the ritual murder hypothesis by the fact that when Sokolov’s archive was sold at Sotheby’s in 1990, the critical piece of evidence – the symbols on the wall-paper – were missing (Bishop Ambrose of Methone, personal communication, June 4, 2010).
The next day, at Alapayevsk, Great Princess Elizabeth was killed together with her faithful companion, the Nun Barbara, and several Great Princes.

The murder of the Tsar and his family was not the responsibility of the Bolsheviks only, but of all those who, directly or indirectly, connived at it. As St. John Maximovich explained: “The sin against him and against Russia was perpetrated by all who in one way or another acted against him, who did not oppose, or who merely by sympathizing participated in those events which took place forty years ago. That sin lies upon everyone until it is washed away by sincere repentance…”

On hearing the news of the Tsar’s murder, Patriarch Tikhon immediately condemned it. He had already angered the government by sending the Tsar his blessing in prison; and he now celebrated a pannikhida for him, blessing the archpastors and pastors to do the same. Then, on July 21, he announced in the Kazan cathedral: “We, in obedience to the teaching of the Word of God, must condemn this deed, otherwise the blood of the shot man will fall also on us, and not only on those who committed the crime…”

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163 St. John, “Homily before a Memorial Service for the Tsar-Martyr”, in Man of God: Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco, Richfield Springs, N.Y, 1994, p. 133. Archbishop Averky of Syracuse continues the theme: “It is small consolation for us that the Royal Family was killed directly by non-Russian hands, non-Orthodox hands and non-Russian people. Although that is so, the whole Russian people is guilty of this terrible, unprecedented evil deed, insofar as it did not resist or stand against it, but behaved itself in such a way that the evil deed appeared as the natural expression of that mood which by that time had matured in the minds and hearts of the undoubted majority of the unfortunate misguided Russian people, beginning with the ‘lowers’ and ending with the very ‘tops’, the upper aristocracy” (Religioznomisticheskij smysl ubienia Tsarkoj Sem’i” (The Religious-Mystical Meaning of the Killing of the Royal Family), http://www.ispovednik.org/fullest.php?nid=59&binn_rubrik_pl_news=132.

164 Gubonin, op. cit., p. 143.
THE RED TERROR

However, the people as a whole did not condemn the evil deed. The result was a significant increase in their suffering... For “he who restrains” the coming of the Antichrist, the Orthodox Autocracy, had been removed, and now, with all restraint removed, the world entered the era of the collective Antichrist...

The signal was an attempt was made on the life of Lenin in August, 1918. Shaken, the Bolsheviks initiated the Red Terror. Of course, they had been terrorizing the population of Russia from the beginning. But now the terror assumed more organized forms, and was on a vastly greater scale...

We have seen that Leninism, far from being a scientifically based doctrine, was much closer in essence to pagan demon-worship with its incessant demand for more and more blood. The murder of the Tsar and his family was particularly marked by its ritual character. As the number of victims mounted, the Church, slow hitherto in exposing the full horror of the persecution, began to protest more loudly.

Thus on August 8, 1918, in an address “to all the faithful children of the Russian Orthodox Church”, the Patriarch said: “Sin has fanned everywhere the flame of the passions, enmity and wrath; brother has risen up against brother; the prisons are filled with captives; the earth is soaked in innocent blood, shed by a brother’s hand; it is defiled by violence, pillaging, fornication and every uncleanness. From this same poisonous source of sin has issued the great deception of material earthly goods, by which our people is enticed, forgetting the one thing necessary. We have not rejected this temptation, as the Saviour Christ rejected it in the wilderness. We have wanted to create a paradise on earth, but without God and His holy commandments. God is not mocked. And so we hunger and thirst and are naked upon the earth, blessed with an abundance of nature’s gifts, and the seal of the curse has fallen on the very work of the people and on all the undertakings of our hands. Sin, heavy and unrepented of, has summoned Satan from the abyss, and he is now bellowing his slander against the Lord and against His Christ, and is raising an open persecution against the Church.”

In characterizing Socialism in similar terms to those used by Dostoyevsky’s Grand Inquisitor, as the temptation to create bread out of stones which Christ rejected, the Patriarch certainly gave a valid critique of Socialism as it was and still is popularly understood – that is, as a striving for social justice on earth, or, as the former Marxist Fr. Sergius Bulgakov put it in 1917, “the thought that first of all and at any price hunger must be conquered and the chains of poverty broken... Socialism does not signify a radical reform of life, it is

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165 Regelson, op. cit., p. 52; Gubonin, op. cit., p. 146.
charity, one of its forms as indicated by contemporary life – and nothing more. The triumph of socialism would not introduce anything essentially new into life.”166 From this point of view, Socialism is essentially a well-intentioned movement that has gone wrong because it fails to take into account God, the commandments of God and the fallenness of human nature. The guilt of the Socialists consists in the fact that, rather than seeking paradise in heaven and with God through the fulfilment of His commandments, they “have wanted to create a paradise on earth, but without God and His holy commandments”. The result has been hell in this life and (to quote from the anathema of 1918) “the fire of Gehenna in the life to come”…

However, as Igor Shafarevich has demonstrated, Socialism in its more radical form – that is, Revolutionary Socialism (Bolshevism, Leninism) as opposed to Welfare Socialism - is very little concerned with justice and not at all with charity. Its real motivation is simply satanic hatred, hatred of the whole of the old world and all those in it, and the desire to destroy it to its very foundations. Its supposed striving for social justice is only a cover, a fig-leaf, a propaganda tool for the attainment of this purely destructive aim, which can be analyzed into four objects: the destruction of: (i) hierarchy, (ii) private property, (iii) the family, and (iv) religion.167

1. Hierarchy. Hierarchy had already largely been destroyed by the time the Bolsheviks came to power: from that time the only hierarchy was the Communist Party and all others were equally miserable in relation to it.

2. Private Property. Lenin proclaimed: “Loot the loot” (grab’ nagraiblennoe), and by the end of the Civil War all property of any significance had passed into the hands of the new aristocracy, the Communist Party. Lenin’s plans were aided by a characteristic of the peasants (not all of them, of course, but probably the majority) that has already been noted: their refusal to admit the right of any but peasants to the land. Pipes writes: “The peasant was revolutionary in one respect only: he did not acknowledge private ownership of land. Although on the eve of the Revolution he owned nine-tenths of the country’s arable, he craved for the remaining 10 percent held by landlords, merchants, and noncommunal peasants. No economic or legal arguments could change his mind: he felt he had a God-given right to that land and that someday it would be his. And by his he meant the commune’s, which would allocate it justly to its members. The prevalence of communal landholding in European Russia was, along with the legacy of serfdom, a fundamental fact of Russian social history. It meant that along with a poorly developed sense for law, the peasant also had little respect for private property. Both tendencies were exploited and exacerbated by radical intellectuals for their own ends to incite the peasants against the status quo.

166 Bulgakov, Sotsializm i Khristianstvo (Socialism and Christianity), Moscow, 1917; quoted in Shafarevich, op. cit., pp. 288, 289.
167 Shafarevich, op. cit., p. 265.
“Russia’s industrial workers were potentially destabilizing not because they assimilated revolutionary ideologies – very few of them did and even they were excluded from leadership positions in the revolutionary parties. Rather, since most of them were one or at most two generations removed from the village and only superficially urbanized, they carried with them to the factory rural attitudes only slightly adjusted to industrial conditions. They were not socialists but syndicalists, believing that as their village relatives were entitled to all the land, so they had a right to the factories.”*168*

3. **The Family.** In 1975 Archbishop Andrew (Rymarenko) of Rockland explained to Alexander Solzhenitsyn: “I saw everything that happened before the revolution and what prepared it. *It was ungodliness in all forms, and chiefly the violation of family life and the corruption of youth…”*169*

Oliver Figes writes: “The Bolsheviks envisaged the building of their Communist utopia as a constant battle against custom and habit. With the end of the Civil War they prepared for a new and longer struggle on the ‘internal front’, a revolutionary war for the liberation of the communistic personality through the eradication of individualistic (‘bourgeois’) behaviour and deviant habits (prostitution, alcoholism, hooliganism and religion) inherited from the old society. There was little dispute among the Bolsheviks that this battle to transform human nature would take decades. There was only disagreement about when the battle should begin. Marx had taught that the alteration of consciousness was dependent on changes to the material base, and Lenin, when he introduced the NEP, affirmed that until the material conditions of a Communist society had been created – a process that would take an entire historical epoch – there was no point trying to engineer a Communist system of morality in private life. But most Bolsheviks did not accept that the NEP required a retreat from the private sphere. On the contrary, as they were increasingly inclined to think, active engagement was essential at every moment and in every battlefield of everyday life – in the family, the home and the inner world of the individual, where the persistence of old mentalities was a major threat to the Party’s basic ideological goals. And as they watched the individualistic instincts of the ‘petty-bourgeois’ masses become stronger in the culture of the NEP, they redoubled their efforts. As Anatoly Lunacharsky wrote in 1927: ‘The so-called sphere of private life cannot slip away from us, because it is precisely here that the final goal of the Revolution is to be reached.’

“The family was the first arena in which the Bolsheviks engaged the struggle. In the 1920s, they took it as an article of faith that the ‘bourgeois family’ was socially harmful: it was inward-looking and conservative, a

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stronghold of religion, superstition, ignorance and prejudice; it fostered egotism and material acquisitiveness, and oppressed women and children. The Bolsheviks expected that the family would disappear as Soviet Russia developed into a fully socialist system, in which the state took responsibility for all the basic household functions, providing nurseries, laundries and canteens in public centres and apartment blocks. Liberated from labour in the home, women would be free to enter the workforce on an equal footing with men. The patriarchal marriage, with its attendant sexual morals, would die out - to be replaced, the radicals believed, by ‘free unions of love’.

“As the Bolsheviks saw it, the family was the biggest obstacle to the socialization of children. ‘By loving a child, the family turns him into an egotistical being, encouraging him to see himself as the centre of the universe,’ wrote the Soviet educational thinker Zlata Lilina. Bolshevik theorists agreed on the need to replace this ‘egotistic love’ with the ‘rational love’ of a broader ‘social family’. The ABC of Communism (1919) envisaged a future society in which parents would no longer use the word ‘my’ to refer to their children, but would care for all the children in their community. Among the Bolsheviks there were different views about how long this change would take. Radicals argued that the Party should take direct action to undermine the family immediately, but most accepted the arguments of Bukharin and NEP theorists that in a peasant country such as Soviet Russia the family would remain for some time the primary unity of production and consumption and that it would weaken gradually as the country made the transition to an urban socialist society.

“Meanwhile the Bolsheviks adopted various strategies – such as the transformation of domestic space – intended to accelerate the disintegration of the family. To tackle the housing shortages in the overcrowded cities the Bolsheviks compelled wealthy families to share their apartments with the urban poor – a policy known as ‘condensation’ (uplotnenie). During the 1920s the most common type of communal apartment (kommunalka) was one in which the original owners occupied the main rooms on the ‘parade side’ while the back rooms were filled by other families. At that time it was still possible for the former owners to select their co-inhabitants, provided they fulfilled the ‘sanitary norm’ (a per capita allowance of living space which fell from 13.5 square metres in 1926 to just 9 square metres in 1931). Many families brought in servants or acquaintances to prevent strangers being moved in to fill up the surplus living space. The policy had a strong ideological appeal, not just as a war on privilege, which is how it was presented in the propaganda of the new regime (‘War against the Palaces!’), but also as part of a crusade to engineer a more collective way of life. By forcing people to share communal apartments, the Bolsheviks believed that they could make them communistic in their basic thinking and behaviour. Private space and property would disappear, the individual (‘bourgeois’) family would be replaced by communistic fraternity and organization, and
the life of the individual would become immersed in the community. From the middle of the 1920s, new types of housing were designed with this transformation in mind. The most radical Soviet architects, like the Constructivists in the Union of Contemporary Architects, proposed the complete obliteration of the private sphere by building ‘commune houses’ (doma kommuny) where all the property, including even clothes and underwear, would be shared by the inhabitants, where domestic tasks like cooking and childcare would be assigned to teams on a rotating basis, and where everybody would sleep in one big dormitory, divided by gender, with private rooms for sexual liaisons. Few houses of this sort were ever built, although they loomed large in the utopian imagination and futuristic novels such as Yevgeny Zamiatin’s We (1920). Most of the projects which did materialize, like the Narkomfin (Ministry of Finance) house in Moscow (1930) designed by the Constructivist Moisei Ginzburg, tended to stop short of the full communal form and included both private living spaces and communalized blocks for laundries, baths, dining rooms and kitchens, nurseries and schools. Yet the goal remained to marshal architecture in a way that would induce the individual to move away from private (‘bourgeois’) forms of domesticity to a more collective way of life.

“The Bolsheviks also intervened more directly in domestic life. The new Code on Marriage and the Family (1918) established a legislative framework that clearly aimed to facilitate the breakdown of the traditional family. It removed the influence of the Church from marriage and divorce, making both a process of simple registration with the state. It granted the same legal rights to de facto marriages (couples living together) as it gave to legal marriages. The Code turned divorce from a luxury for the rich to something that was easy and affordable for all. The result was a huge increase in casual marriages and the highest rate of divorce in the world – three times higher than in France or Germany and twenty-six times higher than in England by 1926 – as the collapse of the Christian-patriarchal order and the chaos of the revolutionary years loosened sexual morals along with family and communal ties.”

170 Figes, The Whisperers, op. cit., pp. 7-10. Figes continues: “In the early years of Soviet power, family breakdown was so common among revolutionary activists that it almost constituted an occupational hazard. Casual relationships were practically the norm in Bolshevik circles during the Civil War, when any comrade could be sent at a moment’s notice to some distant sector of the front. Such relaxed attitudes remained common through the 1920s, as Party activists and their young emulators in the Komsomol [Communist Youth League] were taught to put their commitment to the proletariat before romantic love or family. Sexual promiscuity was more pronounced in the Party’s youthful ranks than among Soviet youth in general. Many Bolsheviks regarded sexual licence as a form of liberation from bourgeois moral conventions and as a sign of ‘Soviet modernity’. Some even advocated promiscuity as a way to counteract the formation of coupling relationships that separated lovers from the collective and detracted from their loyalty to the Party.

“It was a commonplace that the Bolshevik made a bad husband a father because the demands of the Party took him away from the home. ’We Communists don’t know our own families,’ remarked one Moscow Bolshevik. ‘You leave early and come home late. You seldom see your wife and almost never your children.’ At Party congresses, where the issue
In November, 1920 the Bolsheviks also legalized abortions; they were made available free of charge at the mother’s request. For “in Soviet Russia,” writes Pipes, “as in the rest of Europe, World War I led to a loosening of sexual mores, which here was justified on moral grounds. The apostle of free love in Soviet Russia was Alexandra Kollontai, the most prominent woman Bolshevik. Whether she practiced what she preached or preached what she practiced, is not for the historian to determine; but the evidence suggests that she had an uncontrollable sex drive coupled with an inability to form enduring relationships. Born the daughter of a wealthy general, terribly spoiled in childhood, she reacted to the love lavished on her with rebellion. In 1906 she joined the Mensheviks, then, in 1915, switched to Lenin, whose antia war stand she admired. Subsequently, she performed for him valuable services as agent and courier.

“In her writings, Kollontai argued that the modern family had lost its traditional economic function, which meant that women should be set free to choose their partners. In 1919 she published *The New Morality and the Working Class*, a work based on the writings of the German feminist Grete Meisel-Hess. In it she maintained that women had to be emancipated not only economically but also psychologically. The ideal of ‘grand amour’ was very difficult to realize, especially for men, because it clashed with their worldly ambitions. To be capable of it, individuals had to undergo an apprenticeship in the form of ‘love games’ or ‘erotic friendships’, which taught them to engage in sexual relations free of both emotional attachment and personal domination. Casual sex alone conditioned women to safeguard their individuality in a society dominated by men. Every form of sexual relationship was acceptable: Kollontai advocated what she called ‘successive polygamy’. In the capacity of Commissar of Guardianship (Prizrenia) she promoted communal kitchens as a way of ‘separating the kitchen from marriage’. She, too, wanted the care of children to be assumed by the community. She predicted that in time the family would disappear, and women should learn to treat all children as their own. She popularized her theories in a novel, *Free Love: The Love of Worker Bees* (*Svobodnaia liubov’: liubov’ pchel’ trudovykh*) (1924), one part of which was called, ‘The Love of Three

was discussed throughout the 1920s, it was recognized that Bolsheviks were far more likely than non-Party husbands to abandon wives and families, and that this had much to do with the primacy of Party loyalties over sexual fidelity. But in fact the problem of absent wives and mothers was almost as acute in Party circles, as indeed it was in the broader circle of the Soviet intelligentsia, where most women were involved in the public sphere.

“Trotsky argued that the Bolsheviks were more affected than others by domestic breakdown because they were ‘most exposed to the influence of new conditions’. As pioneers of a modern way of life, Trotsky wrote in 1923, the ‘Communist vanguard merely passes sooner and more violently through what is inevitable’ for the population as a whole. In many Party households there was certainly a sense of pioneering a new type of family – one that liberated both parents for public activities – albeit at the cost of intimate involvement with their children.” (pp. 10-11)
Generations’. Its heroine preached divorcing sex from morality as well as from politics. Generous with her body, she said she loved everybody, from Lenin down, and gave herself to any man who happened to attract her.

“Although often regarded as the authoritarian theoretician of Communist sex morals, Kollontai was very much the exception who scandalized her colleagues. Lenin regarded ‘free love’ as a ‘bourgeois’ idea – by which he meant not so much extramarital affairs (with which he himself had had experience) as casual sex...

“Studies of the sexual mores of Soviet youth conducted in the 1920s revealed considerable discrepancy between what young people said they believed and what they actually practiced: unusually, in this instance behaviour was less promiscuous than theory. Russia’s young people stated they considered love and marriage ‘bourgeois’ relics and thought Communists should enjoy a sexual life unhampered by any inhibitions: the less affection and commitment entered into male-female relations, the more ‘communist’ they were. According to opinion surveys, students looked on marriage as confining and, for women, degrading: the largest number of respondents – 50.8 percent of the women and 67.3 of the women – expressed a preference for long-term relationships based on mutual affection but without the formality of marriage.

“Deeper probing of their attitudes, however, revealed that behind the façade of defiance of tradition, old attitudes survived intact. Relations based on love were the ideal of 82.6 percent of the men and 90.5 percent of the women: ‘This is what they secretly long for and dream about,’ according to the author of the survey. Few approved of the kind of casual sex advocated by Kollontai and widely associated with early Communism: a mere 13.3 percent of the men and 10.6 of the women. Strong emotional and moral factors continued to inhibit casual sex: one Soviet survey revealed that over half of the female student respondents were virgins…”

In this continuing conservatism of Soviet youth we see the continuing influence of the Orthodox Church, into which most Russians had been baptized. The Church resisted all the Soviet innovations, including civil marriage, abortion and divorce on demand. And soon the State, too, reversed its teaching, outlawing abortion in 1936 and condemning free love...

4. Religion. Of these four destructive ends of Bolshevism, the most fundamental is the destruction of religion, especially Orthodox Christianity. The incompatibility between Socialism and Christianity was never doubted by the apostles of Socialism. Religion was to Marx “opium for the people”, and to Lenin – “spiritual vodka”. Lenin wrote that “every religious idea, every idea of a god, even flirting with the idea of God is unutterable vileness

of the most dangerous kind”.\textsuperscript{172} And in 1918 he said to Krasin: “Electricity will take the place of God. Let the peasant pray to electricity; he’s going to feel the power of the central authorities more than that of heaven.”\textsuperscript{173}

As regards the Bolshevik attitude to law, this was described by Latsis: “In the investigation don’t search for materials and proofs that the accused acted in word or deed against Soviet power. The first question which you must put to him is: what is his origin, education, upbringing or profession. These are the questions that must decide the fate of the accused… If it is possible to accuse the Cheka of anything it is not in excessive zeal in executions, but in not applying the supreme penalty enough… We were always too soft and magnanimous towards the defeated foe!”\textsuperscript{174}

As for morality, in his address to the Third All-Russian congress of the Union of Russian Youth in October, 1920, Lenin wrote: “In what sense do we reject morality and ethics? In the sense in which it is preached by the bourgeoisie, which has derived this morality from the commandments of God. Of course, as regards God, we say that we do not believe in Him, and we very well know that it was in the name of God that the clergy used to speak, that the landowners spoke, that the bourgeoisie spoke, so as to promote their exploitative interests. Or… they derived morality from idealistic or semi-idealistic phrases, which always came down to something very similar to the commandments of God. All such morality which is taken from extra-human, extra-class conceptions, we reject. We say that it is a deception, that it is a swindle, that it is oppression of the minds of the workers and peasants in the interests of the landowners and capitalists. We say that our morality is entirely subject to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat. Our morality derives from the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat.”\textsuperscript{175}

Of course, there is an inner contradiction here. If God exists, and all the older systems of morality are nonsense, why entertain any notions of good and evil? And why prefer the interests of the proletariat to anyone else’s? In fact, if God does not exist, then, as Dostoyevsky said, everything is permitted. And this is what we actually find in Bolshevism – everything was permitted, including the murder of the proletariat provided it benefited the interests of the Communist Party. In any case, as Alexander Solzhenitsyn wrote: “The line dividing good and evil passes not between states, not between classes, and


\textsuperscript{174} Latsis, Ezhenedel’nik ChK (Cheka Weekly), № 1, November 1, 1918; in Priest Vladimir Dmitriev, Simbirskaja Golgota (Simbirsk’s Golgotha), Moscow, 1997, p. 4.

\textsuperscript{175} Lenin, op. cit., vol. 41, p. 309.
not between parties – it passes through each human heart – and through all human hearts…”¹⁷⁶ And again he wrote: “Within the philosophical system of Marx and Lenin, and at the heart of their psychology, hatred of God is the principal driving force, more fundamental than all their political and economic pretensions. Militant atheism is not merely incidental or marginal to Communist policy. It is not a side-effect, but the central pivot…”¹⁷⁷

That militant atheism, and the rejection of all religiously based morality, was the central pivot of Marxism-Leninism was to become abundantly evident in the next seventy years. And in proportion as the Bolsheviks’ actions became more bloody, so the Patriarch’s condemnation became sterner. Using his position as the head of the Church and last man in Russia who was allowed to speak his mind, on October 26, 1918 he wrote to the Sovnarkom:

“‘All those who take up the sword will perish by the sword’ (Matthew 26.52). This prophecy of the Saviour we apply to you, the present determiners of the destinies of our fatherland, who call yourselves ‘people’s commissars’. For a whole year you have held State power in your hands and you are already preparing to celebrate the anniversary of the October revolution, but the blood poured out in torrents of our brothers pitilessly slaughtered in accordance with your appeals, cries out to heaven and forces us to speak to you this bitter word of righteousness.

“In truth you gave it a stone instead of bread and a serpent instead of a fish (Matthew 7.9, 10). You promised to give the people, worn out by bloody war, peace ‘without annexations and requisitions’. In seizing power and calling on the people to trust you, what promises did you give it and how did you carry out these promises? What conquests could you renounce when you had brought Russia to a shameful peace [the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk] whose humiliating conditions you yourselves did not even decide to publish fully? Instead of annexations and requisitions our great homeland has been conquered, reduced and divided, and in payment of the tribute imposed on it you will secretly export to Germany the gold which was accumulated by others than you… You have divided the whole people into warring camps, and plunged them into a fratricide of unprecedented ferocity. You have openly exchanged the love of Christ for hatred, and instead of peace you have artificially inflamed class enmity. And there is no end in sight to the war you have started, since you are trying to use the workers and peasants to bring victory to the spectre of world revolution… It is not enough that you have drenched the hands of the Russian people in the blood of brothers, covering yourselves with contributions, requisitions and nationalisations under various names: you have incited the people to the most blatant and shameless looting. At your instigation there has been the looting or confiscation of lands, estates,

factories, houses and cattle; money, objects, furniture and clothing are looted. At first you robbed the more wealthy and industrious peasants under the name of ‘bourgeois’, thereby multiplying the numbers of the poor, although you could not fail to realise that by devastating a great number of individual citizens the people’s wealth is being destroyed and the country itself ravaged.

“Having seduced the dark and ignorant people with the opportunity of easy and unpunished profit, you darkened their consciences and drowned out in them the consciousness of sin. But with whatever names you cover your evil deeds – murder, violence and looting will always remain heavy sins and crimes that cry out to heaven for revenge.

“You promised freedom. Rightly understood, as freedom from evil, that does not restrict others, and does not pass over into licence and self-will, freedom is a great good. But you have not given that kind of freedom: the freedom given by you consists in indulging in every way the base passions of the mob, and in not punishing murder and robbery. Every manifestation both of true civil and the higher spiritual freedom of mankind is mercilessly suppressed by you. Is it freedom when nobody can get food for himself, or rent a flat, or move from city to city without special permission? Is it freedom when families, and sometimes the populations of whole houses are resettled and their property thrown out into the street, and when citizens are artificially divided into categories, some of which are given over to hunger and pillaging? Is it freedom when nobody can openly express his opinion for fear of being accused of counter-revolution?

“Where is freedom of the word and the press, where is the freedom of Church preaching? Many bold Church preachers have already paid with the blood of their martyrdom; the voice of social and state discussion and reproach is suppressed; the press, except for the narrowly Bolshevik press, has been completely smothered. The violation of freedom in matters of the faith is especially painful and cruel. There does not pass a day in which the most monstrous slanders against the Church of Christ and her servers, and malicious blasphemies and sacrilege, are not published in the organs of your press. You mock the servers of the altar, you force a bishop to dig ditches (Bishop Hermogen of Tobolsk), and you send priests to do dirty work. You have placed your hands on the heritage of the Church, which has been gathered by generations of believing people, and you have not hesitated to violate their last will. You have closed a series of monasteries and house churches without any reason or cause. You have cut off access to the Moscow Kremlin, that sacred heritage of the whole believing people… It is not our task to judge earthly powers; every power allowed by God would attract to itself Our blessing if it were in truth a servant of God subject to the good, and was ‘terrible not for good deeds, but for evil’ (Romans 13.3,4). Now we extend to you, who are using your power for the persecution of your neighbours and the destruction of the innocent, Our word of exhortation: celebrate the
anniversary of your coming to power by liberating the imprisoned, by stopping the blood-letting, violence, destruction and restriction of the faith. Turn not to destruction, but to the establishment of order and legality. Give the people the rest from civil war that they desire and deserve. Otherwise ‘from you will be required all the righteous blood that you have shed’ (Luke 11.51), ‘and you who have taken up the sword will perish by the sword’.”

Pipes writes: “The effect that persecution had on religious sentiments and practices during the first decade of Communist rule is difficult to assess. There is a great deal of circumstantial evidence, however, that people continued to observe religious rituals and customs, treating the Communists as they would heathen conquerors. Although the observance of religious holidays had been outlawed, the prohibition could not be enforced. As early as 1918 workers received permission to celebrate Easter provided they did not absent themselves from work for more than five days. Later on, the authorities acquiesced in the suspension of work on Christmas under both the old and new calendars. There are reports of religious processions (krestnye khody) in the capital as well as in provincial towns. In the rural districts, the peasants insisted on regarding as legitimate only marriages performed by a priest.

“Religious fervor, which, along with monarchic sentiments, had perceptibly ebbed in 1917, revived in the spring of 1918, when many Christians courted martyrdom by demonstrating, holding protest meetings, and fasting. The fervor increased with each year: in 1920, ‘The Churches filled with worshippers; among them there was not that predominance of women that could be noted before the revolution. Confession acquired particular importance… Church holidays attracted immense crowds. Church life in 1920 was fully restored and perhaps even exceeded the old, pre-Revolutionary one. Without a doubt, the inner growth of church self-consciousness among Russian believers attained a height unknown during the preceding two centuries.’

“Tikhon confirmed this judgement in an interview with an American journalist the same year, saying that ‘the influence of the church on the lives of the people was stronger than ever in all its history’. Confirming these impressions, one well-informed observer concluded in 1926 that the church had emerged victorious from its conflict with the Communists: ‘The only thing the Bolsheviks had achieved was to loosen the hierarchy and split the church’. ”

“But ahead of it lay trials such as no church had ever endured…”

VERSAILLES: THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION

The victory of the Allies in the First World War was a pyrrhic one. France, Britain and Italy increased their territories at the expense of their defeated enemies; but none had the power, economic, financial or psychological, to really absorb or profit from them – old-style imperialism was on its last legs, and would disappear completely by the 1960s. Serbia and Romania, as we shall see, while increasing their territories, thereby also increased their problems in the shape of large ethnic minorities, and found that they had bitten off more than they could chew. The Greeks would regret their attempt to take advantage of the defeated Ottomans. The only real beneficiary from the war was a latecomer, America; her president, Woodrow Wilson, would now attempt to dictate the peace at the Peace Conference in Versailles…

“Dictate” was the word, because while Wilson had to negotiate with the other victorious nation states, France, Britain and Italy, neither he nor any of the other western leaders had any intention of negotiating with Germany. The democratic victor-states were intent on reshaping the world in their own, democratic image, making it “safe for democracy”. And so although the Germans had very quickly got rid of their Kaiser and adopted a democratic constitution, they were not invited to the table, with the result that the “Treaty” of Versailles was not so much a treaty with Germany as a diktat to the Germans, who were asked to sign only after all the negotiations had been conducted without them. Moreover, the Germans had surrendered on the terms of Wilson’s famous “Fourteen Points” (“the good Lord had only ten,” quipped the French President Clemenceau), several of which, as we shall see, were flouted. The anger this injustice caused was one of the main causes of the rise of Hitler and the Second World War…

Russia was also not invited to the negotiations. This was understandable, since Russia was now ruled by the Bolsheviks, an antichristian sect that vowed to overthrow all governments, and had helped to set up short-lived communist states in Hungary and Bavaria in the same year that the conference was held. Not that the conference did anything effective to counter the Bolshevik threat. On the contrary, Point Six of Wilson’s Fourteen Points, “The evacuation of all Russian territory”, was crucial in consolidating Bolshevik power. For it “guaranteed the survival of Bolshevism in Russia as soon as the German government accepted the Fourteen Points as the Allied condition for the Armistice of 11 Nov. 1918”180

The disillusionment at the failure of Versailles was all the greater in view of the idealism that was prevalent at the beginning. “Wilson the Just”, as he was called, “was hailed as the saviour of Europe. In France peasant families

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knelt to pray as his train passed; in Italy wounded soldiers tried to kiss the hem of his garments…” No doubt Wilson was something of a Presbyterian minister manqué, as J.M. Keynes charged. Georges Clemenceau, indeed, said that talking to Wilson was ‘something like talking to Jesus Christ’. “As [his biographer, Lord] Devlin noted, ‘It was almost, but not quite, as if he were trying to bring Christianity into public life.’ Wilson seems to have believed, with House, that truly democratic institutions that actually reflected the will of the people and made commensurate demands on their attention and contributions would yield just such a spiritual change in mankind.”

This was truly hubris on a grand scale – the idea that one man could come to a foreign continent whose ways and exceedingly complicated history he hardly knew, and, armed only with good intentions, recreate its system of inter-state relations on the model of the American Constitution, thereby creating Eternal Peace. Only Christ could have attained such a goal (without reference to the American Constitution). But Wilson, writes Niall Ferguson, “believed he had the answers. Some of these were familiar liberal nostrums, like free trade and freedom of the seas. Others built on pre-war and wartime proposals for collective security, arms control and an end to ‘secret diplomacy’; from these Wilson fashioned his League of Nations, with its biblical ‘Covenant’. The most radical of Wilson’s schemes, however, envisaged a reordering of the European map on the basis of national ‘self-determination’. From December 1914 onwards Wilson had argued that any peace settlement ‘should be for the advantage of the European nations regarded as Peoples and not for any nation imposing its governmental will upon alien people’. In May 1915 he went further, asserting unequivocally that ‘every people has a right to choose the sovereignty under which they shall live’. He repeated the point in January 1917 and elaborated on its implications in points five to thirteen of the Covenant, the League would not merely guarantee the territorial integrity of its member states but would be empowered to accommodate future territorial adjustments ‘pursuant to the principle of self-determination’. This was not entirely novel, needless to say. British liberal thinkers since John Stuart Mill had been arguing that the homogeneous nation-state was the only proper setting for a liberal polity, and British poets and politicians had spasmodically stuck up for the right to independence of the Greeks and the Italians, whom they tended to romanticize. When trying to imagine an ideal map of Europe in 1857, Giuseppe Mazzimi had imagined just eleven nation states ordered on the basis of nationality. But never before had a statesman proposed to make national self-determination the basis for a new European order. In combination with the League, self-determination was to take precedence over the integrity of the sovereign state, the foundation of international relations since the Treaty of Westphalia two and a half centuries before.

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“Applying the principle of self-determination proved far from easy, however, for two reasons. First,.. there were more than thirteen million Germans already living east of the border of the pre-war Reich – perhaps as much as a fifth of the total German-speaking population of Europe. If self-determination were applied vigorously Germany might well end up bigger, which was certainly not the intention of Wilson’s fellow peacemakers. From the outset, then, there had to be inconsistency, if not hypocrisy, in the way Germany was treated: no Anschluss of the rump Austria to the Reich – despite the fact that the post-revolutionary governments in both Berlin and Vienna voted for it – and no vote at all for the 250,000 South Tyroleans, 90 per cent of whom were Germans, on whether they wanted to become Italian, but plebiscites to determine the fate of northern Schleswig (which went to Denmark), eastern Upper Silesia (to Poland) and Eupen-Malmédy (to Belgium). France reclaimed Alsace and Lorraine, lost in 1871, despite the fact that barely one in ten of the population were French-speakers. In all, around 3.5 million German-speakers ceased to be German citizens under the terms of the Versailles Treaty. Equally important, under the terms of the 1919 Treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye, more than 3.2 million Germans in Bohemia, southern Moravia and the hastily constituted Austrian province of Sudetenland found themselves reluctant citizens of a new state, Czechoslovakia. There were just under three-quarters of a million Germans in the new Poland, the same number again in the mightily enlarged Romania, half a million in the new South Slav kingdom later known as Yugoslavia and another half million in the rump Hungary left over after the Treaty of Trianon.

“The second problem for self-determination was that none of the peacemakers saw it as applying to their own empires – only in the empires they had defeated. Wilson’s original draft of Article III of the League Covenant had explicitly stated that: ‘Territorial adjustments... may in the future become necessary by reason of changes in present racial conditions and aspirations or present social and political relationships, pursuant to the principle of self-determination, and... may... in the judgement of three-fourths of the Delegates be demanded by the welfare and manifest interest of the peoples concerned.’

“This was too much even for the other Americans at Paris. Did Wilson seriously contemplate, asked General Tasker Bliss, ‘the possibility of a League of Nations being called upon to consider such questions as the independence of Ireland, of India, etc., etc.?’ His colleague, the legal expert David Hunter Miller warned that such an Article would create permanent ‘dissatisfaction’ and ‘irredentist agitation’. As a result, Wilson’s draft was butchered. What became Article X merely reasserted the old Westphalian verity: ‘The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League’. As the British historian turned diplomat James Headlam-Morley sardonically noted: ‘Self-determination is quite démodé’. He
and his colleagues ‘determine[d] for them [the nationalities] what they ought to wish’, though in practice they could not wholly ignore the results of the plebiscites in certain contested areas. There were, it is true, serious attempts to write ‘minority rights’ into the various peace treaties, beginning with Poland. But here again British cynicism and self-interest played an unconstructive role. Revealingly, Headlam-Morley was as sceptical of minority rights as he was of self-determination. As he noted in his Memoir of the Paris Peace Conference: ‘Some general clause giving the League of Nations the right to protect minorities in all countries which were members… would give [it] the right to protect the Chinese in Liverpool, the Roman Catholics in France, the French in Canada, quite apart from more serious problems, such as the Irish… Even if the denial of such a right elsewhere might lead to injustice and oppression, that was better than to allow everything which means the negation of the sovereignty of every state in the world.’ …

“All over Europe there were… collisions between the ideal of the nation state and the reality of multi-ethnic societies. Previously diversity had been accommodated by the loose structures of the old dynastic empires. Those days were now gone. The only way to proceed, if the peace was to produce visible political units, was to accept that most of the new nation states would have sizeable ethnic minorities…

“… The single most important reason for the fragility of peace in Europe was the fundamental contradiction between self-determination and the existence of these minorities. It was, of course, theoretically possible that all the different ethnic groups in a new state would agree to sublimate their differences in a new collective identity. But more often than not what happened was that a majority group claimed to be the sole proprietor of the nation state and its assets. In theory, there was supposed to be protection of the rights of minorities. But in practice the new governments could not resist discrimination against them…”183

Of course, the principle of national self-determination was part of the ideology of the French revolution, so it was nothing new. But during the nineteenth century the principle had been applied only in the direction of the synthesis of nations, that is, the reunification of large nations such as Germany and Italy out of the many small principalities into which they had been divided since the Middle Ages. National self-determination through analysis, or break-up, had not been practised; and the continued existence of the great multi-ethnic empires of the Romanovs and the Habsburgs had prevented people from understanding what self-determination practised thoroughly and on a large scale really meant. Indeed, “none of the European states conceived the goal of the war as achieving statehood for all national peoples, and some, like Russia and Austria, may have greatly feared this.”184 But now, after the

183 Ferguson, op. cit., pp. 159-163, 164, 166.
184 Bobbitt, op. cit., p. 391.
Great War, the largely American-induced craze was for breaking down even relatively small nation-states and giving independence to their constituent sub-nations.

But the new nation-states, while happy to break free from the Romanovs and Habsburgs, refused to admit that any of their national minorities had the right to be liberated, and took their insecurities out on the potential rebels – usually in a more intolerant manner than their former suzerains. Thus throughout Central and Eastern Europe, from Poland to Romania, and from the Baltic States to Yugoslavia, chaos reigned as the newly liberated nations fought for Lebensraum, not so much with their former rulers, who had disappeared, as with their former fellows in captivity. The two largest minorities who were not liberated were the Germans and the Jews, and it would have made sense for them to unite against their enemies – but they didn’t. Orthodox-Catholic conflicts were especially evident – between Catholic Poles and Orthodox Ukrainians and Belorussians in Poland, between Orthodox Romanians and Catholic Hungarians in Romania, and between Orthodox Serbs and Catholic Croats and Slovenes in Yugoslavia.

A big problem at the peace conference was the completely unreasonable attitude of Italy. At the secret Treaty of London in 1915, Italy had joined the Entente in exchange for the promise, after the war, of parts of Istria, Dalmatia, Albania and Asia Minor. When the armistice with Austria-Hungary was signed on November 3, 1918, Italian troops poured into those parts of Istria and Dalmatia assigned to her by the secret treaty. Of course, one of Wilson’s Fourteen Points had specifically abjured such secret treaties. But neither Italy nor any of the European Great Powers allowed this Point (or, of course, the Points about national self-determination) to interfere with their Realpolitik…

Besides, the Italian Prime Minister Orlando declared in parliament that Italy’s victory in the war had been the greatest in recorded history. This fantasy, writes David Gilmour, “encouraged him and his supporters to make extravagant claims at the peace conference… In addition to gaining what he called Italy’s ‘God-given’ borders in the Alps, Orlando demanded Fiume [Rijeka], a Croatian port with an Italian middle class that had formerly been administered by Hungary. Although the city had not been included in the provisions of the Treaty of London, and though it was superfluous now that Trieste was in Italian hands, Orlando insisted on acquiring a place which, he mysteriously asserted, was ‘more Italian than Rome’. Sonnino, who was still foreign minister, was even more demanding than Orlando…”

The only person prepared to stand up to the Italians was President Wilson, whose ninth Point had stated that “readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality”. This, continues Gilmour, “was plainly an appalling principle for Sonnino, who was

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intent of acquiring a large chunk of Dalmatia even though its population of 610,000 was almost entirely Slav and included only 18,000 Italian speakers. One Italian diplomat supported his view by arguing that self-determination may have been ‘applicable to many regions but not to the shores of the Adriatic’. Arguments of this sort bewildered the American president, who could not understand how the nation of Garibaldi and Mazzini could aspire to rule subject peoples.”

Wilson appealed to the Italian people to renounce the unjust claims put forward by their leaders, whereupon there was a nationalist reaction in Italy. This propelled to the fore the futurist poet and war hero Gabriele D’Annunzio. In September, 1919, in a famous swashbuckling adventure, he marched on Rijeka; and although the garrison had been ordered by Rome to resist him, he seized it with a force of 2,500 Sardinian Grenadiers.

“Over the next eighteen months,” writes Misha Glenny, “theatrical and politics merged into an astonishing spectacle. The set pieces were D’Annunzio’s impassioned speeches from the balcony of the Governor’s Palace overlooking Piazza Dante in the centre of Fiume. He drove his audience into frenzies of patriotism, worshipping huge blood-bespattered flags as the central icons of the new politics. As a Dutch historian has noted, ‘virtually the entire ritual of Fascism came from the ‘Free State of Fiume’: the balcony address, the Roman salute, the use of religious symbols in a new secular setting, the eulogies to the ‘martyrs’ of the cause and the employment of these relics in political ceremonies. Moreover, quite aside from the poet’s contribution to the form and style of Fascist politics, Mussolini’s movement first started to attract great strength when the future dictator supported D’Annunzio’s occupation of Fiume.’ Throughout the fourteen-month existence of the Free State of Fiume, the government in Rome denounced D’Annunzio’s adventure but never felt compelled to remove the municipal dictator by force. Fiume attracted thousands upon thousands of mutinous Italian soldiers, so that within five months of having proclaimed his city state, he had to appeal to the troops to stop signing up for his militia. Fiume could no longer accommodate or feed them. On a number of occasions, the Italian government was deeply concerned that D’Annunzio understood Fiume as a prologue to an assault on Rome itself. Yet despite the animosity between D’Annunzio and Nitti, the regime in Fiume bolstered the Italian delegation’s position in Paris. The Italian government also did nothing to prevent D’Annunzio’s attempts to spread his irredentist message into Dalmatia, and when, in the summer of 1920, Italians embarked on a violent spree against Croats and Slovenes inside Italian-occupied areas, Rome was slow to respond.

“Gradually Yugoslav resistance to Italy’s expansionist programme was worn down. In the middle of January 1920, Clemenceau called in Trumbić and Pašić and told them to give up Fiume or else the entire London Treaty

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186 Gilmour, op. cit., p. 291.
would be implemented while Fiume was still up for discussion. The Yugoslav delegation held out for another nine months with commendable, if progressively less effective, support from Washington. But in November 1920, its representatives were finally forced to sign the Treaty of Rapallo. This created an independent Fiumean state under the control of neither Italy nor the SCS. But the Yugoslavs had to make substantial concessions in Istria and the Dalmatian islands. Fiume-Rij.”

The most dangerous and ominous failure of the conference was in relation to Germany. First, the principle of national self-determination was most seriously flouted in relation to Germany: the translation of large German minorities beyond her borders into such countries as Poland and Czechoslovakia, and the creation of such anomalies as the Danzig corridor and the separation of East Prussia from the rest of Germany, were just asking for trouble. More serious still were Articles 231 and 235 of the Treaty…

Article 231 of the Versailles treaty, the famous “war guilt” clause, said that the Germans were guilty for the war. If we look narrowly at the diplomatic activity leading up to the war, then, as we have seen, Germany and Austria were mainly to blame, since both of them demonstrably wanted war – Germany to knock out Russia, and Austria to knock out Serbia. But if we take a broader and deeper perspective, then it was European man and European civilization and pseudo-religion as a whole that were the real culprits, drawing the wrath of God upon the whole continent.

Article 235 concerned reparations. Wilson put it as follows: “There shall be no annexations, no contributions, no punitive damages… Every territorial settlement involved in this war must be made in the interest and for the benefit of the populations concerned, and not as a part of any mere adjustment or compromise of claims amongst rival states.”

The reparations were eventually fixed at 132 billion marks (£6.6 billion). The famous historian A.J.P. Taylor wrote that they “created resentment, suspicion and international hostility. More than anything else, they cleared the way for the Second World War.” This is an exaggeration. As we shall argue in more detail later, the Second World War was allowed by God in order, among other things, to humble the still-over-proud spirit of the Germans, their refusal to repent of the terrible sufferings they had caused in the First War. Of course, the reparations did cause anger, and Hitler did make use of this anger in his rise for power. But the question is: were the Germans right to think that they were unjust?

188 Bobbitt, op. cit., p. 402.
The first on the Allied side to argue that the reparations were unjust was the economist John Maynard Keynes. He described the Peace of Versailles as “Carthaginian”, a phrase suggested to him by the South African delegate, General Jan Smut. It referred, writes Antony Lentin, “to the peace concluded in 201 BC after the Second Punic War, when Rome stripped Carthage of its army, navy and overseas possessions and imposed a 50-year indemnity. Otherwise Carthage was left independent and able to recover economically, which eventually it did. Keynes actually seems to have been thinking of the ‘peace’ of 146 BC, when, after the Third Punic War, the Romans slaughtered the inhabitants of Carthage or sold them into slavery, annexing what remained of Carthaginian territory. Keynes quoted and endorsed the German view that the Treaty of Versailles signalled ‘the death sentence of many millions of German men, women and children’.”

There is an instructive parallel between the Second and Third Punic Wars, on the one hand, and the First and Second World Wars, on the other. Like Carthage over two thousand years before, it took two great wars to subdue Germany; and in both cases, naturally, the reparations were greater after the second war than after the first. But the Germans suffered significantly less proportionately than the Carthaginians. After the First War Germany was still allowed an army of 100,000 men and was still an independent state that had lost, apart from Alsace-Lorraine, less than four percent of her territory. Although her economy suffered significantly in the 1920s, this was by no means caused exclusively by the reparations, while from 1933 she recovered very quickly to become again, by 1939, the most powerful state in Europe, both economically and militarily. If millions of Germans died between the two wars, this was not caused primarily by the reparations, but by the Spanish flu. Moreover, if the Allies had felt strong enough to occupy the whole of Germany after the war as the Romans had occupied Carthage, they might well have prevented the communist coup in Bavaria and the civil war between the Brownshirts and the Blackshirts that brought Hitler to power...

As Robert and Isabelle Tombs write: “Keynes’s main thrust was the impossibility as well as the iniquity of the sums imposed through ‘revenge’ and ‘greed’. This was a travesty of the truth. Modern economic historians mostly agree that the reparations were reasonable, and within Germany’s capacities. Keynes made himself the invaluable accomplice of a calculated propaganda effort by the new German republic to undermine the treaty. His personal motives were guilt as a liberal intellectual involved in running a war sharpened by his crush on an ‘exquisitely clean’ Hamburg banker named Karl Melchior…”

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191 Bobbitt, op. cit., p. 409.
The French were strongly criticised, then and now, for insisting on greater reparations than the British or Americans wanted. But no victor nation in history has refrained from exacting reparations from a defeated enemy for the losses it has incurred. And the losses incurred by the French, both in men and material, were huge – far greater than those of the Germans, whose own territory remained untouched throughout the war. Moreover, although the French may have been motivated by hatred and vengefulness to a significant degree, nevertheless they were more far-sighted than their Allies in foreseeing what the consequences would be of what they considered to be the insufficient reparations agreed in Versailles.

Thus French writers were more accurate than Keynes in their prediction of the economic consequences.193 “The final German payments were never more than five billion pounds, largely financed [and in the end written off] by the Allies. The political and human catastrophe that followed Versailles had, in fact, little to do with the actual economic impact of the Treaty.”194 As for the political and military consequences, the French Marshal Foch was uncannily prescient. He boycotted the signing ceremony, declaring: “This is not peace. It is an armistice for twenty years... The next time, remember, the Germans will make no mistake. They will break through into northern France and seize the Channel ports as a base of operations against England...”195

The problem was that the Allies were pursuing mutually incompatible aims. On the one hand, they wanted justice, and a guarantee that the Germans would not become strong enough to wage war again for the foreseeable future. This required heavy, truly “Carthaginian” reparations – heavier than they actually imposed. On the other hand, they wanted a quick revival of the world economy, including that of the power-house of Europe, Germany. This required minimal reparations.

In the end, they fell between two stools. And, to make matters still worse, they were not powerful enough to act on the principles they proclaimed, or carry out the decisions they actually made...

193 But, as Lentin writes (op. cit., p. 21), “Neither the acute and prophetic analysis published soon after, Jacques Bainville’s Les conséquences de la paix (1920), which has never been translated into English, nor the detailed refutation of Keynes by Etienne Mantoux, The Carthaginian Peace or The Economic Consequences of Mr Keynes (1944), succeeded in stemming [Keynes’] influence, though while none of Keynes’ predictions were realised almost every one of Bainville’s were.”
194 Bobbitt, op. cit., p. 409.
195 Cohen and Major, op. cit., p. 802.
FROM SERBIA TO YUGOSLAVIA

The First World War began in the East with the Austrians attacking the Serbs and being defeated by them at the battle of Cer. Eventually, sheer force of numbers enabled the Austrians to conquer Belgrade. But in November, 1914 the Serbs drove the Austrians back – an extraordinary feat of arms. A stalemate now set in. “But Alexander began to think of the disintegration of the Austrian Empire and the liberation of the Croats and Slovenes…”

A lull in the fighting ensued. And a typhus epidemic took its toll of the troops. The Austrians sued for a separate peace. But in August, 1915 the Serb parliament in Niš voted to continue the war of liberation. The Austrian overtures were rejected…

In October, the Austrians advanced again, but now stiffened by German troops under General Mackensen and supported by the Bulgarians from the East. The Serbs were forced to retreat through Kosovo, and then over the Albanian and Montenegrin mountains to Durazzo on the Adriatic. Alexander led the terrible and heroic retreat, known as “the Serbian Golgotha”. But when he arrived at Durazzo, the promised Allied help in the form of Italian supplies and transports were not to be seen…

Alexander “trusted Nicholas II and knew him to be a friend. So from his sick bed he dictated a letter to the Tsar: ‘In hope and faith that on the Adriatic shore we should receive succor promised by our Allies, and the means to reorganize, I have led my armies over the Albanian and Montenegrin hills. In these most grievous circumstances I appeal to Your Imperial Majesty, on whom I have ever relied, as a last hope and I beseech Your high intervention on our behalf to save us from sure destruction and to enable us to recoup our strength and offer yet further resistance to the common enemy. To that end it will be necessary for the Allied fleet to transport the army to some more secure place, preferably Salonika. The famished and exhausted troops are in no condition to march to Valona as designated by the Allied higher command. I hope that this my appeal may find response from Your Imperial Majesty, whose fatherly love for the Serbian people has been constant and that You will intervene with the Allies to save the Serbian Army from a catastrophe which it has not deserved, a catastrophe otherwise inevitable.’

“No one stirred to save the Serbian Army till the Tsar got busy. The governments of the West paid little attention to the Serbian exploit, which only became famous after the war was over. It needed a sharp note from Sazonov to spur the Allies to activity.

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“Tsar Nicholas replied: ‘With feelings of anguish I have followed the retreat of the brave Serb troops across Albania and Montenegro. I would like to express to Your Royal Highness my sincere astonishment at the skill with which under Your leadership, and in face of such hardships and being greatly outnumbered by the enemy, attacks have been repelled everywhere and the army withdrawn. In compliance with my instructions my Foreign Minister has already appealed repeatedly to the Allied Powers to take steps to insure safe transport from the Adriatic. Our demands have now been repeated and I have hope that the glorious troops of Your Highness will be given the possibility to leave Albania. I firmly believe that Your army will soon recover and be able once more to take part in the struggle against the common enemy. Victory and the resurrection of great Serbia will be consolation to You and our brother Serbs for all they have gone through.’”

The Serbian retreat of 1915, heroic though it was, contained a message that few Serbs were ready to receive at that time. In 1912 Serbian troops had conquered Kosovo, and Montenegrin troops – Northern Albania, after inflicting terrible atrocities on the Albanians. Now, three years later, they were retreating across the same territory – and the Albanians inflicted revenge. Was there not an element of Divine justice accompanying this all-too-human vengeance? For while not formally responsible for the assassination at Sarajevo in 1914, or of the retreat through Kosovo in 1915, in a deeper sense the Serbs had been responsible – not solely, but definitely in part – for the terrible cycle of vengeance that took over the whole region in these years, beginning with the struggle for Macedonia and continuing with the Balkan Wars and the First World War.

Since the mid-nineteenth century the Serbs had elevated the land and the battle of Kosovo to a mythic status that hardly accorded with Orthodox teaching. Thus in 1889, on the five-hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo, Serbia’s foreign minister, Čedomil Mijatovic, told the Royal Academy that “an inexhaustible source of national pride was discovered on Kosovo. More important than language and stronger than the Church, this pride unites all Serbs in a single nation...” That national pride should be considered “stronger than the Church” was a danger sign. Nothing on earth is stronger than the Divine-human institution of the Church, which, as the Lord says, “will prevail against the gates of hell”, whereas national pride can be crushed, and nations themselves can disappear completely...

The true significance of the original Battle of Kosovo lay in Tsar Lazar’s choice of a Heavenly Kingdom in preference to an earthly kingdom, heavenly rewards (salvation, Paradise, God’s glory) over earthly ones (lands, power, vainglory). From the mid-nineteenth century the more nationalist among the Serbs completely turned round this message to read: the conquest of the

earthly land of Kosovo (and other formerly Serbian lands) is worth any sacrifice and justifies almost any crime. Thus “Apis”, besides taking part in the regicide of 1903, confessed to participation in plots to murder King Nicholas of Montenegro, King Constantine of Greece, Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany and King Ferdinand of Bulgaria! That such a murderous fanatic should be in charge of Serbia’s military intelligence tells us much about the influence within Serbia of the nationalist-revolutionary madness. “In fact,” as Stevenson writes, “Serbia’s army and intelligence service were out of control…”

It was greatly to the credit of Prince Alexander that he tried to bring these forces back under control. In 1917, in Salonika, Apis and two others were tried and executed, and two hundred of his leading followers imprisoned. The question was: was this enough to uproot the virus from the Serbian state and nation?...

But 1917, tragically, was also the year of the abdication of Tsar Nicholas and the Russian revolution. Now the Orthodox Emperor, according to the teaching of the Orthodox Church, is to be identified with the figure whom St. Paul calls “him who restrains” the coming of the Antichrist (II Thessalonians 2.7). Without the support of “him who restrains”, Alexander faced an uphill task in restraining the power of the revolution in his own land...

As if to underline this fact, the famous Serbian Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich pointed out that it was the Russians, not the Serbs, who, by sacrificing themselves for the Serbs, “have repeated the Kosovo tragedy in our time. If the Russian Tsar Nicholas II had been striving for an earthly kingdom, a kingdom of petty personal calculations and egoism, he would be sitting to this day on his throne in Petrograd. But he chose the Heavenly Kingdom, the Kingdom of sacrifice in the name of the Lord, the Kingdom of Gospel spirituality, for which he laid down his own head, for which his children and millions of his subjects laid down their heads…”

In the spring of 1916 Prince Alexander and his 160,000 troops were gradually recovering on the Greek island of Corfu. He then decided to travel to Rome, Paris and London in order to convince the Allies to re-equip his army and transport them to Salonika to open up a new front. With difficulty, he succeeded in convincing them, and in the summer the Serbian army, together with French, British, Russian and Italian contingents, reassembled in Salonika in “the Army of the East”. In September the Serbs advanced against

201 Victor Salni and Svetlana Avlasovich, “Net bol’she toj liubvi, kak esli kto polozhit dushu svoiu za drugi svoia” (There is no greater love than that a man should lay down his life for his friend), http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page*pid=966.
the Bulgarians, and by November were in Monastir (Bitola). They dug in for
the winter. The next year America entered the war, and thousands of Serb,
Croat and Slovene immigrants joined the Army of the East. In June,
Alexander signed a Corfu Declaration to the effect that he was fighting for a
free Yugoslav state combining the three peoples, Serbs, Croats and Slovenes,
in one.202 In September, 1918 the great offensive began, and on October 29
Alexander entered in triumph into a ruined Belgrade, before taking
possession of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dalmatia, Croatia, Slovenia and
Voivodina...203

On December 1, 1918, after national parliaments of the Croats and Slovenes
had approved the idea, the old kingdom of Serbia was transformed into the
new kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes under Alexander’s
leadership. Immediately there was chaos... As Serbian police imposed iron
discipline in Croatia and Slovenia, Italians troops poured into Istria and
Dalmatia. Many now wondered whether the union had not been a huge,
Mason-inspired mistake. And indeed, it was a huge, unprecedented and
extremely risky political experiment: the merging of a well-established, highly
centralised and militarised monarchy with two other South Slavic nations that
had created de facto independent democratic states on the territory of the
former Habsburg empire.

The politicians meeting at Versailles de facto recognized the new state, but
had little or nothing to do with its formation, even if the ideals of Versailles –
democracy and national self-determination – had inspired it.

The first mistake was in the title: “the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and
Slovenes” implied that only these three nations entered the new state on equal
terms, while the others that found themselves, voluntarily or involuntarily,
parts of it – Bosnian Muslims, Kosovan Albanians, Montenegrins (whose
monarchy was abolished), Macedonians, Germans, Hungarians and Jews –
were not even worth a mention.

Secondly, no constitution had been agreed, so for the first two and a half
years, until the passing of the so-called Vidovdan constitution in 1921, the
question of the rights of minorities could not be resolved, and was “solved”
only by the army and police force of the old Serbian kingdom. No wonder
that so many thought that this was no more or less than the old Serbian
kingdom upgraded to the status of an “empire”, and that the Croatian and
Slovene lands had simply been annexed to it – albeit not by force, but by
cunning diplomacy...

202 The Corfu Declaration quite explicitly saw itself as “the first step toward building the new
state of Yugoslavia”
(http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/greaterserbia_corfudeclaration.htm).
203 Graham, op. cit., pp. 102-103.
Thirdly, as a result of Italian aggression and Great-Power indifference, the new state did not have internationally agreed frontiers. We have seen how the Treaty of Rapallo (1920) gave much Slav land to the Italians. Later, “in March 1922,” writes Glenny, “a fascist coup overthrew [the Italian] government in a dress rehearsal for Mussolini’s seizure of power later that year. Italy then exerted immense pressure on Yugoslavia to concede Italian sovereignty over Fiume, and in January 1924, old Nikola Pašić, in his last spell as Prime Minister, travelled to Rome to sign away the city. The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes had been mutilated at birth. As Rijeka, Zadar, most of Istria and the islands of Lošinj, Cres and Lastovo slipped from Yugoslavia’s grasp into the bosom of revolutionary Italy, tensions between Serbs and Croats deepened. The ‘Vidovdan’ (St. Vitus’ Day) constitution, promulgated in 1921 on the sacred Serbian date of 28 June, which commemorated Kosovo Polje and, more recently, Sarajevo, was regarded by all Yugoslavs as a victory for the centralizing aims of the Serbs. In Croatia, it greatly compounded the profound sense of loss and alienation that Croats, and especially Dalmatians, had felt at Italy’s irredentist programme…”

Fourthly, while the smaller nations grumbled, the leaders of the largest parties of the two largest nations, Pašić for the Serbs and Radić for the Croats, were not present at the formation of the new state. And so as Pašić tacitly withdrew from the obligations he had undertaken in the Corfu Declaration, Radić rejected the legitimacy of the state and resorted to gross obstructionism – while Alexander desperately tried to keep the peace between them.

If this sounds as if Alexander was the righteous peace-maker amidst a bunch of self-interested and irresponsible politicians, this is true, but only partly true. For while Alexander’s intentions were pure, and probably purer than those of the politicians, the fact was that he was under an illusion that Pašić and Radić were not under. This was the illusion shared by most of western humanity at that time, that all that was needed to unite the nations in peace and brotherhood was goodwill and a common adherence to the ideal of democracy, regardless of different historical traditions, different political systems and, above all, different religious beliefs. Both Pašić and Radić, each in their own very different ways, understood that the idea of Yugoslavia as multi-ethnic yet Serb-dominated, democratic yet monarchical, multi-faith yet officially Orthodox state was an illusion; and while they can be blamed, as Alexander did blame them, for not trying a little harder to bridge the unbridgeable, they could not be blamed for believing that it could not work in the long run. However, while officially wedded to the Yugoslav idea, Alexander instinctively stepped back from taking the measures that would have brought it fully into being. Thus he always resisted making the state into a confederation, insisting on its centralist character. And he continued to rely almost exclusively on Serbs from the old kingdom to staff the major posts in the army, police and administration...

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204 Glenny, op. cit., p. 377.
THE RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR

The Russian Civil War was the bloodiest conflict in human history to that date, causing the deaths of up to twenty million people according to some estimates, eight or nine million according to others. Pipes estimates the human casualties of the revolution as a whole until 1922 at 23 million. By August, 1920, 29 percent of the age group 16-49 had been eliminated.205

The defeat of the Whites has been attributed to many factors – the Reds’ occupation of the centre, the Whites’ difficulties of communication, the fitful intervention of the western powers, the betrayal of the Whites by the Poles…

Certainly the Reds did not represent a formidable opponent at first. Having destroyed the old Imperial army, it was extremely difficult for them to build up an effective new army. By the spring of 1920 80% of the officer corps was staffed by former tsarist officers, whose services were retained only by the threat that their families would be massacred if they did not comply. Even so, there were very many desertions to the Whites – 1.76 million in 1919 alone.206

But the sad and most fundamental fact was that, as Elder Aristocles of Moscow (+1918) said, “The spirit [among the Whites] is not right.” For many of them were aiming, not at the restoration of Orthodoxy and the Orthodox tsardom, but at the reconvening of the Constituent Assembly or the restoration of the landowners’ lands. Although this conclusion is disputed by some,207 the evidence is in its favour.

Certainly, there is strong evidence that some of the key White leaders were liberals or democrats, but not Orthodox monarchists. Thus the leading White General A.I. Denikin said: “It is not given us to know what state structure Russia would have accepted in the event of the victory of the White armies in 1919-20. I am sure, however, that after an inevitable, but short-lived struggle of various political tendencies, a normal structure would have been established in Russia based on the principles of law, freedom and private property. And in any case – no less democratic than that which the reposed Marshal [Pisludsky] introduced in Poland…”208

205 Pipes, op. cit., p. 509.
206 Pipes, op. cit., p. 60.
207 For example, by Protodeacon German Ivanov-Trinadtsaty, who writes: “Even if the White Army officially supported the principle of ‘non-pre-determination’ in relation to the future political order of Russia, according to the witness of General P.N. Wrangel, 90% of his Russian Army was composed of monarchists, and set itself only one task – the overthrow of the Bolshevik yoke” (“90 let Velikogo Rossijskogo Iskhoda” (90 Years of the Great Russian Exodus), Nasha Strana, N 2905, December 4, 2010, p. 2).
208 Denikin, Kto spas Sovetskuiu vlast’ ot gibeli? (Who Saved Soviet Power from Destruction?), Paris, 1937, in A.I. Denikin and A.A. von Lampe, Tragedia Beloj Armii (The Tragedy of the
Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) commented: “Unfortunately, the most noble and pious leader of this [the White] army listened to those unfitting counsellors who were foreign to Russia and sat in his Special council and destroyed the undertaking. The Russian people, the real people, the believing and struggling people, did not need the bare formula: ‘a united and undivided Russia’. They needed neither ‘Christian Russia’, nor ‘Faithless Russia’, nor ‘Tsarist Russia’, nor ‘the Landowners’ Russia’ (by which they will always understand a republic). They needed the combination of the three dear words – ‘for the Faith, the Tsar and the Fatherland’. Most of all, they needed the first word, since faith rules the whole of the state’s life; the second word was necessary since the tsar guards and protects the first; and the third was needed since the people is the bearer of the first words.”

Not having firmly Orthodox and monarchical convictions, but rather, as V. Shambarov writes, “a complete absence of a political programme”, the Whites were bound to be disunited amongst themselves and weak in opposing Red propaganda in their rear. This was especially evident on the northern front, where Red propaganda was effective amongst both the White Russians and the British, and where the White leader was an anti-monarchist.

In refusing to proclaim a monarchist programme, the Whites lost their own major weapon in the propaganda war. Undoubtedly, if the White armies approaching Yekaterinburg from the East in July, 1918 had managed to rescue the Tsar and his family alive, the task of the Whites would have been easier – which is precisely why the Reds killed them. But even a living Tsar would probably have availed little in view of the fact that in their majority neither the White soldiers nor the populations whose interests they sought to represent were monarchists. Thus in 1919, when the Romanov Great Princes who were in the Crimea approached General Denikin with a request to enter the ranks of the White Army, they were refused. “The reasons,” writes Prince Felix Yusupov, “were political: the presence of relatives of the imperial family in the ranks of the White Army was not desirable. The refusal greatly upset us…”

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White Army), Moscow, 1991, p. 8. Denikin said during the war: “You think that I’m going to Moscow to restore the throne of the Romanovs? Never!”

209 Khrapovitsky, op. cit., p. 4.

210 Shambarov, Belogvardeischina (Whiteguardism), Moscow, 2002.


212 As Michael Nazarov points out, “there sat in the White governments at that time activists like, for example, the head of the Archangel government Tchaikovsky, who gave to the West as an explanation of the Bolshevik savageries the idea that ‘we put up with the destructive autocratic regime for too long,… our people were less educated politically than the other allied peoples’. (Tajna Rossii (The Mystery of Russia), Moscow: “Russkaia Idea”, 1999, pp. 85-86)

As Trotsky said: “If the White Guardists had thought of unfurling the slogan of the kulaks’ Tsar, we would not have lasted for two weeks…” So anti-monarchism not only destroyed the monarchy: it destroyed any chance of delivering Russia from the Bolshevik nightmare.

St. John Maximович summed up the situation: “If the higher military leaders, instead of beseeching his Majesty ‘on their knees’ to abdicate, had carried out what they were bound to do in accordance with their oath, the artificially incited rebellion would have been suppressed and Russia would have been saved…

“A terrible sin before God and a state crime was carried out. God only knows the extent to which any of them expiated their sin. But there was hardly any open repentance. After the fall of the Provisional Government, and the loss of the power it had seized, there was a call to struggle for Russia. But although it elicited noble feelings among many and a corresponding movement, there was no expression of repentance on the part of the main criminals, who continued to think of themselves as heroes and saviours of Russia. Meanwhile, Trotsky in his Memoirs admitted that they (the Soviets) feared above all the proclamation of a Tsar, since then the fall of Soviet power would have been inevitable. However, this did not happen, the ‘leaders’ were also afraid. They inspired many to struggle, but their call was belated and their courage did not save Russia. Some of them laid down their lives and shed their blood in this struggle, but far more innocent blood was shed. It continues to be poured out throughout Russia, crying out to heaven.”

Another weakness of the Whites was their failure to curb anti-semitic excesses in their ranks, especially among the Cossacks. However, as Pipes writes, “while the Cossack detachments of the Southern Army committed numerous atrocities (none can be attributed to the Volunteer army), a careful reckoning of the pogroms by Jewish organizations indicates that the worst crimes were the work of independent gangs of Ukrainians.”

The fact is that hatred of Jews was common to all classes of society, of all ideological persuasions, at this time, and similar atrocities committed by the Reds have been glossed over by historians.

Nevertheless, shameful acts of plunder, torture and rape took place; and while, as Pipes goes on to say, “it is incorrect to lay wholesale blame for the massacres of the Jews on the White Army, it is true that Denikin [commander of the Volunteer Army] remained passive in the face of these atrocities, which not only stained the reputation of his army but also demoralized it…

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214 St. John Maximovich, in Fomin, op. cit., p. 286.
“Personally, Denikin was not a typical anti-Semite of the time: at any rate, in his five-volume chronicle of the Civil War he does not blame the Jews either for Communism or for his defeat. On the contrary, he expresses shame at their treatment in his army as well as the pogroms and shows awareness of the debilitating effect these had on the army’s morale. But he was a weak, politically inexperienced man who had little control over the behaviour of his troops. He yielded to the pressures of anti-Semites in his officer corps from fear of appearing pro-Jewish and from a sense of the futility of fighting against prevailing passions. In June 1919 he told a Jewish delegation that urged him to issue a declaration condemning the pogroms, that ‘words here were powerless, that any unnecessary clamor in regard to this question will only make the situation of Jews harder, irritating the masses and bringing out the customary accusations of “selling out to the Yids”.’ Whatever the justice of such excuses for passivity in the face of civilian massacres, they must have impressed the army as well as the population at large that the White Army command viewed Jews with suspicion and if it did not actively encourage pogroms, neither was it exercised about them...

“The only prominent public figure to condemn the pogroms openly and unequivocally was the head of the Orthodox Church, Patriarch Tikhon. In an Epistle issued on July 21, 1919, he called violence against Jews ‘dishonor for the perpetrators, dishonour for the Holy Church’."^{216}

Paradoxically, the population was probably more anti-Bolshevik in the Red-occupied areas than elsewhere – because they had had direct experience of Bolshevik cruelty. As General A.A. von Lampe writes, “the border regions, which naturally attracted to themselves the attention of those Russians who did not want to submit to the dictatorship established in the centre, did not know Bolshevism, that is, they probably did not know the results of its practical application on the skin of the natives. They had not experienced the delights of the Soviet paradise and were not able to exert themselves fully to avoid the trials and torments that were coming upon them.

“The population of these provinces, of course, knew the war that was exhausting the whole of Russia. The population also knew the revolution, which gave them the so-called ‘freedoms’!... The population, with the complicity of the soldiers, who had known on the front only the declaration of rights, but not the obligations of the soldier, knew only about their rights and did not at all represent to themselves that all these rights were bound up with certain obligations.

“On the territory of this population a real war was being waged, a civil war with its gunfights that did not always hit only those who were fighting in the direct line of fire; with its repressions, not only in relation to people and their property, but also to the settlements themselves, which sometimes, in the
course of a battle, were mercilessly and inexorably razed to the ground... The population had to sacrifice their rights and their comforts. The White army was not that equipped and organized army that we are accustomed to imagine when we pronounce that word; immediately on coming into contact with the population it was forced to take from it fodder, horses, reserves of food and, finally, the people themselves!

“War on a given territory always brings with it many deprivations and sufferings. War, and in particular civil war, *feeds itself and supplements itself!* And, of course, the population could not welcome this; it, as I have already said, thought not about its responsibilities, but only about its rights, and it expected from the Whites only the immediate restoration of order and normal conditions of life, not thinking on its side to offer it any help at all.

“The whole sum of *unpleasantnesses* brought by the drawn-out war was very sharply experienced by the population; and at the same time it was being forcibly corrupted by the Red and socialist propaganda promising them deliverance from all these woes, promises of complete prosperity and complete dominion, promises which, as we know, have seduced not only Russia, but are disturbing no small part of the population of the whole world to this day...

“All this came down to the fact that the inconveniences caused by the Whites *ranged the population against them*...

“The Reds threatened and threatened very unambiguously to take *everything* and in fact took *a part* - the population was deceived and... relieved. The Whites promised legality, and took only a little – and the population was embittered...

“The Reds promised *everything*, the Whites only that which was fitting *according to the law*...

“The Reds had terror and machine-guns as arguments and measures of persuasion; the Whites threatened – *with the law*...

“The Reds decisively rejected *everything* and raised arbitrariness into a law; the Whites, in rejecting the Reds, of course could not also reject the methods of arbitrariness and violence employed by the Reds...

“The population demanded nothing from the Reds since the only thing they could wish for once they had fallen into their hands was peace, and they did not, of course, demand that! But from the Whites the population
demanded… a miracle, they demanded that the Whites, with one wave of their white hands, should remove all the blood from Russia...”\textsuperscript{217}

But the bloodbath was only just beginning, and the longed-for miracle was not forthcoming. For Russia was yet worthy of it, nor able to profit from it spiritually. Moreover, for the patriarch to bless the White armies would have been equivalent to a call to the population in the Red-occupied areas to rise up against their oppressors – a very difficult call, which would probably have ended in disaster.

It is probably for these reasons that in mid-1918, in spite of the pleas of his close advisor, Prince G.I. Trubetskoy, the Patriarch refused to bless a White general in the south, saying that he was not engaging in politics.

But he did bless the one Orthodox general who had not betrayed his oath to the Tsar, General Theodore Keller. Moreover, he secretly blessed the White armies in Siberia under Admiral A.V. Kolchak, the most monarchist of the White leaders and their formal head, who were close to the Church. Thus already in November, 1918, in view of the lack of communication with the Patriarch, an autonomous Temporary Higher Church Authority (THCA) was formed under the leadership of Archbishop Sylvester of Omsk. At the request of Admiral Kolchak, it moved to Omsk, and sent 2000 out of the 3500 clergy living on the territories occupied by Kolchak’s armies to serve in the armies as military chaplains. In April, 1919 a Council of the THCA took place in Omsk which anathematised the leaders of the Bolshevik party and ordered the commemoration of Kolchak during Divine services as the Supreme Ruler of Russia. In an address to the clergy the Council declared: “The pastors of the Church have the moral right to struggle against Bolshevism, and nobody must look on this struggle as unfitting to the Church, as the Church’s interference into political and social affairs of the State.”\textsuperscript{218}

Kolchak believed that the Orthodox Church combined with an authoritarian system of power based on theocratic principles would help him stabilize the situation in Siberia. “The spiritual power of the soldiers has weakened,” he said. “Political slogans and the ideas of the Constituent Assembly and of an undivided Russia no longer have any effect. Much more comprehensible is the struggle for the faith, and this only religion can do.”\textsuperscript{219}

Perhaps for this reason, in January, 1919 the Patriarch appeared to reverse his apolitical stance, at any rate in relation to the Siberian armies. For to Admiral Kolchak he sent a disguised priest with a tiny photograph of an icon


\textsuperscript{218} Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 35-36.

\textsuperscript{219} Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 30-31.
of St. Nicholas and the following message: “As is well known to all Russians and, of course, to your Excellency, before this Icon, revered by the whole of Russia, every day on December 6, the day of the Winter Nicholas feast, there was a prayer service, which ended with the whole people chanting: ‘Save, O Lord, Thy people…’ with all the worshippers on their knees. And then on December 6, 1917, after the October revolution, the people of Moscow, faithful to the faith and tradition, at the end of the prayer service, chanted on their knees: ‘Save, O Lord…’ Soldiers and police came up and drove away the worshippers, and fired at the Icon from rifles and weapons. The holy hierarch on this icon on the wall of the Kremlin was depicted with a cross in his left hand and a sword in his right. The bullets of the fanatics flew around the holy hierarch without touching the God-pleaser anywhere. However, fragments of shells from the explosions tore off the plaster on the left side of the Wonderworker, which destroyed almost the whole of the left side of the holy hierarch on the Icon with the hand in which was the cross. On the same day, on the orders of the powers of the antichrist this Holy Icon was draped with a big red flag with a satanic emblem. It was firmly attached to the lower and side edges. On the wall of the Kremlin the inscription was made: ‘Death to the Faith – the Opium of the People’. On December 6 in the next year, many people gathered for the prayer service, which was coming to its end undisturbed by anyone! But when the people fell on their knees and began to chant: ‘Save, O Lord…’ the flag fell from the Icon of the Wonderworker. The atmosphere of prayerful ecstasy cannot be described! One had to see it, and he who saw it remembers it and feels it to this day. There was chanting, sobbing, cries and hands raised on high, rifle fire, many were wounded, many were killed… and... the place was cleared. The next day, early in the morning, with My Blessing, it was declared in front of the whole people what the Lord had shown through His God-pleaser to the Russian people in Moscow on December 6, 1918.

“I am sending you a photographic copy of the Wonderworking Icon as my blessing to you, Your Excellency, in your struggle with the temporary atheist power over the suffering people of Russia… I ask you, honoured Alexander Vasilievich, look how the Bolsheviks succeeded in striking out the left hand of the God-pleaser with the cross, which demonstrates as it were the temporary trampling of the Orthodox faith... But the punishing sword of the God-pleaser has remained as a help and blessing to your Excellency in your Christian struggle for the salvation of the Orthodox Church in Russia.”

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220 Kniazev, V.V. Zhizn’ za vsekh i smert’ za vsekh (Life for all and death for all), Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1971, pp. 20-23; S. Volkov, Admiral Aleksandr Vasilievich Kolchak, Moscow, 1991, pp. 70-81; Fr. Stefan Krasovitsky, “Otvet apologetu kommunisticheskoi ideologii” (Reply to an Apologist of the Communist Ideology), Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia), № 1553, February 15/28, 1996, p. 15. According to another source, the Patriarch sent Bishop Nestor with the icon of St. Nicholas to Kolchak in Omsk with the instruction: “Tell the people that if they do not unite and take Moscow again by armed force, then we will perish and Holy Rus’ will perish with us” (Gubanov, op. cit., p. 131).
However, this anti-Soviet stance was not maintained. On October 8, 1919, much to the sorrow of the Whites, the Patriarch issued a decree entitled “On the non-interference of the clergy in the civil war”, in which he called on the clergy to “refrain from participation in political parties and demonstrations”, and to submit to the “orders” of the Soviet authorities. “People point out that with a change in authority the Church servers sometimes welcome this change with the ringing of bells and the organization of triumphant services and various ecclesiastical festivities. But if this happens in some places, it takes place either at the demand of the new authorities themselves, or in accordance with the desire of the masses of the people, but not at all at the initiative of the Church servers, who in accordance with their rank must stand higher and beyond all political interests. They must remember the canonical rules of the Holy Church, by which She forbids Her servers from interfering in the political life of the country, and from belonging to any parties, and still more from making service rites and sacred actions into an instrument of political demonstrations.”

This statement marks the beginning of a significant shift in the Church’s attitude from one of open enmity towards the Bolsheviks to qualified neutrality and civil obedience. *Izvestia* commented on it as follows: “The Patriarch and the circles around him have evidently become convinced of the solidity of Soviet power and become more cautious. [Soviet power], of course, is not expecting that the Patriarch should invite the clergy subject to him to express sympathy for Soviet power. The most that these circles are capable of is neutrality. Such tactics are recommended by the Patriarch’s appeal… In any case, the epistle of the Patriarch is characteristic in this respect, that it involuntarily confirms the strength of Soviet power, and that the Orthodox clergy are now too frightened to quarrel with it openly.”

This shift in attitude took place when Denikin’s Volunteer Army looked on the point of breaking through to Moscow. So we cannot excuse it on the grounds that the Patriarch thought that the Reds were going to win the war. More probably, the Patriarch realised that the Whites, though better than the Reds, were motivated, as we have seen, not so much by the positive ideal of Orthodoxy as by the negative ideal of anti-Bolshevism – and only that which is truly positive and spiritual can merit the blessing of God and His Church.

It may well have been right for the Patriarch not to follow the example of St. Hermogen and call the people to rise up against Bolshevism. Nevertheless, the failure of the Church to issue an unequivocal condemnation of Bolshevism was a weakness that her enemies, both political and ecclesiastical, were quick to exploit. The Patriarch’s anti-Soviet statements were construed as dabbling

\[221 \text{Regelson, op. cit., p. 237; Sokolov, op. cit., p. 16; Shkarovskii, “The Russian Orthodox Church”, op. cit., p. 423; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 38-39; Zhukov, op. cit., p. 92.} \]
\[222 \text{Izvestia, October 22, 1919; in Zhukov, op. cit., pp. 92-93, footnote 50.} \]
in politics; while his refusal to bless the White armies was construed as the equivalent of a blessing on the Soviet State...

However, even if the Church did not expose the evil of Bolshevism with complete clarity, the Bolsheviks were providing their own proofs of their antichristianity by their behaviour. Thus Shkarovskii writes: “The spread of civil war was accompanied by a hardening of Bolshevik anti-religious policies. The RKP(b) anticipated that religious faith and the Church would soon die away completely, and that with a ‘purposeful education system’ and ‘revolutionary action’, including the use of force, they could be overcome fairly quickly. At a later stage Soviet atheist literature referred to this period as ‘Sturm und Drang’. In the programme adopted at the Eighth RKP(b) Congress in March 1919, the party proposed a total assault on religion, and talked of the coming ‘complete disappearance of religious prejudice’.

“In order to attain this goal the authorities brought in ever-increasing restrictions. On 3 April 1919 the Commissariat of Justice decreed that voluntary monetary collections among the faithful were permissible ‘only for the needs of a particular church building’. At the beginning of 1919 a complete ban was introduced on religious instruction for anybody under the age of 18. Existing monasteries were only permitted to function if they turned themselves into labour communes or workshops. The closure of cloisters began at the end of 1918. By 1921, 722 monasteries had been nationalized, over half of those existing in Russia. From the summer of 1918 the authorities waged a campaign to destroy ‘holy relics’. This offended the faithful and was a crude intervention in the affairs of the Church, an attempt to regulate its way of life and worship. In the spring of 1919 these actions became widespread, and became a means of conducting anti-religious propaganda by deeds. On 14 March the Commissariat of Justice decreed that they should be welcomed. The authorities also looked upon the Church as a ready source of additional state funds. In 1919 they began a speculative trade in valuable artefacts, including items which they had seized from churches....

“... Despite all the obstacles placed in its way, the Orthodox Church was able to conserve its structure during the civil war. Thousands of small churches which were supposed to have been closed down, even in the capitals, continued to function, as did religious schools. Charitable works continued, and religious processions took place, until the autumn of 1921 in Petrograd.

“A very small number of priests served in the Red Army. The right-wing section of the clergy was active in its support of the White cause... Military chaplains served with the White armies - Kolchak had around 2,000, Denikin had more than 1,000, and Wrangel had over 500. All this provided further ammunition for the Bolsheviks’ anti-clerical campaign. During 1920 state bodies continued the tactic of excluding religion from all aspects of life. A
circular issued by the People’s Commissariat of Justice on 18 May resulted in almost all the diocesan councils being liquidated in Russia. A further 58 holy relics were uncovered by the summer. On 29 July the Sovnarkom approved a proposal from the justice commissariat ‘On the Countrywide Liquidation of Relics’. However, the authority of the Church prevented this proposal from being carried out in full. Eight months later, on 1 April 1921, a secret circular issued by the commissariat admitted defeat on this score. By the autumn of 1920 the nationalization of church property had been completed. A report produced by the Eighth Department of the Commissariat of Justice stated that 7,150 million roubles, 828,000 desiatiny of church lands, and 1,112 buildings for rent had been expropriated by the state.\(^{224}\)

Still more staggering than the material losses in this period were the losses in lives. Thus in 1918-19, according to Ermhardt, 28 bishops and 1,414 priests were killed\(^{225}\); according to Edward E. Roslof, estimates of numbers of clergy killed between 1918 and 1921 range from 1434 to 9000\(^{226}\), while by the end of 1922, according to Shumilin, 2233 clergy of all ranks and two million laymen had been executed.\(^{227}\)

These figures prove the truth of Vladimir Rusak’s assertion: “The Bolsheviks’ relationship to the Church was realized independently of legislation. Violence, bayonets and bullets – these were the instruments of the Bolsheviks’ ‘ideological’ struggle against the Church.”\(^{228}\)

However, as Shkarovskii writes, “the first wave of attacks on religion had not brought the results which had been expected by such Bolshevik theorists as N.I. Bukharin. The majority of the population of Russia remained religious, for all the barbaric methods which had been tried to tear people away from the Church. The patriarchy also emerged from the civil war undefeated.”\(^{229}\)

\(^{223}\) The campaign was counter-productive from the Bolsheviks’ point of view because the relics of the saints were often found to be incorrupt. Thus “St. Sergius of Radonezh was said to have been found perfectly preserved, to the rapturous joy of the onlookers and the consternation of the monastery’s communist custodian, who was subsequently beaten up by the crowd.” (Richard Overy, *The Dictators*, London: Penguin, 2005, p. 274). The relics of St. Theodosius of Chernigov were also found to be incorrupt (see photograph opposite page 182 in I.M. Andreyev, *Russia’s Catacomb Saints*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 1982. (V.M.))

\(^{224}\) Shkarovskii, “The Russian Orthodox Church”, op. cit., pp. 422, 423.

\(^{225}\) *Russkaia pravoslavnaia tserkov’ i kommunisticheskoe gosudarstvo*, 1917-1941 (The Russian Orthodox Church and the Communist State, 1917-1941), Moscow: Terra, 1996, p. 69.


\(^{227}\) Gustavson, op. cit., p. 34. In Petrograd alone 550 clergy and monks of all ranks were shot in the period 1917-1922 (Anatoly Latyshev, "Provesti besposhadnij Massovoi Terror Protiv Popov" (The Conducting of Ruthless Mass Terror against the Priests), *Argumenty i Fakty* (Arguments and Facts), № 26, 1996).

\(^{228}\) Rusak, *Pir Satany*, op. cit.

\(^{229}\) Shkarovskii, op. cit., pp. 423-424.
Moreover, with the suppression of all military and political opposition to the Bolsheviks, the Church remained the only significant anti-communist force in the country. So the Bolsheviks were compelled to resort to a kind of warfare that had a far more sophisticated ideological content...

\[230\] It should be remembered that at this stage this was exclusively an anti-Orthodox rather than an anti-religious struggle; for Lenin viewed Islam as an ally in spreading world revolution to the countries of the East, and he did not persecute the Catholics or Protestants.
FROM WAR COMMUNISM TO NEP

The Whites had effectively lost the Civil War by the winter of 1919-20, and in November, 1920, the last White forces under General Wrangel were evacuated from the Crimea to Constantinople. This was followed by a horrific pogrom of the inhabitants of the Crimea until May, 1921. The Reds were now free to redirect their forces to the goal of world revolution, and invaded Poland. However, things did not go all their way, and they were forced: (1) to abandon the goal of world revolution in view of the Red Army’s defeat on the Vistula in Poland; (2) to abandon grain requisitioning and the militarization of labour in view of the continuation of major peasant rebellions in Western Siberia and Tambovschina, and a major rebellion of the sailors in Kronstadt; and (3) to clamp down hard on dissent within the Communist Party itself.

1. The Polish War. At a critical point in the Civil War in 1919, the Poles under General Pilsudski decided to enter into negotiations with the Reds. This, according to General Denikin, was the decisive event that guaranteed the defeat of the Whites. Be that as it may, the Poles made up for this in the next year by decisively defeating the Red Army on the banks of the Vistula.

The Bolsheviks’ defeat suggested to them, as Adam Zamoyski writes, “that the whole world was ranged against them, and that the masses in other countries could not be relied on to support them. This gave rise to a siege mentality, isolationism and the doctrine of ‘communism in one country’, expressed to the outside world in a sulky, defensive aggressiveness. Hurt pride is in evidence in the attitude of most of Russia’s leaders to the rest of the world, beginning with Lenin.

“The isolation in which Russia spent the 1920s and 1930s undoubtedly assisted Stalin in his seizure of power and his reign of terror, and it ultimately pushed her into the arms of the other regime born of humiliation and fired by a determination to overthrow the Versailles settlement – Nazi Germany. And when his troops marched into Poland in support of the Germans in 1939, Stalin showed that he had learned the lessons of 1919-20 [he served as political commissar in the Russo-Polish war]. There would be no attempt to win the Poles over to communism; his previous experience had taught him that they were not amenable. So he set about extirpating not only nobles, priests and landowners, but also doctors, nurses and veterinary surgeons, and in general anyone who might show the slightest sign of independent thought or even curiosity – the scores of charges which entailed immediate arrest and deportation included possessing a stamp collection. Over 1,500,000 people were caught up in this fine net. Army officers, for whom Stalin felt a particular hatred, were murdered in the forest of Katyn and elsewhere, other ranks and civilians were despatched to the Gulag, where a majority died. After 1945 he would do his best to extend the same principles to the rest of Poland.

135
“How differently things might have turned out in Russia had some kind of peace been negotiated back at the beginning of 1919, and the whole war avoided, it would be idle to speculate. It would be equally pointless, if fascinating, to try to extrapolate the consequences of a Russian victory at Warsaw in 1920: Poland and the Baltic states would have been turned into Soviet republics, followed almost certainly by Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania, and very probably Germany, and the rest of Europe would have been profoundly affected; whether this would have led to world revolution or an international crusade leading to the destruction of Soviet Russia is anybody’s guess…”

Abandoning world revolution went right against one of the central tenets of Leninism. On arriving in Petrograd in April, 1917, Lenin had declared: “I am happy to greet in your persons the victorious Russian revolution, and greet you as the vanguard of the world-wide proletarian army”. The two went together: in fact, Lenin thought that revolution in Russia would fail if it was not transformed into world-wide revolution. Nor was it an impossible prospect in the early years after the Great War, when disillusion with western civilization was at its height. For here, as Brendon writes, “was the promise of an end to the capitalist system, which institutionalised greed and exploitation, whose by-products were unjust empires and cruel wars. Instead each would give according to his ability and receive according to his need. The Communist creed tapped the idealism of the generation which mourned the lost generation. Old Socialists like George Lansbury said that the Bolsheviks were ‘doing what Christians call the Lord’s work’ and that Lenin’s devotion to the cause of humanity made his whole life like ‘that of one of the saints of old’ [1]. Communism also appealed to those who craved power. Soon Communist parties were springing up everywhere, encouraged by money and propaganda from Russia (in Britain, for example, the Soviet trade delegation sold tsarist diamonds to subsidise the Daily Herald). In 1919 Red revolution broke out in Germany and Hungary. In 1920 some 35 countries sent delegates to the second Congress of the Communist International (Comintern) at Petrograd. It predictably resolved that ‘The International Proletariat will not sheathe its sword until Soviet Russia become a link in the federation of Soviet republics of the whole world.’

But the Soviet defeat on the Vistula put an end to those hopes – for the present. And with that defeat the mood of the masses changed, aided not a little by the foolish tactics of the Comintern in refusing to allow alliances with any more moderate socialist party. “The world rejected the revolutionary gospel of the Bolsheviks just as it had rejected that of the Jacobins and for much the same reasons... The German and Hungarian uprisings were suppressed. In America, where Secretary of State Lansing warned that

232 Brendon, op. cit., pp. 11-12.
Bolshevik forces ‘are menacing the present social order in nearly every European country and… may have to be reckoned with even in this country’, there was a Red Scare. In England the Labour party repudiated Communism, which was not surprising in view of Lenin’s offer to support their leaders as a rope supports a hanged man. In Japan the authorities passed a law against ‘thought crime’ and the ‘thought police’ (by no means a figment of George Orwell’s imagination) devised new methods of reminding offenders of their loyalty to the Emperor. In France the Right branded Communism as a German aberration and the Left split over whether to embrace it. In Italy fear of Communism helped to bring Mussolini’s Fascists to power…”

2. The Peasant Rebellions. The peasants had never served the Bolsheviks with enthusiasm, and now, after the defeat of the Whites, they rose up against them. “Until March 1921,” writes Richard Pipes, “the Communists tried and in some measure succeeded in placing the national economy under state control. Later this policy came to be known as ‘War Communism’ – Lenin himself first used this term in April 1921 as he was abandoning it. It was a misnomer coined to justify the disastrous consequences of economic experimentation by the alleged exigencies of the Civil War and foreign intervention. Scrutiny of contemporary records, however, leaves no doubt that these policies were, in fact, not so much emergency responses to war conditions as an attempt as rapidly as possible to construct a Communist society. War Communism involved the nationalization of the means of production and most other economic assets, the abolition of private trade, the elimination of money, the subjection of the national economy to a comprehensive plan, and the introduction of forced labor.

“These experiments left Russia’s economy in shambles. In 1920-21, compared to 1913, large-scale industrial production fell by 82 percent, worker productivity by 74 percent, and the production of cereals by 40 percent. The cities emptied as their inhabitants fled to the countryside in search of food: Petrograd lost 70 percent of its population, Moscow over 50 percent; the other urban and industrial centers also suffered depletions. The non-agricultural labor force dropped to less than a half of what it had been when the Bolsheviks took power: from 3.6 to 1.5 million. Workers’ real wages declined to one-third of the level of 1913-14. A hydralike black market, ineradicable because indispensable, supplied the population with the bulk of consumer goods. Communist policies had succeeded in ruining the world’s fifth-largest economy and depleting the wealth accumulated over centuries of ‘feudalism’ and ‘capitalism’. A contemporary Communist economist called the economic collapse a calamity ‘unparalleled in the history of mankind’.

“The Civil War ended, for all practical purposes, in the winter of 1919-20, and if war needs had been the driving force behind these policies, now would have been the time to give them up. Instead, the year that followed the

233 Brendon, op. cit., p. 12.
crushing of the White armies saw the wildest economic experiments, such as the ‘militarization’ of labor and the elimination of money. The government persevered with forcible confiscations of peasant food ‘surplus’. The peasants responded by hoarding, reducing the sown acreage, and selling produce on the black market in defiance of government prohibitions. Since the weather in 1920 happened to be unfavourable, the meagre supply of bread dwindled still further. It was now that the Russian countryside, until then relatively well off compared to the cities in terms of food supplies, began to experience the first symptoms of famine.

“The repercussions of such mismanagement were not only economic but also social: they eroded still further the thin base of Bolshevik support, turning followers into enemies and enemies into rebels. The ‘masses’, whom Bolshevik propaganda had been telling that the hardships they had endured in 1918-19 were the fault of the ‘White Guards’ and their foreign backers, expected the end of hostilities to bring back normal conditions. The Civil War had to some extent shielded the Communists from the unpopularity of their policies by making it possible to justify them as militarily necessary. This explanation could no longer be invoked once the Civil War was over…

“It now began to dawn even on those willing to give the Bolsheviks the benefit of the doubt, that they had been had, that the true objective of the new regime was not improving their lot but holding on to power, and that to this end it was prepared to sacrifice their well-being and even their very lives. This realization produced a national rebellion unprecedented in its dimensions and ferocity. The end of one Civil War led immediately to the outbreak of another: having defeated the White armies, the Red Army now had to battle partisan bands, popularly known as ‘Greens’ but labelled by the authorities ‘bandits’, made up of peasants, deserters, and demobilized soldiers.

“In 1920 and 1921, the Russian countryside from the Black Sea to the Pacific was the scene of uprisings that in numbers involved and territory affected greatly eclipsed the famous peasant rebellions of Stenka Razin and Pugachev under tsarism. Its true dimensions cannot even now be established, because the relevant materials have not yet been properly studied.\(^{234}\) The Communist authorities have assiduously minimized its scope: thus, according to the Cheka, in February, 1921, there occurred 118 peasant risings. In fact, there were hundreds of such uprisings, involving hundreds of thousands of partisans. Lenin was in receipt of regular reports from this front of the Civil War, which included detailed maps covering the entire country, indicating that vast territories were in rebellion. Occasionally, Communist historians

\(^{234}\) One indication of the scale of the suffering is the fact that in Western Siberia, the scene of one of the largest peasant rebellions, more priests were killed in 1921 than in any other year – a pattern not found in any other region. Nearly one hundred priests were shot in the Tobolsk area alone. (V.M.)
give us a glimpse of the dimensions of this other Civil War, conceding that some ‘bands’ of ‘kulaks’ numbered 50,000 and more rebels. An idea of the extent and savagery of the fighting can be obtained from official figures of the losses suffered by the Red Army units engaged against the rebels. According to recent information, the number of Red Army casualties in the campaign of 1921-22, which were waged almost exclusively against peasants and other domestic rebels, came to 237,908. The losses among the rebels were almost certainly as high and probably much higher.”

The Peasant Civil War finally failed because the rebels were scattered and disunited, and the Reds were able to destroy each rising separately. Moreover, with the exception of the rebellion in the Tambov region led by Antonov, they “aimed not to march on Moscow so much as to cut themselves off from its influence”. So those who wanted power most clung onto it...

But terrible as the peasant rebellions were, they were not such a direct threat to the regime as the strikes of workers in Petrograd and the mutiny of the sailors in Kronstadt. For these constituted the primary support of the Bolsheviks, whose interests they were supposed to defend above all others. And so on March 7, Trotsky ordered Tukhachevsky, who had commanded the defeated Red Army in Poland, to attack the sailors across the ice.

The next day the Provisional Revolutionary Committee of Kronstadt published a statement that condemned the revolution in no uncertain terms: “In carrying out the October Revolution, the working class hoped to achieve its liberation. The outcome has been even greater enslavement of human beings. Power has passed from a monarchy based on the police and gendarmerie into the hands of usurpers – Communists – who have given the toilers not freedom but the daily dread of ending up in the torture chambers of the Cheka, the horrors of which exceed many times the rule of tsarism’s gendarmerie. The bayonets, the bullets, the coarse shouts of the oprichniki from the Cheka – this is the fruit of the long struggles and sufferings of Soviet Russia’s toilers. The glorious emblem of the toilers’ state – the hammer and sickle – Communist authority has in truth replaced with the bayonet and the iron bar, created to protect the tranquil and careless life of the new bureaucracy, the Communist commissars and functionaries. But basest and most criminal of all is the moral slavery introduced by the Communists: they have also laid their hands on the inner world of the working people, compelling them to think only as they do. By means of state-run trade unions, the workers have been chained to their machines, so that labor is not a source of joy but a new serfdom. To the protests of peasants, expressed in spontaneous uprisings, and those of the workers, whom the very conditions of life compel to strike, they have responded with mass executions and an

appetite for blood that by far exceeds that of tsarist generals. Toiling Russia, the first to raise the red banner of the liberation of labor, is thoroughly drenched with the blood of the victims of Communist rule. In this sea of blood, the Communists drown all the great and bright pledges and slogans of the toilers’ revolution. It has become ever more clear, and by now is self-evident, that the Russian Communist Party is not the protector of the working people that it claims to be, that the interests of the working people are foreign to it, and that, having gained power, its only fear is of losing it, and hence that all means [to that end] are permissible: slander, violence, deception, murder, revenge on the families of those who have revolted... The current revolt finally offers the toilers a chance to have their freely elected, functioning soviets, free of violent party pressures, to refashion the state-run trade unions into free associations of workers, peasants, and the working intelligentsia. At last, the police baton of Communist autocracy is smashed…”

Sadly, it was the Kronstadt sailors, not the “Communist autocracy”, that were smashed; but their defeat, coinciding with the crushing of a peasant rebellion in Western Siberia that interrupted vital food shipments for two weeks, marked a critical turning-point. “On March 15, as the Red Army stood poised to launch the final assault on the naval base, Lenin announced what was to become the linchpin of the New Economic Policy, the abandonment of arbitrary food confiscation known as prodrazverstka in favor of a tax in kind. Prodrazverstka had been the most universally despised feature of ‘War Communism’ – despised by peasants, whom it robbed of their produce, but also by the urban population, whom in deprived of food.

“Requisitioning had been enforced in an appallingly arbitrary manner. The Commissariat of Supply determined the quantity of foodstuffs it required – a quantity determined by what was needed to feed the consumers in the cities and the armed forces, without regard to what the producers could provide. This figure it broke down, on the basis of inadequate and often outdated information, into quotas for each province, district, and village. The system was as inefficient as it was brutal: in 1920, for example, Moscow set the prodrazverska at 583 million puds (9.5 million tons) but managed to collect only half that amount.

“Collectors acted on the premise that peasants lied when they claimed that the grain they were forced to surrender was not surplus but essential to provide food for their families and seed, and that they could compensate for the loss by digging up their hoard. This the peasants may have been able to do in 1918 and 1919. But by 1920 they had little if anything left to hoard: as a result,... in the case of Tambov province, prodrazverstka, even if incompletely realized, left them with next to nothing. Nor was this all. Zealous collectors impounded not only ‘surplus’ and food needed for sustenance, but grain set aside for the next season’s sowing: one high Communist official admitted that

in many areas the authorities appropriated one hundred percent of the harvest. Refusal to pay resulted in the confiscation of livestock and beatings. In addition, collecting agents and local officials, empowered to label resistance to their demands as ‘kulak’-inspired, or ‘counterrevolutionary’, felt at liberty to appropriate food, cattle, even clothing for their personal use. The peasants resisted fiercely: in the Ukraine alone, they were reported to have killed 1,700 requisition officials.

“A more self-defeating policy would be hard to conceive. The system operated on the absurd principle that the more the peasant produced the more would be taken from him; from which it followed with inexorable logic that he would produce little if anything beyond his own needs. The richer a region, the more it was subjected to government plunder, and the more prone it was to curtail production: between 1916-17 and 1920-21, the decline in the sown acreage in the center of the country, an area of grain deficits, was 18 percent, whereas in the main region of grain surpluses it was 33 percent. And since yields per acre declined from shortage of fertilizer and draft animals as well, grain production, which in 1913 had been 80.1 million tons, dropped in 1920 to 46.1 million tons. If in 1918 and 1919 it has still been possible to extract a ‘surplus’, by 1920 the peasant had learned his lesson and made sure there was nothing to surrender. It apparently never occurred to him that the regime would take what it wanted even if it meant that he went breadless and seedless.

“Prodrazverstka had to be abandoned for both economic and political reasons. There was nothing left to take from the peasant, who faced starvation; and it fuelled nationwide rebellions. The Politburo finally decided to drop prodrazverstka on March 15. The new policy was made public on March 23. Henceforth, the peasants were required to turn over to government agencies a fixed amount of grain; arbitrary confiscations of ‘surplus’ were terminated…

“While the economic benefits of the new agrarian policy were not immediately apparent, the political rewards were reaped at once. The abandonment of food requisitioning took the wind out of the sails of rebellion. The following year, Lenin could boast that peasant uprisings, which previously had ‘determined the general picture of Russia’, had virtually ceased…” 238

At the same time, Moscow introduced “The New Economic Policy” (NEP), a humiliating retreat from Communist ideals allowing the return of some small-scale private trade. It worked. “The benefits appeared first and foremost in agriculture. In 1922, thanks to donations and purchases of seed grain abroad as well as favourable weather, Russia enjoyed a bumper crop. Encouraged by the new tax policy to increase the cultivated acreage, peasants

expanded production: the acreage sown in 1925 equalled that of 1913. Yields, however, remained lower than before the Revolution, and the harvest proportionately smaller: as late as 1928, on the eve of collectivization, it was 10 percent below the 1913 figure…

4. The Tenth Party Congress. The year that climaxed in the crushing of the peasants’ and Kronstadt sailors’ rebellions had revealed that the popularity of the Communist Party was at an all-time low. So Lenin acted to crush dissent within the party; in the same fateful month of March, 1921, the Tenth Party Congress tightened the screws on political dissent at just the moment when a degree of economic liberalization was being introduced through NEP. Thereby it destroyed the last bastion of free speech in the country – within the Party itself.

It did so by crushing a movement called “the Workers’ Opposition” that was led by Alexander Shliapnikov and his mistress, Alexandra Kollontai. For “the emergence of the Workers’ Opposition,” writes Pipes, “brought into the open a smoldering antagonism that went back to the late nineteenth century, between a minority of politically active workers and the intellectuals who claimed to represent them and speak in their behalf. Radical workers, usually more inclined to syndicalism that Marxism, cooperated with the socialist intelligentsia and allowed themselves to be guided by them because they knew they were short of political experience. But they never ceased to be aware of a gulf between themselves and their partners: and once a ‘workerss’ state’ had come into being, they saw no reason for submitting to the authority of the ‘white hands’.

“The concerns expressed by the Workers’ Opposition stood at the center of the deliberations of the Tenth Party Congress in March 1921. Shortly before it convened, Kollontai released for internal party use a brochure in which she assailed the regime’s bureaucratization. (Party rules prohibited venting party disputes in public.) The Workers’ Opposition, she argued, made up exclusively of labouring men and women, felt that the Partyr’s leadership had lost touch with labor: the higher up the ladder of authority one ascended, the less support there was for the Workers’ Opposition. This happened because the Soviet apparatus had been taken over by class enemies who despised Communism: the petty bourgeoisie had seized control of the bureaucracy, while the ‘grand bourgeoisie’, in the guise of ‘specialists’, had taken over industrial management and the military command.

“The Workers’ Opposition submitted to the Tenth Congress two resolutions, one dealing with party organization, the other with the role of trade unions. It was the last time that independent resolutions – that is, resolutions not originating with the Central Committee – would be discussed at a party congress. The first document spoke of a crisis in the party caused by

239 Pipes, op. cit., p. 395.
the perpetuation of habits of military command acquired during the Civil War, and the alienation of the leadership from the labouring masses. Party affairs were conducted without either glasnost’ or democracy, in a bureaucratic style, by elements mistrustful of workers, causing them to lose confidence in the party and to leave it in droves. To remedy this situation, the party should carry out a thorough purge to rid itself of opportunistic elements and increase worker involvement. Every Communist should be required to spend at least three months a year doing physical labor. All functionaries should be elected by and accountable to their members: appointments from the Center should be made only in exceptional cases. The personnel of the central organs should be regularly turned over: the majority of the posts should be reserved for workers. The focus of party work should shift from the Center to the cells.

“The resolution on trade unions was no less radical. It protested the degradation of unions, to the point where their status was reduced to ‘virtual zero’. The rehabilitation of the country’s economy required the maximum involvement of the masses: ‘The systems and methods of construction based on a cumbersome bureaucratic machine stifle all creative initiative and independence’ of the producers. The party must demonstrate trust in the workers and their organizations. The national economy ought to be reorganized from the bottom up by the producers themselves. In time, transferred to a new body, an All-Russian Congress of Producers, not appointed by the Communist Party, but elected by the trade unions and ‘productive’ associations. (In the discussion of this resolution, Shliapnikov denied that the terms ‘producers’ included peasants.) Under this arrangement, the Party would confine itself to politics, leaving the direction of the economy to labor.

“These proposals by veteran Communists from labor ranks revealed a remarkable ignorance of Bolshevik theory and practice. Lenin, in his opening address, minced no words in denouncing them as representing a ‘clear syndicalist deviation’. Such a deviation, he went on, would not be dangerous were it not for the economic crisis and the prevalence in the country of armed banditry (by which he meant peasant rebellions). The perils of ‘petty bourgeois spontaneity’ exceeded even those posed by the Whites: they required greater party unity than ever. As for Kollontai, he dismissed her personal relations with the leader of the Workers’ Opposition (‘Thank God, we know well that Comrade Kollontai and Comrade Shliapnikov are “bound by class ties [and] class consciousness”’).”

“Worker defections confronted Lenin and his associates with a problem: how to govern in the name of the ‘proletariat’ when the ‘proletariat’ turned its back on them. One solution was to denigrate Russia’s working class. It was now often heard that the ‘true’ workers had given their lives in the Civil War and that their place had been taken by social dregs. Bukharin claimed that
Soviet Russia’s working class had been ‘peasantified’ and that, ‘objectively speaking’, the Workers’ Opposition was a Peasant Opposition, while a Chekist told the Menshevik Dan that the Petrograd workers were ‘scum’ (svoloch) left over after all the true proletarians had gone to the front. Lenin, at the Eleventh Party Congress, denied that Soviet Russia even had a ‘proletariat’ in Marx’s sense, since the ranks of industrial labor had been filled with malingerers and ‘all kinds of casual elements’. Rebutting such charges, Shliapnikov noted that 16 of the 41 delegates of the Tenth Congress supportive of the Workers’ Opposition had joined the Bolshevik party before 1905 and all had done so before 1914...

“... Trotsky criticized Shliapnikov for making a ‘fetish of democracy’: ‘The principle of elections within the labor movement is, as it were, placed above the Party, as if the Party did not have the right to assert its dictatorship even in the event that this dictatorship temporarily clashed with the transient mood within the worker democracy.’ It was not possible to entrust the management of the economy to workers, if only because there were hardly any Communists among them: in this connection, Trotsky cited Zinoviev to the effect that in Petrograd, the country’s largest industrial center, 99 percent of the workers either had no party preference, or, to the extent that they did, sympathized with the Mensheviks or even the Black Hundreds. In other words, one could have either Communism (‘the dictatorship of the proletariat’) or worker rule, but not both: democracy spelled the doom of Communism...

“The Workers’ Opposition suffered a decisive defeat and was ordered to dissolve. It was doomed from the outset not only because it challenged powerful vested interests of the central apparatus, but because it accepted the undemocratic premises of Communism, including the idea of a one-party state. It championed democratic procedures in a party that was by its ideology and, increasingly, by its structure committed to ignoring the popular will...

“... To make impossible further dissent in the party, Lenin had the Tenth Congress adopt a new and fateful rule that outlawed the formation of ‘factions’: these were defined as organized groupings with their own platforms. The key, concluding article of the resolution ‘On the unity of the party’, kept secret at the time, provided severe penalties for violators: ‘In order to maintain strict discipline within the party and in all soviet activities, [in order] to attain the greatest unity by eliminating all factionalism, the Congress authorizes the Central Committee in instances of violations of discipline, or the revival or tolerance of factionalism, to apply all measures of party accounting up to exclusion from the party.’

“Although Lenin and the majority that voted for his resolution seem to have been unaware of its potential implications, it was destined to have the
gravest consequences: Leonard Schapiro regards it as the decisive event in the history of the Communist Party. Simply put, in Trotsky’s words, the ruling transferred ‘the political regime prevailing in the state to the inner life of the ruling party’. Henceforth, the party, too, was to be run as a dictatorship…  

240 Pipes, op. cit., pp. 451-453, 454, 455.
**SELF-DETERMINATION IN THE RUSSIAN BORDERLANDS**

The fall of the Russian Autocracy, which was followed, two years later, by the proclamation of the principle of national self-determination at Versailles, encouraged several nationalities of the former Russian empire to declare their independence. At the same time, these nations wanted their own independent Orthodox Churches. So several schisms from the Russian Orthodox Church took place. However, in the East as in the West, the attainment of sovereignty by several smaller nations exarcebated rather than resolved the national question in several regions.

The problem was that each newly formed nation-state contained within itself still smaller nationalities; and these felt less secure under their new rulers than they had under the larger empires that had now passed away – the Russian, the Ottoman, the Habsburg and the Hohenzollern. In the East, the Pandora’s box effect created by this process greatly facilitated the ultimate triumph of Soviet power, which first encouraged nationalist separatism, and then, when each newly formed nation was particularly small and vulnerable, pounced like an eagle on its prey to include all in the new empire…

1. **Ukraine.** On April 12, 1917, a "Congress of the clergy and laymen of the Kievan diocese" was convened in Kiev, which declared that “the autonomous Ukraine must have a Ukrainian church which is independent of the Synod [of the Russian Orthodox Church].

Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev was very opposed to this ecclesiastical nationalism. In August, 1917, on the eve of the convocation of an extraordinary congress of the Kievan diocese, he wrote: “Our local and rapidly growing sorrows add to the misfortune experienced by the whole of the Russian land. I am speaking about a tendency which has surfaced in southern Russia and which threatens to destroy the peace and unity of the Church. It is terrible for us even to hear people talk about separating the churches of southern Russia from the one Orthodox Church of Russia. After their long cooperation, can there be any grounds for such aims? What is their origin? Did not the preachers who spread Orthodoxy throughout Russia come from Kiev? Among the God-pleasing brethren of the Kiev-Caves Lavra do we not see men who came from all corners of Holy Russia? Is it not true that the Orthodox of southern Russia have laboured in all parts of Russia, serving the Church and as scholars in various fields? And conversely, is it not true that the Orthodox of northern Russia have laboured for salvation in various professions in southern Russia? Did they not erect the one great Russian Orthodox Church together? Could the Orthodox of southern Russia possibly reproach the Orthodox of northern Russia for falling away from the faith in some way or for distorting the teachings of faith and morality? Certainly not. Based on my personal experience I can testify that in all the dioceses where God has allowed me to serve, the Orthodox teachings of faith and morality...
are kept pure and unchanged, and there is everywhere unity in the Church's teachings and liturgical practices. Why should there be any separation? Where will it lead? Indeed, only the enemies both without and within will have cause to rejoice. Our love for our native soil should not suppress and stifle our love for the whole of Russia and for the one Russian Orthodox Church."

The metropolitan concluded by appealing to the clergy and laymen to "take every possible measure to promote unity among themselves and with the whole of the Russian Orthodox Church," and to "devote serious thought and proper preparation to the upcoming congress, thoroughly to discuss the issues presented there, and pass resolutions which are correct, legal, beneficial and which merit implementation."

However, the congress, which took place on August 8 and 9, 1917, took an entirely different direction. On August 9, the metropolitan was so offended by the proceedings of the congress that he fell seriously ill and had to leave the meeting immediately. In a defiant public statement, the delegates interpreted the metropolitan's departure as escapism and an expression of his lack of respect for the meeting.

In October, the Provisional Government fell. The Ukrainian government wished to use the change to turn their autonomous status into one of full independence. And the same tendencies were strongly present in the Church. A special committee in charge of convening a Council of the Orthodox clergy and lay people of the Ukraine was organized in Kiev in mid-November of 1917 according to a resolution passed at the third Cossack military assembly. Archbishop Alexis Dorodnitsyn (formerly of Vladimir), who was in retirement in the Kiev Caves Lavra, stood at the head of this committee. This committee was joined by representatives from among the clergy of Kiev (Fathers Lipkovsky, Tarnavsky, Filipenko and others), who played active roles in the above-mentioned organizations, such as the Executive Committee, Church Advisory Council to the Metropolitan of Kiev, etc.

At a meeting on November 23, this committee "discussed the present position of the Orthodox Church in the Ukraine now that the Ukrainian government is being separated from the government of Russia, and took into account the pronouncement of the Russian Patriarch, who might extend his authority to include the Ukrainian Church as well". They passed a whole series of resolutions, which amounted to sweeping changes in the status and administration of the Church in the Ukraine. The organizational committee was renamed "the provisional Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council", and an executive committee established to convene a provisional Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council was proclaimed "the provisional government of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church". It was also decided that this new ecclesiastical government should appoint commissars to all the dioceses of the Ukraine. On
November 24, a general meeting of the Orthodox parish councils of Kiev was convened at which these moves towards Ukrainian ecclesiastical autocephaly were condemned and the fear was expressed that an autocephalous Church might join the uniates and come under the Pope.

A few days later the metropolitan arrived in Kiev. On December 4 a meeting convened by the Union of Orthodox Parish Councils was held under the presidency of the metropolitan and attended by Metropolitan Platon of Georgia. In the days that followed several attempts were made by the autocephalists to remove Metropolitan Vladimir and his vicar bishops from Kiev. At the end of the month another delegation came to the metropolitan and demanded that he leave Kiev. He replied with emotion: "I am not afraid of anyone or anything. I am at all times prepared to give my life for Christ's Church and for the Orthodox faith, to prevent its enemies from mocking it. I will suffer to the very end in order to preserve Orthodoxy in the very place where it first took root in Russia." And then, going up to one member of the delegation and pointing at his heart, he said: "Do you know that the first revolutionary was the devil, and you are making a revolution in the Church of Christ?" Then he wept bitterly.

The metropolitan considered the convening of an All-Ukrainian Council untimely in view of the Bolshevik seizure of power. Nevertheless, he was forced to prepare for the opening of a new Council, and opened its first session on January 7, 1918 with a moleben on Sophia square and a welcoming speech to the delegates. He was unanimously elected to the chairmanship of the Council, and attended every meeting until the civil war broke out in Kiev.

Artillery shells began to fall on the Lavra on January 15. However, the metropolitan continued with his religious duties, displaying great calm. On January 23, he celebrated his last Divine Liturgy with the brotherhood of the Lavra. That evening, after occupying Kiev, the Bolsheviks took control of the Lavra, and violence began. Metropolitan Vladimir was killed...

In March, 1918, after the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Kiev surrendered to the Germans. But after the defeat of Germany in the world war in November, Petlyura captured Kiev. In August, 1919, Kiev was liberated by the Whites. But then the Red Army regained the upper hand. Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev set off for the Kuban, where he became honorary president of the Higher Church Authority that had been formed there.

In 1920 an “Independent Union of Ukrainian Orthodox Parishes” was formed, which convoked the first council of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church in October, 1921. Metropolitan Michael (Ermakov) appeared at the Sophia cathedral and called on those present not to introduce a scandal into Church life, and pointed out that Patriarch Tikhon had “blessed Divine
services in the Ukrainian language when that was desired by a majority of parishioners, including women, whom the Patriarch blessed to take part in Church work with full rights”. The metropolitan hoped that the delegates “will not transgress the Church canons or the will of his Holiness the Patriarch”. He did not give his blessing to the assembly, pointing out its anticanonicity, and suggested that the participants disperse to their homes.

When the metropolitan had departed, on October 23 the participants proceeded to a so-called “conciliar consecration”. That is, since no bishops had joined them, they were forced to create bishops for themselves in a manner that no other Orthodox Church recognized as canonical, earning for themselves the title of the “Lypkovsky samosvyaty” after the first “bishop” to be thus consecrated, Basil Lypkovsky. As Lypkovsky himself wrote: “30 priests and all the laymen – as many as could fit into the walls of the Sophia cathedral - took part in the consecration. At the moment of consecration a wave of enthusiasm ran through the crowd. The members of the council and all those present put their hands on each other’s shoulders until a chain of hands went up to the priests who surrounded me.” Then they took Lipkovsky to the relics of Great Martyr Mercurius (according to other sources – St. Clement of Rome) and placed on his head the dead head of the saint. That is how Lypkovsky became a “bishop”. On October 24 and 30 several other bishops were consecrated. The Council also introduced a married episcopate and second marriages for priests.

Although the Ukrainian autocephalists were a clearly schismatic movement, they did not share the modernist ideology of the Muscovite renovationists, and entered into union with them only in the autumn of 1924, evidently with the aim of securing the recognition of their own autocephaly from Constantinople, with whom the renovationists were in communion. That is why it was not until January 5, 1924 that the patriarch extended his anti-renovationist anathema of 1923 to the autocephalists, who soon came under the control of Soviet agents. In January, 1930 the authorities convened a council which dissolved the whole of their Church organization...

2. Bessarabia. One of the consequences of the Russian revolution was that Russian Moldavia (Bessarabia), 60% of whose population was Romanian, was united to the Romanian State. Before the revolution, writes Jelavich, “Romanians as such did not face prejudice, and there were Romanian as well as Russian large landowners. The widespread discontent was economic and social more than national. The position of the peasants was regulated by the

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Russian emancipation laws of the 1860s and subsequent reform measures, but, as in other parts of Russia, these had not solved the basic agrarian problems. Since conditions were roughly the same in the Regat, independent Romania did not hold a great attraction for the peasant majority. The main demand of all peasants was a breakup of the large estates and a distribution of their lands…

“Because of these conditions, the Russian revolutions in March and November 1917 were bound to have a great effect. They influenced not only the disaffected peasants, but also the many soldiers in the province who had deserted the rapidly disintegrating Russian army… As early as July 1917 the peasants began to seize the land; by the end of the year they had appropriated about two-thirds.

“In October 1917 a provisional government for Bessarabia was organized, with its center at Kishinev… This government remained in control of the province from November 1917 to November 1918. In December 1917 it declared itself the Democratic Moldavian Republic and expressed the desire to join a Soviet federative republic…”

However, in view of the discussions that had begun between the Soviet and German governments, this decision disturbed the Allied Powers, and with the approval of France the Romanian army invaded the province. On March 27, the Moldavian parliament, surrounded by Romanian soldiers, voted for the union of Bessarabia with Romania, and the Kishinev diocese was handed over to the Romanian Church. It was suggested to Archbishop Anastasy (Gribanovsky) of Kishinev that he join the Romanian Church; but he refused. In May he left the province, and the Kishinev archiepiscopate fell under the jurisdiction of the Romanian Church. On June 14, the Holy Synod of the Romanian Church appointed Bishop Nicodemus (Muntianu) of Khush as deputy locum tenens of the see (he later became Patriarch of Romania). He began to “Romanize” the Bessarabian Church, introduced the Romanian language into the Kishinev seminary and in some monasteries replaced Russian and Ukrainian superiors with Romanian ones.

In October, 1918 Patriarch Tikhon wrote to Metropolitan Pimen of Moldavia and Suceava, the president of the Romanian Synod, protesting strongly at the anticanonical seizure of the Kishinev diocese by the Romanian Church. The Romanians paid no attention to this admonition, and in 1919 placed in the see of Kishinev Archimandrite Gurius (Grossu), a Russian priest of Moldavian extraction, and a graduate of the Kiev Academy… And so, as K.V. Glazkov writes, “while with one hand the Romanian authorities mercilessly destroyed the communist opposition (for example, mass punitive operation were undertaken against Bolsheviks in the army, and Romanian units took part in the suppression of the red revolution in 1918 in Hungary),

with the other hand they suppressed every kind of dissidence. A number of deputies of the Popular Assembly who were opponents of the union of Bessarabia and Romania were shot, after which the National Assembly itself was dissolved, while on the same day the pro-Romanian deputies triumphantly overthrew the monuments to Tsars Alexander I and Alexander II in the capital. In January, 1920, the White armies of General Bredov..., in whose carts were fugitives, women and children, were shot from Romanian machine-guns as they approached the Dniester. In this way the new authorities in Bessarabia spoiled for good their relations with the Russians.

“We should note that from the very beginning the Russian hierarchy and clergy, as if foreseeing the possibility of church-political disturbances, adopted quite a cold attitude to the inclusion of Bessarabia into Romania. This act was even condemned by Archbishop Anastasy (Gribanovsky) of Kishinev and Khotyn (latter first-hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad). Hoping for the speedy victory of the White movement, the representatives of the Bessarabian Church together with the zemstvo took part in the creation of a Committee for the liberation of Bessarabia. Therefore the Romanian Synod began the canonical submission of the Bessarabian diocese by demanding that Vladykas Anastasy, Gabriel and Dionysius separate from the Russian Orthodox Church in spite of the protests of Patriarch Tikhon. When the hierarchs refused to do this, the Romanian military units arrested them and exiled them from the country. But the believers were told that the hierarchs had left their diocese voluntarily. In the place of Metropolitan Anastasy there arrived from Bucharest the Romanian Archbishop Nicodemus; he was met by the clergy and laity by no means in a friendly manner. The ecclesiastical authorities [of the Russian Church] Abroad did not recognise the lawfulness of the union of the Kishinev diocese to the Romanian Church. It was violence, deceit and transgression of the Church canons, and not at all the commandments of God, that were laid at the foundation of their actions on the territory of Bessarabia by the Romanian civil and ecclesiastical authorities. How could the coming events unfold except in conditions of further imposition of terror?

“In the Kishinev spiritual seminary and spiritual schools the Romanian authorities removed the teaching of Russian and Church Slavonic languages, clearly intending to create a situation in which in Bessarabia as a whole there would remain no priests able to serve in Church Slavonic. Also, Church Slavonic service books were removed from the churches, and the priests were banned from delivering sermons in Russian. Direct physical persecution began against the zealots for the language of Saints Cyril and Methodius. In the village of Rechul the nuns of the local monastery were beaten with birch-rods by Romanian gendarmes for taking part in services in Church Slavonic, while an old priest of the village of Goreshte who was suspected of sympathising with the opposition was tortured with wet lashes until he lost consciousness, after which he went mad. It may be that the whole guilt of the
priest consisted in the fact that he, like many true patriots, did not want to commemorate the Romanian king, his family and the Synod at the liturgy.

“The majority of the zealots for Church Slavonic as the liturgical language were Russians, but many Moldavian priests and laypeople fought steadfastly against forcible Romanianization. ‘The Moldavians,’ reported the Romanian counter-intelligence of Beltsky uyezd, ‘are hostile to the Romanian administration, they avoid the Romanian clergy…, they threaten the priests when they commemorate the name of the king in church.’…

“In July, 1922 there was formed in Kishinev a multi-national ‘Union of Orthodox Christians’. Soon Bessarabian patriots came to lead the Union. They were closely linked with the Russian communion in Kishinev. According to certain information, Russian monarchists led by General E. Leontovich took part in the organisation of the Union. In 1924 the re-registration of another organisation took place – the Orthodox Brotherhood of Alexander Nevsky, which was led by activists of Moldavian, Gagauz and Russian nationalities – Protopriest Michael Chakir, Priest Nicholas Lashku and K.K. Malanetsky, etc. All these were branded by the secret police as ‘ardent pan-Russists’, while the brotherhood was called the centre for the preservation and propaganda of Russian monarchist ideas…”

3. Transcaucasia. In Transcaucasia, writes Dov Kontorer, “everything was at first festal: in November, 1917 in Tbilisi a Transcaucasian commissariat was established representing a combined government of Georgian socialists, Armenian Dashnaks and Azerbaidzhani Musavatists. The power of this organ extended – theoretically, at least – over the whole territory of Transcaucasia, except for the region of Baku, where the Bolsheviks were in power. The Transcaucasian commissariat refused to recognize the results of the Brest peace, according to which Soviet Russia conceded to Turkey not only the territories conquered in the First World War, but also the districts of Kars, Ardagan and Batum. This led to the destruction of peaceful negotiations at a conference in Trabzon in March-April, 1918. Meanwhile the continuing collapse of State in Transcaucasia was combined with an excessively bold external politics. In the spring of 1918 the Turks were in quite a difficult situation. Nevertheless, at the cost of some short military actions, they succeeded in seizing Batumi, Ozurgeti, Akhaltsikhe and a series of other territories.

“It was against this background that an ‘independent federal democratic republic’ was proclaimed in Transcaucasia. It lasted for about a month. On May 26, 1918 the Georgian Mensheviks headed by N.S. Chkheidze, I.G.

Tsereteli and N.N. Jordania, declared Georgia to be an independent republic... But the reality of Georgian ‘independence’ was such that the new government immediately had to summon German forces onto its territory ‘for defence against the Turks’, and at the same time to sign a peace agreement with Turkey according to which Georgia lost even more than it had according to the conditions of the Brest peace which it had rejected.”

Georgian ecclesiastical independence had been proclaimed even earlier than Georgian political independence. On March 12, 1917, an Assembly of the bishops, clergy and laity of Georgia proclaimed the re-establishment of the autocephaly of the Georgian Church, which led to a break in communion with the Russian Church. In the summer, however, “the Georgian Church sent a special deputation to the Most Holy Russian Synod to inform the Most Holy Synod about the re-establishment of the autocephaly of the Georgian Church and greet it. The Russian Synod through the mouth of Archbishop Sergius of Finland confirmed ‘that Russian Church consciousness has never been foreign to the thought of the necessity of returning to the Georgian Church her former constitution... If this thought has not been realised up to now, for this there were special reasons’ not depending on Church actors, but ‘now, in the days of the general liberating spring, Russian Church consciousness is ready to welcome the fulfilment … of the long-time dream’ of the Orthodox Georgians, and the Russian hierarchs hope ‘that God will order all for the good, and that certain roughnesses in this matter will be smoothed over’ and that at the forthcoming Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church a fraternal meeting of representatives of the two Churches is bound to take place in order to find a path to mutual understanding’.”

In September, a General Council of the Georgian Church confirmed the Acts of the March Council. On October 1 Bishop Kirion Sadzaguelachvili was enthroned as Catholicos-Patriarch in Tbilisi by three vicar bishops over the protests of three Georgian hierarchs: Demetrius (Abashidze) of Simferopol, Antony of Gori and Nazarius (Lezhavy). On January 11, 1918, Patriarch Tikhon also protested against the re-establishment of Georgian autocephaly, pointedly addressing Kirion as only a bishop.

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245 Catholicois Leonid to Patriarch Tikhon, August 5, 1919; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 9.

246 Georgia, he wrote, had united with Russia more than a century before, and from that time the highest ecclesiastical authority in Georgia had belonged to the Holy Synod. However, when, in 1905, an attempt was made to restore the autocephaly of the Georgian Church, the Holy Synod in 1906 decreed that this question should be handed over for discussion at the All-Russian Council, the decisions of which the Georgian hierarchs were obliged to wait for. “According to canon law, the agreement and permission of the Mother [kiriarkhal’noj] Church to the autocephaly of the other Local Church which before was subject to her jurisdiction is required. Usually the Church which is seeking independence addresses the Mother Church with her request, and, on the basis of data of a political and ecclesiastical character, seeks her agreement to the reception of autocephaly. The request is directed in the name of both the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of the country, and also of the people; it
However, the Russian and Georgian governments confirmed this election.247 Kirion immediately seized the exarchal house and ordered the portraits of the Tsar and the previous exarchs removed. After his first and last liturgy as Catholicos, he fell ill – he had been poisoned (according to one source, he poisoned himself). In order to recuperate he went to the monastery of St. Anthony, near Martkopi. There, in June, 1918, he committed suicide.248

“In December, 1918,” continues Kontorer, “with the defeat of Germany in the First World War, the German soldiers in Transcaucasia were replaced by a British expeditionary force. They saw their task in guaranteeing the uninterrupted work of the oil industry and the Batumi-Baku railway, while keeping internal peace in the region interested them very little. As a lawful result of this, there began a series of embittered ethnic wars that accompanied a ‘parade of sovereignties’ in Transcaucasia.

“The best known was the Armenian-Azerbaidzhani war, which was accompanied on both sides by the massive slaughter of the peaceful population (in contemporary terminology: ‘ethnic cleansing’). In the autumn of 1920 there entered into the conflict, with the agreement of Georgia, the young Kemalist state of Turkey. Having attained a rapid and complete victory on the field of battle, it imposed significant territorial concessions on Armenia in negotiations in Alexandropol. These were partially reviewed later when the RSFSR and Turkey concluded an agreement in Moscow in 1921.

“But it was not only the major Transcaucasian nations who warred against each other at this time. The assertion of national identity in conditions of the collapse of the previous imperial statehood was accompanied almost everywhere by blood civil conflict. Thus in Georgia the Menshevik government of Noe Jordania conducted in relation to a whole series of...
national minorities a politics that would be described today as an attempt at genocide. In particular, at that time Georgia exterminated about 18,000 Osetians, which helped greatly to make the population of Northern Osetia to cling desperately to the possibility of remaining within Soviet Russia, while that part of the Osetian population which lived compactly to the south of the Great Caucasian Ridge was extremely grateful to Moscow for the creation within Georgia of the South Osetian autonomous republic.  

For in February, 1921 the Bolsheviks, at the initiative of the Georgians Stalin and Ordzhonikidze, had invaded Georgia, and after a short war of three weeks took control of the country. Soon the Church was deprived of juridical status, and churches and monasteries began to be closed…

“On February 7, 1922,” writes Fr. Elijah Melia, “Catholicos Ambrose sent to the Interallied Conference at Genoa (the highest degree of international jurisdiction at that time) a letter of protest in which, recalling the moral obligations towards the nation of his charge, he protested in the name of the people of Georgia, deprived of their rights, against the foreign occupation and demanded the intervention of civilized humanity to oppose the iniquity committed against Georgia. He was arrested in February 1923 with Archbishop Nasaire and all the members of his Council. Their trial, which took place under conditions of semi-liberty, greatly stirred up the country.

“There were three accusations: 1) the 1922 letter to the Genoa Conference, 2) the concealment of the historic treasures of the Church in order to preserve them from passing into the hands of the State and 3) the prohibition imposed [by the] Governmental Commission for Religion against the redemption of precious objects in favour of the starving. Archbishop Nasaire was assassinated during the trial [on September 1, 1924], most probably in order to impress the others accused. All the members of his Council showed their solidarity with the Catholicos Ambrose, who conducted himself heroically, assuming the entire responsibility for his acts, which he declared to have been in conformity with his obligations and with the tradition of the Church of Georgia in similar cases. He was condemned to eight years imprisonment. Two members of his Council were given five and two years respectively. The Catholicos was liberated before the term of his imprisonment was over. He died on March 29, 1927.

“In August 1924, a general insurrection broke out, organized by all the active forces of the nation – the higher ranks of the army, the political parties, the university, the ecclesiastics, the population as a whole. But the uprising was doomed to fail, for the plot had been betrayed. The repression created thousands of victims. Groups of partisans still operated for some time…”

249 Kontorer, op. cit.
250 Melia, “The Orthodox Church of Georgia”, A Sign of God: Orthodoxy 1964, Athens: Zoe, 1964, pp. 112-113. According to Slava Katamidze, the number of victims was “enormous”, but
THE RUSSIAN CHURCH IN EXILE

Out of the chaos of the Russian Civil War there was formed the Russian Orthodox Church in Exile, later known as the Russian Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR). A.F. Traskovsky writes: “The part of the Russian Orthodox Church which was abroad already had quite a long history before the formation of ROCOR. In Western Europe Russian Orthodox churches had been built beginning from the eighteenth century at Russian embassies and holy places that were often visited by Russians on trips abroad. In the East, thanks to the missionary activities of the Russian Orthodox Church missions were founded in China and Japan that later became dioceses, as well as a mission in Jerusalem. The spread of Orthodoxy in Alaska and North America also led to the creation of a diocese. In the “Statute concerning the convening of an Emigration Assembly of the Russian Churches”, mention was made that in 1921 there were 15 emigration regions which had Russian bishops and 14 districts where there were Russian Orthodox parishes but no bishops. The regions included: North America, Japan, China, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, France, Italy, Serbia, Bulgaria, Turkey and the Far East. The districts included: Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, England, Switzerland, Czechia, Hungary, Austria, Romania, Palestine, Greece and the city of Bizert in Tunisia. All the emigration missions, parishes and dioceses were in canonical submission to the higher ecclesiastical authorities in Russia – the Holy Ruling Synod until the restoration of the patriarchate in 1917, and his Holiness the Patriarch after 1917. But then after the revolution there began the Civil War and anarchy. The Bolsheviks began to persecute the Church. The majority of emigration missions and dioceses found themselves either deprived of the possibility of normal relations with the higher ecclesiastical authorities of Russia, or such relations were exceptionally difficult. Moreover, in Russia itself many dioceses were cut off by the front from his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon (Bellavin)’s leadership. After the defeat of the White army, a huge flood of émigrés flooded abroad, amongst whom were not a few representatives of the clergy, including bishops and metropolitans. On the shoulders of the clerics who were abroad and the clergy who had emigrated lay the burden of care for the spiritual nourishment of the huge Russian diaspora. That was the situation in which the part of the Russian Church that was abroad found itself on the eve of the formation of the Church Abroad.

“What was the prehistory of the Russian Church Abroad? Her beginnings went back to 1919, in Russia. In Stavropol in May, 1919 there took place the South Russian Church Council headed by the oldest hierarch in the South of Russia, Archbishop Agathodorus of Stavropol. There took part in the Council all the bishops who were on the territory of the Voluntary army, the members

“the real figure has never been published” (Loyal Comrades, Ruthless Killers, Staplehurst: Spellmount, 2003, p. 39).
of the All-Russian Ecclesiastical Council and four people from each diocesan council. At the Council there was formed the Higher Church Administration of the South of Russia (HCA of the South of Russia), which consisted of: President – Archbishop Metrophanes of Novocherkassk, Assistant to the President – Archbishop Demetrius of Tauris, Protopresbyter G. Shavelsky, Protopriest A.P. Rozhdestvensky, Count V.V. Musin-Pushkin and Professor of theology P.V. Verkhovsky. In November, 1919 the Higher Church Administration was headed by Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev and Galich, who had arrived from Kiev.  

“The aim of the creation of the HCA was the organization of the leadership of church life on the territory of the Volunteer army in view of the difficulties Patriarch Tikhon was experiencing in administering the dioceses on the other side of the front line. A little earlier, in November, 1918, an analogous Temporary Higher Church Administration had been created in Siberia headed by Archbishop Sylvester of Omsk. Later, a part of the clergy that submitted to this HCA emigrated after the defeat of Kolchak’s army and entered the composition of the Chinese dioceses of the Russian Orthodox Church. The HCA of the South of Russia, like the Siberian HCA, was, in spite of its self-government, nevertheless in canonical submission to his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, and in this way Church unity was maintained.

“After the defeat of the armies of Denikin, in the spring of 1920 the head of the HCA of the South of Russia, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), was evacuated from Novorossiysk to Constantinople, and was then for a time in a monastery on Mount Athos. However, in September, 1920, at the invitation of General Wrangel, he returned to Russia, to the Crimea, where he continued his work. The final evacuation of the HCA of the South of Russia took place in November, 1920, together with the remains of Wrangel’s army. On the steamer ‘Alexander Mikhailovich’ there set out from the Crimea to Constantinople the leaders of the HCA and a large number of simple priests.

“On arriving in Constantinople, as Archbishop Nicon (Rklitsky) indicates in his Biography of Metropolitan Anthony, Metropolitan Anthony ‘first considered that from now on all the activities of the Russian Higher Church

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251 For more details on this Council, see Andrej Alexandrovich Kostriukov, “Stavropol’skij Sobor 1919 g. i nachalo nezavisimoj tserkovnoj organizatsii na iuge Rossii” (The Stavropol Council of 1919 and the beginning of independent church organization in the south of Russia), Ural’skij istoricheskij vestnik, 2008, N 4 (21), pp. 71-75; Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’, N 5 (685), May, 2009, pp. 1-11. (V.M.)

252 Before being evacuated, while still in Yekaterinodar, Metropolitan Anthony came out of the cathedral, accompanied by all the clergy, and addressed the thousands of faithful, asking them – for one knows, he said, that “the voice of the people is the voice of God” - whether they should leave with the White Army or stay in Russia and suffer for the faith. The crowd replied that they should leave (Monk Anthony (Chernov), Archvêque Theophane de Poltava (Archbishop Theophan of Poltava), Lavardac: Monastère de St. Michael, 1988, p. 73 (in French)) (V.M.).
Administration should be brought to an end and all the care for the spiritual welfare of the Russian Orthodox people should be taken upon herself by the Church of Constantinople and the Local Orthodox Churches in whose bounds the Russian Orthodox people found themselves.’ However, as soon became clear, the realization of this variant became extremely problematic in view of the fact that huge masses of Russian refugees did not know the language and customs of those countries to which they had come, and the nourishment of such a large flock by priests speaking other languages (for example Greeks) presented very many problems. Moreover, the numerous émigré Russian clergy, who were fully able to deal with these problems, would not be involved. Therefore it was decided to continue the activities of the Higher Church Administration.

“In order to work out a plan of further action, the first session of the HCA outside the borders of Russia took place on November 19, 1920… Metropolitan Dorotheus [the locum tenens of the patriarchal throne of Constantinople] gave his agreement [to the HCA’s decisions] and the HCA of the South of Russia was transformed into the Higher Church Administration Abroad.

“Literally the day after the above-mentioned session, on November 20, 1920, an event took place in Moscow that had an exceptional significance for the Russian Church Abroad – his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon passed decree № 362 concerning the self-governance of church dioceses in the case of a break of communications between this or that diocese and his Holiness the Patriarch for external reasons over which they had no control (what they had in mind was war or repression by the authorities). This is the decree’s main content:

“1. With the blessing of his Holiness the Patriarch, the Holy Synod and the Higher Church Council, in a joint session, judged concerning the necessity of giving the diocesan Hierarch... instructions in case of a disconnection with the higher church administration or the cessation of the activity of the latter...

“2. If dioceses, as a result of the movement of the front, changes of state boundaries, etc., find themselves unable to communicate with the higher church administration or the higher church administration itself together with his Holiness the Patriarch for some reason ceases its activity, the diocesan

253 On that day more than 125 ships arrived in Constantinople with about 150,000 people on board (Zhukov, op. cit., p. 67). The session of the HCA took place on board the steamer Great Prince Alexander Mikhailovich. In it took part Metropolitan Anthony of Kiev, Metropolitan Plato of Odessa, Archbishop Theophan of Poltava and Bishop Benjamin of Sebastopol. It was decided to continue the prerogatives of the members of the HCA, discussing all aspects of the Church life of the refugees and soldiers in all states having relations with the Ecumenical Patriarch (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 47-48). (V.M.)

At the second session, on November 22, it was decided to include Archbishop Anastasy of Kishinev, who was already living in Constantinople, in the HCA (Zhukov, op. cit., p. 69)
hierarch will immediately enter into relations with the hierarchs of neighbouring dioceses in order to organize a higher instance of church authority for several dioceses in the same conditions (in the form of a temporary higher church government or metropolitan region, or something similar).

“3. The care for the organization of the higher church authority for the whole group who are in the situation indicated in point 2 is the obligatory duty of the eldest ranked hierarch in the indicated group…”

“This wise decree of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, which was passed in conditions of anti-church terror, was given to the foreign bishops a year after its passing with the help of Bishop Meletius of Nerchensk. It served as the canonical basis for the formation of the Russian Church Abroad, since the émigré clergy were in the situation indicated in points 2 and 3.

“Meanwhile the HCA in Constantinople continued to work out a plan for further action. At the sessions of April 19-21, 1921, it was decided to convene a ‘Congress of the representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad to unite, regulate and revive church activity abroad’, which was later renamed the ‘Russian Church Council Abroad’, also known in the literature as the Karlovtsy Council. Soon, at the invitation of Patriarch Demetrius of Serbia, the HCA led by Metropolitan Anthony moved to Sremskie Karlovtsy in Serbia – a fraternal country which in the course of many years proved to be a safe haven for the leadership of the Church Abroad.”

Sremskie Karlovtsy was a significant centre for the Russian Church in Exile for historical reasons. In 1691 37,000 Serbian families had fled there from Turkish-ruled Serbia with the blessing of Patriarch Arsenius III, forming an autonomous metropolitanate in 1712. Just as the Serbs fled there from the Turks, so the Russians now fled there from the Bolsheviks.

ROCOR found greater sympathy among the Serbs than among the Greeks. “Serbia repaid mercy [Tsar Nicholas II’s decision to declare war in 1914 in defence of Serbia] with mercy. Alexander I never identified Russia with her new communist government. Being a deeply believing Orthodox man, King Alexander could not contemplate the destiny of Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church without pain... During the Civil war, by command of the Monarch of Yugoslavia, a Serbian corps of volunteers was formed in the South of Russia to fight against the Bolsheviks. When the civil war was lost and the remains of the Volunteer Army, thanks to the efforts of General Wrangel, were saved and left their homeland, Alexander I magnanimously stretched out his hand of help and received those who were without a...”

homeland, the Russian refugees who were needed by nobody, and gave them
the opportunity to set themselves up, work and live in this country. The
young Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes needed cultural and
intellectual forces. It well understood this, but it did not give refuge to
Russian people out of avaricious motives – it strove to repay good with good,
to repay the joyful hospitality it received from Russia when it was a political
émigré, and for help in the war.”

Meanwhile, at the end of 1920, 200,000 Russian refugees with the retreating
remnants of the White armies in Siberia crossed from Siberia into China.
Among them were six bishops and many priests. This large colony of
Russians recognized the authority of the HCA in Serbia.

The canonical status of ROCOR was unique in the history of the Orthodox
Church. She always called herself a part of the Local Russian Church - that
part which was situated outside Russia and had jurisdiction exclusively
outside Russia (point 1 of the Polozhenie or Statute of ROCOR). And yet she
had dioceses and parishes on all six continents of Europe, North and South
America, Asia, Africa and Australia, and was in canonical submission to none
of the Local Orthodox Churches already existing in those places. Moreover, at
the beginning of the 1990s, when she returned to Russia, she claimed
jurisdiction in Russia as well! And so ROCOR was, in effect, a world-wide
jurisdiction claiming to have jurisdiction in every part of the globe, but which
claimed to be only a part of one Local Church, the Russian!

This clearly anomalous situation was justified on a temporary basis, - until
the fall of communism in Russia, according to the Polozhenie. It was
supported also by what came to be called the Catacomb Church in Russia
and, at least for a time, such established Local Churches as Serbia and
Jerusalem. The situation was seen as justified on the grounds, first, of the
extraordinarily difficult situation of the three million or so Russian Orthodox
scattered around the world, whose spiritual and physical needs had to be met
by Russian-speaking pastors; and secondly, of the critical situation in the
Orthodox Church as a whole, when even the leaders of Orthodoxy were
falling into heresy.

The First All-Emigration Council opened in Sremskie Karlovtsy on
November 21, 1921. Eleven Russian and two Serbian bishops took part;
twenty-four Russian bishops who could not attend the Council sent telegrams
recognizing its authority. Clergy, monastics and laity also took part in the
Council – 163 people in all. Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) was the
president of the Council, and Patriarch Demetrius of Serbia its honorary

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255 Victor Salni and Svetlana Avlasovich, “Net bol’she toj liubvi, kak esli kto polozhit dushu
svoiu za drugi svoia” (There is no greater love than that a man should lay down his life for
256 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 51.
president. However, when the Bulgarian Metropolitan Stefan of Sophia arrived, bringing a greeting from the Bulgarian Holy Synod, this upset the Patriarch of Serbia, whose relations with the Bulgarians were not good. So he did not come, while Metropolitan Stefan immediately returned to Bulgaria.

Bishop Seraphim (Sobolev), who was in charge of the Russian communities in Bulgaria, reported to the Council about the great difficulty of their position in Bulgaria because of the Bulgarian schism and the impossibility of concelebrating with the Bulgarian clergy. The hierarchs discussed this matter from all sides and declared that they would like to restore communion with the Bulgarian Church, but could not exceed their canonical prerogatives without the participation of the other Local Churches, and in particular of the Church of Constantinople. In spite of that, continuing the practice of the Russian Church and basing themselves on the canons (71, 81, 88 and 122 of Carthage), the delegates allowed the Russian priests and deacons to serve all kinds of Divine services and sacraments with the bishops and clergy of the Bulgarian Church, and they also allowed the Russian bishops to serve with the Bulgarian clergy. Between bishops only joint serving of molebens, pannikhidas, etc. was allowed, but “in no way the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and other holy sacraments of the Orthodox Church”.

The Council called on the Genoa conference to refuse recognition to the Bolshevik regime and help the Russian people to overthrow it. And it declared: “May [God] return to the All-Russian throne his Anointed One, strong in the love of the people, a lawful tsar from the House of the Romanovs”. However, Archbishop Eulogius of Paris and Bishop Benjamin of Sebastopol voted against the Epistle, considering it to be an inadmissible invasion of politics into church life. Ironically, both later joined the Moscow Patriarchate, which allowed an unprecedented domination of Bolshevik politics over church life... Archbishop Anastasy of Kishinev also voted against, but for different reasons: he was not anti-monarchist, but did not want the Romanovs to be designated as the only possible monarchs. The hierarchs were split in two, two-thirds of the clergy abstained, and the Epistle was issued only thanks to the votes of the laity.

The strongly monarchist tone of the Karlovtsy Council marks an important step in the spiritual recovery of the Russian Church. As we have seen, the Holy Synod in February, 1917 had done little, if anything, to protect the monarchy, and the Councils that took place during the Civil War shied clear

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257 Ivan Snegarov, Otnosheniata mezhdu B’lgarskata ts’rkva i drugite pravoslavni ts’rkvi sled prov’zglasianeto na skhiznata (Relations between the Bulgarian Church and other Orthodox Churches following the declaration of the schism) (in Bulgarian); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 61.

258 Protodeacon German Ivanov-Trinadtsaty, “Aktual’nost’ Pervogo Vsezarubezhnogo Sobora” (The Contemporary Relevance of the First All-Abroad Council), Nasha Strana (Our Country), N 2929, December 3, 2011.
of any commitment to monarchism. But from now on monarchism became part of the credo of the Russian Church Abroad.

As A.A. Kostriukov writes: “Both the Stavropol Council and the HTCA created by it tried to adopt a restrained political position. While speaking out against the Bolshevik dictatorship, the leadership of the Church in the south of Russia distanced itself from the monarchy and tried to stand on democratic principles. So as not to destroy the fragile peace between the representatives of various parties represented in the White armies. Recalling this period, Protopriest Vladimir Vostokov wrote in 1922: ‘In May, 1919 the South Russian Council in Stavropol under the presidency of Archbishop Metrophanes, and through the exceptional participation of Protopriest [George] Shavelsky, who at that time was working in agreement with the chief of staff General Romanovsky, did not allow those members to speak who tried to express themselves definitively in relation to ‘socialism’ and ‘the internationalist executioners’. And the word ‘Tsar’ was feared at the Council like fire.’

“According to the witness of Protopriest Vladimir Vostokov, even the open condemnation of regicide and the appeal to the people to repent of this sin dates to the period when the HTCA of the South-East of Russia was already in the Crimea. However, ‘not even the Crimean Church administration resolved on appealing’ for the reestablishment of the monarchy’…”

However, final defeat in the Civil War and the experience of exile gave the Karlovtsy Council the spiritual freedom to speak openly for the restoration of the monarchy. And the Russian Church in Exile continued to preserve the traditions of monarchism until the very end of its existence. This position was, however, intensely feared by the Bolsheviks, for whom the threat of the restoration of the monarchy remained real for many years.

And so, under pressure from the Bolsheviks, Patriarch Tikhon resolved: “To close the Council, and to recognise the resolutions of the Karlovtsy Council as having no canonical significance in view of its invasion into the political sphere which does not belong to it. To demand the materials of the Council abroad, so as to judge on the degree of guilt of the participants in the Council.” The Holy Synod added: “To enter into discussion of the activity of those responsible for the Council, and to give them over to ecclesiastical trial after the establishment of the normal life of the Russian Synod.”

In defence of the Karlovtsy Council’s position, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) said: “If by politics one understands all that touches upon the life of the people, beginning with the rightful position of the Church within the realm, then the ecclesiastical authorities and Church councils must participate in political life, and from this point of view definite demands are

259 Kostriukov, op. cit, pp. 9-10.
260 Monk Benjamin, op. cit, pp. 60-61.
made upon it. Thus, the holy hierarch Hermogenes laid his life on the line by first demanding that the people be loyal to Tsar Basil Shuisky, and when the Poles imprisoned him he demanded the election of Tsar Michael Romanov. At the present time, the paths of the political life of the people are diverging in various directions in a far more definite way: some, in a positive sense, for the Faith and the Church, others in an inimical sense; some in support of the army and against socialism and communism, others exactly the opposite. Thus the Karlovtsy Council not only had the right, but was obliged to bless the army for the struggle against the Bolsheviks, and also, following the Great Council of Moscow of 1917-1918, to condemn socialism and communism.”

The position of the Karlovtsy Council was supported, as we have seen, by the Zemsky Sobor which took place in Vladivostok from July 23 to August 10, 1922. As Anton Ter-Grigorian writes, “it recognized the cause of the revolution to be the sins of the Russian people and called for repentance, proclaiming the only path of salvation for Russia to be the restoration of a lawful Orthodox monarchy. The Council resolved that ‘the right to establish Supreme power in Russia belongs to the dynasty of the House of Romanov’. That is, the Council recognized the Romanov Dynasty to be still reigning in spite of the troubles, and for a short time re-established the Fundamental laws of the Russian empire in the Amur district (until the final conquest of the region by the Reds).

“Accordingly it was decided that the Amur State formation free from the Bolsheviks should be headed by a representative of the Dynasty. For the transitional period General Michael Konstantinovich Diterichs was elected as Ruler. Patriarch Tikhon, who was in Moscow, was unanimously elected as the honourable president of the Council. The widowed Empress Maria Fyodorovna wrote a welcoming telegram to the Sobor in reply.

“In order no. 1 dated August 8, 1922 Lieutenant-General Diterichs wrote: ‘For our sins against the Anointed of God, Emperor Nicholas II, who was martyred with the whole of his Family by Soviet power, a terrible time of troubles has struck the Russian people and Holy Rus’ has been subjected to the greatest destruction, pillaging, torment and slavery by atheist Russians and thieves and robbers of other races, led by infidels of Jewish race who have even renounced their own Jewish faith…

“‘Here, at the edge of the Russian land, in the Amur region, the Lord has placed a single thought and faith into the hearts and minds of everyone gathered at the Zemsky Sobor: there can be no Great Russia without a Sovereign, without an Anointed of God of inherited succession. And here in the Amur region, as we, the last people of the Russian land, are gathered in a

261 Metropolitan Anthony, in Archbishop Nikon (Rklitsky), Zhizneopisanie Blazhenneishago Antonia, Mitropolita Kievskago i Galitskago (A Life of his Beatitude Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich), New York, 1960, vol. VI, p. 36.
small body, but one strong in faith and national spirit, we are set the task and the duty and the good intention of directing all our service to preparing the way for him – our future God-seer.’

“And here are the words of the last order of General Diterichs of October 17, 1922 before his departure from Russia under the pressure of the Reds: ‘I believe that Russia will return to the Russia of Christ, the Russia of the Anointed of God, but I believe that we were unworthy of this mercy from the Supreme Creator…’” 262

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THE SECOND GREEK REVOLUTION: (1) VENIZELOS

At the same time as the revolution in Russia, Greece was undergoing its own revolution, both political and ecclesiastical. Though less bloody, its results were hardly less disastrous for the Greek people. For in the space of a few years they lost their monarchy, their army and a vast part of their ancestral lands in Asia Minor. Worst of all, as in Russia, a large part of the Church apostasized. The revolution began, as in Russia, with a military coup engineered by the Cretan Freemason Eleutherios Venizelos, who as Prime Minister fell out with King Constantine over the direction Greece should take in the Great War.

“Greece had entered the Great War,” writes Misha Glenny, “flushed with its successes in the Balkan Wars, which had been won at relatively little cost to itself. The country was united and optimistic. Yet just over two years after the outbreak of the war, the country had been torn down the middle both geographically and politically. In the north, Venizelos had established the so-called Government of National Defence with its capital in Salonika and under the patronage of the Entente’s Army of the Orient. Venizelos had fled there to join rebel army commanders when it became clear that Athens could not accommodate two men intent on running the country’s foreign affairs – especially since the Prime Minister wanted at all costs to join the Entente and his chief rival, King Constantine (1913-17, 1920-2), did not…

“In Athens, the Germanophile monarch had built up considerable public support for his policy of neutrality. But his most important power base was the officer corps of the army. Constantine’s resistance to the Entente’s perpetual interference in Greece’s affairs, notably to the Allies’ attempt to seize control of the country’s postal and transport systems during the war, won him support. There is only circumstantial evidence that Constantine ever considered actually joining the Central Powers. He may have been influenced to a degree by his wife, Sophie, Kaiser Wilhelm’s sister, but the Greek King was no fool. He could see perfectly well that the Entente controlled the Mediterranean and had 300,000 troops in Salonika backing Venizelos’s insurrection (although the same troops also prevented the hotter heads in the Venizelist military leadership from attacking the areas loyal to the King). To declare for the Central Powers would have provoked a massive assault from the Entente and plunged the country into a violent civil conflict.

“Yet the French diplomatic mission in Athens bombarded the Quai d’Orsay and the Prime Minister, Aristide Briand, with fanciful reports of conspiracies directed by German agents in Athens. The French government trusted neither Constantine nor Venizelos. Throughout 1916, a powerful lobby comprising General Sarrail [commander of the Army of the Orient] and the senior Embassy officials in Athens urged on Paris the policy of establishing a protectorate over Greece, humiliating Constantine with
ultimatums whose conditions he could not possibly fulfil without provoking his own army. This diplomatic pressure culminated in the event of 1 December, 1916, when French and British troops under the command of the French Admiral Dartige du Fournet landed at Piraeus and marched on Athens. The army resisted the Allied assault. Dartige had assumed that his display of superior force would be a stroll. He was wrong. Within hours of entering Athens, fifty-seven French and five British soldiers had been killed and many more were wounded. The Allies beat a hasty retreat. The monarchist soldiers were enraged at this violation of Greek sovereignty. [However, in the spring of 1917] the French finally succeeded in forcing Constantine’s abdication and exile. Venizelos returned to Athens in triumph to govern the reunited country. He began by purging the armed forces and civil service of known monarchists…”

With the Greeks firmly, if not altogether voluntarily, on the side of the Allies, they were able to take part in the victorious campaign of the Army of the Orient against Bulgaria and the Central Powers, and so be counted as a victor nation at Versailles in 1919. This gave Venizelos the opportunity to put his nationalist expansionist plans into effect. The French Prime Minister Briand had been right to suspect, some years before, that “Venizelos may have very long teeth when peace negotiations open. He has not renounced his dream to recreate the Byzantine Empire… Now, a large-scale expansion of Greece would be a threat to the peace of the world. I have for a long time desired the cooperation of the Greeks but not under these conditions…”

In May, 1919, the Italians, having withdrawn from the Paris Peace Conference, began to occupy parts of Turkey – Antalya in the south and Marmaris in the west. The other Great Powers were alarmed. This gave Venizelos his chance to try and put his “great idea” – the restoration of the Byzantine empire – into practice.

Margaret Macmillan writes: “He had been working hard from the start of the Peace Conference to press Greek claims, with mixed success. Although he tried to argue that the coast of Asia Minor was indisputably Greek in character, and the Turks in a minority, his statistics were highly dubious. For the inland territory he was claiming, where even he had to admit that the Turks were in a majority, Venizelos called in economic arguments. The whole area (the Turkish provinces of Aidin and Brusa and the areas around the Dardanelles and Izmir) was a geographic unit that belonged to the Mediterranean; it was warm, well watered, fertile, opening out to the world, unlike the dry and Asiatic plateau of the hinterland. The Turks were good workers, honest, in their relations, and a good people as subjects’, he told the Supreme Council at his first appearance in February. ‘But as rulers they were insupportable and a disgrace to civilisation, as was proved by their having

264 Briand, in Glenny, op. cit., pp. 348-349.
exterminated over a million Armenians and 300,000 Greeks during the last four years.’ To show how reasonable he was being, he renounced any claims to the ancient Greek settlements at Pontus on the eastern end of the Black Sea. He would not listen to petitions from the Pontine Greeks, he assured [the American official] House’s assistant, Bonsal: ‘I have told them that I cannot claim the south shore of the Black Sea, as my hands are quite full with Thrace and Anatolia.’ There was a slight conflict with Italian claims, but he was confident the two countries could come to a friendly agreement. They had, in fact, already tried and it had been clear that neither was prepared to back down, especially on Smyrna.

“The thriving port of Smyrna lay at the heart of Greek claims. It had been Greek in the great Hellenic past and in the nineteenth century had become predominantly Greek again as immigrants from the Greek mainland had flocked there to take advantage of the new railways which stretched into the hinterland and opportunities for trade and investment. The population was at least a quarter of a million before the war and more Greeks lived there than in Athens itself. They dominated the exports – from figs to opium to carpets – which coursed down from the Anatolian plateau in Asia Minor. Smyrna was a Greek city, a centre of Greek learning and nationalism – but it was also a crucial part of the Turkish economy.

“When Venizelos reached out for Smyrna and its hinterland, he was going well beyond what could be justified in terms of self-determination. He was also putting Greece into a dangerous position. Taking the fertile valleys of western Asia Minor was perhaps necessary, as he argued, to protect the Greek colonies along the coast. From another perspective, though, it created a Greek province with a huge number of non-Greeks as well as a long line to defend against anyone who chose to attack from central Anatolia. His great rival General Metaxas, later dictator of Greece, warned of this repeatedly. ‘The Greek state is not today ready for the government and exploitation of so extensive a territory.’ Metaxas was right.”

The Italians and the Americans were against the Greek claims on Smyrna; but the British and the French were sympathetic. The deadlock was resolved when the Italians walked out of the Peace Conference and landed troops on the coast of Western Asia Minor. This gave Lloyd George his chance to intervene on behalf of Venizelos. The Americans were won over, and the Greeks were told that they could land in Smyrna and “wherever there is a threat of trouble or massacre”.

“The whole thing,” wrote Henry Wilson, the British military expert, “is mad and bad”...

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Lord Curzon, the soon-to-be British Foreign Minister, was also worried, though he was far from being a Turkophile. As he said: “The presence of the Turks in Europe has been a source of unmitigated evil to everybody concerned. I am not aware of a single interest, Turkish or otherwise, that during nearly 500 years has benefited from that presence.”

“That the Turks should be deprived of Constantinople is, in my opinion, inevitable and desirable as the crowning evidence of their defeat in war, and I believe that it will be accepted with whatever wrathful reluctance by the Eastern world.” “But,” he went on, “when it is realized that the fugitives are to be kicked from pillar to post and that there is to be practically no Turkish Empire and probably no Caliphate at all, I believe that we shall be giving a most dangerous and most unnecessary stimulus to Moslem passions throughout the Eastern world and that sullen resentment may easily burst into savage frenzy”. And he called the landing in Smyrna “the greatest mistake that had been made in Paris”.

The landing took place on May 15, 1919. Unfortunately, it was handled badly, and some hundreds of Turkish civilians were killed. Although the Greeks arrested those responsible and did all they could to make amends, international opinion, stirred up by Turkish propaganda and the American representative in Constantinople, Admiral Bristol, began to turn against them, ignoring the mass slaughter of Greeks in Western Asia Minor, Pontus and the Caucasus. Then, on May 16, Kemal Ataturk slipped out of Constantinople on an Italian pass, and arrived in Samsun to organize the nationalist movement that eventually defeated the Greeks and created the modern state of Turkey. By the end of the year he had created a new Turkish capital in Ankara. Although, on May 20, the Allies had recognized the Sultan, and not Ataturk, as Turkey’s legitimate ruler, the Italians were already secretly negotiating with Ataturk, and the French were not slow to follow suit. Only the British – more precisely, Lloyd George – continued to support Venizelos.

On June 14, Venizelos asked the Supreme Council to allow the Greeks to extend their occupation zone. However, the western powers said no. They were exhausted from more than four years of war, had already been demobilizing their armies around the globe, and with the defeat of the Whites in Russia, this process accelerated. The last thing they wanted was another full-scale war with the Turks. Besides, the Americans were concerned that their Standard Oil Company should have large concessions in Mesopotamia, which they believed Ataturk could give them, and the French wanted an intact Turkey in order to pay back her pre-war loans. The British toyed with the idea of supporting an independent Kurdistan in Ataturk’s rear, but by the spring of 1920 this plan had been dropped. Soon they also abandoned their protectorates in Georgia and Baku.

In April, 1920, the Sultan’s government appealed to the allies to help him fight Ataturk, but the allies refused. In fact, the French were already arming Ataturk by this time. In spite of this, in May, the terms of the Treaty of Sèvres were announced. They were harsh on Turkey, ceding Smyrna to the Greeks, founding a free Armenia and creating a free Kurdistan. The eastern part of Asia Minor was divided up into French, Italian and British occupation zones; Mesopotamia and the Straits were ceded to Britain, and Syria to France. Constantinople was kept as an international city, and the Turkish army was reduced to a token force. But none of this was going to become reality... The Treaty also ignored the territorial concessions to Russia that had been agreed during the Great War. This incensed the Soviets, who now began to support Kemal...

As the Turkish nationalist forces advanced westwards, they encountered British troops about one hundred miles from Constantinople. The British drove them off, but called for reinforcements. There were no British reinforcements, so it had to be Greek ones. In June, Lloyd George and the Supreme Council agreed to Venizelos’ plans to move inland from Smyrna to relieve the pressure exerted by Kemal on the British at Chanak. “The British high commissioner in Constantinople wrote angrily to Curzon: ‘The Supreme Council, thus, are prepared for a resumption of general warfare; they are prepared to do violence to their own declared principles; they are prepared to perpetuate bloodshed indefinitely in the Near East, and for what? To maintain M. Venizelos in power in Greece for what cannot in the nature of things be more than a few years at the outside.’ Curzon agreed completely: ‘Venizelos thinks his men will sweep the Turks into the mountains. I doubt it will be so.’”

At first, however, the Greeks did well. They defeated the Turks at Chanak (present-day Canakkale) and seized Eastern Thrace. By August, 1920, 100,000 soldiers had penetrated 250 miles inland. But the alarmed Allies then sent token forces of their own to separate the Greeks from the Turks. Harold Nicolson wrote: “By turning their guns against the Greeks – their own allies – the Great Powers saved Kemal’s panic-stricken newly-enlisted army at the eleventh hour from final destruction.”

In October, the French signed a treaty with Ataturk’s government, which enabled them to withdraw their troops from Cilicia, which freed more Turkish troops for the Greek front. The Turks were now receiving supplies from the Italians, the French and the Soviets, and began to regroup in the centre of the country...

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In November Venizelos and his liberal party suffered a stunning and quite unexpected defeat in the Greek elections. King Constantine returned to power. This made no difference to the war because the king felt honour-bound to try and finish what Venizelos had begun. Or rather, it made things worse, because the king then conducted a purge of pro-Venizelos officers which weakened the army at a critical time. Moreover, the Allies were enraged, because Constantine had refused to join the Entente during the war.

On March 25, 1921, on the one-hundredth anniversary of the Greek revolution, meetings took place in 500 Cypriot churches, and petitions were addressed to the English authorities that Cyprus should be reunited with Greece. At the same time the Greek army in Asia Minor began its advance on Ankara. Very soon they had won control of the whole of the western escarpment of the Anatolian plateau. However, on March 31 the Turks conducted a successful counter-attack.

The Greeks would have been well-advised to seek peace at this point, but they did not. Massacres of Turks were taking place in the Greek-controlled region, and of Greeks in the Turk-controlled region. Passions were too high for either side to contemplate peace.

In the summer King Constantine arrived in Smyrna, and it was agreed to resume the advance. In August the Greeks arrived at the summit of Mount Tchal, overlooking Ankara. However, they were in a poor state, hungry, diseased and in danger of having their lines of communication cut by Turkish irregulars. The Turks counter-attacked, and September 11 the Greeks retreated to the west bank of the Sakarya river. “For approximately nine months,” wrote Sir Winston Churchill, “the Turks waited comfortably in the warmth while the Greeks suffered throughout the icy-cold of the severe winter”. Finally, on August 26, 1922, the Turks began a general offensive. The Greek army was routed. Early in September the Turkish army entered Smyrna, the Greek Metropolitan Chrysostom was murdered and the city deliberately set on fire. Chrysostom was a Mason, and so cannot be counted as a martyr; but his murder was nevertheless shocking.

At this moment Lord Beaverbrook arrived in Constantinople on a special mission for the British. On learning the facts, he told the American Admiral Bristol: “Our behaviour to the Greeks was rotten! We have behaved to them with dirty duplicity! They were prompted and supported by us in beginning their campaign. But we abandoned them without support at their most critical moment so that the Turks could exterminate them and destroy them forever! Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister, supported them and prompted him to make the landing at Smyrna. He supported them with every means except for giving them money which his Treasury did not have to give.

271 Churchill, Memoirs; in Murat, op. cit., p. 108.
And now we are leaving them exposed to disaster!” Then he turned to Admiral Bristol: “And what are you doing in this matter?” 272

The Allies did nothing: allied ships in Smyrna were ordered to observe strict “neutrality”, and the Greek government failed to send any of its own. It took the heroic efforts of a Methodist minister from New York, Asa Jennings, to galvanize the Greeks and the Allies into action, and a massive evacuation began. Then the Greek government fell, the king resigned, Prime Minister Gounaris was executed together with six army leaders 273, and Colonels Nicholas Plastiras and Stylianus Gonatas took control. But the evacuation continued, and hundreds of thousands were rescued from certain death either through fire or at the hands of the Turks. Nevertheless, it is calculated that 100,000 Greeks died in Smyrna, with many thousands of other nationalities, while 160,000 were deported into the interior in terrible conditions. 274 The “Great Idea” of Greek nationalism was dead, drowned in a sea of blood…

272 Murat, op. cit., p. 128.
274 Fr. Raphael Moore (ORTHODOX@LISTSERV.INDIANA.EDU), January 17, 1999) calculates that the following numbers of Greeks were killed in Asia Minor: in 1914 - 400,000 in forced labour brigades; 1922 - 100,000 in Smyrna; 1916-22 - 350,000 Pontians during forced deportations; 1914-22 - 900,000 from maltreatment, starvation in all other areas.
THE SECOND GREEK REVOLUTION: (2) METAXAKIS

When Venizelos came to power during the war, he began to purge, not only the military and the civil service, but also the Church. Thus when Metropolitan Theocletus of Athens anathematized him in 1916, he had him defrocked. Then he recalled his friend and fellow Cretan and Freemason, Meletios Metaxakis, from America and enthroned him as Archbishop of Athens in November, 1918. Meletios immediately started commemorating Venizelos at the Liturgy instead of the King. This led to an ideological schism within the Synod between the Venizelists and the Royalists. The latter included St. Nectarius of Pentapolis and Metropolitan Germanus of Demetrias, the future leader of the True Orthodox Church. Almost simultaneously, Patriarch Germanus V of Constantinople was forced into retirement as a result of the stormy protest of his flock against what they saw to be his compromising politics in relation to the Turkish authorities.

Now the Greek government wanted to introduce the western, Gregorian calendar into Greece. And so Meletios promptly, in January, 1919, raised this question in the Church. The only obstacle to the introduction of the new calendar, he declared, was the Apostolic Canon forbidding the celebration of Pascha at the same time as the Jewish Passover or before the spring equinox. But since, he went on, “the government feels the necessity of changing to the Gregorian calendar, let it do so without touching the ecclesiastical calendar.” And he set up a Commission to investigate the question.

The Commission was set up with Metropolitan Germanus of Demetrias, the future leader of the True Orthodox Church, as the representative of the hierarchy. In May 20, 1919, on the initiative of Meletios Metaxakis, the Synod raised the question of changing to the new calendar. Meletios told the Synod: “The situation in Russia has changed, and the possibility of becoming closer to the West has become more real. We consider it necessary to introduce a rapid calendar reform.” However, the Commission headed by Metropolitan Germanus was more cautious: “In the opinion of the Commission, the change of the Julian calendar provided it does not contradict canonical and dogmatic bases, could be realised on condition that all the other Orthodox Autocephalous Churches agree, and first of all, the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate, to which it would be necessary to present the initiative in any action in this sphere, so long as we do not change to the Gregorian calendar, but compose a new, more scientifically exact Gregorian calendar, which would be free from the inadequacies of both of the calendars – the Julian and the Gregorian – at present in use.”

275 “To imerologiakon skhisma apo istorikes kai kanonikes apopseos exetazomenon” (The Calendar Schism from an Historical and Canonical Point of View), Agios Agathangelos Esphigmenites (St. Agathangelos of Esphigmenou), 130, March-April, 1992, p. 16.
276 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 29.
277 Goutzidis, Ekklesiologika Themata (Ecclesiological Themes), Athens, 1980, pp. 67-68.
“One of the committee members who voted in favour of this position,” writes Fr. Basile Sakkas, “was Chrysostom Papadopoulos, then an Archimandrite and Professor of Theology at the University of Athens.” He it was who, as Archbishop of Athens, introduced the new calendar into the Greek Church in 1924…

When the conclusions of the commission had been read out, Meletios changed his tune somewhat: “We must not change to the Gregorian calendar at a time when a new and scientifically perfect calendar is being prepared. If the State feels that it cannot remain in the present calendar status quo, it is free to accept the Gregorian as the European calendar, while the Church keeps the Julian calendar until the new scientific calendar is ready.”

Two things are clear from these events of 1919. First, Meletios was very anxious to accommodate the government if he could. And yet he must have realized that blessing the adoption of the new calendar by the State would inevitably generate pressure for its introduction into the Church as well. Secondly, while he did not feel strong enough to introduce the new calendar into the Church at that time, he was not in principle against it, because he either did not understand, or did not want to understand, the reasons for the Church’s devotion to the Julian calendar, which have nothing to do with scientific accuracy, and all to do with faithfulness to the Tradition and Canons of the Church and the maintenance of Her Unity.

The new calendar was not the only innovation Meletios wanted to introduce: what he wanted, writes Bishop Ephraim, “was an Anglican Church with an eastern tint, and the faithful people in Greece knew it and distrusted everything he did. While in Athens, he even forbade the chanting of vigil services (!) because he considered them out of date and a source of embarrassment when heterodox – especially Anglicans – visited Athens. The people simply ignored him and continued to have vigils secretly.”

However, the heart of Greek Orthodoxy was not Athens, but Constantinople. It was necessary for Venizelos to get his own man on the Ecumenical throne. That man would eventually be Metaxakis.

But in the meantime, until Metaxakis could be transferred, he needed someone else to stir up the kind of nationalist ferment he needed. Fortunately for Venizelos, the patriarchal locum tenens in 1919, Metropolitan Dorotheus of Prussa, was just the right man for the job. He introduced two important and closely related innovations in the conduct of the patriarchate towards the

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279 Goutzidis, op. cit., p. 68.
Ottoman Empire, on the one hand, and the western heresies, on the other. Thus on January 21, 1919, protected by a Greek-Cretan regiment stationed in the city, Dorotheus proceeded to abolish the teaching of Turkish in Greek schools. Then, on March 16, a resolution for “Union with Greece” was passed in the Constantinopolitan churches, after which the patriarchate and the Greeks refused to communicate with the Sublime Porte. When the Greeks also refused to participate in the November elections, the break with the Turkish authorities was complete.

The patriarchate had in effect carried out a political **coup d’État** against the Ottoman Empire, thereby reversing a 466-year tradition of submission to the Muslims the political sphere. Since such a daring coup required political and military support from outside, the patriarchate set about making friends with those to whom, from a religious point of view, it had always been inimical. Thus in January, 1919, a Greek-Armenian conference was held to coordinate the activities of the two groups in the city. Then, in the summer, Metropolitan Nicholas of Caesarea in the name of the patriarchate accepted the invitation of the Joint Commission of the World Conference on Faith and Order, a forerunner of the World Council of Churches, to participate in its preliminary conference in Geneva the following year. He said that the patriarchate was “thereby stretching out a hand of help to those working in the same field and in the same vineyard of the Lord”. This statement, which in effect recognized that the western heretics belonged to the True Church, was probably the first statement from the Ecumenical Patriarchate explicitly endorsing the great heresy of **ecumenism**.

“**The ideologue of ecumenism,”** writes Archbishop Averky, “which is the natural consequence of the nostalgia of the Protestant world for the Church that they have lost, was the German pastor Christopher Blumhardt, whom the Protestants call for that reason ‘the great prophet of the contemporary world’. He called all the Protestants to unity for ‘the construction of the Kingdom of God on earth’, but he died before the organization of the ecumenical movement, in 1919. His fundamental idea consisted of the proposition that ‘the old world has been destroyed, and a new one is rising on its ruins’. He placed three problems before Christianity: 1) the realization of the best social structure, 2) the overcoming of confessional disagreements and 3) the working together for the education of the whole world community of nations with the complete liquidation of war.

“It was in these three points that the aims of ecumenism were formulated by the present general secretary of the Council of the ecumenical movement, Visser-t-Hooft, who saw the means for their realization in the Church’s pursuit of social aims. For this it is first of all necessary to overcome

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confessional differences and create one church. The renewed one church will have the possibility of preparing the way for the triumph of Socialism, which will lead to the creation of one world State as the Kingdom of God on earth...”  

This project elicited the first public debate on the question of the nature of the unity of the Church and the ecumenical movement between leading representatives of the Western and Orthodox Churches. Participants in the debate were, on the one hand, Mr. Robert Gardiner, secretary of the Joint Commission, and, on the other hand, Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kharkov and Archimandrite, later Archbishop Hilarion (Troitsky). In the course of this debate, Archimandrite Hilarion wrote:

“I could ask you this question: Do you and I belong to the one Church of Christ? In answering it you undoubtedly would mention the insignificance of our dogmatic differences and the virtually negligible difference in rites. For me, however, the answer is determined not by considerations of dogmatic disagreements but by the fact on hand: there is no ecclesiastical unity in grace between us...

“The principal truth of Christianity, its great mystery - the Incarnation of the Son of God - is acknowledged by all Christian creeds, yet this alone cannot fuse them into one Church. For, according to the Apostle James (2.19), the devils also believe; as attested by the Gospel, they confessed their faith like the Apostle Peter did (Matthew 16.16; 8.26; Mark 1.24; Luke 8.28). But do they belong to one Church of Christ? On the other hand, the Church community undoubtedly embraces people who do not know the dogmas of the Council of Chalcedon and who are unable to say much about their dogmatic convictions...

“If the question of the belonging or non-belonging to the Church be formulated in terms of theological dogma, it will be seen that it even cannot be resolved in a definite way. Just how far should conformity to the Church’s ideas go in dogmatic matters? Just in what is it necessary to agree and what kind of disagreement ensues following a separation from the Church? How are we to answer this question? And who has so much authority as to make the decision stand? Perhaps you will point to the faith in the incarnate Son of God as the chief characteristic of belonging to the Church. Yet the German Protestants are going to argue against the necessity of even this feature, since in their religion there are to be found even such ministers who openly deny the Divinity of the Saviour.

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283 Averky, "O polozhenii pravoslavnago khristianina v sovremennom mire" (On the Position of the Orthodox Christian in the Contemporary World), in Istinnoe Pravoslavie i Sovremennij Mir (True Orthodoxy and the Contemporary World), Jordanville, 1972.
“Christ never wrote a course in dogmatic religion. Precise formulations of the principal dogmas of Christianity took place centuries after the earthly life of the Saviour. What, then, determined the belonging to the Church in those, the very first, times of the historical existence of Christianity? This is attested to in the book of the Acts of the Apostles: ‘Such as should be saved were added to the Church’ (2.45; 6.13-14). Membership of the Church is determined by the unity with the Church. It cannot be otherwise, if only because the Church is not a school of philosophy. She is a new mankind, a new grace-filled organism of love. She is the Body of Christ. Christ Himself compared the unity of His disciples with the organic unity of a tree and its branches. Two ‘bodies’ or two trees standing side by side cannot be organically related to each other. What the soul is to the body, the Holy Spirit is to the Church; the Church is not only one body but also One Spirit. The soul does not bring back to life a member which has been cut off, and likewise the vital sap of a tree does not flow into the detached branch. A separated member dies and rots away. A branch that has been cut off dries up. These similes must guide us in a discussion of the unity of the Church. If we apply these similes, these figures of a tree and a body, to the Church, any separation from the Church, any termination of the unity with the Church will turn out to be incompatible with membership of the Church. It is not the degree of the dogmatic dissent on the part of the separated member that is important; what is significant in the extreme is the fact of separation as such, the cessation itself of the unity with the Church. Be it a separation on the basis of but a rebellion against the Church, a disciplinary insubordination without any dogmatic difference in opinion, separation from the Church will for the one who has fallen away have every sad consequence.

“Not only heretics but schismatics, too, separate themselves from the Church. The essence of the separation remains the same.”

The Ecumenical Patriarchate would have done well to listen to the reasoning of their Russian co-religionists. However, the time was past when Constantinople could be seriously influenced by the views of the Russian Church. The fall of the Russian empire and Constantinople’s temporary freedom from the Ottoman yoke encouraged the Phanar to take the lead in proclaiming the new heresy of Ecumenism.

In any case, the Russians, under extreme pressure from the Bolsheviks, were soon to become preoccupied with the modernist schism of the “Living Church” renovationists, which left the Greek renovationists free to pursue their own modernist designs without serious interference from the other Orthodox Churches...

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So in January, 1920, Metropolitan Dorotheus and his Synod issued what was in effect a charter for Ecumenism. This encyclical was the product of a conference of professor-hierarchs of the Theological School at Khalki, led by Metropolitan Germanus of Seleucia (later of Thyateira and Great Britain).

It was addressed “to all the Churches of Christ everywhere”, and declared that “the first essential is to revive and strengthen the love between the Churches, not considering each other as strangers and foreigners, but as kith and kin in Christ and united co-heirs of the promise of God in Christ.”

It went on: “This love and benevolent disposition towards each other can be expressed and proven especially, in our opinion, through:

“(a) the reception of a single calendar for the simultaneous celebration of the great Christian feasts by all the Churches;

“(b) the exchange of brotherly epistles on the great feasts of the single calendar.;

“(c) close inter-relations between the representatives of the different Churches;

“(d) intercourse between the Theological Schools and the representatives of Theological Science and the exchange of theological and ecclesiastical periodicals and writings published in each Church;

“(e) the sending of young people to study from the schools of one to another Church;

“(f) the convening of Pan-Christian conferences to examine questions of common interest to all the Churches;

“(g) the objective and historical study of dogmatic differences.;

“(h) mutual respect for the habits and customs prevailing in the different Churches;

“(i) the mutual provision of prayer houses and cemeteries for the funeral and burial of members of other confessions dying abroad;

“(j) the regulation of the question of mixed marriages between the different confessions;

“(k) mutual support in the strengthening of religion and philanthropy.”

The unprecedented nature of the encyclical consists in the facts: (1) that it was addressed not, as was Patriarch Joachim’s encyclical of 1903, to the Orthodox Churches only, but to the Orthodox and heretics together, as if they were all equally “co-heirs of God in Christ”; (2) that the proposed rapprochement was seen as coming, not through the acceptance by the heretics of the Truth of Orthodoxy and their sincere repentance and rejection of their errors, but through other means; and (3) the proposal of a single universal calendar for concelebration of the feasts, in contravention of the canonical law of the Orthodox Church.

There is no mention here of the only possible justification of Ecumenism from an Orthodox point of view – the opportunity it provides of conducting missionary work among the heretics. On the contrary, as we have seen, one of the first aims of the ecumenical movement was and is to prevent proselytism among the member-Churches.

From this time the Ecumenical Patriarchate became an active participant in the ecumenical movement, sending representatives to its conferences in Geneva in 1920, in Lausanne in 1927 and in Edinburgh in 1937. The World Conference on Faith and Order was organized on the initiative of the American Episcopal Church; and the purpose of the Joint Commission’s approaches to the Churches was that “all Christian Communions throughout the world which confess our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior” should be asked “to unite with us in arranging for and conducting such a conference”.

The real purpose of the 1920 encyclical was political, to gain the support of the western heretics, and especially the Anglicans, in persuading their governments to endorse Dorotheus’ and Venizelos’ plans for Greek control of Constantinople and Smyrna and its hinterland. Thus on February 24, 1920, Dorotheus wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury: “We beseech you energetically to fortify the British government... in its attempts to drive out the Turks [from Constantinople]. By this complete and final expulsion, and by no other means, can the resurrection of Christianity in the Near East and the restoration of the church of Hagia Sophia be secured.”

The tragedy of the Greek position was that, in spite of the support of the Anglican Church for Dorotheus, and of Lloyd George for Venizelos, the Allies never committed themselves to the creation of a Greek kingdom in Asia Minor. The reason was obvious: it would have meant full-scale war with Turkey – an unattractive prospect so soon after the terrible losses of the Great War, and when British troops were still fighting in Soviet Russia and other

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288 Alexandris, op. cit., p. 62.
places. From the Allied Powers’ point of view, their troops were stationed in Constantinople, not as a permanent occupation force, but only in order to protect the Christian minority.

In fact, the Greeks, by their fiercely nationalist attitude, antagonized the Turks and led to the creation of a powerful Turkish nationalist movement, which eventually destroyed the centuries-old Greek civilization in Asia Minor. The Greeks forgot that one nationalism inevitably elicits another, equal and opposite nationalism... If they had been less aggressive, they may well have attained at least some of their aims without war and without sacrificing their faith to the Anglicans...

With the fall of Venizelos, his brother Mason and Cretan Metaxakis also fell. In February, 1921, he returned to America, campaigning on behalf of Venizelos, and presenting the novel argument that all the Orthodox in America should be under the Patriarchate of Constantinople because of Canon 28 of the Fourth Ecumenical Council. He immediately returned into communion with the Anglicans. Thus the Greek ambassador in Washington reported to the prefect in Thessalonica that on December 17, 1921, “vested, he took part in a service in an Anglican church, knelt in prayer with the Anglicans before the holy table, which he venerated, gave a sermon, and blessed those present in the church” of the heretics.

Meletios won over the epitropos of the Greek Archdiocese, Rodostolos Alexandros, and the two of them first broke relations with the Church of Greece. Then, at a clergy-laity conference in the church of the Holy Trinity, New York, he declared the autonomy of the Greek Archdiocese from the Church of Greece, changing its name to the grandiloquent: “Greek Archbishopric of North and South America”. This was more than ironical, since it had been Metaxakis himself who had created the archdiocese as a diocese of the Church of Greece when he had been Archbishop of Athens in 1918! Metaxakis’ new diocese broke Church unity in another way, in that it was done without the blessing of the Russian Church, which until then had included all the Orthodox of all nationalities in America under its own jurisdiction. And once the Greeks had formed their own diocese, other nationalities followed suit. Thus on August 14, 1921 Patriarch Gregory of Antioch asked Patriarch Tikhon's blessing to found a Syrian diocese in North America. Tikhon replied on January 17, 1922 that the Antiochian Patriarch would first have to get the agreement of the Russian bishops in America...

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289 This was reported in June, 1921 to the Serbian Orthodox Church by Bishop Nicholas (Velimirovich), who had been sent to American to investigate the needs of the Serbs there. Canon 28 talks about the “barbarian” lands in Thrace and other places being placed under Constantinople. Nobody before Metaxakis had interpreted it to mean jurisdiction over the whole world outside the traditional patriarchates...

Meanwhile, the Patriarchate in Constantinople was still beating the nationalist and anti-monarchist drum. In December, 1920, it called for the resignation of the king for the sake of the Hellenic nation, and even considered excommunicating him! Then, in March, a patriarchal delegation headed by Metropolitan Dorotheus travelled to London, where they met Lord Curzon, the British foreign secretary, King George V and the archbishop of Canterbury – the first such trip to the West by the senior prelate of Orthodoxy since Patriarch Joseph’s fateful participation in the council of Florence in 1438. And there, like Joseph, Dorotheus had a heart attack and died, just as he was to receive the honorary vice-presidency of the World Congress for the friendship of the World through the Churches.  

The terrible tragedy suffered by the Greek nation at this time must be attributed in no small part to the nationalist-ecumenist politics of Dorotheus and his Synod – a classic example of the destructive consequences of the intrusion of political passions into the life of the Church. There followed a prolonged struggle for control of the patriarchate between the Royalist and Venizelist factions.

Bishop Photius writes: “Political circles around Venizelos and the Anglican Church had been involved in Meletius’ election as Patriarch. Metropolitan Germanus (Karavangelis) of the Holy Synod of Constantinople wrote of these events, ‘My election in 1921 to the Ecumenical Throne was unquestioned. Of the seventeen votes cast, sixteen were in my favour. Then one of my lay friends offered me 10,000 lira if I would forfeit my election in favour of Meletius Metaxakis. Naturally I refused his offer, displeased and disgusted. At the same time, one night a delegation of three men unexpectedly visited me from the “National Defence League” and began to earnestly entreat me to forfeit my candidacy in favour of Meletius Metaxakis. The delegates said that Meletius could bring in $100,000 for the Patriarchate and, since he had very friendly relations with Protestant bishops in England and America, could be useful in international causes. Therefore, international interests demanded that Meletius Metaxakis be elected Patriarch. Such was also the will of Eleutherios Venizelos. I thought over this proposal all night. Economic chaos reigned at the Patriarchate. The government in Athens had stopped sending subsidies, and there were no other sources of income. Regular salaries had not been paid for nine months. The charitable organizations of the Patriarchate were in a critical economic state. For these reasons and for the good of the people [or so thought the deceived hierarch] I accepted the offer...’ Thus, to everyone’s amazement, the next day, November 25 [December 8], 1921, Meletius Metaxakis became the Patriarch of Constantinople.

“The uncanonical nature of his election became evident when, two days before the election, November 23 [December 6], there was a proposal made by the Synod of Constantinople to postpone the election on canonical grounds. The majority of the members voted to accept this proposal. At the same time, on the very day of the election, the bishops who had voted to postpone the election were replaced by other bishops. This move allowed the election of Meletius as Patriarch. Consequently, the majority of bishops of the Patriarchate of Constantinople who had been circumvented met in Thessalonica. [This Council included seven out of the twelve members of the Constantinopolitan Holy Synod and about 60 patriarchal bishops from the New Regions of Greece under the presidency of Metropolitan Constantine of Cyzicus.] They announced that, ‘the election of Meletius Metaxakis was done in open violation of the holy canons,’ and proposed to undertake ‘a valid and canonical election for Patriarch of Constantinople.’ In spite of this, Meletius was confirmed on the Patriarchal Throne.”

Two members of the Synod then went to Athens to report to the council of ministers. On December 12, 1921 they declared the election null and void. One of the prominent hierarchs who refused to accept this election was Metropolitan Chrysostom (Kavourides) of Florina, the future leader of the True Orthodox Church. The Sublime Porte also refused to recognize the election, first because Meletius was not an Ottoman citizen and therefore not eligible for the patriarchate according to the Ottoman charter of 1856, and secondly because Meletius declared that he did not consider any such charters as binding insofar as they had been imposed by the Muslim conquerors.

On December 29, 1921, the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece under the presidency of Metropolitan Germanus of Demetrias deposed Metaxakis for a series of canonical transgressions and for creating a schism, declared both Metaxakis and Rodostolos Alexandros to be schismatics and threatened to declare all those who followed them to be similarly schismatic. However, in spite of this second condemnation, Meletius sailed into Constantinople under the Byzantine flag and was enthroned as patriarch on January 22, 1922. And as a result of intense political pressure his deposition was uncanonically lifted on September 24, 1922!

Thus there arrived at the peak of power one of the men whom Metropolitan Chrysostom (Kavourides) called “these two Luthers of the Orthodox Church”. The other one, Archbishop Chrysostom (Papadopoulos) of Athens, would come to power very shortly...

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292 Bishop Photius, op. cit., p. 41-42.
293 Alexandris, op. cit., pp. 75-76.
294 “To imerologiakon skhism apo istorikis kai kanonikis apopseos exetazomenon” (The Calendar Schism from an historical and canonical point of view), Agios Agathangelos Esphigmenites (St. Agathangelos of Esphigmenou), № 131, May-June, 1992, p. 17; Bishop Photius, op. cit., p. 41.
The insecurity of Meletius’ position did not prevent him from trumpeting his nationalist-ecumenist plans in his enthronement speech: “I give myself to the service of the Church, so as from her first throne to assist in the development, as far as this is possible, of closer friendly relations with the heterodox Christian Churches of the East and West, to push forward the work of unification between them and others.” Then, on August 3, his Synod recognised the validity of Anglican orders. In 1923 Cyprus and Jerusalem followed suit, showing how quickly Ecumenism could spread once it had taken hold in Constantinople. 295

Within the next few years, Meletius and his successor, Gregory VII, undertook the wholesale annexation of vast territories belonging to the jurisdiction of the Serbian and Russian Patriarchates. Basing his actions on a false interpretation of the 28th canon of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, which supposedly gives all the “barbarian lands” into the jurisdiction of Constantinople, he and his successor created the following uncanonical autonomous and autocephalous Churches:

1. Western Europe. On April 5, 1922, Meletius named an exarch for the whole of Western and Central Europe, Metropolitan Germanus of Thyateira and Great Britain. In 1923 he suggested to Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris and his flock that he submit to Metropolitan Germanus. In a letter dated March 28, 1923, Metropolitan Eulogius declined. 296 By the time of Gregory VII’s death in November, 1924, there was an exarchate of Central Europe under Metropolitan Germanus of Berlin, an exarchate of Great Britain and Western Europe under Metropolitan Germanus of Thyateira, and a diocese of Bishop Gregory of Paris. In the late 1920s the Ecumenical Patriarch received into his jurisdiction Metropolitan Eulogius, who had just created a schism in the Russian Church Abroad, and who sheltered a number of influential heretics, such as Nicholas Berdiaev and Fr. Sergius Bulgakov, in the theological institute of St. Sergius in Paris. 297

2. Finland. In February, 1921 Patriarch Tikhon granted the Finnish Church, led by Archbishop Seraphim (Lukyanov), autonomy within the Russian Church. In 1922, Meletius offered to Seraphim to ordain the renovationist priest Herman (Aava) as his vicar-bishop, and receive autocephaly from the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The excuse given here was that Patriarch Tikhon was no longer free, “therefore he could do as he pleased” (Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky)). Seraphim refused, declaring his loyalty to Patriarch Tikhon and the Russian Church Abroad. In spite of this, and under the strong pressure of the Finnish authorities, Herman was consecrated Bishop of Sortavala in Constantinople. This undermined the efforts of the Orthodox to

295 Stavrides, op. cit., p. 45.
296 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 93.
maintain their position vis-à-vis the Lutherans. Then, for refusing to learn the Finnish language in three months, Archbishop Seraphim was imprisoned on the island of Konevets by the Finnish government, while Patriarch Gregory VII raised Bishop Herman to the rank of metropolitan. Despite the protests of Patriarch Tikhon, the new metropolitan, under pressure from the government, annulled the right of the monasteries to celebrate Pascha according to the Julian calendar. Then began the persecution of the confessors of the Old Calendar in the monastery of Valaam (see below).

“Even more iniquitous and cruel,” writes Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), “was the relationship of the late Patriarch Gregory and his synod towards the diocese and the person of the Archbishop of Finland. The Ecumenical Patriarch consecrated a vicar bishop for Finland, the priest Aava, who was not only not tonsured, but not even a rasophore. Moreover, this was done not only without the agreement of the Archbishop of Finland, but in spite of his protest. By these actions the late Patriarch of Constantinople violated a fundamental canon of the Church – the sixth canon of the First Ecumenical Council [and many others], which states, ‘If anyone is consecrated bishop without the consent of his metropolitan, the Great Council declares him not to be a bishop.’ According to the twenty-eighth canon of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, the patriarch cannot even place a bishop in his diocese without the approval of the local metropolitan. Based on precisely this same canon, the predecessors of Gregory vainly attempted to realize his pretensions and legalize their claims to control. This uncanonical ‘bishop’ Aava, once consecrated as bishop, placed a monastic klobuk on his own head, and thus costumed, he appeared in the foreign diocese of Finland. There he instigated the Lutheran government to persecute the canonical Archbishop of Finland, Seraphim, who was respected by the people. The Finnish government previously had requested the Ecumenical Patriarch to confirm the most illegal of laws, namely that the secular government of Finland would have the right to retire the Archbishop. The government in fact followed through with the retirement, falsely claiming that Archbishop Seraphim had not learned enough Finnish in the allotted time. Heaven and earth were horrified at this illegal, tyrannical act of a non-Orthodox government. Even more horrifying was that an Orthodox patriarch had consented to such chicanery. To the scandal of the Orthodox and the evil delight of the heterodox, the highly dubious Bishop Germanus (the former Fr. Aava) strolled the streets of Finland in secular clothes, clean-shaven and hair cut short, while the most worthy of bishops, Seraphim, crudely betrayed by his false brother, languished in exile for the remainder of his life in a tiny hut of a monastery on a stormy isle on Lake Ladoga.”298

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298 Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), in Monk Gorazd, “Quo Vadis, Konstantinopol’skaia Patriarkhia?” (Where are you going, Constantinopolitan Patriarchate?), Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia), № 2 (1455), January 15/28, 1992, p. 9.
On November 14/27, 1923, Patriarch Tikhon and the Russian Holy Synod, after listening to a report by Archbishop Seraphim decreed that “since his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon has entered upon the administration of the Russian Orthodox Church, the reason for which the Patriarch of Constantinople considered it necessary temporarily to submit the Finnish Church to his jurisdiction has now fallen away, and the Finnish eparchy must return under the rule of the All-Russian Patriarch.” However, the Finns did not return to the Russian Church, and the Finnish Church remains to this day the most modernist of all the Orthodox Churches, being the only Church that has adopted the Western paschalion.

3. Estonia. In February, 1919, after the martyrdom of Bishop Plato of Revel, Bishop Alexander (Paulus) of Porkhov was transferred to his see. Patriarch Tikhon then granted a broad measure of autonomy to the parts of the former Pskov and Revel dioceses that entered into the boundaries of the newly formed Estonian state. On September 23, 1922, the Estonian Church under Archbishop Alexander petitioned to be received under the Ecumenical Patriarchate and to be granted autocephaly. On March 10, 1940, in a letter to Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky), Metropolitan Alexander wrote that this decision was taken under strong political pressure from the State authorities at a time when news was constantly coming from Soviet Russia about the very difficult position of Patriarch Tikhon and the Russian Church, and in reply to an appeal from Patriarch Meletius IV.

4. Latvia. In June, 1921 Patriarch Tikhon granted the Latvian Church autonomy under Archbishop John of Riga, who was burned to death by the communists in 1934. In March, 1936, the Ecumenical Patriarch accepted the Church of Latvia within his own jurisdiction. On March 29 Metropolitan Germanus of Thyateira and Great Britain headed the consecration of the garrison priest Augustine (Peterson) as Metropolitan of Riga and All Latvia.

5. Poland. In 1921 Patriarch Tikhon appointed Archbishop Seraphim (Chichagov) to the see of Warsaw, but the Poles, whose armies had defeated the Red Army in 1920, did not grant him entry into the country. So on September 27 the Patriarch was forced to accept the Poles’ candidate, Archbishop George (Yaroshevsky) of Minsk. However, he appointed him his exarch in Poland, not metropolitan of Warsaw (that title remained with Archbishop Seraphim). Moreover, he refused Archbishop George’s request for autocephaly on the grounds that very few members of the Polish Church were Poles and the Polish dioceses were historically indivisible parts of the Russian Church. Instead, he granted the Polish Church autonomy within the Russian Church.

299 Gubonin, op. cit., p. 304.
300 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 87.
On January 24, 1922 Archbishop George convened a Council in Warsaw which included Archbishops Dionysius (Valedinsky) and Panteleimon (Rozhnovsky). Under pressure from the authorities, Bishop Vladimir also joined them. Pekarsky, an official of the ministry of religious confessions, tried to make the Russian hierarchs sign the so-called “Temporary Rules”, which had been drawn up in the ministry and which envisaged far-reaching government control over the life of the Orthodox Church in Poland. On January 30 the “Temporary Rules” were signed by Archbishops George and Dionysius, but not by Archbishop Panteleimon and Bishop Vladimir. On the same day Patriarch Tikhon issued a decree transferring Archbishop George to the see of Warsaw and raising him to the rank of metropolitan, insofar as it had become evident that it would be impossible to obtain the Polish authorities’ permission for the entrance into Warsaw of Metropolitan Seraphim (Chichagov), who had the reputation of being an extreme rightist. However, the titular promotion of Archbishop George by no means signified that the patriarch supported his intentions, for in the decrees there is no mention of ecclesiastical autocephaly, nor of exarchal rights. Consequently, as was confirmed by the patriarch in 1925, he was simply one of the diocesan bishops in Poland, and not metropolitan “of all Poland”.302

Liudmilla Koeller writes: “The Polish authorities restricted the Orthodox Church, which numbered more than 3 million believers (mainly Ukrainians and Byelorussians).303 In 1922 a council was convoked in Pochaev which was to have declared autocephaly, but as the result of a protest by Bishop Eleutherios [Bogoyavlensky, of Vilnius] and Bishop Vladimir (Tikhonitsky), this decision was not made. But at the next council of bishops, which gathered in Warsaw in June, 1922, the majority voted for autocephaly, with only Bishops Eleutherios and Vladimir voting against. A council convoked in September of the same year ‘deprived Bishops Eleutherios and Vladimir of their sees. In December, 1922, Bishop Eleutherios was arrested and imprisoned’.”304

Bishop Eleutherios was later exiled to Lithuania. Two other Russian bishops, Panteleimon (Rozhnovsky) and Sergius (Korolev), were also deprived of their sees. The three dissident bishops were then expelled from Poland.

302 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 63-64.
303 Already on October 22, 1919 the Poles had ordered 497 Orthodox churches and chapels, which had supposedly been seized from the Catholics in the past, to be returned to the Catholic Church. See Danilushkin, op. cit., p. 586. (V.M.)
304 Koeller, “Kommentarii k pis’mu Arkhiepiskopa Rizhskago i Latvijskago Ioanna Arkhiepiskopu Vilenskomu i Litovskomu Elefveriu ot 2 noiabria 1927 g.” (Commentary on the Letter of Archbishop John of Riga and Latvia to Archbishop Eleutherios of Vilnius and Lithuania), Tserkovnaia Zhizn’ (Church Life), №№. 3-4, May-June-July-August, 1992, pp. 56-57; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 87.
In November, 1923, Metropolitan George was killed by an opponent of his church politics, Archimandrite Smaragd (Laytshenko), and was succeeded by Metropolitan Dionysius “with the agreement of the Polish government and the confirmation and blessing of his Holiness Meletius IV [Metaxakis]”. Patriarch Tikhon rejected this act as uncanonical. On November 13, 1924 Patriarch Gregory VII signed a Tomos “on the recognition of the Orthodox Church in Poland as autocephalous”. The Tomos significantly declared: “The first separation from our see of the Kievan Metropolia and from the Orthodox Metropolias of Latvia and Poland, which depended on it, and also their union to the holy Moscow Church, took place by no means in accordance with the prescription of the holy canons, nor was everything observed that had been established with regard to the complete ecclesiastical autonomy of the Kievan metropolitan who bears the title of exarch of the Ecumenical Throne”. Hereby the patriarch indirectly laid claim to Ukraine as his canonical territory, in spite of the fact that it had been under Russian rule for two-and-a-half centuries. And yet, in contradiction with that, he affirmed as the basis of his grant of autocephaly to the Polish Church the fact that “the order of ecclesiastical affairs must follow political and social forms”, basing this affirmation on the 17th Canon of the Fourth Ecumenical Council and the 38th canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council.

5. Hungary and Czechoslovakia. According to the old Hungarian law of 1868, and confirmed by the government of the new Czechoslovak republic in 1918 and 1920, all Orthodox Christians living in the territory of the former Hungarian kingdom came within the jurisdiction of the Serbian Patriarchate. That meant that they were served by Bishops Gorazd of Moravia and Dositheus of Carpatho-Russia (Gorazd was consecrated on September 25, 1921 in Belgrade by Patriarch Demetrius of Serbia, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev and two Serbian bishops).

However, on September 3, 1921, the Orthodox parish in Prague elected Archimandrite Sabbatius to be their bishop. When the Serbian Synod refused to consecrate Sabbatius, he, without the knowledge of his community, set off for Constantinople, where on March 4, 1923, he was consecrated “archbishop” of the newly created Czechoslovakian branch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which included Carpatho-Russia. Then, on April 15, 1924, the Ecumenical

306 K. Svitich, Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ v Pol’she i ee autokefalia (The Orthodox Church in Poland and its autocephaly); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 133. For a more detailed account of the Polish autocephaly, see M. Zyzykin, “Avtokefalia i printsipy eia primenenia” (Autocephaly and the principles of its application), Pravoslavniy Put’ (The Orthodox Way), 2004, pp. 101-133. A translation of the whole Tomos is to be found here: http://www.ukrainianorthodoxchurchinexile.org/1924_tomos_of_autocephaly.html.
307 Meanwhile, on August 9, Archimandrite Alexis (Kabaliuk) convened a Council of the Carpatho-Russian Church to which 400 delegates came. Because of the persecution of the faith in Russia, the Council decided to remain within the jurisdiction of the Serbian Church (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 57).
Patriarch established a metropolia of Hungary and All Central Europe with its see in Budapest (although there was already a Serbian bishop there).

“The scandal caused by this confusion,” writes Z.G. Ashkenazy, “is easy to imagine. Bishop Sabbatius insisted on his rights in Carpatho-Russia, enthusiastically recruiting sympathizers from the Carpatho-Russian clergy and ordaining candidates indiscriminately. His followers requested that the authorities take administrative measures against priests not agreeing to submit to him. Bishop Dositheus placed a rebellious monk under ban – Bishop Sabbatius elevated him to igumen; Bishop Dositheus gathered the clergy in Husta and organized an Ecclesiastical Consistory – Bishop Sabbatius enticed priests to Bushtin and formed an Episcopal Council. Chaos reigned in church affairs. Malice and hatred spread among the clergy, who organized into ‘Sabbatiites’ and ‘Dositheiites’.

“A wonderful spiritual flowering which gave birth to so many martyrs for Orthodoxy degenerated into a shameful struggle for power, for a more lucrative parish and extra income. The Uniate press was gleeful, while bitterness settled in among the Orthodox people against their clergy, who were not able to maintain that high standard of Orthodoxy which had been initiated by inspired simple folk.”

6. Turkey. While creating uncanonical new Churches on the territory of other Local Orthodox Churches (he also invited the Russians in America to come under his omophorion, but they refused), Meletius contrived to support a schism on his own canonical territory. Thus in the autumn of 1922, Metropolitan Procopius of Konium, to whom all the churches of Anatolia were subject, with two titular bishops and two priests separated from the patriarchate and created his own Synod of the “Turkish Orthodox Church”. Since the new Church was strongly supported by the government of Ataturk, Meletius considered it inappropriate to ban it. Instead, he suggested the creation of an autonomous Turkish Church subject to the patriarchate, and he promised to introduce the Turkish language into the Divine services.

In 1938 Bishop John (Maximovich) of Shanghai reported to ROCOR’s All-Diaspora Council: “Increasing without limit their desires to submit to themselves parts of Russia, the Patriarchs of Constantinople have even begun to declare the uncanonicity of the annexation of Kiev to the Moscow Patriarchate, and to declare that the previously existing southern Russian Metropolia of Kiev should be subject to the Throne of Constantinople. Such a point of view is not only clearly expressed in the Tomos of November 13, 1924, in connection with the separation of the Polish Church, but is also quite

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308 Monk Gorazd, op. cit.
309 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 84. At that time there lived about 50,000 Turkish-speaking Orthodox in Anatolia. This movement lost all support after the great exodus of the Orthodox from Turkey in 1922-1923.
thoroughly promoted by the Patriarchs. Thus, the Vicar of Metropolitan Eulogius in Paris, who was consecrated with the permission of the Ecumenical Patriarch, has assumed the title of Chersonese; that is to say, Chersonese, which is now in the territory of Russia, is subject to the Ecumenical Patriarch. The next logical step for the Ecumenical Patriarchate would be to declare the whole of Russia as being under the jurisdiction of Constantinople…

“In sum, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, in theory embracing almost the whole universe, and in fact extending its authority only over several dioceses, and in other places having only a superficial supervision and receiving certain revenues for this; persecuted by the government at home and not supported by any governmental authority abroad; having lost its significance as a pillar of truth and having itself become a source of division, and at the same time being possessed by an exorbitant love of power – represents a pitiful spectacle which recalls the worst periods in the history of the See of Constantinople.”310

PART 2. THE RISE OF THE DICTATORS (1922-1933)

LIBERALISM, COMMUNISM AND FASCISM

Some political philosophies are of the head; others – of the heart. Liberalism is of the first kind. It appeals to the rational (but false) idea that if governments are formed through elections on the basis of universal suffrage, then they will act for the benefit of all: “government by the people for the people”. “People” here means “a multitude of voters, each voting rationally for his own interests”. It should be noted, however, that “people” here does not mean a single unity having a single will (Rousseau’s concept of “the general will” is a communistic, not liberal idea). And once enough individuals see that they as individuals are not benefiting from democracy, then they will seek salvation in a philosophy with a more powerful, more unitary and more emotive definition of the word “people”, where “people” means something closer to “nation”, not a chance aggregate of unrelated individuals, each wanting something different and forming unities only on the basis of fleeting and constantly shifting parliamentary majorities, but a mystical organism with a single will and soul and heart.

After the Great War, western leaders such as Lloyd George proclaimed that it had been fought for the sake of democracy against tyranny. True: the Kaiser’s Germany had been aggressive and tyrannical, and the victory of the Allies did spell, as we have seen, the demise of monarchy in many countries and the rendering of lip-service to democracy throughout Europe. However, Lloyd George himself had closed down cabinet government in Britain in December, 1916. And both the British and the French fought less for democracy in the Versailles negotiations than for a return to the status quo ante the war. The only country that genuinely fought first of all for democracy was probably America. For, as Philip Bobbitt writes, “America went to war in 1917 to create a system of nation-states whose legitimacy would be based on democracy and self-determination. Within this system all states were to be legally equal, because Wilson and [his friend and adviser, Colonel] House believed that such a system would prevent future wars against the democracies. This system would reflect American conceptions of the relationship between nation and state and for that reason it could call upon an American commitment to intervene if necessary to protect the system. The establishment of the League of Nations came to be America’s principal war aim because it gave an institutional structure to these ideas. A world order based on a German victory would not be one that was ultimately safe for the American democracy, but neither would an Allied victory that merely reinstated in Europe the state system that had collapsed in the first place. As Lord Devlin, a Wilson biographer, shrewdly observed: ‘Indeed [Wilson] never lost his distrust of Allied motives… The Allies did not, he believed, genuinely care about democracy and the right to self-government.’
“And of course Wilson was right: the Allies, like the Central Powers they opposed, shared a European conception of sovereignty, that held the State’s authority to have come by descent from its predecessors, and not to arise directly from the people. Even democratic states like Britain and France held sovereignty to be distinct from elections; sovereignty was an attribute of the State. European states were not limited sovereigns. Because their peoples had wholly delegated their sovereignty to the State the nation could scarcely demand the creation of a new state by withholding sovereignty from that power that ruled them. Yet this was the reason American entered the Long War [from 1914 to 1990]: to allow the democratic form to fulfil its role in creating the proper relation between a State and its nation…” 311

But America’s war aim was not achieved, at least in the short run. The Versailles Peace appears to have disillusioned everyone who took part in it (Wilson and House never met thereafter). It certainly did not bring peace to Europe, although it did cause a lot of chaos, fear and resentment. And the League of Nations, as we shall see, failed as an arbiter of international conflict. It was the failure of the Versailles peace that especially exposed the myth of freedom and equality in our time; for very many individuals and nations in Europe felt, not more, but less free and equal in 1919 than they had in 1914 – and still more after the anarchy, poverty and violence of the early 1920s, followed by the Great Depression of 1929...

Italy was the first country that lost confidence in democracy. Mussolini’s march on Rome in March, 1922 proved its impotence. Thus Mussolini in August he declared: “Democracy has done its work. The century of democracy is over. Democratic ideologies have been liquidated.” 312

The next failed democracy was Germany’s Weimar Republic, which was plagued by violence and, as the Reichmark plummeted in value in 1923, by widespread poverty and despair. Even pious Germans, such as the Lutheran Paul Althaus, began to doubt in its legitimacy: “Did Lutherans owe the Weimar Republic the loyalty prescribed in Romans 13? Only in a heavily qualified way, since the ‘temporary structure’ of Weimar was ‘the expression and means of German degradadation and apathy’.” 313 Why? Because the Weimar republic was seen as having been imposed on Germany by the Allied victor-nations, and therefore as betraying the real interests of the German people in such questions as reparation payments and the French occupation of the Ruhr. This gave extremist movements on both the right and the left powerful ammunition, and several attempted coups, including one by Hitler, were put down with difficulty. And so Germany became a battlefield between three fairly equally matched ideologies: parliamentary democracy, fascism and communism.

313 Burleigh, op. cit., p. 19.
From 1924 democracy appeared to recover, and foreign companies began to invest in Germany, leading to an economic recovery. But then in 1929 came the Great Depression, which hit Germany harder than any other country precisely because it had become more dependent on foreign investment, which now left the country. Democracy faltered again; the fascists and communists recovered their confidence, and even those in the centre seemed to lose confidence in it. As W. B. Yeats said:

*the best lack all conviction,*
*while the worst are full of passionate intensity…*

However, Fascism and Nazism did not emerge primarily as reactions against Liberalism. Or rather, anti-liberalism was a reason of the head, rather than of the heart. A deeper reason was to be found by looking, not west, to the failure of President Wilson’s democratic dream, but east – to the fulfilment of Lenin’s communistic nightmare. Even before securing victory inside Russia, the Bolsheviks had founded the Comintern, whose openly declared aim was to overthrow all the capitalist governments of the world. Such a programme rightly repelled the majority of Europeans, even those, like the British striking miners in 1926, who had only their chains to lose. But for a significant minority the violence in the East was a stimulant and a magnet, not a spectre. As D.H. Lawrence noted, “the great leaning of the Germanic spirit is once more eastwards, towards Russia, towards Tatary”.

Many joined the Communist Party as a place where they could express their violent feelings. But others joined the no less violent fledgling movements of Fascism and Nazism. In Germany and Italy, it was especially the wandering bands of war veterans who filled their ranks. They felt that the war had come to an end too early, that the nation had to be purged and purified by yet more violence and hatred. Thus, as Michael Burleigh writes: “In both Italy and Germany elite fighting units (the Italian *arditi*) who had brought fanatical courage and tenacity to the wartime battlefields, provided the prototypical ‘new man’ who, despite his self-professed dehumanisation, was supposed to be the nation’s future redeemer. The brutality that total war had engendered, and which in Armenia, Belgium, the Balkans, northern France and East Prussia has spilled over into violence towards civilians, became a permanent condition, in the sense that political *opponents* were regarded as deadly *enemies*. In Italy people who revelled in violence for political purposes acquired a political label earlier than elsewhere: that of Fascists, the very symbol – of axes tightly bound in lictorial rods – conveying the closed community of the exultantly thuggish better than the mystic iron octopus of the Nazi swastika.”

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First in Italy, and later in Germany, the Fascist idea gradually triumphed over the Communist one. This was largely because its mystical concept of the nation corresponded more closely to the psychology and history of the Italian and German peoples. Of course, this concept was at least as old as the French revolution and had been influential everywhere; but it had been particularly important in Germany and Italy, whose hitherto disunited countries were united at about the same time in the late nineteenth century. The two countries were also united by the feeling that they had been cheated in the aftermath of the war. The Germans felt they had been “stabbed in the back” by the Jews, and betrayed by Wilson’s failure to implement his Fourteen Points, while Italy, though a victor-nation, felt frustrated by Wilson’s resistance to their demands for Slavic lands on the other side of the Adriatic (not to speak of Albanian lands in Albania and Turkish lands in Turkey). The German veterans felt they had not been defeated in the war, while the Italian veterans felt that their losses of half a million men merited them a greater reward. And so pre-war Italian nationalism, reared on the exploits of Mazzini and Garibaldi, and on the music of Verdi, now re-emerged in a more violent, hard-edged form in Fascism.

The differences between the three ideologies can be seen in two different ways. Some have seen the more important cleavage as running between, on the one hand, the rationalist Enlightenment ideologies of Liberalism and Communism, which go back to the French constitutional monarchy of 1789-1792 and the Jacobin dictatorship of 1792-94 respectively, and on the other hand, the anti-Enlightenment irrationalist ideology of nationalism, which could be said to go back to the third, Napoleonic phase of the French revolution, but whose real origins are in the German reaction against it. For others, however, the more fundamental cleavage was between the totalitarian ideologies of Communism and Nazism, on the one hand, and the anti-totalitarian ideology of Liberalism, on the other.

Both Liberalism and Communism trace their roots to the optimistic Enlightenment faith that a materialistic utopia can be achieved on earth by education, rationalism, science and the elimination of religious superstition. Both emphasize the role of the State as the spearhead of progress; and if Liberalism also tries to protect the “human rights” of the individual, it is nevertheless the State, rather than the Church or any other organization or individual, that determines what those rights are and how they are to be implemented. So if Liberalism gives greater protection to the individual than does Communism, this is a difference in emphasis rather than of principle, as the increasing convergence between the two systems after World War II demonstrates.316

316 George Orwell prophesied this convergence at the end of his post-war novel Animal Farm, when the pigs (the communists) and the men (the capitalists) looked indistinguishable to the impoverished animals.
If there is a difference in principle between the two systems it consists in Liberalism’s insistence that the dominance of the State should be limited by democratic elections, preceded by genuinely free debate, that permit the removal of governments that are perceived to have failed, whereas Communism posits the eternal rule of the Communist Party and of the State ruled by it, and punishes any criticism of it. 317

And yet even here the difference is not as radical as might at first appear. For, on the one hand, Communism pays lip-service to the principle of democratic elections (during which the existing leaders are usually, by a miracle, elected again with 99.9% of the vote). And on the other hand, the choice offered to voters in a liberal democracy becomes increasingly limited as real power is vested in two increasingly similar political party machines.

There is also a difference between the the fallen passions these systems most pander to. Liberalism panders especially to greed and lust. It moderates, without destroying, these passions by recognizing that one individual’s greed and lust should be satisfied only to the extent that it does not interfere with the satisfaction of another’s greed and lust. These passions are given a more or less decent covering by such slogans as “human rights” and “freedom, equality and fraternity”: we supposedly have the “right” to indulge them; we must be free to indulge them, and to an equal extent as everybody else. Not that there is not some genuine idealism and altruism among many liberals: but the egoistic roots of “humanrightism” are becoming increasingly obvious as their demands become more and more absurd...

Since Communism shares a common ancestry with Liberalism in the French Revolution, it, too, uses the slogans of “human rights” and “freedom, equality and fraternity”. But as heirs of the later Jacobin rather than the early liberal phase of the revolution, Communism is based on the sharper passions of hatred – hatred of the old society of kings and priests, businessmen, bankers and peasants – and love of power. This hatred and love of power was demonstrated most clearly in the Communist leaders, such as Lenin and Stalin, who, whatever their propaganda might say, cared not at all for justice, freedom and equality for the masses: they hated their fellow men and sought to dominate and exterminate them. By contrast, many rank-and-file Communists, and especially those in Western countries, were motivated by liberal ideals when they joined the Party; their Communism was simply an

317 Strictly speaking, Communism preaches the withering away of the State. But the State had to expand to its maximum first. Thus Stalin declared at the Sixteenth Party Congress in 1930: “We are for the withering away of the state. But at the same time we stand for the strengthening of the proletarian dictatorship, which constitutes the most powerful, the mightiest of all governing powers that have ever existed. The highest development of governmental power for the purpose of preparing the conditions for the withering away of governmental power, this is the Marxist formula. Is this ‘contradictory’? Yes, it is ‘contradictory’. But this contradiction is life, and it reflects completely the Marxist dialectic” (in Alan Bullock, Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives, London, 1991, p. 467).
extension of their Liberalism. But the conflict between the professed aims of
the Party and the satanic means employed to achieve them, soon corrupted
and destroyed all those who did not quickly repent.

Richard Pipes has argued that Communism and Fascism are two varieties
of “totalitarianism”. The fact that neither system achieved total control of
society does not lessen the usefulness of the term, which accurately points to
the main thrust of each. For both sought to control, not only the strictly
political sphere, but also the economic, cultural and religious.

The term was first invented in 1923 “by an opponent of Mussolini,
Giovanni Amendola (later murdered by the Fascists), who, having observed
Mussolini’s systematic subversion of state institutions, concluded that his
regime suffered fundamentally from conventional dictatorships. In 1925,
Mussolini adopted the term and assigned it a positive meaning. He defined
Fascism as ‘totalitarian’ in the sense that it politicized everything ‘human’ as
well as ‘spiritual’: ‘Everything within the state, nothing outside the state,
nothing against the state’.”

In 1928, the Italian Education Minister Giovanni Gentile defined Fascism
primarily in terms of “the comprehensive, or as Fascists say, the ‘totalitarian’
scope of its doctrine, which concerns itself not only with political organization
and political tendency, but with the whole will and thought and feeling of the
nation.” This remains the first defining characteristic, not only of Fascism, but
of all other totalitarian regimes, such as the Nazi and the Soviet. Unlike liberal
regimes, which make a distinction between public and private space, and
accord the individual, theoretically at any rate, a more or less wide area in
which he can rule his life independently of the State, totalitarian regimes try
to encompass everything.

But if the Fascists first used the term, the reality was imbibed from
Communist Russia. As Pipes writes: “All the attributes of [Fascist]
totalitarianism had antecedents in Lenin’s Russia: an official, all-embracing
ideology; a single party of the elect headed by a ‘leader’ and dominating the
state; police terror; the ruling party’s control of the means of communication
and the armed forces; central command of the economy. Since these
institutions and procedures were in place in the Soviet Union in the 1920s
when Mussolini founded his regime and Hitler his party, and were to be
found nowhere else, the burden of proving there was no connection between
‘Fascism’ and Communism rests of those who hold this opinion.

318 “‘Totalitarian’ does not mean that they were ‘total’ parties, either all inclusive or wielding
complete power; it means that they were parties concerned with the ‘totality’ of the societies
in which they worked. In this narrower sense both movements did have totalitarian
319 Pipes, Russia under the Bolshevik Regime, p. 241.
“No prominent European socialist before World War I resembled Lenin more closely than Benito Mussolini. Like Lenin, he headed the antirevisionist wing of the country’s Socialist Party; like him, he believed that the worker was not by nature a revolutionary and had to be prodded to radical action by an intellectual elite. However, working in an environment more favourable to his ideas, he did not need to form a splinter party: whereas Lenin, leading a minority wing, had to break away, Mussolini gained a majority in the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) and ejected the reformists. Had it not been for his reversal, in 1914, of his stand on the war, coming out in favour of Italy’s entry on the Allied side, which resulted in his expulsion from the PSI, he might well have turned into an Italian Lenin. Socialist historians, embarrassed by these facts of Mussolini’s early biography, have either suppressed them or described them as a passing flirtation with socialism by a man whose true intellectual mentor was not Marx, but Nietzsche and Sorel. Such claims, however, are difficult to reconcile with the fact that Italian socialists thought well enough of the future leader of Fascism to name him in 1912 editor in chief of the Party’s organ, Avanti! Far from having a fleeting romance with socialism, Mussolini was fanatically committed to it: until November 1913, and in some respects until early 1920, his ideas on the nature of the working class, the structure and function of the party, and the strategy of the socialist revolution, were remarkably like Lenin’s…

“Like Lenin, he saw in conflict the distinguishing quality of politics. The ‘class struggle’ meant to him warfare in the literal sense of the word: it was bound to assume violent forms because no ruling class ever peacefully surrendered its wealth and power. He admired Marx, whom he called a ‘father and teacher’, not for his economics and sociology, but for being the ‘grand philosopher of worker violence’. He despised ‘lawyer socialists’ who pretended to advance the cause by parliamentary maneuvers. Nor did he have faith in trade unionism, which he believed diverted labor from the class struggle. In 1912, in a passage that could have come from the pen of Lenin, he wrote: ‘A worker who is merely organized turns into a petty bourgeois who obeys only the voice of interest. Every appeal to ideals leaves him deaf.’ He remained faithful to this view even after abandoning socialism: in 1921, as Fascist leader, he would describe workers as ‘by nature... piously and fundamentally pacifistic’. Thus, independently of Lenin, in both his socialist and his Fascist incarnation he repudiated what Russian radicals called ‘spontaneity’: left to his own devices, the worker would not make a revolution but strike a deal with the capitalist, which was the quintessence of Lenin’s social theory.

“These premises confronted Mussolini with the same problem that faced Lenin: how to make a revolution with a class said to be inherently unrevolutionary. He solved it, as did Lenin, by calling for the creation of an elite party to inject into labor the spirit of revolutionary violence. Whereas Lenin’s concept of the vanguard party came from the experience of the
People’s Will, Mussolini’s was shaped by the writings of Gaetano Mosca and Vilfredo Pareto, who in the 1890s and early 1900s popularized the view of politics as contests for power among elite groups.”  

The only significant difference between Soviet Communism and Italian Fascism was that Mussolini came to the conclusion that, for his revolutionary purposes, “nationalism was more potent fare than socialism. In December 1914, he wrote: ‘The nation has not disappeared. We used to believe that it was annihilated. Instead, we see it rise, living, palpitating before us! And understandably so. The new reality does not suppress the truth: class cannot destroy the nation. Class is a collectivity of interests, but the nation is a history of sentiments, traditions, language, culture, ancestry. You can insert the class into the nation. But they do not destroy each other.’ From this it followed that the Socialist Party must lead not only the proletariat, but the entire nation: it must create ‘un socialismo nationale’…”

If we turn from the relationship between Communism and Fascism to that between Communism and Nazism, we again find no fundamental contradictions. There were many similarities between Russia and Germany after the First World War. Both countries had suffered defeat; both were treated as pariahs by the western powers; both bitterly resented this treatment (however much they themselves had contributed to it), and therefore gravitated towards each other. Secret military and trade links were established between them in the 1920s. More significantly, there was also a trade in ideology.

A Bolshevik who believed in the similarity between the two systems – and thought that they would have to war against each other one day - was Nikolai Bukharin. As Piers Brendon writes, “he was struck by the similarities between Stalinism and Nazism. Both systems dehumanised their own people by suppressing intellectual liberty through force and fraud. In the last article he wrote for Izvestia, on 6 July 1936, Bukharin made the identification as explicit as he dared. At a time when every utterance was combed for hidden meanings, it was tantamount to a manifesto: ‘A complicated network of decorative deceit in words and action is a highly essential characteristic of Fascist regimes of all stamps and hues.’”

Niall Ferguson asks: “Were not Stalin and his German counterpart in reality just two grim faces of totalitarianism? Was there any real difference between Stalin’s ‘socialism in one country’ and Hitler’s National Socialism, except that one was put into practice a few years before the other? We can now see just how many of the things that were done in German concentration camps during the Second World War were anticipated in the Gulag: the

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transportation in cattle trucks, the selection into different categories of prisoner, the shaving of heads, the dehumanizing living conditions, the humiliating clothing, the interminable roll-calling, the brutal and arbitrary punishments, the differentiation between the determined and the doomed. Yes, the regimes were very far from identical... But it is at least suggestive that when the teenage zek Yuri Chirkov arrived at Solovetsky, the slogan that greeted him was "Through Labour – Freedom!" – a lie identical to the wrought-iron legend Arbeit Macht Frei that would later welcome prisoners to Auschwitz…"

Again, the war correspondent and disillusioned communist Vasily Grossman, in a novel entitled Life and Fate, which was completed in 1960 but published only decades later, emphasizes the similarities between Soviet Communism and German Nazism. In one scene an SS officer is talking to his prisoner, an old Bolshevik. “When we look at one another in the face, we’re neither of us just looking at a face we hate – no, we are gazing into a mirror. That’s the tragedy of our age. Do you really not recognise yourself in us; yourselves and the strength of your will?... You may think you hate us, but what you really hate is yourselves in us... Our victory will be your victory... And if you should conquer, then we shall perish only to live in your victory.”

But there was, of course, one important difference between the two. Nazism was nationalist and anti-semitic: communism was neither. And yet even here there are links that draw the two evil monsters together... Thus the leadership of the communist movement, in Russia as elsewhere, was, as we have seen, mainly Jewish. This fact was the primary cause of the rise in anti-semitism that we have seen on both sides in the Russian Civil War. This in turn increased the popularity of anti-semitic forgeries like The Protocols of the Elders of Zion. But it was not only anti-Soviet Russians who were reading the Protocols: those Germans who believed that Germany had been “stabbed in the back” by the Jews eagerly read the same material. Thus in 1920 F.M. Vinberg, a White Russian officer of German ancestry, published, together with a German anti-Semite, the first translation of the Protocols, which made a profound influence on the Nazis, and especially on Alfred Rosenberg, a Baltic German with a Russian passport, who introduced the forgery to Hitler.

Pipes writes: “The Protocols made on the future Führer an overwhelming impression. ‘I have read The Protocols of the Elders of Zion – it simply appalled me,’ he told Hermann Rauschning, an early associate, ‘the stealthiness of the enemy, and his ubiquity! I saw at once that we must copy it – in our own way, of course.’ According to Rauschning, the Protocols served Hitler as a major source of political inspiration. Hitler thus used a spurious manual of Jewish strategy for world domination, not only to depict the Jews as the mortal

enemy of Germany, but to carry out his own quest for world domination employing its methods. He so admired the alleged cunning of Jews in their drive to master the world that he decided to adopt fully their ‘ideology’ and ‘program’.

“It was only after he had read the Protocols that Hitler turned anti-Communist: ‘Rosenberg left a permanent mark on Nazi ideology. The party was rabidly anti-Semitic from the moment of its foundation in 1919, but it became obsessed with Russian communism only in 1921-22; and this seems to have been largely Rosenberg’s doing. He provided the link between Russian anti-Semitism of the Black Hundred type and the anti-Semitism of the German racists; more precisely, he took over Vinberg’s view of Bolshevism as a Jewish conspiracy and reinterpreted it in völkisch-racist terms. The resulting fantasy, as expounded in innumerable articles and pamphlets, became an obsessive theme in Hitler’s thinking and in the outlook and propaganda of the Nazi party.’ It has been said that Hitler had only two major political objectives: the destruction of Jewry and the expansion into the East European Lebensraum (‘Living Space’), all other elements of his program, capitalist as well as socialist, being only means to this end. The right-wing Russian theory linking Jews with Communism allowed him to connect these two objectives.

“Thus the ravings of extremist Russian monarchists, who sought and found a scapegoat for the catastrophe that had befallen their country in the ‘hidden hand’ of world Jewry, injected themselves into the political ideology of a party destined before long to acquire total power in Germany. The rationale for the Nazi extermination of Jews came from Russian right-wing circles: it was Vinberg and his friends who first called publicly for the physical extermination of Jews. The Jewish Holocaust thus turned out to be one of the many unanticipated and unintended consequences of the Russian Revolution.”

However, the Nazis borrowed even more from Russia. Even while trying to destroying communism in Germany, Hitler acknowledged in private that “there is more that binds us to Bolshevism that separates us from it”. In a speech delivered on February 24, 1941 he stated bluntly that “basically National Socialism and Marxism are the same”. And “in a conversation with Rauschning,” writes Pipes, “he conceded his debt to socialism: ‘I have learned a great deal from Marxism as I do not hesitate to admit. I don’t mean their tiresome social doctrine or the materialist conception of history, or their absurd ‘marginal utility’ theories, and so on. But I have learned from their

326 Brendon, op. cit., p. 244.
327 Pipes, op. cit., p. 259, note.
methods. The difference between them and myself is that I have really put into practice what these peddlers and pen-pushers have timidly begun. The whole of National Socialism is based on it. Look at the workers’ sports clubs, the industrial cells, the mass demonstrations, the propaganda leaflets written specially for the comprehension of the masses; all these new methods of political struggle are essentially Marxist in origin. All I had to do was take over these methods and adapt them to our purpose. I only had to develop logically what Social Democracy repeatedly failed in because of its attempt to realize its evolution within the framework of democracy. National Socialism is what Marxism might have been if it could have broken its absurd and artificial ties with a democratic order.”

This last remark might seem strange at first in view of the fact that it was the Bolsheviks who destroyed the democratic order of Russia, whereas Hitler came to power through elections in a multi-party democratic system. But the paradox is explained if we remember that the cult of the leader was developed much earlier in Nazism, and occupied a much more critical place in its history. Both parties despised and destroyed democracy; but Stalin had to preserve the fiction of democracy for longer – as in the 1936 Constitution, which claimed to be supremely democratic when democracy no longer existed in Russia. That is the main reason why he felt the need to purge his party so thoroughly whereas Hitler did not. It is also the main reason why western intellectuals have always been more generous to Stalin than to Hitler – it is thought, quite wrongly, that since Stalin was at least striving to create a democracy (after all, that was the purpose of the Russian revolution, wasn’t it?), he was better than Hitler, who never denied his contempt for it.

Hitler’s party was distinctly proletarian; it was originally called the German Labor Party, which “combined socialism, anticapitalism, and anticlericalism with German nationalism. In 1918, it renamed itself the German National Socialist Labor Party (DNSAP), adding anti-Semitism to its platform and luring to its ranks demobilized war veterans, shopkeepers, and professional personnel. (The word ‘Labor’ in its name was meant to include ‘all who work’, not only industrial workers.) It was this organization that Hitler took over in 1919. According to Bracher, the ideology of the party in its early years ‘contained a thoroughly revolutionary kernel within an irrational, violence-oriented political ideology. It was in no sense a mere expression of reactionary tendencies: it derived from the world of workers and trade unionists.’ The Nazis appealed to the socialist tradition of German labor, declaring the worker ‘a pillar of the community’, and the ‘bourgeois’ – along with the traditional aristocracy – a doomed class. Hitler, who told associates that he was a ‘socialist’, had the party adopt the red flag and, on coming to power, declared May 1 a national holiday; Nazi Party members were ordered to address one another as ‘comrades’ (Genossen). His conception of the party was, like Lenin’s, that of a militant organization, a Kampfbund or ‘Combat

328 Pipes, op. cit., p. 259.
League’… His ultimate aim was a society in which traditional classes would be abolished, and status earned by personal heroism. In typically radical fashion, he envisaged man re-creating himself: ‘Man is becoming god,’ he told Rauschning. ‘Man is god in the making.’“329

And just as man collectively was god in general, so the Führer or Vozhd was a god in particular. The worship of an infallible man-god served a similar psychological need in the two countries. According to Ida Vermehren, “the most seductive factor [in Nazism] was Hitler’s messianic image. For Germany found itself in an ideological and ethical vacuum. We had lost our Emperor, our national identity had been damaged. The majority of the population had no religious faith. I think that for many, National Socialism was a substitute religion which aroused a deep enthusiasm and provided a new source of strength. People wanted to get stuck in and work for a better life.”

Much the same could be said of Russia, especially after the most educated and religious people had been exterminated. The remainder found in the worship of Stalin a substitute for their former faith in Orthodoxy and Tsarism which they had lost. For, as Lunacharsky recognized in 1908, Marxism was “the fifth great religion formulated by Judaism”.

The religious nature of the two totalitarian ideologies was described in 1937 by Winston Churchill, who said: “It is a strange thing that certain parts of the world should now be wishing to revive the old religious wars. There are those non-God religions Nazism and Communism... I repudiate both and will have nothing to do with either... They are as alike as two peas. Tweedledum and Tweedledee were violently contrasted compared with them. You leave out God and you substitute the devil.”330

However, Churchill came to see Hitler as more devilish than Stalin, saying that if Hitler had invaded Hell, he would have found it within himself “to make a favourable reference to the Devil in the House of Commons”. Once the atheist, but former seminarian Stalin said to Churchill: “May God help you”. Churchill replied: “God, of course, is on our side.” Stalin replied: “And the devil is, naturally, on mine, and through our combined efforts we shall defeat the enemy.”331

Which brings us to the question: what was the relationship of the three political philosophies to traditional religion?

329 Pipes, op. cit., p. 260.
331 Fenby, op. cit., pp. 65, 152.
Sigmund Freud wrote in 1928: “If you want to expel religion from our European civilization, you can only do it by means of another system of doctrines; and such a system would from the outset take over all the psychological characteristics of religion – the same sanctity, rigidity and intolerance, the same prohibition of thought – for its own defence.”

Freud’s words clearly applied to the new political religions of his day, communism and fascism, as well as, though less obviously, liberal democracy. In general, these new religions were hostile to the dominant religion of contemporary Europe - Christianity. But they came to power in countries imbued with the old religion in the course of many centuries. Therefore, in order to spread their own message more quickly and effectively, they tried to clothe the wolf of the new religion in the sheep’s clothing of the old. Thus Burleigh argues that “the totalitarian movements [had] a more or less conscious mimetic relationship to the Churches, not least the Bolsheviks in Russia…”

Exploiting the religious sentiments of their subject populations, both Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Soviet Russia created symbioses of their essentially secular doctrines with traditional religion. Let us look at each in turn, beginning with Italy.

Michael Burleigh writes: “While still a grimly dedicated minority, Fascists regarded themselves as missionaries ‘scattered in the unexplored regions of the world among savages and idolatrous tribes’. In this version, Mussolini became a Messiah figure ‘who began speaking to fifty people and ended up evangelizing a million,’ although that was clear only in retrospect. The missionaries metamorphosed into crusaders, liberating Italians from the infidel socialists who had temporarily occupied the patria, with the aid of such weapons as the ‘holy Manganello’, the wooden club which ‘brightened every brain’ into a glistening bloody pulp. In their wake they left the citadels of the infidels (Socialist offices) in flames, with everything that could be smashed broken.

“Expansion was a product of disciplined ruthlessness. Intelligent opponents of Fascism, such as the journalist Giovanni Amendola, recognised that Fascism differed in intensity and ambition from traditional political movements: ‘Fascism wants to own the private conscience of every citizen, it wants the “conversion” of Italians... Fascism has pretensions to being a religion... the overweening intransigence of a religious crusade. It does not promise happiness to those who convert; it allows no escape to those who refuse baptism.’ The Fascists gloried in the alleged intolerance of the medieval preaching orders, notably the Dominican friars, turning publing fanaticism

333 Burleigh, op. cit., p. 37.
into a Fascist virtue. Notoriously, in 1926 Roberto Davanzati proudly announced: ‘When our opponents tell us we are totalitarian, Dominicans, implacable, tyrannical, we don’t recoil from these epithets in fright. Accept them with honour and pride... Don’t reject any of it! Yes indeed, we are totalitarians! We want to be from morning to evening, without distracting thoughts.’ The Church’s destruction of unrepentant heretics became the model for Fascist treatment of political dissidence: ‘Fascism is a closed political party, not politically but religiously. It can accept only those who believe in the truth of its faith... As the Church has its own religious dogmas, so Fascism has its own dogmas of national faith.’

“Alfredo Rocco made the totalitarian analogy between the Church and Fascism explicit: ‘One of the basic innovations of the Fascist State is that in some respects, like another centuries-old institution, the Catholic Church, it too has, parallel to the normal organization of its public powers, another organization with an infinity of institutions whose purpose is to bring the State nearer to the masses, to penetrate them, organize them, to look after their economic and spiritual well-being at a more intimate level, to be the channel and interpreter of their needs and aspirations.’ From here it was a relatively short step to lauding the more sanguinary episodes in the history of the Catholic Church as they have settled in vulgar memory. Fascism had learned ‘from those great and imperishable pillars of the Church, its great saints, its pontiffs, bishops and missionaries: political and warrior spirits who wielded both sword and cross, and used without distinction the stake and excommunication, torture and poison – not of course in pursuit of temporal or personal power, but on behalf of the Church’s power and glory.

“... The Fascist youth organisation would be modelled after the Society of Jesus, with the operating credo ‘Believe, Obey, Fight’, while Fascism’s protean and pretentious doctrine would be modernised into a simple catechism for schoolchildren.

“Official statements of Fascist doctrine were routinely characterised by a pretentiously woolly religiosity, whose opacity (in any language) faithfully reflected the philosophical tone of the times. In 1932 Mussolini himself claimed that ‘Fascism is a religious conception in which man in his immanent relationship with a superior law and with an objective Will that transcends the particular individual and raises him to conscious membership of a spiritual society.’ He was careful, however, to eschew the vaulting ambitions of either the Jacobins or Bolsheviks: ‘The Fascist State does not create a “God” of its own, as Robespierre once, at the height of the Convention’s foolishness, wished to do; nor does it vainly seek, like Bolshevism, to expel religion from the minds of men; Fascism respects the God of the ascetics, of the saints, of the heroes, and also God as seen and prayed to be the simple and primitive heart of the people.’”

Dostoyevsky once asserted the close relationship between Roman Catholicism and Socialism. Now it was evident that the similarities between Roman Catholicism and Fascism were, as Piers Brendon writes, “ legion. Both were autocracies ranged against freemasonry, Communism and democracy. Both relied on ceremonial and censorship, dogma and propaganda. Both opposed birth control and other modern fashions. Both exalted their own martyrs and favoured the subordination of women. Like the Pope, the Duce claimed infallibility. Many wearing black shirts and black soutances believed that a rapprochement between the two faiths might be as advantageous as the alliance familiar elsewhere between throne and altar. The Fascist State would receive a pontifical blessing in return for lending the Church its secular arm. The Pope would re-enter the life of the nation and reinvigorate its spirit. But though both sides felt the attraction of the alliance, both knew that the claims of God and the claims of Caesar were proverbially hard to reconcile. Now that the champions of Church and State were competing tyrants the difficulties were compounded. Thus the stage was set, against a background of acute Depression, for a clash of characters as well as creeds…”

Pope Pius XI was certainly dictatorial. “His early encyclicals proclaimed the theocratic authority of his office with a boldness which would have done credit to Gregory VII or Innocent III. But his terminology was sometimes shockingly modern: ‘If a totalitarian regime exists – totalitarian in fact and by right – it is the regime of the church’...” Certainly, the Roman church in Italy was very powerful, and so it is not surprising that Mussolini should have sought a Concordat with it in 1929. This gave him power and prestige, while it gave the Pope a sovereign state in the Vatican, a large indemnity and recognition of Catholicism as the state religion. Moreover, as the philosopher Benedetto Croce noted, the Pope “had discovered in Mussolini a pillar of the hierarchic principle in the state, a divine instrument called upon to impose the dogmatic doctrine of absolute sovereignty on a people led astray by the nefarious liberal revolution”.

In 1931 there was a hiccup in the relationship when Mussolini disbanded Catholic Action. The Pope furiously “suggested that Mussolini had signed the Concordat in the hope of dominating the Church and not from any love of religion. He proposed that Catholics swearing loyalty oaths to the Duce should make a mental reservation that these took second place to the laws of God. Finally, he damned the regime’s efforts to convert the young to ‘Statolatry’ – ‘a real pagan worship of the state’.” Nevertheless, Mussolini and the Pope met in 1932 and were reconciled. The Pope said that he saw nothing contrary to Catholicism in Fascist ideology and that “Fascist totalitarianism” should cooperate with “Catholic totalitarianism”...

337 Croce, in Brendon, op. cit., p. 114.
“Most Nazi leaders,” writes Norman Stone, “were unbelievers; Hitler himself was a lapsed Catholic. Their rituals owed more to the parody of ancient German paganism than to any modern religion. So they had a major problem in defining their relationship with a German nation that was still predominantly Christian. As often as not, they ignored the theoretical issues. But to pacify the Catholics, Hitler signed a Concordat with the Vatican in July 1933, confirming the autonomy of the German See in return for the hierarchy’s renunciation of political involvement. The compromise encouraged some Catholic prelates, such as Archbishop Innitzer of Vienna, to express sympathy for Nazi aims. But it did not prevent the Vatican from ordering Mit brennender Sorge (1937), which denounced Nazi ideology, to be read in all Catholic churches in Germany. To manage the Protestants, Hitler announced the creation in 1935 of a state-controlled Union of Protestant Churches. There was also an attempt to found a new movement for ‘German Christians’, where the swastika embraced the cross, under Reichsbishop Dr Müller. In November 1933 these pseudo-Christian Nazi surrogates staged a demonstration in Berlin to the honour of ‘Christ the Hero’. In the end, religion and irreligion had to co-exist as best they could.”

However, the real attitude of the Germans to Christianity was hostile. A. Rosenberg, the head of the ministry of the East, said that “the Church’s Yahweh is now dead, as Wotan was dead 1500 years ago”. Hitler, while feigning religious tolerance for political reasons, was “utterly irreligious”. Thus “the heaviest blow that ever struck humanity,” he said, “was the coming of Christianity. Bolshevism is Christianity's illegitimate child. Both are inventions of the Jew. The deliberate lie in religion was introduced into the world by Christianity. Bolshevism practises a lie of the same nature, when it claims to bring liberty to men, only to enslave them.” At the same time he recognized that Christianity "can't be broken so simply. It must rot and die off like a gangrened limb." And on April 11, 1942, he said: "We must avoid having one solitary church to satisfy the religious needs of large districts, and each village must be made into an independent sect, worshipping God in its own fashion. If some villages as a result wish to practise black magic, after the fashion of Negroes or Indians, we should do nothing to hinder them. In short, our policy in the wide Russian spaces should be to encourage any and every form of dissension and schism."

341 Overy, Russia's War, p. 162.
342 Cited in Bullock, op. cit., p. 801.
The Fascists almost worshipped Mussolini. “He is like a god,” said one Fascist. “Like a god? No, no,” said another, “He is a god.” The relationship of the Nazis to Hitler was similar. According to Brendon, “many people really did worship the Führer. Typically they confessed their creed in quite straightforward terms: ‘My belief is that our Leader, Adolf Hitler, was given by fate to the German nation as our Saviour, bringing light into darkness.’ Attending the Passion Play at Oberammergau, the American Ambassador found that Hitler was identified with Jesus and Röhm [the SA leader whom Hitler murdered] with Judas – the only character played by a Jew.”

A special cult was invented by Himmler for the SS. “Sometimes its members were known as the Nazi Jesuits. Certainly Himmler, who had been brought up a Roman Catholic, though he was later to call for the Pope’s public execution, admired the black-cassocked society’s discipline. The Führer went so far as to call him ‘our Ignatius de Loyola’. But Himmler also drew inspiration, in fashioning his élite, from the myths of King Arthur and the sagas of the Teutonic Knights. He developed an SS code of honour, including rules for duelling and committing suicide. As well as oath-taking ceremonies for initiates, he evolved a series of pseudo-chivalric, neo-pagan rituals to be performed in his medieval castle at Wewelsburg in the mountain forests of Westphalia. Here 12 senior SS paladins would sit around Himmler’s massive oaken table in high-backed, pigskin-covered chairs inscribed with their occupants’ names on silver plates and engage in something like a secular séance. Himmler apparently believed that he had the power to summon up the spirits of the dead and he seems at times to have regarded himself as the reincarnation of one of them, the Dark Age German King, Henry the Fowler.” Again, “children of the SS were supposed to undergo an alternative form of baptism with SS standard bearers instead of clergy officiating, and a portrait of Hitler rather than a font as the focal point of the ceremony”.

Himmler believed that the Germans were descended from a master race that had survived the flooding of Atlantis and had migrated to Tibet; and in the 1930s he sent scientific expeditions to Tibet to verify his theory. In 1935 he started the Lebensborn eugenics programme in order to select the finest specimens of the Nordic race, mate them and thereby create a super race embodying the finest physical and spiritual characteristics. Eventually this would lead to the birth of a superman, a kind of Antichrist figure. At this point Social Darwinism combined with Nietzscheanism and paganism and anti-semitism to form a lethal mixture that justified the extermination of lower races for the sake of the ultimate triumph of the master race.

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344 Brendon, op. cit., p. 280.
345 Brendon, op. cit., p. 259.
346 Brendon, op. cit., pp. 254-255.
348 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nazism_and_race
Niall Ferguson has noted the messianic nature of Nazism: “As an SA sergeant explained: ‘Our opponents... committed a fundamental error when equating us as a party with the Economic Party, the Democrats or the Maxist parties. All these parties were only interest groups, they lacked soul, spiritual ties. Adolf Hitler emerged as bearer of a new political religion.’ The Nazis developed a self-conscious liturgy, with November 9 (the date of the 1918 Revolution and the failed 1923 Beer Hall putsch) as a Day of Mourning, complete with fires, wreaths, altars, blood-stained relics and even a Nazi book of martyrs. Initiates into the elite Schutzstaffel (SS) had to incant a catechism with lines like ‘We believe in God, we believe in Germany which He created... and in the Führer... whom He has sent us.’ It was not just that Christ was more or less overtly supplanted by Hitler in the iconography and liturgy of ‘the brown cult’. As the SS magazine Das Schwarze Korps argued, the very ethical foundation of Christianity had to go too: ‘The abstruse doctrine of Original Sin... indeed the whole notion of sin as set forth by the Church... is something intolerable to Nordic man, since it is incompatible with the “heroic” ideology of our blood.’

“The Nazis’ opponents also recognized the pseudo-religious character of the movement. As the Catholic exile Eric Voegelin put it, Nazism was ‘an ideology akin to Christian heresies of redemption in the here and now... fused with post-Enlightenment doctrines of social transformation’. The journalist Konrad Heiden called Hitler ‘a pure fragment of the modern mass soul’ whose speeches always ended ‘in overjoyed redemption’. An anonymous Social Democrat called the Nazi regime a ‘counter-church’. Two individuals as different as Eva Klemperer, wife of the Jewish-born philologist Victor, and the East Prussian conservative Friedrich Reck-Malleczewen could agree in likening Hitler to the sixteenth-century Anabaptist Jan of Leyden: ‘As in our case, a misbegotten failure conceived, so to speak, in the gutter, became the great prophet, and the opposition simply disintegrated, while the rest of the world looked on in astonishment and incomprehension. As with us... hysterical females, schoolmasters, renegade priests, the dregs and outsiders from everywhere formed the main support of the regime... A thin sauce of ideology covered lewdness, greed, sadism, and fathomless lust for power... and whoever would not completely accept the new teaching was turned over to the executioner.’

“Still, all this leaves one question unanswered: What had gone wrong with the existing religions in Germany? For if National Socialism was a political religion, the fragmentation of the old political parties cannot satisfactorily be presented as the essential precondition for its success. Evidence of declining religious belief among German Christians is in fact not hard to find: a substantial proportion of Germans exercised the option to be registered as konfessionslos in the 1920s. There were marked declines in church attendance, particularly in North German cities. Significantly, unlike the Catholic Church,
the Lutheran Church had suffered very heavy financial losses in the hyperinflation. Morale among the Protestant clergy was low; many were attracted to the Nazi notion of a new ‘Positive Christianity’. All this may offer a clue as to why the former were more likely than the latter to vote Nazi in the crucial elections of 1930-33 – … though here too there was considerable regional variation and it would be quite wrong to infer from this anything stronger than inertia in Catholic voting patterns. After all, Austrians were scarcely less enthusiastic about National Socialism and they were virtually all Catholics. And nearly all the fascist dictators were themselves raised as Catholics: Franco, Hitler, Mussolini, to say nothing of wartime puppets like Ante Pavelić in Croatia and Josef Tiso in Slovakia, who was himself a priest…”349

“German Protestantism,” writes Burleigh, “was subjected to three pressures after 1933, which were designed to de-Judaize it, to heroise it and to unify it. These came from within, although beyond the Churches there were clusters of neo-pagans whose clamorous agitations encouraged Protestant Nazi sympathizers to ‘Nazify’ their own Churches before they were replaced by something wholly unrelated to Christianity.

“The idea of fusing extreme racist nationalism with Christianity was not new; a League for a German Church had been founded in 1921 precisely for that purpose. Some 120 Protestant pastors belonged to the Party by 1930, eight having stood as candidates in elections. Wilhelm Kube, the gauleiter of Brandenburg, was both leader of the Nazi caucus in the Prussian parliament and an active member of the synod of the diocese of Berlin. In late 1931 he suggested the formation of ‘Protestant National Socialists’, a Church party not formally integrated with the NSDAP itself. Hitler thought that ‘German Christians’ would be less contentious. From their inception in 1932, the German Christians, a group of clergy and laity, sought to impose an ecclesiology defined by race rather than grace, blending ‘traditional’ anti-Judaism with new-fangled scientific racism to establish a new ‘Church of blood’. They wished to revivify Protestantism by incorporating those things that had made Nazism itself such a potent force. Their banner consisted of a cross and the initials DC with a swastika in the centre…

“Since the German Christians seemed to give empty churches a new lease of life – albeit by introducing the lurid razzamatazz of Nazism into places of worship – they were welcomed by some senior Protestant clergy as a way of restoring the popularity of religion. Bishop Theophil Wurm of Württemberg was not alone in imagining that Nazism might represent a revival of the fusion of nationalism and religiosity that had last been seen in Germany during the Wars of Liberation…”350

TOTALITARIANISM AND RELIGION: (3) SOVIET RUSSIA

By 1922, the Bolsheviks had pacified the country and tamed most opposition to their regime. The politicians and artists had been suppressed, the philosophers – expelled. Only the Orthodox Church remained as a real threat to their ideological monopoly. Now in spite of the fact that the Church had suffered terribly during the Civil War, some, like the anti-religious organizer S. Krasikov, felt that she had been let off lightly. The problem was: the Church had grown stronger under persecution; physical force had failed; so a more subtle approach was required.

The Bolsheviks believed that the roots of religion lay in poverty and ignorance, so that the elimination of these evils would naturally lead to the withering away of religion. This being the case, they could not believe that religious belief had any deeper roots in the nature of things. Therefore, writes Edward E. Roslof, “the party explicitly rejected ‘God-building’, an attempt by its own members to develop a ‘socialist religion of humanity’. Led by A.V. Lunacharskii, Leonid Krasin, and Bogdanov (A.A. Malinovskii), Bolshevik God-builders maintained that the proletariat would create a non-transcendent, earth-centered religion to complement its formation of the ultimate human society. Only this group within the party ‘recognized that religion’s power lay in its response to people’s psychic needs and argued that a revolutionary movement could not afford to ignore these’.”

In May, 1921 Lenin supported a resolution calling for the replacement of the religious world-view by “a harmonious communist scientific system embracing and answering the questions to which the peasants’ and workers’ masses have hitherto sought answers in religion.” At the same time he said that the Bolsheviks must “definitely avoid offending religious sensibilities”. The result was the suspension of the “dilettantist” anti-religious commissions (Lenin’s phrase) that had existed thereto, and their replacement by a Commission on the Separation of Church and State attached to the Politburo which lasted until 1929 under the Jew Emelian Yaroslavsky and whose aim was clearly the extirpation of all religion. The importance of this Commission

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351 He wrote: “In October we beat up and destroyed the old state machine. We destroyed the old army, the old law-courts, the schools, the administrative and other institutions. And we created and our creating our own, new ones. This process is difficult... we are making mistakes. However, it turns out that, having overthrown all this landowners’ gendarmerie, etc., we have not destroyed the Church, which constitutes a part of this old state exploitative machine. We have only deprived it of its state content...we have not deprived it of its state power. But still this chunk of the old state landowner-capitalist machine has been preserved, tens of thousands of priests, as well as monks, metropolitans and bishops still exist. Why has Soviet power acted with such undeserved caution to this chunk of the old machine?” (Tserkov’ i Revoliutsii (The Church and Revolution), 1919, N 1, p. 3)
in the Bolsheviks’ eyes was clearly indicated by the extreme secrecy in which its protocols were shrouded and by the active participation in it, at one time or another, of all the top party leaders. The strategy of the Commission was directly defined, at the beginning by Lenin, and later – by Stalin.\(^\text{353}\)

An important aspect of the Commission’s strategy was “divide and rule”\(^\text{353}\). For while physical methods continued to be applied, the Bolsheviks recognized that the Church could not be defeated by direct physical assault alone. They needed subtler methods including the recruitment of agents among the clergy and the creation of schisms among them. Thus already in December, 1920, T. Samsonov, head of a secret department of the Cheka, the forerunner of the KGB, wrote to Dzerzhinsky that “communism and religion are mutually exclusive… No machinery can destroy religion except that of the [Cheka]. In its plans to demoralize the church the Cheka has recently focussed its attention on the rank and file of the priesthood. Only through them, by long, intensive, and painstaking work, shall we succeed in destroying and dismantling the church completely.”\(^\text{354}\)

Samsonov was supported by Lunacharsky, who since the early 1900s had been instrumental in developing a more subtle, less physically confrontational approach to the problem of eradicating religion.\(^\text{355}\) And at the beginning of the 1920s Trotsky said: “Let those popes who are ready to cooperate with us become leaders in the Church and carry out all our instructions, calling on the believers to serve Soviet power”\(^\text{356}\). In a protocol of the secret section of the Cheka Trotsky discussed recruiting clergy with money to report on themselves and others in the Church and to prevent anti-Bolshevik agitation…\(^\text{357}\)

The Bolsheviks were counting on a modernist or “renovationist” faction in the Russian Church to provide them with their “loyal” clergy. Already in the revolutionary years of 1905 and 1917, the renovationists-to-be had reared their heads with a long list of demands for modernist reform of the Church. And in March, 1918, Professor Titlinov, who was later to become one of the main ideologists of renovationism, founded a newspaper in Petrograd which criticized the Patriarch’s anathematization of Soviet power.\(^\text{358}\)

Philip Walters writes: “During the early 20\(^{th}\) Century, in pre-revolutionary Russia, many groups of intellectuals, philosophers and churchmen began

\(^{353}\) S. Savelev, “Bog i komissary” (God and the Commissars), in Bessmertny A.R. and Filatov, S.B., Religia i Demokratia (Religion and Democracy), Moscow: Progress, 1993, pp. 164-216.


\(^{355}\) Pipes, op. cit., p. 338.

\(^{356}\) Protopriest Benjamin Zhukov, Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ na Rodine i za Rubezhom (The Russian Orthodox Church in the Homeland and Abroad), Paris, 2005, p. 33, footnote 19.

\(^{357}\) Bishop Gregory Grabbe, Russkaia Tserkov’ pered litsom gospodstvuiushchego zla (The Russian Church in the Face of Dominant Evil), Jordanville, 1991, p. 42.

\(^{358}\) Grabbe, op. cit., p. 32.
voicing their concern over the plight of the Orthodox Church in its enforced alliance with a reactionary State. It is possible to discover many lines of continuity between the democratic and socialist aims of these men and the aims of the men of the Living Church (also known as Renovationists). There is also a certain amount of personal continuity: for example, the so-called ‘Group of Thirty-Two’ reformist priests, who were active between 1905 and 1907, reappeared after the February Revolution of 1917 as the ‘League of Democratic Orthodox Clergy and Laymen’, a group which stood against the increasing conservatism of the Orthodox Church, and which included among its members one or two men who later became prominent in the Living Church.

“B.V. Titlinov’s book, Novaia Tserkov’ (The New Church), written in 1922, contains an apology for Renovationist ideology. Titlinov declares that the new movement is not a revolution or a reformation, which would imply a definite break with the historical Church, but a reform which remains true to the original spirit of Orthodoxy. The basic task of the Living Church is to ‘do away with those accretions which have been introduced into Orthodox worship during the period of union between the Church and the [Tsarist] State’. Titlinov calls for ‘priestly creativity’ in the liturgy and for its celebration as in the early Church amidst the congregation. There must be ethical and moral reform in society, involving opposition to capitalism. Bishops should be elected from the lower clergy and should be allowed to marry. The Living Church, he claims, accepts the October Revolution as consonant with the aims of Christian truth.

“There are three basic ideological strands in Renovationism: a political strand, concerned with promoting loyalty to the Soviet regime; an organizational strand, concerned with the rights of the lower clergy and with the administration of the Church; and an ethical strand, concerned with making Church services more accessible to the masses and with moral and social reform. The first strand was characteristic of the Living Church movement as a whole...When the Living Church movement split into various factions, the second ideological strand was taken up chiefly by the followers of V.D. Krasnitsky, and the third by the groups which followed Bishop Antonin Granovsky and A.I. Vvedensky.”

And yet, as the future hieromartyr and Archbishop of Riga John (Pommer) said of the Bolsheviks: “They have put Marx in the dust-jacket of the Gospel and think that the people will accept it instead of the Gospel. They have dressed commissars in sacred vestments and think the Orthodox will accept them as their pastors and follow them. They have substituted the portrait of Lenin for the icon of Christ in the icon-cases and expect the people to come up to kiss it. Ilyich is not at all like Christ. It is impossible to put Marxism in the

place of Christianity, whatever vestments the preachers of Marxism put on. The blasphemous utterance of the name of Marx from the church kathedra only emphasizes more vividly the irreconcilable contradiction between Christ and Marx. Here is love incarnate, pouring out its blood for its guilty brethren. There – satanic malice pouring out the blood of brothers guilty of nothing like water.”
THE RISE OF STALIN

“By the end of 1922,” writes Niall Ferguson, “a new Russian Socialist Federal Republic extended from the Baltic to the Bering Straits. It, along with the far smaller Byelorussian, Transcaucasian and Far Eastern republics, made up the new Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Apart from a westward strip running from Helsinki down to Kishinev, remarkably little of the old Tsarist edifice had been lost – an astonishing outcome given the weakness of the Bolshevik position in the initial phase of the Revolution, and testament to the effectiveness of their ruthless tactics in the civil war. In effect, then, one Russian empire had simply been replaced by another. The 1926 census revealed that slightly less that 53 per cent of the citizens of the Soviet Union regarded themselves as of Russian nationality, though nearly 58 per cent gave Russian as the language they knew best or most often used.

“Some cynics added that the political system had not changed much either; for what was Lenin if not a Red Tsar, wielding absolute power through the Politburo of the Russian Communist Party (which, crucially, maintained direct control over the parties in the other republics)? Yet that was to miss the vast change of ethos that separated the new empire from the old. Though there had been ‘terrible’ Tsars in Russia’s past, the empire established by Lenin and his confederates was the first to be based on terror itself since the short-lived tyranny of the Jacobins in revolutionary France. At the same time, for all the Bolsheviks’ obsession with Western revolutionary models, theirs was a revolution that looked east more than it looked west. Asked to characterize the Russian empire as it re-emerged under Lenin, most Western commentators would not have hesitated to use the word ‘Asiatic’. That was also Trotsky’s view: ‘Our Red Army,’ he argued, ‘constitutes an incomparably more powerful force in the Asiatic terrain of world politics that in European terrain.’ Significantly, ‘Asiatic’ was precisely the word Lenin had used to describe Stalin...”³⁶⁰

Like Roman Catholicism, the religion of Leninism logically leads to the worship of one man as the infallible incarnation of the one truth. The truth is History, the vanguard of History is the Party, and the leader of the Party is the one true interpreter of its Will, the incarnation of History and its infallible vector or arrow. All those who oppose him are deviants who miss the mark, being consigned, in Trotsky’s phrase, “to the dustbin of History”.

Although this teaching had always been implicit in Leninism, and although the Tenth Congress in 1921 had gone a long way, through its banning of all factionalism, to prepare the way for its universal acceptance, it required the five-year period following the departure of Lenin from centre stage in 1922-23 to the rise of Stalin as dictator in 1927-28 to impress it upon

³⁶⁰ Ferguson, op. cit., pp. 158-159.
the hearts as well as the minds of the Bolshevik faithful. For before that time Lenin was the undisputed vozhd’, but it was not clear whether there could be Leninism without Lenin. After it, the answer was clear: just as there can be no Catholicism without the Pope, so there can be no Leninism without Lenin. And the new Lenin is – Stalin. For, as Pravda wrote in January, 1934: Now when we speak of Lenin, / It means we are speaking of Stalin.361

The rise to power of Stalin over the whole of Russia and over all his fellow-Bolsheviks is one of the mysteries of Soviet history. In particular, historians have been surprised why it should have been Stalin, and not the more striking Trotsky, who conquered in their famous struggle for power in the 1920s. The question could be put – misleadingly, as we shall see – as follows: how did Stalin, the most undistinguished of the leading Bolsheviks from an intellectual point of view, the uncharismatic bureaucratic plodder (an early nickname was “Comrade Filing-Cabinet”362) with little hold (in a personal sense) over his fellow Bolsheviks, the non-Russian, non-Slav, non-European ex-seminarian and bank robber, acquire, within ten years of the revolution, such ascendancy within the party and the nation that he could expel from both the party and the nation – Trotsky, the hero of 1905 and October and the Civil War, the brilliant writer and demagogue and courageous man of action, the dynamic, cultivated and popular European internationalist?

As a provisional hypothesis to explain this fact we may apply to the Soviet situation the words of the ancient Greek historian Thucydides in his History of the Peloponnesian War: “Inferior minds were as a rule more successful; aware of their own defects and of the intelligence of their opponents, to whom they felt themselves inferior in debate, and by whose versatility of intrigue they were afraid of being surprised, they struck boldly and at once. Their enemies despised them, were confident of detecting their plots, and thought it needless to effect by violence what they could achieve by their brains, and so were taken off their guard and destroyed.”

In agreement with this hypothesis, there is plenty of evidence that Trotsky grossly underestimated Stalin, “the outstanding mediocrity of our Party”, as he said to Sklyansky. Boris Bazhanov, Stalin’s secretary during the mid-twenties, confirms Isaac Deutscher’s opinion that “Trotsky felt it beneath his dignity to cross swords with a man as intellectually undistinguished and personally contemptible as Stalin”363. Trotsky also felt it beneath his dignity to indulge in the kind of political skulduggery that Stalin excelled in, especially the tactic of “divide and conquer”. Stalin’s very obscurity, the stealthy but steady way in which he acquired power, lulled his opponents into inactivity. Trotsky was like a hare, opening up a large lead very quickly but then sitting

361 Bullock, op.cit., p. 413.

213
back and preening his whiskers, while Stalin the tortoise crept past him to the finishing-line. And indeed, we know that he was vain and arrogant, “treasuring his historic role”, in Lunacharsky’s words, in the looking-glass of his imagination. Stalin, too, was vain, but he hid this fault more carefully…

In any case, Stalin was far more talented than Trotsky supposed. He was a skilled and tenacious guerilla fighter, bank-robber and organizer in the pre-revolutionary period; and during his numerous exiles and escapes from exile he acquired endurance, prudence and ingenuity. The Western leaders and diplomats who met him in the Second World War admired his toughness, realism and cleverness – sometimes even his supposed moral qualities! And he outmanoeuvred them time and again… He was a good judge of character, and could be attractive, strange as it may seem, to women, without ever being controlled by them. He knew several languages, had a fine voice, was thought to be a considerable poet, liked to instruct people in Shakespeare and art and music, and read voraciously in many subjects.

He could not match Trotsky in oratory, and yet this, too, he turned to his advantage, since it marked him out as a genuine proletarian, which Trotsky certainly was not: in the eyes of rough Bolsheviks from the provinces, writes Sebag Montefiore, “his flat quiet public speaking was an asset, a great improvement on Trotsky’s oratorical wizardry. His very faults, the chip on the shoulder, the brutality and fits of irrational temper, were the Party’s faults. ‘He was not trusted but he was the man the Party trusted,’ admitted Bukharin. ‘He’s like the symbol of the Party, the lower strata trust him.’ But above all, reflected the future secret police chief, Beria, he was ‘supremely intelligent’, a political ‘genius’. However rude or charming he was, ‘he dominated his entourage with his intelligence’.”

In fact, Trotsky was more impressed by Stalin than he liked to admit, and foresaw his triumph earlier than most. As Stone writes, “Trotsky saw it coming: in 1924 he was correctly predicting that ‘the gravedigger of the Party of the Revolution’ would take over: ‘The dialectics of history have already hooked him and will raise him up. He is needed by all of them, by the tired radicals, by the bureaucrats, by the nepmen, by the kulaks [], by the upstarts, by all the sneaks that are crawling out of the upturned soil of the revolution… He speaks their language, and knows how to lead them. Stalin will become the dictator of the USSR.”

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365 According to Overy, “in the 1930s his library counted 40,000 volumes. He wrote extensively both before 1917 and in the 1920s, works and speeches that ran to thirteen volumes when they were published” (op. cit., p. 9).
367 Stone, op. cit., p. 960.
Montefiore writes: “Stalin impressed Trotsky, whose description reveals why he lost their struggle for power. ‘Stalin was very valuable behind the scenes,’ he wrote. ‘He did have the knack of convincing the average run of leaders, especially the provincials.’ He ‘wasn’t regarded as the official leader of the Party,’ says Sagirashvili, another Georgian Menshevik in Petrograd throughout 1917, but ‘everyone listened to what he had to say, including Lenin – he was a representative of the rank and file, one who expressed its real views and moods’, which were unknown to émigrés like Trotsky. Soso [Stalin] was the ‘unquestioned leader’ of the Caucasians. Lenin, says Sagirashvili, ‘felt that behind him stood countless leaders from the provinces’. While Trotsky was prancing on the stage at the Circus, Stalin was finding new allies such as the young man he had unceremoniously kicked off the Bureau, Molotov.”368

There was another aspect to Trotsky’s vanity that placed him at a disadvantage in relation to Stalin. As Edmund Wilson has shown, he was a deeply committed believer in History, and in the ultimate triumph of international Socialism under History’s aegis.369 But it was self-evident to him that such a great movement must have great leaders – educated, internationally minded men who had absorbed all the riches of bourgeois culture, decisive men of action who would jump to the forefront of the masses and be immediately accepted them. Lenin fitted this role, which is why Trotsky, from 1917 onward, accepted his leadership unquestioningly. But Stalin, the uncouth Asiatic, did not fit this role. Trotsky could not see how History could anoint him, of all people, to be the leader of the revolutionary movement. Perhaps this betrayed a certain lack of culture and historical knowledge on Trotsky’s part. After all, the ultimate victor in the great French revolution was the provincial, boorish Napoleon. Stalin, too, was a provincial – and he had studied Napoleon...

Trotsky’s fanatical faith in History was indeed a major bonus at those moments when History seemed to be at her most active – in 1905 and 1917-21.370 At such times fiery ardour, disregard of obstacles and the infirmities of men, firm faith in the goal and hope in its attainment, are at a premium. And these were the times when the plodding, cautious Stalin did not shine – although he did not lose ground, either.

But in the ebb of revolutionary fervour, when History seemed to have hidden her face from her devotees, different qualities were required – patience above all. This was a quality possessed by Stalin, and these were the years – 1906-16 and 1921-27 – when he advanced most rapidly up the ladder of power. Moreover, he continued to show faith in his goddess even in the most difficult times, as during his Siberian exile during the First World War.

369 Wilson, To the Finland Station, London: Fontana, 1940.
370 Bertram Wolff, Three Who Made a Revolution.
“Even this fanatical Marxist,” writes Montefiore, “convinced that the progress of history would bring about revolution and dictatorship of the proletariat, must have sometimes doubted if he would ever return. Even Lenin doubted the Revolution, asking Krupskaya, ‘Will we ever live to see it?’ Yet Stalin never seems to have lost faith. ‘The Russian Revolution is as inevitable as the rising of the sun,’ he had written back in 1905 and he had not changed his view. ‘Can you prevent the sun from rising?’”  

From 1922 onwards Trotsky frittered away the enormous advantage given him by his reputation as a war-leader by refusing to build up a political power-base, or appeal to the mass of the party against the growing centralization of power in the Politburo, or in any way to pander to the vanities and jealous susceptibilities of his colleagues. Thus he elicited their contempt by pointedly reading French novels while the Politburo was in session. Through his arrogance and lack of political circumspection, Trotsky made enemies easily – and one of the first was Stalin. Thus when, at the London Congress of 1907, Trotsky attacked the bank robberies that Stalin had organized on Lenin’s behalf, Stalin was hurt, later talking about Trotsky’s “beautiful uselessness”. Trotsky again embittered Stalin by attacking his conduct at Tsaritsyn (later Stalingrad) during the Civil War.

Unfortunately for Trotsky, Stalin’s nature was not such as could shrug off personal insults. He was a bully; but, as Robert Service puts it, “he was an extremely sensitive bully”. And that gave him the defining trait of his nature: vengefulness. Thus “at a boozzy dinner, Kamenev asked everyone round the table to declare their greatest pleasure in life. Some cited women, others earnestly replied that it was the progress of dialectical materialism towards the workers’ paradise. Then Stalin answered: ‘My greatest pleasure is to choose one’s victim, prepared one’s plans minutely, slake an implacable vengeance, and then go to bed. There’s nothing sweeter in the world.’…”

This vengefulness is the critical element in Stalin’s character, the element that truly distinguishes him from his colleagues. Not that vengefulness was not characteristic of the whole revolutionary movement. But Stalin possessed it to a quite exceptional degree.

It appeared early in his life. Thus Vershak writes: “Stalin’s comrades in the seminary circle say that soon after his expulsion [from Tiflis seminary], they were in turn expelled as the result of a denunciation by Stalin to the rector. He did not deny the accusation, but justified the deed by saying that the expelled students, having lost their right to become priests, would become good revolutionaries…”

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371 Montefiore, Young Stalin, p. 305.
373 Montefiore, Young Stalin, p. 309.
Again, in 1930 the Georgian Menshevik newspaper, *Brdzolis Khhma*, made an accusation that was first levelled against him by Martov in 1918: “From the earliest days of his activity among the workers, Djugashvili [Stalin] attracted attention by his intrigues against the outstanding Social Democratic leader, Sylvester Jibladze. He was warned but took no notice, continuing to spread slanders with the intention of discrediting the recognized representative of the local organization. Brought before a party tribunal, he was found guilty of unjust slander, and was unanimously excluded from the Tiflis organization.”

Again, Iremashvili relates what Stalin said to him on the death of his first wife, Ekaterina: “This creature softened my stony heart. She is dead, and with her have died my last warm feelings for all human beings.”

Iremashvili comments: “From the day he buried his wife, he indeed lost the last vestige of human feelings. His heart filled with the unutterably malicious hatred which his cruel father had already begun to engender in him while he was still a child. Ruthless with himself, he became ruthless with all people.”

It would be unwise to discount the important attached here to the death of Stalin’s first wife. Russian history provides us with a striking parallel: it was after the death of Tsar Ivan IV’s first wife, Anastasia Romanova, that he became “the Terrible”, cruel and rapacious to a paranoid degree. Ivan’s decimation of the Russian boyars through his oprichnina in the 16th century bears a striking resemblance to Stalin’s of the Communist Party through the NKVD in the 1930s; and Stalin showed great interest in the Terrible Ivan.

While no purely psychological hypothesis can fully explain the extremes of evil that the Russian revolution threw up, it is legitimate to seek a partial explanation of the actions of a man like Stalin in his early childhood. Alan Bullock is sympathetic to the thesis, put forward by Erich Fromm, that Stalin, like Hitler, was a narcissist: “‘Narcissism’ is a concept originally formulated by Freud in relation to early infancy, but one which is now accepted more broadly to describe a personality disorder in which the natural development of relationships to the external world has failed to take place. In such a state only the person himself, his needs, feelings and thoughts, everything and everybody pertaining to him are experienced as fully real, while everybody and everything else lacks reality or interest.

“Fromm argues that some degree of narcissism can be considered an occupational illness among political leaders in proportion to their conviction of a providential mission and their claim to infallibility of judgement and a monopoly of power. When such claims are raised to the level demanded by a Hitler or a Stalin at the height of their power, any challenge will be perceived as a threat to their private image of themselves as much as to their public image, and they will react by going to any lengths to suppress it.
“So far psychiatrists have paid much less attention to Stalin than to Hitler. Lack of evidence is part of the reason. There has been no parallel in the case of the Soviet Union to the capture of documents and interrogation of witnesses that followed the defeat of Germany. But more important is the striking contrast in temperament and style between the two men: the flamboyant Hitler, displaying a lack of restraint and extravagance of speech which for long made it difficult for many to take him seriously, in contrast to the reserved Stalin, who owed his rise to power to his success, not in exploiting, but in concealing his personality, and was underestimated for the opposite reason – because many failed to recognize his ambition and ruthlessness. Nor surprisingly, it is the first rather than the second who has caught the psychiatrists’ attention. All the more interesting then is the suggestion that underlying the contrast there was a common narcissistic obsession with themselves.

“There is one other insight, which Stalin’s American biographer, Robert Tucker, has adopted from Karen Horney’s work on neurosis. He suggests that his father’s brutal treatment of Stalin, particularly the beatings which he inflicted on the boy, and on the boy’s mother in his presence, produced the basic anxiety, the sense of being isolated in a hostile world, which can lead a child to develop a neurotic personality. Searching for firm ground on which to build an inner security, someone who in his childhood had experienced such anxiety might naturally search for inner security by forming an idealistic image of himself and then adopting this as his true identity. ‘From then on his energies are invested in the increasing effort to prove the ideal self in action and gain others’ affirmation of it.’ In Stalin’s case, this fits his identification with the Caucasian outlaw-hero, whose name he assumed, and later with Lenin, the revolutionary hero, on whom he fashioned his own ‘revolutionary persona’, with the name of Stalin, ‘man of steel’, which echoed Lenin’s own pseudonym...

“The earliest recorded diagnosis of Stalin as paranoid appears to have been made in December 1927, when an international scientific conference met in Moscow. A leading Russian neuropathologist, Professor Vladimir Bekhterev from Leningrad, made a great impression on the foreign delegates and attracted the attention of Stalin, who asked Bekhterev to pay him a visit. After the interview (22 December 1927) Bekhterev told his assistant Mnukhin that Stalin was a typical case of severe paranoia and that a dangerous man was now at the head of the Soviet Union. The fact that Bekhterev was suddenly taken ill and died while still in his hotel has inevitably led to the suspicion that Stalin had him poisoned. Whether this is true or not, when the report of Bekhterev’s diagnosis was repeated in Liternaturnaya Gazeta in September 1988, it was accepted as correct by a leading Soviet psychiatrist, Professor E.A. Lichko.”}

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374 Bullock, op. cit., pp. 10-12, 401.
Stalin’s paranoid cruelty first manifested itself on a large scale in his suppression of his native Georgia’s independence in 1921. The fact that this was his native land did not inhibit him from calling for “the smashing of the hydra of nationalism” there, and burning out “the nationalist survivals with hot iron”. And in 1924 Stalin said of Jordania’s uprising: “All Georgia must be ploughed under.” Now the cruelty and desire to dominate that had been evident in him even as a child began to manifest itself more and more. Not for nothing did he say that the death of one man was a tragedy, but the death of a million – a mere statistic.

In the period 1923-26 the rivalry between Stalin and Trotsky became more intense, and for these years we have the invaluable testimony of Bazhanov. He says that Stalin’s sole concern during this period “was to outwit his colleagues and lay his hands on the reins of unrestricted power”. He accused Stalin of murdering Frunze and Sklyansky. And he says: “It was clear to me already in those early years that Stalin was a vindictive Asiatic, with fear, suspicion and revenge deeply embedded in his soul. I could tell from everything he said and left unsaid, his tastes, preferences and demeanour, that he would recoil from nothing, drive every issue to its absurd extreme and send me to their deaths without hesitation if they stood in his way.”

Bazhanov considers Trotsky to have been potentially as ruthless as Stalin. But there was an important difference between the two kinds of ruthlessness. Trotsky’s was not a personally directed emotion but a kind of impersonal passion stemming directly from his faith in the revolution and in essence an extension of it. As Deutscher said (perhaps over-generously): “His judgement remained unclouded by any personal emotion against Stalin, and severely objective.” Stalin, on the other hand, had the great advantage of really hating his opponent. Deutscher suggests that Stalin must have had “better qualities and emotions, such as intellectual ambition and a degree of sympathy with the oppressed, without which no young man would ever join a persecuted revolutionary party”. But he produces no evidence in support of this dubious statement. And even he had to admit that Stalin’s betrayal of the Warsaw rising in 1944 could have been motivated, not by political expediency, but by nothing else than “that unscrupulous rancour and insensible spite of which he had given so much proof in the great purges”.

But hatred and ambition, without intelligence, accomplishes little. And here we must revise the simplistic notion that Trotsky was intelligent and Stalin stupid. Lenin, for one, did not share this opinion, considering Stalin to be second only to Trotsky in ability among the members of the Politburo. Trotsky was a brilliant intellectual, one of the most acute judges of the

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375 Deutscher, The Prophet Outcast, p. 455.
376 Deutscher, Stalin: A Political Biography, Oxford University Press, 1949, p. 524. This spite may have been linked with the defeat that the Poles inflicted on the Red Army near Warsaw in 1920, for which Stalin bore some responsibility.
national and international scene. Not for nothing did Deutscher call him a “prophet”. But he had his weaknesses apart from the vanity that we have already mentioned. Bazhanov says that he was naïve with the naïveté that comes from fanaticism. Lunacharsky said that he was a bad organizer. These two faults were linked to a third which may be called a kind of stupidity: his blindly optimistic faith in the infallibility of the party. As he wrote to Zinoviev: “The party in the last analysis is always right, because the party is the single historic instrument given to the proletariat for the solution of its fundamental problems… I know that one must not be right against the party.”

It was because of this faith in the party – and in Lenin – that Trotsky accepted the ban on factionalism at the Tenth Party Congress in 1921. And yet he understood better than anybody what this “egocentralist” restriction of free speech within the party would lead to. As he had declared several years earlier: “The organization of the party takes the place of the party itself; the Central Committee takes the place of the organization; and finally the dictator takes the place of the Central Committee.”

Why, then, did he not protest when he saw Stalin attaining supreme power by precisely these means, using his position as General Secretary to fill the party with men loyal to himself alone? Partly because, as we have seen, he underestimated Stalin. And partly because, after Lenin’s death in 1924, he did not want to appear to be stepping too eagerly into Lenin’s shoes. But mainly because he simply trusted in the party to get it right in the long run.

This attitude of Trotsky’s persisted for a long time, even after he had been expelled from the country and the horrors of the First Five-Year-Plan had revealed the extent of Stalin’s “bureaucratic collectivist” heresy. As late as October, 1932, Trotsky refused to support a “Remove Stalin!” slogan because it might encourage counter-revolution. Instead, he proposed the formation of a Fourth International opposed to the Stalin-controlled Comintern – but only after Hitler (aided by the Comintern’s refusal to form a Popular Front with the other left-wing parties) had come to power in Germany. Even then he said that this new International should have jurisdiction only up to, but not beyond, the frontiers of the USSR. And it was only in October, 1933 that he declared that the Opposition should constitute a new party against the Bolshevik party within the country. And it was not until the later 1930s that he began, in a letter to Angelica Balabanov, to rebel both against the Party and History herself: “History has to be taken as she is; but when she allows herself such extraordinary and filthy outrages [Stalin’s show-trials], one must fight back at her with one’s fists…”

Stalin had no such ideological scruples, no agonies of a revolutionary conscience. He had the great good fortune – or good judgement – to become a follower of Lenin as early as 1903 and to stick to him, in spite of some disagreements, right up to the revolution. Not that he loved Lenin – he was
delighted at the news of Lenin’s death, according to Bazhanov, whereas Trotsky fainted for two hours, according to Krupskaya. Nor was he a consistent Leninist thereafter, for all his propaganda to the contrary – Stalin’s career covers the most extraordinary range between extreme communism to near-convergence with capitalism, from the most strident Russian nationalism to the purest internationalism. What mattered to him was not ideological purity, but power; and while he did not underestimate the importance of ideology in the attainment and maintenance of power – in this respect Lenin trained him well, - he never mistook the means for the end.

Thus he paid attention to organization – he was an excellent administrator – and to the shifting patterns of alliances within the party. He did not wear his heart on his sleeve, and was capable of the most studied hypocrisy in the manner of Shakespeare’s Richard III. In October, 1917 Trotsky had impetuously condemned Zinoviev and Kamenev “to the dustbin of history” for their refusal to back Lenin’s call for an immediate putsch; but Stalin held his fire. Thus he was able to use Zinoviev and Kamenev against Trotsky, and then, when his own power base had been established, destroy all three of them. This combination of hatred with prudence, cunning with caution, made him a formidable politician.

Other objective aspects of the political situation in the mid-twenties favoured Stalin against Trotsky. As Deutscher points out, Trotsky’s doctrine of permanent revolution, while critical to the success of the October revolution, offended the self-confident complacency of the party. On the other hand, Stalin’s discovery (with Bukharin) of the slogan “Socialism in One Country” answered to the country’s pride in itself, its weariness with the failure of European revolution and its longing for stability. The fact that Stalin later stole so many pages out of Trotsky’s book – his emphasis on rapid industrialization, on militarization of the unions and on discipline within the party – does not contradict this thesis. In the early twenties, when Trotsky proposed these policies, the time was not yet ripe for their implementation; whereas in the late twenties and early thirties, when the New Economic Policy had run into the sands and political power was concentrated exclusively in Stalin’s hands, they could be embarked upon with some prospect of success – according to Stalin’s criteria, that is.

Have we then succeeded in explaining why Stalin triumphed over Trotsky? Can we say that Stalin’s greater hatred, cunning, prudence and organizational ability, on the one hand, and Trotsky’s vanity, naiveté, on the other, were bound to lead to Stalin’s triumph in the conditions of war weariness, ideological cooling-off and party sclerosis that prevailed in the Soviet Union of the mid-1920s? In the present writer’s opinion we cannot say this, because the factors mentioned above do not help us to understand the extraordinary drama that took place over Lenin’s will in the critical years
1922-24, when Stalin was very nearly catapulted from power, and in which it is difficult not to see another, metaphysical factor entering into the situation...

In April, 1922 Stalin became General Secretary, the critical platform for his rise to supreme power. In May, 1922 Lenin suffered his first stroke, thereby removing the main obstacle to Stalin's exploiting the secretariat in his personal bid for power. Then, during the autumn of that year, while he was slowly recovering from his stroke, Lenin fell out for the first time with the man whom, in 1913, he had called “the wonderful Georgian”. The quarrel seems to have been over Georgia, which the Second Army, on instructions from Stalin, had invaded the previous year. Dzerzhinsky reported that Stalin’s underling, Ordzhonikidze, had committed brutalities there, and complaints also reached Lenin against Stalin. Lenin wanted Stalin to pay more attention to Georgian national sensitivities. But Stalin, who had been the Party’s expert on Nationalities for years, believed his countrymen should be kept on a close rein.

But then, in December, 1922, came Lenin’s second stroke. Recovering somewhat, Lenin began to draw up a will, in which, while commenting on each member of the Politburo, he wrote: “Comrade Stalin, having become General Secretary, has concentrated enormous power in his hands; and I am not sure that he always knows how to use that power with sufficient caution.” He also hinted at the possibility of a split between Trotsky and Stalin, which the party should act to avoid. Five days later, on December 30, he wrote: “I think that the hastiness and administrative clumsiness of Stalin played a fatal role here [in Georgia], and also his spite against the notorious ‘social chauvinism’. Spite in general plays the worst possible role in politics…”

Fairly mild criticism, perhaps. But a quarrel between Stalin and Krupskaya led to a significant hardening in Lenin’s attitude in the few months remaining to him.377 Thus on January 4, 1923, in a postscript to his will, he wrote: “Stalin is too rude, and this fault... becomes unbearable in the office of General Secretary. Therefore I propose to the comrades to find a way to remove Stalin from that position and appoint to it another man more patient, more loyal, more polite and more attentive to comrades, less capricious, etc.”

377 It appears that the Politburo had banned Lenin from working more than ten minutes a day, which led to the quarrel with Krupskaya and then with Lenin himself. “Stalin’s row with Lenin’s wife, Krupskaya, outraged Lenin’s bourgeois sentiments. But Stalin thought it was entirely consistent with Party culture. ‘Why should I stand on my hindlegs for her? To sleep with Lenin does not mean you understand Marxism-Leninism. Just because she used the same toilet as Lenin...’ This led to some classic Stalin jokes, in which he warned Krupskaya that if she did not obey, the Central Committee would appoint someone else as Lenin’s wife. That is a very Bolshevik concept. His disrespect for Krupskaya was probably not helped by her complaints about Lenin’s flirtations with his assistants, including Yelena Stasova, the one whom Stalin threatened to promote to ‘wife’” (Montefiore, Stalin, p. 37).
Then, on March 4, there appeared in Pravda a blistering attack by Lenin on Stalin’s work as Commissar of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Inspectorate. Deutscher wrote: “This was Lenin’s first, publicly delivered blow. Behind the scenes he prepared for a final attack at the twelfth party congress, convened for April; and he agreed with Trotsky on joint action. On 5 March, the day after Pravda had at last published his criticisms of Stalin’s Commissariat, he had a sharp exchange with Stalin. He then dictated a brief letter to Stalin, telling him that he ‘broke off’ all personal relations with him. The next day, 6 March, he wired a message to the leaders of the Georgian opposition, promising to take up their case at the congress: ‘I am with you in this matter with all my heart. I am outraged by the arrogance of Ordzhonikidze and the connivance of Stalin and Dzerzhinsky.’ He again communicated with Trotsky about their joint tactics in the Georgian business; and he briefed Kamenev who was to depart for Tiflis with a special commission of inquiry. Just in the middle of all these moves, on 9 March, he suffered the third attack of his illness, from which he was not to recover…”

There can be little doubt that if Lenin had survived, Stalin would have been sacked. There can be little doubt, either, that if he had died that March, and not ten months later, Stalin would still have been sacked. For then his will would have been opened at the twelfth congress in April. But Krupskaya scrupulously observed the instructions on Lenin’s will: “Open only after my death”, so the contents of the will were not made known until shortly before the fourteenth congress in May, 1924. By that time, however, Stalin had worked hard to create a bloc with Zinoviev and Kamenev against Trotsky. So when the matter came up before the Central Committee, Zinoviev and Kamenev spoke in favour of Stalin and against the publication of the will. Trotsky was silent, the vote was taken – and Stalin was saved. Three years later, Stalin was stronger than all three. In November, 1927 Trotsky and Zinoviev were expelled from the party, and in December the Fifteenth Party Congress confirmed the decision...

Bazhanov writes: “Trotsky’s position in 1923-4 was strong. If he had used the cards history had dealt him, Stalin could have been stopped. Of course Stalin was an accomplished schemer, but with the support Lenin had given him Trotsky could have lined up the party behind him if his temperament had not stood in the way. But he failed to understand the nature of the Party machine, Stalin’s use of it, and the full significance Stalin’s position as General Secretary had acquired by the time of the 13th Congress.”

And yet there was more to it than that. The vital factor, which depended neither on psychology nor on politics, was the timing of Lenin’s strokes, and above all the fact that the last stroke incapacitated him without immediately killing him. Was this a product of blind Chance? Or History’s choice of Stalin? Or God’s judgement on apostate Russia?

378 Deutscher, Stalin, pp. 252-253.
For a believer in the true God there is only one possible answer to this question. God acted now as He had acted in seventh-century Byzantium when He allowed the cruel tyrant Phocas to murder the good Emperor Maurice and ascend the throne. “One contemporary,” writes Alexander Dvorkin, “cites the story of a certain man who cried out to God: ‘Why did You send Your people such a blood-thirsty wolf?’ And the Lord replied to him: ‘I tried to find someone worse than Phocas, so as to punish the people for its self-will, but was unable. But from now on don’t you question the judgements of God…’”379

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379 Dvorkin, Ocherki po Istorii Vselenskoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi (Sketches on the History of the Universal Orthodox Church), Nizhni-Novgorod, 2006, p. 439.
FROM THE VOLGA FAMINE TO THE “LIVING CHURCH”

It was the Volga famine of 1921-22, in which about 25 million people were starving, 15 million more were under threat, and more than one million actually died, that provided the Bolsheviks with their first opportunity to create a major schism in the Church. Alexander Solzhenitsyn writes: “At the end of the civil war, and as its natural consequence, an unprecedented famine developed in the Volga area… V.G. Korolenko, in his Letters to Lunacharsky explains to us Russia’s total, epidemic descent into famine and destitution. It was the result of productivity having become reduced to zero (the working hands were all carrying guns) and the result, also, of the peasants’ utter lack of trust and hope that even the smallest part of the harvest might be left to them…

“There was a direct, immediate chain of cause and effect. The Volga peasants had to eat their children because we were so impatient about putting up with the Constituent Assembly.

“But political genius lies in extracting success even from the people’s ruin. A brilliant idea was born: after all, three billiard balls can be pocketed with one shot. So now let the priests feed the Volga region! They are Christians. They are generous!

“1. If they refuse, we will blame the whole famine on them and destroy the Church.

“2. If they agree, we will clean out the churches.

“In either case, we will replenish our stocks of foreign exchange and precious metals.

“Yes, and the action was probably inspired by the actions of the Church itself. As Patriarch Tikhon himself had testified, back in August, 1921, at the beginning of the famine, the Church had created diocesan and all-Russian committees for aid to the starving and had begun to collect funds. But to have permitted any direct help to go straight from the Church into the mouths of those who were starving would have undermined the dictatorship of the proletariat. The committees were banned, and the funds they had collected were confiscated and turned over to the state and to the treasury. The Patriarch had also appealed to the Pope in Rome and the Archbishop of Canterbury for assistance – but he was rebuked for this, too, on the grounds that only the Soviet authorities had the right to enter into discussions with

foreigners. Yes, indeed. And what was there to be alarmed about? The newspapers wrote that the government itself had all the necessary means to cope with the famine.

“Meanwhile, in the Volga region they were eating grass, the soles of shoes and gnawing at door jambs. And, finally, in December [27], 1921, Pomgol – the State Commission for Famine Relief – proposed that the churches help the starving by donating church valuables – not all, but those not required for liturgical rites. The Patriarch agreed. Pomgol issued a directive: all gifts must be strictly voluntary! On February 19, 1922, the Patriarch issued a pastoral letter permitting the parish councils to make gifts of objects that did not have liturgical and ritual significance.

“And in this way matter could again have simply degenerated into a compromise that would have frustrated the will of the proletariat, just as it once had been by the Constituent Assembly, and still was in all the chatterbox European parliaments.

“The thought came in a stroke of lightning! The thought came – and a decree followed! A decree of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on February 26: all valuables were to be requisitioned from the churches – for the starving!”

This decree annihilated the voluntary character of the offerings, and put the clergy in the position of accessories to sacrilege. And so on February 28, in order to resolve the perplexities of the faithful, the Patriarch decreed: “… In view of the exceptionally difficult circumstances, we have admitted the possibility of offering church objects that have not been consecrated and are not used in Divine services. Now again we call on the faithful children of the Church to make such offerings, desiring only that these offerings should be the response of a loving heart to the needs of his neighbour, if only they can provide some real help to our suffering brothers. But we cannot approve of the requisitioning from the churches, even as a voluntary offering, of consecrated objects, whose use for purposes other than Divine services is forbidden by the canons of the Ecumenical Church and is punished by Her as sacrilege – laymen by excommunication from Her, and clergy by defrocking (Apostolic Canon 73; Canon 10 of the First-Second Council).” This compromise decree represented the first major concession made by the Church to Soviet power. Thus no less an authority than the holy Elder Nectarius of Optina said: “You see now, the patriarch gave the order to give up all valuables from the churches, but they belonged to the Church!”

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382 M.E. Gubonin, Akty Sviateishago Patriarkha Tikhona, Moscow, 1994, p. 190.
On March 13, the Politburo (Lenin, Molotov, Kamenev and Stalin) accepted Trotsky’s suggestion to form a “completely secret” commission to mastermind the requisitioning. “Moreover,” writes Gregory Ravich, “the commission was ordered ‘to act with maximal cruelty, not stopping at anything, including executions on the spot (that is, without trial and investigation), in cases of necessity summoning special (for which read: punitive) units of the Red Army, dispersing and firing on demonstrations, interrogations with the use of torture’ and so on. The commission’s members were, besides Trotsky, Sapronov, Unschlicht, Medved and Samoilov-Zemliachka. It literally rushed like a hurricane through Russia, sweeping away... everything in its path.”

Soon clashes with believers who resisted the confiscation of church valuables took place. 1414 such clashes were reported in the official press. The first took place in the town of Shuye on March 15. Five Christians were killed and fifteen wounded, as a result of which two priests and a layman were condemned and executed. In 1921-23, 2,691 married priests, 1,962 monks, 3,447 nuns and an unknown number of laymen were killed on the pretext of resistance to the seizure of church valuables in the country as a whole.

On March 19, Lenin sent a long letter to the Politburo marked “Top Secret. No Copies to be Made”: “It is precisely now and only now, when there is cannibalism in the famine-stricken areas and hundreds if not thousands of corpses are lying along the roads, that we can (and therefore must) carry out the confiscation of valuables with fanatical and merciless energy and not hesitate to suppress any form of resistance... It is precisely now and only now that the vast majority of the peasant masses will either support us or at least will be unable to give any decisive support to those... who might and would want to try to resist the Soviet decree. We must confiscate in the shortest possible time as much as possible to create for ourselves a fund of several hundred million roubles... Without this fund, government work.. and the defence of our positions in Genoa are absolutely unthinkable... Now our victory over the reactionary clergy is guaranteed... It is precisely now that we must wage a decisive and merciless war with the black-hundreds clergy and crush their opposition with such cruelty that they will not forget it for many decades... The more members of the reactionary bourgeoisie we manage to shoot the better.”

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384 Ravich, "Ograblennij Khristos, ili brillianty dlya diktatury proletariata" (Christ Robbed, or Diamonds for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat), Chas-Pik (Rush Hour), № 18, pp. 24-25.
385 Ravich, op. cit., p. 26. According to another estimate, up to 10,000 believers were killed (V. Petrenko, “Sv. Patriarkh Vserossijskij Tikhon” (His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon of All Russia), Vestnik I.P.Ts. (Herald of the True Orthodox Church), Odessa, № 1 (11), 1998, p. 27). Donald Rayfield writes that in the parishes some 2,700 priests and 5,000 monks and nuns perished (Stalin and his Hangmen, London: Viking, 2004, p. 122).
Concerning the Patriarch, however, Lenin said: “I think it is expedient for us not to touch Patriarch Tikhon himself, although he is undoubtedly heading this entire rebellion of slave-owners.” As leader of the campaign, Lenin wanted Trotsky - “but he should at no time and under no circumstances speak out [on this matter] in the press or before the public in any other manner”. This was probably, as Richard Pipes suggests, “in order not to feed rumors that the campaign was a Jewish plot against Christianity.” For Trotsky was a Jew, and the high proportion of Jews in the Bolshevik party had aroused the people’s wrath against them.

At a Politburo session the next day Trotsky himself insisted: “The agitation must not be linked with the struggle against religion and the Church, but must be wholly directed towards helping the starving” (point 5); “we must take a decisive initiative in creating a schism among the clergy”, taking the priests who speak in support of the measures undertaken by Soviet power “under the protection of state power” (point 6); “our agitation and the agitation of priests loyal to us must in no case be mixed up”, but the communists must refer to “the significant part of the clergy” which is speaking against the inhumanity and greed “of the princes of the Church” (point 7); spying is necessary “to guarantee complete knowledge of everything that is happening in various groups of clergy, believers, etc.” (point 8); the question must be formulated correctly: “it is best to begin with some church led by a loyal priest, and if such a church does not exist, then with the most significant church after careful preparation” (point 9); “representatives of the loyal clergy must be allowed to be registered in the provinces and in the centre, after the population is well informed that they will have every opportunity to check that not one article of the church heritage goes anywhere else than to help the starving” (point 13). In actual fact, according to a secret instruction all church valuables taken from “the enemies of Soviet power” were to be handed over, not to Pomyol or the starving, but to the Economic administration of the OGPU.

In addition to being the head of the requisitioning commission, Trotsky also headed the commission for their monetary realization. And in a submission to this commission he wrote on March 23: “For us it is more important to obtain 50 million in 1922-23 for a certain mass of valuables than to hope for 75 million in 1923-24. The advance of the proletarian revolution in


388 N.A., "One bo vragom Tvoim tajnu poviem..." (I will not give Thy Mystery to Thine enemies), Vestnik Germanskoy Eparkhii Rosskoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi za Granitsej (Herald of the German Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad), 1992, № 1, p. 17.
just one of the large countries of Europe will put a stop to the market in valuables... Conclusion: we must proceed as fast as possible.”

However, the Bolsheviks failed to get the money they wanted – the sale of church valuables fetched only about $1.5 million, or between $4 and $10 million according to another estimate.

If the Bolsheviks’ primary motive in the requisitioning campaign was in fact to destroy the Church, then they failed – the Church emerged even stronger spiritually from her fiery ordeal. The blood of the martyrs was already starting to bring forth fruit as thousands of previously lukewarm Christians returned to the Church.

The struggle between the patriarchate and the Bolsheviks over church valuables gave the renovationists their chance to seize power. It began in Petrograd, a stronghold of renovationism as it had been of Bolshevism. The initiative here came from the Petrograd party chief, Zinoviev, who suggested to Archpriest Alexander Vvedensky that his group would be the appropriate one for an eventual concordat between the State and the Church. Vvedensky then joined Archpriest Vladimir Krasnitsky and Bishop Antonin Granovsky in plotting to overthrow the Patriarch.

The leader of the Patriarchal Church in Petrograd was Metropolitan Benjamin, who had actually come to an agreement with the local authorities concerning the voluntary handing over of church valuables. These authorities evidently did not yet understand that the real purpose of the Soviet decree was not to help the starving but to destroy the Church. Having conferred with the central authorities in Moscow, however, they reneged on their agreement with the metropolitan.

Then, on March 24, a letter signed by the future renovationist leaders Krasnitsky, Vvedensky, Belkov, Boyarsky and others, appeared in Petrogradskaia Pravda. The letter defended the measures undertaken by the Soviet government and distanced the authors from the rest of the clergy. The latter reacted strongly against this letter at a clergy meeting, during which Vvedensky gave a brazen and threatening speech. However, the metropolitan

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390 Pipes, op. cit., p. 355. According to Rayfield, “barely four million gold roubles were realized of which one million was spent on famine relief” (op. cit., pp. 120-121). For another estimate, see Volkogonov, op. cit., p. 381. Rukh (№ 34, November 4, 1996) reports that the Bolsheviks received a “profit” of 2.5 million gold rubles. At the same time, Bukharin admitted to having spent nearly $14 million on propaganda during the famine (Richard Joseph Cooke, Religion in Russia and the Soviets, p. 149). But the Bolsheviks already had the Russian crown jewels, worth one billion gold roubles, and jewels from the Kremlin museum, worth 300 million gold roubles – far more than the market price of the church valuables (Pipes, op. cit., p. 355).
succeeded in calming passions sufficiently so that it was decided to enter into fresh negotiations with the authorities, the conduct of these negotiations being entrusted to Vvedensky and Boyarsky. They proceeded to win an agreement according to which other articles or money were allowed to be substituted for the church valuables...

On March 22-23 Trotsky wrote: “The arrest of the Synod and the Patriarch is necessary, but not now, but in about 10-15 days... In the course of this week we must arrange a trial of priests for stealing church valuables (there are quite a few facts)... The press must adopted a frenzied tone, giving [evidence of] a heap of priestly attempts in Smolensk, Petrograd, etc.”

On April 1 the Patriarch was placed under house arrest. Then he was called as a witness for the defence in the trial of 54 Moscow Christians, which began on April 26. In an effort to save the accused, he took the whole responsibility upon himself. And in one of the exchanges the essence of the relationship between the Church and the State was expressed.

The Presiding Judge: “Do you consider the state’s laws obligatory or not?”

The Patriarch: “Yes, I recognize them, to the extent that they do not contradict the rules of piety.”

Solzhenitsyn comments: “Oh, if only everyone had answered just that way! Our whole history would have been different.”

And yet the Patriarch’s words constituted a distinct weakening of his position vis-à-vis Soviet power when compared with the absolutely irreconcilable position he and the Council had adopted in 1917-18; for they implied that Soviet power was legitimate, the power of Caesar rather than that of the Antichrist... The first instinct of the Russian Church in the face of Soviet power, as manifested in the 1917-18 Council, has never been extinguished among Russian Christians. It continued to manifest itself both at home and abroad (for example, in the First All-Emigration Council of the Russian Church Abroad in 1921), both in the early and the later decades of Soviet power (for example, among the "passportless" Christians of the Catacomb Church). However, it was very soon tempered by the realisation that such outright rejection of Soviet power on a large scale could be sustained only by war - and after the defeat of the White Armies in the Civil War there were no armies left to carry on the fight against the Bolsheviks.

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391 Monk Benjamin (Gomareteli), Letopis' tserkovnykh sobytij Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi nachinaia s 1917 goda (Chronicle of Church Events, beginning from 1917), www.zlatoust.ws/letopis.htm, p. 67.
Therefore from the early 1920s a new attitude towards Soviet power began to evolve among the Tikhonite Christians: loyalty towards it as a political institution ("for all power is from God"), and acceptance of such of its laws as could be interpreted in favour of the Church (for example, the law on the separation of Church and State), combined with rejection of its atheistic world-view (large parts of which the renovationists, by contrast, accepted). In essence, this new attitude involved accepting that the Soviet State was not Antichrist, as the Local Council of 1917-18 and the Russian Church Abroad had in effect declared, but Caesar, no worse in principle than the Caesars of Ancient Rome, to whom the things belonging to Caesar were due. This attitude involved the assertion that it was possible, in the Soviet Union as in Ancient Rome, to draw a clear line between politics and religion.

But in practice, even more than in theory, this line proved very hard to draw. For to the early Bolsheviks there was no such dividing line; for them, everything was ideological, everything had to be in accord with their ideology, there could be no room for disagreement, no private spheres into which the state did not pry. Thus unlike most of the Roman emperors, who allowed the Christians to order their own lives so long as they showed loyalty to the state (which the Christians were eager to do), the Bolsheviks insisted in imposing their own ways upon the Christians in every sphere: in family life (civil marriage only, divorce on demand, children spying on parents), in education (compulsory Marxism), in economics (dekulakization, collectivization), in military service (the oath of allegiance to Lenin), in science (Lysenkoism), in art (socialist realism), and in religion (the requisitioning of valuables, registration, commemoration of the authorities at the Liturgy, reporting of confessions by the priests). Resistance to any one of these demands was counted as "anti-Soviet behaviour", i.e. political disloyalty. Therefore it was no use protesting one's political loyalty to the regime if one refused to accept just one of these demands. According to the Soviet interpretation of the word: "Whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one has become guilty of all of it" (James 2.10), such a person was an enemy of the people.

In view of this, it is not surprising that many Christians came to the conclusion that there was no gain, and from a moral point of view much to be lost, in accepting a regime that made such impossible demands, since the penalty would be the same whether one asserted one's loyalty to it or not. And if this meant living as an outlaw, so be it... Nevertheless, the path of total rejection of the Soviet state required enormous courage, strength and self-sacrifice, not only for oneself but also (which was more difficult) for one's family or flock. It is therefore not surprising that, already during the Civil War, the Church began to soften her anti-Soviet rhetoric and try once more to draw the line between politics and religion. This is what Patriarch Tikhon tried to do in the later years of his patriarchate - with, it must be said, only mixed results. Thus his decision to allow some, but not all of the Church's valuables to be requisitioned by the Bolsheviks in 1922 not only did not bring
help to the starving of the Volga, as was the intention, but led to many clashes between believers and the authorities and many deaths of believers.

The decision to negotiate and compromise with the Bolsheviks only brought confusion and division to the Church. Thus on the right wing of the Church there were those, like Archbishop Theodore of Volokolamsk, who thought that the patriarch had already gone too far; while on the left wing there were those, like Archbishop Hilarion of Verey, who wanted to go further. The basic problem was that the compromises were always one-sided; the Bolsheviks always took and never gave; their aim was not peaceful co-existence, but the complete conquest of the Church. And so, as a "Letter from Russia" put it many years later: "It's no use our manoeuvring; there's nothing for us to preserve except the things that are God's. For the things that are Caesar's (if one should really consider it to be Caesar and not Pharaoh) are always associated with the quenching of the Spirit..." 393

However, the Patriarchal Church remained Orthodox under Patriarch Tikhon and his successor, Metropolitan Peter, for two major reasons: first, because the leaders of the Church did not sacrifice the lives of their fellow Christians for the sake of their own security or the security of the Church organisation; and secondly, because, while the Soviet regime was recognised to be, in effect, Caesar rather than Pharaoh, no further concessions were made with regard to the communist ideology.

Early in May, the Patriarch was placed under house arrest. According to his will, the temporary administration of the Church should now have passed to Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan. But since he was in prison, the next hierarch according to the will, Metropolitan Agathangelus of Yaroslavl, should have taken over.

On May 12, accompanied by two chekists, the renovationist priests Vvedensky, Belkov and Kalinovsky (who, as the Patriarch pointed out, had but a short time before renounced holy orders), visited the Patriarch at the Troitsky podvorye, where he was confined, and told him that they had obtained permission for the convening of a Council, but on condition that he resigned from the patriarchal throne.

The Patriarch replied that the patriarchy weighed on him like a cross. “I would joyfully accept it if the coming Council removed the patriarchy from me, but now I am handing power to one of the oldest hierarchs and will renounced the administration of the Church.” The Patriarch rejected the candidacies of some modernist bishops and appointed Metropolitan Agathangelus as his deputy. 394

393 Russkaia Mysl' (Russian Thought), № 3143, March 17, 1977.
394 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 74.
“However,” writes Krivova, “the authorities did not allow Metropolitan Agathangelus to leave for Moscow. Already on May 5, 1922 V.D. Krasnitsky had arrived at the Tolga monastery where the metropolitan was living, and demanded that he sign the appeal of the so-called ‘Initiative Group of Clergy’. The metropolitan refused to sign the appeal. Then, two days later, his signature declaring that he would not leave was taken from him, and a guard was placed outside his cell and a search was carried out.

“After Agathangelus there remained in Moscow only three of the members of the Holy Synod and HCA, but they were not empowered to take any kind of decision that would be obligatory for the whole Church. Thus the path to the seizure of Church power by the renovationists was open. Using Tikhon’s temporary concession and the impossibility of Metropolitan Agathangelus’ taking the place of the Patriarch, the renovationists declared that Tikhon had been removed and in an arbitrary manner seized power. Arriving on May 15, 1922 at a reception with M.I. Kalinin, they understood that Metropolitan Agathangelus’ departure to Moscow was hardly possible. The next day the renovationists sent a letter to M.I. Kalinin, in which they declared ‘in view of Patriarch Tikhon’s removal of himself from power, a Higher Church Administration is formed, which from May 2 (15) has taken upon itself the conducting of Church affairs in Russia.'

On May 18 the renovationists again presented the Patriarch with a written statement complaining that in consequence of the existing circumstances, Church business remained unattended to. They demanded that he entrust his chancery to them until Metropolitan Agathangelus’ arrival in Moscow, in order that they might properly classify the correspondence received. The Patriarch yielded, and inscribed their petition with the following resolution: “The undersigned persons are ordered to take over and transmit to the Right Reverend Metropolitan Agathangelus, upon his arrival in Moscow, all the Synodical business with the assistance of secretary Numerov.”

The next day, the Patriarch was transferred to the Donskoj monastery, and the renovationists took over his residence in the Troitsky podvorye.

However, the renovationists and communists still had to neutralize the threat posed by Metropolitan Agathangelus. So Krasnitsky was sent to Yaroslavl and placed a number of conditions before the Patriarch’s lawful deputy that amounted to his placing himself in complete dependence on the renovationists. When the metropolitan rejected these conditions, the renovationists spread the rumour that he “was not hurrying” to fulfil the Patriarch’s command.

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On June 5/18, “Metropolitan Agathangelus unexpectedly addressed the Russian Church with an appeal, which was printed by some underground printing-press and very quickly distributed in Moscow and the other cities…”

“E.A. Tuchkov was taken completely by surprise. The HCA was also shocked. Metropolitan Agathangelus was immediately arrested and sent into exile, to the Narymsk region. However, the appearance of this appeal showed that the unprincipled line of V.D. Krasnitsky was meeting with a sharp rejection in ecclesiastical circles…”

Agathangelus wrote that the renovationists had “declared their intention to revise the dogmas and moral teaching of our Orthodox Faith, the sacred canons of the Holy Ecumenical Councils and the Orthodox Typicon of Divine services given by the great ascetics of Christian piety”, and gave the bishops the right to administer their dioceses independently until the restoration of a canonical Higher Church Authority.

He was immediately arrested. Now both the patriarch and his only lawful deputy were in prison...

The metropolitan’s reference to the renovationists’ revising the dogmas and moral teachings of the Faith, as well as the canons and services, was correct. Thus in its “Reform Programme”, the renovationists called for “the re-establishment of the evangelical teaching of the first Christians, with a deliberate development of the teaching concerning the human nature of Christ the Saviour and a struggle with the scholastic corruption of Christianity.” And one of the subsections of the programme bore the title: “The terrible judgement, paradise and hell as moral concepts.”

Fr. Basil Redechkin writes that the renovationists “united the leaders of various rationalist tendencies. Therefore various voices were heard: some denied the Holy Icons, others – the sign of the Cross, others – the Holy Relics, others denied all the sacraments except baptism, while yet others tried to overthrow the veneration of our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and even the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said about the All-holy Virgin Mary: ‘She is a simple woman, just like all women, and her son was, of course, only a man, and not God!’ And the ‘livers’ created a completely atheist ‘symbol of faith’ to please the God-fighting, antichristian authorities. It was published in the journal Zhivaia Tserkov’ in 1925, and was composed of thirty articles. This ‘symbol’ began with the words: ‘1. I believe in one power that created the world, the heavens and the earth, the visible and invisible worlds. 2. In one catholic humanity and in it (in the man) Jesus Christ.’

398 Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 219-221.
399 Zhivaia Tserkov’, 10, October 1, 1922; Zhukov, op. cit., p. 30.
“And it is completely understandable that after this they should declare that the Canonical rules by which the Holy Church has been guided for two thousand years: the rules of the Holy Apostles, of the Ecumenical and Local Councils and of the Holy Fathers – ‘have become infinitely outdated’ and have ‘repealed’ themselves... So the ‘liver-renovationists’, wanting to walk ‘in step with the times’,... introduced a married episcopate, allowed widowed priests to marry a second and even a third time, and took other liberties.”

The focus now shifts back to Petrograd. On May 25 Vvedensky appeared before Metropolitan Benjamin with a document signed by the renovationist Bishop Leonid, which said that he, “in accordance with the resolution of Patriarch Tikhon, is a member of the HCA and is sent to Petrograd and other cities on Church business”. The metropolitan, not seeing the signature of the Patriarch, refused to accept it.

The next day, at the Sunday Liturgy, an Epistle from the metropolitan was read in all the churches of Petrograd, in which he anathematised the rebellious priest Alexander Vvedensky and Eugene Belkov and also those with them. “According to the teaching of the Church,” it said in the Epistle, “a diocese that is for some reason deprived of the possibility of receiving instructions from its Patriarch, is ruled by its bishops, who remains in spiritual union with the Patriarch... The bishop of Petrograd is the Metropolitan of Petrograd. By obeying him, you will be in union with him and will be in the Church.”

The next day chekists arrived at the residence of the metropolitan and arrested him. Meanwhile, Vvedensky took over the chancellorry. Without turning a hair, he went up to the hierarch for a blessing. “Fr. Alexander,” said the metropolitan peacefully, “you and I are not in the Garden of Gethsemane”. And without blessing the schismatic, he calmly listened to the statement about his arrest.

On May 29, the administration of the diocese passed to his vicar, Bishop Alexis (Simansky) of Yamburg, the future false-patriarch.

On the same day, Metropolitan Benjamin was brought to trial together with 86 others. They were accused of entering into negotiations with Soviet power with the aim of annulling or softening the decree on the requisitioning of church valuables, and that they were “in a plot with the worldwide bourgeoisie and the Russian emigration”. He was given many chances to save
himself in a dishonourable manner. Thus even before the trial Vvedensky and the Petrograd commandant Bakaiev had come to him and given him the choice: either revoke the anathema against Vvedensky or face trial. But the metropolitan refused to revoke the anathema. (His deputy, Bishop Alexis, having recognised the HCA to be lawful, did revoke the anathema, on June 4. According to A. Levitin and V. Shavrov, he did this because the chekists threatened him that if he disobeyed Metropolitan Benjamin would be shot.\footnote{Levitin and Shavrov, \textit{op. cit.}, Monk Benjamin, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 77.}) Again, during the trial, the judges hinted that he save himself by naming “the authors” of the proposition he had sent to Pogol. The metropolitan again refused, saying: “I alone did it – I thought everything over; I formulated, wrote and sent the proposition myself. I did not allow anybody else to participate in deciding matters entrusted to me as archpastor.”

The renovationists Krasnitsky and Vvedensky testified against Metropolitan Benjamin during the trial, which was staged in what had been the Club of the Nobility. Three witnesses came forward to defend the metropolitan. They were immediately arrested, so no-one else came forward. On July 5, the metropolitan was convicted of “organizing a counter-revolutionary group having set himself the aim of struggling with Soviet power”. Ten people were condemned to be shot; the others were given prison sentences of varying lengths. The metropolitan himself was shot on the night of August 12 to 13, 1922.

In a letter written from prison, the metropolitan expressed the essence of what was to become the position of the Catacomb Church a few years later: “The reasonings of some, perhaps outstanding pastors are strange... – ‘we must preserve the living forces’, that is, for their sake, we must abandon everything! Then what is Christ for? It is not the Platonovs, the Chuprins, the Benjamins and their like who save the Church, but Christ. That point on which they are trying to stand is destruction for the Church; it is not right to sacrifice the Church for oneself...”

The renovationist schismatics continued to gain ground throughout 1922. On June 16, three important hierarchs joined them, declaring: “We, Metropolitan Sergius [Stragorodsky] of Vladimir and Shuya, Archbishop Eudocimus of Nizhegorod and Arzamas and Archbishop Seraphim of Kostroma and Galich, having studied the platform of the Temporary Church Administration and the canonical lawfulness of its administration, consider it the only lawful, canonical, higher church authority, and all the instructions issuing from it we consider to be completely lawful and obligatory. We call on all true pastors and believing sons of the Church, both those entrusted to us and those belonging to other dioceses, to follow our example.”\footnote{Gubonin, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 218-219.}
Metropolitan John (Snychev) wrote: “We do not have the right to hide from history those sad and staggering apostasies from the unity of the Russian Church which took place on a mass scale after the publication in the journal ‘Living Church’ of the epistle-appeals of the three well-known hierarchs. Many of the hierarchs and clergy reasoned naively. Thus: ‘If the wise Sergius has recognized the possibility of submitting to the Higher Church Administration, then it is clear that we, too, must follow his example.’”

The GPU gave valuable aid to the renovationists, arresting and sending into exile all the clergy who remained faithful to the Patriarch. Also, they handed over to them nearly two-thirds of the functioning churches in the Russian republic and Central Asia, as well as many thousands in the Ukraine, Belorussia and Siberia. However, these figures exaggerated the true strength of the renovationists, in that their churches were almost empty while the patriarchal churches were filled to overflowing.

In April, the government announced that the Patriarch was about to go on trial on charges arising from the trials of the 54 in Moscow and of Metropolitan Benjamin in Petrograd the previous year. At about this time, international opinion began to make itself felt in support of Patriarch Tikhon. On April 10, 1923 G.V. Chicherin reported to Stalin that the Anglo-Saxons were as interested in Orthodoxy as they were in Catholicism, and that the execution of the Patriarch would be disadvantageous in all respects.405 On April 21, Dzerzhinsky proposed to the Politburo that the Tikhon’s trial be postponed. The Politburo agreed and backed down.406 The trial was postponed to June 17. On May 8, the British foreign minister Lord Curzon issued an ultimatum to the Soviets, demanding, among other things, a cessation of religious persecution and the liberation of Patriarch Tikhon, otherwise there would be a new intervention against the USSR. This was supported by an outcry in the British and American press. The conflict was resolved by the end of June, when the Patriarch was released from prison.407

One of the reasons why the Soviets postponed the trial of the Patriarch was their desire that the renovationists condemn him first. They were not disappointed... At their second All-Russian council, which met in Moscow on April 29, 1923, the renovationists first heaped praises on the revolution, which they called a “Christian creation”, on the Soviet government, which they said was the first government in the world that strove to realize “the ideal of the Kingdom of God”. And they were no less generous to Lenin: “First of all, we

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405 “G. Chicherin and L. Trotsky told the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets: ‘Do nothing and say nothing that could close the path to a peaceful resolution of the conflict with England’” (S. Bychkov, Maskovskij Komsomolets (Muscovite Komsomolian), May 16, 1990).

406 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 94.

407 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 96.
must turn with words of deep gratitude to the government of our state, which, in spite of the slanders of foreign informers, does not persecute the Church... The word of gratitude and welcome must be expressed by us to the only state in the world which performs, without believing, that work of love which we, believers, do not fulfil, and also to the leader of Soviet Russia, V.I. Lenin, who must be dear also to church people..."

Patriarch Tikhon was tried in absentia, and deprived both of his orders and of his monasticism, being called thenceforth “layman Basil Bellavin”. Then the restoration of the patriarchate was called a counter-revolutionary act; so it was abolished and replaced by a synod. The council proceeded to decree: “Church people must not see in Soviet power the power of the Antichrist. On the contrary, the Council draws their attention to the fact that Soviet power, alone in the whole world, is able by state methods to realize the ideals of the Kingdom of God. Therefore every believing churchman must not only be an honourable citizen, but also must struggle in every way, together with Soviet power, for the realization on earth of the ideals of the Kingdom of God.”

Some further resolutions were adopted allowing white clergy to become bishops and priests to remarry, and introducing the Gregorian calendar.

When the decisions of the council were taken to the Patriarch for his signature, he calmly wrote: “Read. The council did not summon me, I do not know its competence and for that reason cannot consider its decision lawful.” Forty-six “bishops” (out of the seventy-three who attended the council) signed the decree condemning the Patriarch. One of them, Joasaph (Shishkovsky), told Fr. Basil Vinogradov how this happened. “The leaders of the council Krasnitsky and Vvedensky gathered all those present at the ‘council’ of bishops for this meeting. When several direct and indirect objections to these leaders’ proposal to defrock the Patriarch began to be expressed, Krasnitsky quite openly declared to all present: ‘He who does not immediately sign this resolution will only leave this room straight for the prison.’ The terrorized bishops (including Joasaph himself) did not find the courage to resist in the face of the threat of a new prison sentence and forced labour in a concentration camp and... signed, although almost all were against the resolution. None of the church people had any doubt that the ‘council’s’ sentence was the direct work of Soviet power and that now a criminal trial and bloody reprisal against the Patriarch was to be expected at any time.”

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408 Zhukov, op. cit., p. 34.
409 Gubonin, op. cit., p. 224.
410 Cited in Archbishop Nikon (Rklitsky), Zhizneopisanie mitropolita Antonia Kievskago, op. cit., vol. VI, p. 114. The council also consecrated the married Protopriest John (Kedrovsky) as Metropolitan of the Aleutian Islands and North America. On returning to America, he conducted a stubborn struggle against Metropolitan Plato, drawing 115 churches to his side (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 96).
However, already at this 1923 council the renovationist movement was beginning to fall apart. The 560 deputies were divided into four groups: the supporters of Krasnitsky (the Living Church), of Vvedensky (the Ancient-Apostolic Church), of Antonin (Church Regeneration) and of Patriarch Tikhon. When Krasnitsky tried to take control of the council and reject any coalition between his group and the other renovationists, a schism amidst the schismatics was avoided only by strong behind-the-scenes pressure on his supporters from the communists, who succeeded in regrouping them under a “Holy Synod” led by Metropolitan Eudocimus.411

At the beginning of June, the Patriarch fell ill, and was transferred from the Donskoy monastery to the Taganka prison. There he was able to receive only official Soviet newspaper accounts of the Church struggle, which greatly exaggerated the successes of the renovationists. But the newspapers said otherwise – and the Patriarch was deceived. As he said: “Reading the newspapers in prison, with each passing day I was more and more horrified that the renovationists were taking the Church into their hands. If I had known that their successes were so meagre and that the people was not following them, I would never have come out of prison.”

Feeling that his presence at the helm of the Church was absolutely necessary, and that of his two enemies, the renovationists and the communists, the renovationists were the more dangerous, the Patriarch decided to make concessions to the government in order to be released. Thus on June 16 and again on July 1 he issued his famous “confession”, in which he repented of all his anti-Soviet acts (including the anathema against the Bolsheviks), and “finally and decisively” set himself apart “from both the foreign and the internal monarchist White-guard counter-revolutionaries”.412

While we can make excuses for the Patriarch, whose position was extraordinarily difficult, there is no doubt that his “repentance” was a blow to the Church. Thus in a report dated December 12, 1923 to his superior, T.D. Deribas, Tuchkov wrote: “The second significant moment in the work of the Section was the accomplishment of the ‘repentance of Tikhon’, which as you are probably aware, made an extremely unfavourable impression on the Russian monarchists and the right-leaning elements in general, who had seen in Tikhon, up to this time, an adamant anti-Soviet figure.”413

411 Savelev, op.cit., p. 195.
412 Gubonin, op.cit., pp. 280, 286. There is some evidence that Patriarch Tikhon’s release from prison was linked with the fact that in June, 1923 the Bolsheviks finally accepted that Lenin was too ill to return to politics. A. Rykov took over from Lenin as president of the Sovnarkom, and on entering office immediately received the Patriarch and promised to reduce the pressure on religious organizations, reduce the taxes on the clergy and churches and release some hierarchs from prison - a promise that he kept. See Latyshev, op.cit.
413 Archpriest Alexander Lebedev, “[paradosis] Who is Really Behind the Schisms?”, orthodox-tradition@yahooogroups.com, March 2, 2006. The second achievement Tuchkov claimed for himself as director of the 6th Section of the Secret Department of the OGPU was
We see a striking parallel between the destinies and decisions of Patriarch Tikhon and Tsar Nicholas here. Both were peacemakers, ready to lay down their own lives for the sake of their flock. Both, in the interests of saving lives, made fateful decisions which they came bitterly to regret – the Tsar his decision to abdicate the throne, and the Patriarch his decision to “repent” of his anti-Soviet behaviour. But in spite of these mistakes, both were granted the crown of life from the Lord, Who looks on the heart and intentions of men, forgiving them their unintended consequences…

Some have seen a less flattering parallel between Patriarch Tikhon and his successor, Metropolitan Sergius. We shall discuss Sergius in detail later. Suffice it to say at this point that, whatever compromises Patriarch Tikhon made, he never made them to spare himself, but only others, and he never betrayed his colleagues to death by calling them “counter-revolutionaries”…

Moreover, the Patriarch managed to write to Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), as it were replying to the perplexities elicited by his words on “wallowing himself off” from the “counter-revolution” of the Church Abroad: “I wrote this for the authorities, but you sit and work”.414 In other words, the Church was not to take his words seriously…415

the splitting up of the Church and a decline in faith among the young. Here he exaggerates, failing to take into account the strengthening of the patriarchate’s position vis-à-vis the other groups since July: “The goal which had been placed before the Section at the end of 1922 to move the Orthodox Church from its moribund and anti-Soviet position and to deprive it of that strength which it had held prior to that time, has been completely accomplished by the Section. The Orthodox Church as a single apparatus does not exist any more at the present time; it has been broken into several separate groups which have their separate hierarchies, and which are found in constant enmity to one another and which are disposed to be completely irreconcilable to one another.

“At the present time there are four such groups that are fully formed and which have their own ecclesiastical apparatus, namely the Tikhonites, the Renovationists, the Renascenists, and the Working Church. All of these groups have been placed in such a state, that willingly or unwillingly they are bound to constantly be at war with one another and to curry favour from the organs of civil authority. The enmity between these groups deepens from time to time and more and more, and concurrently the authority of the servers of the cult is being lost, and from this, among the faithful, and especially among the youth, is created an extremely passive, and at time inimical attitude even to the Church itself, on the grounds of which there begins to develop the growth of atheism.

“The splitting up of the Orthodox Church into the above-indicated groups is the fulfilment of only one part of the work which was completed regarding the Orthodox churchniks [tserkovniki] in 1923.”

414 Izvestia, June 12, 1924; Lebedev, Velikorossia, p. 577.
415 Cf. also the words of Archbishop Nicon (Rklitsky), who points out: “1) it did not annul the anathema in the name of the Russian Orthodox Church on Soviet power, 2) he did not declare himself a friend of Soviet power and its co-worker, 3) it did not invoke God’s blessing on it, 4) it did not call on the Russian people to obey this power as God-established, 5) it did not condemn the movement for the re-establishment of the monarchy in Russia, and 6) it did not condemn the Whites’ struggle to overthrow Soviet power. By his declaration Patriarch
Tikhon was released on June 27, 1923, and his appearance in public – he had aged terribly in prison – was enough to send the Living Church into a sharp and irreversible decline.\textsuperscript{416} They remained dangerous as long as they retained the favour of the authorities; but by 1926 the authorities were already turning to others (the Gregorians, then Metropolitan Sergius) as better suited for the task of destroying the Church. And by the end of the Second World War the last remaining renovationists had been absorbed into the neo-renovationist Soviet Moscow Patriarchate.

The decline of the renovationists after the Patriarch’s coming out of prison have led some to suppose that the price of that release, his “repentance” for his anti-Sovietism, was a price worth paying. However, the Patriarch bitterly repented of his “repentance”; he said that if he had known how weak the Living Church really was, he would not have signed the “confession” and would have stayed in prison.\textsuperscript{417} And when he was asked why he had said that he was no longer an enemy of the Soviet government, he replied: “But I did not say that I was its friend...”\textsuperscript{418}

On the next day the Patriarch wrote: “I am, of course, not such a venerator of Soviet power as the Church renovationists, headed by the Higher Church Council, declare themselves to be, but on the other hand I am not such an enemy of it as people present me to be. If in the first year of the existence of Soviet power I sometimes permitted sharp attacks against it, I did this in consequence of my education and the orientation that prevailed in the Council at that time. But with time much began to change and become clear, and now, for example, it is necessary to ask Soviet power to intercede in the defence of the offended Russian Orthodox in Poland and in Grodno region, where the Poles have closed Orthodox churches. However, already at the beginning of 1919 I tried to wall the Church off from Tsarism and Tikhon only pointed to the way of acting which he had chosen for the further defence and preservation of the Russian Orthodox Church. How expedient this way of acting was is another question,... but in any case Patriarch Tikhon did not cross that boundary which had to separate him, as head of the Russian Orthodox Church, from the godless power.” (\textit{op. cit.}, pp. 151-152).

\textsuperscript{416} Pospielovsky writes: "If by the end of 1922 the patriarchal Church in Moscow had only 4 churches against the 400 or so of the renovationists, in Petrograd after the exile of Bishop Nicholas almost all the churches had been seized by the renovationists, and throughout the country about 66% of the functioning churches were in the hands of the renovationists, then by November, 1924 the renovationists had about 14,000 churches, not more than 30%" (\textit{"Obnovlenchestvo: Pereosmyslenie techenia v svete arkhivnykh dokumentov"} (Renovationism: A Rethinking of the Tendency in the Light of Archival Documents), \textit{Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia} (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), № 168, II-III, 1993, p. 217).

\textsuperscript{417} Swan, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 83.

\textsuperscript{418} Quoted in Protopriest Lev Lebedev, “Dialogue between the ROCA and the MP: Why and How?”, report to be given to the Sobor of Bishops of the Russian Church Outside Russia, Great Lent, 1998.
intervention, and in September of the same year I appealed to the archpastors and pastors not to intervene in politics..."\textsuperscript{419}

In spite of the Patriarch’s “repentance”, the Bolsheviks continued to back the renovationists, and on December 8, 1923 forbade the commemoration of the “former” Patriarch in that such an act would be seen “as having the character of a clearly political demonstration against the Worker-Peasants’ authorities.”\textsuperscript{420} Moreover, the Patriarch was still seen, as Lebedev writes, “as a criminal whose accusation had not been removed... For violating this ban, according to the circular of Narkomiust № 254 of December 8, 1923, those guilty (that is, those who would continue to consider the Patriarch the head of the Church and commemorate him during the Divine services) were subjected to the punishment appointed for criminals – three years in the camps! But in spite of everything the people, the priests and deacons continued to commemorate him!”\textsuperscript{421}

On July 15, the Patriarch anathematised the Living Church, declaring: “They have separated themselves from the body of the Ecumenical Church and deprived themselves of God’s favour, which resides only in the Church of Christ. Consequently, all arrangements made during our absence by those ruling the Church, since they had neither legal right nor canonical authority, are non-valid and void, and all actions and sacraments performed by bishops and clergymen who have forsaken the Church are devoid of God’s grace and power; the faithful taking part in such prayers and sacraments shall receive no sanctification thereby, and are subject to condemnation for participating in their sin...”\textsuperscript{422}

This was the signal for a decline in the strength of the renovationists. Large numbers of parishes, especially in such important urban centres as Petrograd and Voronezh, now renounced renovationism, and influential renovationist hierarchs such as Metropolitan Sergius hastened (and yet not very quickly, as Hieromartyr Bishop Damascene of Glukhov pointed out\textsuperscript{423}) to make public confession to the Patriarch. Renovationism never fully recovered...

The Patriarch received Sergius in the following way. He explained that it was his Christian duty to forgive him, but that since his guilt was great before the people also, he had to repent before them, too. Then he would receive him with joy and love. And so he stood throughout the liturgy in simple monastic garments without his Episcopal mantia, klobuk, panagia, and cross. At the

\textsuperscript{419} Monk Benjamin, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 103-104.
\textsuperscript{421} Lebedev, \textit{Velkorossia}, p. 577.
\textsuperscript{422} Regelson, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 347; Gubonin, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 291.
\textsuperscript{423} E.L. \textit{Episkopy-Ispovedniki}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 68, note.
end of the liturgy he was led by the Patriarch out onto the amvon where he bowed to the people three times, after which the Patriarch restored to him them his panagia with cross, white klobuk, mantia, and staff.\textsuperscript{424}

Some sergianists have tried to show that Sergius did not really share the renovationist position.\textsuperscript{425} However, Sergius’ published statements, especially his epistle of June 16, 1922, contradict this view. Moreover, the renowned Elder Nectarius of Optina prophetically said that, even after his repentance, the poison of renovationism was in him still.\textsuperscript{426}

“Honour and glory to the late patriarch,” wrote Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) in 1925, “that, with all his good-natured condescension towards people, with all his yearning for peace, he never gave an inch of ground to this barren ‘living church’, but received penitents from her according to the rite for the reception of heretics and schismatics, and reconsecrated churches which were returned from them to their lawful pastors as churches ‘defiled by heretics’.” \textsuperscript{427}

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\textsuperscript{425} Pospielovsky, “Mitropolit Sergij i raskoly sprava” (Metropolitan Sergius and the Schisms on the Right), Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), № 158, 1-1990.

\textsuperscript{426} I.M. Kontsevich, Optina pustyn’ i ee vremia (Optina Desert and its Time), Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery Press, 1971, p. 546. The elder also said of the renovationist “church”: “There is no Grace there. By rebelling against the lawful Patriarch, Tikhon, the bishops and priests of the Living Church have deprived themselves of Grace and have lost, according to canonical ruling, their hierarchical office. Because of this, the liturgy performed by them is a blasphemy…” (Kontsevich, Elder Nektary of Optina, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1998, p. 209)

\textsuperscript{427} Metropolitan Anthony, in Orthodox Life, vol. 25, March-April, 1975.
**THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW CALENDAR**

Throughout the Orthodox world, the new political rulers after the First World War wanted to introduce the new, Gregorian calendar to replace the old, Julian one sanctioned by the holy canons and many centuries of usage. Why? In the Balkans and Constantinople, the motive appears to have been purely political: to obtain the support of the Masonic-led western powers. In Russia the motive was more subtle: as Yaroslavsky explained: “[The Patriarch’s] agreement with even one of these reforms (he has agreed to recognise the new, Gregorian calendar) will make him a ‘heretic’ – an innovator in the eyes of the True Orthodox.”\(^{428}\) However, God had pre-armed the Orthodox against the innovation. In 1583, 1587 and 1593, the Eastern Patriarchs had anathematized the new calendar; in 1904 all of the Local Churches had condemned it; and in February, 1918 the Local Council of the Russian Church in Moscow had again condemned it.

But the pressure from the Bolsheviks continued, and on January 21, 1919 Patriarch Tikhon wrote to the patriarch of Constantinople suggesting various options with regard to the calendar.\(^{429}\) When the renovationists adopted the new calendar, the pressure was increased. Thus on June 11, 1923, Yaroslavsky wrote to the Politburo and Stalin: “Tikhon must be informed that the penalty meted out to him may be commuted if... he expresses his agreement with some reforms in the ecclesiastical sphere (for example, the new style [i.e. the introduction of the new calendar]).” On September 18 the Antireligious Commission decreed: “To recognize as appropriate that Tikhon and co. should in the first instance bring forward the new style into the church, disband the parish councils and introduce the second marriages of the clergy...”\(^{430}\)

On September 24, 1923 Patriarch Tikhon convened a Council of bishops which took the decision to introduce the new calendar on October 2/15. The Patriarch explained his decision as follows: “This demand was repeated many times, and was reinforced by the promise of a more benevolent attitude on the part of the Government towards the Orthodox Church and Her institutions in the case of our agreement and the threat of a deterioration in these relations in the case of our refusal”.\(^{431}\) He also pointed to considerations of unity with the other Orthodox Churches; for he had been falsely informed by Tuchkov that all the other Churches had adopted the new style, whereas in fact all the Churches except Constantinople, Greece and Romania had objected to the change. Also, in a letter to Abbot Paulinus of Valaam dated October 6 he justified the introduction of the new style on the grounds that it introduced no innovation in faith, and the Orthodox Paschalion remained in force.\(^{432}\)

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\(^{429}\) Gubonin, *op. cit.*, pp. 332-338.


\(^{431}\) Gubonin, *op. cit.*, pp. 299-300, 335.

The decree on the introduction of the new style was read out in the Moscow Pokrov monastery on October 1/14. But it was sent out only to the deans of Moscow, while the diocesan bishops did not receive it, since Archbishop Hilarion had obtained permission from Tuchkov not to send it to the provinces as long as the patriarchal epistle explaining the change had not been printed. So the new style was only introduced in Moscow and in Valaam, where it was rejected by many of the monks. However, on November 8, when the Patriarch learned from Archbishop Anastasy in Constantinople that the patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem and Serbia, as well as ROCOR, were against the change, and when he saw that the Russian people were also strongly opposed to his decree, he reversed his decision “temporarily”, making use of the fact that his epistle on the calendar change had not been published. In spite of this, agents of the government posted up notices of the now annulled decree on the introduction of the new calendar. But the people saw in this the clear interference of the State, and so no attention was paid to the decree.

After the Patriarch recovered from his mistake, he and the Russian Church as a whole set themselves firmly against the new calendar…

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It was a different story in Constantinople and Greece… After the new revolutionary government took power in Greece, all the hierarchs who had condemned the election of Meletius Metaxakis patriarch changed their minds, and, as Stavros Karamitsos writes, “quickly hastened, one after the other, to recognize Meletius, except for two bishops, Sophronius of Eleutheropolis and our famous Chrysostom,… [who wrote in his Apology]: ‘I was then summoned, through the bishop of Kavala Chrysostom, to appear before the Minister, who urged me with threats to recognize Meletius. I took no account of his threats and refused to knuckle under. Then, to avoid a second exile to the Holy Mountain, I departed to Alexandria to see my relatives and to recover from my distress. While in Alexandria, I received a summons from the Ecumenical Patriarchate to appear before the Holy Synod and explain why I did not recognize the election of Meletius as Ecumenical Patriarch. But..., being unable to appear in person before the Synod, I sent a letter justifying my refusal to recognize Meletius as the canonical Patriarch on the basis of the divine and sacred Canons. And while he was preparing to condemn and defrock me in my absence, he was driven from his throne by the Turks for scandalously mixing his spiritual mission with anti-Turkish politics…”

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433 Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 300, 335; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 118.
However, the mood in Constantinople had begun to turn against Meletius during August-September, 1922, when the terrified Greeks began to leave at the rate of 3000 a day. One of those who left at this time was Hierodeacon Basil Apostolides. As Fr. Jerome of Aegina he was to become one of the great figures of the True Orthodox Church. He gave as reason for his departure to the Patriarch his fear that the Turks would force the clergy to take off their cassocks – a prophecy that was fulfilled twelve years later.436

“The second fall of Constantinople” took place for the same reason as the first fall in 1453 – the attempt of the Church to achieve union with the western heretics. The first concrete step towards that union was to be the adoption of the new, papist calendar... Already at the beginning of 1923, a Commission had been set up on the initiative of the government to see whether the Greek Church could accept the new calendar. The Commission reported: “Although the Church of Greece, like the other Autocephalous Orthodox Churches, is inherently independent, they are firmly united and bound to each other through the principle of the spiritual unity of the Church, composing one and one only Church, the Orthodox Church. Consequently none of them can separate itself from the others and accept the new calendar without becoming schismatic in relation to them.”

On the basis of this report a royal mandate was issued decreeing, among other things, that “the Julian Calendar is to remain in force as regards the Church and religious feasts in general”, and that “the national festival of the 25th of March and all the holidays laid down by the laws are to be regulated according to the Julian Calendar.”437

On February 3, Meletius Metaxakis wrote to the Church of Greece, arguing for the change of calendar at his forthcoming Pan-Orthodox Council “so as to further the cause, in this part of the Pan-Christian unity, of the celebration of the Nativity and Resurrection of Christ on the same day by all those who are called by the name of the Lord.”438 The revolutionary government of Greece under Colonel Plastiras then removed Metropolitan Theocletus I of Athens from office. Shortly afterwards, on February 25, Archimandrite Chrysostom Papadopoulos, was elected Metropolitan of Athens by three out of a specially chosen Synod of only five hierarchs – another ecclesiastical coup. During his enthronement speech, Chrysostom said that for collaboration with the heterodox “it is not necessary to have common ground or dogmatic union, for the union of Christian love is sufficient”.439

436 Peter Botsis, Gerontas Jeronymos o Isykhastes tis Aiginas (Elder Jerome the Hesychast of Aegina), Athens, 1991, p. 76.
437 Goutzidis, op. cit., pp. 68-70.
438 Goutzidis, op. cit., p. 76.
439 Cited in Bishop Photius, "The 70th Anniversary of the Pan-Orthodox Congress in Constantinople", Orthodox Life, № 1, 1994, p. 40. At about this time the Churches of Cyprus,
As one of the members of the commission which had rejected the new calendar, Chrysostom might have been expected to resist Meletius’ call. But it seems that the two men had more in common than the fact that they had both been expelled from the Church of Jerusalem in their youth; for on March 6 Chrysostom and his Synod accepted Meletius’ proposal and agreed to send a representative to the forthcoming Council. Then, on April 16, he proposed to the Hierarchy that 13 days should be added to the calendar, “for reasons not only of convenience, but also of ecclesiastical, scientifically ratified accuracy”. This in spite of the fact that only three months before he had signed the Commission’s report that rejected the new calendar, saying that any Church that accepted the new calendar would become schismatic… Five out of the thirty-two hierarch voted against the innovation. Two days later, however, at the second meeting of the Hierarchy, it was announced that Chrysostom’s proposal had been “unanimously” approved, but “with absolutely no change to the Paschalion and Calendar of the Orthodox Church”. Moreover, it was decided that the Greek Church would approve of any decision regarding the celebration of Pascha made by the forthcoming Pan-Orthodox Council, provided it was in accordance with the Canons…

It was therefore with the knowledge that the Greek Church would support his reforms that Meletius convened a “Pan-Orthodox Council” in Constantinople from May 10 to June 8, 1923. The resolutions included the “correction” of the Julian calendar, a fixed date for Pascha, the second marriage of clergy, and various relaxations with regard to the clothing of clergy, the keeping of monastic vows, impediments to marriage, the transfer of Saints’ feasts from the middle of the week, and fasting. However, hardly more than ten people, and no official representatives of the Patriarchates, turned up for the council, so discredited was its convener. And even Archbishop Chrysostom (Papadopoulos) had to admit: “Unfortunately, the Eastern Patriarchs who refused to take part in the Congress rejected all of its resolutions in toto from the very outset. If the Congress had restricted itself only to the issue of the calendar, perhaps it would not have encountered the kind of reaction that it did.” What made the changing of the calendar still less acceptable was its raison d’être, viz., that it “would make a great moral impression on the whole civilized world by bringing the two Christian worlds of the East and West closer…”

Jerusalem and Sinai all issued declarations recognising Anglican orders (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 91, 92).

440 Goutzidis, op. cit., pp. 74-78.

441 However, an Anglican hierarch, Charles Gore of Oxford, was allowed to attend one of the sessions, sitting at the right hand of Meletius and taking part in the work of the Congress.


Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev called the calendar innovation “this senseless and pointless concession to Masonry and Papism”. And Archbishop Nicon wrote: “The most important decrees of the Congress were the decisions to change to the new style [calendar] and to allow the clergy to marry a second time. The Alexandrian, Antiochian and Jerusalem Churches did not participate in the Congress, considering its convening untimely [and Meletius an uncanonical usurper]. But its decrees were rejected by them as being, according to the expression of the Alexandrian Patriarch, ‘contrary to the practice, tradition and teaching of our most Holy Mother Church and presented under the pretext of being slight modifications, which are probably elicited by the demands of the new dogma of “Modernism”’ (epistle to the Antiochian Patriarch, 23 June, 1923). The representatives of the Russian Church Abroad [Archbishops Anastasy and Alexander], and after them the Council of Bishops, reacted completely negatively to these reforms.”

The false council caused rioting in the streets of Constantinople, and the Orthodox population sacked the patriarchal apartments and physically beat Meletius himself... In fact, the position of the patriarchate was already so vulnerable, that during the Lausanne conference (1922-23), which decided on the massive exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey, the Turkish delegation officially demanded the removal of the patriarchate from Constantinople in view of its disloyalty to the Turkish government in the course of the past war. And the Italian president of the exchange of populations subcommission, G.M. Mantagna, even suggested that “the removal of the Patriarchate [from Constantinople] would not be too high a price to pay for the conclusion of an agreement.” However, the French delegation, supported by the Greeks, suggested that the patriarchate remain in Constantinople but be deprived of its former political power. And on January 10, 1923 the British Lord Curzon said that the removal of the patriarchate from Constantinople would be a shock to the whole civilised world.

The British, whose troops were still occupying Constantinople and probably prevented a massacre there similar to that which had taken place in Smyrna, suspected the hand of the Vatican in this proposal to remove the patriarchate. For, as the advisor to the Archbishop of Canterbury on Near Eastern questions, J.A. Douglas, said: “No one with the slightest knowledge of the Near East can doubt that Rome is bitterly hostile to the Phanar, and reckons a disaster to it as an institution to be a great thing.”

444 See Monk Gorazd, Monk Gorazd, "Quo Vadis, Konstantinopol'skaia Patriarkhia?" (Where are you going, Constantinopolitan Patriarchate?), Pravoslavnaia Rus' (Orthodox Russia), № 2 (1455), January 15/28, 1992.
446 Alexandris, op. cit., pp. 90, 91.
Venizelos then came up with a compromise proposal that the patriarchate remain in Constantinople but that he would do all he could to remove his nephew Metaxakis from it, a proposal that the Turks reluctantly agreed to.\textsuperscript{447} Meletius agreed to his resignation, but suggested its postponement until the conclusion of the peace negotiations, in June, 1923. On July 10, harassed by both Venizelos and the Turkish government, and challenged for his see by the newly formed “Turkish Orthodox Church” of Papa Euthymius, Meletius withdrew to Mount Athos. On September 20, he resigned officially.

On December 6, a new patriarch, Gregory VII, was enthroned. On the very next day, the “Turkish Orthodox” priest Papa Euthymius together with Metropolitan Cyril of Rodopolis and his supporters burst into the Phanar, drove out all the inhabitants and declared that they would not leave the Phanar until a “lawful” patriarch was elected and Gregory renounced the throne. Two days, after an order came from Ankara, the Turkish police escorted them out, and the Phanar was returned to Patriarch Gregory.\textsuperscript{448}

The irony was that, only a few years earlier, the patriarchate had broken with the Turkish authorities on the grounds of Greek nationalism. Now the patriarchate owed its rescue from the hands of Turkish ecclesiastical nationalists to – the Turkish authorities… Lausanne and the exchange of populations that followed spelled the end of Greek nationalist dreams, and the beginning of the end of Constantinople as a Greek city…

Metaxakis’s notorious career was not over yet. Platonov writes that after “hiding with his Masonic protectors in England” for a few years, in 1926, on the death of Patriarch Photius of Alexandria, “with the financial and organisational support of the secret world powers-that-be, Meletius was put forward as second candidate for the throne of Alexandria. The first claimant was Metropolitan Nicholas of Nubia. According to established practice, the first candidate should have been proclaimed patriarch. However, the Egyptian authorities under pressure from the English confirmed the ‘election’ of Meletius. Using his power, the new Alexandrian patriarch-mason introduced the Gregorian calendar [in 1926], causing a serious schism in the Alexandrian Church.”\textsuperscript{449}

This had major repercussions on the relationship between Constantinople and ROCOR. On March 30, 1924 the Ecumenical Patriarch appointed a commission composed of three metropolitans which told Archbishop

\begin{itemize}
  \item Monk Benjamin, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 90.
  \item \textit{Oriente Moderno} (The Contemporary East), January 15, 1924, p. 30; Monk Benjamin, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 118.
\end{itemize}
Anastasy that in carrying out ordinations and divorces he was exceeding his prerogatives. Nevertheless, no specific ordinations were discussed, but instead it was demanded of Anastasy that (a) he should not speak out against Soviet power, (b) ceased commemorating Patriarch Tikhon, and (c) recognize Bolshevik power. So the Ecumenical Patriarch by 1924 was what we should now call renovationist-sergianist as well as ecumenist!

At the same time the patriarchate tried to detain Metropolitan Anthony on Mount Athos... And “on 30 April 1924,” writes Psarev, “the Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople adopted a decision: they suspended Russian Archbishops Anastasy and Alexander, who were in Constantinople, and directed that all Russian clerics serving in Turkey were to consider themselves directly subordinate to the Patriarchate of Constantinople; and they informed the Serbian Patriarch that the Russian bishops located within Serbian canonical territory did not have the right to minister to Russian exiles.

“The Serbian Orthodox Church, however, had a different outlook on the plight of Russian bishops. In the reply from the Council of Bishops of the Serbian Church to the Patriarchate of Constantinople dated 9 December 1924 they stated: ‘The Holy Council of Bishops, as the supreme authority of the autocephalous united Serbian Church, gave its assent to a request from His Eminence Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich, during a council session held on 18/31 August 1921... which authorized the creation of a higher church authority of [Russian] bishops to manage church affairs for the Russian colony and exiles living on the territory of our [Serbian] jurisdiction. In doing so, the Serbian Council carried out its responsibilities in a spiritual manner that leaves us satisfied that we have fulfilled our apostolic responsibilities. Thus, we have accepted the Russian exiles, who because of circumstances have ended up in our spiritual realm, under our patronage, with the permission of state authorities. We have also willed that they be ministered to by their own priests and bishops who know best their spiritual needs and blessed church traditions. Thus, on the basis of canon law, they have the right to organize an autocephalous [autonomous?] church authority by their own free will.”

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It was the Freemason Archbishop Chrysostom Papadopoulos of Athens who took the lead in introducing the new calendar in Greece. Or rather, it was the revolutionary Greek government that took the lead, and Chrysostom immediately followed. Thus on December 14, 1923 the government decided to suspend the old Constitutional Law in accordance with which the Greek Church had been administered for the previous 70 years. According to the new Law, the Hierarchy would meet only once a year, and between sessions

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would be represented by the Archbishop of Athens alone. Metropolitans would have to retire at 65, which conveniently neutralized the influence of the older and more conservative hierarchs. Invested now with almost dictatorial powers, Archbishop Chrysostom convened a meeting of the Hierarchy, which, on December 24, voted to thank the government for emancipating it from the previous administrative system (!), and, on December 27, decided to introduce the new calendar with the agreement of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (but no other Orthodox Church).

It is striking how similar were the programs of the renovationists in Greece and Russia at this time. Both proposed a complete reformation of the Church with a very similar agenda. And both were pushed from behind by the political revolution... Thus the decision to change the calendar in Greece was imposed on the Church by the revolutionary government. At a meeting on December 24, Nicholas Plastiras, the President of the government, said to the hierarchs: “The Revolution requests you, then, my respected Hierarchs, to leave all personal preference to one side and proceed to purge the Church... The Revolution hopes that a useful work for the new generation will result from your labours, and that it will reckon itself happy to see the rebirth of the Church being set in motion... Consequently, it wishes you not to limit yourselves to the ancestral Canons, but to proceed to radical measures.”

On January 4, 1924, Chrysostom wrote to the Ecumenical Patriarch asking, in a rather lordly tone, for his agreement to the calendar change. He said that it was “sad” that the other Orthodox Churches had not agreed to this, but did not suggest that this might be an impediment. The Patriarch replied on February 14 in a much more sycophantic tone, suggesting that the change should take place on March 10 (henceforth March 23), but asking that he be informed of the agreement of the other Orthodox Churches. Chrysostom immediately telegraphed his agreement to this date, and asked the Patriarch to inform his metropolitans in the New Territories about it.

His haste was probably elicited by the Alexandrian Patriarch Photius’ message to the Ecumenical Patriarch on January 15: “Your announcement that, without any real cause or dogmatic or canonical reasons, the brotherly advice and entreaties of the four Apostolic Thrones has been rejected, and the ‘reform of the calendar’ has taken place, caused us great grief and surprise. You are in danger of alienating all the Orthodox peoples of the Church. Therefore I suggest the convening of a council to examine the question. Taking into consideration the letters from the Churches of Romania and Serbia, we abide in these things which have been dogmatized in former Synodal Congresses, and we reject every addition or any change of the calendar before the convocation of an Ecumenical Council, which alone is

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capable of discussing this question, concerning which Ecumenical Council we propose a speedy convocation.”

On February 16 Chrysostom telegraphed Photius, saying that an Ecumenical Council could not be convened immediately, and that the calendar change was an urgent necessity “for the sake of millions of Orthodox people”. After asking him to change the calendar on March 10, he added, rather craftily, that there would be no change in the Paschalion, for such a change would have to be referred to an Ecumenical Council (as if the addition of 13 days to the calendar was a much less important change that did not require a conciliar decision). But Photius was not persuaded...

The other patriarchs spoke out strongly against the calendar reforms. Thus Patriarch Damian of Jerusalem and his Synod wrote: “The most holy Mother of the Churches is unable to accept the change at present because of the disadvantageous position in which, as is well known, she finds herself in relation to the Latins in the holy places, and because of the dangers of proselytism.” And Patriarch Gregory of Antioch and his Synod wrote: “Political factors produced the change of the calendar even though the whole of the Eastern Church keeps to the Julian calendar. The tendency to change the canons represents a great danger in our eyes.” And Patriarch Demetrius of Serbia wrote: “We have indicated the necessity of postponing for the time being the council that has been convened in order that the question be examined before an Ecumenical Council so as to decide on a single calendar for all the Orthodox Churches.”

On March 3, Chrysostom wrote to all the Hierarchs of the Church of Greece that “in accordance with the decision of the Holy Synod the Church of Greece has accepted the correction of the Julian calendar defined by the Ecumenical Patriarch, according to which March 10 is to be considered and called March 23…” Finally, on March 4, he completed his coup, asking the Foreign Ministry to “send urgent telegrams to the Blessed Patriarchs of Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria and Serbia, and the Archbishops of Romania and Cyprus, informing them that the Church of Greece has accepted the decision of the Ecumenical Patriarchate concerning the convergence of the ecclesiastical and political calendar, calling March 10 March 23, and to inform the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople that the Church of Greece had put his decision into effect.”

As we have seen, the Ecumenical Patriarch accepted the change, albeit with the proviso that it be agreed by all the Orthodox Churches. This acquiescence is largely explained by the very weak position of the patriarchate in the wake of the Asia Minor catastrophe. For it was economically dependent on the Greek Church and could not afford to disagree.

In fact, Patriarch Gregory VII was personally opposed to the change. But he accepted it because, as he told the Holy Synod: “Unfortunately, the change in the calendar was imposed by the Greek government.” For as the tomos of November 13, 1924 declared: “The conduct of Church affairs must be compatible with the political and social forms”!

On Sunday, March 10, 1924 (March 23, according to the new calendar) the State Church of Greece and the Patriarchate of Constantinople adopted the new calendar. On that day, the future hierarch-confessor of the True Orthodox Church, Archimandrite Germanus (Varykopoulos) was serving the Divine Liturgy in his church of St. Alexander in Palaion Faliron. Having come to the end of the Liturgy, he commemorated “the holy 13 days whose memory we celebrate!”

On March 25, 1924 (new calendar), two important events took place simultaneously in Athens. The great feast of the Annunciation was celebrated according to the new calendar by Archbishop Chrysostom (Papadopoulos). And the Greek monarchy was abrogated (without a vote) by the revolutionary government.

As Nicholas Kraniotakis wrote: “Under strict orders, and to the sound of trumpets, the soldiers detached the Crown from the Cross and threw it to the ground! And Greek democracy was born!…”

This is another indication of the close spiritual link between events in Greece and in Russia. In both, political anti-monarchism was joined to religious renovationism. In Greece since 1917 the anti-monarchists and renovationists had been led by Venizelos in the State and Metaxakis in the Church.

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457 Metropolitan Calliopius, op. cit., p. 15.
458 From The New York Times, June 7, 1917, p. 22: “A miniature civil war between Venizelists and the supporters of King Constantine of Greece was fought in the basement of the St. Constantine’s Greek Orthodox Church at 64 Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn, last night when the Constantine faction sought to expel the pastor of the church for omitting the usual custom of saying ‘long live the King’ in every Sunday prayer.

“Police were called in to untangle the difficulties, and while the king’s men were at the Adams Street police station making complaints about the religious, political and military zeal of the Venizelists, the supporters of the pro-Allies ex-Premier elected a Board of Trustees and informed the pastor of the church, the Rev. Stephano Papamacaronis, that he could omit to pray for the King.”
Moreover, Meletius had been helped by the fact that in Russia the so-called “Living Church” had come to power in 1922 with a very similar programme of modernistic reforms to his own. And on the occasion of his election as Patriarch of Alexandria, the synod of the “Living Church” wrote to him: “The Holy Synod recalls with sincere best wishes the moral support which Your Beatitude showed us while you were yet Patriarch of Constantinople by entering into communion with us as the only rightfully ruling organ of the Russian Orthodox Church.”

On April 6, 1924, a vast crowd gathered in the courtyard outside the Annunciation cathedral. The next day the newspaper Vradini (Evening News) reported: “The priests have been forbidden, under pain of defrocking, to liturgise or chant the troparia of the Annunciation today. Also forbidden is the ringing of the bells of the Russian cathedral (in Phillelinon Street), and today’s celebration of the Liturgy at the metochion of the Holy Sepulchre, although the Patriarchate of Jerusalem has not accepted the new calendar.

“In spite of all the measures taken, multitudes of the faithful inundated the metropolitan cathedral from afternoon to late at night, and at their persistent entreaty one priest was found who chanted a paraklesis, being ‘obedient,’ as he said, ‘to the threats of the people’. The wardens wanted to close the church, but in view of the fanaticism of the worshippers the cathedral remained open into the night. Three miracles took place at the metropolitan cathedral... Seven-year-old Stasinopoulos, a deaf-mute and paralytic since birth, was brought by his mother to the icon of the Mother of God, convulsed by spasms. A little while later he arose amidst general compunction, pronounced the words “mama-granny-papa” and began to walk.

“A little later a seventeen-year-old paralytic was healed, and... a hard-working deaf-mute. The latter spoke yesterday for the first time in thirty years, declaring that he would not go to work today. Although the cathedral wardens know the names of these two, they refuse to publish them, affirming that no miracle has taken place, although the contrary is confessed by the whole congregation.”

Another newspaper, Skrip, reported on the same day: “Movement inside the cathedral was impossible. The faithful listened to the vespers, and after the dismissal anxiously discussed the change in the worshipping calendar and the transfer of the feast of the Annunciation. “Two thousand pious Christians, together with women and children, unanimously proclaimed their adherence to the holy dogmas of religion, which the democrats have come to change, and one voice was heard: ‘We will not become Franks! We are Orthodox Christians, and we will remain Orthodox Christians!’”

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459 Cited in Bishop Photius, op. cit., p. 42.
Similar scenes, and similar miracles, took place in other regional centres, such as Nauplion, Tripolis, Thessalonica and Corinth. The secular authorities everywhere supported the new ecclesiastical regime. But the faithful Christians, obeying the teachings of the holy Fathers and imitating the Christians of old who in similar situations broke communion with the innovators, themselves broke off all ecclesiastical communion with the innovating Church of Greece. They prayed at home or in country chapels, served by a very small number of priests, including some from Mount Athos, who were continually persecuted by the police at the instigation of Chrysostom Papadopoulos.

From the beginning the Lord showed by many signs and wonders that He was with the adherents of the Orthodox Calendar. Thus a miracle took place on January 6, 1925 – that is, the eve of the feast of the Nativity of Christ according to the Orthodox Calendar and the feast of the Theophany according to the new. The parishioners of the new calendar church of the Holy Apostles in Acropolis were following the Divine Liturgy. Suddenly they saw that tears were flowing from the eyes of the icon of the Mother of God, and blood from the heads of the Apostles. The amazed parishioners were not slow to see in this a sign of God’s anger at “the change in religion”, that they were baptizing Christ when He had not yet been born. The church authorities sent an archimandrite to convince the people that it was no sign from God but “an effluence from the wood, which is fir and is acted upon by excessive heat or also by... cold”! The archimandrite was laughed off the ambon. Finally, the authorities closed the church, preventing worshippers from entering. Today the church is denuded of icons and visited only by... tourists.460

* 460 Metropolitan Calliopius, op. cit, pp. 17-18, 22, 45-48.

The Romanian Church had already been tempted by the new calendar in 1864, when Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza “convoked a Church Synod at which he recommended that the Romanian Orthodox Church change from the Julian Calendar to the Gregorian Calendar. Also present at this Synod was Saint Calinic of Cernica (1787-1868), one of the most dauntless strugglers for the triumph of the truth and for the preservation of the True Faith. He was categorically opposed to the calendar innovation and exclaimed as he was leaving the hall in which the Synod was meeting: ‘I will not be reckoned with transgressors!’ Thus, the Prince did not succeed in implementing this recommendation, which had been imposed on him by Freemasons.”461

However, Cuza succeeded in getting some leading hierarchs sent to foreign heterodox institutions for training. Among them was Metropolitan Miron

461 Metropolitan Vlasie, preface to Constantin Bujor, Resisting unto Blood: Sixty-Five Years of Persecution of the True (Old Calendar) Orthodox Church of Romania (October 1924 – December 1989), Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 2003, p. 10.
(Cristea), a former uniate, who on December 17, 1923, as head of the Romanian Orthodox Church, wrote to the Patriarch of Constantinople that the Romanian Church accepted the decision of the “Pan-Orthodox Council” on the change of calendar, and that it would be applied in 1924.\footnote{Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 118.} And so in Romania, the new calendar was introduced in the same year as in Greece, October 1, 1924 becoming October 14.

In reward for this, on February 4, 1925, the Romanian Church was proclaimed a patriarchate by Constantinople, and on November 1 Metropolitan Miron was enthroned as patriarch of Romania. Then, in 1926 and again in 1929, he changed the date of Pascha to bring it into conformity with the western Paschalion.

The new calendar innovation was pushed through by Alexandru Lapedatu, the Minister of Cults. Nicolae Iorga, the future President of the Council of Ministers writes that it “did not bring about the expected results. People were beaten even in front of altars, and on the following day, after these desperate measures, the congregations were mostly empty, and the few people who were present – mainly clergy – were content to listen to proceedings of the driest imperial tradition.”\footnote{Iorga, The History of the Romanian Church; cited in Bujor, op. cit., p. 26.}

“These,” as Constantin Bujor writes, “were reports written in advance, in which the Faithful ‘begged’ for the use of the Gregorian Calendar in the Church, just as the peasants of Romania later ‘begged’ to enter en masse the collective agricultural cooperatives patterned after Soviet collective farms, according to the Congress of the Romanian Workers’ Party of February 18-20/March 3-5, 1949. Iorga continues: ‘Nevertheless, this decision to adopt the Western Calendar was taken too lightly and without recognition of the complex, conservative, and mystical psychology of the people, and it provoked a schism that still continues not only in Basarabia but also in the mountainous regions of old Moldavia.’ The population living in the extensive mountain regions remained steadfast in the ancestral Orthodox Tradition, from one generation to the next, from great-grandparents to grandparents, parents, children, and grandchildren, and so on, by recounting stories about the sacrifices made in the past, in the hope that such sufferings would leave memories and kindle the flame of the traditional Orthodox Faith everywhere. The press of this period mentions an eloquent declaration in this regard from some of the Faithful living in the vicinity of Cluj: ‘We, the whole village, will not abandon the Tradition and Faith into which we were born. It is up to the Priests to decide which religion they wish to join; we will have no part in this. But if we find that any of them want to introduce innovations here, such a one will no longer be our Priest.’\footnote{Bujor, op. cit., pp. 26-27.}
In fact, only one hierarch rejected the calendar innovation - Metropolitan Visarion (Puiu) of Bucovina, who went into exile and died in Paris in 1964.\textsuperscript{465}

Resistance to the reform was particularly strong in Bessarabia, where, as we have seen, there had already been strong resistance to the union with Romania and the removal of Church Slavonic from the churches. “The patriotically minded Bessarabian population,” writes Glazkov, “who took a very cautious attitude to any attempt by the Bessarabian authorities to liquidate the national particularities of the Moldavian people, met the reform with protests. ‘The Union of Orthodox Christians’ immediately condemned Metropolitan Gurias, who carried out the decision of the Synod, and began an active campaign against the new calendar style by publishing apologetic literature and conducting popular meetings and processions. Some of the Bessarabian priests who considered the reform of the calendar to be uncanonical supported the protests of the laity and rejected the Gregorian calendar. Around the churches where the Church Slavonic language and the Julian calendar were preserved (for example, the church of the Alexander Nevsky brotherhood), there gathered priests and laity. Thus in April, 1926 thousands of believers gathered at the church of St. Panteleimon in Kishinev for a pannikhida for Tsar-Martyr Nicholas II. Some priests openly celebrated all the feasts according to the old style in front of a large number of believers, which was defined by the authorities as rebellion, for many lay Old Calendarists were subjected to direct humiliations by the new style clergy. There was an attempt to build, in Kishinev, a church in direct submission to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who had remained faithful to the old style. According to the police, the majority of the population resisted the ecclesiastical reform, only individual parishes passed over to the Gregorian calendar. It is noteworthy that if, at the beginning, the civil authorities were quite conciliatory towards the Old Calendarists, allowing them to celebrate Pascha and other Church feasts according to the old and new styles, the official Romanian Church authorities took upon themselves police-fiscal functions in exposing and repressing them…”\textsuperscript{466}

In Bessarabia, the leadership of the movement against the new style had been taken up by the white clergy and the city intelligentsia. In other parts of Romania, however, the leaders were the monks; out of the 14,000 parish priests, almost none stood up against the calendar reform. The only exception to this, as Metropolitan Blaise writes, was “Archimandrite Galaction (Cordun), who at that time was serving as parish priest in the metropolitan cathedral in Bucharest and who used to preach there when there was no bishop.

\textsuperscript{465} Bujor, op. cit., p. 11.
\textsuperscript{466} K.V. Glazkov, “Istoricheskie prichiny nekotorykh sobytij v istorii Rumynskoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi do II mirovoj vojny” (Historical Reasons for Certain Events in the History of the Romanian Orthodox Church up to the Second World War), Tserkovnaia Zhizn’ (Church Life), No.3-4, May-August, 2000, pp. 48-49.
“... Fr. Galaction, who later became our first metropolitan, fought against the reform, but was unable to do anything, since he was only an archimandrite. He was very capable, and had studied in Petersburg with the future Patriarchs Alexis of Moscow and Cyril of Bulgaria, graduating with the degree of doctor of theology. Later, in 1935, he was consecrated to the episcopate - they thought he had changed his views. Three bishops who had been consecrated before the change of calendar participated in the consecration, so [apostolic] succession was not broken...

“This is what happened, for example, in Neamț monastery, where St. Paisius Velichkovsky was once the abbot. When the reform took place there were about 200 monks in the monastery, 80 of whom were clergy. This was the biggest monastery in Romania. It was here that the strongest movement against the new style arose. Two months before the reform the abbot warned the brotherhood: be careful, reforms are coming, do not accept them. This was as it were a prophecy. But out of the 80 hieromonks only 30 (not counting the monks) were against the reform; and of these 30 only 6 stood out openly in opposition - the rest did not separate for material reasons. By a decree of the metropolitan of Moldavia all the clergy who did not accept the new style were threatened with deposition, exile from the monastery and confiscation of their property - the man would be outlawed. Then a small group of monks with the most devoted and zealous priests left the monastery, and it is from this group that our Church begins its history. Neamț monastery as a whole accepted the new style, later they also renounced St. Paisius’ rule, for the keeping of which the monastery was renowned. Our monastery of Slatioara, which is not far from Neamț, inherited this rule and tradition.

“Here are the names of the (clerical) inhabitants of the monastery who resisted all their lives: Hieromonk Fr. Glycerius (later metropolitan), Hierodeacon David (the first abbot of the monastery at Slatioara), Hieromonk Pambo, Fr. Baruch, Fr. Gimnasius, Fr. Zosim, Fr. Gamaliel, Fr. Damascene, who died in the woods near the monastery. We also know the names of other monks of Neamț who resisted the new style. There were also nuns: Mother Macaria, who was the helper of the abbess of the biggest women's monastery in the country, Agapia, which became new calendarist (it now has 450 nuns), and who with her nuns founded the first women’s monastery in our Church.

“The small groups of clergy and monastics of these men’s and women’s monasteries - the purest, who had God in their hearts and not their property - rejected the reforms and were driven out of the monasteries, being forced to live in the world. The pious laity who supported them became like bees

\[ Fr. \ Glycerie \ (Tanas) \ was \ superior \ of \ the \ Protection \ skete. \ When \ Abbot \ Nicodemus \ (Muntianu) \ of \ Neamț \ monastery \ offered \ to \ put \ him \ in \ charge \ of \ another \ skete \ if \ he \ changed \ calendar, \ Fr. \ Glycerie \ refused, \ and \ with \ Deacon \ David \ (Bidascu) \ left \ the \ skete. \ (Monk \ Benjamin, \ op. \ cit., \ p. 132). \ (V.M.) \]
constructing hives, the churches, while these clerics were like queen-bees. That was how our Church came into being.”

“Two months before the calendar change,” writes Metropolitan Blaise, “something very momentous happened in the great Church of the Neamț Monastery. It was on the Eve of the Dormition of the Mother of God. The Ecclesiarch went to the Church to prepare all that was needed and to light the candles and kandelia for the Midnight Service. The weather was calm, with clear skies and numerous stars; no cloud was in sight. Suddenly, a great bolt of lightning came down from the heavens and, passing through a window in the dome of the Church, struck in front of the Miracle-working Icon of the Mother of God. It hit the stone floor, and a section of stone collapsed; from the impact, the candlestand that was affixed to this slab in front of the Icon was knocked over. [Cf. the words of the Lord in Revelation (2.5): “Repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place”]. When the Fathers and Brothers came to Church, the Priest who was serving told them what had happened; seeing the damage done by the lightning strike, they all concluded that it was a Divine sign.

“Here is another incident. When Father Glycherie reached the Coroi Ravine, a spiritual uneasiness overcame him. One night, after lengthy prayer, he was beset by heavy thoughts. ‘How is it possible,’ he said, ‘that in our country many Priests with advanced theological training, together with a large number of intellectuals, are leaving the Old Calendar, as it was bequeathed to the people by the Holy Fathers of the Orthodox Church, who have honoured it from times of old? Should I not abandon the Old Calendar and be one of these? Am I making a mistake before God by not changing?’ Late in the night, he had a beautiful vision: from the West, a dark cloud appeared; it tried to cover the whole world and was moving furiously towards the East, howling like a monster. In front of the cloud, a powerful storm formed, adorned with a chain as black as tar, on which black Crosses appeared. Everyone was frightened. But looking towards the East, he saw a snow-white cloud, glittering like gold; before it was a chain of gold, from which there were hanging Crosses of gold.

“A choir of Hierarchs also appeared – all with golden vestments, - walking towards the black cloud. In a designated place, the two clouds collided and the dark cloud fell; and in its place, a sea of water appeared, engulfing the earth…”

In 1926, two shepherds, Ioan and Mihail Urzică found Hieromonk Pamvu and Monks Galaction and Veniamin hiding in the Coroi Ravine. They then led

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468 Metropolitan Blaise, in Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia), № 2 (1479), 15/28 January, 1993, pp. 6-7.
them to Fr. Glycherie and Fr. David. The Old Calendarist monks were received with rejoicing by the faithful of Vănători, and it was decided to build a church. When it was built, Fr. Glycherie appointed Hieromonk Pamvu and his Monks Galaction and Veniamin to look after it. In this way a beginning was made to the Old Calendarist movement in Romania. In spite of continual persecution by the police and the new calendarists, it flourished. By 1936 Fr. Glycherie had built about forty large churches, most of them in Moldavia.

Metropolitan Cyprian writes: “The Romanian Patriarchate, both in 1926 and 1929, celebrated Pascha with the Latins, constituting an infringement of the Orthodox tradition of centuries. Indeed, on the second occasion that this was done, Patriarch Miron, having the undivided support of the Uniate (Greek-Catholic) prime minister, Julius Maniu, and several others among the clergy, compelled all of the Romanian Metropolises to proceed with the common celebration of Pascha with the Papists, a fact which evoked great commotion in the ranks of the Romanian Church. Metropolitan Gurius of Bessarabia openly criticized Miron and, ignoring the Patriarchal decree, ordered his churches to celebrate with the other autocephalous Orthodox Churches (i.e. with the entire Orthodox world, with the exception of the innovative Church of Finland). Patriarch Miron’s action also scandalized these other Orthodox Churches, many of which reacted in protest. As well, the White Russian clergy of Bucharest took a particularly strong position during those trying days, ignoring the Patriarchal order and celebrating Pascha in accordance with the traditional canonical decrees.”

The Romanian monks on Mount Athos fully supported their co-religionists in the homeland. Two hieromonks returned from the Holy Mountain to support their co-religionists in the homeland. However, the new calendarists prepared counter-measures. Thus in 1930, “there arrived in the Moldavian skete [of the Forerunner] from Romania one of the skete’s hieromonks, Simeon, a fifty-year-old who had been sent by Patriarch Miron to propagandise the new style on Athos. He brought with him a lot of money… from Romania. He also brought with him a lawyer, who was armed with an agreement obtained in Athens to conduct negotiations over the return of the metochion on the island of Thasos. The skete-dwellers received him with honour. They promised to gather the brotherhood and speak to them in the church about accepting the new style. But they prepared a trap for him. They summoned him to the hall, cut off his beard and pigtail, took the money sent for propaganda, put a jacket and hat on him and drove him out… He appealed to the police in Karyes for help, but they replied that this did not come within the compass of their responsibilities. This was the end of the propaganda for the new style on Athos. This was already the Romanians’ second piece of trickery. The first time they had received a letter from the

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470 Buzor, op. cit., pp. 52-53.
patriarch suggesting that they change to the new style. The skete-dwellers, on receiving this letter, served a triumphant all-night vigil, and, on the next day, a liturgy with a moleben, after which they pronounced an anathema on the patriarch, composing an official document which they sent on to him.”

In the 1920s and 1930s many Romanians fled from the new calendarists in Romania and Bessarabia. They constituted the majority of the new postulants in the Russian monasteries of the Holy Land. Among these was the famous priest-hermit Fr. John the Romanian (+1960), who never concelebrated with the new calendarists and whose relics are still incorrupt...

The adoption of the new calendar by the Churches of Greece and Romania in 1924 came at a very vulnerable time for the Orthodox Church as a whole. The outward position of the Church had changed radically in the previous ten years. The Russian empire was gone, and the Ecumenical and the Moscow patriarchates, to which the vast majority of Orthodox Christians belonged, were fighting both external foes (the Bolsheviks and the Turks) and internal schism (“the Living Church” and “the Turkish Orthodox Church”). Neither the remaining Eastern patriarchates, on the one hand, nor the Serbian patriarchate and the Russian Church Abroad, on the other, could take the place occupied by the Russian empire and the Ecumenical patriarchate in the preceding centuries. It followed that if, as was (temporarily) the case, none of the hierarchs of the Greek Church would reject the calendar change and break communion with the Archbishop of Athens, there was only one force remaining that could take up the banner of truth – the people.

The position of the laity in the Orthodox Church has often been misunderstood. In Orthodoxy, the laypeople are neither the inert, impotent, blindly obedient mass of the Roman Catholics, nor the all-powerful, revolutionary horde of the Protestants. There are two vital functions which can only be performed by canonically consecrated clergy: the administration of the sacraments, including the ordination of bishops and priests, and the definition of the faith, including the position of the Church in relation to heretics and schismatics. But while the laity cannot take the leading role in these two functions, they do have an important confirmatory role in them. Thus strictly speaking a bishop or priest cannot celebrate the Divine Liturgy without the presence of at least one layman. Likewise a bishop cannot ordain a priest without the consent of the people (expressed by shouting “axios!” or “he is worthy!”). And a definition of the faith that is rejected by the people will remain a dead letter. Thus we read: “I shall judge the bishop and the layperson. The sheep are rational and not irrational, so that no layman may

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472 Letter to Metropolitan Anthony (Khраповитский), in Glazkov, op. cit., p. 54.
ever say: ‘I am a sheep, and not a shepherd, and I give no account of myself, but the shepherd shall see to it, and he alone shall pay the penalty for me.’ For even as the sheep that follows not the good shepherd shall fall to the wolves unto its own destruction, so too it is evident that the sheep that follows the evil shepherd shall acquire death; for he shall utterly devour it. Therefore it is required that we flee from destructive shepherds.”

When the new calendar was introduced by the Pope in 1582 in order to create divisions among the Orthodox, it was synodically condemned no less than eight times: in 1583, 1587, 1593, 1722, 1827, 1848, 1895 and 1904. Towards the end of this period ecumenist tendencies began to increase in the Orthodox Churches, but opposition to the new calendar remained strong.

However, already in their encyclical of 1848, the Eastern Patriarchs had indicated the people’s role: “With us neither Patriarchs nor Councils could ever introduce anything new, because the defender of religion is the very body of the Church, or the people itself, who wanted their religion to remain forever unchanged and in accord with the religion of their Fathers.”

The question that arose in 1924, therefore, was: did the people (and a handful of clergy) have the right to separate from all the innovating bishops and, in the absence of any Orthodox hierarchs, declare themselves to be the truly Orthodox Church? The answer supplied by the Holy Tradition of the Church was a clear: yes. While certain functions that can only be performed by bishops, such as the ordination of priests, are temporarily suspended in such a situation, the Church does not cease to exist, and remains there, and only there, where the True Faith is confessed. For “where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them”, said the Bishop of bishops, the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 18.20).

Moreover, the 15th canon of the First-and-Second Council of Constantinople praises those who break with a heretical bishop even before his synodical condemnation. Indeed, there are several cases in the Church’s history of holy men either breaking immediately with heretical bishops – St. Hypatius in the fifth century, for example; or dying out of communion with all the bishops of the Church and yet being praised and glorified by succeeding generations – St. Maximus the Confessor in the seventh century, for example, and St. Arsenius of Paros in the nineteenth. Since the Churches of Constantinople, Greece, Romania, Finland, the Baltic States and Poland adopted the new calendar in 1924, there was no way the laity in these

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474 Apostolic Constitutions, 10:19, P.G. 1, 633.
475 In Poland, the Russian, Ukrainian and Belorussian press was full of protests against the innovation. However, the government strongly supported it, and there were some bloody confrontations with the police (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 121). The Church of Alexandria did not immediately accept the new calendar, but only in 1928 when Meletius Metaxakis became patriarch. Antioch followed after the war, and in 1968 – Bulgaria. The other Slavic Churches and Jerusalem continue to follow the Julian calendar to this day.
Churches could remain in communion with the other Churches keeping the old calendar unless they broke communion with their innovating hierarchs.

“But why such a fuss,” say the new calendarists, “over a mere ‘thirteen days’ difference?” Because the Apostle Paul said: "Hold the traditions" (II Thessalonians 2.15), and the tradition of the “old” Orthodox calendar was sealed by the fathers of the First Ecumenical Council and sanctified by many centuries of usage. To change the calendar, therefore, would be to break communion, not only with our brethren who keep the old calendar on earth, but also with all the saints who worship together with us in heaven.

It is in this rupture of communion that the major crime consists; for, as St. John Chrysostom says, “exactness in the keeping of times is not as important as the crime of division and schism”.476 “To tear asunder the Church means nothing less, than to fall into heresy. The Church is the house of the Heavenly Father, One Body and One Spirit”.477 The supreme aim of our life in Christ is unity in heaven and on earth, in time and in eternity - "that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us" (John 17.21); and anything which disrupts that unity is anathema to us. According to the Holy Fathers, schism is no less abhorrent and deadly a sin than heresy. Even martyrdom, writes St. Cyprian of Carthage, followed by St. John Chrysostom478, cannot wipe out the sin of him who divides the Body of Christ. For as Christ is one, so is His Church one; indeed, the one Christ cannot be separated from the one Church in that “the full and perfect Christ”, in St. Augustine’s phrase, “is Head and Body” together.479

“Since the Church,” writes Fr. Justin Popovich, “is catholically one and a unique theanthropic organism for all worlds, she cannot be divided. Any division would signify her death… According to the united position of the Fathers and the Councils, the Church is not only one but unique, because the one unique God-man, her Head, cannot have many bodies. The Church is one and unique because she is the body of the one unique Christ. A division in the Church is ontologically impossible, for which reason there has never been a division in the Church, only a division from the Church. According to the word of the Lord, the Vine is not divided; but only those branches which voluntarily refuse to bring forth fruit fall away from the ever-living Vine and are dried up (John 15.1-6). At various times heretics and schismatics have been separated and cut off from the one undivided Church of Christ; they have subsequently ceased to be members of the Church and united with her theanthropic body. Such were, first of all, the Gnostics, then the Arians and

476 Quoted by Liudmila Perepelkina, "Iulianskij kalendar’ - 1000-letnaia ikona vremeni na Russi" (The Julian Calendar - a thousand-year icon of time in Russia), Pravoslavnij Put’ (The Orthodox Way), 1988, p. 122.
477 St. Chrysostom, Homilies on Ephesians.
478 St. Chrysostom, Homilies on Ephesians, 4.4.
479 St. Augustine, Discourse on Psalm 37, 4.
Spirit-fighters, then the Monophysites and Iconoclasts, and finally the Roman Catholics and Protestants and Uniates and all the rest of the heretical and schismatic legion.”

The Athonite Elder Augustine writes: “It is a dogma of the Faith that the Church is not only Holy, Catholic and Apostolic, but also One, so that even though the Churches are seen to be many, one and one only is the Church composed of the many that are seen in different places. This is the teaching of the Holy Creed, this is the message of the Divine Scriptures, the Apostolic Tradition, the Sacred councils and the God-bearing Fathers. From this we conclude that the union of the Church is a most important dogma of the Faith.

“We have seen... that St. Constantine and the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council re-established both the inner and the outer unity of the Church, which is why the joyful autocrat cried out: 'I have reaped a double victory, I have both re-established inner peace through the common confession of the Faith and brought the separation which existed before into the unity of the Church through the common celebration of Pascha.'

“This, then, is unity, as we are assured by the Acts of the First Council, an inner unity and an outer unity, and neither can the first be a true unity without the second, nor can the second exist without the first. The relationship between them is like that of faith to works and works to faith. The one without the other is dead. Thus inner unity without outer unity is dead, and outer unity without inner unity is dead. And the first is defined by the common confession of the Faith, and the second by the visible harmony in accordance with the laws and institutions of the Church, both constituting the one and only true unity, the essential unity of the Church.”

In 1968 Abbot Philotheus Zervakos of Paros wrote to the new calendar bishop Augustine of Florina: “Since the old calendar is a written tradition, and since the new one is an innovation of papist and masonic origin, whoever despises the old calendar and follows the new is subject to anathema. Every excuse and justification is unjustified and ‘excuses in sins’...

“Last Sunday I had to go to the peak of All Saints and the Prophet Elijah... and as I was kneeling in front of their venerable icon I tearfully besought them to reveal to me which calendar I the wretched one should follow together with my brethren, my spiritual children and all the Orthodox Christians. Before I had finished my humble and pitiful petition, I heard a

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480 Popovich, *Orthodoxos Ekklesia kai Oikoumenismos* (The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism), Thessaloniki, 1974, pp. 80-82.
481 *Phoni ex Agiou Orous* (A Voice from the Holy Mountain), *op. cit.*, pp. 57-58. St. Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain writes, in his commentary on the 31st Apostolic Canon: "Even as the ecclesiastical traditions have need of the Faith, so also is the Faith in need of the ecclesiastical traditions; and these two cannot be separated one from another"
voice inside me saying: ‘you must follow the old calendar which the God-bearing Fathers who brought together the seven holy Ecumenical Councils and supported the Orthodox Faith handed down to you, and not the new calendar of the popes of the West, who have divided the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and despised the Apostolic and patristic traditions’!!!

“At that moment I felt such emotion, such joy, such hope, such courage and greatness of soul as I have hardly ever felt in the hour of prayer in the whole of my life...

“Do not suppose that following the papist calendar is a small thing. It [The Orthodox Julian calendar] is a tradition and as such we must guard it or we shall be subject to anathema. ‘If anyone violates any tradition, written or unwritten, let him be anathema’, declares the Seventh Ecumenical Council... This is not the time to continue to be silent... don’t delay, hurry.”

And he added that Chrysostom Papadopoulos had told him during a meeting: “If only I hadn’t gone through with it, if only I hadn’t gone through with it. This perverse Metaxakis has got me by the throat”!

On August 7, 1930 Metaxakis headed a delegation from the Churches of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Greece, Cyprus and Poland to the Lambeth conference of Anglican bishops. There they officially, on the basis of a report by the Anglicans recognising the priesthood to be a sacrament, declared that the Anglicans had Apostolic Succession.

But Metaxakis did not escape retribution. In 1935, on the death of Patriarch Damian of Jerusalem, he tried to acquire that see, too, but failed. It is said that he then went out of his mind, and six days later, grinding his teeth and wringing his hands, he died, groaning: “Alas, I have divided the Church, I have destroyed Orthodoxy.” He lied to the end; for he destroyed only himself, while the True Church will prevail over the gates of hell...


483 Hieromonk Theodoritus, op. cit., p. 25.
484 The Christian East, Autumn, 1930. In 1934 two Ugandan Anglicans applied to Metaxakis to receive them into Orthodoxy. He replied that the union of the Churches was not far off, so it would be better for them to stay where they were! (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 45)
485 Monk Paul, op. cit. p. 82.
THE FALL OF RENOVATIONISM

On April 18, 1924 the Greek renovationists tried a new tack in their continuing assault on the True Church: they voted to ease the difficult situation of the Ecumenical Patriarch in Ataturk’s Turkey by offering him to settle freely in one of the cities of Russia in exchange for his accepting all the decrees of their 1923 council. On May 6, Patriarch Gregory duly obliged, “removed” Patriarch Tikhon from administering the Russian Church, called on him to retire, and decided to send a delegation to Moscow to investigate and “to bring peace and end the present anomaly”. He also demanded “that the Russian Metropolitan Anthony and Archbishop Anastasius, who were residing Constantinople at the time, cease their activities against the Soviet regime and stop commemorating Patriarch Tikhon. Receiving no compliance from them, Patriarch Gregory organized an investigation and suspended the two bishops from serving. He asked Patriarch Demetrius [of Serbia] to close down the Russian Council of Bishops in Sremsky-Karlovtsy, but Demetrius refused…”

“The initiative of Constantinople with regard to this question,” writes Gubonin, “had been elicited by the provocative and lying ‘information’ from the renovationist Synod concerning a supposed ‘Tikhonite schism’ in the Russian Orthodox Church (that is, among them – the renovationists) and the supposedly universal desire among the clerical leaders (that is, of the renovationist-synodalists) to bring peace into the difficult situation that had been created with the cooperation of the lofty authority of the Ecumenical Vladyka (since, they said, all means had already been exhausted and they had no other hope!).

“Taking into account the complete isolation of the Russian Church from communion with the external world at that time, the falsely informed Patriarch Gregory VII fell into this renovationist trap, but was stopped in time by the sobering epistle of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon.”

Gregory abandoned his plans to send a mission to Russia, but relations between the two Churches continued to be frosty. When Metropolitan Peter came to power in Russia in April, 1925, he was presented with a letter from Patriarch Basil III which called on the “Old Churchmen” to unite with the renovationists. His comment was: “We still have to check whether this Patriarch is Orthodox…” Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) was also sceptical; he reacted to Constantinople’s recognition of the renovationists as follows: “Let them recognize them; the renovationists have not become Orthodox from this, only the Patriarchs have become renovationists!”

486 Monk Gorazd, op. cit.; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 122.
The Greeks continued to hedge their bets between the Russian Churches. Thus on July 10, 1927, Patriarch Damian of Jerusalem wrote to the renovationist synod recognizing it as “the only lawful bearer of Higher Ecclesiastical Authority on the territory of the USSR”. However, his successor, Patriarch Basil III broke communion with the Living Church in 1929 – only to enter into communion with the by now neo-renovationist Metropolitan Sergius! Nor did the reception into the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris, a rebel from ROCOR and a supporter of the heresy of sophianism, improve matters…

If the Moscow Council of 1917-18 established the basic position of the Church vis-à-vis the State, the renovationist council of 1923 revealed the basic modes of attack employed by the State against the Church, and thus provided the Church with valuable experience for the still fiercer struggles ahead. These basic modes of attack were:-

1. Control of the Central Church Administration. Like the State, the Church in Her post-revolutionary structure was a highly centralized organism. The astonishing success of the Living Church in its early stages was partly the result of its usurpation of the central administration and the confusion this engendered in the faithful. The Patriarch was in prison, and some reports said that he had resigned, others – that he had been killed. Although Metropolitan Agathangelus, circulated a secret order directing the bishops to rule their dioceses independently in accordance with the Patriarch’s ukaz no. 362 of November 7/20, 1920, the habit of looking to the centre for all major directives was difficult to break. This habit was broken, for some, only after the still greater shock of the events of 1927, when another unscrupulous hierarch, Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky), took control of the central administration of the Church.

2. The Façade of Canonical Orthodoxy. At first the renovationists put on a mask of canonical Orthodoxy, claiming to have received power by legal transfer from the Patriarch. But soon they – mistakenly - threw off this mask; and, as we have seen, the crudity of their attacks on the Faith and monasticism repelled the people. In future, the GPU would take care that their candidate for the leadership of the Russian Church would have at least the appearance of canonical and dogmatic Orthodoxy.

3. The Lure of State Legalization. In spite of the Patriarch’s “confession”, the Patriarchal Church never received legalization by the State during his lifetime. This meant that the Church was always as it were in the wilderness, without the favour and security enjoyed by the renovationists.

489 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 155.
The depths to which the renovationists were prepared to go in order to win this security is illustrated by the pannikhida they celebrated for Lenin after his death, in which they described his soul as “essentially Christian”! In the same vein was Vvedensky’s speech to the 1923 council, in which he said: “We must turn to the government with words of deeply felt gratitude. The Church is not persecuted, whatever the calumnies of the foreign propagandists may say. Everyone in Russia can voice his conviction. We must direct this message of thanks to the only Government in the world, which, though it does not believe in God, yet acts in accordance with love, which is more than we, who believe, can claim for ourselves.”490

Ironically, therefore, as Fr. Aidan Nichols writes, the renovationists came “to resemble the pre-Revolutionary establishment in their spirit of subordination to the State.”491 The Patriarchal Church, however, gained in spiritual authority. For, already in the early 1920s, the view was current that the faithful were living, in the Patriarch’s words, “in the years of the triumph of Satan and of the power of the Antichrist”. So the “Living Church”, in coming to terms with Soviet power, was, as the Patriarch said, “an institution of the Antichrist”.492 The Patriarchal Church, on the other hand, was like the woman fleeing into the wilderness from the red dragon (Revelation 12). And it was still to her that the faithful children of the Church clung...

However, in absolute terms the number of Russian Orthodox Christians was still falling, especially in the countryside. “When the Bolsheviks had fulfilled their promise about land after the revolution, most of the peasants in Central Russia were completely satisfied, and were ready to acknowledge their ideology, becoming cooler and cooler towards the Church. Although in the 1920s the Bolsheviks were still afraid to persecute the Church in the villages, the number of those who attended Church services was reduced to one third of that before the revolution.”493

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492 Regelson, op. cit., p. 313.
493 Benevich, op. cit.
THE RUSSIAN CHURCH DECENTRALIZED

Shortly before his death, Patriarch Tikhon confided to his personal physician and friend, Michael Zhizhilenko, that he felt that the unceasing pressure of the government would one day force the leadership of the Church to concede more than was right, and that the true Church would then have to descend into the catacombs like the Roman Christians of old. And he counselled his friend, who was a widower, that when that time came, he should seek the monastic tonsure and episcopal consecration. That time came in 1927 with the notorious declaration of Metropolitan Sergius; and Michael Zhizhilenko, following the advice of his mentor, was consecrated as the first bishop of the anti-sergianist Catacomb Church in 1928, for which he paid with his life in Solovki in 1931. Thus was the concept and even the name of the Catacomb Church foreseen by the Martyr-Patriarch himself; it was, and is the “Tikhonite” Church.

On April 7, 1925, his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon reposed in the Lord – it is almost certain that he was poisoned. According to his cell-attendant, Constantine Pashkovich, his next to last words, uttered with an unusual severity, were: “Now I shall go to sleep… deeply and for a long time. The night will be long, and very dark.”

On April 12, the deceased Patriarch’s will of January 7, 1925 was discovered and read out. It said that in the event of the Patriarch’s death and the absence of the first two candidates for the post of patriarchal locum tenens, Metropolitans Cyril of Kazan and Agathangelus of Yaroslavl, “our patriarchal rights and duties, until the lawful election of a new patriarch,… pass to his Eminence Peter, metropolitan of Krutitsa.” At the moment of the Patriarch’s death, Metropolitans Cyril and Agathangelus were in exile and unable to rule the Church. Therefore the 59 assembled hierarchs decided that “Metropolitan Peter cannot decline from the obedience given him and… must enter upon the duties of the patriarchal locum tenens.”

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494 I.M. Andreyev, Russia's Catacomb Saints, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman Brotherhood Press, 1982, p. 56.
495 For evidence that he was in fact poisoned, see Chernov, op. cit.; Lebedev, Velikorossia, p. 582; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 137; D. Volkogonov, Lenin, London: Harper Collins, 1994, p. 384.
496 Quoted in Danilushkin op. cit., p. 201.
497 Another will dated the day of the Patriarch’s death and published in Izvestia was almost certainly a forgery. See Chernov, op. cit.; Lebedev, op. cit., p. 582, Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 137, Protopresbyter George (later Bishop Gregory) Grabbe, Pravda o Russkoi Tserkvi na rodine i za rubezhom (The Truth about the Russian Church in the Homeland and Abroad), Jordanville, 1989; Protopriest Alexander Lebedev, Plod lukavij, Proiskhozhdenie i suschnost' Moskovskoj Patriarkhii (A Bad Fruit. The Origin and Essence of the Moscow Patriarchate), Los-Angeles, 1994.
498 Gubonin, op. cit, p. 413.
Metropolitan Peter proved to be a strong rock against which the waves of the atheists and renovationists beat in vain. In an epistle dated July 28, 1925, he declared concerning the renovationists: “In the holy Church of God only that is lawful which is approved by the God-ordained ecclesiastical government, preserved by succession since the time of the Apostles. All arbitrary acts, everything that has been done by the new-church party without the approval of the most holy Patriarch now at rest with God, everything that is now done without our approval – all this has no validity in accordance with the canons of the holy Church (Apostolic canon 34; Council of Antioch, canon 9), for the true Church is one, and the grace of the most Holy Spirit residing in her is one, for there can be no two Churches or two graces. ‘There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all’ (Ephesians, 4.4-6).”

Meanwhile, Tuchkov initiated discussions with Peter with regard to “legalizing” the Church. This “legalization” promised to relieve the Church’s rightless position, but on the following conditions:

1) the issuing of a declaration of a pre-determined content;
2) the exclusion from the ranks of the bishops of those who were displeasing to the authorities;
3) the condemnation of the émigré bishops; and
4) the participation of the government, in the person of Tuchkov, in the future activities of the Church.

However, Metropolitan Peter refused to accept these conditions or sign the text of the declaration Tuchkov offered him. For, as he once said to Tuchkov: “You’re all liars. You give nothing, except promises. And now please leave the room, we are about to have a meeting.”

On December 12, Metropolitan Peter was imprisoned in the Lubyanka. The other locum tenentes, Metropolitan Cyril and Agathangel, had already been exiled. There followed a tussle for power between different Church parties claiming to be the lawful deputies of Peter which was eventually won by Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) of Nizhni-Novgorod, the former renovationist. The communists had removed the last canonical leaders of the Russian Church, and they were ready now to place their own candidate on the throne of all the Russias...

On June 7, 1926 a group of bishops imprisoned on Solovki issued an epistle that squarely faced up to the problems of Church-State relations in the Soviet Union. Although the Orthodox Church had cooperated with many kinds of regime in her history, there were definite limits to such cooperation, the

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500 Gubonin, op. cit., p. 402.
bishops said, with regard to the communist state. “The Church recognizes
spiritual principles of existence; Communism rejects them. The Church
believes in the living God, the Creator of the world, the Leader of Her life and
destinies; Communism denies His existence, believing in the spontaneity of
the world’s existence and in the absence of rational, ultimate causes of its
history. The Church assumes that the purpose of human life is in the heavenly
fatherland, even if She lives in conditions of the highest development of
material culture and general well-being; Communism refuses to recognize
any other purpose of mankind’s existence than terrestrial welfare. The
ideological differences between the Church and the State descend from the
apex of philosophical observations to the region of immediately practical
significance, the sphere of ethics, justice and law, which Communism
considers the conditional result of class struggle, assessing phenomena in the
moral sphere exclusively in terms of utility. The Church preaches love and
mercy; Communism – camaraderie and merciless struggle. The Church instils
in believers humility, which elevates the person; Communism debases man
by pride. The Church preserves chastity of the body and the sacredness of
reproduction; Communism sees nothing else in marital relations than the
satisfaction of the instincts. The Church sees in religion a life-bearing force
which does not only guarantee for men his eternal, foreordained destiny, but
also serves as the source of all the greatness of man’s creativity, as the basis
of his earthly happiness, sanity and welfare; Communism sees religion as
opium, inebriating the people and relaxing their energies, as the source of
their suffering and poverty. The Church wants to see religion flourish;
Communism wants its death. Such a deep contradiction in the very basis of
their Weltanschauungen precludes any intrinsic approximation or
reconciliation between the Church and the State, as there cannot be any
between affirmation and negation, between yes and no, because the very soul
of the Church, the condition of Her existence and the sense of Her being, is
that which is categorically denied by Communism.

“The Church cannot attain such an approximation by any compromises or
concessions, by any partial changes in Her teaching or reinterpretation of it in
the spirit of Communism. Pitiful attempts of this kind were made by the
renovationists: one of them declared it his task to instil into the consciousness
of believers the idea that Communism is in its essence indistinguishable from
Christianity, and that the Communist State strives for the attainment of the
same aims as the Gospel, but by its own means, that is, not by the power of
religious conviction, but by the path of compulsion. Others recommended a
review of Christian dogmatics in such a way that its teaching about the
relationship of God to the world would not remind one of the relationship of
a monarch to his subjects and would rather correspond to republican
conceptions. Yet others demanded the exclusion from the calendar of saints
‘of bourgeois origin’ and their removal from church veneration. These
attempts, which were obviously insincere, produced a profound feeling of
indignation among believing people.
“The Orthodox Church will never stand upon this unworthy path and will never, either in whole or in part, renounce her teaching of the Faith that has been winnowed through the holiness of past centuries, for one of the eternally shifting moods of society…”

On June 10, Metropolitan Sergius issued an address to the archpastors, pastors and flock of the Russian Church in the same spirit, noting that there were certain irreconcilable differences between the Church and the State. At the same time, however, he argued for the necessity of the Church being legalized by the State. The question of legalization proved to be the Achilles’ heel through which the communists took control of the official Church.

In December Sergius was arrested, so Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd took over as Peter’s deputy, in accordance with the latter’s will of one year before. But Joseph was prevented from leaving Yaroslavl by the authorities, so he handed the leadership of the Church to his deputies: Archbishop Cornelius (Sobolev), Archbishop Thaddeus (Uspensky) and Archbishop Seraphim (Samoilovich) of Uglich. On December 29, Metropolitan Joseph was arrested, and on the same day Archbishop Seraphim wrote that he was taking upon himself the duties of the deputy of the patriarchal locum tenens.

In the same month of December, 1926, Tuchkov proposed to Metropolitan Peter, who was in prison in Suzdal, that he renounce his locum tenancy. Peter refused, and then sent a message to everyone through a fellow prisoner that he would “never under any circumstances leave his post and would remain faithful to the Orthodox Church to death itself”.

Then, on January 1, 1927, while he was in Perm on his way to exile on the island of Khe in Siberia, Metropolitan Peter confirmed Sergius as his deputy, being apparently unaware of the recent changes in the leadership of the Church. Though he came to regret this decision, Metropolitan Peter was not able to revoke it officially from his remote exile. And Metropolitan Sergius now acted as if he did not exist...

At the beginning of March, Archbishop Seraphim was summoned from Uglich to Moscow and interrogated for three days by the GPU. He was offered a Synod, and indicated who should be its members. Seraphim refused, and put forward his own list of names, which included Metropolitan Cyril.

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502 Gubonin, op. cit., p. 422. Peter’s choice of deputies was: Sergius of Nizhni-Novgorod, Michael of the Ukraine, and Joseph of Rostov, in that order.
503 If Archbishop Seraphim had not been in freedom, then, according to Metropolitan Joseph’s epistle, the bishops were to govern their dioceses independently (Tsypin, op. cit., p. 86).
504 Regelson, op. cit., p. 408.
“But he’s in prison,” they said.

“Then free him,” said the archbishop.

The GPU then presented him with the familiar conditions for legalization.

Gustavson writes: “He refused outrightly without entering into discussions, pointing out that he was not entitled to decide such questions without the advice of his imprisoned superiors. When he was asked whom he would appoint as his executive deputy he is said to have answered that he would turn over the Church to the Lord Himself. The examining magistrate was said to have looked at him full of wonder and to have replied:

“‘All the others have appointed deputies…’

“To this Seraphim countered: ‘But I lay the Church in the hands of God, our Lord. I am doing this, so that the whole world may know what freedom Orthodox Christianity is enjoying in our free State.’”

This was a decisive moment, for the central hierarch of the Church was effectively declaring the Church’s decentralization. And not before time. For with the imprisonment of the last of the three possible locum tenentes there was really no canonical basis for establishing a central administration for the Church before the convocation of a Local Council. But this was prevented by the communists. The system of deputies of the deputy of the locum tenens had no basis in Canon Law or precedent in the history of the Church. And if it was really the case that the Church could not exist without a first hierarch and central administration, then the awful possibility existed that with the fall of the first hierarch the whole Church would fall, too…

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On March 20, 1927 Metropolitan Sergius was released from prison and was given back the reins of the Church by Archbishop Seraphim. On March 28 Metropolitan Cyril was given another term in exile – and it is clear from the court records that the main reason was his secret election as patriarch by the confessing bishops. But why, then, was not Metropolitan Sergius not imprisoned, too? Evidently, he had reached an agreement with the authorities, while Metropolitan Cyril (together with Metropolitan Agathangel) had rejected any such agreement. Indeed, the conversation between Tuchkov and Metropolitan Cyril concerning the conditions of the latter’s leadership of the Church is reported to have gone something like this:

“If we have to remove some hierarch, will you help us in this?”

“Yes, if the hierarch appears to be guilty of some ecclesiastical transgression… In the contrary case, I shall tell him directly, ‘The authorities are demanding this of me, but I have nothing against you.’”

“No!” replied Tuchkov. “You must try to find an appropriate reason and remove him as if on your own initiative.”

To this the hierarch replied: “Eugene Nikolayevich! You are not the cannon, and I am not the shot, with which you want to blow up our Church from within!”

But they found the shot – Metropolitan Sergius, who had played a leading role in the first Church revolution in 1917 and in the second, renovationist one in 1922, when he officially declared the renovationists’ Higher Church Authority to be “the only canonical, lawful supreme ecclesiastical authority, and we consider all the decrees issuing from it to be completely lawful and binding.” In 1923 Metropolitan Sergius had supported the renovationists’ defrocking of Patriarch Tikhon as “a traitor to Orthodoxy”. True, on August 27, 1923, he was forced to offer public repentance for his betrayal of Orthodoxy in renovationism. But as Hieromartyr Damascene later pointed out, he had not been in a hurry to offer repentance… Moreover, as the Catholic writer Deinber points out, “the fact of the liberation of Metropolitan Sergius at this moment, when the repressions against the Church throughout...

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507 In later years, after Sergius’ betrayal of the Church, Archbishop Seraphim is reported to have reasserted his rights as patriarchal locum tenens. See Michael Khlebnikov, “O tservkovnoj situatsii v Kostrome v 20-30-e gody” (On the Church Situation in Kostroma in the 20s and 30s), Prawoslavnnaia Zhizn’ (Orthodox Life), 49, № 5 (569), May, 1997, p. 19.


509 Regelson, op. cit., p. 413.

510 The Living Church, №№ 4-5, 14 July, 1922; Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 218-19.
Russia were all the time increasing, when his participation in the affair of the election of Metropolitan Cyril, for which a whole series of bishops had paid with exile, was undoubted, immediately aroused anxiety, which was strengthened when, on April 25 / May 8, a Synod was unexpectedly convoked in Moscow. It became certain that between Metropolitan Sergius, during his imprisonment, and the Soviet government, i.e. the GPU, some sort of agreement had been established, which placed both him and the bishops close to him in a quite exceptional position relative to the others. Metropolitan Sergius received the right to live in Moscow, which right he had not enjoyed even before his arrest. When the names of the bishops invited to join the Synod were made known, then there could be no further doubts concerning the capitulation of Metropolitan Sergius before Soviet power. The following joined the Synod: Archbishop Sylvestor (Bratanovsky) – a former renovationist; Archbishop Alexis Simansky – a former renovationist, appointed to the Petrograd see by the Living Church after the execution of Metropolitan Benjamin [Kazansky]; Archbishop Philip [Gumilevsky] – a former beglopopovets, i.e. one who had left the Orthodox Church for the sect of the beglopopovtsi; Metropolitan Seraphim [Alexandrov] of Tver, a man whose connections with the OGPU were known to all Russia and whom no-one trusted…"511

On May 20, the OGPU officially recognized this Synod512, which suggested that Metropolitan Sergius had agreed to the terms of legalization which Patriarch Tikhon and Metropolitan Peter had rejected. One of Sergius’ closest supporters, Bishop Metropbanes of Aksaik, had once declared that “the legalisation of the church administration is a sign of heterodoxy”… In any case, Metropolitan Sergius and his “Patriarchal Holy Synod” now wrote to the bishops enclosing the OGPU document and telling them that their diocesan councils should now seek registration from the local organs of Soviet power. Then, in June, Sergius wrote to Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris directing him to sign a declaration of loyalty to the Soviet power. He agreed… On July 14, in ukaz № 93, Sergius demanded that all clergy abroad should sign a formal pledge to cease criticizing the Soviet government. It also stated that any clergyman abroad who refused to sign such would no longer be considered to be a part of the Moscow Patriarchate. This ukaz, which completely contradicted his previous ukaz of September 12, 1926, which blessed the hierarchs abroad to form their own independent administration, even included the actual text of the pledge that was to be signed: “I, the undersigned, promise that because of my actual dependence upon the Moscow Patriarchate, I will not permit myself in either my social activities nor especially in my Church work, any expression that could in the least way be considered as being disloyal with regard to the Soviet government.”513

512 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 163-164.
513 Quoted in Protopriest Alexander Lebedeff, “Is the Moscow Patriarchate the ‘Mother Church’ of the ROCOR”, Orthodox@ListServ. Indiana.Edu, 24 December, 1997.
The clergy abroad were given until October 15 to sign this pledge. The Council of Bishops of the Russian Church Outside Russia (ROCOR), in their encyclical dated August 26, 1927, refused this demand and declared: “The free portion of the Church of Russia must terminate relations with the ecclesiastical administration in Moscow [i.e., with Metropolitan Sergius and his synod], in view of the fact that normal relations with it are impossible and because of its enslavement by the atheist regime, which is depriving it of freedom to act according to its own will and of freedom to govern the Church in accordance with the canons.”

However, Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris, agreed to sign, “but on condition that the term ‘loyalty’ means for us the apoliticisation of the émigré Church, that is, we are obliged not to make the ambon a political arena, if this will relieve the difficult situation of our native Mother Church; but we cannot be ‘loyal’ to Soviet power: we are not citizens of the USSR, and the USSR does not recognise us as such, and therefore the political demand is from the canonical point of view non-obligatory for us…”

On July 5, 1928, the Hierarchical Synod of ROCOR decreed: “The present ukaz [of Sergius] introduces nothing new into the position of the Church Abroad. It repeats the same notorious ukaz of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon in 1922, which was decisively rejected by the whole Church Abroad in its time.” In response to this refusal, Metropolitan Sergius expelled the ROCOR hierarchs from membership of the Moscow Patriarchate. So the first schism between the Russian Church inside and outside Russia took place as a result of the purely political demands of Sergius’ Moscow Patriarchate.

The refusal of ROCOR was supported by the Solovki bishops: “The epistle threatens those church-servers who have emigrated with exclusion from the Moscow Patriarchate on the grounds of their political activity, that is, it lays an ecclesiastical punishment upon them for political statements, which contradicts the resolution of the All-Russian Council of 1917-18 of August 3/16, 1918, which made clear the canonical impermissibility of such punishments, and rehabilitated all those people who were deprived of their orders for political crimes in the past.”

Meanwhile, ominous events were taking place in Georgia. “Between June 21 and 27, 1927,” writes Fr. Elijah Melia, “a Council elected as Catholicos Christopher Tsitskichvili. On August 6 he wrote to the Ecumenical Patriarch

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514 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 171.
515 Tsypin, op. cit., p. 383. Monk Benjamin (op. cit., p. 172) writes that on September 13, Metropolitan Eulogius wrote to Sergius asking that he be given autonomy. On September 24 Sergius replied with a refusal.
516 Tsypin, op. cit., p. 384.
Basil III who replied addressing him as Catholicos. The new Catholicos entirely changed the attitude of the ecclesiastical hierarchy towards the Soviet power, officially declared militant atheist, in favour of submission and collaboration with the Government.”

During a synodal session under the presidency of the new Catholicos, it was decided to introduce the new style into the Georgian Church. However, the reform was rejected by the people and the majority of the priests. So it fell through and was repealed within a few months. All this, according to Boris Sokolov, took place under the influence of the head of the Georgian KGB, Laurence Pavlovich Beria, who wrote in 1929: “By our lengthy labours we succeeded in creating an opposition to Catholicos Ambrose and the then leading group in the Georgian Church, and... in January, 1927 we succeeded in completely wresting the reins of the government of the Georgian Church from the hands of Ambrose, and in removing him and his supporters from a leading role in the Georgian Church. In April, after the death of Catholicos Ambrose, Metropolitan Christopher was elected Catholicos. He is completely loyal to Soviet power, and already the Council that elected Christopher has declared its loyalty to the power and has condemned the politics and activity of Ambrose, and in particular, the Georgian emigration.” There followed, as Fr. Samson Zateishvili writes, “the persecution of clergy and believers, the dissolution of monasteries, the destruction of churches and their transformation into warehouses and cattle-sheds... The situation of the Church in Georgia was, perhaps, still more tragic and hopeless [than in the Russian Church], insofar as the new trials were imposed on old, unhealed wounds which remained from previous epochs.”

In October, 1930, the future Archbishop Leontius of Chile noted: “I arrived in Tbilisi in the evening,” he wrote in his Memoirs, and went straight with my letter to the cathedral church of Sion... The clergy of the cathedral were so terrified of the Bolsheviks that they were afraid to give me shelter in their houses and gave me a place to sleep in the cathedral itself.”

As if taking his cue from the Georgians, on July 16/29, Metropolitan Sergius issued the infamous Declaration that has been the basis of the existence of the Sovietized Moscow Patriarchate ever since, and which was to cause the greatest and most destructive schism in the history of the Orthodox Church since the fall of the Papacy in the eleventh century.

519 Monk Benjamin (Gomarteli), Letopis’ Tserkovnykh Sobytij (1928-1938) (Chronicle of Church Events (1928-1938), vol. 2, pp. 5-6.
520 Zateishvili, “Gruzinskaia Tserkov’ i polnota pravoslavia” (The Georgian Church and the Fullness of Orthodoxy), in Bessmertny. and Filatov, op. cit., p. 422.
First he pretended that Patriarch Tikhon had always been aiming to have the Church legalized by the State, but had been frustrated by the émigré hierarchs and by his own death. There is a limited truth in this – but it was not the émigré hierarchs that frustrated the patriarch, nor did he want the kind of legalization Sergius wanted… Then he went on: “At my proposal and with permission from the State, a blessed Patriarchal Synod has been formed by those whose signatures are affixed to this document at its conclusion. Missing are the Metropolitan of Novgorod, Arsenius, who has not arrived yet, and Archbishop Sebastian of Kostroma, who is ill. Our application that this Synod be permitted to take up the administration of the Orthodox All-Russian Church has been granted. Now our Orthodox Church has not only a canonically legal central administration but a central administration that is legal also according to the law of the State of the Soviet Union. We hope that this legalization will be gradually extended to the lower administrative units, to the dioceses and the districts. It is hardly necessary to explain the significance and the consequences of this change for our Orthodox Church, her clergy and her ecclesiastical activity. Let us therefore thank the Lord, Who has thus favoured our Church. Let us also give thanks before the whole people to the Soviet Government for its understanding of the religious needs of the Orthodox population. At the same time let us assure the Government that we will not misuse the confidence it has shown us.

“In undertaking now, with the blessings of the Lord, the work of this Synod, we clearly realize the greatness of our task and that of all the representatives of the Church. We must show not only with words but with deeds, that not only people indifferent to the Orthodox Faith or traitors to the Orthodox Church can be loyal citizens of the Soviet Union and loyal subjects of the Soviet power, but also the most zealous supporters of the Orthodox Church, to whom the Church with all her dogmas and traditions, with all her laws and prescriptions, is as dear as Truth and Life.

“We want to be Orthodox, and at the same time to see the Soviet Union as our civil Fatherland, whose triumphs and successes are also our triumphs and successes, whose failures are our failures. Every attack, boycott, public catastrophe or an ordinary case of assassination, as the recent one in Warsaw, will be regarded as an attack against ourselves…”

Lebedev comments on this: “This murder in Warsaw was the murder by B. Koverdaya of the Bolshevik Voikoff (also known as Weiner), who was one of the principal organizers of the murder of the Imperial Family, which fact was well known then, in 1927. So Sergius let the Bolsheviks clearly understand that he and his entourage were at one with them in all their evil deeds up to and including regicide.”

Metropolitan Sergius continued: “Even if we remain Orthodox, we shall yet do our duties as citizens of the Soviet Union ‘not only for wrath but also for conscience’s sake’ (Romans 13.5), and we hope that with the help of God and through working together and giving support to one another we shall be able to fulfil this task.

“We can be hindered only by that which hindered the construction of Church life on the bases of loyalty in the first years of Soviet power. This is an inadequate consciousness of the whole seriousness of what has happened in our country. The establishment of Soviet power has seemed to many like some kind of misunderstanding, something coincidental and therefore not long lasting. People have forgotten that there are no coincidences for the Christian and that in what has happened with us, as in all places and at all times, the same right hand of God is acting, that hand which inexorably leads every nation to the end predetermined for it. To such people who do not want to understand ‘the signs of the times’, it may also seem that it is wrong to break with the former regime and even with the monarchy, without breaking with Orthodoxy... Only ivory-tower dreamers can think that such an enormous society as our Orthodox Church, with the whole of its organisation, can have a peaceful existence in the State while hiding itself from the authorities. Now, when our Patriarchate, fulfilling the will of the reposed Patriarch, has decisively and without turning back stepped on the path of loyalty, the people who think like this have to either break themselves and, leaving their political sympathies at home, offer to the Church only their faith and work with us only in the name of faith, or (if they cannot immediately break themselves) at least not hinder us, and temporarily leave the scene. We are sure that they will again, and very soon, return to work with us, being convinced that only the relationship to the authorities has changed, while faith and Orthodox Christian life remain unshaken...”

An article in Izvestia immediately noted the essence of the declaration – a return to renovationism: “The far-sighted part of the clergy set out on this path already in 1922”. So “sergianism”, as Sergius’ position came to be known, was “neo-renovationism”, and therefore subject to the same condemnation as the earlier renovationism of “the Living Church”. As recently as November, 2008 the True Orthodox Church of Russia has defined sergianism as “a neo-renovationist schism”.

The radical error that lay at the root of this declaration lay in the last sentence quoted, in the idea that, in an antichristian state whose aim was the extirpation of all religion, it was possible to preserve loyalty to the State while “faith and Orthodox Christian life remained unshaken”. This attitude presupposed that it was possible, in the Soviet Union as in Ancient Rome, to

524 Izvestia, in Zhukov, op. cit., p. 40.
525 At its Council in Odessa under the presidency of Archbishop Tikhon of Omsk and Siberia.
draw a clear line between politics and religion. But in practice, even more than in theory, this line proved impossible to draw. For the Bolsheviks, there was no such dividing line; for them, *everything* was ideological, everything had to be in accordance with their ideology, there could be no room for disagreement, no private spheres into which the state and its ideology did not pry. Unlike most of the Roman emperors, who allowed the Christians to order their own lives in their own way so long as they showed loyalty to the state, the Bolsheviks insisted in imposing their own ways upon the Christians in every sphere: in family life (civil marriage only, divorce on demand, children spying on parents), in education (compulsory Marxism), in economics (dekulakization, collectivization), in military service (the oath of allegiance to Lenin), in science (Darwinism, Lysenkoism), in art (socialist realism), and in religion (the requisitioning of valuables, registration, commemoration of the authorities at the Liturgy, reporting of confessions by the priests). Resistance to any one of these demands was counted as "anti-Soviet behaviour", i.e. political disloyalty. Therefore it was no use protesting one's political loyalty to the regime if one refused to accept just one of these demands. According to the Soviet interpretation of the word: "Whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one has become guilty of all of it" (*James* 2.10), such a person was an *enemy of the people*. Metropolitan Sergius' identification of his and his Church's joys and sorrows with the joys and sorrows of Soviet communism placed the souls of the millions who followed him in the most serious jeopardy.  

Only two months earlier the bishops imprisoned on Solovki had issued a statement affirming the loyalty of the Church to the Soviet State. But, as Danilushkin points out, “the tone of these affirmations were fundamentally different than in the Declaration of Metropolitan Sergius. Recognizing necessity – mainly the inevitability of civil submission to the authorities – they decisively protested against the unceremonious interference of the authorities into the inner affairs of the Church, the ban on missionary activity and the religious education of children, firmly expressing their position that in this sphere there could be no compromise on the part of the Church. Although the Declaration of Metropolitan Sergius recognized the religious persecutions in the USSR, it called, not the state, but the believers, to peace. In this consists the fundamental difference between the two documents…”

The publication of the Declaration was greeted with a storm of criticism. Its opponents saw in it a more subtle version of renovationism. Even its supporters and neutral commentators from the West have recognized that it marked a radical change in the relationship of the Church to the State.

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526 St. John Cassian writes: “You should know that in the world to come also you will be judged in the lot of those with whom in this life you have been affected by sharing in their gains or losses, their joys or their sorrows…” (cited by S. Brakus, [ROCElaity] FW: Communists and Spies in cassocks, January 8, 2007).


528 Thus Professor William Fletcher comments: “This was a profound and important change in the position of the Russian Orthodox Church, one which evoked a storm of protest.” (*The...
THE BIRTH OF THE CATACOMB CHURCH

As was said above, the Declaration of Metropolitan Sergius created the most serious schism in Orthodox Church history since the schism of the Papacy in 1054.\textsuperscript{529} If only a few had followed the traitor, the damage would have been limited to the loss of his soul and the souls of his followers. But in fact the majority followed him; which brought down the just retribution of God in the form of the worst persecution of the Church in history...

The persecution began in the winter of 1927-28, which was critical in other ways in the history of the Russian revolution. In that winter Stalin came to supreme power in the Soviet Union, having banished his main rival, Trotsky, from the Party. Now, perhaps, he felt secure enough to turn to his other main rival, the Church.

Before this watershed, although the pre-revolutionary State had been destroyed, the economy amputated and enormous damage inflicted on the Church, with huge numbers of churches and monasteries destroyed, 117 bishops in prison or exile\textsuperscript{530}, and hundreds of thousands, if not millions of Christians martyred, the foundations of the building of Holy Rus’ still stood: the mass of the population, most of the peasants and many workers and intelligently, still held to the Orthodox faith and the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, while the structure of daily life in the countryside remained largely unchanged. Moreover, in some vital respects Holy Rus’ was reviving. Thus the spiritual authority of the Church had never been higher, church attendance was up, and church activities of all kinds were on the increase. E. Lopeshanskaia writes: “The Church was becoming a state within the state... The prestige and authority of the imprisoned and persecuted clergy was immeasurably higher than that of the clergy under the tsars.”\textsuperscript{531}

\textsuperscript{529} Sergius Chechuga ("Deklaratsia", ili Novij Velikij Raskol (The “Declaration”, or a New Great Schism), St. Petersburg, 2006) compares it to the schism of the Old Ritualists in the seventeenth century. There is indeed a resemblance, but the schismatics in the seventeenth century were those who rejected the Orthodox State, whereas the schismatics after 1927 were those who identified their interests with the interests of the theomachist State.


\textsuperscript{531} E.L., Episkopy-Ispovedniki (Bishop-Confessors), San Francisco, 1971, p. 70. See Rusak, Svidetel'stvo Obivenenia (Witness for the Prosecution), Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery,
Five years later, everything had changed. The official church was a slave of Soviet power; the True Church, after suffering still more thousands of martyrdoms, had gone underground. The structure of country life had been destroyed, with most of the local churches destroyed and the peasants either “dekulakized” – that is, exiled to the taiga or the steppe, with no provision for their shelter or food – or “collectivized” – that is, deprived of all their private property and herded into state farms where life was on a subsistence level. The result of all this was hunger: physical hunger on a vast scale, as fourteen million starved to death in the Ukraine, Kuban and Kazakhstan; and spiritual hunger, as the only true sources of spiritual food were either destroyed or hidden underground.

Vladimir Rusak writes: “The Church was divided. The majority of clergy and laymen, preserving the purity of ecclesiological consciousness, did not recognize the Declaration... On this soil fresh arrests were made. All those who did not recognize the Declaration were arrested and exiled to distant regions or confined in prisons and camps. [In 1929] about 15 hierarchs who did not share the position of Metropolitan Sergius were arrested. Metropolitan Cyril, the main ‘opponent’ of Metropolitan Sergius, was exiled to Turukhansk in June-July. The arrest procedure looked something like this: an agent of the GPU appeared before a bishop and put him a direct question: what is your attitude to the Declaration of Metropolitan Sergius? If the bishop replied that he did not recognize it, the agent drew the conclusion: that means that you are a counter-revolutionary. The bishop was arrested.”

The first recorded verbal reaction of the anti-sergianists (or, as they now came to be called, the “True Orthodox Christians”) came from the bishops imprisoned on Solovki. On the initiative of Bishop Basil of Priluki, in a letter dated September 14/27, the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, they wrote: “The subjection of the Church to the State’s decrees is expressed [in Sergius’ declaration] in such a categorical and sweeping form that it could easily be understood in the sense of a complete entanglement of Church and State... The Church cannot declare all the triumphs and successes of the State to be Her own triumphs and successes. Every government can occasionally make unwarranted, unjust and cruel decisions which become obligatory to the Church by way of coercion, but which the Church cannot rejoice in or approve of. One of the tasks of the present government is the elimination of all religion. The government’s successes in this direction cannot be recognized by the Church as Her own successes... The epistle renders to the government ‘thanks before the whole people to the Soviet government for its understanding of the religious needs of the Orthodox population’. An expression of gratitude of such a kind on the lips of the head of the Russian

532 Rusak, op. cit., p. 175; Gubonin, op. cit., p. 409.
Orthodox Church cannot be sincere and therefore does not correspond to the
dignity of the Church... The epistle of the patriarchate sweepingly accepts the
official version and lays all the blame for the grievous clashes between the
Church and the State on the Church...

“In 1926 Metropolitan Sergius said that he saw himself only as a temporary
deputy of the patriarchal locum tenens and in this capacity as not empowered
to address pastoral messages to the entire Russian Church. If then he thought
himself empowered only to issue circular letters, why has he changed his
mind now? The pastoral message of Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod
leads the Church into a pact with the State. It was considered as such by its
authors as well as by the government. Sergius’ action resembles the political
activities of the ‘Living Church’ and differs from them not in nature but only
in form and scope...”\(^{533}\)

Although over 20 bishops signed this epistle, the majority of them did not
consider Sergius’ declaration a reason for immediately breaking communion
with him. Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan wrote to an unknown person that the
Solovki bishops wanted to wait for the repentance of Sergius “until the
convening of a canonical Council... in the assurance that the Council could
not fail to demand that of him”.\(^ {534}\)

On October 21, Sergius directed all the clergy in Russia to commemorate
the Soviet authorities, and not the bishops who were in exile. The
commemoration of the authorities was seen by many as the boundary beyond
which the Church would fall away from Orthodoxy. And the refusal to
commemorate the exiled hierarchs implied that the hierarchs themselves were
not Orthodox and constituted a break with the tradition of commemorating
exiled hierarchs that extended back to the time of the Roman catacombs.
Sergius was in effect cutting the faithful off from their canonical hierarchs.

On October 25, Bishop Nicholas (Yarushevich) proclaimed in the cathedral
of the Resurrection of Christ in Petrograd the decision of the Provisional
Synod, taken on September 13, to transfer Metropolitan Joseph (Petrovykh)
from Petrograd to Odessa. This caused major disturbances in Petrograd,
therefore one of the major centres of the True Orthodox Church. Joseph
himself refused to obey Sergius, regarding his transfer as “anti-canonical, ill-
advised and pleasing to an evil intrigue in which I will have no part”.\(^ {535}\) He
saw in it the hand of the OGPU. Certainly, the fact that more than 40 bishops
were transferred by Sergius in this period was one of the main complaints of
the confessing bishops against him.

\(^{533}\) Regelson, op. cit., p. 440.
\(^{534}\) Nicholas Balashov, “Esche raz o ‘deklaratsii’ i o ‘solidarnosti’ solovchan” (Again on the
‘declaration’ and on ‘the solidarity of the Solovkans’), Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo
\(^{535}\) Gubonin, op. cit., pp. 516, 524.
On October 30 Joseph wrote to Sergius: “You made me metropolitan of Leningrad without the slightest striving for it on my part. It was not without disturbance and distress that I accepted this dangerous obedience, which others, perhaps wisely (otherwise it would have been criminal) decisively declined… Vladyko! Your firmness is yet able to correct everything and urgently put an end to every disturbance and indeterminateness. It is true, I am not free and cannot now serve my flock, but after all everybody understands this ‘secret’… Now anyone who is to any degree firm and needed is unfree (and will hardly be free in the future)... You say: this is what the authorities want; they are giving back their freedom to exiled hierarchs on the condition that they change their former place of serving and residence. But what sense or benefit can we derive from the leap-frogging and shuffling of hierarchs that this has elicited, when according to the spirit of the Church canons they are in an indissoluble union with their flock as with a bride? Would it not be better to say: let it be, this false human mercy, which is simply a mockery of our human dignity, which strives for a cheap effect, a spectre of clemency. Let it be as it was before; it will be better like that. Somehow we’ll get to the time when they finally understand that the eternal, universal Truth cannot be conquered by exiles and vain torments… One compromise might be permissible in the given case... Let them (the hierarchs) settle in other places as temporarily governing them, but let them unfailingly retain their former title... I cannot be reconciled in my conscience with any other scheme, I am absolutely unable to recognize as correct my disgustingly tsarist-rasputinite transfer to the Odessa diocese, which took place without any fault on my part or any agreement of mine, and even without my knowledge. And I demand that my case be immediately transferred from the competence of your Synod, in whose competence I am not the only one to doubt, for discussion by a larger Council of bishops, to which alone I consider myself bound to display my unquestioning obedience.”

However, Metropolitan Sergius paid no attention to the disturbances in Petrograd. Taking upon himself the administration of the diocese, he sent in his place Bishop Alexis (Simansky), who was distrusted by the people because of his role in the betrayal of Metropolitan Benjamin in 1922. So already, only three months after the declaration, the new revolutionary cadres were being put in place... Then, on October 31, Archimandrite Sergius (Zenkevich) was consecrated Bishop of Detskoe Selo, although the canonical bishop, Gregory (Lebedev), was still alive but languishing in a GPU prison. From that moment many parishioners stopped going to churches where Metropolitan Sergius’ name was commemorated, and Bishop Nicholas was not invited to serve.

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537 V.V.Antonov, “Otvet na Deklaratsiu” (Reply to the Declaration), Russkiy Pastyr’ (Russian Pastor), № 24, 1996, p. 73.
Meanwhile, antisergianist groups were forming in different parts of the country. Thus between October 3 and 6 an antisergianist diocesan assembly took place in Ufa, and on November 8 Archbishop Andrew of Ufa issued an encyclical from Kzyl-Orda in which he said that “even if the lying Sergius repents, as he repented three times before of renovationism, under no circumstances must he be received into communion”. This encyclical quickly circulated throughout Eastern Russia and Siberia.

In November, Bishop Victor of Glazov broke with Sergius. He had especially noted the phrase in the declaration that “only ivory-tower dreamers can think that such an enormous society as our Orthodox Church, with the whole of its organisation, can have a peaceful existence in the State while hiding itself from the authorities.” To Sergius himself Bishop Victor wrote: “The enemy has lured and seduced you a second time with the idea of an organization of the Church. But if this organization is bought for the price of the Church of Christ Herself no longer remaining the house of Grace-giving salvation for men, and he who received the organization ceases to be what he was – for it is written, ‘Let his habitation be made desolate, and his bishopric let another take’ (Acts 1.20) – then it were better for us never to have any kind of organization. What is the benefit if we, having become by God’s Grace temples of the Holy Spirit, become ourselves suddenly worthless, while at the same time receiving an organization for ourselves? No. Let the whole visible material world perish; let there be more important in our eyes the certain perdition of the soul to which he who presents such pretexts for sin will be subjected.” And he concluded that Sergius’ pact with the atheists was “not less than any heresy or schism, but is rather incomparably greater, for it plunges a man immediately into the abyss of destruction, according to the unlying word: ‘Whosoever shall deny Me before men…’ (Matthew 10.33).”

At the same time antisergianism began to develop in the Ukraine with the publication of the “Kievan appeal” by Schema-Archbishop Anthony (Abashidze), Bishop Damascene of Glukhov and Fr. Anatolius Zhurakovsky. They wrote concerning Sergius’ declaration: “Insofar as the deputy of the patriarchal locum tenens makes declarations in the person of the whole Church and undertakes responsible decisions without the agreement of the locum tenens and an array of bishops, he is clearly going beyond the bounds of his prerogatives…” In December the Kievan were joined by two brother bishops – Archbishops Averky and Pachomius (Kedrov).  

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539 Regelson, op. cit., p. 435.
Typical of the attitude of True Orthodox Christians in the Ukraine was the letter of the famous writer Sergius Alexandrovich Nilus to L.A. Orlov in February, 1928: “As long as there is a church of God that is not of ‘the Church of the evildoers’, go to it whenever you can; but if not, pray at home... They will say: ‘But where will you receive communion? With whom? I reply: ‘The Lord will show you, or an Angel will give you communion, for in ‘the Church of the evildoers’ there is not and cannot be the Body and Blood of the Lord. Here in Chernigov, out of all the churches only the church of the Trinity has remained faithful to Orthodoxy; but if it, too, will commemorate the [sergianist] Exarch Michael, and, consequently, will have communion in prayer with him, acting with the blessing of Sergius and his Synod, then we shall break communion with it.”

In Petrograd, meanwhile, probably the largest antisergianist group was being organized by Bishop Demetrius of Gdov with the blessing of Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd. The “Josephites” were later to assume the leadership of the antisergianists in Petrograd, Tver, Moscow, Voronezh and still further afield. On December 12, they sent a delegation led by Bishop Demetrius and representing eight Petrograd bishops, clergy and academics to Moscow to meet Sergius. Here the conversation centred, not on Sergius’ canonical transgressions, but on the central issue of his relationship to Soviet power. At one point Sergius said: “By my new church policy I am saving the Church.” To which Archpriest Victorinus Dobronravov replied: “The Church does not have need of salvation; the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. You, yourself, Vladyka, have need of salvation through the Church.”

On December 15 Tuchkov, having received a secret report from Leningrad on this meeting with Sergius, wrote the following in his own handwriting: “To Comrade Polyansky. 1. Tell Leningrad that Sergius had a delegation with such-and-such suggestions. 2. Suggest that the most active laymen be arrest under some other pretenses. 3. Tell them that we will influence Sergius that he ban certain of the oppositional bishops from serving, and let Erushevich then ban some of the priests.”

After further delegations and dialogues in this vein, Bishops Demetrius of Gdov and Sergius of Narva separated from Sergius on December 26: “for the sake of the peace of our conscience we reject the person and the works of our former leader [predstoiatelia – Sergius was meant], who has unlawfully and beyond measure exceeded his rights”. This was approved by Metropolitan Joseph (who had been prevented from coming to Petrograd) on January 7.

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542 Andreyev, op. cit., p. 100.
543 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 175.
In a letter to a Soviet archimandrite, Metropolitan Joseph rejected the charge of being a schismatic and accused Sergius of being a schismatic. He went on: “The defenders of Sergius say that the canons allow one to separate oneself from a bishop only for heresy which has been condemned by a Council. Against this one may reply that the deeds of Metropolitan Sergius may be sufficiently placed in this category as well, if one has in mind such an open violation by him of the freedom and dignity of the Church, One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. But beyond this, the canons themselves could not foresee many things, and can one dispute that it is even worse and more harmful than any heresy when one plunges a knife into the Church’s very heart – Her freedom and dignity?… ‘Lest imperceptibly and little by little we lose the freedom which our Lord Jesus Christ, the Liberator of all men, has given us as a free gift by His Own Blood’ (8th Canon of the Third Ecumenical Council)... Perhaps I do not dispute that ‘there are more of you at present than of us’. And let it be said that ‘the great mass is not for me’, as you say. But I will never consider myself a schismatic, even if I were to remain absolutely alone, as one of the holy confessors once was. The matter is not at all one of quantity, do not forget that for a minute: ‘The Son of God when He cometh shall He find faith on the earth?’ (Luke 18.8). And perhaps the last ‘rebels’ against the betrayers of the Church and the accomplices of Her ruin will be not only bishops and not protopriests, but the simplest mortals, just as at the Cross of Christ His last gasp of suffering was heard by a few simple souls who were close to Him...”

It remained now to unite these scattered groups under a common leadership, or, at any rate, under a common confession, through the convening of a Council of the Catacomb Church... Now we can infer from a remark of Hieromartyr Maximus, Bishop of Serpukhov, that there was some Catacomb Council in 1928 that anathematized the Sergianists. Another source has described a so-called “Nomadic Council” attended at different times by over 70 bishops in 1928 which likewise anathematized the Sergianists. But hard evidence for the existence of this council has proved hard to obtain, and there are reasons for suspecting the authenticity of the description of its proceedings...

544 Andreyev, op. cit., p. 100.
545 His words, as reported by Protopresbyter Michael Polsky (op. cit., vol. II, p. 30), were: “The secret, desert, Catacomb Church has anathematized the ‘Sergianists’ and all those with them.”
546 Our information about this Council is based exclusively on Archbishop Ambrose (von Sievers), “Katakombaia Tserkov’: Kochuiushchiy Sabor 1928 g.” (“The Catacomb Church: The ‘Nomadic’ Council of 1928”), Russkoe Pravoslavie (Russian Orthodoxy), № 3 (7), 1997®, whose main source is claimed to be the archives of the president of the Council, Bishop Mark (Novoselov), as researched by the Andrewite Bishop Evagrius. Historians such as Osipova (“V otvet na statiу ‘Mif ob ‘Istinnoj Tserkvi’” (In Reply to the Article, “The Myth of ‘the True Church’”), Russkoe Pravoslavie (Russian Orthodoxy), № 3 (7), 1997, pp. 18-19) and Danilushkin (op. cit., p. 534) appear to accept the existence of this Council; but it is difficult to find anything other than oblique supporting evidence for it, and von Sievers has refused to allow the present writer to see the archives. A. Smirnov (perhaps von Sivers himself) writes that the “non-commemorating” branch of the Catacomb Church, whose leading priest was Fr.
Whether or not the Catacomb Church formally anathematized the Sergianists at this time, Metropolitan Sergius considered her graceless. On August 6, 1929 his synod declared: “The sacraments performed in separation from Church unity... by the followers of the former Metropolitan Joseph (Petrovykh) of Leningrad, the former Bishop Demetrius (Lyubimov) of Gdov, the former Bishop Alexis (Buj) of Urazov, as also of those who are under ban, are also invalid, and those who are converted from these schisms, if they have been baptized in schism, are to be received through Holy Chrismation.”

And yet, as the sergianist Bishop Manuel (Lemeshevsky) testified, these “schismatics” were among the finest hierarchs of the Russian Church: “It is the best pastors who have fallen away and cut themselves off, those who by their purity in the struggle with renovationism stood much higher than the others.” They stood much higher then, and they continued to stand much higher after the Metropolitan Sergius’ declaration. For already in 1928 Metropolitan Sergius’ church was a Sovietized institution. We see this in the official church calendar for 1928, which included among the feasts of the church: the memory of the Leader of the Proletariat Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (on the 32nd Sunday after Pentecost), the Overthrow of the Autocracy (in the Third Week of the Great Fast), the memory of the Paris Commune (the same week), the Day of the Internationale and the Day of the Proletarian Revolution.

In the birth of the Catacomb Church in 1927-28 we can see the rebirth of the spirit of the 1917-18 Council. In the previous decade, first under Patriarch Tikhon and then under Metropolitan Peter, the original fierce tone of reproach and rejection of the God-hating authorities, epitomized above all by the anathematization of Soviet power, had gradually softened under the twin pressures of the Bolsheviks from without and the renovationists from within. Although the apocalyptic spirit of the Council remained alive in the masses, and prevented the Church leaders from actually commemorating the antichristian power, compromises continued to be made – compromises that were never repaid by compromises on the part of the Bolsheviks.

Sergius Mechev, had bishops who “united in a constantly active Preconciliar Convention” and who were linked with each other by special people called ‘svyazniki’ (“Ugasshie nepominaishchie v bege vremeni” (The Extinguished Non-Commemorators in the Passing of Time), Simvol (Symbol), № 40, 1998, p. 174).


549 Pravoslavnoe obozrenie (Orthodox Review), St. Petersburg, №10 (23), 1999, p. 2.
However, these acts did not cross the line separating compromise from apostasy. That line was passed by Metropolitan Sergius when he recognized the God-accursed power to be God-established, and ordered it to be commemorated while banning the commemoration of the confessing bishops. At this point the spirit of the Council flared up again in all its original strength. For, as Protopresbyter Michael Polsky wrote: “The Orthodoxy that submits to the Soviets and has become a weapon of the worldwide antichristian deception is not Orthodoxy, but the deceptive heresy of antichristianity clothed in the torn raiment of historical Orthodoxy…”

As Archbishop Theophan of Poltava, second hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, wrote: “It is impossible to recognize the epistle of Metropolitan Sergius as obligatory for ourselves. The just-completed Council of Bishops rejected this epistle. It was necessary to act in this way on the basis of the teaching of the Holy Fathers on what should be recognized as a canonical power to which Christians must submit. St. Isidore of Pelusium, having pointed to the presence of the God-established order of the submission of some to others everywhere in the life of rational and irrational beings, draws the conclusion: ‘Therefore we are right to say that the thing in itself, I mean power, that is, authority and royal power, have been established by God. But if a lawless evildoer seizes this power, we do not affirm that he has been sent by God, but we say that he, like Pharaoh, has been permitted to spew out this cunning and thereby inflict extreme punishment on and bring to their senses those for whom cruelty was necessary, just as the King of Babylon brought the Jews to their senses.’ (Works, part II, letter 6). Bolshevik power in its essence is an antichristian power and there is no way that it can be recognized as God-established.”

Out of the approximately 150 Russian bishops in 1927, 80 declared themselves definitely against the declaration, 17 separated from Sergius but did not make their position clear, and 9 at first separated but later changed their mind. So a large part of the Russian episcopate went underground. Wandering bishops and priests served the faithful in secret locations around the country. Particular areas buzzed with underground activity. Thus

552 Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia), № 14 (1587), July 15/28, 1997, p. 7. These figures probably do not take into account all the secret bishops consecrated by the Ufa Autocephaly. In 1930 Sergius claimed he had 70% of the Orthodox bishops (not including the renovationists and Gregorians), which implies that about 30% of the Russian episcopate joined the Catacomb Church (Pospelovskiy, “Mitropolit Sergij i raskoly sprava”, op. cit., p. 70). According to the Catholic Bishop Michel D’Erbigny, once the Vatican’s representative in Russia, three quarters of the episcopate separated from him, but this is probably an exaggeration. (D’Erbigny and Alexandre Deubner, Evêques Russes en Exil – Douze ans d’Épreuves 1918-1930 (Russian Bishops in Exile – Twelve Years of Trials, 1918-1930), Orientalia Christiana, vol. XXI, № 67)
Professor Ivan Andreyevsky testified that during the war he personally knew some 200 places of worship of the Catacomb Church in the Leningrad area alone. Popovsky writes that the Catacomb Church “arose in our midst at the end of the 20s. First one, then another priest disappeared from his parish, settled in a secret place and began the dangerous life of exiles. In decrepit little houses on the outskirts of towns chapels appeared. There they served the Liturgy, heard confessions, gave communion, baptized, married and even ordained new priests. Believers from distant towns and regions poured there in secret, passing on to each other the agreed knock on the door…”

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553 Grabbe, op. cit., p. 79.
THE VATICAN AND RUSSIA

Russia’s age-old enemy, the Vatican, at first appeared to condemn the revolution in Russia, and support the Orthodox. On March 12, 1919 Pope Benedict XV sent Lenin a protest against the persecutions of the Orthodox clergy, while Archbishop Ropp sent Patriarch Tikhon a letter of sympathy. The Bolshevik Commissar for Foreign Affairs Chicherin noted with dissatisfaction this “solidarity with the servers of the Orthodox Church.”

In general, however, relations between the Vatican and the Russian Orthodox Church were very bad. In 1922 Hieromartyr Benjamin of Petrograd said to Fyodorov: “You offer us unification... and all the while your Latin priests, behind our backs, are sowing ruin amongst our flock.” Nicholas Boyeikov writes: “In his epistle of 25 June, 1925, the locum tenens of the All-Russian Patriarchal Throne, Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa, who suffered torture in Soviet exile, expressed himself on the ‘Eastern Rite’ as follows: ‘the Orthodox Christian Church has many enemies. Now they have increased their activity against Orthodoxy. The Catholics, by introducing the rites of our divine services, are seducing the believing people – especially those among the western churches which have been Orthodox since antiquity – into accepting the unia, and by this means they are distracting the forces of the Orthodox Church from the more urgent struggle against unbelief.’”

Protodeacon Herman Ivanov-Trinadtsaty writes: “Pope Pius X (who was canonized in 1954) pronounced on the very eve of World War I, ‘Russia is the greatest enemy of the [Roman] Church.’ Therefore it is not surprising that the Roman Catholic world greeted the Bolshevik Revolution with joy. ‘After the Jews the Catholics did probably more than anyone else to organize the overthrow of tsarist power. At least they did nothing to stop it.’ Shamelessly and with great candour they wrote in Rome as soon as the Bolshevik ‘victory’ became evident: ‘there has been uncontainable pleasure over the fall of the tsarist government and Rome has not wasted any time in entering into negotiations with the Soviet government.’ When a leading Vatican dignitary was asked why the Vatican was against France during World War II, he exclaimed: ‘The victory of the Entente allied with Russia would have been as great a catastrophe for the Roman Catholic Church as the Reformation was.’ Pope Pius conveyed this feeling in his typically abrupt manner: ‘If Russia is victorious, then the schism is victorious.’…

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554 Peter Sokolov, “Put’ Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi v Rossii-SSSR (1917-1961)” (The Path of the Russian Orthodox Church in Russia-USSR (1917-1961)), in Russkaia Pravoslavnua Tserkov’ v SSSR: Sbornik (The Russian Orthodox Church in the USSR: A Collection), Munich, 1962, p. 16.

“Even though the Vatican had long prepared for it, the collapse of the Orthodox Russian Empire caught it unawares. It very quickly came to its senses. The collapse of Russia did not yet mean that Russia could turn Roman Catholic. For this, a new plan of attack was needed. Realizing that it would be as difficult for a Pole to proselytise in Russia as for an Englishman in Ireland, the Vatican understood the necessity of finding a totally different method of battle with Orthodoxy, which would painlessly and without raising the slightest suspicion, ensnare and subordinate the Russian people to the Roman Pope. This Machiavellian scheme was the appearance of the so-called ‘Eastern Rite’, which its defenders understood as ‘the bridge by which Rome will enter Russia’, to quote an apt expression of K.N. Nikolaiev.

“This treacherous plot, which can be likened to a ship sailing under a false flag, had very rapid success in the first years after the establishment of Soviet power. This too place in blood-drenched Russia and abroad, where feverish activity was begun amongst the hapless émigrés, such as finding them work, putting their immigration status in order, and opening Russian-language schools for them and their children.

“It cannot be denied that there were cases of unmercenary help, but in the overwhelming majority of cases, this charitable work had a thinly disguised confessional goal, to lure by various means the unfortunate refugees into what seemed at first glance to be true Orthodox churches, but which at the same time commemorated the pope...

“In Russia the experiment with the ‘Eastern Rite’ lasted more than ten years... The heart and soul of the papal ‘Ostpolitik’, its eastern policies, was a Jesuit, the French Bishop d’Erbigny, who was specially authorized by the pope to conduct negotiations with the Kremlin for the wide dissemination of Roman Catholicism in the Soviet Union and by the same token the supplanting of Orthodoxy in Russia and in Russian souls.

“With this in mind, d’Erbigny travelled three times to the Soviet Union on a French diplomatic passport. He consecrated several Roman Catholic hierarchs with the aim of building up a group of Russian Catholic clergymen who would be acceptable to the Soviet authorities. Let us listen to the degree of open amorality that these clerics were capable of: ‘Bolshevism is liquidating priests, desecrating churches and holy places, and destroying monasteries. Is this not where the religious mission of irreligous Bolshevism lies, in the disappearance of the carriers of schismatic thought, as it were presenting a “clean table”, a tabula rasa, which gives us the possibility of spiritual recreation.’ For those to whom it is not clear just what kind of spiritual reconstruction the Benedictine monk Chrysostom Bayer is referring to, his thoughts can be amplified by the official …Catholic journal, Bayrischer Kurier: ‘Bolshevism is creating the possibility of the conversion of stagnant Russia to Catholicism.’
“No one less than the exarch of the Russian Catholics, Leonid Fyodorov, when on trial in March of 1923 along with fourteen other clergymen and one layman, pathetically testified to the sincerity of his feelings in relation to the Soviet authorities, who, Fyodorov thought later, did not fully understand what could be expected from Roman Catholicism. He explained: ‘From the time that I gave myself to the Roman Catholic Church, my cherished dream has been to reconcile my homeland with this church, which for me is the only true one. But we were not understood by the government. All Latin Catholics heaved a sigh of relief when the October Revolution took place. I myself greeted with enthusiasm the decree on the separation of Church and State... Only under Soviet rule, when Church and State are separated, could we breathe freely. As a religious believer, I saw in this liberation the hand of God.

“Let us not lose sight of the fact that all these declarations by Roman Catholics, who were quite friendly with the Soviets, were pronounced during the nightmarish period when the Soviets were trying to eradicate the Orthodox Church. Keeping in mind that Vatican diplomacy adheres to the principle that the end justifies the means, which is illustrated throughout its centuries-old history, the game which the Vatican has been playing with Moscow should be clearly understood. The essence of the matter is that Russia has become a sacrifice to two principles hostile to it, Catholicism and godless communism, which are drawn together by a curious concurrence of interests. Moscow realizes that the eradication of faith from the Russian soul is a hopeless task. As long as the Russian Church remained faithful to itself, and uncompromising towards the godless power, courageously witnessing to the fundamental incompatibility between Christian and communist principles, the Soviet leaders were ready for two reasons to graciously study the variant of Roman Catholicism offered to them. By this means they hoped to manipulate the religiousness of the Russian soul.

“The first reason was Rome’s consistent, impeccable loyalty to the communist regime, both in the U.S.S.R. and outside it [until 1930]. Secondly, it was advantageous to the Kremlin, or simply entertaining, that the religious needs of the Russians should be satisfied by this centuries-old enemy of Orthodoxy. For their part, the Catholics were ready to close their eyes to all the atrocities of Bolshevism, including the shooting of the Roman Catholic Bishop Butkevich in April of 1923 and the imprisonment of Bishops Tseplyak, Malyetsky and Fyodorov. Six weeks later, the Vatican expressed its sorrow over the assassination of the Soviet agent Vorovsky in Lausanne! The People’s Commissar of Foreign Affairs told the German Ambassador, ‘Pius XI was amiable to me in Genoa, expressing the hope that we [the Bolsheviks] would break the monopoly of the Orthodox Church in Russia, thus clearing a path for him.’
“We have discovered information of the greatest importance in the archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A secret telegram № 266 of February 6, 1925 from Berlin, stated that the Soviet ambassador, Krestinsky, told Cardinal Pacelli (the future Pius XII) that Moscow would not oppose the existence of Roman Catholic bishops and a metropolitan on Russian territory. Furthermore, the Roman clergy were offered the very best conditions. Six days later, secret telegram № 284 spoke of permission being granted for the opening of a Roman Catholic seminary. Thus, while our holy New Martyrs were being annihilated with incredible cruelty, the Vatican was conducting secret negotiations with Moscow. In short, Rome attempted to gain permission to appoint the necessary bishops and even permission to open a seminary. Our evidence shows that this question was discussed once more in high circles in the autumn of 1926. In all likelihood, it had not been satisfactorily settled earlier. This might be viewed as the culmination of the unnaturally close relations between the Vatican and the Soviet government.”

In July, 1927 Metropolitan Sergius wrote his notorious declaration. Having broken Sergius, the Bolsheviks no longer needed the Catholics. And so, as an “unexpected and indirect result” of the declaration, writes Ivanov-Trinadtsaty, “Moscow put an end to the negotiations and the attention it was devoting to Vatican offers... The restitution of the traditional [in appearance] Russian Orthodox Church, neutralized as it were, seemed more useful to the Soviet authorities than, the Vatican. From then on, the Soviets lost interest in the Vatican. Only at the end of 1929 and the beginning of 1930 did the Vatican finally admit that it had suffered a political defeat and began vociferously to condemn the Bolshevik crimes. It had somehow not noticed them until 1930. Only in 1937 did Pope Pius XI release the encyclical Divini Redemptori (Divine Redeemer), which denounced communism...”556

The descent of the True Church of Russia into the catacombs coincided with an important change in Soviet economic policy. The New Economic Policy, introduced by Lenin, had “ended requisitioning, legalized private trade, and abandoned the semi-militarization of labor”. However, the results had not satisfied Stalin.

So in 1927 “the first Five-Year Plan was introduced. This Plan proposed massive state investment that, with increases in agricultural and industrial productivity, was to bring about a rise in living standards. But even though investment soared, gains in productivity were slight, such that workers and peasants were now called upon to finance the state’s investment in heavy industry. As it became clear that considerable coercion would be required, some of the Soviet leadership, led by Bukharin, urged a revision of industrial goals. Josef Stalin led the majority that insisted on overcoming the resistance of the society and replacing the NEP.

“Requisitioning was reinstituted; when this proved insufficient, the state imposed a system of forced collectivization…” It began with a grain crisis in 1927-28. This threatened Stalin’s industrial plans. It also showed that the private producers of grain, the peasants, still held power. But the peasants were not going to sell their grain on the open market when the Five-Year-Plan for industry offered them so few goods to buy in exchange. Stalin announced that he would not allow industry to become “dependent on the caprice of the kulaks”, the richer peasantry…

“Collectivization,” writes Oliver Figes, “was the great turning-point in Soviet history. It destroyed a way of life that had developed over many centuries - a life based on the family farm, the ancient peasant commune, the independent village and its church and the rural market, all of which were seen by the Bolsheviks as obstacles to socialist industrialization. Millions of people were uprooted from their homes and dispersed across the Soviet Union: runaways from the collective farms; victims of the famine that resulted from the over-requisitioning of kolkhoz grain; orphaned children; ‘kulaks’ and their families. This nomadic population became the main labour force of Stalin’s industrial revolution, filling the cities and industrial building-sites, the labour camps and ‘special settlements’ of the Gulag (Main Administration of Camps). The First Five Year Plan, which set this pattern of forced development, launched a new type of social revolution (a ‘revolution from above’) that consolidated the Stalinist regime: old ties and loyalties were broken down, morality dissolved, and new (‘Soviet’) values and identities were imposed, as the whole population was subordinated to the state and

557 Bobbitt, op. cit., p. 29.
forced to depend on it for almost everything – housing, schooling, jobs and food – controlled by the planned economy.

“The eradication of the peasant family farm was the starting-point of this ‘revolution from above’. The Bolsheviks had a fundamental mistrust of the peasantry. In 1917, without influence in the countryside, they had been forced to tolerate the peasant revolution on the land, which they had exploited to undermine the old regime; but they had always made it clear that their long-term goal was to sweep away the peasant smallholding system, replacing it with large-scale mechanized collective farms in which the peasants would be transformed into a ‘rural proletariat’. Marxist ideology had taught the Bolsheviks to regard the peasantry as a ‘petty-bourgeois’ relic of the old society that was ultimately incompatible with the development of a Communist society. It was too closely tied to the patriarchal customs and traditions of Old Russia, too imbued in the principles and habits of free trade and private property and too given over to the ‘egotism’ of the family ever to be fully socialized.

“The Bolsheviks believed that the peasants were a potential threat to the Revolution, as long as they controlled the main supply of food. As the Civil War had shown, the peasantry could bring the Soviet regime to the verge of collapse by keeping grain from the market. The grain crisis of 1927-8 renewed fears of a ‘kulak strike’ in Stalinist circles. In response, Stalin reintroduced requisitioning of food supplies and engineered an atmosphere of ‘civil war’ against the ‘kulak threat’ to justify the policy. In January 1928, Stalin travelled to Siberia, a key grain-producing area, and urged the local activists to show no mercy to ‘kulaks’ suspected of withholding grain. His battle-cry was backed up by a series of Emergency Measures instructing local organs to use the Criminal Code to arrest any peasants and confiscate their property if they refused to give their grain to the requisitioning brigades (a wild interpretation of the Code that met with some resistance in the government). Hundreds of thousands of ‘malicious kulaks’... were arrested and sent to labour camps, their property destroyed or confiscated, as the regime sought to break the ‘kulak strike’ and transform its overcrowded prisons into a network of labour camps (soon to become known as the Gulag).

“As the battle for grain intensified, Stalin and his supporters moved towards a policy of mass collectivization in order to strengthen the state’s control of food production and remove the ‘kulak threat’ once and for all. ‘We must devise a procedure whereby the collective farms will over their entire marketable production of grain to the state and co-operative organizations under the threat of withdrawal of state subsidies and credits’, Stalin said in 1928. Stalin spoke with growing optimism about the potential of large-scale mechanized collective farms. Statistics showed that the few such farms already in existence had a much larger marketable surplus than the small agricultural surpluses produced by the vast majority of peasant family farms.
“This enthusiasm for collective farms was relatively new. Previously, the Party had not placed much emphasis on collectivization. Under the NEP, the organization of collective farms was encouraged by the state through financial and agronomic aid, yet in Party circles it was generally agreed that collectivization was to be a gradual and voluntary process. During the NEP the peasants showed no sign of coming round to the collective principle, and the growth of the kolkhoz sector was pretty insignificant. After 1927, when the state exerted greater pressure through taxation policies – giving credits to collective farms and imposing heavy fees on ‘kulak’ farms – the kolkhoz sector grew more rapidly. But it was not the large kommunity (where all the land and property was pooled) but the smaller, more informal and ‘peasant-like’ associations called TOZy (where the land was farmed in common but the livestock and the tools were retained by the peasants as their private property) that attracted the most peasant interest. The Five Year Plan gave little indication that the Party was about to change its policies; it projected a moderate increase in the land sown by collective farms, and made no mention of departing from the voluntary principle.

“The sudden change in policy was forced through by Stalin in 1929. The volte face was a decisive blow against Bukharin, who was desperately trying to retain the market mechanism of the NEP within the structure of the Five Year Plan, which in its original version (adopted in the spring of 1929 but dated retroactively to 1928) had envisaged optimistic but reasonable targets of socialist industrialization. Stalin pushed for even higher rates of industrial growth and, but the autumn of 1929, the target figures of the Five Year Plan had been raised dramatically. Investment was to triple; coal output was to double; and the production of pig-iron (which had been set to rise by 250 per cent in the original version of the Plan) was now set to quadruple by 1932. In a wave of frenzied optimism, which was widely shared by the Party rank and file, the Soviet press advanced the slogan ‘The Five Year Plan in Four!’ It was these utopian rates of growth that forced the Party to accept the Stalinist policy of mass collectivization as, it seemed, the only way to obtain a cheap and guaranteed supply of foodstuffs for the rapidly expanding industrial labour force (and for sale abroad to bring in capital).

“At the heart of these policies was the Party’s war against the peasantry. The collectivization of agriculture was a direct assault on the peasantry’s attachment to the village and the Church, to the individual family farm, to private trade and property, which all rooted Russia in the past. On 7 November 1929, Stalin wrote an article in Pravda, ‘The Year of the Great Break’, in which he heralded the Five Year Plan as the start of the last great revolutionary struggle against ‘capitalist elements’ in the USSR, leading to the foundation of a Communist society built by socialist industry. What Stalin meant by the ‘great break’, as he explained to Gorky, was the ‘total breaking up of the old society and the feverish building of the new’.
“From the summer of 1929, thousands of Party activists were sent into the countryside to agitate for the collective farms... Most of the peasants were afraid to give up a centuries-old way of life to make a leap of faith into the unknown. There were precious few examples of good collective farms to persuade the peasantry. A German agricultural specialist working in Siberia in 1929 described the collective farms as ‘candidates for death’. Very few had tractors or modern implements. They were badly run by people who knew little about agriculture and made ‘crude mistakes’, which ‘discredited the whole process of collectivization’. According to OGPU, the perception of the peasants was that they would ‘lose everything’ – their land and cows, their horses and their tools, their homes and family – if they entered a kolkhoz. As one old peasant said: ‘Lecturer after lecturer is coming and telling us that we ought to forget possessions and have everything in common. Why then is the desire for it in our blood?’

“Unable to persuade the peasantry, the activists began to use coercive measures. From December 1929, when Stalin called for the ‘liquidation of the kulaks as a class’, the campaign to drive the peasants into the collective farms took on the form of a war. The Party and the Komsomol were fully armed and mobilized, reinforced by the local militia, special army and OGPU units, urban workers and student volunteers, and sent into the villages with strict instructions not to come back to the district centres without having organized a kolkhoz. ‘It is better to overstep the mark than to fall short,’ they were told by their instructors. ‘Remember that we won’t condemn you for an excess, but if you fall short – watch out!’ One activist recalls a speech by the Bolshevik leader Mendel Khataevich, in which he told a meeting of eighty Party organizers in the Volga region: ‘You must assume your duties with a feeling of the strictest Party responsibility, without whimpering, without any rotten liberalism. Throw your bourgeois humanitarianism out of the window and act like Bolsheviks worthy of comrade Stalin. Beat down the kulak agent wherever he raises his head. It’s war – it’s them or us. The last decayed remnant of capitalist farming must be wiped out at any cost.’

“During just the first two months of 1930, half the Soviet peasantry (about 60 million people in over 100,000 villages) was herded into the collective farms. The activists employed various tactics of intimidation at the village meetings where the decisive vote to join the kolkhoz took place. In one Siberian village, for example, the peasants were reluctant to accept the motion to join the collective farm. When the time came for the vote, the activists brought in armed soldiers and called on those opposed to the motion to speak out: no one dared to raise objections, so it was declared that the motion had been ‘passed unanimously’. In another village, after the peasants had voted against joining the kolkhoz, the activists demanded to know which peasants were opposed to Soviet power, explaining that it was the command of the Soviet government that the peasants join the collective farms. When nobody
was willing to state their opposition to the government, it was recorded by activists that the village had ‘voted unanimously’ for collectivization. In other villages only a small minority of the inhabitants (hand-picked by the activists) was allowed to attend the meeting, although the result of the vote was made binding on the population as a whole. In the village of Cheremukhova in the Komi region, for example, there were 437 households, but only 52 had representatives at the village assembly: 18 voted in favour of collectivization and 16 against, yet on this basis the entire village was enrolled in the kolkhoz.

“Peasants who spoke out against collectivization were beaten, tortured, threatened and harassed, until they agreed to join the collective farm. Many were expelled as ‘kulaks’ from their homes and driven out of the village. The herding of the peasants into the collective farms was accompanied by a violent assault against the Church, the focal point of the old way of life in the village, which was regarded by the Bolsheviks as a source of potential opposition to collectivization. Thousands of priests were arrested and churches were looted and destroyed, forcing millions of believers to maintain their faith in the secrecy of their own homes.”

The human cost of collectivization has been well described by Piers Brendon: “Stalin declared war on his own people – a class war to end class. In the first two months of 1930 perhaps a million kulaks, weakened by previous victimisation, were stripped of their possessions and uprooted from their farmsteads. They were among the earliest of ‘over five million’ souls deported during the next three years, most of whom perished. Brigades of workers conscripted from the towns, backed by contingents of the Red Army, and the OGPU (which had replaced the Cheka), swept through the countryside ‘like raging beasts’. They rounded up the best farmers [as Zinoviev said, ‘We are fond of describing any peasant who has enough to eat as a kulak’] and their families, banished them to the barren outskirts of their villages or drove them into the northern wastes. Often they shot the heads of households, cramming their dependents into ‘death trains’ – a prolonged process owing to a shortage of the blood-coloured cattle trucks known as ‘red cows’. While they waited, women and children expired of cold, hunger and disease. Muscovites, at first shocked by glimpses of the terror being inflicted on the countryside, became inured to the sight of peasants being herded from one station to another at gunpoint. A witness wrote: ‘Trainloads of deported peasants left for the icy North, the forests, the steppes, the deserts. There were whole populations, denuded of everything; the old folk starved to death in mid-journey, newborn babies were buried on the banks of the roadside, and each wilderness had its crop of little crosses of boughs or white wood.’ The survivors of these ghastly odysseys were concentrated in primitive camps which they often had to scratch with their bare hands from taiga or tundra. They were then sent to work at digging canals, lumbering and other projects, Stalin having recently

558 Figes, The Whisperers, pp. 81-86.
been dazzled by the prospect of ‘constructing socialism through the use of prison labour’.

“Whatever Stalin may have envisaged, the assault on the kulaks was less like a considered piece of social engineering than ‘a nation-wide pogrom’. Often the urban cadres simply pillaged for private gain, eating the kulaks’ food and drinking their vodka on the spot, donning their felt boots and clothes, right down to their woollen underwear. Moreover the spoliation was marked by caprice and chaos since it was virtually impossible to decide which peasants were kulaks. Peasants of all sorts (including women) resisted, fighting back with anything from sporadic terror to full-scale revolt. There were major uprisings in Moldavia, the Ukraine, the Caucasus, Crimea, Azerbaijan, Soviet Central Asia and elsewhere. To quell them Stalin employed tanks and even military aircraft, unusual adjuncts to agrarian reform (though Lenin had also used poison gas). Some units refused to kill their countrymen and these he punished. Where troops did not mutiny their morale was shattered. ‘I am an old Bolshevik,’ sobbed one OGPU colonel to a foreign writer. ‘I worked in the underground against the Tsar and then I fought in the civil war. Did I do all that in order that I should now surround villages with machine-guns and order my men to fire indiscriminately into crowds of peasants? Oh, no, no!’

“Some kulaks fled from the holocaust, seeking refuge in the towns or the woods and selling as many of their possessions as they could. Braving the machine-guns of the blue-capped border guards, others crossed into Poland, Romania, China or Alaska, taking portable property with them, occasionally even driving their flocks and herds. Some tried to bribe their persecutors. Some committed suicide. Some appealed for mercy, of all Communist commodities the one in shortest supply. Like the troops, some Party members were indeed horrified at the vicious acts which they were called upon to perform. One exclaimed, ‘We are no longer people, we are animals.’ Many were brutes, official gangsters who revelled in licensed thuggery… Still others were idealists of a different stamp, convinced that they were doing their ‘revolutionary duty’. They had no time for what Trotsky had once called the ‘papist-Quaker babble about the sanctity of human life’. According to Marx’s iron laws of history, they shed the blood of the kulaks to achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat. Without this sacrifice the Soviet Union could not modernise and socialism could not survive. As one apparatchik expressed it: ‘When you are attacking there is no place for mercy; don’t think of the kulak’s hunger children; in the class struggle philanthropy is evil.’ This view, incidentally, was often shared by Western fellow-travellers. Upton Sinclair and A.J.P. Taylor both argued that to preserve the Workers’ State the kulaks ‘had to be destroyed’.

“Whether facing expropriation and exile or collectivisation and servitude, masses of peasants retaliated by smashing their implements and killing their
animals – live beasts would have to be handed over to the collectives whereas meat and hides could be respectively consumed and concealed. In the first two months of 1930 millions of cattle, horses, pigs, sheep and goats were slaughtered. Many others starved to death because grain was lacking or the collective farmers neglected them. A quarter of the nation’s livestock perished, a greater loss than that sustained during the Civil War and one not made up until the 1960s. It was ironic, therefore, that on 2 March 1930 Stalin should call a halt in an article in Pravda entitled ‘Dizzy with Success’. This declared that over-zealous local officials had made mistakes and that peasants should not be forced to join collectives. Under the spur of coercion no fewer than 15 million households (numbering over 70 million souls, or 60 per cent of all peasants) had already done so. But now, within a few weeks, nine million households withdrew from what they regarded as a new form of serfdom. Processions of peasants marched round villages with copies of Stalin’s article blazoned aloft on banners. As a foreign journalist recorded, Russia’s muzhiks had live under ‘lowering clouds of gloom, fear and evil foreboding… until the colour of them seemed to have entered their very souls’. Now, thanks to Stalin, the pall had lifted and the reign of terror had ended.

“It was a false dawn. Stalin was retreating the better to advance…

“... In the autumn of 1930 he resumed the policy of forcible collectivisation. Peasant anguish was fed by rumours that women would be socialised, that unproductive old people would be prematurely cremated and that children were to be sent to crèches in China. Such fears did not seem extravagant, for the authorities themselves were offering peasants apocalyptic inducements to join the collectives: ‘They promised golden mountains... They said that women would be freed from doing the washing, from milking and cleaning the animals, weeding the garden, etc. Electricity can do that, they said.’ Under the hammer and sickle all things would be made new.

“In 1930, Year XIII of the Communist era, a new calendar was introduced. It began the year on November 1 and established a five-day week: Sundays were abolished and rest days rotated so that work could be continuous. The anti-God crusade became more vicious and the church was portrayed as the ‘kulaks’ agitprop [agitation and propaganda agency]’. Priests were persecuted. Icons were burned and replaced with portraits of Stalin. The bells of basilicas were silenced, many being melted down for the metal. Monasteries were demolished or turned into prison camps. Abbeys and convents were smashed to pieces and factories rose on their ruins. Churches were destroyed, scores in Moscow itself. Chief among them was the gold-domed Cathedral of Christ the Redeemer, Russia’s largest place of worship and (according to the League of Militant Atheists) ‘the ideological fortress of the accused old world’, which was dynamited to make way for the Palace of Soviets on 5 December 1931. Stalin was unprepared for the explosion and asked tremulously, ‘Where’s the bombardment?’
“The new Russian orthodoxy was instilled through everything from schools in which pupils learned to chant thanks to Comrade Stalin for their happy childhood to libraries purged of ‘harmful literature’, from atheistic playing-cards to ideologically sound performances by circus clowns. An early signal that the Party was becoming the arbiter of all intellectual life was the suicide of Vladimir Mayakovsky: he was tormented by having turned himself into a poetry factory; he had stepped ‘on the throat of my own song’. (Even so he became a posthumous propagandist: as Pasternak wrote, ‘Mayakovsky began to be introduced forcibly, like potatoes under Catherine the Great. This was his second death. He had no hand in it.’) Of more concern to the average Soviet citizen was the socialist transformation of everyday life: the final elimination of small traders and private businessmen, the establishment of communal kitchens and lavatories, the direction of labour, the proliferation of informers (a marble monument was raised to Pavel Morozov, who supposedly denounced his father as a kulak), the purging of ‘wreckers’ and the attempt to impose ‘iron discipline’ at every level. Stalin called for an increase in the power of the State to assist in its withering away. Like Peter the Great, he would bend Russia to his will even if he had to decimate the inhabitants – as he had once presciently observed, ‘full conformity of views can be achieved only at a cemetery’.

“Destroying the nation’s best farmers, disrupting the agricultural system and extracting grain from a famished countryside in return for Western technology – all this had a fatal impact on the Soviet standard of living. By 1930 bread and other foodstuffs were rationed, as were staple goods such as soap. But even rations were hard to get: sugar, for example, had ‘ceased to exist as a commodity’. The cooperative shops were generally empty, though gathering dust on their shelves were items that no one wanted, among them French horns and hockey sticks. There were also ‘tantalisingly realistic and mouth-watering’ wooden cheeses, dummy hams, enamelled cakes and other fake promises of future abundance. On the black market bread cost 43 roubles a kilo, while the average collective farmer earned 3 roubles a day. Some Muscovite workers shortened the slogan ‘pobeda’ (victory) to ‘obed’ (food), or even to ‘beda’ (misfortune).’…”

Stalin’s collectivization campaign recalled Lenin’s campaign of War Communism in 1918-21. And, as in Lenin’s time, it was “as much an attack on [the peasants’] traditional religion as on their individual holdings”. For, as Vladimir Rusak writes: “1928, the beginning of collectivisation. Stalin could no longer ‘leave the Church in the countryside’. In one interview he gave at that time he directly complained against ‘the reactionary clergy’ who were poisoning the souls of the masses. ‘The only thing I can complain about is that the clergy were not liquidated root and branch,’ he said. At the 15th Congress

of the party he demanded that all weariness in the anti-religious struggle be overcome."  

Then, “on 8 April 1929,” as W. Husband writes, “the VtsIK and Sovnarkom declaration ‘On Religious Associations’ largely superseded the 1918 separation of church and state and redefined freedom of conscience. Though reiterating central aspects of the 1918 separation decree, the new law introduced important limitations. Religious associations of twenty or more adults were allowed, but only if registered and approved in advance by government authorities. They retained their previous right to the free use of buildings for worship but still could not exist as a judicial person. Most important, the new regulations rescinded the previously guaranteed right to conduct religious propaganda, and it reaffirmed the ban on religious instructions in state educational institutions. In effect, proselytising and instruction outside the home were illegal except in officially sanctioned classes, and religious rights of assembly and property were now more circumscribed.”

“Henceforth,” writes Nicholas Werth, “any activity ‘going beyond the limits of the simple satisfaction of religious aspirations’ fell under the law. Notably, section 10 of the much-feared Article 58 of the penal code stipulated that ‘any use of the religious prejudices of the masses... for destabilizing the state’ was punishable ‘by anything from a minimum three-year sentence up to and including the death penalty’. On 26 August 1929 the government instituted the new five-day work week – five days of work, and one day of rest – which made it impossible to observe Sunday as a day of rest. This measure deliberately introduced ‘to facilitate the struggle to eliminate religion’.

“These decrees were no more than a prelude to a second, much larger phase of the antireligious campaign. In October 1929 the seizure of all church bells was ordered because ‘the sound of bells disturbs the right to peace of the vast majority of atheists in the towns and the countryside’. Anyone closely associated with the church was treated like a kulak and forced to pay special taxes. The taxes paid by religious leaders increased tenfold from 1928 to 1930, and the leaders were stripped of their civil rights, which meant that they lost their ration cards and their right to medical care. Many were arrested, exiled, or deported. According to the incomplete records, more than 13,000 priests were ‘dekulakised’ in 1930. In many villages and towns, collectivisation began symbolically with the closure of the church, and dekulakization began with the removal of the local religious leaders. Significantly, nearly 14 percent of riots and peasant uprisings in 1930 were sparked by the closure of a church or the removal of its bells. The antireligious campaign reached its height in the winter of 1929-30; by 1 March 1930, 6,715 churches had been closed or

destroyed. In the aftermath of Stalin’s famous article ‘Dizzy with Success’ on 2 March 1930, a resolution from the Central Committee cynically condemned ‘inadmissible deviations in the struggle against religious prejudices, particularly the administrative closure of churches without the consent of the local inhabitants’. This formal condemnation had no effect on the fate of the people deported on religious grounds.

“Over the next few years these great offensives against the church were replaced by daily administrative harassment of priests and religious organizations. Freely interpreting the sixty-eight articles of the government decree of 8 April 1929, and going considerably beyond their mandate when it came to the closure of churches, local authorities continued their guerrilla war with a series of justifications: ‘unsanitary condition or extreme age’ of the buildings in question, ‘unpaid insurance’, and non-payment of taxes or other of the innumerable contributions imposed on the members of religious communities. Stripped of their civil rights and their right to teach, and without the possibility of taking up other paid employment – a status that left them arbitrarily classified as ‘parasitic elements living on unearned wages’ – a number of priests had no option but to become peripatetic and to lead a secret life on the edges of society.”

It was the True Orthodox Church which took the brunt of this offensive. For opposition to the betrayal of the Church by Metropolitan Sergius went hand in hand with opposition to collectivization. Thus in 1929, the Bolsheviks began to imprison the True Orthodox on the basis of membership of a “church monarchist organization” called “True Orthodoxy”. The numbers of True Orthodox Christians arrested between 1929 and 1933 exceeded by seven times the numbers of clergy repressed from 1924 to 1928. The main case against the True Orthodox was called the case of “The All-Union Counter-Revolutionary Church Monarchist Organization, ‘the True Orthodox Church’”. In 1929 5000 clergy were repressed, three times more than in 1928; in 1930 – 13,000; in 1931–32 – 19,000. It is hardly a coincidence that this took place against the background of the collectivisation of agriculture and a general attack on religion spearheaded by Yaroslavsky’s League of Militant Godless, who numbered 17 million by 1933.

564 I.I. Osipova, “Istoria Istinnogo Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi po Materialam Sledstvennago Dela” (The History of the True Orthodox Church according to Materials from the Interrogation Process), Pravoslavnaja Rus’ (Orthodox Russia), № 14 (1587), July 15/28, 1997, p. 2.
566 Although the Protestants had welcomed the revolution and thus escaped the earlier persecutions, they were now subjected to the same torments as the Orthodox (Pospielovsky, "Podvig very", op. cit., pp. 233-34). Religious Jews also began to be persecuted.
The war of the True Orthodox against collectivization was especially fierce in the Central Black Earth region, where resistance to collectivization and resistance to the Sovietized Moscow Patriarchate crystallized into a single powerful movement under the leadership of Bishop Alexis (Buy) of Voronezh. Meetings of the “Buyevtsy”, as Bishop Alexis’ followers were called, took place in the Alexeyev monastery in Voronezh. During one of these, in December, 1929, Archimandrite Tikhon said that collectivization was a way of removing the peasants from their churches, which were then closed. And Igumen Joseph (Yatsk) said: "Now the times of the Antichrist have arrived, so everything that Soviet power tried to impose upon the peasantry: collective farms, cooperatives, etc., should be rejected." At the beginning of 1930 the Voronezh peasantry rebelled against forcible collectivization in several places. Thus in Ostrog district alone between January 4 and February 5 there were demonstrations in twenty villages: Nizhny Ikorets, Peskovatka, Kopanishche, Podserednoye, Platava, Kazatskoye, Uryv, Dyevitsa, Godlayevka, Troitskoye, Drakonovo, Mashkino, Badyeyevka, Selyavnoye and others. At the same time there were demonstrations in the neighbouring areas of Usman district, from where they moved to the Kozlov, Yelets, Belgorod and other districts, encompassing more than forty districts in all. The OGPU considered that these demonstrations took place under the influence of the "Buyevtsy". On January 21-22, in Nizhny Ikorets, some hundreds of peasants, mainly women, destroyed the village soviet, tore down the red flag, tore up the portraits of the "leaders" and walked down the streets with a black flag, shouting: "Down with the collective farms! Down with the antichrist communists!" An active participant in this event was Nun Macrina (Maslovskaya), who said at her interrogation: "I preached Christ everywhere... [I urged] the citizens to struggle with the apostates from God, who are emissaries of the Antichrist, and [I urged] the peasants not to go into the collective farms because by going into the collectives they were giving their souls to the Antichrist, who would appear soon..."

In February-March, 1930, the OGPU investigated 492 people in connection with these disturbances. The anti-Soviet organization called "The Flock" which they uncovered was supposedly made up of 22 leaders and 470 followers, including 4 officers, 8 noblemen, 33 traders, 8 policemen, 13 members of the "Union of the Russian people", 81 priests, 75 monastics, 210 kulaks, 24 middle peasants, and 2 beggars. 134 people were arrested, of whom some were freed, some had their cases referred to higher authorities and some died during the investigation because of the violent methods used to extort confessions. There were several more trials of “Buyevites” in the 1930s.

This persecution began to arouse criticism in the West – specifically, from Pope Pius XI and the Archbishop of Canterbury. On February 14, 1930 the Politburo decided “to entrust to Comrades Yaroslavsky, Stalin and Molotov the decision of the question of an interview” to counter-act these criticisms. The result was two interviews, the first to Soviet correspondents on February 15 and published on February 16 in Izvestia and Pravda in the name of Sergius and those members of his Synod who were still in freedom, and a second to foreign correspondents three days later. In the first interview, which is now thought to have been composed entirely by the Bolsheviks with the active participation of Stalin, but whose authenticity was never denied by Sergius, it was asserted that “in the Soviet Union there was not and is not now any religious persecution”, that “churches are closed not on the orders of the authorities, but at the wish of the population, and in many cases even at the request of the believers”, that “the priests themselves are to blame, because they do not use the opportunities presented to them by the freedom to preach” and that “the Church herself does not want to have any theological-educational institutions”.

Commenting on the interview, Archbishop Andrew of Ufa wrote: “Such is the opinion of the false-head of the false-patriarchal church of Metropolitan Sergius... But who is going to recognize this head after all this? For whom does this lying head remain a head, in spite of his betrayal of Christ?... All the followers of the lying Metropolitan Sergius... have fallen away from the Church of Christ. The Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church is somewhere else, not near Metropolitan Sergius and not near ‘his Synod’.”

With the True Church driven underground, and the peasantry destroyed, Stalin proceeded to industrialize the country at breakneck speed, herding millions of dispossessed peasants into the building of huge enterprises for which there existed as yet not even the most basic workers’ living conditions.

“Egalitarian ideals were scrapped,” writes Brendon, “to increase productivity. For example, skilled workers received extra incentives in the shape of higher pay, better food and improved accommodation – at the massive steel plant of Magnitogorsk in the Urals there was a whole hierarchy

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570 Zelenogorsky, M. Zhizni i deiatel’nost’ Arhiepiskopa Andrea (Kniazia Uktomskogo) (The Life and Activity of Archbishop Andrew (Prince Uktomsky), Moscow, 1991, p. 216. According to Archbishop Bartholomew (Remov), who never joined the Catacomb Church, the whole activity of Metropolitan Sergius was carried out in accordance with the instructions of the Bolsheviks (Za Khrista Postradavshie (Suffered for Christ), Moscow: St. Tikhon’s Theological Institute, 1997, p. 220).
of canteens. But Stalin favoured the stick rather than the carrot and those infringing industrial discipline were harshly punished. Men were tied to their machines like helots. Those arriving late could be imprisoned. Dismissal might mean starvation – the loss of a work card resulted in the denial of a food card. Diligence was kept at fever pitch by the arrest and execution of large numbers of economic ‘wreckers’, plus well-publicised show trials of ‘spies’ and ‘saboteurs’. Morbidly suspicious, Stalin seems to have persuaded himself of their guilt; but even if they were innocent their punishment would encourage the others. His solution to the shortage of small coins, hoarded for their tiny silver content because the government had printed so much paper money to pay for its own incompetence, was to shoot ‘wreckers’ in the banking system, ‘including several dozen common cashiers’.

“In 1931 Stalin also tried to squeeze the last valuables, particularly gold, from Russian citizens in order to purchase more foreign equipment. Among the methods of torture used were the ‘conveyor’, whereby relays of interrogators deprived prisoners of sleep; the sweat- and ice-rooms, to which victims were confined in conditions of intolerable heat and cold; the tormenting of children in front of their parents. Alternatively the OGPU might just beat their prey to death with a felt boot full of bricks. These bestial practices were theoretically illegal but their employment was an open secret. When a defendant at one show trial protested indignantly that he had suffered no maltreatment in the Lubyanka it was too much even for a court which had solemnly swallowed stories of a conspiracy masterminded by the likes of President Poincaré and Lawrence of Arabia: everyone simply roared with laughter. The Lubyanka, the tall grey OGPU headquarters (formerly the office of the Rossiya Insurance Company) in Dzerzhinsky Square, was a place ‘fraught with horror’. Appropriately it was embellished with a sculpture representing the Greek Fates cutting short the threads of human life. Stalin saw himself as the atavar of destiny, the embodiment of the will of history, the personification of progress...

“The achievements of Stalin’s revolution were almost as staggering as the costs, even when propagandist fictions are discounted. Although its targets kept growing in the making, the first Five Year Plan was anything but ‘Utopian’. Initiated in 1928, its purpose was to transform the Russian economy at unprecedented speed. As the British Ambassador reported, it was ‘one of the most important and far reaching [experiments] that has ever been undertaken.’ Between 1928 and 1932 investment in industry increased from two billion to nine billion roubles and the labour force doubled to six million workers. Productivity too nearly doubled and huge new enterprises were established – factories making machine tools, automobiles, chemicals, turbines, synthetic rubber and so on. The number of tractors produced rose from just over 3,000 to almost 50,000. Special emphasis was placed on armaments and factories were established out of the reach of invaders – by 1936 a plant at Sverdlovsk in the Urals was actually turning out submarines,
which were transported in sections to the Pacific, the Baltic and the Black Sea. In just four years, by a mixture of heroic effort, ‘economic patriotism’ and implacable coercion, the foundations of Soviet industrial greatness were laid. Cities had grown by 44 per cent. Literacy was advancing dramatically. By the mid-1930s Russia was spending nearly twice as much as the United States on research and development; by the end of the decade its output was rivalling that of Germany.

“In this initial stage, of course, progress was patchy and the quality of manufactured goods was poor. There were many reasons for this, such as the unremitting pressure to increase quantity and the fact that (as Sukhanov had said) ‘one only had to scratch a worker to find a peasant’. The novelist Ilya Ehrenburg described new factory hands as looking ‘mistrustfully at the machines; when a lever would not work they grew angry and treated it like a baulking horse, often damaging the machine’. After visiting Russia David Low drew a cartoon of a dairymaid-turned-engineer absent-mindedly trying to milk a steam-hammer. Managers were little help. They were terrorised from above: an American specialist sharing a hotel bedroom with his mill boss was woken by ‘the most ghastly sounds imaginable’ as the man ground his teeth in his sleep, tormented by stark, primitive ‘fears that none but his subconscious mind could know’. Managers in their turn were encouraged to behave like ‘little Stalins’: as the Moscow Party chief Lazar Kaganovich said, ‘The earth should tremble when the director is entering the factory.’

“The atmosphere of intimidation was hardly conducive to enterprise even if management had been competent, which it generally was not. At the Gorky automobile plant, which had been designed by engineers from Detroit, several different types of vehicle were made simultaneously on one assembly line, thus making nonsense of Ford’s plan to standardise parts and performance. In the Urals asbestos ore was mined underground when it could have been dug from the surface by mechanical shovel far more safely and at a tenth of the cost. Everywhere so many older managers were purged that inexperienced young men had to be promoted – one found himself head of the State Institute of Metal Work Projects two days after he had graduated from Moscow’s Mining Academy. Vigour could compensate for callowness. Foreign experts, often Communists and others fleeing from unemployment in the West, were impressed by the frenetic enthusiasm and hysterical tempo with which their Russian colleagues tried to complete the Five Year plan in four years, a task expressed in Stalinist arithmetic as 2+2=5. They were even more impressed by the suffering involved. In the words of an American technician who worked at Magnitogorsk: ‘I would wager that Russia’s battle of ferrous metallurgy alone involved more casualties than the battle of the Marne.’

“Magnitogorsk, situated on the mineral-rich boundary between Europe and Asia, was a monument to Stalin’s gigantomania. Built to American
designs, it was to be a showpiece of ‘socialist construction’ and the largest steelworks in the world. It was also the most important project in the Five Year Plan. So between 1928 and 1932 250,000 people were drawn willy-nilly to the remote ‘magnetic heart’ of the new complex. There were horny-handed peasants from the Ukraine, sparsely-bearded nomads from Mongolia, sheepskin-clad Tartars who had never before seen a locomotive, an electric light, even a staircase. There were Jews, Finns, Georgians and Russians, some of them products of three-month crash-courses in engineering and disparaged by the American and German experts as ‘90-day wonders’. There were 50,000 prisoners under OGPU supervision, including scientists, kulaks, criminals, prostitutes and child slave-labourers swept up from the gutters of Moscow. There was even a brigade of long-haired, bushy-bearded bishops and priests wearing ragged black robes and mitre-like hats.

“To accommodate this labour force a rash of tents, earthen huts and wooden barracks sprang up on the rolling steppe. These grossly overcrowded refuges were verminous and insanitary, especially during the spring thaw when Magnitogorsk became a sea of mud and there were outbreaks of bubonic plague. Moreover they afforded scant protection against the scorching summers and freezing winters. The same was true of the rows of porous, box-like structures for the privileged, set up with such haste that for years the streets lacked names and the buildings lacked numbers. These were the first houses of the socialist city which was to rise out of chaos during the 1930s, a city which would boast 50 schools, 17 libraries and 8 theatres but not a single church. There was, however, a Communist cathedral – the steel plant itself. No place of worship was built with more fervour or more labour. Its construction involved the excavation of 500 million cubic feet of earth, the pouring of 42 million cubic feet of reinforced concrete, the laying of 5 million cubic feet of fire bricks and the erection of 250,000 tons of structural steel.

“Ill-clad, half-starved and inadequately equipped, the workers were pitilessly sacrificed to the work. Driven by terror and zeal, they were also the victims of incompetence. They lacked the tools and the skill to weld metal on rickety scaffolding 100 feet high in temperatures of -50 Fahrenheit. Countless accidents occurred, many of which damaged the plant. Confusion was worse confounded by gross management failures. American experts were horrified to find that Party propagandists rather than engineers were determining priorities – tall, open-hearth stacks were erected earlier than they should have been because they ‘made a nice picture’. But despite every setback the stately blast furnaces rose from their concrete beds, to the tune of ‘incessant hammering, resembling machine-gun fire’. By 1 February 1932 the first pig-iron was produced. Although less than half built by 1937 (its target date for completion), Magnitogorsk was already one of the biggest metallurgical works on earth.
"To the faithful it was a huge crucible for the Promethean energies unleashed by Russia’s man of steel. Enterprises such as Magnitogorsk symbolised Stalin’s successful ‘break’ with the past (perelom) and Russia’s great leap forward. It was a leap in the dark. But the shape of future terrors could be discerned and even committed Communists feared that too much was being sacrificed to the industrial Moloch. In the final speech at his show trial Nikolai Bukharin likened ‘our huge, gigantically growing factories’ to ‘monstrous gluttons which consumed everything’. What they certainly consumed was vast quantities of grain, both directly to feed the workers and indirectly to exchange [export] for the sinews of technology. In the 2 years after 1928 government grain requisitions had doubled and only a good harvest in 1930 enabled Stalin to commandeer 22 million tons (over a quarter of the total yield) from a countryside devastated by collectivisation and ‘dekulakisation’. Yet in 1931 he took slightly more grain even though the harvest was poor. The result was massive rural famine. It was the largest organised famine in history until that of Mao Tse-tung in 1959-60…"

The historian Sergius Naumov writes: “One of the most horrific crimes of the God-hating communist regime was the artificially contrived famine in the Ukraine and the South of Russia in 1932-1933. As a result, in the Ukraine alone more than nine million people died within two years, while as a whole in the USSR more than thirteen million died. The blow was deliberately directed against the age-old strongholds of Orthodox culture and tradition in the people for the defence of the Faith and the Church. This sin, the responsibility for this inhuman crime lies like an ineradicable blot on all the heirs of communism without exception. In the Ukraine this campaign for the mass annihilation of the Orthodox peasantry was carried out from the centre by the apparatus of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine under the leadership of Lazarus Moiseyevich Kaganovich.

“Kaganovich personally headed the campaign for the forcible requisitioning of all reserves of bread from the Ukrainian peasantry, which elicited the artificial famine of the 1930s. Thus on December 29, 1932, on the initiative of Kaganovich, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine adopted a directive in which the collective farms were required to give up ‘all the grain they have, including the so-called seed funds’. It was ordered that all available funds be removed immediately, in the course of five to six days. Every delay was viewed as the sabotage of bread deliveries with all the consequences that ensued from that… (Istoria SSSR, №2/1989, p. 14). Or one more characteristic example, which helps us to understand much. At the January [1933] united Plenum of the Central Committee and the TsKK of the Communist Party one of its participants cried out during Kaganovich’s speech: ‘But you know, they have begun to eat people in our area!’ To which Kaganovich cynically replied: ‘If we give rein to our nerves, then they will be eating you and us… Will that be better?’

571 Brendon, op. cit., 208-211.
Nothing needs to be added to this cannibalistic revelation. Although, it must be said, already at the dawn of the Bolshevik dictatorship, ‘Trotsky, on receiving a delegation of church-parish councils from Moscow, in reply to Professor Kuznetsov’s declaration that the city was literally dying from hunger, declared: “This is not hunger. When Titus conquered Jerusalem, the Jewish mothers ate their own children. Then you can come and say: ‘We’re hungry.’”’ (Tsinichnoe zaiavenie”, Donskie Vedomosti (Novocherkassk), №268/1919).

“One should point out that the famine artificially organized by the Bolsheviks in 1932-1933 was a logical step in the long chain of genocide of the Slavic Orthodox population of the country. Long before the year 1937 that is so bewailed by Memorial, G.E. Zinoviev (Ovsey-Hershen Aaronovich Radomyshelsky) defined the task directly: ‘We must keep ninety million out of the one hundred that populates Soviet Russia. We don’t need to talk to the rest – they must be annihilated’ (Северная Коммуна, 19.IX.1918). The control figure of those marked for annihilation by Zinoviev was reached with interest already before the forcible collectivization of the countryside began. Collectivization and ‘dekulakization’, in the carrying out of which the People’s Commissar for Agriculture, Yakov Arkadyevich Yakovlev (Epstein) and the president of the collective farm centre, Gregory Nakhumovich Kaminsky particularly distinguished themselves, brought fresh millions of peasants to their deaths. To suppress the numerous peasant rebellions, on the orders of Over-Chekist Genrikh Girshevich Yagoda (Ieguda) ‘individually selected GPU soldiers accustomed to civil war, the guardians of present order,’ were thrown in. ‘Machine guns were wheeled out, cannons were stations, balloons of poison gas were unscrewed… And often there was nobody you could ask: what was in this village? There was no village. None of those who lived in it were alive: neither the women nor the children nor the old men. Nobody was spared by the shells and the gas…’ (Dmitrievsky S., Stalin, Berlin, 1931, p. 330).

“The famine of 1932-1933 was specially organized so as finally to crush the active and passive resistance of the Orthodox peasantry to collectivization. To break their resistance to their forcible regeneration from an Orthodox people into a faceless mass, the so-called ‘collective farmers’ and homo sovieticus. That explains what at first sight appears to be the paradoxical fact that the boundaries of the famine coincided with the boundaries of the bread baskets of the country, which were always regions of agricultural abundance and strongholds of Orthodoxy. As the member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine, Mendel Markovich Khatayevich, said: ‘There had to be a famine, in order to show them who is boss here. That cost millions of lives, but we won.’”572

It is calculated that about 14 million people died as a result of the artificial famine created as a consequence of Stalin’s collectivization programme…

“The fertile Ukraine,” writes Brendon, “where Stalin was already persecuting anyone suspected of local nationalism, suffered worst. But other regions were also affected, notably Kazakhstan where about 40 per cent of the 4 million inhabitants died as a result of the attempt to turn them from nomadic herders into collective farmers. As early as December 1931 hordes of Ukrainian peasants were surging into towns and besieging railway stations with cries of ‘Bread, bread, bread!’ By the spring of 1932, when Stalin demanded nearly half of the Ukrainian harvest, the granary of Russia was in the grip of starvation. While peasants collapsed from hunger Communist shock brigades, supported by units of the OGPU in their brown tunics and red and blue caps, invaded their cabins and took their last ounces of food, including seed for the spring sowing. They used long steel rods to probe for buried grain, stationed armed guards in the fields and sent up spotter planes to prevent the pilfering of Soviet property. This was now an offence punishable by death or, to use the jargon of the time, ‘the highest measure of social defence’. The OGPU suspected anyone who was not starving of hoarding. It also attempted to stop peasants from migrating in search of food; but by the summer of 1932 three million were on the move. Some Communist cadres tried to avoid carrying out their task. One rebellious Party man reported that he could fulfil his meat quota, but only with human corpses. He fled, while others like him were driven to madness and suicide. But most activists were so frightened for their own skins that they endorsed Stalin’s ukase.

“So the Ukraine came to resemble ‘one vast Belsen’. A population of ‘walking corpses’ struggled to survive on a diet of roots, weeds, grass, bark and furry catkins. They devoured dogs, cats, snails, mice, ants, earthworms. They boiled up old skins and ground down dry bones. They even ate horse-manure for the whole grains of seed it contained. Cannibalism became so commonplace that the OGPU received a special directive on the subject from Moscow and local authorities issued hundreds of posters announcing that ‘EATING DEAD CHILDREN IS BARBARISM’. Some peasants braved machine-guns in desperate assaults on grain stockpiles. Others robbed graves for gold to sell in Torgsin shops. Parents unable to feed their offspring sent them away from home to beg. Cities such as Kiev, Kharkov, Dnepropetrovsk, Poltava, Odessa and Belgorod were overrun by pathetic waifs with huge heads, stunted limbs and swollen bellies. Arthur Koestler said that they ‘looked like embryos out of alcohol bottles’. Periodically the OGPU rounded them up, sending some to brutal orphanages or juvenile labour colonies, training others to be informers or secret policemen. Still others became the victims of ‘mass shootings’.”
“Meanwhile adults, frantic to follow the slightest rumour of sustenance, continued to desert their villages. They staggered into towns and collapsed in the squares, at first objects of pity, later of indifference. Haunting the railway stations these ‘swollen human shadows, full of rubbish, alive with lice’, followed passengers with mute appeals and ‘hungry eyes’. A few managed to get out of the region despite the guards (who confiscated the food of Ukrainians returning to help), but for the most part these ‘miserable hulks of humanity dragged themselves along, begging for bread or searching for scraps in garbage heaps, frozen and filthy. Each morning wagons rolled along the streets picking up the remains of the dead.’ Some were picked up before they died and buried in pits so extensive that they resembled sand dunes and so shallow that bodies were dug up and devoured by wolves. In the summer of 1932 Stalin increased his squeeze on the villages, ordering blockades of those which did not supply their grain quotas and blaming kulak sabotage for the shortfall. It may well have been over the famine that on 5 November 1932 his wife Nadezhda Alliluyev committed suicide. Certainly she had lost any illusions she might have possessed about her husband. Some time before her death Nadezhda yelled at him: ‘You are a tormentor, that’s what you are! You torment your own son... you torment your wife... you torment the whole Russian people.’

“The better to control his victims Stalin reintroduced the internal passport.573 Communists had always denounced this as a prime instance of tsarist tyranny. Now it enabled them to hide the famine, or at any rate to render it less visible, by ensuring that most deaths occurred outside urban areas. This is not to suggest that Stalin was prepared to acknowledge the existence of the tragedy. When a courageous Ukrainian Communist gave details of what was happening Stalin replied that he had made up ‘a fable about famine, thinking to frighten us, but it won’t work’. It is clear, though, that Stalin was deliberately employing starvation as an instrument of policy. Early in 1933 he sent Pavel Postyshev to the Ukraine with orders to extract further deliveries from the barren countryside. Postyshev announced that the region had failed to provide the requisite grain because of the Party’s ‘leniency’. The consequence of his strictness was that, over the next few months, the famine reached its terrible climax. Entire families died in agony. Buildings decayed, schools closed, fields were choked with weeds, livestock perished and the countryside became a gigantic charnel-house. About a quarter of the rural population was wiped out and the mortality rate only began to decline in the summer of 1933, after it had become clear that no more grain could be procured and the State’s demands were relaxed...”574

574 Brendon, op. cit., pp. 211-213.
The fact of this monstrous tragedy could not be concealed. And yet many western journalists and writers, pandering to western governments that were eager to do business with Stalin, or simply refusing to face facts that contradicted their own socialist convictions, tried to do just that. A notorious example was George Bernard Shaw, who wrote: “Stalin has delivered the goods to an extent that seemed impossible ten years ago. Jesus Christ has come down to earth. He is no longer an idol. People are gaining some kind of idea of what would happen if He lived now…”\textsuperscript{575}

No less egregious was the example of the Reverend Hewlett Johnson, the Dean of Canterbury. As Robert Service writes: “In a decade when Stalin was exterminating tens of thousands of Orthodox Church priests, this prominent English cleric declared: ‘The communist puts the Christian to shame in the thoroughness of his quest for a harmonious society. Here he proves himself to be the heir of the Christian intention.’ Johnson’s visit to the Soviet Union in 1937 left him permanently transfixed by its achievements; and as Vice-President of the Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR he spoke up for the communist spirit of the times more fervently than for the Holy Spirit…”\textsuperscript{576}

\textsuperscript{575} Shaw, \textit{The Rationalization of Russia}, 1931.
KING ALEXANDER I OF YUGOSLAVIA

On June 14, 1928 the Croat Peasant Party leader Radić died a few weeks after being shot in the Yugoslav skupština or parliament. Immediately, Croat representatives walked out of the skupština in protest and refused to return. The kingdom’s politics became deadlocked.

King Alexander now faced a difficult dilemma. The dilemma consisted in the fact that, on the one hand, parliament was being exploited by dissident Croats and Slovenes (and also increasing numbers of Serbs) in order to paralyze the country. And now, after the murder of Radić, the Croats were even less inclined to compromise... But on the other hand, any attempt to suspend the constitution, or introduce a new political order, might paralyze the country still more in an age that placed freedom in the sense of unbridled self-will above everything...

In a last throw of the dice, King Alexander appointed the Slovene cleric Korošec as the first and last non-Serb Prime Minister of the kingdom. But this attempt at conciliating the non-Serbs failed because the Croat delegates continued to boycott parliament, while the beginning of the Great Depression cast a dark cloud of pessimism over the country. The result was that Korošec resigned on December 30, 1928.

It was time to change course... On January 6, 1929 King Alexander prorogued parliament and took all political power into his own hands.

This act was not as unprecedented or radical as might at first appear, for the democratic tide in European politics was ebbing. As Niall Ferguson writes, “Of twenty-eight European countries... nearly all had acquired some form of representative government before, during or after the First World War. Yet eight were dictatorships by 1925, and a further five by 1933. Five years later only ten democracies remained. Russia, as we have seen, was the first to go after the Bolsheviks shut down the Constituent Assembly in 1918. In Hungary the franchise was restricted as early as 1920. Kemal [Ataturk], fresh from his trouncing of the Greeks, established what was effectively a one-party state in Turkey in 1923, rather than see his policies of secularism challenged by an Islamic opposition...

“... Even before his distinctly theatrical March on Rome on October 29, 1922 – which was more photo-opportunity than coup, since the fascists lacked the capability to seize power by force – Mussolini was invited to form a government by the king, Victor Emmanuel III, who had declined to impose martial law...

“Italy was far from unusual in having dictatorship by royal appointment. Other dictators were themselves monarchs. The Albanian President, Ahmed
Bey Zogu, declared himself King Zog I in 1928. In Yugoslavia King Alexander staged a coup in 1929, restored parliamentarism in 1931 and was assassinated in 1934; thereafter the Regent Paul re-established royal dictatorship. In Bulgaria King Boris III seized power in 1934. In Greece the king dissolved parliament and in 1936 installed General Ioannis Metaxas as dictator. Two years later Romania’s King Carol established a royal dictatorship of his own.”  

Not dissimilar dictatorships were created in the Baltic states, in Hungary, Poland, Spain, Portugal and Austria. In Germany, the democratically elected Reichstag chose Hitler as chancellor…

“Nearly all the dictatorships of the inter-war period,” continues Ferguson, “were at root conservative, if not downright reactionary. The social foundations of their power was what remained of the pre-industrial ancien régime: the monarchy, the aristocracy, the officer corps and the Church, supported to varying degrees by industrialists fearful of socialism and by frivolous intellectuals who were bored of democracy’s messy compromises…”

But it is unjust to describe the intellectuals who were frustrated with democracy as “frivolous”. For the post-war idols of democracy and national self-determination, proclaiming only the pseudo-“rights” but never the real obligations of individuals and ethnic groups, had led not simply to “messy compromises”, but to gridlock, paralysis, near-anarchy and civil war in many countries. In the short to medium term, this could only benefit one power – the Soviet Union, the most voracious, God-hating and man-destroying state in history. Western historians routinely describe the dictators as vain, power-hungry men who overthrew the will of the people. Doubtless some, even the majority of them were vain and power-hungry – although by no means always more vain and power-hungry than the democratic politicians they replaced. But their basic aims of preserving order and unity in the state, and suppressing the extreme left whose overt aim was to destroy it, was laudable and necessary. As for the will of the people, this was usually on the side of the dictators: it was the “frivolous intellectuals” of liberal views (Lenin had called them “useful idiots”) who preferred to fiddle and talk while Rome burned, moaning about the loss of their “human right” to pontificate from a public tribunal while the tribunal itself was being sawn apart from below…

King Alexander understood this as well as anyone, and his adoption of the dictator’s path was certainly not born of vanity or lust for power, but of love for his country and care for her salvation. As he proclaimed when he prorogued parliament and suspended the constitution, “My expectations and those of my people that the evolution of our internal political life would bring

578 Ferguson, op. cit., p. 231.
about order and consolidation within our country have not been realised. Both parliamentary life and the political outlook generally have become more and more negative and both the nation and the State are today suffering from the consequences of this state of affairs.

“All useful institutions within the State and the development of our national life have been jeopardized. Such an unhealthy political situation is not only prejudicial to internal life and progress, but also to the development of our external relations as well as to our prestige and credit abroad.

“Parliamentary life, which as a political instrument was a tradition of my late revered father, has also always been my ideal, but blind political passions have so abused it, that it has become an obstacle to all profitable work in the State. The regrettable disputes and the events in the Skupština have undermined the confidence of the nation in this institution. All harmony and even those elementary relations between parties and individuals have become altogether impossible. Instead of developing and strengthening the feeling of national unity, Parliamentarism as it has developed has begun to provoke moral disorganisation and national disunion.

“It is my sacred duty to preserve by all means national unity and the State. I am determined to fulfil my duty without flinching until the end. The preservation of the unity of the people and the safeguarding of the unity of the State, the highest ideal of my reign, must also be the most important law for me and for all…”

National unity was indeed King Alexander’s highest political ideal, and after ten years of failed experiment with his other ideal of parliamentarism, he was now prepared, while not rejecting parliamentarism permanently, to place it temporarily but firmly in subjection to national unity. As he explained to an American journalist, “a house divided against itself cannot stand. The politicians tried to divide our people.”

“As a gesture to advocates of federalism he renamed the country ‘Yugoslavia’ and reorganized it into nine banovine, districts named for points of geographical interest. These modifications, along with a strict ban on activities and organizations deemed political or ethnocentric, were to be the basis of a new Yugoslav patriotism that admitted no national distinctions. In order to guarantee cooperation with this new program, the king capped his list of decrees with a new Law for the Defense of the State, an expansion of the 1921 obzana to cover any would-be dissenters. Thus Aleksandar joined the ranks of East European dictators, although he always rejected that interpretation. ‘This was not a dictatorship,’ he said shortly before his death. ‘I

only took a few necessary measures to further the unity of the state until political passions cooled.”

Alexander made a major mistake at the beginning of his dictatorship when he appointed General Peter Živković as Prime Minister. Živković was a close friend of the king, but he “had opened the oak gates to Belgrade’s royal residence on the night in May 1903 when Apis and his co-conspirators stormed the palace and murdered King Aleksandar Obrenović”. Later, he turned against Apis. However, his appointment “was greeted with undisguised dismay not only in Croatia but also in Serbia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Montenegro…”

A more accurate description of what Alexander did in 1929 might be: an attempted transition from constitutional monarchy to autocratic monarchy of the traditional Orthodox kind. Of course, he could not say this, even if he had been fully conscious that this was his goal; for the West, and the westernized classes in the East, no longer understood the concept of the Orthodox autocracy, which they mistakenly equated with an oriental variety of Catholic absolutism. For Orthodox autocracy means a close relationship between Church and State in which the hierarchy is the conscience of the king, advising and correcting him in accordance with the precepts of the Gospel, while according him the supremacy in the political sphere – a supremacy that the Popes did not concede to their Catholic kings.

King Alexander had such a close friend and advisor from the hierarchy in the person of Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich of Ohrid. Bishop Nikolai appears to have gradually changed his political position from his earlier enthusiastic Yugoslavism and ecumenism to a closer concentration on the preservation of Serbia and her Orthodox traditions. This “conversion” appears to have taken place in the mid-1920s and almost certainly influenced his friend the king. Always a fervent anti-communist, Nikolai retained his close friendships in the democratic powers of Britain and America – a fact that later made the Germans imprison him in Dachau. But his political ideal was the Serbian Orthodox autocracy of the Nemanjas.

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583 “In those days,” wrote Bishop Nikolai, “the problem of relations between the Church and the State did not disquiet people as it does in our days, at least not in the Orthodox countries. It had been regulated as it were by itself, through long tradition. Whenever Caesaropapism or Papocaesarism tried to prevail by force, it had been overcome in a short time. For there existed no tradition in the Church of the East of an augustus [emperor] being at the same time Pontifex Maximus, or vice-versa. There were unfortunate clashes between civil and ecclesiastical authorities on personal grounds, but those clashes were temporary and passing. Or, if such clashes and disagreements arose on matters of religious doctrines and principles, threatening the unity of the Christian people, the Councils had to judge and decide. Whoever
Having said that, neither king nor bishop spoke openly about the Orthodox autocracy. That would have been impossible in an age in which the only political choices seemed to be between democracy and totalitarianism—or half-baked mixtures between them. Besides, a transition from constitutionalism to autocracy had never been attempted in history, and would probably have been possible only in a country, like Russia, with a recent strong tradition of autocracy.

So the king’s only alternative was to hold on grimly, forced to repress those dissidents whom he was unable to persuade. At least he could not be accused of discriminating in favour of the Serbs - his repressive measures landed many Serbs, too, in prison. And “he underscored his personal Yugoslavism [and ecumenism] by vacationing in Slovenia, naming a son after the Croatian king Tomislav, and standing as godfather to a Muslim child.”

Perhaps surprisingly, many democrats accepted the necessity of his dictatorship - at first. “Generally,” writes Farley, “Aleksandar’s new regime received favourable reviews. Yugoslavia’s Great Power allies swallowed their distaste for non-parliamentary solutions. The London Times expressed confidence that the end-result would be a ‘well-knit state’, while the erstwhile leftist French Prime Minister, Briand, said only that Aleksandar should avoid ‘fascist-style bombast’. None of the king’s allies wanted to see Yugoslavia, the crucial link between Danubian and Balkan Europe, fractured and disunited. At home Croat leaders expressed their relief at the end of an era. ‘This was a necessary step,’ declared Ante Trumbić, who had continued to promote his vision of an equal partnership among the leading groups in the state. Despairing of effecting change through the Skupšina, they turned hopefully

was found guilty could not escape condemnation by the Councils, be he Emperor or Patriarch or anybody else.

“Savva’s conception of the mutual relations between Church and State was founded upon a deeper conception of the aim of man’s life on earth. He clearly realized that all rightful terrestrial aims should be considered only as means towards a celestial end. He was tireless in pointing out the true aim of man’s existence in this short life span on earth. That aim is the Kingdom of Heaven according to Christ’s revelation. Consequently, both the Church and the State authorities are duty-bound to help people towards that supreme end. If they want to compete with one another, let them compete in serving people in the fear of God and not by quarrelling about honors and rights or by grabbing prerogatives from one another. The King and the Archbishop are called to be servants of God by serving the people towards the final and eternal aim…” (“The Life of St. Sava”, in Sabrana Dela (Collected Works), volume 12, Khimelstir, 1984, pp. 573-574)

Farley, op. cit., p. 76. The genuine Yugoslavism of the king is illustrated by the following anecdote: “Once while the king was in Zagreb, there was a reception and a ball. At the ball they introduced to the king a lady who, after curtseying, said: ‘I am a Serb from Zagreb.’ And I, replied the king with a gentle smile, ‘am a Croat from Belgrade…”” (T.V., “Svetloj pamiati nezabvennago ego velichestva korolia vitiadia Aleksandra I Yugoslavianskago” (To the radiant Memory of his Majesty, the Unforgettable Knight, Alexander I of Yugoslavia), Pravoslavnia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia), № 24 (1765), December 15/28, 2004, p. 7)
to Aleksandar after its suspension... They believed that the end of politics-as-usual would lead to initiatives addressing their fundamental grievance..."585

But this optimism did not last long; and by the summer of 1929 Croatia’s politicians resumed the offensive. Indeed, the whole province was not simply discontented but seething with revolutionary violence. And so, as a result of the continuous, uncompromising demands of the Croats, the “Dictatorship, which Alexander had hoped to raise above Nationalism, became essentially anti-Croatian”586 For, despite his efforts “to be a colorless Yugoslav, he was the symbol of the hegemony of the Serbs”.587 And so, “whatever his intentions, Aleksandar’s personal rule stripped Croats of what little influence they had had in the state”.588

Recognizing that his policy was not working, he decided on a cosmetic change. In November, 1931 elections were permitted - but all opposition to the government list was banned. And so 306 members of parliament were returned, all belonging to the pro-government National Party. Yugoslavia had become a one-party state, even if the appearance of genuine democracy was maintained. And her king was now a real dictator, albeit less cruel and more genuinely impartial than other dictators of the time.

Increasingly prominent in the political struggle now was the Catholic Church under Archbishop Stepinac, who was already showing evidence of those viciously anti-Serb and anti-Orthodox tendencies that were to explode into mass murder in 1941. This was evident already in 1932, when Metropolitan Dositheus (Vasič) was appointed to the see of Zagreb. Alexis Gerovsky, the Carpatho-Russian political and religious activist, wrote: “Dositheus’ appointment to Zagreb elicited great discontent among the Catholics. The name of Bishop Dositheus was already blacklisted because he ‘by his propaganda has converted the Carpatho-Russians to Orthodoxy’... When some years before the Second World War Bishop Dositheus told me that he had been appointed as metropolitan in Zagreb, I besought him not to accept this appointment, since he had never been there and did not know the religious fanaticism of the Zagreb Croats... I mentioned to him [the Catholic Archbishop] Stepinac, who was already famous for his religious intolerance, and I warned him that he would suffer many unpleasantnesses from him. ‘Stepinac, who was educated for seven years in a Jesuit seminary in Rome,’ I said, ‘will feel offended that an Orthodox metropolitan should be implanted in his capital’... I advised him to convince the members of the Synod to send to Zagreb a bishop from those who had been born before the First World War.

585 Farley, op. cit., p. 73.
588 Farley, op. cit., p. 75.
and raised in Austria-Hungary, and who was already familiar with types like Stepinac. But Vladyka told me that it was his duty to obey the will of the patriarch, and he went to Zagreb. When, several months later, I again met him in Belgrade, he told me that I had been right. He was often insulted in the street. Sometime the windows of his house were broken at night. Stones even fell into his bedroom. I asked Vladyka whether he had spoken to the police. He replied that it was not fitting for a bishop to call the police. But when I told him that in such a case his enemies would think that he feared them, and would be still more brazen, Vladyka replied: ‘No, they know that I am not afraid of them. When they revile me or spit at me, I simply raise my hands and bless them with the sign of the cross.’”

Another important new factor allied to this militant Catholicism was the rise of the Ustaše Party under Ante Pavelić, who fled Yugoslavia in 1929 in order to organize the training of his terrorists in Italy and Hungary. Pavelić’s Ustaše (literally: “Rebel”) Party was an extreme offshoot of the Croatian Party of Rights, founded in 1861 by Ante Starčević. As John Cox writes, “Starčević advocated Croatian unity and independence. His party pursued a line that was both anti-Habsburg and anti-Serbian... Starčević... advocated the construction of a ‘greater Croatia’ which would include territory inhabited by Bosnian Muslims, Serbs and even Slovenes. He wrote that, on the whole Serbs were simply Croats who had wandered away from their Catholic Christianity; other members of the substantial Serbian minority living in Croatia were either recent arrivals, encouraged to settle by the Habsburgs, or members of other groups such as ‘Vlachs’ who had taken up Orthodoxy. The Catholic Slovenes to the north, with whom Croats have traditionally had few conflicts, were supposedly not a distinct nation but merely ‘mountain Croats’ who spoke a different dialect. Furthermore the Muslims of Bosnia were just islamized Croats, and actually very admirable Croats indeed since they had even been willing to adopt Islam under the Turks to gain autonomy and maintain their political and economic control over what had been medieval Croatia. This point would be very important to Pavelić later, when he tried to justify Croatia’s annexation of Bosnia after the Axis invasion of 1941. He would argue that NDH [the independent state of Croatia] was a Croat state with two religions: Catholic Christianity and Islam.

“While Starčević was right about the Bosnian Muslims being overwhelmingly of Slavic origin, he was grossly over-estimating their Croatian or non-Serbian character. Starčević’s ethnic nationalism meant that the Bosnian Muslims would be co-opted later by the Croatian fascists, but that

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589 Andrew Shestakov, *Kogda terror stanovitsa zakonom, iz istorii gonenij na Prawoslavnu Tserkov’ v Khorvatii v seredine XX v.* (When terror becomes the law: from the history of the persecutions on the Orthodox Church in Croatia in the middle of the 20th century); in Monk Benjamin, “Letopis’ Tserkovnykh Sobytij Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi nachinaia s 1917 goda” (A Chronicle of Church Events of the Orthodox Church beginning from 1917), [http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis.htm](http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis.htm), part 2, pp. 22-23.
they would also, at least initially, be spared much of the violence directed at Croatia’s Serbs and Jews.

“The Party of Rights had moved through various declarations of who were its allies and what were its goals. Pavelić belonged to the most anti-Serbian branch of the Party, initiated by Josip Frank in 1894. By Pavelić’s day the Ustaša line was that Croatia needed to get out of Yugoslavia fast and take Bosnia with it, and that it should use any means necessary to carry out its goals. This is what the Axis invasion of April 1941 allowed Pavelić to do. A tragic fate then awaited the Serbs: as Ustaša leaders publicly boasted, one-third of them were to be slaughtered, one-third forcibly converted to Catholic Christianity, and the rest expelled from the country.”

Unlike the Croatian Peasant Party under Maček, which continued to negotiate with King Alexander, and in 1939 even came to an agreement or sporazum on Croatian autonomy with his successor, Prince Paul, Pavelić and the Ustaše were hate-filled terrorists with whom it was impossible for the king to negotiate. Thus Pavelić once “visited Bulgaria, where he made several public appearances with leading members of Vanche Mihailov’s VMRO, the wing of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization which was committed to the violent overthrow of Yugoslav rule in Macedonia: ‘We cannot fight against those forest bandits [Serbs/Yugoslavs] with a prayer book in our hands,’ Pavelić told large crowds of VMRO supporters in Vidin and Sofia. ‘After the World War many believed that we would have peace. But what sort of peace is it when Croats and Macedonians are imprisoned? These two peoples were enslaved on the basis of a great lie – that Serbs live in Macedonia and Croatia and that the Macedonian people is Serbian… If we tie our hands and wait until the civilized world helps us, our grandchildren will die in slavery. If we wish to see our homeland free, we must unbind our hands and go into battle.’

“Pavelić’s appeal for the violent overthrow of Yugoslavia and the secession of Croat lands led to a Belgrade court sentencing him to death in absentia on a charge of high treason. Persona non grata in Austria, Pavelić chose Italy as his place of exile. With the financial assistance of the Italian government, Pavelić set about the construction of two main training camps, one in Hungary, one in Italy, for his new organization, the UHRO [Ustaše Hrvatska Revolucionarna Organizacija].”

Soon Pavelić felt ready to strike. On March 23, 1929 he sent a hit team to Zagreb to kill Toni Schlegel, the Croat editor of the pro-Yugoslav newspaper Novosti, and a personal friend of King Alexander. Then, in 1932, “a unit of the

591 Glenny, op. cit., p. 431.
Ustaše ‘invaded’ the town of Brušani in Like by stealing across the Italian border (Italy had annexed large amounts of Croatian territory after the World War); it attacked some government buildings and many of the men were then caught. Inside the country they inspired sporadic bombings and shootings.”

Finally, in December, 1933 Pavelić sent three men from Italy to kill the king in Zagreb. But the leading conspirator, Peter Orebić, couldn’t carry it through, partly because he did not want to kill innocent civilians and the Catholic Archbishop of Zagreb, who was blessing the king, but also because he was amazed at the warmth with which the Croats greeted the king, which was not what he had been led to believe. And so he made a full confession, incriminating Pavelich and compromising Italy. The trial [took place] in March, in Yugoslavia, in a blaze of publicity. The position of Pavelich, suborned by Italy, was made clear to the Yugoslavs, perhaps to the world. On April 1 the three men [were] condemned to death.”

At the beginning of the 1930s, as both Fascism and Communism were becoming stronger on the international stage, Alexander’s task was not becoming any easier. Within, his kingdom was seething with malcontents and revolutionaries. From outside, hostile powers such as Italy, Hungary and Bulgaria were helping his internal enemies. Faced with this mounting, and increasingly united opposition, King Alexander was forced to seek friends - or rather, counterweights to his enemies - in one or other of the European blocs: the communists, the fascists and the democrats.

There was no question of him, the main protector of the White Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, entering into an alliance with the communists, especially after the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia came out in defence of the Ustaše’s incursion into Lika… The fascists were

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592 Fox, op. cit.
593 Graham, op. cit., pp. 29. 213-220.
594 The statement declared: “The Communist Party is addressing the whole Croatian people inviting it to support the Ustasas’ struggle with utmost effort, and in doing so, not to rely exclusively on the Ustasas’ terrorist actions, but also to rely on the widest masses of the Croatian people against the Serbian nationalist domineering oppressors…”

“At the same time,” writes Novica Vojnovic, “the communists financially supported the issuing of the Ustasas’ publications and other press, criticised the Ustasas’ leader Ante Pavelic for not fighting more vehemently against the ‘nationalist Serbian regime’, threatening him that they would assume the leadership of the Ustasas’ movement, that it would be managed by the communists if he continued with such insufficient activities against the Serbs.

“In order to be able to act more successfully against the Serbian people in Yugoslavia, the... trio Broz[Tito]-Kardelj-Bakaric convened in 1934 the Fourth Conference of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in Ljubljana, in the Bishop's Court, with the black wine from the Bishop's cellar and with roast lamb which was specially prepared by the Diocese for the communists as ‘dear guests’, as the Bishop himself told when he greeted them at the meeting.

“The nationalist communist parties of Croatia and Slovenia were formed at the Conference, and it was decided not to form the communist party of Serbia because the Serbs
also unacceptable allies because of Italy’s territorial incursions into Yugoslavia and support for the Ustaše.

That left the democrats, who at least supported the idea of a multi-ethnic Yugoslavia, and had close brotherly (i.e. masonic) links with many of Yugoslavia’s leading politicians, bankers and industrialists. And so in February, 1933 Alexander joined a “Little Entente” consisting of the democratic powers of France, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia...

The problem, however, was that these nations were militarily weaker and geographically more disconnected from each other than the fascist bloc, and that they included none of Yugoslavia’s main trading partners. Besides, the leaders of the “Little Entente” were angry with Alexander for betraying their masonic-democratic ideals on January 6, 1929. Perhaps that is why both Britain and France were rather slow in coming to the aid, political or economic, of their former wartime ally...

And so Alexander decided, while not abandoning his democratic allies, to make feelers towards the fascist bloc...

First, in 1932, he entered into secret negotiations with Mussolini. But in spite of intense diplomatic activity, these came to nothing. “To the proposal for a meeting with the King [Mussolini] replied arrogantly. Alexander must first of all consolidate the internal divisions of his country, then if he would apply again Mussolini would consider it. ‘I wait at my window,’ said Mussolini.

“That amounted to an affront. From that time on Alexander worked more vigorously to thwart Italian policy in the Balkans. But the phrase, ‘I wait at my window’, was seen afterwards to have a sinister meaning. Mussolini was staging a revolt at Lika on the boundary of Croatia and Dalmatia. His window looked across the Adriatic. He was going to drop a lighted match into the supposed powder factory of Croat and Dalmatian disaffection and

were ‘the oppressive people’, and so the other peoples, especially the Croats and Slovenians, should defend themselves from the Serbs by having their national communist parties.

“Having assumed all the power in the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in 1934, the... trio Broz[Tito]-Kardelj-Bakaric strengthened the anti-Serbian propaganda in the country, satanising the Serbs and the whole Serbian people, accusing it of being the primary impediment to the creation of a new, democratic, brotherly community of nations and nationalities in Yugoslavia, in which they were fully supported in Moscow, by the Comintern, and the Soviet regime. Thus, the Serbian people were even then de facto proclaimed a reactionary people, which should be destroyed for it stood in the way of creating a better, more just, socialist society, as in the Soviet Russia, even though Russia was at the time ruled by the most undemocratic regime in the world.” (“Communist Crimes over the Serbian People in the XX Century”, http://www.akademediasrbija.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=789:communist-crimes-against-serbs-and-russians&catid=45:english&Itemid=59)
watch the effects. Perhaps Yugoslavia would be blown to bits. Then he could move in and impose Fascist order on the other side of the Adriatic…”

But Yugoslavia did not blow up, and “there are signs that in 1933 the Fascists became discontented. Yugoslavia had not been obviously weakened by terrorism. There was no unrest, no political ferment. The various political parties remained passive under the dictatorship. The propaganda conducted in the foreign press had raised no agitation against the Yugoslav government. Great Britain had privately expressed her desire that Yugoslavia should return to democratic institutions, but she was too occupied with other pressing problems to take sides in Balkan politics. France was engrossed by the spectre of resurgent Germany. Travellers to Yugoslavia heard little or nothing of the train wrecks and outrages. They reported an uncommonly peaceful country. Tourists swarmed to the Dalmatian resorts…”

As Italy fumed, Hungary, the other main supporter of the Ustaša, began to rethink her relations with Yugoslavia. Yelka Pogorolets, the girlfriend of the Croatian terrorist Perchets, had revealed the role of both Italy and Hungary in financing Ustaša camps on their soil, and Yugoslavia protested to the League of Nations. Admiral Horthy sent Alexander a diplomatic representative, who was warmly received. The Ustaša camp in Hungary was closed, and relations with Hungary developed well. By October, 1934 they appeared to have achieved a break-through.

Italy still threatened – in December, 1933 the Italians and the Ustaša were behind an attempt on Alexander’s life in Zagreb. But his stock internationally was rising, and in the summer of 1933, only a few months after Hitler came to power, the king decided to approach the most powerful country in the fascist bloc. He travelled incognito by car to southern Germany, where he met Goering…

However, French diplomats still hoped to enlist both Yugoslavia and Italy into their anti-Hitler alliance, in spite of Alexander’s annoyingly dictatorial and anti-Croatian ways. “If Aleksandar solved the Croat problem, they thought, Mussolini’s opportunities for troublemaking with the Ustaša would vanish and France would enlist both states in the campaign to limit German expansion. The king reacted badly to this request, curtly informing the French ambassador, Emile Naggiar, that federalism condemned the country to anarchy. Why was Italy not being pressured to stop its support for the Ustaša? Aleksandar then accepted some overtures from the German government, whose representatives were probing weak links in the French

595 Graham, op. cit., pp. 177-178.
596 Graham, op. cit., p. 191.
597 Graham, op. cit., p. 194.
alliance system. They hastened to assure the king that Serbs were the rightful rulers of Yugoslavia and proffered economic assistance that addressed pressing needs. For a time Aleksandar contemplated using his German connections as leverage against unreasonable French demands – until his diplomats learned that Germany was secretly bankrolling various Ustaša activities both in Germany and elsewhere…”

Nevertheless, common interests continued to draw Alexander and the Germans together.

On the one hand, the French and the Czechs appeared to want to expand the Little Entente to include Soviet Russia. Alexander could not countenance that…

On the other hand, the Germans had their own reasons, both political and economic, for talking to Alexander. “On the political front, Hitler was disturbed by the defence pact signed by the leaders of the Little Entente… By improving Germany’s relations with Belgrade and Bucharest, he hoped to drive a wedge between them, on the one hand, and Prague, on the other, which would help to isolate Czechoslovakia, a country on which Hitler had lethal designs.

“On the economic front, closer ties with Yugoslavia and Romania (and, indeed, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey) would provide Germany with the agricultural and mineral resources it needed for rearmament and, ultimately, a policy of imperial expansion in Europe…”

As the Germans had anticipated, Alexander’s negotiations with the fascist powers began to alarm some of his allies in the “Little Entente”, notably France and Czechoslovakia. The Parisian newspaper Le Temps was furious, as were the Czechs. Already years before, the Czech President Tomas Masaryk had expressed a dislike for King Alexander, whom he found “uncultured and undemocratic, a typical product of military mentality”. Now the Croatian architect and sculptor Meštrović, who was a friend of the king, reported a conversation with Jan Masaryk, the son of the President and his country’s ambassador in London in 1933, in which Masaryk stormed against Alexander and the Serbs, saying that they would “ruin themselves and us”, and that in the end it came down to a choice: “either Alexander’s head, or the fall of your and our lands, which are allies”.

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600 Farley, op. cit., p. 81.
601 Graham, op. cit., p. 198.
602 Glenny, op. cit., p. 435.
603 http://www.studiacroatica.org/jcs/28/2805.htm
Although Alexander never broke with the masonic-democratic camp represented by Masaryk, his feelings against Masonry were becoming more intense. In August, 1934, less than two months before his death, the king expressed his frustration to Milan Banić. Denying that he occupied a midpoint between democracy and authoritarianism, he said that he “had to chase away all the Masons, because they are the root of all evil. No dirty business takes place without them!”

His estrangement from them was deepened by their lurch to the left in 1934. Until that year, the Comintern had refused to enter into any alliance with left-wing socialist parties, which it regarded as “social fascist”. But the rise of Hitler alarmed these parties, who began seeing “no enemies to the left”; and Stalin, sensing an opportunity, decided that these parties were no longer “social fascist”, but simply socialist, and blessed the formation of “Popular Fronts” in union with them. In May an article appeared in Pravda commenting favourably on socialist-Communist collaboration. Then, in June, Léon Blum’s Socialist Party signed a pact for united action with the French Communist Party, and the Radical Party joined the pact in October...

While lurching to the left, French politicians still wanted to keep King Alexander on side. Thus the French Foreign Minister Louis Barthou thought that Alexander’s regime might be a powerful asset for an anti-Hitler alliance in spite of its dictatorial nature. “His foreign policy was to create an anti-Hitler defense ring to be achieved by what was known as the Eastern Pact - binding the Soviet Union and Poland and the Little Entente, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Romania, to France... Barthou went to Belgrade... at the end of June 1934 for successful introductory talks regarding a Franco-Yugoslav alliance, and it was agreed that King Alexander would pay a two week state visit to France starting on October 9th to lay the groundwork for an anti-Hitler alliance...”

In the midst of these complicated manoeuvres with the western powers, “King Alexander had his own plan for securing peace in the Balkans, and peace in the Balkans concerned him much more than peace in Western Europe. He believed that a solidarity of the nations on the Balkan Peninsula was a first requirement. Let it become unprofitable for a Western Power to start a war there and impossible through diplomatic intrigue to set one Balkan State against another. He received assistance to that end in an unexpected quarter. The King of Bulgaria made a move to reconcile Bulgars and Serbs.”

In the end King Boris was unable, for internal political reasons, to join the pact - but relations between the two countries greatly improved. However, Romania, Greece and even Turkey responded well to King Alexander’s

605 Banić, op. cit.
607 Graham, op. cit., p. 199.
overtures. In some ways, this must be seen as one of the greatest of Alexander’s achievements, and one that might have changed European history but for his own untimely death...

The godfather of King Alexander, Tsar Alexander III, once told his son, the future Tsar Nicholas, that Russia had no friends. However, Imperial Russia herself had been a true friend to the Balkan and Middle Eastern Orthodox financially, diplomatically and militarily. It followed that with the fall of the last Russian tsar in 1917, all the other Orthodox states found themselves essentially on their own, friendless and under sentence of death. The most significant of these was Alexander’s Yugoslavia. From every direction, Alexander was surrounded by enemies: by Croats, Slovenes, Muslims, Kosovans, Macedonians and even some Serbs from within the country, and by Italians, Austrians, Hungarians and Albanians from without. The Romanians were allies, and perhaps in King Boris of Bulgaria he had a real friend – but only on a personal level. For the history of bad blood and the territorial claims and counter-claims between the two countries made real cooperation impossible...

Already during the 1920s, Alexander was a marked man. For indeed, “many sides wanted his death for many reasons... political mainly... either from [an] international point of view or from [a] national point of view - and he knew it!” By assuming dictatorial powers in 1929 he had given his regime a few more years of life, but it was a temporary expedient – and it created for him yet more enemies. And so during the “dark valley” of the 1930s the wild beasts of communism, fascism and masonic democracy circled closer and closer around the wounded lion until one of them delivered the mortal blow.

King Alexander - whom one Russian called “the last honest man in Europe” - was shot and killed on October 9, 1934 while on an official visit to France by “Vlada the Chauffeur”, a well-known Bulgarian terrorist working for Pavelić. Thus representatives of two of the illegal nationalist organizations that rejected Alexander’s suzerainty – Croatia’s Ustaše and Macedonia’s IMRO (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization) – combined to wreak revenge on their enemy. This much is clear, and the motivation is clear.

However, from the beginning there have been persistent rumours that International Freemasonry – specifically, the Grand Orient of Paris - was also involved and protected the assassins. Some say that the Masons wanted him killed because he had once been a Mason but had withdrawn from the lodge under the influence of Bishop Nikolai. According to one variant of this theory, Alexander had refused to trample on the Cross in a Masonic rite...

It is true that security arrangements before the assassination appear to have been very weak, and that after the assassination, the French appeared to do everything possible to protect the Ustaša and their paymaster, Mussolini. No effort was made to extradite Pavelić and his co-conspirators from Italy. At the League of Nations France again protected Italy. And when the trial of the assassins finally got under way, after a great delay, in Aix-en-Provence (not Paris, as might have been expected), the defence counsel, Desbons, acted in such an extraordinarily obstructive manner that it was suspected that he wanted to be expelled from the bar, with the result that the case could not go on, the jury would be dismissed and a new trial called.609

All this, however, does not add up to a convincing argument that it was the French Grand Orient that masterminded the assassination. All the evidence points to the truth of the generally accepted theory, that Mussolini and Pavelić planned it. After all, it is established that they were behind another attempt to kill the king only ten months earlier in Zagreb. So they had the motive and intent and will to kill. And in spite of all attempts to muddy the waters, Pavelić’s agents were eventually convicted and executed.

The most that we can say about possible masonic involvement is that the French authorities, most of whom were Masons, appeared to have tried to protect Mussolini and Pavelić and save the face of Italy. Why? Because the French Masonic politicians were trying to extend their anti-Hitlerite Little Entente or “Eastern Locarno” to include Italy, which had vowed to protect Austria against Germany. The fact that by protecting the Italians from implication in the assassination (which, let us remember, also included the assassination of the French Foreign Minister!) they offended the Yugoslavs, who were also members of the Little Entente, seems not to have worried them. And so, in fitting recompense for their injustice, they attained none of their aims, neither Italy’s adherence to the Little Entente, nor Yugoslavia’s remaining in it; for under the regency of Prince Paul Yugoslavia gravitated more and more towards Germany…

609 Graham, op. cit., p. 296. A Serb who was present at the trial in Aix-en-Provence claimed the following: (1) An American cine-journalist who filmed the assassination to the smallest details, died in a hospital two months later, with no visitors allowed to see him; (2) Desbons, the assassin’s lawyer, wanted to prove during the trial that it was the Masons, and not the Ustaše who had killed the king. But he was visited by some “influential Belgraders” who paid him five million francs not to defend the Ustaše; (3) There was a big argument between London’s Scotland Yard and French Sécurité. The English suspected that the French had sabotaged the king’s escort… (Slobodno Zidarsvo ili Masonerija, izdan’e radog komiteta antimasonske izložbe, 1941, pp. 71-72.)
THE OLD CALENDARIST MOVEMENT

Although the True Orthodox laity of the Church of Greece with their few priests were essentially alone in openly opposing the calendar change, there were still some who had not “bowed the knee to Baal” in “the king’s palace” – the hierarchy headed by Chrysostom Papadopoulos. Thus Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina never accepted it, while Metropolitan Germanus of Demetrias protested against the introduction of the new calendar and held it in abeyance in his diocese until February 15, 1928.610 Others accepted it, but continued to agitate for its removal.

Thus “on July 2, 1929, in the presence of forty-four metropolitans, [Archbishop] Chrysostom suddenly demanded the immediate signature of the hierarchs present to a report he had prepared approving the calendar change and condemning those who stayed with the old. This satanic plan of Chrysostom’s was opposed by the metropolitans of Kassandreia, Maronia, Ioannina, Druinopolis, Florina, Demetrias, Samos and Khalkis. When the archbishop insisted, thirteen hierarchs left, while of the fifty-one who remained twenty-seven against four signed Chrysostom’s report.”611

Indeed, it was the hope that the State Church would eventually return to the Julian Calendar, that persuaded those bishops who later joined the True Orthodox to stay where they were for the time being.

Bishop Ephraim writes that at a “Pre-Council” held at the monastery of Vatopedi on Mount Athos in 1930, “the representatives of the Serbian and Polish Churches (the Churches of Russia, Georgia, and Bulgaria were not represented at the council; Russia and Georgia were not present because, at the time, they were weathering the third wave of persecutions under Stalin, Bulgaria was not present because the ‘Bulgarian schism’ was still in effect) asked for a separate chapel. When the Greeks insisted that they all celebrate together the Slavs refused, excusing themselves by saying that the language was different, as well as the typicon, and that there would be confusion. The Greeks kept insisting and the Slavs kept refusing, and in fact, to the end of the council, the two did not concelebrate, and it became clear that the Slavs considered the calendar issue important enough at the time to separate themselves from the Greeks. When they said that their typicon was different, the calendar obviously weighed heavily as a part of that difference... In fact the Serbian Church even supported the Old Calendarist movement in Greece by sending them Chrism across the border secretly.”612

612 Monk (now Bishop) Ephraim, Letter on the Calendar issue. During this council Bishop Nicholas (Velimirovich) of Ochrid vehemently defended the Orthodox Calendar, declaring
In 1929 Metropolitan Innocent of Peking wrote an open letter on the calendar question in which he said: “In the Church of Christ there is nothing of little value, nothing unimportant, for in every custom there is incarnate the Spirit of God, by Whom the Church lives and breathes. Does not everyone who dares to rise up against the customs and laws of the Church, which are based on sacred Tradition and Scripture, rise up against the Spirit of God and thereby show to all who have eyes to see of what spirit he is? Worthily and rightly does the Holy Church consign such people to anathema.”

In Greece, the number of True Orthodox parishes multiplied - 800 were founded in the years 1926-30 alone. And, helped by a parliamentary decree of 1931 granting freedom of worship to the Old Calendarists, the numbers of the faithful had swelled to over 200,000 by October, 1934.

On August 8, 1934 the True Orthodox Christians declared the official church to be schismatic. For, as Nicetas Anagnostopoulos wrote, the Greek Church had “infringed on the dogma of the spiritual unity of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, for which the Divine Founder had prayed, because it separated itself in the simultaneous celebration of the feasts and observance of the fasts from the other Orthodox Churches and the Orthodox world, 8/10ths of which follows the Old Calendar (the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Holy Mountain, Russia, Serbia and others).

“In Divine worship it has divided the pious Greek people into two worshipping camps, and has divided families and introduced the simultaneous feasts of Orthodox and heretics (Catholics, Protestants and others) as well as confusion and disorder into the divine Orthodox Worship handed down by the Fathers.

“It has transferred the immovable religious feasts and the great fasts, handed down from ages past, of Christmas, the Mother of God and the Holy Apostles, reducing the fast of the Apostles until it disappears when it coincides with the feast of All Saints; and has removed the readings from the Gospel and Apostle from the Sunday cycle.

“From this it becomes evident that the Calendar is not an astronomical question, as the innovators of the Church of Greece claim in their defence, but quite clearly a religious question, given that it is indissolubly bound up with

that the 1923 Congress which approved the new calendar had created a schism. “Does the present assembly,” he said, “have any relation to the Pan-Orthodox Congress of Constantinople, from which the anomalies known to us all proceeded? The Church of Serbia was stunned when she saw the decisions of that Congress put into practice.” (Monk Paul, Neimerologitismos Oikoumenismos (Newcalendarism Ecumenism), Athens, 1982, p. 78)

the worshipping, and in general with the religious life of the Orthodox Christian.

“Through the calendar innovation the new calendarist Church has transgressed, not only the perennial Ecclesiastical Tradition of the Patristic and Orthodox Calendar, and not only the above-mentioned Apostolic command [II Thessalonians 2.15; Galatians 1.8-9] and the decision of the Seventh Ecumenical Council concerning the anathematisation of those who violate the Sacred Tradition [“If anyone violates any ecclesiastical tradition, written or unwritten, let him be anathema”], but also the decisions of the Pan-Orthodox Patriarchal Councils of the years 1583, 1587 and 1593 under the Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II and of 1848 under the Ecumenical Patriarch Anthimus, which condemned and anathematized the Gregorian calendar.

“It has also transgressed the Sacred Canons which order the keeping and observance of the Sacred Traditions, which are: a) the Third of the Council of Carthage, b) the Twenty-First of the Council of Gangra, and c) the Ninety-First and Ninety-Second of St. Basil the Great, as well as the Forty-Seventh canon of the Council of Laodicea, which forbids the concelebration with heretics, which is what the Latins and the Protestants are, and the First of the Seventh Ecumenical Council concerning the steadfast observance of the complete array of the divine Canons.”

Nor did the new calendarists lack direct warnings from the Heavenly Church that the path they had embarked on was false. One such warning was given to the new calendarist Bishop Arsenius of Larissa on December 12/25, 1934, the feast of St. Spyridon according to the Old Calendar, but Christmas according to the new calendar.

“In the morning the bishop went by car to celebrate the Liturgy in his holy church. When he arrived there, he saw a humble, aged, gracious Bishop with a panagia on his breast. Arsenius said to him: ‘Brother, come, let’s proclaim the joyful letters of Christmas and then I will give you hospitality.’

“The humble Bishop replied: ‘You must not proclaim those letters but mine, St. Spyridon’s!’ Then Arsenius got angry and said: ‘I’m inviting you and you’re despising me. Go away then.’

“Arsenius went into the church, venerated the icons and sat in his throne. When the time for the katavasias came, he sang the first katavasia, and then told the choir to sing the second. Arsenius began to say the third, but suddenly felt anxious and unwell. He motioned to the choir to continue and went into the altar, where they asked him: ‘What’s the matter, master?’ He replied: ‘I don’t feel well.’

“When Arsenius’ indisposition increased, they carried him to his house, where his condition worsened, and the next day he died. He had been punished by God for his impious disobedience to St. Spyridon. This miracle is known by the older Orthodox faithful of Larissa.”

During this early period of the struggle against the new calendar, many people sympathized with the True Orthodox but did not join them because they did not yet have bishops. Others continued to worship according to the Orthodox Calendar without openly breaking communion with the new calendarists. Among the latter was Fr. Nicholas Planas of Athens. Fr. Nicholas was the priest who was called to conduct a service of Holy Water to bless the “Society of the Orthodox”, which effectively marked the beginning of the Old Calendarist struggle. At that service he said: “Whatever has been done uncanonically cannot stand – it will fall.”

Once “he wanted to serve according to the traditional Calendar on the feast of the Prophet Elisseus [Elisha]. But since he feared that obstacles might arise, he agreed with his assistant priest the night before to go and serve at Saint Spyridon’s in Mantouka. In the morning his chantress went to Saint Spyridon’s and waited for him. Time passed and it looked as though the priest was not going to come to serve. She despaired. She supposed that something serious had happened to him, and that was why he hadn’t come. She left and went to Prophet Elisseus’ (because the ‘information center’ was there), to ask what had happened to the priest, and there, she saw him in the church preparing to celebrate the Liturgy! She chided him for breaking the agreement which they had made, and asked furthermore why he was not afraid, but came there in the center, right in the midst of the seething persecution. He said to her, ‘Don’t scold me, because this morning I saw the Prophet and he told me to come here to serve and not to fear anything, because he will watch over me.’ His helper was left with her argument unfinished! ‘But, how did you see him?’ she asked him. He told her, ‘I got up this morning and got ready for Saint Spyridon’s. I was sitting in an armchair while they brought me a carriage. At that moment I saw Prophet Elisseus before me, and he told me to go to his church to celebrate the Liturgy!’…

“Another example similar to that of Papa-Nicholas is that of the priestmonk Jerome of Aegina, who followed the same path. Shortly after his ordination to the priesthood, a year or so before the calendar change, Fr. Jerome ceased from serving because of a vision that was granted him during the Liturgy. According to some accounts this occurred within forty days of his ordination. He continued to preach, however, at a hospital chapel where he lived, and which he himself had built there on the island of Aegina. Although this chapel officially was under the new calendar diocese of Aegina, Fr.

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Jerome always celebrated the feast days according to the traditional ecclesiastical calendar…

“Although he himself did not serve as a priest, nevertheless, because of his saintliness and his popularity among the people and because of the obvious gifts of the Holy Spirit which he possessed, he had great influence among the faithful who looked to him for direction and guidance. This came to the ears of Procopius, the Bishop of Hydra and Aegina. As a result, the bishop sent word to Fr. Jerome that he was going to come and impose on him to concelebrate with him. Up to this time, Fr. Jerome had sought to remain faithful to the Church’s tradition and to his conscience without making an issue of it publicly or in street demonstrations. He saw, however, that the bishop was determined to create an issue now and force him into communion with him. As a result, Fr. Jerome sent the bishop a short note and resigned from the diocese, saying among other things: ‘I ask you to accept my resignation from the Hospital, because from 1924 and thence, my longing, as well as my zeal, has been for the Orthodox Church and Faith. From my childhood I revered Her, and dedicated all my life to Her, in obedience to the traditions of the Godbearing Fathers. I confess and proclaim the calendar of the Fathers to be the correct one, even as You Yourself acknowledge…”616

An especially active role in the struggle was played by Hieromonk Matthew (Karpathakis), who in 1927, in response to a Divine vision, founded the women’s Monastery of the Mother of God at Keratea, Attica, which soon became the largest monastery in Greece.617

In 1934 he wrote: “For every Christian there is nothing more honourable in this fleeting life than devout faith in the Master of all things, our Lord Jesus Christ. For what else can save the soul from death, that is, from the condemnation of eternal punishment, than this faultless Orthodox Christian Faith of ours, about which the Lord speaks clearly, saying: ‘He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned’ (Mark 16.16). This Faith was compared by the Lord to a valuable treasure which a man found hidden in a field and to buy which he sold all his possessions (Matthew 13.13).

“Therefore the blessed Apostle Jude exhorts everyone ‘to contend for the Faith which was once for all delivered to the saints’ (Catholic epistle, v. 3). And the divine Apostle made such an exhortation because there were appearing at that time men of deceit, the vessels of Satan, guileful workers, who sow tares in the field of the Lord, and who attempt to overturn the holy Faith in Christ. Concerning the men of impiety and perdition, the holy Apostle went on to write: ‘For admission has been secretly gained by some who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly persons who

617 Bishop Andrew of Patras, Matthaios (Matthew), Athens, 1963, pp. 50-66.
pervert the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.’ Because of these innovators and despisers of the Faith in the Holy Church of God which has been handed down to us, the Apostle of the Gentiles and Walker in heavenly places Paul hurled a terrible anathema, saying: ‘If any one preaches to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed’ (Galatians 1.9).

“Therefore our Lord in the Holy Gospel cries to all His faithful servants: ‘Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits… Take heed that no one leads you astray… And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.’ (Matthew 7.15, 16, 24.4, 11)

“Against these innovating false-bishops and their followers the synodical decrees of the Church through the Most Holy Patriarchs declare that ‘whoever has wished to add or take away one iota – let him be seven times anathema’…

“St. Basil the Great once wrote: ‘The one crime that is severely avenged is the strict keeping of the patristic traditions… No white hair is venerable to the judges of injustice, no pious asceticism, no state according to the Gospel from youth to old age… To our grief we see our feasts upturned, our houses of prayer closed, our altars of spiritual worship unused.’ All this has now come upon us. Many and clearly to be seen by all are the great evils that the anticanonical renovationists introduced into the menologion and calendar of the Orthodox Church. Schisms, divisions, the overthrow of good order and complete confusion, violation of the most ancient laws of the Church, a great scandal for the conscience of the faithful were the consequences, though anathemas on those who violate ‘any ecclesiastical tradition, whether written or unwritten’ had been sounded by the Holy Ecumenical Councils. On the basis of the apostolic maxim, ‘Obey those who have the rule over you and submit to them’ (Hebrews 13.7), the Shepherds of the Church who support this anticanonical innovation expect absolute obedience from the fullness of the Church. But how can the true children of the Church obey those who at the same moment disobey the holy Fathers, of whom the prophet says: ‘The Lord chose them to love them’, and do not venerate the Church’s established order that has been handed down and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, while the Lord says concerning them: ‘He who hears you hears Me, and he who despises you despises Me. And he who despises Me despises Him Who sent Me? How can pious Christians shut their ears to the voices and work of such great Saints of God, and so be deprived of the praise and blessing of the Holy Trinity, which we hear in the mouth of the Apostle Paul himself: ‘I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I have delivered them to you’ (I Corinthians 11.2); thereby receiving diverse and strange teachings ‘according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ’ (Colossians 2.8), inventions of men in
which there lurks a special danger for the soul? The faithful children of the Church, with fear of God in regard to the commandment of the Holy Spirit: ‘Stand firm and hold to the traditions’ (II Thessalonians 2.15), and in conformity with the other commandment: ‘Continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it’ (II Timothy, 3.14), have a reverent and God-pleasing answer to give to the unproved claims of today’s innovating shepherds with regard to obedience: ‘We must obey God rather than men’ (Acts 5.29).\footnote{Hieromonk Matthew (Karpathakes) (later Bishop of Bresthena), preface to the third edition of Theion Prosevkhytarion (Divine Prayer Book), Athens, 1934.}

Now the True Orthodox Christians both in Greece and in Romania conducted the first phase of their struggle against the innovating State Churches without bishops. This is not to say that there were not bishops who supported them, but they were outside Greece and Romania. Thus Bishop Nicholas (Velimirovich) supported the Greek Old Calendarists from Serbia. Again, Metropolitan Anastasy of Kishinev supported the Romanian Old Calendarists from Jerusalem. In 1925 he wrote to Protopriest Vladimir Polyakov saying that he still considered himself head of the Bessarabian Church and was waiting for the opportunity to return there. And in 1930 he concelebrated with Fr. Glycherie in Jerusalem.

But in Greece and Romania there were no bishops of the Old Calendar. This was a severe handicap, for while it is better to have no bishop than a heretical or schismatic one, the absence of bishops endangers the long-term survival of a Church for the simple reason that without a bishop it is impossible to ordain priests. Moreover, those in the camp of the innovators who secretly sympathize with the confessors are less likely to cross over to the latter if they have no bishops.

On October 11, 1934 Gerege Paraschos and Basil Stamatoullis, the President and Secretary General respectively of the Community of Genuine Orthodox Christians, appealed to ROCOR President Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky to consecrate bishops for them and accept them under his omophorion. But nothing came of their appeal.\footnote{Stavros Karamitsos, I Agonia en to kipo Gethsemani (The Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane), Athens, 1999, pp. 162-164; Lardas, op. cit., p. 17.}

But pressure for a return to the Julian Calendar continued to build up within the State Church; and in May, 1935 eleven bishops decided to return to the Julian calendar. However, pressure was exerted on them, and eight withdrew at the last moment. This left three: Metropolitan Germanus of Demetrias, the retired Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina (who had already distinguished himself in the early 1920s by refusing to recognize the election of Meletius Metaxakis) and Metropolitan Chrysostom of Zakynthos, who, according to one source, was accepted by the first two by the laying-on of
hands, since he had been consecrated after the calendar change.\textsuperscript{620} The three bishops were accepted through a public confession of faith.\textsuperscript{621}

On May 25, 1935, the Community of the Genuine Orthodox Christians invited the three metropolitans to break communion with the State Church and take up the leadership of the True Church. They agreed, and on Sunday, May 13/26, in the Community’s little church of the Dormition at Colonus, Athens, and in the presence of 25,000 faithful, they formally announced their adherence to the True Orthodox Church – that is, the Church that followed the patristic calendar. Metropolitan Germanus was elected president of the new Synod. This joyful event was the people’s reward for their steadfast confession of the Faith and the necessary condition for the further success of the sacred struggle of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece.

The three metropolitans then issued an encyclical in which they declared, among other things: “Those who now administer the Church of Greece have divided the unity of Orthodoxy through the calendar innovation, and have split the Greek Orthodox People into two opposing calendar parts. They have not only violated an Ecclesiastical Tradition which was consecrated by the Seven Ecumenical Councils and sanctioned by the age-old practice of the Eastern Orthodox Church, but have also touched the Dogma of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Therefore those who now administer the Greek Church have, by their unilateral, anticanonical and unthinking introduction of the Gregorian calendar, cut themselves off completely from the trunk of Orthodoxy, and have declared themselves to be in essence schismatics in relation to the Orthodox Churches which stand on the foundation of the Seven Ecumenical Councils and the Orthodox laws and Traditions, the Churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, Serbia, Poland, the Holy Mountain and the God-trodden Mountain of Sinai, etc.

“That this is so was confirmed by the Commission made up of the best jurists and theologian-professors of the National University which was appointed to study the calendar question, and one of whose members happened to be his Blessedness the Archbishop of Athens in his then capacity as professor of Church History in the National University.

“Let us see what was the opinion given by this Commission on the new calendar: ‘Although all the Orthodox Churches are autocephalous in their internal administration, nevertheless, in that they are united to each other through the Dogmas and the Synodical decrees and Canons, none of them can separate itself off as an individual Orthodox Church and accept the new

\textsuperscript{620} Holy Transfiguration Monastery, \textit{The Struggle against Ecumenism}, Boston, 1998, p. 46. However, it should be emphasised that this cheirothesia is not mentioned in any of the early sources, and is not confirmed by contemporary True Orthodox sources.

\textsuperscript{621} Bishop Photius of Marathon, private communication, March 5, 2008.
Church calendar without being considered Schismatic in relation to the others.'

“Since his Beatitude the Archbishop of Athens has by his own signature declared himself to be a Schismatic, what need have we of witnesses to demonstrate that he and the hierarchs who think like him have become Schismatics, in that they have split the unity of Orthodoxy through the calendar innovation and divided the Ecclesiastical and ethnic soul of the Greek Orthodox People?”

This very important document was confirmed as expressing the Faith of the Church in several subsequent Confessions (notably the “Florinite” Confessions of 1950, 1974 and 1991). It declares that the new calendarists are not only schismatics but also, by clear implication, heretics in that they “have encroached on the Dogma of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church”. Equally importantly, it shows that the three metropolitans recognized those Local Orthodox Churches that were still using the Old Calendar but remained in communion with the new calendarists to be still Orthodox.

On May 23, 24, 25 and 26 (old calendar), 1935, the three metropolitans consecrated four new bishops in the monastery of the Mother of God in Keratea: Germanus (Varykopoulos) of the Cyclades, Christopher (Hatzi) of Megara, Polycarp (Liosi) of Diauleia, and Matthew (Karpathakis) of Bresthena. For this, on May 29, all seven bishops were arrested; later they were tried and defrocked by the State Church.

On June 1 the believing people came out en masse in front of the cathedral in Athens. A struggle with the police took place, and blood was shed. On June 7, the minister of security warned the Old Calendarist bishops that they would be exiled the next day.

On June 8, as they were being sent into exile, the three metropolitans issued the following encyclical: “We recommend to all those who follow the Orthodox Calendar that they have no spiritual communion with the schismatic church of the schismatic ministers, from whom the grace of the All-Holy Spirit has fled, because they have violated the decisions of the Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council and the Pan-Orthodox Councils which condemned the Gregorian calendar. That the schismatic Church does not have Grace and the Holy Spirit is affirmed by St. Basil the Great, who says the following: ‘Even if the schismatics have erred about things which are not Dogmas, since the head of the Church is Christ, according to the divine Apostle, from Whom all the members live and receive spiritual increase, they have torn themselves away from the harmony of the members of the Body

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622 Metropolitan Calliopius (Giannakouloupolos) of Pentapolis, Ta Patria (Fatherland Matters), volume 7, Piraeus, 1987, p. 43.
and no longer are members [of that Body] or have the grace of the Holy Spirit. Therefore he who does not have it cannot transfer it to others.”

By a “coincidence” rich in symbolical meaning, it was precisely at this time – June, 1935 – that the Turkish law banning Orthodox clergy from wearing cassocks came into effect. Although this regulation was strongly resented by Patriarch Photius, the lower clergy greeted it with delight, shouting: “Long live Ataturk!” And indeed, deprived now of the inner vestment of grace, and governed by “human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ” (Colossians 2.8), it was only fitting that the Patriarchate should lose even the outer sign of its former glory.

Metropolitans Germanus and Chrysostom and Bishop Germanus were exiled to distant newcalendarist monasteries, while Bishop Matthew was allowed to stay confined in his monastery in Keratea on account of his poor health. The remaining three bishops repented, and were received back into the State Church in their existing orders.

However, in October the three exiled bishops were freed before time by the government (the new prime-minister, George Kondyles, sympathized with the True Orthodox).

The four Old Calendarist bishops then formed a Sacred Synod of the Greek Old Calendarist Church with Metropolitan Germanus as president.

In December, 1935 Metropolitan Chrysostom set off for Jerusalem and Damascus in order to discuss the possibility of convening a Council to resolve the calendar question. The two Patriarchs received him kindly and promised to help towards this goal.

However, as he prepared to return to Greece, the Greek consul in Jerusalem, acting under orders from Athens, refused to stamp a visa into his passport. For several months Metropolitan Chrysostom languished in Jerusalem as a virtual prisoner of the Greek consul. But Divine Providence, through a miracle wrought by “the liberator of captives”, St. George, found a way out for him.

The two metropolitans continued to be harassed by the State Church. Thus in 1937 a magistrate’s court tried Chrysostom on the charge of having served

624 Metropolitan Calliopius op. cit., pp. 277-278.
626 Hieromonk Nectarius (Yashunsky), Kratkaia istoria sviaschennoj bor’by starostil’nikov Gretsi pratri ot vseerii ekumenizma (A Short History of the Sacred Struggle of the Old Calendarists of Greece against the Pan-Heresy of Ecumenism).
in the church of the Three Hierarchs in Thessalonica. He was declared innocent. However, further trials followed in 1938 and 1940\textsuperscript{628}, and in 1943 Metropolitan Germanus died in exile.

The Old Calendarists were also strong in Romania... In 1920, Carol, the heir to the Romanian throne, having been obliged to leave his first wife, Zisi Lambrino, was married to Princess Helen of Greece, who bore him the present king, Mihail.\textsuperscript{629} In 1922, however, he took as his mistress the Jewess Magda Lupescu. This was a public scandal, and in 1925 he was obliged both to resign his right of succession (in favour of his son) and leave the country. From the death of King Ferdinand in 1927 until 1930, as the king was a small boy, the country was ruled by a regency council which included Patriarch Miron and Carol’s younger brother Nicolae. Carol was recalled in 1930, and his former wife was forced into exile, while the king lived openly with Lupescu (he only married her after his exile from Romania in 1940). During this period, Patriarch Miron used his power as temporary prime minister to persecute the True Orthodox Christians of Romania.

“The first and foremost problem” for the True Orthodox, writes Constantin Bujor, “was the lack of Priests. Religious persecution against the clergy and Faithful was in full swing, especially in Moldavia. Great sacrifice and an unwavering will were needed in order to uphold the True Faith. The organization of the Old Calendar Church started with the construction of the Church in Vănători, Neamț County, and afterwards in other places; and alongside this, religious assistance was provided for the Faithful in various localities in the houses of trustworthy Christians. In addition to Vănători and Rădașeni, Brusturi, Rășca, Slătioara, Cucova, and Angheleşti were among the first places to oppose the calendar innovation, and strong communities of true believers formed in these localities. It was in Rădașeni that Hieromonk Glicherie first established himself. At the outset, the Divine services were held in the village Church, but this situation was not allowed to continue. In normal circumstances, the Church could have been used by both the Old and the New Calendarist communities, because all of the Faithful had contributed to its construction. However, Father Haralambie Teodorus, the Priest who served the New Calendarist community, locked the Old Calendarists out of the Church and removed the clapper from the bell so as to prevent them from holding services. He incited the locals to pelt the Old Calendarist Faithful with rocks, and on one particular day he told them, ‘If you need a Church, go build your own.’

\textsuperscript{629} Since King George of Greece, Helen’s brother, wished to marry Carol’s sister Elizabeth, and this is forbidden by the canons, it was arranged that the two marriages took place exactly simultaneously in Bucharest and Athens, so that the one should not be an impediment to the other!
“This hatred was fomented by New Calendarist clergymen and subsequently degenerated into acts of violence and aggression. The celebration of Holy Pascha according to the Gregorian Paschalion in 1926 and 1929 convinced the Faithful that the New Calendar was, in fact, just the first step in a process that had as its goal the destruction of the Orthodox ethos. In 1931, Hieromonk Glicherie came to Rădășeni and began to organize an Old Calendar parish in response to a decision made by the local Faithful. On May 8/21, 1932, he blessed the place where the new Church of Saints Peter and Paul was to be built and laid the foundation stone. The Church was built out of wood in twenty-eight days, covered with sheet metal, and then stuccoed in a single day. But in June of that same year, the local New Calendarist Priest sent two men under the cover of darkness to set the Church on fire. However, the Church was saved by the father of Father Nicolae Onofrei, Vasile Onofrei, who was alerted and awakened. Along with Nicolae (then a child) and his two sisters, by barking dogs. One of the malefactors, Teodor Sandu, fell very ill later on and was carried on a stretcher to Church to ask for forgiveness. On October 14/27, 1933, the Church was Consecrated.

“In later 1930, Hieromonk Glicherie and Hierodeacon David went to Jerusalem to discuss with Patriarch Damianos of Jerusalem (1848-1931) the situation of the Romanian Orthodox Christians who wished to continue observing the Julian Calendar. The Patriarch blessed them to continue their struggle and to build and Consecrate new Churches, for which purpose he provided them with Holy Chrism. To this day, in the home of Father Nicholae Onofrei there is a photograph of Father Glicherie serving with Patriarch Damianos. On returning to Romania, Father Glicherie continued the struggle with greater zeal and invigorated the Old Calendar Church by building over thirty new Churches. He went to many places in the country, including Basarabia, accompanied by a group of monks from both Romania and Mount Athos, who helped him in convincing the Faithful to keep alive love, hope, and confidence in the power of the traditional Faith.

“For the service of blessing the site for a new Church or of Consecrating finished Churches, the Faithful, dressed in festal attire, would come on pilgrimage from all over the country in convoys of carriages. Led by Father Glicherie and his Synodeia, journeys to these sites were permeated with spiritual joy. Father Nicholae Onofrei remembers that when he was a child, he and his brother Onofrei Onofrei (later to become Metropolitan Silvestru [1924-1992]) were taken by their father (who later became a monk at the Slătioara Monastery with the name ‘Varlaam’) on such pilgrimages when Churches or sites for Churches were to be blessed. While travelling towards Oglinzi, Neamț County, to bless the site for a new Church at Vadu in Moldavia, they met convoys of carriages from Mălini, Drăgușeni, and other places. Father Glicherie stood up and greeted the Faithful with ‘Christ is Risen!’ to which the crowd responded with ‘Truly He is Risen!’ so loudly that the entire Moldavian valley they were crossing echoed with the shouting. Because it
was the Paschal season, the Faithful sang ‘Christ is Risen’ the entire way to the new Church. They were all overcome with spiritual joy and wanted to glorify God.

“This unity displayed by the Old Calendarist Faithful, which lent a note of greater splendour to their religious celebrations, was not viewed favourably by the authorities or the representatives of the official Church. Thus, on June 29/July 12, 1932, the Old Calendar Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, strong action was taken to stifle the celebration and especially to discourage the organization of such events. At the end of the service, the mayor of Rădășeni, Costică Grigorescu, deceitfully and cunningly said, ‘All the men of your parish have to go to the Prefecture in Fălticeni in order to receive approval for the functioning of your Church.’ Since the people respected the mayor as being a sober individual, they joyfully left on foot for Fălticeni, a distance of two or three kilometres over a hill. Although Father Glicherie did not trust the mayor, he approved the departure of the people for Fălticeni, placing all his hope in God.

“After the Faithful had departed and had gone some distance, the Church was surrounded by forty gendarmes, all of them drunk, who had entered the courtyard in search of Father Glicherie. When he saw the danger, Father Glicherie ran into the backyard and hid among the potato plants. However, he was spotted by the gendarmes, who brutally pounced on him. They tried to haul him over the fence, but they were seen by a few nuns, who alerted Vasile Onofrei by their cries. Together with Toader Amariei and Anica Grecu, he sprang to Father Glicherie’s assistance and yelled at the gendarmes, ‘What are you doing in my backyard!’ One of the gendarmes answered with a warning shot; but as the gendarme tried to reload his gun, he lost his balance dodging Anica Grecu, who had lunged at him with a pitchfork. He was disarmed by Vasile Onofrei, who in turn freed Father Glicherie. During this vicious attack, the gendarmes brutally kicked Hieromnonk Glicerie’s legs with their boots, leaving him with an incurable wound for the rest of his life. Vasile Onofrei hid the gun used by the gendarme and kept it for two weeks, intending to take it with him to the Ministry of Internal Affairs to denounce the abuses committed by the Gendarmerie.

“The Faithful who lived close to the Church made haste to alert the people by tolling the bells, and one of them went on horseback to catch up with the believers who had left for Fălticeni. Meanwhile, the Church was defended by women, who blocked the gate and prevented the gendarmes from entering the courtyard. The gendarmes withdrew only upon the return of those who had gone to the Prefecture and were now angry at having been deceived by the mayor. Later on, it turned out that the gendarmes had been hiding in the house of the New Calendarist Priest, Father Haralambie Teodoru, waiting for the Faithful to depart for Fălticeni. The same Father Teodoru had gotten the
gendarmes drunk, thereby becoming an accomplice to their criminal action.”

In 1935, the leader of the Romanian Old Calendarists, Hieromonk Glycherie, heard of the return of the three bishops to the Old Calendar in Greece. And so late in the autumn he “travelled again to Mount Athos, accompanied by Monk Ghimnazie, who knew Greek… Their purpose was to bring an Old Calendarist Hierarch to Romania to perform Ordinations, or to have Father Ghimnazie or any other Romanian living on Mount Athos consecrated to serve the Church back home.”

However, when they “asked the Old Calendar Greek bishops to consecrate Fr. Ghimnazie to the episcopate, the bishops could do nothing without their first-hierarch, Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina, who, at the insistence of the newcalendarist Metropolitan of Athens, had been detained by the English authorities in Palestine...

“St. Glycherie set off for Yugoslavia. He visited the church of the Russian Church Abroad in Belgrade, where Metropolitan Anastasy was serving. Metropolitan Anastasy advised Fr. Glycherie to turn to Bishop Seraphim (Lyade) of the Russian Church Abroad, and ask him to go to Romania to order Old Calendar priests. Bishop Seraphim at that time was in Vienna. St. Glycherie set off there, but Vladyka Seraphim did not decide to go to Romania, knowing how dangerous it was.”

After returning to Romania, on September 1, 1936 Fr. Glycherie came to the consecration of a church in the village of Bukhalniţa-Neamţ. He was accompanied by 4000 peasants on 500 waggons. When the procession was passing through the town of Piatra Neamţ, the road was blocked by soldiers with machine guns. St. Glycherie and many other monks and laypeople were arrested. Many were killed. Glycherie was savagely beaten on the head with various clubs. Deacon David Bidascu was also beaten, and suffered from his wounds for the rest of his days.

Metropolitan Cyprian writes: “Hieromonk Glycherie... was taken under guard to Bucharest and there condemned to death. He was, however, miraculously saved, in that the Theotokos appeared to the wife of the Minister of Justice and gave her an order to intercede with her husband on Father Glycherie’ behalf. Her husband did not react in the manner of Pilate,

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630 Bujor, Resisting unto Blood: Sixty-Five Years of Persecution of the True (Old Calendar) Orthodox Church of Romania (October 1924 – December 1989), Etna, Ca.: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 2003, pp. 55-60.
631 Bujor, op. cit., p. 98.
632 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 52.
but rather commuted Father Glycherie’s death sentence and ordered him imprisoned in a distant monastery…

“[Patriarch Miron] ordered all of the churches of the True Orthodox Christians razed, and imprisoned any cleric or monastic who refused to submit to his authority. The monks and nuns were incarcerated in two monasteries, where they were treated with unheard of barbarity. Some of them, such as Hieromonk Pambo, founder of the Monastery of Dobru (which was demolished and rebuilt three times), met with a martyr’s end. During the destruction of the Monastery of Cucova, five lay people were thrown into the monastery well and drowned. By such tactics the Patriarch wished to rid himself of the Old Calendarist problem!”

634 Metropolitan Cyprian, "The True Orthodox Christians of Romania", The Orthodox Word, January-February, 1982, vol. 18, № 1 (102). Over ten priests were killed or died in prison, including Fathers Pambo, Gideon and Theophanes. See Victor Boldewskul, "The Old Calendar Church of Romania", Orthodox Life, vol. 42, № 5, October-November, 1992, pp. 11-17. Metropolitan Blaise writes: "Take, for example, Fr. Euthymius – he was in a concentration camp for 3 years with Fr. Pambo, and he told us how they tortured him: they threw him into a stream and forced other prisoners to walk over him as over a bridge: he was at that time about 27 years old." (Pravoslavnia Rus' (Orthodox Russia), № 2 (1479), 15/28 January, 1993)
THE RUSSIAN DIASPORA

The political make-up of the Russian Diaspora was exceptionally complex, with every part of the political spectrum from monarchists to communists represented. The monarchists continued the struggle against Bolshevism, but with very little success. At the end of 1921 a Monarchical Union of Central Russia (MUCR), known by the Cheka as “The Trust”, was established in Moscow, with close links with the Diaspora. However, it was comprehensively infiltrated by the Cheka, and its leaders executed. In September, 1923 General Wrangel established ROVS (the Russian Inter-Forces Union), which numbered twenty-five thousand veterans of the Civil War and recognized a Romanov Grand Duke as heir to the Throne of Russia.635

After the death of General Wrangel, the leader of ROVS became General Eugene Karlovich Miller. He wrote: “For every victory it is necessary to strive for a single goal with maximum effort. For victory over Soviet power the Russian emigration must recognize that not one émigré can have the right to do or say anything that could harm another émigré, that is, a man who in one way or another fights Bolshevism, and not one émigré can have the right not to do what is in his power and he can do in one way or another to harm communism.

“With this thought in mind he must get up in the morning and go to sleep in the evening. From this point of view he must evaluate every step he makes, every work, sacrificing everything personal, secondary and factional to the main and only important thing. He must never do what could give joy to the common enemy. All his efforts must be directed against communism, the communists and the communist authorities in Moscow. Discipline and self-limitation will lead to victory.”

On September 22, 1937 this noble warrior was kidnapped and taken by NKVD agents from Paris to Moscow. He was sentenced by the Supreme Court of the USSR and sentenced to death. He was shot in the inner prison of the NKVD on May 11, 1939.636

The Russian Diaspora contributed mightily to the culture of their host nations in Europe and America in such fields as painting, music and ballet. But much more importantly, the Russian Church Abroad brought the light of Orthodoxy to millions. It was from this time that Russian theology and theologians began to exert a powerful influence on western thought.

And yet only a minority of Russians émigrés took the opportunity of exile to repent of their participation in the Russian revolution.

As St. John Maximovich, at that time Bishop of Shanghai, said in his report to the Second All-Diaspora Council in Belgrade in 1938: “A significant portion of the Russians that have gone abroad belong to that intellectual class which in recent times lived according to the ideas of the West. While belonging to the Orthodox Church and confessing themselves to be Orthodox, the people of that class had strayed far from Orthodoxy in their world view. The principal sin of these people was that their beliefs and way of life were not founded on the teachings of the Orthodox faith; they tried to reconcile the rules and teachings of the Church with their own habits and desires. For this reason they had, on the one hand, very little interest in the essence of Orthodox teaching, often even considering the Church’s dogmatic teaching completely unessential, and, on the other hand, they fulfilled the requirements and rites of the Orthodox Church but only insofar as this did not interfere with their more European than Russian way of life. This gave rise to their disdain for the fasts, to their going to church for only a short time (and then only to satisfy a more aesthetic than religious feeling) and to a thorough lack of understanding of religion as the principal foundation of man’s spiritual life. Many, of course, were inwardly otherwise disposed, but few possessed sufficient strength of spirit and the ability to manifest it outwardly in their way of life.

“In the social sphere this class also lived by the ideas of the West. Without giving any room at all to the influence of the Church, they strove to rebuild the whole life of Russia, especially in the realm of government, according to Western models. This is why in recent times an especially bitter struggle was waged against the government. Liberal reforms and the democratic structuring of Russia became, as it were, a new faith. Not to confess this idea meant that one was behind the times. Seized with a thirst for power and utilizing for their struggle with the monarchy widespread slander against the Royal Family, the intelligentsia brought Imperial Russia to its downfall and prepared the way for the Communist regime. Then, unreconciled to the thought of losing the power for which they had waited for so long, they declared war on the Communists, in the beginning mainly out of their unwillingness to cede them power. The struggle against Soviet power subsequently involved broad sectors of the populace, especially drawing in the youth to an outburst of enthusiasm to reconstruct a ‘United, indivisible Russia’, at the cost of their lives. There were many exploits which manifested the valor of the Christ-loved Russian army, but the Russian nation proved itself still unprepared for liberation, and the Communists turned out to be the victors.

“The intelligentsia was partially annihilated and partially it fled abroad to save itself. Meanwhile, the Communists showed their true colors and, together with the intelligentsia, large sections of the population left Russia, in part to save their lives and in part because of ideology: they did not want to
serve the Communists. Finding themselves abroad, the Russian people experienced great spiritual shocks. A significant crisis occurred in the souls of a majority, which was marked by a mass return of the intelligentsia to the Church. Many churches abroad are filled primarily by these people. The intelligentsia took an interest in questions of spiritual life and began to take an active part in church affairs. Numerous circles and societies were formed for the purpose of religious enlightenment. Members study the Holy Scriptures, the works of the Holy Fathers, general spiritual life and theological questions, and many of them have become clergy.

“However, all these gratifying manifestations also had a negative aspect. Far from all of those who returned to the faith adopted the Orthodox teaching in its entirety. The proud mind could not be reconciled to the fact that, until then, it had stood on a false path. Many began to attempt to reconcile Christian teaching with their previous views and ideas. This resulted in the appearance of a whole series of new religious-philosophical trends, some completely alien to Church teaching. Among them Sophiology was especially widespread. It is based on the recognition of man’s worth in and of himself and expresses the psychology of the intelligentsia.

“As a teaching, Sophiology is known to a comparatively small group of people and very few openly espouse it. Nonetheless, a significant part of the immigrant intelligentsia is spiritually related to it because the psychology of

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637 Sophiology, or Sophianism, was invented by the Paris-based theologian Fr. Sergius Bulgakov. The heresy centred on the mythical, quasi-divine figure of Sophia, and was based, according to Archbishop Theophan of Poltava in a letter he wrote in 1930, “on the book of Fr. [Paul] Florensky, The Pillar and Ground of the Truth. But Florensky borrowed the idea of Sophia from V.S. Soloviev. And V.S. Soloviev borrowed it from the medieval mystics.

“In V.S. Soloviev Sophia is the feminine principle of God, His ‘other’. Florensky tries to prove that Sophia, as the feminine principle of God, is a special substance. He tries to find this teaching in St. Athanasius the Great and in Russian iconography. Protopriest Bulgakov accepts on faith the basic conclusions of Florensky, but partly changes the form of this teaching, and partly gives it a new foundation. In Bulgakov this teaching has two variants: a) originally it is a special Hypostasis, although not of one essence with the Holy Trinity (in the book The Unwaning Light), b) later it is not a Hypostasis but ‘hypostasisness’. In this latter form it is an energy of God coming from the essence of God through the Hypostases of the Divinity into the world and finding for itself its highest ‘created union’ in the Mother of God. Consequently, according to this variant, Sophia is not a special substance, but the Mother of God.

“According to the Church teaching, which is especially clearly revealed in St. Athanasius the Great, the Sophia-Wisdom of God is the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Here, in the most general terms, is the essence of Protopriest Bulgakov’s teaching on Sophia! To expound any philosophical teaching shortly is very difficult, and so it is difficult to expound shortly the teaching of the ‘sophianists’ on Sophia. This teaching of theirs becomes clear only in connection the whole of their philosophical system. But to expound the latter shortly is also impossible. One can say only: their philosophy is the philosophy of ‘panentheism’, that is, a moderate form of ‘pantheism’. The originator of this ‘panentheism’ in Russia is V.S. Soloviev.”

In 1935 both the Moscow Patriarchate and ROCOR condemned Sophianism as heretical. (V.M.)
Sophiology is based on the worship of man, not as a humble servant of God, but rather as a little god himself, who has no need for being blindly obedient to the Lord God. The feeling of keen pride, joined with faith in the possibility of man living by his own wisdom, is quite characteristic of many people considered to be cultured by today’s standards, who place their own reasonings above all else and do not wish to be obedient in everything to the teaching of the Church, which they regard favourably but with condescension. Because of this, the Church Abroad has been rocked by a series of schisms which have harmed her up till now and have drawn away even a part of the hierarchy. This consciousness of a feeling of personal worthiness is manifested also in social affairs, where each person who has advanced a little among the ranks, or thinks he has, puts his own opinion higher than everyone’s and tries to be a leader. As a result, Russian society is split into countless parties and groups irreconcilably at odds with each other, each trying to put forwards its own program, which is sometimes a thoroughly developed system and sometimes simply an appeal to follow this or that personality.

“With the hope of saving and resurrecting Russia through the realization of their programs, these social activists almost always lose sight of the fact that besides human activity making history, there moves the hand of God. The Russian people as a whole has committed great sins, which are the reasons for the present misfortunes; namely, oath-breaking and regicide. Civic and military leaders renounced their obedience and loyalty to the Tsar, even before his abdication, forcing the latter upon him, who did not want internal bloodshed. The people openly and noisily greeted this act, without any loud protest anywhere. This renunciation of obedience was a breach of the oath taken to the Emperor and his lawful heirs. On the heads of those who committed this crime fell the curses of their forefathers, the Zemsky Sobor of 1613, which imposed a curse on those who disobeyed its resolutions. The ones guilty of the sin of regicide are not only those who physically performed the deed but the people as a whole, who rejoiced when the Tsar was overthrown and allowed his degradation, his arrest and exile, leaving him defenceless in the hands of criminals, which itself spelled out the end.

“Thus, the calamity which befell Russia is the direct result of terrible sins, and her rebirth is possible only after she has been cleansed from them. However, until now there has been no real repentance; the crimes that were committed have not been openly condemned, and many active participants in the Revolution continue even now to assert that at the time it was impossible to act otherwise.

“By not voicing an outright condemnation of the February Revolution, of the uprising against the Anointed One of God, the Russian people continue to participate in the sin, especially when they defend the fruits of the Revolution, for in the words of the Apostle Paul, those men are especially sinful who,
‘knowing... that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them’ (Romans 1.32).

“While punishing the Russian people, the Lord at the same time is pointing out the way to salvation by making them teachers of Orthodoxy throughout the world. The Russian Diaspora has acquainted the four corners of the earth with Orthodoxy, for a significant part of the Russian immigration unconsciously preaches Orthodoxy. Everywhere, wherever Russians live, they build little refugee churches or even majestic cathedrals, or simply serve in premises adapted for this purpose.

“The majority of Russian refugees are not familiar with the religious tendencies of their intelligentsia, and they are nourished by those spiritual reserves which they accumulated in the homeland. Large masses of refugees attend Divine services, some of them actively participate in them, helping with the singing and reading on cliros and serving in the altar. Affiliated organizations have been established which take upon themselves the responsibility of maintaining the churches, often performing charitable work as well.

“Looking at the faithful who pack the churches on feast days, one might think that in fact the Russian people have turned to the Church and are repenting of their sins. However, if you compare the number who go to church with the number of Russians who live in a given place, it turns out that about one-tenth of the Russian population regularly goes to church. Approximately the same number attend Divine services on major feasts, and the rest either very rarely – on some particular occasions – go to church and occasionally pray at home, or have left the Church altogether. The latter sometimes is a conscious choice under sectarian or anti-religious influences, but in most cases it is simply because people do not live in a spiritual manner; they grow hard, their souls become crude, and sometimes they become outright nihilists.

“The great majority of Russians have a hard life full of personal difficulties and material deprivation. Despite the hospitable attitude towards us in some countries, especially in our fraternal Yugoslavia, whose government and people are doing everything possible to show their love for Russia and to ease the grief of the Russian exiles, still, Russians everywhere feel the bitterness of being deprived of their homeland. Their surrounding environment reminds them that they are strangers and must adapt to customs that are often foreign to them, feeding of the crumbs that fall from the table of their hosts. Even in those countries which are very well disposed towards us, it is natural that in hiring practices preference should be given to the country’s citizens; and with the current difficult situations of most countries, Russians often cannot find work. Even those who are relatively well provided for are constantly make to feel their lack of rights in the absence of organizations which could protect
them from injustices. Although only a comparatively insignificant number have been completely absorbed into local society, it quite often happens in such cases that they become totally alienated from their own people and their own country.

“In such a difficult situation in all respects, the Russian people abroad have shown a remarkable degree of patient endurance and self-sacrifice. It is as if they have forgotten about their formerly wonderful (for many) conditions of life, their service to their homeland and its allies in the Great War, their education and everything else that might prompt them to strive for a comfortable life. In their exile they have taken up every kind of work and occupation to make a living for themselves abroad. Former nobles and generals have become simple workmen, artisans and petty merchants, not disdaining any type of work and remembering that no work is degrading, provided it is not bound up with any immoral activity. The Russian intelligentsia in this respect has manifested an ability, whatever the situation, to preserve its vitality and to overcome everything that stands in the way of its existence and development. It has also shown that it had lofty spiritual qualities, that it is capable of being humble and long-suffering.

“The school of refugee life has morally regenerated and elevated many people. One has to give honor and credit to those who bear their refugee cross doing difficult work to which they are unaccustomed, living in conditions which previously they did not know or even think of. Remaining firm in spirit, they have maintained a nobility of soul and ardent love for their homeland, and, repenting over their former sins, they endure their trial without complaints. Truly, many of them, men and women, are now more glorious in their dishonour than in the years of their glory. The spiritual wealth which they have now acquired is better than the material wealth they left in the homeland, and their souls, like gold purified by fire, have been cleansed in the fire of suffering and burn like brightly glowing lamps…”

THE RISE OF HITLER

The Great Depression shook the foundations of democracy throughout the world. Some, such as the Socialist Beatrice Webb, saw it as preparing the way for the world revolution: “The U.S.A., with its cancerous growth of crime and uncounted but destitute unemployed; Germany hanging over the abyss of a nationalist dictatorship; France, its dread of a new combination of Italy, Germany and Austria against her; Spain on the brink of revolution; the Balkan states snarling at each other; the Far East in a state of anarchic ferment; the African continent uncertain whether its paramount interest and culture power will be black or white; South American states forcibly replacing pseudo-democracies by military dictatorships; and finally – acutely hostile to the rest of the world, engulfed in a fabulous effort, the success of which would shake capitalist civilization to its very foundations – Soviet Russia.”

And yet this “fabulous effort” did not bring Soviet Russia the success on the international stage that one might have expected. The U.S.A. avoided revolution by a heavy injection of state capitalism - Roosevelt’s “New Wave”, not socialism. Britain muddled through, although T.S. Eliot opined that “the present system does not work properly, and more and more people are inclined to believe that it never did and never will”. Germany, Spain and Japan adopted the Fascist path. And France nearly went along the same path after the bloody Fascist riots of February 6, 1934, in the wake of which “few Frenchmen looked so cheerfully to the future. Since 1929 they had seen their country sink from its gleaming peak of prosperity into a dark valley of Depression. The economic crisis appeared to have sapped France’s will to defend itself, menaced though it was by rampant Nazism without and creeping fascism within. The riots were, in Mussolini’s view a convincing argument for fascist discipline, and politicians such as Laval were not ashamed to declare that ‘the parliamentary system is decidedly incapable of functioning except in times of prosperity and ease’.”

Let us look more closely at the German experience. In the years 1930-33, writes Norman Stone, “the Nazis took part for the first time in a rash of five parliamentary elections. On three successive occasions they increased both their popular vote and their list of elected deputies. On the fourth occasion, in November 1932, their support declined; and they never won an outright majority. But in a very short time they had established themselves as the largest single party in the Reichstag. What is more, the rising tide of street violence, to which Nazi gangs greatly contributed, took place in a much-changed international setting. In the early 1920s, Communist-led strikes and demonstrations were overshadowed by the apparently limitless power of the Entente. German industrialists and German democrats knew exactly whom to

640 Brendon, op. cit., p. 168.
641 Brendon, op. cit., p. 149.
call in if the Communists ever tried to take over. But in the early 1930s Britain, France and the USA were in no better fettle than Germany; and the Soviet Union was seen to be modernizing with remarkable energy. With the communists claiming almost as many votes as the Nazis, Germany’s conservative leaders had much-reduced means to keep the red menace at bay.

“… In September 1930, in the interests of democracy, one minority Chancellor persuaded President Hindenburg to activate Article 48 of the Weimar Constitution. Henceforth, the German president could ‘use armed force to restore order and safety’ and suspend ‘the fundamental rights of the citizen’. It was an instrument which others could exploit to overthrow democracy.

“The sequence of events was crucial. The storm raged for three years: deepening recession, growing cohorts of unemployed, communists fighting anti-communists on the streets, indecisive elections, and endless Cabinet crises. In June 1932 another minority Chancellor, Franz von Papen, gained the support of the Reichstag by working with the Nazi deputies. Six months later, he cooked up another combination: he decided to make Hitler Chancellor, with himself as Vice-Chancellor, and to put three Nazi ministers out of twelve into the Cabinet. President Hindenburg, and the German right in general, thought it a clever idea: they thought they were using Hitler against the Communists. In fact, when Hitler accepted the invitation, suitably dressed in top hat and tails, it was Hitler who was using them.

“Less than a month later, and a week before the next elections, a mysterious fire demolished the Reichstag building. The Nazis proclaimed a Red plot, arrested communist leaders, won 44 per cent of the popular vote in the frenzied, anti-communist atmosphere, then calmly passed an Enabling Act granting the Chancellor dictatorial powers for four years. In October Hitler organized a plebiscite to approve Germany’s withdrawal from the League of Nations and from the Disarmament Conference. He received 96.3 per cent support. In August 1934, following the President’s death, he called another plebiscite to approve his own election to the new party-state position of ‘Führer and Reich Chancellor’ with full emergency powers. This time he received 90 per cent support. Hitler was in control. In the final path to the summit, he did not breach the Constitution once…

“Hitler’s democratic triumph exposed the true nature of democracy. Democracy has few values of its own: it is as good, or as bad, as the principles of the people who operate it. In the hands of liberal and tolerant people, it will produce a liberal and tolerant government; in the hands of cannibals, a government of cannibals. In Germany in 1933-34 it produced a Nazi government because the prevailing culture of Germany’s voters did not give priority to the exclusion of gangsters…”

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Stone’s point about democracy is well taken. And yet the weakness, indeed profound danger, of democracy consists in something else: over time, the leaders elected by democracy become worse and worse. For the fundamental ethos of democracy, in modern as in ancient times, is secularist, anti-religious and anti-traditional. So as this ethos becomes more deeply entrenched in the people, they will be more inclined to elect anti-religious and anti-traditionalist, even wholly demonized leaders... And so, just as Russian democracy in 1917 elected the worst of men to lead it, who then handed democracy into the hands of the communists, so German democracy in 1933 elected the worst of men, who promptly turned it into a fascist dictatorship...

The mass worship of the most evil of men by modern, educated people requires an explanation. The religious mind will find it in demon-possession, in Satan’s taking over of a nation that has abandoned its faith and given in to the most primitive passions of envy, lust and hatred. The demonic nature of the Russian revolution hardly needs demonstrating. Many reported that the coming of Soviet power was as if the country had been invaded by demons, and there were many incidents in which demonic activity was almost palpable. Similar incidents were reported in Nazi Germany.

643 Thus the Catacomb Christian P.M. writes: “I want to tell about the miracles of God of which I was a witness. In our village they closed the church and made it into a club. And then they declared that they would be showing a film – this was the first opening of the club. In the church everything was as it had been before, even the iconostasis was standing with its icons. They put in benches, hung up a screen and began to show the film. About half an hour passed, and then suddenly the people began to shout. Those who were at the back jumped up and rushed towards the exit, while those in front fell on the floor or crawled under the benches. What had happened? As many people later recounted, the holy Great Martyr George came out of an icon that was on the iconostasis on a horse, and taking a spear, galloped at the people, who began to flee in fear. But that was not the end of it. Somehow they got at any rate some of the people together again and continued to show the film. It was being shown by a mechanic and his assistant. And suddenly up in the choir they began to sing the Cherubic hymn – and so loudly that the film was scarcely audible. At that point they decided that some believers had climbed up and wanted to interrupt the showing of the film. So about seven members of the Komsomol and the assistant climbed up in order to catch them all and bring them down. But then they said that when they had climbed up the stairs the singing stopped, and they rejoiced – the believers had got frightened and fallen silent. But when they climbed up into the choir they saw that it was empty. They stood in bewilderment and could not understand how the singers could have run away. And then suddenly in the midst of them unseen singers began to sing the Cherubic hymn. Pursued by an unknown fear, they rushed to get out, not knowing the way, pushing and shoving each other. The assistant mechanic, who was running in front, suddenly fell down, and everyone ran over him since there was no other way because of the narrowness of the place. Having run down, they rushed out into the street. Now the showing was finally abandoned. The assistant mechanic was ill for a month and died, while the mechanic left, and nobody wanted to go to work in the club as a mechanic for any money. So from that time they stopped having a cinema in it.”

644 Thus “two British guests at a Hitler rally in Berlin in 1934, seated in a stadium just feet behind him, watched him captivate his listeners with the familiar rising passion and jarring voice. ‘Then an amazing thing happened,’ continued the account: ‘[we] both saw a blue flash
Needless to say, demon-possession is not the explanation favoured by modernists. They prefer that nebulous something called “charisma”. Thus Laurence Rees writes: “Emil Klein, who heard Hitler speak at a beer hall in Munich in the 1920s... believes that Hitler ‘gave off such a charisma that people believed whatever he said’.

“What we learn from eye-witnesses like... Klein is that charisma is first and foremost about making a connection between people. No one can be charismatic alone on a desert island. Charisma is formed in a relationship. As Sir Neville Henderson, British ambassador to Berlin in the 1930s, wrote, Hitler ‘owed his success in the struggle for power to the fact that he was the reflection of their [ie his supporters’] subconscious mind, and his ability to express in words what that subconscious mind felt that it wanted.’

“It’s a view confirmed by Konrad Heiden, who heard Hitler speak many times in the 1920s: ‘His speeches begin always with deep pessimism and end in overjoyed redemption, a triumphant happy ending; often they can be refuted by reason, but they follow the far mightier logic of the subconscious, which no refutation can touch... Hitler has given speech to the speechless terror of the modern mass...’”

However, this is still too vague – and too simple. The fact is that for most of his career Stalin was considered singularly lacking in charisma, and hardly connected with anyone; while as late as 1928 “the Nazis polled just 2.6 per cent of the German electorate – so more than 97 per cent of the German electorate rejected any charismatic power Hitler may have possessed. It was clear that unless Hitler could make a connection with the mass of the Germans, then he could not succeed.

“It took the Wall Street Crash and the dire economic crisis of the early 1930s to make millions of Germans responsive to Hitler’s appeal. Suddenly, to people like student Jutta Ruediger, Hitler’s call for a national resurgence made him seem like ‘the bringer of salvation’. So much so that by 1932 the Nazis were suddenly the biggest political party in Germany... Hitler was dismissed as a peripheral figure in 1928, yet lauded by millions in 1933. What changed was not Hitler, but the situation. Economic catastrophe made huge numbers of Germans seek a charismatic ‘saviour’...”

of lightning come out of Hitler’s back... We were surprised that those of us close behind Hitler had not all been struck dead.’ The two men afterwards discussed whether Hitler was actually possessed at certain moments by the Devil: ‘We came to the conclusion that he was.”

(Rees, op. cit., pp. 13-14)

“... But then Hitler and the Nazis seemed to hit a brick wall – in the shape of President Hindenburg. State Secretary Otto Meissner reported that Hindenburg said to Hitler on 13 August 1932: ‘He [i.e Hindenburg] could not justify before God, before his conscience or before the Fatherland, the transfer of the whole authority of government to a single party, especially to a party that was biased against people who had different views from their own.’

“In this crucial period between Hindenburg’s rejection of Hitler’s bid for the chancellorship of Germany, and his final appointment as chancellor in January 1933, two different perceptions of Hitler’s charisma came together... Hitler, during these months, had never been more impressive to devoted followers like Joseph Goebbels. On 13 August 1932, Hitler discussed the consequences of Hindenburg’s rejection with his Nazi colleagues. ‘Hitler holds his nerve,’ recorded Goebbels in his diary. ‘He stands above the machinations. So I love him.’ Hitler exuded confidence that all would come right...”647

And he was right... So it was not simply dire economic circumstances, and the need for a saviour from them, but also overwhelming self-confidence, that went into the making of Hitler’s “charisma”. And yet this is still not enough to explain his rise. After all, there are many democratic politicians exuding self-confidence who have promised salvation from misery, and yet have never come near to power.

Freud, whose theories were becoming fashionable at precisely this time, considered it too simple to explain the worship of the masses for their totalitarian leaders simply as the consequence of fear of persecution, or because of political or economic motives. That would be to treat the matter in “far too rational a manner... Libidinal ties are what characterize a group”.648 It is the love of the people for their leader that creates the group and the relationships within the group, which disappear “at the same time as the leader”.649 (This was true of Nazism, but less so of Stalinism.) “The credulity of love is the most fundamental source of authority”.650

Hitler himself came to a similar conclusion about his powers, emphasizing that the masses should stop thinking and surrender themselves to the power of instinct: “The masses are like an animal that obeys its instincts. They do not reach conclusions by reasoning... At a mass meeting, thought is eliminated... Mastery always means the transmission of a stronger will to a weaker one,

647 Rees, op. cit., p. 22.
649 Freud, Group Psychology, p. 94; in Rieff, op. cit., p. 235.
650 Freud, Three Essays, p. 150; in Rieff, op. cit., p. 237.
[which follows] something in the nature of a physical or biological law."651 Thus when Hitler entered Vienna in 1938, "‘the whole city behaved like an aroused woman, vibrating, writhing, moaning and sighing lustfully for orgasm’, wrote one witness, George Clare, who stated that this was no purple passage but an ‘exact description’.‘652

Certainly, it seems impossible to explain the passionate love of the peoples of Nazi Germany or Stalinist Russia for their leaders without invoking some such deep psychological motive – stirred up and exploited by the demonic powers of the spirit world.

Let us consider, for example, the quasi-hypnotic effect that Hitler had on the German masses. The 1934 Nuremberg rally, writes Martin Gilbert, “had seemed to Hitler the ideal vehicle for nationwide propaganda, using documentary film with artistic presentation. He entrusted this task to a former actress and fiction film maker, Leni Riefenstahl, who worked to turn the 1934 rally into an epic paean of praise for the ‘Leader’. Her film Triumph of the Will (Triumph des Willes) was finished in 1935, and gave German audiences an almost mystical view of Hitler’s charismatic appeal: the film opens with Hitler in an aeroplane flying to Nuremberg, and descending through the clouds to the city and the rally, where the Nazi Party officials proclaim repeatedly: ‘Hitler is Germany, the Party is Germany, thus Germany is Hitler and the Party is Germany’. The film historian Charles Musser writes: ‘The exchange of looks and salutes creates a bond of obedience between these different levels, one in which the identity of the self is only found through identifying with the nation and the Party. In the process, Hitler and the various troops are eroticized by Riefestahl’s adoring vision.’653

We see a similar process taking place in Stalinist Russia. “Consider this diary entry written by a witness of Stalin’s visit to a young communist congress in April 1936: ‘And HE stood, a little weary, pensive and stately. One could feel the tremendous habit of power, the force of it, and at the same time something feminine and soft. I look about: Everybody had fallen in love with this gentle, inspired, laughing face. To see him, simply to see him, was happiness for all of us’.”654 Again, a Lithuanian writer wrote: “I approached Stalin’s portrait, took it off the wall, placed it on the table and, resting my head in my hands, I gazed and meditated. What should I do? The Leader’s face, as always so serene, his eyes so clear-sighted, they penetrated into the distance. It seems that his penetrating look pierces my little room and goes out to embrace the entire globe... With my every fibre, every nerve, every

651 Overy, op. cit., p. 19. Hitler certainly believed in such a law. Thus he refused to marry his mistress, Eva Braun, because he considered that a married man, like a married movie star, exercised less of a libidinal power over his worshippers.
652 Brendon, op. cit., p. 459.
654 Overy, op. cit., p. 129.
drop of blood I feel that, at this moment, nothing exists in this entire world but this dear and beloved face.”655

The masses’ eroticization of their leaders went together with their own brutalization - eros with thanatos. For “perhaps the most fundamental affinity among the three totalitarian movements lay in the realm of psychology: Communism, Fascism and National Socialism exacerbated and exploited popular resentments – class, racial, and ethnic – to win mass support and to reinforce the claim that they, not the democratically elected governments, expressed the true will of the people. All three appealed to the emotion of hate.”656 Thus anti-war films, such as Remarque’s All Quiet on the Western Front, were mocked in Germany, and violence and hardness were exalted over tenderness and compassion. “Hitler rejected ‘the loathsome humanitarian morality’, which he followed Nietzsche in seeing as a mask for people’s defects: ‘In the end, only the urge for self-preservation can conquer. Beneath it is so-called humanity, the expression of a mixture of stupidity, cowardice, and know-it-all conceit, will melt like snow in the March sun. Mankind has grown great in eternal struggle, and only in eternal peace does it perish.’...”657

The same moral revaluation, the same emphasis on violence and steely hardness (Stalin comes from the Russian word for “steel”) was taking place in Stalinist Russia. Thus “Nadezhda Mandelstam described how ‘Thou shalt not kill’ was identified with ‘bourgeois’ morality: ‘A number of terms such as ‘honour’ and ‘conscience’ went out of use at this time – concepts like these were easily discredited, now the right formula had been found.’ She noticed that people were going through a metamorphosis: ‘a process of turning into wood – that is what comes over those who lose their sense of values’.”658

The poet Heinrich Heine wrote in the 1840s: “A drama will be enacted in Germany compared with which the French Revolution will seem like a harmless idyll. Christianity may have restrained the martial ardour of the Teutons for a time, but it did not destroy it. Now that the restraining talisman, the cross, has rotted away, the old frenzied madness will break out again.”

Of course, the cross was no mere “talisman”. Belief in the cross was indeed the only power that could keep Germany (and all the nations) freed from the demonic madnesses of post-Christian civilization. But, as we have seen, with some notable exceptions, the Churches of Germany preferred to join in the madness rather than exorcise it...

657 Glover, op. cit., p. 326.
And what of the state that this madness created? The German historian Golo Mann writes: “‘National Socialism’, its spokesman often said, was a Weltanschaung, an ideology. Basically, however, it was not; not in the sense that Communism for example was. Communism was an elaborate system of doctrines about the world, man and history; false science, false religion which many people seriously believed in. Many people died willingly for Communism, including German Communists. In places where the party was proscribed its followers went underground and when, years later, the pressure was lifted, they reappeared – genuine, indestructible fanatics that they were. The Nazis also boasted of their fanatical faith – they were very fond of the word ‘fanatical’ – but their fanaticism was only skin deep. Fanaticism demands faith, and what did the Nazis believe in? When Hitler’s Reich was broken up almost no National Socialists were to be found. People claimed that they had never been Nazis, that they had known nothing, that they had been forced to join in or had joined in merely to prevent worse things from happening, not because they acted in accordance with their beliefs. Only in the disputed frontier regions where there was momentarily no distinction between the Nazi cause and the pan-German nationalistic one, as in Austria in 1934, were people ready to die for the cause. This was the exception, not the rule. Democrats, Socialists, students, conservative noblemen and trade unionists risked their lives in Germany for the sake of human decency. The Nazis wanted to live and enjoy life.

“When these words were written people were saying that there were still or again ‘National Socialists’ in Germany. One wonders why they should be called thus. Because they believe that not everything that Hitler did was wrong; that Germany was entitled to tear up the Versailles treaty; that the West should not have stabbed Germany in the back when it was defending Europe against Bolshevism; that the Germans were the most industrious nation in Europe; that firm, secure government was needed; and more such things. These may have been sentiments and opinions which National Socialists made use of. But they were there before; they survived National Socialism, and their sum total does not by any means add up to the essence of National Socialism.

“What then was National Socialism? It was an historically unique phenomenon, dependent on an individual and on a moment, a phenomenon which can never reappear in the same form. It was a state of intoxication produced by a gang of intoxicated experts, kept up for a few years. It was a machine for the manufacture of power, for the safeguarding of power and for the extension of power. The machine was located in Germany and therefore used to fuel German energies, German interests, passions and ideas. ‘We want power’ – this cry of the year 1932 was the essence of the new message. Power

659 Yes, but as Elder Aristocles of Moscow said in 1911, Communism was not so much an ideology as a spirit, a spirit from hell. Both totalitarian movements were spiritual in essence, being two variants of the spirit of the revolution. (V.M.)
means organization, indoctrination and the authority to give orders; it meant the suppression of all independent life, of anything capable of resistance. In that sense it was essentially a negative element. The power of National Socialism over Germany thus only became complete when the Reich was close to collapse, when its army had already been defeated.

“The determination to have power was considerable; the doctrine was not. Who can say today what the Nazis ‘taught’? The superiority of the Nordic race? They made fun of it, admitting when they were among themselves that it was a weapon not a truth. Few of them seemed to have seriously believed this nonsense. Anti-semitism? This was probably the most genuine feeling of which Hitler was capable, but it was hardly a Weltanschaung. Nor did anti-Semitism arouse the imagination of the Germans among whom it was no stronger than among most other nations. Later, when the authorities ordered the murder of Europe’s Jews there were people prepared to do this, just as they would have carried out any other order. Himmler himself said shortly before the end that it was time for Germans and Jews to bury the hatchet and become reconciled. When he wanted to save himself and worm his way into the Allies’ favour he pretended that the murder of the Jews was nothing but a regrettable misunderstanding. This was not an article of faith but crime produced by evil propaganda. The same was true of the old Party programme, abandoned as soon as the Nazis came to power, of the economic theories and the talk about the common good. One member of the gang, the President of the People’s Court during the war years, said that the bond between National Socialism and Christianity was that both claimed the whole man. Yet even that was evil propaganda, boasting, imitation of the Communists, of the Jacobins. He would not have been able to say for what National Socialism required the whole man. Relatively the most interesting formulations of the Nazi theory came from outsiders who were quick to place their talents at the disposal of the new rulers and to credit them with all sorts of refinements. Equally there were German scholars who did not find it difficult to avoid the whole mish-mash and who followed their pursuits as before; much less difficult than it is under Communism. As personified in its leaders ‘National Socialism’ was a determination of tremendous intensity which cared for nothing but itself and was for that reason identical with cynical opportunism; without its leaders it did not exist at all. Hence it vanished with Hitler’s death and at the same time people looked at each other in surprise as though they had woken from a long period of bewitchment. If the Nazis believed in anything they believed in the great man. If he believed in anything it was in himself; in the last years of his life his conviction that he was the chosen one assumed dimensions which can no longer be called human…”

660 Not true. Anti-semitism had been built up and incited in Germany since at least the 1870s. It was certainly strong also in other countries, especially France and Romania, but it was particularly strong in Germany. (V.M.)

Immediately he came to power, Hitler initiated the persecution of the Jews that was his prime obsession to the very end of his life. The Jews of America reacted quickly. “In late July 1933, an International Jewish Boycott Conference (New York Times, 7th August 1933) was held in Amsterdam to devise means of bringing Germany to terms. Samuel Untermyer of New York presided over the Conference and was elected President of the World Jewish Economic Federation. Returning to America, Mr. Untermyer described the planned Jewish move against Germany as a ‘holy war... a war must be waged unremittingly.’ (New York Times, 7th August 1933)... The immediately feasible tactic of the ‘economic boycott’ was described by Mr. Untermyer as ‘nothing new’, for ‘President Roosevelt, whose wise statesmanship and vision are the wonder of the civilized world, is invoking it in furtherance of his noble conception of the relations between capital and labor’. Mr. Untermyer gave his hearers and readers specific instruction...”

Under largely Jewish influence, as we shall see, Roosevelt would pursue the policy of unconditional surrender, the de-industrialization of Germany and the surrender of most of Europe to the Soviet Union until his death in 1945. The Second World War really began in 1933...

In spite of the Jewish economic boycott, Hitler was able to employ a combination of Keynesian economics and massive spending on rearmament to drag his nation out of depression, both psychological and economic. Soon it became evident that even if France and Britain could cooperate again, as in 1914, they would have difficulty in defeating Germany in a new European war – although “difficulty” by no means meant “impossibility”. The smaller Central and Eastern European countries – especially Czechoslovakia, the most heavily industrialized among them – might tip the balance against the Axis powers – but only if the western Allies were genuinely prepared to protect them against Germany. However, that they were not prepared to do. As the history of the later 1930s demonstrated, their threats and promises were equally hollow as they followed a policy of appeasing rather than truly opposing the Nazis...

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PART 3. THE SECOND WORLD WAR (1933-1945)

APPEASEMENT: FROM ABYSSINIA TO MUNICH

Democracy is less cruel (usually) than despotism – but more hypocritical; for democracy proclaims its adherence to lofty moral ideals which it then fails to live up to, whereas despotism, as often as not, despises the ideals themselves. Thus when the democracies of Britain and France prided themselves on their adherence to the ideals of freedom and equality for all men while holding in subjection hundreds of millions of men in their vast global empires, they were rightly accused of hypocrisy. However, the innate hypocrisy of democracy was exposed as never before in the 1930s, when Britain, France and even the anti-imperial United States fawned before the despotisms of Italy, Germany and Japan. Only in relation to Japan did they have some excuse – resisting it was simply beyond their strength at the time. But in relation to Italy and Germany this was by no means the case, which makes the history of appeasement so illuminating as regards the true nature of democratic power...

From the beginning of the 1930s there was a steady rise in international warfare. In 1931 the Japanese invaded Manchuria and then China. Then, in 1935, the Italians invaded Abyssinia (Ethiopia).

Abyssinia was a Christian (Monophysite) kingdom led by “Emperor Haile Selassie I, Elect of God, Lion of Judah, King of Zion – he traced his ancestry back to King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba”. A cultured and dignified man, the emperor was trying to drag his ancient, poverty-stricken country into the twentieth century at a steady pace, without endangering its native institutions. Mussolini, barbarian that he was, thought that progress could be brought more quickly to the country by raping it, killing tens of thousands with bombs and mustard gas. The British and the French responded to this threat by trying to buy Mussolini off when they could have stopped the whole venture immediately by simply sealing off the Suez Canal... Haile Selassie decided to appeal to the League of Nations; the “dark continent’s” last European colony would try to enlighten the European colonists...

The League of Nations, the organ created in 1920 by President Wilson and the Versailles Conference for the resolution of international conflicts, was helpless. It was of some use with small conflicts, but had neither the resources nor the international consensus required in order to intervene effectively in larger conflicts. Nor was this surprising when the American Congress refused to ratify American participation, when the largest European powers, Russia and Germany, were either excluded from the beginning or excluded themselves, and when Japan adopted the slogan “Asia for the Asiatics”...

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The only Great Powers remaining in the League, France and Britain, were forced to resort to a more conventional form of conflict resolution – “collective security”, which in effect meant building up alliances of nations or “cordons sanitaires” to deter potential aggressors on the model of the pre-war Entente between France, Britain and Russia. But with Russia – which had supported Abyssinia against Italy in the 1890s - now enslaved to the irreconcilably hostile Soviet Union, and America retreating into splendid isolation, the main objects of deterrence, Germany and Italy, inevitably felt less than overawed by the nations opposed to their expansion. Besides, the Germans, at any rate, were doing better than the western democracies, which, in order to deter Germany, felt compelled to appease Italy...

When the Ethiopian emperor came to Geneva, he “made an eloquent plea for morality in international affairs. He appealed to the conscience of the League and accused it of failing in its duty: ‘You abandoned us to Italy’. Had not its connivance at the rape of Ethiopia set a ‘terrible precedent of bowing before force?’ What would happen next and what could he tell his people?

“He was questioning a corpse. Damaged by its impotence over Manchuria, the League of Nations, as many had anticipated, was destroyed by its failure over Ethiopia. Like the preserved body of Lenin, it had the appearance of life but its veins were filled with embalming fluid. As Léon Blum noted bitterly, ‘The League of Nations no longer condemns the Fascist acts of aggression, the League ‘notes’, the League ‘does this and thus’, the League ‘deplores’ – the League makes a hypocritical show of balancing between the criminal and his victim... Even more intolerable are the lies concealed in these formulae, and what can be read between the lines: the League’s confession of impotence, its abject surrender, its acceptance of the fait accompli.’... As he stalked proudly from the platform of Geneva, the Lion of Juda growled, ‘It is us today. It will be you tomorrow.’”

The roots of appeasement were complex, and not identical in the two major western powers... France had suffered most in the Great War, and was naturally desperate to avoid a second war against the same foe. Always clearer-eyed than the more relaxed and myopic British, they clearly saw how powerful the Germans were becoming and feared the worst. But they also feared to take any initiative without explicit British support – which the British were not always prepared to give. As a result, a defensive, even defeatist mentality set in, symbolised by the purely defensive fortifications of the Maginot Line, which was compounded by the fact that the nation was not united within itself – there were many fascist sympathizers and anti-semites in France, whose subversive and demoralizing activity became manifest to all during the shameful collapse of 1940 and the formation of collaborationist Vichy France.

664 Brendon, op. cit., p. 282.
Britain, while sympathetic to French fears, felt less directly threatened by German expansion. Her military planners suffered from an amateurish, over-optimistic approach that was hampered by the government’s refusal to spend enough on arms until it was almost too late, and by the fact that the forces at their dispersal were manifestly insufficient to do three things at once: both intervene to support victims of German aggression abroad, and defend the island homeland, and protect Britain’s vast colonial empire and overseas commercial interests. Moreover, the British, unlike the French, were tormented by the sneaking feeling that perhaps the Germans had been unjustly treated at Versailles, and that perhaps they had a case in demanding, for example, the return of the Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia...

Of course, the British were less inclined to apply such notions of justice and “fair play” to their own empire. Thus while it might be “fair” to return the Sudetenland to the Germans, it was by no means fair to return India to the Indians… The racist attitudes that underlay their own refusal to give up their empire perhaps made the British less sensitive to the evil of Nazi racism. Of course, British racism was more condescending and less hate-filled than Nazi racism, especially against the Jews. But, as they found to their cost in 1941, it meant that their subject peoples did not jump to defend their colonial masters...

There was an alternative to appeasement. The figures for spending on rearmament in the 1930s reveal that the only country matching Germany in spending was the Soviet Union. As Norman Stone writes, these figures underlined the fact that “the totalitarian powers had suffered from the Depression much less than the Western democracies had. Their military expenditure was twice as great as that of all the Western Powers put together. Their ‘relative war potential’ – which was a calculation based on the ability to translate industrial strength into military power through indices such as machine-tool levels – was roughly equal, and was separately equivalent to that of Britain and France combined.” 665 It was logical, therefore, to expect that the next war might not involve the West at all, but would be between the two powers in the East, especially since Hitler in Mein Kampf had openly declared his intention to acquire Lebensraum and raw materials in the East at the expense of the Slavs. So if the western democracies were not prepared for war on the western front, they might be prepared to incite it on the eastern front, playing off their two most dangerous enemies against each other...

Nor was it only figures on military expenditure that suggested where the core of the future war would be: in 1936 there began the Spanish Civil War, which prefigured the international world war that was to come, with the future antagonists of Italy and Germany, on the one hand, and Soviet Russia, on the other, supporting the nationalist and republican causes respectively. It

indicated that the coming international war would in fact be a civil war between related secular ideologies, all of which had their roots in the early modern history of Western Europe...

Almost immediately after Hitler became Chancellor of Germany in January, 1933, the Spanish right began to set out along the same path of the overthrow of democracy – and on a very similar anti-communist basis, albeit more traditionally religious and reactionary. Thus in February the Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas (CEDA) was created under the leadership of José Maria Gil Robles, who declared: “When the social order is threatened, Catholics should unite to defend it and safeguard the principles of Christian civilization... We are faced with a social revolution. In the political panorama of Europe I can see only the formation of Marxist and non-Marxist groups. That is what is happening in Germany and in Spain also. This is the great battle which we must fight this year...

“We must reconquer Spain... We must give Spain a true unity, a new spirit, a totalitarian polity... It is necessary now to defeat socialism inexorably. We must found a new state, purge the fatherland of judaizing freemasons... We need full power and that is what we demand... To realize this ideal we are not going to waste time with archaic forms. Democracy is not an end but a means to the conquest of the new state. When the time comes, either parliament submits or we will eliminate it...”

For the next three years, in an atmosphere of increasing violence and hatred, right and left struggled for control of the republican government. Eventually, in July, 1936, the army carried out a coup d’état. It was General Franco who eventually emerged as the leader of the new state, not least because his Army of Africa (he had been commander of the Canaries Islands garrison) in its journey north had shown itself to be the most ruthless and most prepared to murder any suspected Republican.

“Of course the atrocities were not confined to the rebel zone. At the beginning of the war, particularly, there were waves of assassinations of priests and suspected Fascist sympathizers. Militia units set themselves up to purge their towns of known rightists and especially churchmen. Churches and religious monuments were destroyed. More than six thousand priests and religious were estimated to have been murdered...”

“At the outset,” writes Norman Stone, “the political spectrum in Spain was extremely wide and complicated... Inexorably, however, the strains of civil war boosted the fortunes of the two most violent and radical extremes. The Falange was destined to become the main political instrument of the army.

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667 Preston, op. cit., p. 124.
The communists were destined to dominate the beleaguered Republic. Franco said, and possibly believed, that he was fighting to forestall Bolshevism...

“The fighting was long, fragmented, and often confused… Behind the lines, massacres of prisoners and civilians were perpetrated by both sides… In Barcelona, ‘the wildest city in Europe’, where Catalans and anarchists were opposed to any form of Spanish government, whether Red or White, the tragedy ended [in 1939] with frightful massacres perpetrated by both the defeated communists and their erstwhile anarchist allies. In Madrid, where the rump Council of Defence of the Popular Front eventually renounced the communists, it ended with the rebels’ triumphal entry on 29 March. Republican leaders fled. Thousands of refugees fled over the Pyrenees. Spain lay firmly in the Fascists’ grip for 40 years.

“Franco’s victory over ‘the Spanish people’, as his opponents put it, was frequently attributed to his superior armaments and foreign help [from Mussolini and Hitler]. But the truth was not so simple or so palatable. The ‘Spanish people’ were not all on one side, and neither were all of Spain’s ‘anti-democratic’ forces. It is hard to say whether the Spanish Republic was more discomfited by its nationalistic enemies or by the totalitarian elements within its own ranks. Franco could unite his supporters; the Republic’s supporters could not organize a united or effective democracy…”

It was the unity of Franco’s fascists, combined with the frequent stories of atrocities by their leftist opponents, and the active support of Italy and Germany, that guaranteed his final victory. But it was not a victory that brought internal peace to Spain. For the fascist atrocities, which were greater in number and carried out in a more systematic, cold-blooded way than those of the leftists, alienated large parts of the population. Thus the philosopher Unamuno wrote to a friend “about the Nationalist repression that he had witnessed in Salamanca, referring to ‘the most bestial persecution and unjustified murders’. Regarding Franco, he wrote: ‘He takes no lead in the repression, in the savage terror of the rearguard. He lets others get on with it. The repression in the rearguard is left to a venomous and malicious monster of perversity, General Mola… I said, and Franco repeated it, that what has to be saved in Spain is Western Christian civilization under threat from Bolshevism, but the methods they are using are not civilized, nor Western, but rather African, certainly not Christian. The crude traditionalist Spanish Catholicism has very little that is Christian. What we have here is pagan, imperialist, African militarization. In this way there will never be real peace. They will win but they will not convince; they will conquer but they will not persuade…”

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He was right; and the long sterile conflict between two equally barbarous ideologies continued in Spain for another forty years until democracy triumphed over both...

One might have expected that the western democracies would have supported another democracy, Spain, against its fascist-militarist enemies, especially since the real nature of Italy and Germany was at last beginning to be recognized. And indeed, a large majority of the western electorate did support the Republic. However, the governments sat on the fence, sponsoring a Non Intervention Agreement whose patchy implementation in fact favoured Franco; for the Italians and Germans were quite uninhibited in ignoring non-intervention and supplying Franco with all the arms he needed together with men on the ground – much more uninhibited than Stalin, who, of course, did not want the Republic to be defeated, but at the same time did not want to stop the democracies from forming an alliance with himself against Hitler.

The reason for western hesitation was only partly a well-grounded fear of communism and the extreme left. “The British were inclined by their considerable commercial interests in Spain, with substantial investments in mines, sherry, textiles, olive oil and cork, to be anything but sympathetic to the Republic. The business community inevitably tended towards the Nationalist side since it was believed that the anarchists and other Spanish revolutionaries were liable to seize and collectivize British holdings...

“[Moreover,] like the French, the British government was committed at all costs to diminishing the risks of a European conflagration. In addition, an implicit goal of British appeasement was to persuade the Germans that they should look to the East if they wished to expand. Hence the willing sacrifice of Austria and Czechoslovakia; hence the attempts by Chamberlain to extricate Britain from her agreement to go to Poland’s aid in the event of attack. This was the logical concomitant of British policy since 1935, during which a blind eye had been turned to Germany’s open rearmament and to the Italian invasion of Abyssinia, a member state of the League of Nations.”

The only real obstacle to Hitler’s expansion in the late 1930s was France’s system of alliances with the smaller states of Central and Eastern Europe. However, as Golo Mann writes, “no dramatic blows were needed to break up the French alliance system; it gradually rotted away. Economic factors entered. Germany, not France, had always been the big buyer and seller on the central European markets. Under Hjalmar Schacht’s so-called ‘New Plan’ this relationship assumed curious forms; in order to avoid spending foreign exchange Germany concluded a number of bi-lateral agreements, barter arrangements in effect, as a result of which the states of central and south-east Europe became increasingly dependent on Germany. As long as Germany paid with useful finished goods and not with loot there was little objection to

670 Preston, op. cit., 139, 137.
this method. Britain, for example, regarded this development as fundamentally natural. Neville Chamberlain thought good-naturedly that there was no cause for anxiety if Germany wanted to revive its economy and that of the south-eastern states by intensive bilateral trade; sooner or later the British economy would also somehow benefit.

“This was the direction in which events seemed to be moving in the period of appeasement. The problems and conflicts of the war were out of date because Germany had long ceased to be the vanquished nation of 1918. It was as feared and powerful as under the Hohenzollern, even more powerful because France was weaker than before, because the whole European system was weaker, and because in central Europe there was no longer the Habsburg monarchy but a collection of artificial, small states distrustful and envious of each other…”671

So the multi-national empires, for all their faults, had served a good purpose, in preventing the rise of nationalist empires like Germany’s! But self-determination, the mad principle of the democratic statesmen (who, however, refused to apply it to their own empires) had destroyed the multi-nationalism of the Romanov and Habsburg empires. The result was Nazism, which tried to reconstitute these empires into one Reich and under a far harsher regime...

The first of the small states to fall was Austria. But they were Germans anyway, reasoned the democracies, and the Anschluss was largely (although by no means completely) voluntary. Using this excuse, the democracies meekly allowed the whole Versailles system to collapse.

“Hitler had made ‘greater’ Germany a reality. The dream of the men of 1848 had at last become a fact. In three days he had done what Bismarck had not attempted in thirty years.”672 Indeed, if he had stopped there, he might have gone down in history as greater than Bismarck, with the gratitude of the German people and with his earlier sins forgiven. For, as Admiral Doenitz, Hitler’s successor in 1945, who signed the capitulation, wrote: “The idea of a national community, in the proper, social sense of this word, and the cohesion of the German people upon this base, fired me with enthusiasm. Hitler’s reunion of all the branches of the German race under one Reich seemed to me the achievement of one of the oldest dreams of our nation. Our dispersion can be traced back to the Thirty Years War. Our adversaries, who had achieved their own unity at the beginning of the modern era, wanted to keep us weak and to prevent us achieving our unity for a very long time. Only National Socialism has been able to overcome all these obstacles…”673

672 Mann, op. cit., pp. 452-453.
However, Hitler did not restrict his ambitions to restoring the unity and greatnes of Germany, which could be subsumed under his anti-Versailles policy: he went on to try and destroy the Czechs... For, “as envisaged by the men of the Paulskirche [the German parliament of 1848] ‘greater’ Germany included Bohemia. Now Bohemia was the heart of a post-war state clumsily called Czechoslovakia in which there lived about four million German-speaking people. They enjoyed complete equality of civic status, were fully protected by the law and free to pursue their economic, cultural and political interests; but not in a state which satisfied them emotionally. The old game of disliking each other which the Czechs and the Germans had inherited from the Habsburg Empire found enthusiastic supporters in Czechoslovakia. But after 1918 the Czechs had the advantage. They were the rulers and they were in the majority; where they could hurt the Germans a little without actually breaking the law they did so. Now they were to pay for this attitude. Many ‘Sudeten Germans’ followed a leader who, having started on his own, quickly became a tool of Hitler and of the policy of the Reich. What his followers really wanted cannot be said with certainty because they were never asked; probably they did not want to become part of Germany but to have an autonomous existence within a Bohemian-Moravian state. However, it must not be thought that the individual citizen knows exactly what he wants in such a crisis; in the end he is inclined to want what a vociferous leadership tells him to want. When Eduard Beneš, President of the Czechoslovak Republic, summoned the Sudeten German leaders to his castle in order to grant any and every wish they might have, they extricated themselves from the discussions and broke them off under a flimsy excuse. They were now more anxious to break away than to obtain advantages within the Czech state.

“The German dictator did not particularly want the Sudeten Germans to break away from Czechoslovakia. The great philanthropist cared little about the happiness of the Sudeten Germans or about the ideal of the pan-German state. The real or alleged emotions of the Germans in Bohemia, their real or alleged plight, were an opportunity for him, nothing more. Nationalism was an instrument which he would employ as long as it was useful, in this case to smash and then to swallow the whole Czech state. This was his next aim. Meanwhile let Europe’s and America’s star journalists rush to northern Bohemia in order to study the living conditions and demands of the Sudeten Germans on the spot; let those duped people enjoy the limelight and let them feel that they were at the centre of history, just as a few months previously the Austrians, now swallowed up by the grey everyday life of the Nazi Reich had felt that they had occupied the centre of the world stage. A glance at the map, moreover, showed that to take away the Germans in practice meant the end of the Czechoslovak state. Without the industries of northern and eastern [western?] Bohemia, the fortifications and the lines of communications, the Prague republic ceased anyway to be a state; it could only have lived out an impotent satellite existence in the shadow of the Reich, almost completely
encircled by it. The Western powers had accepted the annexation of Austria as an internal German affair. They could not do the same in the case of Czechoslovakia.

“For that the republic had after all played too important an international role for twenty years. Here was a people which even in the most generously interpreted sense of the word could not be called ‘German’, a people which had an alliance with France, a similar form of association with Russia, an ‘Entente’ with the Balkan states, which enjoyed considerable popularity in America, possessed an up-to-date Army and occupied a strategic position of classical importance – on this occasion the world could not pretend to be unconcerned. In May therefore French diplomacy began to spread the word that an attack on Czechoslovakia would spark off a European war. The Russians supported this attitude and even Britain, uncommitted by any treaty, made warning representations in Berlin. Confronted with what seemed to be a defensive front Hitler drew back on 23 May and announced that no one planned to attack the Czechs. Exactly a week later he issued a directive to his generals: ‘It is my irrevocable determination to smash Czechoslovakia by military action in the foreseeable future. To await or to create a suitable opportunity from the political and military point of view is a matter for the political leadership.’

“The method was always the same: to create disorder, if necessary to use terror in order to produce counter-terror and then to intervene, allegedly with the aim of preventing civil war and chaos and of helping one’s friends. The method was used first in Germany and then in Austria; now it was used, not for the last time either, on the Czechs and, as always, it was adapted to the local peculiarities of the case. As planned the crisis reached boiling point in the late summer. At the Nuremberg Party rally Hitler screamed threats against Beneš: he would not tolerate a second Palestine ‘in the heart of Germany’, he would come to the aid of his German brothers in distress whatever the cost. Disturbances in Eger and Carlsbad were suppressed by the Czechs. The Sudeten German leaders expected German intervention, and rightly; the German attack on Czechoslovakia was planned to start on 28 September. Hitler for his part was right in maintaining that the Czechs were asserting themselves because they were relying on their Western allies...

“They were mistaken in their hopes. The French had helped to found the Czechoslovak state because it seemed to bring them political and military advantages, and as long as it did this it was a genuine, a necessary state. Now it brought no more advantages. Because of the sheer necessity of having to defend it, Czechoslovakia threatened to draw France into a second world war for which the French had little inclination. As a result Czechoslovakia now seemed to them to be a pretty unnatural state. France was anxious, if could be done, to extricate itself honourably or at least not discreditably. The mood in Britain was similar, except that here the public spirit was stronger and juster,
less corrupted by monetary influences. If Hitler wanted to conquer Europe
the British were morally prepared to oppose him by force as they had, by
tradition, opposed Napoleon and William II. However, let Hitler first prove
that this was really his intention. If his aim was merely, as he maintained, to
gather together in one nation-state all these Germans who wanted to belong to
it, that was a different matter. Then there was nothing to be done, however
tiresome effects such an action might have on the European balance of power.
If the Sudeten Germans really wanted ‘to return to the Reich’ it was wrong to
prevent them by means of a world war and it was better to let nature, which
in this instance was probably identical with right anyway, take its course. The
best, said The Times on 7 September, would be if the Sudetenland were taken
from Czechoslovakia and made part of Germany. When Neville Chamberlain
made his surprise flight to Berchtesgaden two weeks later he carried the same
proposal in his pocket.

“Hitler had expected to be allowed to attack Czechoslovakia, as he had
been allowed to attack Austria six months earlier, putting up with the risk of a
major war. What now happened took him completely by surprise: the
Western powers intervened, for the first time before and not after the event,
not to prevent him from doing what he wanted to do but merely to give it a
peaceful form and to offer him a colossal gain without any risk; alternatively
to threaten him with war if he refused the offer and acted on his own. At the
discussions which followed in Berchtesgaden, in Godesberge and finally in
Munich this grotesque question only was at stake: should the Germans march
into the predominantly German-speaking regions of Czechoslovakia with the
consent of the European powers, on agreed days and in agreed stages or
should Germany attack at once, without Europe and against Europe. The
second alternative appealed more to Hitler’s emotions and for a few days it
seemed as though he would choose it. His frenzy revealed itself; he was ready
to unleash war, not over a matter of substance but because of minute details
of a question decided in principle. With heavy hearts France and Britain
belatedly did what they could to prepare for war. The Germans too saw war
approaching and, like the British and the French, disliked what they saw;
where troops appeared they were greeted not with the enthusiasm of 1914 but
with a gloomy indifference. It seems that this mood left an impression on
Hitler. Faced with a threat coupled with an offer unique in the diplomatic
history of Europe, and also urged to moderation by his Italian ally, Hitler
finally decided to accept the huge, incomplete offer and to postpone the rest
until later. As a result agreement was quickly reached at Munich. The Czechs
were not asked. These bogus victors of 1918 were forced to accept an
arrangement the harshness of which far exceeded that of the Treaty of
Versailles. Not even the Sudeten Germans were asked, although the Munich
Agreement promised plebiscites in the disputed regions. Many of them did
not really know what was happening to them; they were surprised and
confused when German troops move din with the consent of Europe to
liberate them from Czechoslovakia. Besides it was impossible to separate the
two peoples without employing the barbarous method of an exchange of ‘populations’. Almost one million Czechs now came under German sovereignty together with the Sudeten Germans.

“Hitler was sufficiently perverse and mad to be profoundly annoyed by the conclusion of the affair. By agreeing to more than his allegedly just demands the Western powers had prevented him from carrying out his real aim. ‘The fellow,’ he said of Chamberlain, ‘has spoilt my entry into Prague.’ In reality the fellow had hoped for a lessening of tension in Europe and Germany as a result of the incredible concessions of the Munich Agreement. However, the atmosphere in Germany remained tense. Screams, barks and offended threats went on coming through the loudspeakers at public meetings even after Munich. And as if to show the world with whom it was dealing and to destroy any illusion about the nature of the German regime, the most terrible pogrom thus far against the Jews was staged in November; in one night all synagogues were destroyed, thousands of Jews were dragged into camps and torture and finally a ‘fine’ of one millard marks was imposed on the German Jews. Chamberlain had said tolerantly at Munich, that like Britain, Germany had the political system which appeared to suit it and which it should certainly keep. Could one say this of a government which of its own free will indulged in such activities while the mass of the people watched, indifferently or bitterly, without taking part in these crimes? Only a few weeks after Munich even the most confirmed British supporters of appeasement began to wonder whether they were on the right road and whether they could follow it much longer…”

Hitler finally got everything he wanted, including his entry into Prague. In March, 1939 “there was a disagreement between Czechs and Slovaks, a repetition of the Austrian and the Sudeten-German crisis, only that this time it was not Germans among themselves, or Germans and Slavs but Slavs among themselves who irritated each other with German encouragement. Again it was necessary to restore order. The weak old President of Czechoslovakia was told to come to Berlin and confronted with choosing between a German invasion, the destruction of Prague by bomber squadrons, and entrusting his people to German protection. The President signed; the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia was proclaimed; German tanks entered Prague and Brünn without encountering any resistance and Hitler enjoyed a night in the castle of the ancient kings of Bohemia.

“… After a brief moment of hesitation Britain’s long-standing policy of appeasement collapsed, amid the sound of furious indignation. If the Western powers did nothing about the Prague coup at least they did not recognize the Protectorate, as they had recognized Hitler’s ‘bloodless conquests’ in the past…”

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675 Mann, op. cit., p. 457.
THE GREAT PURGES

In the summer of 1934, Stalin summoned Leningrad Party Boss Sergei Kirov to spend the summer of 1934 at his dacha in Sochi “to join him and Zhdanov in laying down the guidelines for the rewriting of history textbooks. Published in 1936, Remarks Concerning the Conspectus of a Textbook on the History of the USSR produced an abrupt reversal in Soviet historiography, establishing the Soviet regime as the custodian of national interests and traditions. The new history celebrated the great men of Russia’s Tsarist past – Peter the Great, Suvorov, Kutuzov – whose state-building, military victories and territorial conquests had created modern Russia. It was the autocratic [in this context – “absolutist”] tradition... which was highlighted, so establishing a natural link between the new patriotism and the cult of Stalin.”  

It was ironic that Stalin, who had spent the last five years in an unprecedented assault on everything Russian, should now seek to celebrate the great tsars and military leaders of Russia’s past. Of course, not all of them were celebrated - Nicholas II would remain “bloody Nicholas” to the end. But Stalin was proud to see himself as the successor of the more totalitarian and bloody tsars such as Ivan the Terrible (his favourite) and Peter the Great.

In this policy, as Alan Bullock writes, “sentiment and calculation coincided. To combine the Marxist vision with the deep-seated nationalist and patriotic feelings of the Russian people was to give it a wider and stronger emotional appeal than ideology by itself could generate. As early as June 1934 Pravda had sounded the new note, ‘For the Fatherland’, ‘which alone kindles the flame of heroism, the flame of creative initiative in all fields, in all the realms of our rich, our many-sided life... The defence of the Fatherland is the supreme law... For the Fatherland, for its honour, glory, might and prosperity!’”

Other factors influencing Stalin’s change of tactics probably included the failure of the revolution to catch fire in other countries – and the success of Hitler’s nationalist socialism. Probably he came to realize that, as Mussolini had put it, “the nation has not disappeared. We used to believe that it was annihilated. Instead, we see it rise, living, palpitating before us!” Hence his adoption of the slogan: “Socialism in one country”, thereby emphasizing the national uniqueness of Russia. Hence, too, his persecution of many ethnic minorities from the early 1930s, transporting them en masse from one end of the Union to the other, and the artificially-induced famine of 1932-33, whose aim appears to have been to wipe out Ukrainian nationalism. After all, in spite of the fact that Stalin was Georgian, Lenin had called him “a real and true ‘nationalist-socialist’, and even a vulgar Great Russian bully”.

677 Bullock, op. cit., p. 701.
In the middle of the 1930s, perhaps as a result of his new national policy, Stalin began to ease up in his unprecedentedly savage war on the Russian people. Not that life became significantly easier for them. On the surface, the God-haters appeared to have triumphed, and were now successfully building a new, godless civilization to replace the old civilization of Holy Russia. But the reign of fear continued, and was about to be ratcheted up yet again…

The West, to its shame, cooperated with the red beast. All the leading nations now recognized the Soviet Union, and helped its rapid industrial growth through trade. Moreover, comparing their own economic slump with the Soviet performance, they even began to applaud the achievements of Communism, as journalists closed their eyes to Stalin’s appalling assault on his own people. “Totalitarianism,” writes Piers Brendon, “won adherents across frontiers, for the failures of capitalism were palpable during the Depression and the democracies suffered a sharp crisis of confidence. Hearing that Stalin had achieved planned progress and social equality [!], that Hitler had abolished unemployment and built autobahns, that Mussolini had revived Italy and made the trains run on time, people in Britain, France and the United States were inclined to believe that Utopia was another country…”

“The trauma of the Great Slump,” writes Eric Hobsbawn, “was underlined by the fact that the one country that had clamorously broken with capitalism appeared to be immune to it: the Soviet Union. While the rest of the world, or at least liberal Western capitalism, stagnated, the USSR was engaged in massive ultra-rapid industrialization under its new Five Year plans. From 1929 to 1940 Soviet industrial production tripled, at the very least. It rose from 5 per cent of the world’s manufactured products in 1929 to 18 per cent in 1938, while during the same period the joint share of the USA, Britain and France, fell from 59 per cent to 52 per cent of the world’s total. What was more, there was [supposedly] no unemployment. These achievements impressed foreign observers of all ideologies, including a small but influential flow of socio-economic tourists to Moscow in 1930-35, more than the visible primitiveness and inefficiency of the Soviet economy, or the ruthlessness and brutality of Stalin’s collectivisation and mass repression. For what they were trying to come to terms with was not the actual phenomenon of the USSR but the breakdown of their own economic system, the depth of the failure of Western capitalism. What was the secret of the Soviet system? Could anything be learned from it? Echoing Russia’s Five Year Plans, ‘Plan’ and ‘Planning’ became buzz-words in politics… Even the very Nazis plagiarized the idea, as Hitler introduced a ‘Four Year Plan’ in 1933.”

So far, Stalin had simply continued the work of Lenin on a larger, more systematic scale. But in 1937 he began to do what Lenin had never done: destroy the members of his own party. Thus was fulfilled the prediction of Pierre Vergniaud in Paris in 1793: “There is reason to fear that, like Saturn, the Revolution may devour each of its children in turn”.680

Two events portended the coming of this bloody massacre. The first was the suicide of his wife, which made him turn more in on himself. The second was the murder of Kirov on December 1, 1934. Aas Evgenia Ginzburg put it in Into the Whirlwind: “That year, 1937, really began on the 1st of December, 1934”.681 Although it is likely that Stalin himself ordered the killing, it – together with the continued opposition of Trotsky from abroad - became the excuse to root out supposed counter-revolutionary conspiracies and fascist spy-rings within the party.

The great purges of 1937-38 wiped out a large proportion of the leaders of Soviet society. In fact, no section of society was exempt from Stalin’s murderous cull of his own people. He used the term “enemy of the people” to wipe out anyone who represented the remotest prospect of opposition to the regime became the foremost “enemy of the people” of Russia in the whole of her history.

His assault on the army was if anything still more thorough than his assault on the party. Thus, according to figures given in the Soviet press, “the military purge accounted for:

“3 of the 5 Soviet marshals
“11 of the 15 army commanders
“8 of the 9 fleet admirals and admirals Grade 1
“50 of the 57 corps commanders
“154 of the 186 divisional commanders

“16 of the 16 army political commissars
“25 of the 28 corps commissars
“58 of the 64 divisional commanders

“11 of the 11 vice-commissars of defence
“98 of the 109 members of the Supreme Military Soviet

The effect was not confined to the upper echelons. Between May 1937 and September 1938, 36,761 army officers and over 3000 navy officers were dismissed. Allowing for 13,000 re-enrolled and adding the numbers ‘repressed’ after September 1938, this gives a total for 1937-41 of 43,000 officers at battalion and company-commander level arrested and either shot

680 Bullock, op. cit., p. 511.
681 Ginzburg, in Bullock, op. cit., p. 516.
or sent to the camps (the great majority) or permanently dismissed. Roy Medvedev sums up an operation without parallel in the striking sentence: ‘Never has the officer staff of any army suffered such great losses in any war as the Soviet Army suffered in this time of peace.’

But the greatest victims of the great purges were neither the party, nor the army, but the clergy – a fact often forgotten by historians. If Metropolitan Sergius thought that his betrayal of the True Orthodox Christians would “save the Church”, the next few years would prove him terribly wrong. From 1935 the Bolsheviks began to repress all the clergy, sergianist as well as True Orthodox. The sergianist clergy often received longer sentences than their True Orthodox brothers had received in the early 1930s. This only went to show how futile their Judas-like collaboration with the Antichrist, and betrayal of their brothers, had been. It did not earn them a respite, but only the shame of collaborationism, while depriving them of a martyr’s crown.

According to Russian government figures, in 1937 alone 136,900 clergy were arrested, of whom 106,800 were killed (there were 180,000 clergy in Russia before the revolution); while between 1917 and 1980, 200,000 clergy were executed and 500,000 others were imprisoned or sent to the camps. According to another source, from October, 1917 to June, 1941 inclusive, 134,000 clergy were killed, of whom the majority (80,000) were killed between 1928 and 1940. As for churches, there were none at all in Belorussia (Kolarz), “less than a dozen” in Ukraine (Bociurkiw), and a total of 150-200 in the whole of Russia. In all, the numbers of functioning Orthodox churches declined from 54,692 in 1914 to 39,000 at the beginning of 1929 to 15,835 on April 1, 1936.

682 Bullock, op. cit., pp. 547-548.
683 Thus Bullock (op. cit.) completely ignores the persecution of the clergy at this time.
684 A document of the Commission attached to the President of the Russian Federation on the Rehabilitation of the Victims of Political Repressions, January 5, 1996; Service Orthodoxe de Presse (Orthodox Press Service), № 204, January, 1996, p. 15. The rate of killing slowed down considerably in the following years. In 1939 900 clergy were killed, in 1940 – 1100, in 1941 – 1900, in 1943 – 500. In the period 1917 to 1940 205 Russian hierarchs “disappeared without trace”; 59 disappeared in 1937 alone.
685 Cyril Mikhailovich Alexandrov, in V. Lyulechnik, “Tserkov’ i KGB” (The Church and the KGB), in http://elmager.livejournal.com/217784.html. According to a third source, in the nineteen years of Soviet terror before the Great Terror there were killed: 128 bishops; 26,777 clergy; 7,500 professors; about 9,000 doctors; 94,800 officers; 1,000,000 soldiers; 200,000 policemen; 45,000 teachers; 2,200,000 workers and peasants. Besides that, 16 million Russians died from hunger and three million died in forced labour in the camps. (Kharbinskoye Vremia, February, 1937, № 28, in Protopriest John Stukach, “Vyskomerie kak prepona k ui zineniu” (Haughtiness as an obstacle to union), http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=page&pid=1357
“However,” writes Brendon, “as the liquidation of top managers took its
toll on the economy and the armed forces suffered a further assault, few
doubted that Russia’s capacity to resist alien aggression was being seriously
impaired. So on 24 January 1938 Stalin touched the brakes and changed
direction, just as he had done by writing his article ‘Dizzy with Success’,
condemning the excesses of collectivisation in 1930. Now he launched a
campaign against false informers, those who had denounced others in order
to save their skins. He turned his withering gaze on the secret police, who had
reckoned that their ‘personal salvation lay in swimming’ with the tide of
terror. The purgers themselves should be purged, though no one knew who
would accomplish this or how far they would go.”688

By the end of 1938 almost all the Old Bolsheviks who had created Lenin’s
party had been killed (or, as in the case of Ordzhonikidze, killed themselves)
after prolonged tortures in NKVD prisons and show trials in which they
confessed to the most horrific and improbable acts of sabotage against their
own party.

One of the few who refused to incriminate themselves was Bukharin,
whom Lenin had called “the party’s favourite”. In his “Letter to a Future
Generation of Party Leaders”, he wrote: “I feel my helplessness before a
hellish machine, which has acquired gigantic power, enough to fabricate
organised slander… and which uses the Cheka’s bygone authority to cater to
Stalin’s morbid suspiciousness… Any member of the Central Committee, any
member of the Party can be rubbed out, turned into a traitor or terrorist.”689

Bukharin wrote to the Politburo from prison that he was innocent of the
crimes to which he had confessed under interrogation – and, probably,
torture. But he said that “he would submit to the Party because he had
concluded that there was some ‘great and bold political idea behind the
general purge’ which overshadowed all else. ‘It would be petty of me to put
the fortunes of my own person on the same level as those tasks of world-
historical importance, which rest upon all your shoulders’… During his
famous final speech from the dock [he] said that he had given in to the prison
investigators after having completely reevaluated his past. ‘For when you ask
yourself: “If you must die, what are you dying for?” – an absolutely black
vacuity suddenly rises before you with startling vividness. And, on the
contrary, everything positive that glistens in the Soviet Union acquires new
dimensions in a man’s mind. This is the end disarmed me completely and led
me to bend my knees before the Party and the country… For in reality the
whole country stands behind Stalin; he is the hope of the future…”690

688 Brendon, op. cit., p. 565.
689 Bukharin, in Bullock, op. cit., p. 541; Brendon, op. cit., p. 568.
690 Brendon, op. cit., p. 569.
With the murder of Trotsky in Mexico in 1940 the last possible threat to Stalin’s absolute authority from the Old Guard was gone. For, as Bullock writes, “his suspicion never slept: it was precisely the Bolshevik Old Guard whom he distrusted most. Even men who had been closely associated with him in carrying out the Second Revolution [of 1928 to 1934] were executed, committed suicide or died in the camps.”

The manifest absurdity of the trials, and of the idea that so many of Lenin’s and Stalin’s closest and most loyal collaborators were in fact spies, did not stop the “useful idiots” of the West from justifying the charade. Thus the US ambassador Joseph Davies wrote to Washington that “the indictments of the defendants in the Moscow show trials had been proved ‘beyond a reasonable doubt and that ‘the adjudication of the punishment’ had been entirely justified”…

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691 Bullock, op. cit., p. 425.
692 Service, Comrades, p. 208.
THE FRUITS OF SERGIANISM

The greatest persecution of Christianity in history did not wipe out the faith. The census of 1937 established that one-third of city-dwellers and two-thirds of country-dwellers still believed in God. Stalin’s plan that the Name of God should not be named in Russia by the year 1937 had failed...

Nevertheless, the immediate outlook for believers was bleak indeed. Thus E.L. writes about Hieromartyr Bishop Damascene: “He warmed the hearts of many, but the masses remained... passive and inert, moving in any direction in accordance with an external push, and not their inner convictions... The long isolation of Bishop Damascene from Soviet life, his remoteness from the gradual process of sovietization led him to an unrealistic assessment of the real relations of forces in the reality that surrounded him. Although he remained unshaken himself, he did not see... the desolation of the human soul in the masses. This soul had been diverted onto another path – a slippery, opportunistic path which led people where the leaders of Soviet power – bold men who stopped at nothing in their attacks on all moral and material values – wanted them to go... Between the hierarchs and priests who had languished in the concentration camps and prisons, and the mass of the believers, however firmly they tried to stand in the faith, there grew an abyss of mutual incomprehension. The confessors strove to raise the believers onto a higher plane and bring their spiritual level closer to their own. The mass of believers, weighed down by the cares of life and family, blinded by propaganda, involuntarily went in the opposite direction, downwards. Visions of a future golden age of satiety, of complete liberty from all external and internal restrictions, of the submission of the forces of nature to man, deceitful perspectives in which fantasy passed for science... were used by the Bolsheviks to draw the overwhelming majority of the people into their nets. Only a few individuals were able to preserve a loftiness of spirit. This situation was exploited very well by Metropolitan Sergius...”

Sergius has had many apologists. Some have claimed that he “saved the Church” for a future generation, when the whirlwind of the persecution had passed. This claim cannot be justified, as we have seen. It was rather the Catacomb Church, which, as Alexeyev writes, “in a sense saved the official Church from complete destruction because the Soviet authorities were afraid to force the entire Russian Church underground through ruthless suppression and so to lose control over it.” As St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco wrote: “The Declaration of Metropolitan Sergius brought no benefit to the Church. The persecutions not only did not cease, but also sharply increased. To the number of other accusations brought by the Soviet regime against clergy and laymen, one more was added – non-recognition of the Declaration.

At the same time, a wave of church closings rolled over all Russia... Concentration camps and places of forced labor held thousands of clergymen, a significant part of whom never saw freedom again, being executed there or dying from excessive labors and deprivations.”

Others have tried to justify Sergius by claiming that there are two paths to salvation, one through open confession or the descent into the catacombs, and the other through compromise. Sergius, according to this view, was no less a martyr than the Catacomb martyrs, only he suffered the martyrdom of losing his good name. However, this view comes close to the “Rasputinite” heresy that there can be salvation through sin – in this case, lying, the sacrifice of the freedom and dignity of the Church, and the betrayal to torments and death of one’s fellow Christians! Thus Hieromartyr Sergius Mechev was betrayed by "Bishop" Manuel Lemeshevsky. And more generally, Metropolitan Sergius' charge that all the catacomb bishops were "counter-revolutionaries" was sufficient to send them to their deaths. This fact demonstrates that “sergianism” can best be defined as, quite simply, the sin of Judas...

Meanwhile, deep in the underground, the True Orthodox Church delivered its verdict on the traitors. In July, 1937, four bishops, two priests and six laymen met in Ust-Kut, Siberia, convened a council, and declared:

“1. The Sacred Council forbids the faithful to receive communion from the clergy legalized by the anti-Christian State.

“2. It has been revealed to the Sacred Council by the Spirit that the anathema-curse hurled by his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon is valid, and all priests and Church-servers who have dared to consider it as an ecclesiastical mistake or political tactic are placed under its power and bound by it.

“3. To all those who discredit and separate themselves from the Sacred Council of 1917-18 – Anathema!

695 St. John Maximovich, The Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. A Short History, Jordanville, NY: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1997, pp. 28-29. Even a recent biography of Sergius by a sergianist author accepts this fact: “If Metropolitan Sergius, in agreeing in his name to publish the Declaration of 1927 composed by the authorities, hoping to buy some relief for the Church and the clergy, then his hopes not only were not fulfilled, but the persecutions after 1927 became still fiercer, reaching truly hurricane-force in 1937-38.” (Sergius Fomin, Strazh Doma Gospodnia (Guardian of the House of the Lord), Moscow, 2003, p. 262)


“4. All branches of the Church which are on the common trunk – the trunk is our pre-revolutionary Church – are living branches of the Church of Christ. We give our blessing to common prayer and the serving of the Divine Liturgy to all priests of these branches. The Sacred Council forbids all those who do not consider themselves to be branches, but independent from the tree of the Church, to serve the Divine Liturgy. The Sacred Council does not consider it necessary to have administrative unity of the branches of the Church, but unity of mind concerning the Church is binding on all.”

This last measure completed the de-centralization of the Church, which Patriarch Tikhon had already begun through his famous ukaz number 362 of 1920. It was elicited by the fact that the organization of the Church was now destroyed, and all its leaders dead or in prison or so deep underground that they could not rule the Church. This process was sealed in the autumn of 1937, when the patriarchal locum tenens Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa, and his only possible successors, Metropolitans Cyril of Kazan and Joseph of Petrograd, were shot. And so by the end of 1937, the Church’s descent into the catacombs, which had begun in the early 20s, was completed. From now on, with the external administrative machinery of the Church destroyed, it was up to each bishop – sometimes each believer – individually to preserve the fire of faith, being linked with his fellow Christians only through the inner, mystical bonds of the life in Christ. Thus was the premonition of Hieromartyr Bishop Damascene fulfilled: “Perhaps the time has come when the Lord does not wish that the Church should stand as an intermediary between Himself and the believers, but that everyone is called to stand directly before the Lord and himself answer for himself as it was with the forefathers!”

Even sergianist sources have spoken about the falsity of Sergius’ declaration, the true confession of those who opposed him, and the invalidity of the measures he took to punish them. Thus: “Amidst the opponents of Metropolitan Sergius were a multitude of remarkable martyrs and confessors, bishops, monks, priests… The ‘canonical’ bans of Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) and his Synod were taken seriously by no one, neither at that time [the 1930s] nor later by dint of the uncanonicity of the situation of Metropolitan Sergius himself…”


700 E.L., op. cit., p. 92.

701 M.E. Gubonin, Akty Patriarkha Tikhona, Moscow, 1994, pp. 809, 810. And again: “The particular tragedy of the Declaration of Metropolitan Sergius consists in its principled rejection of the podvig of martyrdom and confession, without which witnessing to the truth is
Sergius made the basic mistake of forgetting that it is God, not man, Who saves the Church. This mistake almost amounts to a loss of faith in the Providence and Omnipotence of God Himself. The faith that saves is the faith that “with God all things are possible” (Matthew 19.26). It is the faith that cries: “Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will call upon the name of the Lord our God” (Psalm 19.7). This was and is the faith of the Catacomb Church, which, being founded on “the Rock, which is Christ” (I Corinthians 10.7), has prevailed against the gates of hell. But Sergius’ “faith” was of a different, more “supple” kind, the kind of which the Prophet spoke: “Because you have said, ‘We have made a covenant with death, and with hell we have an agreement; when the overwhelming scourge passes through it will not come to us; for we have made lies our refuge, and in falsehood we have taken shelter’; therefore thus says the Lord God,… hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and waters will overwhelm the shelter. Then your covenant with death will be annulled, and your agreement with hell will not stand; when the overwhelming scourge passes through you will be beaten down by it…” (Isaiah 28.15, 17-19)

A Catacomb Appeal of the period wrote: “May this article drop a word that will be as a burning spark in the heart of every person who has Divinity in himself and faith in our One Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ. Beloved brethren! Orthodox Christians, peace-makers! Do not forget your brothers who are suffering in cells and prisons for the word of God and for the faith, the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, for they are in terrible dark bonds which have been built as tombs for all innocent people. Thousands and thousands of peace-loving brothers are languishing, buried alive in these tombs, these cemeteries; their bodies are wasting away and their souls are in pain every day and every hour, nor is there one minute of consolation, they are doomed to death and a hopeless life. These are the little brothers of Christ, they bear that cross which the Lord bore. Jesus Christ received suffering and death and was buried in the tomb, sealed by a stone and guarded by a watch. The hour came when death could not hold in its bonds the body of Christ that had suffered, for an Angel of the Lord coming down from the heavens rolled away the stone from the tomb and the soldiers who had been on guard fled in great fear. The Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead. But the thunder will also strike these castles where the brothers languish for the word of God, and will smash the bolts where death threatens men...”

inconceivable. In this way Metropolitan Sergius took as his foundation, not hope on the Providence of God, but a purely human approach to the resolution of church problems... The courage of the ‘catacombniks’ and their firmness of faith cannot be doubted, and it is our duty to preserve the memory of those whose names we shall probably learn only in eternity...” (Danilushkin, op. cit., pp. 297, 520)

702 M.V. Shkvarovsky, Iosiflianstvo: techenie v Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi (Josephitism: a tendency in the Russian Orthodox Church), St. Petersburg: Memorial, 1999, p. 236.
A PARABLE OF SOVIET REALITY

Already years before the purges of 1937-38 truth had disappeared from the public life of the Russian nation. Both Trotskyites at the one extreme, and the official Orthodox Church at the other, had been silenced and crushed; people hardly dared to speak the truth even in the privacy of their own homes. Probably the only places where some remnants of free speech still existed were the confessional (but not that of the official church) and the camps – if only because the inmates now had nothing but their chains to lose...

But where, in the midst of this nightmare, was the traditional bastion of truth and justice against tyranny in Russian society – the writer?.. Of course, the cult of the writer since the time of Pushkin had been largely created by the revolutionary-minded intelligentsia as a tool for overthrowing the Orthodox tsars and the Orthodox faith in general. Writers such as Alexander Herzen, Lev Tolstoy and Maxim Gorky were exalted because they lambasted the official order; and the restrictions placed on them by the authorities were exaggerated in order to give their sufferings an aura of martyrdom. When the infinitely more repressive order of Soviet power came into being, the great majority of these “champions of truth and justice” fell strangely silent – or, like Gorky, publicly supported the new order.

However, the very prestige that the writer’s profession had acquired in pre-revolutionary Russia meant that the authorities could not simply crush them out of existence. Nor was it useful to them to have just hacks churning out communist propaganda or the communist parody of true realism in art that they called “Socialist Realism”. The Russian public was highly educated and had a discerning literary palate: only real literature and real writers could be expected to have a real influence on this higher class of Soviet citizen.

So the authorities began looking around for writers with talent who could serve the communist cause in a truly creative way. Of course, there were dangers in such a search: a talented writer might betray the revolutionary cause as some of the most talented writers of pre-revolutionary Russia had done: instead of a Herzen, they might find themselves with a Gogol; or instead of a Tolstoy – with a Dostoyevsky… But the risk had to be taken...

One of the most talented of Soviet writers was Michael Afanasyevich Bulgakov. He was also one of the most truthful: his Heart of a Dog (1924), for example, was a brilliant satire on the regime’s attempts to create a new kind of human being, Homo Sovieticus. As a natural result of this truthfulness, however, he suffered repression, and by the end of the 1920s it looked as if his career would end in the way that the careers of other talented writers such as Mandelstam ended: in death-row or the camps. But by Divine Providence he had one extremely influential admirer: Stalin, and a phone call from the great leader was enough to ensure that Bulgakov lived undisturbed in his Moscow
flat until his death in 1940. This enabled him to write his masterpiece, *The Master and Margarita*, in relative peace and quiet at the very centre of the 1930s maelstrom. It was not published, however, until 1967, and that only in a severely cut edition. For not even the favour of a Stalin could ensure that a true parable on Soviet reality, however heavily disguised, could be allowed to corrupt the minds of Soviet citizens…

*The Master and Margarita* is a novel on two, or even three levels: there is the novel about Pontius Pilate and Yeshua (Jesus), which is set in Yershalaim (Jerusalem) on Great Friday; there is the novel about the Master, who writes the novel, and his mistress, Margarita, who ensures its survival; and there is the novel about the poet Bezdomny, who continues the Master’s work, and the Moscow society of writers, theatre agents and government officials in which he lives and works. The action is precipitated by a visit to Moscow by Satan, posing as the German Professor of Black Magic Woland, and his demonic suite: the dapper ex-choirmaster Korovyev, the black cat Behemoth, the executioner Azazello and the naked witch Hella (not to mention other minor demons such as Abadonna). As one would expect, all hell is set loose: the editor Berlioz loses his head (literally), various people are tricked, robbed or go out of their minds, and the house of the union of writers, Griboyedov, is burned to the ground. However, good comes out of this evil. Not only are many bad writers and officials given their just deserts, and the vices and vanities of Moscow society exposed: the Master is rescued from the asylum into which repression and rejection by his fellow writers had driven him through the good offices of Satan and Margarita, who becomes (temporarily) a witch for his sake; and the bad poet Bezdomny renounces his bad poetry and becomes the faithful disciple of the Master.

The interpretation of the novel must also proceed on several levels. Most obviously, it is a satire on the literary world of Moscow in the 1930s, a hilarious exposure of how the writers have betrayed their calling to tell the truth about the society they live in, and of how the best writers had suffered at the hands of their philistine colleagues. Here there also enters a strong autobiographical element: clearly Bulgakov sees himself, the writer who suffered from other writers, in the figure of the unjustly persecuted Master, and to a lesser extent in the figure of Bezdomny; while his wife, who later published *The Master and Margarita*, is portrayed in the role of Margarita. The way in which Satan-Woland rescues the Master and Margarita also recalls the way in which Stalin rescued the real-life Bulgakov in 1929. And there are many incidents and people in the novel that industrious researchers have traced to real incidents and people in Bulgakov’s life.\(^{703}\)

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\(^{703}\) For example, the chapter on Satan’s ball was inspired by a real-life ball given by the American ambassador in 1935. See J.A.E. Curtis, “Mikhail Bulgakov and the Red Army’s Polo Instructor: Political Satire in *The Master and Margarita*”, in Laura D. Weeks (ed.), *The Master and Margarita: A Critical Companion*, Northwestern University Press, 1996, pp. 213-226.
But there are also deeper, moral and philosophico-religious strands. Thus Satan-Woland causes the beheading of Berlioz because the latter denies the very existence of Christ and therefore also of himself, Satan, who likes to point out that he was personally present when Pilate gave sentence on Yeshua. It is difficult not to see in this an implicit rebuke to the literary world for its inane atheism… Again, the destruction of the Griboyedov house by fire can be seen as Divine retribution for the sins of the writers – even if God uses the evil Satan as His instrument in the accomplishing of this good. This latter interpretation is supported by the quotation at the beginning of the whole novel from Faust: “… so who are you in the end?” “I am a part of that power which eternally desires evil and eternally does good.”

However, we look in vain in Bulgakov’s novel for a placing of the whole of the revolution in the scheme of Divine Providence. Satan comes to Moscow to carry out God’s judgement on the Soviet Union of Writers, and we ask: but is not every Soviet institution, and the whole of Soviet reality, the creation of Satan and therefore subject to God’s wrath? And was not the revolution itself a deliverance of Russia to Satan, allowed by God as His punishment for the sins of the Russian people? But Bulgakov does not pose these questions, even indirectly, just as there is only the very slightest hint in the novel at the great fact of the age – the terrible persecution of the Church and faith. Of course, Bulgakov was not writing a historical or theological treatise (although, significantly, Bezdomny becomes a member of the Institute of History and Philosophy at the end). But to omit the widest questions and perspectives from what was clearly designed to be a hugely ambitious parable of Soviet reality indicates a certain pusillanimity, or lack of faith…

The main moral theme of the novel is cowardice. Both Pilate and the Master suffer from guilt at their cowardice – Pilate, because he delivered the innocent Yeshua to death out of fear of being denounced to Caesar, and the Master - because cringing before Soviet power was the original sin of all Soviet writers. Again, there is an autobiographical element here: Bulgakov survived when many writers perished, and although he was more truthful (or less mendacious) than most, it was impossible to survive in Soviet conditions without bowing, even if shallowly and stiffly, to the false Soviet god. The theme of cowardice is confronted more directly in the Pilate novel – Pilate is haunted by the last words of Yeshua, that one of the most important vices was cowardice704, and after nearly two thousand years of purgatorial suffering he is redeemed by Yeshua. The Master, on the other hand, does not appear to face this issue directly; and his lapse into mental illness appears to be the result, less of his persecution by others (which was mild, relatively speaking), as of his own inner conflict, his suppressed guilt at failing to live up fully to his calling as a writer, who, as Russian tradition affirmed, must tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth about his society. This

interpretation is supported by the fact that Yeshua does not redeem him as he redeems Pilate, but through his faithful disciple Levi Matthew he pronounces the following sentence: “He has not merited light, he has merited peace”.705

Is this how Bulgakov judged himself: as worthy of peace because of the good novel he had written, but not of the light because he had done a deal with Satan (Stalin) to keep his career alive? It is impossible to say - there is no reliable path from the characters of a novel to the true nature of a writer or his religious beliefs. What we can say is that there was indeed no place for the true writer, the Christian writer, in Soviet society; and that even the finest products of Soviet literature were poisoned from within by their sin of cowardice, by their schizophrenia, by their serving a master whom they hated while thinking to serve another whom they loved - but not well enough.

“Manuscripts don’t burn”, said Satan-Woland in the most famous line of the novel. But this was a lie from the father of lies. The Holy Scripture says: “What is not of faith is sin” (Romans 14.23). And again: “You have not yet resisted to blood, striving against sin” (Hebrews 12.4). Soviet literature was born in sin, the sin of the revolution, the sin of the Bolshevik assault on faith. Without a complete and wholehearted renunciation of that sin, and a striving against it to blood, the blood of confession and martyrdom, there could be no real redemption for the Soviet writer. Without the real conversion of the writer to True Christianity that took place in, for example, Gogol and Dostoyevsky, there could be no true eternity for his work, no protection against the flames of the Last Day (or even the penultimate day: we remember that Gogol, Bulgakov’s favourite writer, burned the second part of Dead Souls). Even if the writer injected a Christian element into his work, as Bulgakov did in The Master and Margarita and Pasternak would later do in Doctor Zhivago, that Christian element could not sanctify the rest of the work, but would rather be deformed by the alien context in which it found itself. And so Yeshua in The Master and Margarita is a pitiful shadow of the real Jesus, being shorn of His power and majesty - Satan-Woland is much more interesting. Of course, this is a phenomenon found throughout the history of literature: it is much easier to depict the evil than the good; and from Shakespeare to Milton, from Dostoyevsky to Bulgakov, the satanic characters stick longer in the memory than the Christlike. But the truly Christian writer at least comes closer to the mark, as Dostoyevsky did in The Brothers Karamazov and in the Parable of the Grand Inquisitor. The great tragedy of the Russian revolution was that it defiled everything it touched, making it impossible to be a true Christian and a real participant in public life – and that public life included its artistic and literary life. So the lesson from literature was the same as the lesson from every other sphere: true life, the life of the spirit, the life in Christ, could only be preserved in the catacombs...

THE SERBS AND THE CONCORDAT

In the last analysis, the Yugoslav kingdom foundered on the religious question, that of ecumenism between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches. Although King Alexander made many ecumenical gestures to his Catholic (Croat and Slovene) subjects, he was not prepared to abandon the privileged position accorded in the state to the Orthodox Church. Thus early in his reign his brother George put two questions to him. “Can you really combine Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in one person?” and “Can you really deny your Serbian mother and father, your Serbian Orthodox Church?” Alexander replied in the negative, thereby determining his early demise…

The importance of the religious differences between the peoples was underestimated by idealists on both sides. Bishop Nikolai Velimirović argued passionately for “love before logic”; he believed that questions of faith, such as the Filioque, should be put aside for the sake of national and political unity; they were merely “individual differences” that were far outweighed by what the Southern Slavs had in common. “We Yugoslavs,” he said, “sincerely believe that in the future Serbian state harmony and friendship will come between the two faiths, the two Churches.”

It did not happen; and when, in 1937, the Serbs rose up against the heavily pro-Catholic Concordat with the Vatican imposed on the Orthodox Church by the prime minister Stoyadinović, Bishop Nikolai was among the protestors. He had come to understand that these “individual differences” were not simply a matter of “logic”, but constituted a deep difference in spirit. Love and religious tolerance between peoples must indeed be practised – but never at the expense of zeal for the truth, never at the price of ecumenist lukewarmness. That was the truth that the idealists of the 19th century would have to learn from the harsh realities of the 20th...

Bishop Akakije (Stankević), leader of the True Orthodox Church of Serbia, writes: “Drafts of the text were prepared in 1923, in 1925 and 1931. The final text of the Concordat was signed in Rome on July 25, 1935. Stoyadinović was brought to the helm of the king’s government by the Duke-Regent Pavle Karageorgević. This solution Duke Pavle chose with the consent of the British ruling circles. It was believed that Stoyadinović would be able to come to an understanding with Maček’s Croatian peasants’ party, and also that he would lead the policy of rapprochement with Germany and Italy, since British policy in Europe at that time was strictly anti-communist and anti-Soviet. As assumed by some, Stoyadinovich, as a trader and a risk-taker, immediately calculated that, by the acceptance of the Concordat, he would achieve two of

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his goals: to gain the Catholic Church’s support, as the leader of five million Croatian Catholics, and to improve relations with Fascist Italy in order to become closer to the Triple Pact. In addition to this, he was convinced that the contract with the Vatican would be concluded without any problems. As he writes in his memoirs, published after the war in Argentina, his self-confidence was based on a very broad preparation, in which he included the whole state apparatus. In the first place, he thought that a considerable number of newsmen and newspapers were under his control. He even thought that among those preparing the documents were a number of his own men. His informants were constantly telling him what was being said about the Concordat in the Serbian Orthodox Church. In the struggle for the Concordat nothing was to be left to chance. He seemed to have been convinced about a positive outcome, but Stoyadinović could not have imagined what a storm the Concordat would arouse.

“In the beginning nobody rejected it, even Patriarch Barnabas was convinced that everything would be alright with the Concordat, because it was based on an idea of King Alexander, and as such it could not have been in conflict with the interests of the Serbian Orthodox Church. But analysis later revealed that a number of articles in the Concordat compromised the religious equality guaranteed by the Constitution. So the patriarch changed his position, and became an ardent opponent of the Concordat. By signing the Concordat, the Catholic Church was to receive from the State larger privileges than the Orthodox Church already had. In the evaluation of Professor Sergije Troitsky, who in a special brochure analysed the project of the Concordat, article number 7 and some others obliged the Yugoslav State to accept the Catholic Code Juris Canonici, which would, if accepted, become a parallel constitution. The sharpest argument related to the article by which the Catholic Church would have ‘full rights to freely and publicly execute its mission in the kingdom of Yugoslavia’. In formulating this article, the term ‘mission’ was used, which was unacceptable to the Orthodox Church. In the Concordats accepted in other European countries, this problem was resolved by the statement that the Catholic faith would be freely and publicly confessed... By the term ‘mission’ the kingdom of Yugoslavia was being characterised as a pagan country... The project of the Concordat gave the Catholic Church a missionary character as if Yugoslavia were an unenlightened, pagan country. The approval of the special status of the Catholic Church was discovered in many other articles of the Concordat. For example, the article about marriage in the Catholic Church said that... for all citizens being married in the Catholic Church the obligation to register as a civil marriage was removed. In the same article there was another questionable position, which obliged the civil powers that in the case of mixed marriages, at the request of an insulted Catholic side, they should take care that the other side had to fulfil the promise that all the sons and the daughters without exception should be educated in the Catholic faith. With such and similar articles the Catholic Church was given a major advantage over all
other confessions in the State, as Patriarch Barnabas said: ‘Giving the Catholic Church the position of the main and dominant State Church, the Concordat puts all other confessions, and especially the Church of the majority of citizens in the State, the Orthodox Church, in the position of being tolerated’, which destroyed the rule of religious equality that was guaranteed by the State Constitution.

“All publications critical of the Concordat were prohibited or censored. The little things that were missed by the State censors were not enough to explain to the public the seriousness of the Concordat crisis and the sharpness of the conflict that began between the highest ranks in the Orthodox Church and State. The Hierarchical Council of the Serbian Orthodox Church held an extraordinary meeting on November 24, 1936, and discussed the position of the Serbian Church after the acceptance of the laws about the State-recognized confessions. The Serbian Orthodox Church could no longer peacefully watch how the Catholic Church in the kingdom of Yugoslavia was receiving rights and privileges that it had nowhere else in Europe, and which even the Serbian Church did not have as the State Church of Serbia.

“On January 19, 1937, before the Orthodox New Year, Patriarch Barnabas finally delivered his judgement on the Concordat. The censors saw it, the public did not receive the message that the leader of the Serbian Church delivered in his traditional New Year message to the faithful. The censored text published in the newspaper Politika could have been understood to mean that the patriarch looked forward to the Concordat without much excitement. What Patriarch Barnabas really said in his New Year message, a part of the public found out from the illegal leaflet entitled ‘What the Newspapermen were Forbidden to Publish’, in which the whole message for the new year of 1937 was printed. Whoever read at least one passage from the leaflet understood why Stoyadinović had forbidden the publication of the patriarch’s New Year message: ‘... For completely unknown reasons, and incomprehensible causes, they have made a contract with the black leader of the Black International (the Patriarch was thinking of the Pope). By this contract they want to bring that leader to triumph in the Balkans, where he has been trying to triumph for a thousand years. The Byzantine patriarchs and emperors were the first to fight against this black leader and his Jesuit army. When their arms lost strength, our glorious Nemanja dynasty headed by St. Sava accepted the struggle. When the Serbian kingdom fell at Kosovo, even the Turks fought against the Latin attacks on the Balkans. The Turks knew the false character of that International, so they did not give it the Balkans. The Turks knew the destructive impact of this international within the State. They knew that this International uses all means, intrigues and cunning strategems, so they made no compromise with it. The Orthodox Faith was sometimes persecuted by the Ottomans, but they considered it to be a faith and respected it as a faith. But they did not look on that Black International as a faith, but as politics. And so, my brothers, to that
unscrupulous political organization our rulers today have widely opened the
gates, and allowed it to stand firmly in the Balkans. And who, and when? Not
some strangers, but baptized sons of the Church of St. Sava… Honour to the
Turks, and shame to such Orthodox and such Serbs.’ Explaining why he
hadn’t raised his voice earlier against this situation, Patriarch Barnabas
continued to pour out his soul’s anger: ‘… They complain that we introduce
politics into the Church! We are not bringing politics into the Church, but
they are introducing poison into the whole national organism. Those who
have lost their wisdom, their patriotism and their sincerity… Who is going to
tell people the truth if not the people’s Holy Church? From where shall the
voice of God and the voice of the nation’s conscience be heard if not from the
Church of St. Sava? I am not afraid to say this. I hope that I’m not too late in
saying this. Maybe I should have said this earlier. I’m afraid I’m going to give
an answer for this before God’s judgement. But all the time I expected, like all
conscientious people in this country, that the evil would be stopped…” After
seeing that this message of the patriarch did not reach the broad public,
Stoyadinović made an effort to soften the position of the Church’s hierarchy,
trying to convince them that there was absolutely nothing in the Concordat
that could in any way harm the Serbian Church and the Orthodox Faith. From
his discussion with the hierarchs, he soon realized, as he later wrote in his
memoirs, that all his effort was in vain. No arguments helped. The Concordat
had already been ‘condemned’. Since then, the struggle over the Concordat
became a war between the Orthodox Church and her spiritual army, on the
one hand, and the State and its powerful apparatus, on the other. Using
different religious gatherings and festal meetings, the priests and bishops
from the ambon pronounced, with a cross in their hands, the fiercest
condemnation of those who were in favour of the Concordat. The State used
very powerful censorship to ban all the literature against the Concordat. The
department of state security with the ministry of internal affairs sent
instructions to all local government and police authorities to stop local people
signing petitions and sending representatives to Belgrade to demand the
repeal of the Concordat. In the parliament, the main debate over the
ratification of the Concordat was about to start. On the same day an
extraordinary session of the Hierarchical Council, the highest institution in
the Serbian Orthodox Church, began. The tense atmosphere became even
tenser when information was received on the health of Patriarch Barnabas,
signed every day by three specialists. The patriarch became ill at the
beginning of June, during a regular session of the Hierarchical Council. As it
was known that the patriarch was opposed to the Concordat, rumours started
that the leader of the Serbian Orthodox Church had been poisoned. One
group of national deputies in the parliament demanded from the minister of
internal affairs that he conduct an investigation to find out whether the
patriarch had been poisoned by his servant, and whether the servant had
been put up to it by some people outside the patriarchate. In the patriarchate
the belief was that his personal servant had poisoned him, so he was
dismissed from his post for a while, and until he disappeared without trace he
was under observation. The patriarchate itself made its own investigation into this. So on July 8, at almost the same time, two bodies were in session, the Council for the Concordat and the extraordinary Hierarchical Council. At the same time, in all the churches of Belgrade, prayers were organized for the patriarch’s health, and many of the faithful attended. These gatherings added to the tension, and passions were ready to explode. Police control over all religious activity was strengthened. The voting on the Concordat within the Council passed it with a very small majority. But the final battle was just ahead.

“The government used all means against the opponents of the Concordat. The conflicts between the representatives of the government and the citizens became serious. Opponents of the Concordat were said to be religious fanatics, and... it looked as if civil war would break out. In conflict with the police, some even gave their lives, as Vladyka Nikolai [Velimirović] of Žiča confirmed in his famous message in Valjevo: ‘... Here are the names of those who we know were killed. They are: Milovan Zhivanović from the village of Yanilo, Lyubomir Spassović from the village of Koračitsa, George Todorović from Bielina, Dragitsa Bostanović from Sarajevo. And how many others were wounded, how many others reported to hospital, and how many ran into the cornfields and woods, afraid to report to the hospital, fearing to be arrested and interrogated. And how many others were dismissed from their posts, how many were forced to retire, and how many were humiliated and insulted? Thousands and thousands of sons in these sixty days suffered and are suffering for our holy national faith and holy Orthodox Church.’ As a result of all these events, and the displeasure of the people, which was growing from day to day, Stoyadinović’s government was in a hurry to complete the job of accepting the Concordat. That was the main reason why the meeting of the national parliament was scheduled for July 19. It is interesting that the session started with a question from Deputy Dušan Ivančević: ‘Are the security measures around the national parliament well enforced?’ This question illustrates the atmosphere in which the main debate on the Concordat began. To understand better why such excitement existed in the national parliament, it is necessary to remember that in the newspaper Politika dated July 18, the day before the parliament session, the patriarchate had published the information that the next day, in accordance with the will of the people, there would be a litiya and prayers for the health of the patriarch. Neglecting the prohibition from the city government, at about four o’clock in the afternoon on the day of the parliament session, from the Saborna Church a multitude of people burning with almost-forgotten religious passion and holding church banners and gonfalons began a litiya led by seventy priests and four bishops. At about six o’clock in the evening when they reached Knez Mikhailova Street, they met a line of policemen. This is how events unfurled.... The gendarmes stopped the litiya, asking the people to disperse because the litiya was forbidden. Bishop Simeon of Šabats shouted: ‘Move away, blasphemers! Do not defile the sacred cross, but let us go on our
way in peace! We are not interfering with anyone, we are carrying out a normal church rite in our own country.’ And holding the cross more firmly, he began to chant: ‘Save, O Lord, Thy people’. He wanted to go on. But there was no way through, the litia faced another line of policemen, who started to hit whomever they could. They seized and tore up church banners, they broke crosses, they pulled the priests by their beards, they tried to strangle them, and they tore their vestments. The most dramatic scene was when a policeman ran out of the line and attacked Bishop Simeon with a heavy rubber truncheon, hitting him and saying: ‘Son of a Serbian bitch, move away or I shall pull your beard out!’ The bishop continued singing, ‘Save, O Lord, Thy people’ and went on. Another policeman said: ‘I will save you by hitting you’. And two more ran up to accompany him. All three of them attacked the bishop. They hit him everywhere, his mitre fell to the ground, and blood spurted from the bishop’s face. Covered with blood and his hair akimbo, he picked up his mitre from the ground, put it on his head and continued. He went on like that, defending himself with the cross, until the policemen hit him with a rifle-butt. He fell unconscious on the ground covered with blood. The people raised him on their hands and took him to the building of the patriarchate. And then a full-scale fight broke out. The priests used gonfalons to protect themselves, and finally started hitting the policemen with them. Eyewitnesses claim that the police had never been as ruthless and merciless towards the citizens. After these incidents black flags were raised over the patriarchate and all the churches in Belgrade, and all the bells were rung. It is not clear whether all the policemen who took part in this incident were Catholics, since the minister of internal affairs Korošets was a Catholic priest.

The situation was at boiling point, and this simply added fuel to the fire. The leadership of the Serbian Orthodox Church imposed punishments on those who voted for the Concordat. The Holy Hierarchical Council, at its session of July 19, 1937, the same day on which the police brutally broke up the litia, decided to excommunicate all the ministers and representatives of the Orthodox Church who voted for the Concordat, explaining that none of the clergy under any pretext can enter the home of those persons. In addition, it was ordered that the decision had to be proclaimed publicly in all the churches after the first liturgy. It was advised in this document that not only the clergy, but also all other faithful, should not communicate with those who had been punished. In the days following the incidents were repeated. The police hit the citizens with rubber truncheons, even fire-arms were used. One policeman and two citizens were killed in these street riots. In the streets the police were everywhere, they stood guard in front of every church and nobody could enter. Every hour church bells were rung from the church towers.

“The struggle against the Concordat was not restricted to Belgrade. By the end it had spread to most of the country and the people. Kraguyevats, Šabats, Užite and Malednovats are only some of the cities that supported the struggle against the Concordat. In Malednovats one of the sharpest conflicts
took place, in which three people were killed and fifty were seriously wounded. In these conflicts between the spiritual and secular power, many different political parties and groups saw their chance. They joined one or the other side according to their programmes. As a result, in the litia for the health of the patriarch, members of the forbidden communist party of Yugoslavia found their place together with bishops and priests, even though they had nothing in common with the Church and the priesthood. In the meantime, at midnight between the 23rd and 24th of July, Patriarch Barnabas reposed. Censors could not prohibit writing that more than 350,000 people took part in the funeral from all the different parts of the country. Belgrade has never known such a majestic gathering. The day before the parliament had accepted the Concordat, but that didn’t mean its final acceptance. The parliament agreed on the text, but it still had to pass through the Senate. The public believed that Patriarch Barnabas, as the main opponent of the Concordat, had been poisoned, and that it was done with the knowledge of Stoyadinović and his closest co-workers. The peak of national discontent was reached on the day when the press revealed that the patriarch had died on the same night that the parliament majority voted for the Concordat. The government of Stoyadinović found itself in a very unpleasant situation. The national discontent was augmented by words from the church ambon, and it threatened to become an unstoppable flood. The government tried, with police help, to gather statements from the doctors who were looking after the patriarch’s health in order to prove that the stories about his poisoning were false. They hoped in this way to stop the dangerous situation. But the manoeuvre was so obvious that nobody believed it. Professor Igniatovsky, the doctor who had been with the patriarch from the beginning to his death, claimed that it was forcible poisoning. So did Professor Xenophon Šakovitch. After many years, he publicly said: ‘I’m declaring this now, because before the war I was not allowed, that Patriarch Barnabas was poisoned! I know because I with my assistants did a post-mortem on the late Patriarch Barnabas, and definitely established that Patriarch Barnabas was poisoned.’ The senior medical technician, Miroslav Božovich, witnessed on the contrary that this statement of Professor Šakovitch was not true as regards the post-mortem, because the post-mortem was not carried out, since the government would not allow it. Instead of a post-mortem, from ‘the highest place’ it was ordered that the patriarch’s body be embalmed. The embalming was done during the night, ‘in an urgent procedure and in the presence of the police’. Those who initiated it wanted to stop the real truth from being revealed in this way. The results of the judicial enquiry were never revealed, nor was the case of Barnabas’ death ever judicially completed. The investigation itself was stopped in April, 1938. One thing was certain: the city government that led the investigation succeeded in proving that the patriarch was not poisoned and that the government was not involved in the poisoning, and gave this finding great publicity. In October the Concordat was officially withdrawn. The government of Stoyadinović decided that there should be no Concordat – no old one, no new one, no Concordat at all. In addition to this, Stoyadinović
was forced to the wall from one side by the firm position of the Serbian Orthodox Church and on the other side by the firm requests of the Duke’s authority to restore good relations with the Serbian Orthodox Church as soon as possible, and in that way he practically accepted all that the persistent hierarchs requested from his government: for example, to punish all those responsible for the terrible events in front of the Saborna church in Belgrade and other places, without reference to their positions, whether they were ministers or state officials, and other such things. In exchange, in one of the last sessions the Hierarchical Council decided that they would remove the sanctions against the ministers and deputies that voted for the Concordat. Through these decisions both sides put an end to the dispute, which for more than a year had put more wood on the fire of political and religious passions.

“The rejection of the Concordat with the Vatican caused the displeasure and rage of Pope Pius XI, who declared in December, 1937: ‘... I am convinced that there will not be a small number of souls who will regret not accepting wholeheartedly and with an open mind such a great good as the one which the representative of Jesus Christ offered the country, and not only for the Church and the religious harmony of the nation, but also for the social and political harmony, though we strongly resent the idea that politics should be our business.’ This pope’s threat very shortly, during the Second World War, came true in the most monstrous way. The pope’s revenge for the non-acceptance of the ‘great good’ of the Concordat, carried out at the hands of the Ustaša, was really horrible.”

ROCOR AND ECUMENISM

As we have seen, as early as 1920 the Ecumenical Patriarchate had declared the Catholics and Protestants to be “fellow heirs” of the promises of Christ together with the Orthodox; and the main purpose of the introduction of the new calendar into the Greek and Romanian Churches had been to facilitate union in prayer with the western heretics. In the inter-war years progress towards the unia with the heretics had been slow but steady. ROCOR had said little against the new heresy, and had sent representatives to the ecumenical conferences in Lausanne, Edinburgh and Oxford. However, it was time to her to define more clearly her attitude both to the ecumenical movement in general and to the participation of the Local Orthodox Churches in it. No less urgent was the need to define her position relative to the sergianist Moscow Patriarchate.

On August 14, 1938 an All-Diaspora Council of ROCOR consisting of 13 bishops, 26 priests and 58 laymen was convened. Bishop John (Maximovich) of Shanghai said, in his report “The Situation of the Orthodox Church after the War”: “We (the faithful of the Russian Church Abroad) must firmly stand on the ground of the Church canons and not be with those who depart from them. Formerly, in order to reproach canonical irregularities in a Local Church, canonical communion with her was broken. The Russian Church Abroad cannot act in this way since her position has not been completely determined. For that reason she must not break communion with other Churches if they do not take this step first. But, while maintaining communion, she must not be silent about violations of Church truth…”

This “liberal” position was followed by a still more liberal declaration. Protocol number 8 for August 16 stated: “Judgement was made concerning concelebrations with clergy belonging to the jurisdiction of Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod. Metropolitan Anastasy pointed out that clergy coming from Russia from the named jurisdiction were immediately admitted to communion in prayer, and cited the opinion of Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan in his epistle published in Church Life to the effect that the sin of Metropolitan Sergius did not extend to the clergy subject to him. It was decreed: to recognize that there is no obstacle to communion in prayer and concelebration with the clergy of Metropolitan Sergius.”

This was a dangerous declaration which threatened to put ROCOR at odds with the Catacomb Church and in danger of merging with World Orthodoxy. Moreover, it was not accurate in its assertions. First, Metropolitan Cyril never expressed the view that “there are no obstacles to prayerful communion and concelebration with clergymen of Metropolitan Sergius”. On the contrary, in

709 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 75.
710 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 75.
his earliest epistle, that of 1929, he wrote: “I acknowledge it as a fulfillment of our archpastoral duty for those Archpastors and all who consider the establishment of the so-called ‘Temporary Patriarchal Synod’ as wrong, to refrain from communion with Metropolitan Sergius and those Archpastors who are of one mind with him.”

Nor did he ever declare that while it was wrong to have communion with the Sergianist bishops, it was alright to have communion with their priests – which would have been canonical nonsense in any case. True, he refrained – at that time – from declaring the Sergianists to be graceless. However, he did say, in his epistle of 1934, that Christians who partook of the Sergianist sacraments knowing of Sergius’ usurpation of power and the illegality of his Synod would receive them to their condemnation – a point for all those contemplating union with the MP today to consider very carefully...

Moreover, we now know (as Metropolitan Anastasy did not know) that by 1937 Metropolitan Cyril’s position had hardened considerably: “The expectations that Metropolitan Sergius would correct himself have not been justified, but there has been enough time for the formerly ignorant members of the Church, enough incentive and enough opportunity to investigate what has happened; and very many have both investigated and understood that Metropolitan Sergius is departing from that Orthodox Church which the Holy Patriarch Tikhon entrusted to us to guard, and consequently there can be no part or lot with him for the Orthodox. The recent events have finally made clear the renovationist [that is, heretical] nature of Sergianism...”\(^71\) That Metropolitan Anastasy did not know the true position of Metropolitan Cyril, not to mention that of a whole series of other Catacomb hierarchs and martyrs, indicates a growing difference in outlook between the True Russian Church inside and outside Russia...

The 1938 Council also discussed the Church’s participation in the ecumenical movement, and here for the first time doubts began to be expressed about this participation. ROCOR had sent representatives to ecumenical conferences, and in his report Bishop Seraphim (Lyade) of Berlin defending this position, saying that the Orthodox had always expounded and defended the sacred dogmas. “Therefore the Orthodox delegates both in Lausanne and in Edinburgh considered it their duty to give and publish special declarations; in this way they clearly marked the Orthodox Church off from other confessions calling themselves ‘churches’... We must disperse all perplexities and ideas about Orthodoxy that are often simply caricatures... To be reconciled with the existing situation of alienation of the larger part of the Christian world from the Orthodox Church, and an indifferent attitude towards the ecumenical seeking of the unity of the Church, would be an unforgivable sin, for we must bear responsibility for the destiny of those who still remain beyond the boundaries of the Church and for the future

destiny of the whole of the Christian world... But while participating in the ecumenical movement, we must beware of concessions and condescension, for this is extremely harmful and dangerous, and confirms the heterodox in the conviction that they are members of the true Church. In the sphere of dogmatics and other essential and basic questions we cannot diminish our demands…”

Bishop Seraphim’s position was supported by Metropolitan Anastasy and Count George Grabbe.

However, others took a more “rightist” position. Thus N.F. Stefanov read a report on the influence of Masonry on the Oxford conference. And Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev) said: “Extra-ecclesiastical unity brings nothing but harm. Orthodox Truth is expressed in the grace of the Holy Spirit, which is precisely what the ecumenical movement does not want to know... Unity can take place only on the ground of grace-filled life. The aims of the ecumenical movement are unattainable. ‘Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the council of the ungodly.’”

Metropolitan Anastasy said: “We have to choose between two dangers – a temptation or a refusal to engage in missionary work in the confession of Orthodoxy. Which danger is greater? We shall proceed from our premises. The grace-filled Church must carry out missionary work, for in this way it is possible to save some of those who waver. Beside the leaders who want to disfigure Orthodoxy, there are others, for example the young, who come to conferences with true seeking. Comparing that which they see and hear from their own pastors and from the Orthodox pastor, they will understand the truth. Otherwise they will remain alone. I have heard positive reviews from heterodox of Bishop Seraphim’s speeches at conferences. We must also take into account that the Anglo-Saxon world is in crisis, and is seeking the truth. Protestantism is also seeking support for itself. Moreover, we have a tradition of participating in such conferences that was established by the reposed Metropolitan Anthony. To avoid temptation we must clarify the essence of the matter.”

A resolution was passed that ROCOR members should not take part in the ecumenical movement. However, for the sake of missionary aims, bishops could instruct their representatives to attend conferences and explain without compromise the teaching of the Orthodox Church, without allowing the slightest deviation from the Orthodox point of view. 712

The lack of clarity in the definition of ROCOR’s relationship to the Moscow Patriarchate, to the rest of World Orthodoxy and the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and to the ecumenical movement in general, continued to plague ROCOR in the post-war period, causing complications in her relations with other True

712 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, pp. 75-77.
Orthodox Churches. This problem was not really resolved until Metropolitan Philaret (Voznesensky) became first-hierarch in 1964; he firmly established that the only True Church inside the Soviet Union was the Catacomb Church, wrote a series of “sorrowful epistles” to the leaders of World Orthodoxy condemning their heresy, and finally, in 1983 secured the anathema against ecumenism – probably the most important ecclesiastical document of the second half of the twentieth century. The incorrupt body and many miracles of Metropolitan Philaret made it clear to all those with eyes to see that his position was the correct one, expressing the mind of Christ and His One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church...
In February, 1938 Patriarch Miron became prime minister in the cabinet of the "royal dictatorship" of King Charles II. In the same year, the authorities now decided to accuse the Old Calendarist leader Fr. Glycherie of being an Iron Guard. "After Father Glicherie was arrested in 1936," writes Constantin Bujor, "all means of intimidation were employed to shatter his nervous system. He was incarcerated for more than two years in a variety of prisons, being transferred from one jail to another; Bucharest, Iezeru, Râmnicu Vâlcea, Iezeru, Râmnicu Vâlcea, Craiova, Bucharest, Iaşi, Iezeru, and Piatra Niamţ. The accusation of being an Old Calendarist could not carry too long a sentence, and Father Glicherie was thus finally set at liberty in 1938 – much to the chagrin of those who had gone to such great lengths to have him arrested. So, once again, they fabricated false charges, this time accusing him of more serious infractions in order to have him decisively condemned. Thus, Hieromonk Glicherie was falsely accused of being active in the Legionary Movement. Although Legionnaires were highly regarded and visible in Romanian political life at this time, the Monarch had dictatorially abolished all political parties. Ironically, Father Glicherie was also falsely accused at the same time of Communist or Bolshevik activity, because the Russian Orthodox Church followed the Julian Calendar. This, too, was a serious charge: the Communists were mortal enemies of Romania, and therefore, through guilt by association, the Old Calendarists were enemies of the State. Accusations of these kinds provoked a variety of reactions and even frightened many people, who came to believe that the Old Calendarists posed a danger to society. To discourage supporters of the Old Calendar Church, appropriate punishments were levied. Plenty of ‘witnesses’, denunciations, and contrived ‘facts’ could easily be produced; the elimination of inconvenient opponents by such methods was the order of the day. Thus, in 1938, Father Glicherie was arrested and sent to Miercurea Ciuc to a death camp for political prisoners. After nine months’ imprisonment, he was scheduled for execution with a group of Legionnaires. Miraculously, at the very moment that he was to face the firing squad, he was saved by the government’s unexpected amnesty of the camp’s remaining detainees…"

K.V. Glazkov writes that while Fr. Glycherie was in the camp in Miercurea Ciuc, “in November… there came an order to divide all the prisoners into two parts and shoot one part and then the other. When the first group had been shot, Fr. Glycerie and several legionnaires in the second group prayed a thanksgiving moleben to the Lord God and the Mother of God for counting

them worthy of death in the Orthodox faith. The Lord worked a miracle – suddenly there arrived a governmental order decreeing clemency.”

The Romanian Legionnaire movement has been evaluated in very different ways. A generally negative assessment is provided by Michael Burleigh: “Few European Fascist movements went so far as to proclaim that ‘God is a Fascist!’ or that ‘the ultimate goal of the Nation must be resurrection in Christ!’ Romania was the exception. Romanian Fascists wanted ‘a Romania in delirium’ and they largely got one. The Legion of the Archangel Michael was founded in 1927 in honour of the archangel, who had allegedly visited Corneliu Codreanu, its chief ideologist, while he was in prison. It was the only European Fascist movement with religion (in this case Romanian Orthodoxy) at its core. In 1930 the Legion was renamed the Iron Guard. While rivaling only the Nazis in the ferocity of their hatred of Jews, these Romanian Fascists were sui generis in their fusion of political militancy with Orthodox mysticism into a truly lethal whole. One of the Legion’s intellectual luminaries, the world-renowned anthropologist Mircea Eliade, described the legionary ideal as ‘a harsh Christian spirituality’. Its four commandments were ‘belief in God; faith in our mission; love for one another; son’. The goal of a ‘new moral man’ may have been a totalitarian commonplace, but the ‘resurrection of the [Romanian] people in front of God’s throne’ was not routine in such circles. But then few European Fascists were induced into an elite called the Brotherhood of Christ by sipping from a communal cup of blood filled from slashes in their own arms, or went around with little bags of soil tied around their necks. Nor did they do frenzied dances after chopping opponents into hundreds of pieces. Not for nothing was the prison massacre of Iron Guard leaders – including the captain Codreanu himself – by supporters of King Carol II known to local wits as ‘the Night of the Vampires’. Although the Romanian elites emasculated the Guard’s leadership, much of their furious potential was at that elite’s disposal…”

A more positive assessment is provided by Monk Moise: “After wandering off in different directions, Codreanu and other young people, troubled by the need to do something for their country, realized that what was needed to instigate a profound change in society was not so much a new party or a new political program – as they themselves had been tempted to believe – but rather education of a Christian and national character leading to moral renewal. ‘This country [wrote Codreanu] is perishing from lack of people, not from a lack of programs. This is our opinion. It is not programs that we must create, but people, new people… Therefore the cornerstone from which the Legion sets out is humankind, not political programs. The reform of people,

714 Glazkov, “Istoricheskie prichiny niekotorykh sobitij v istorii Rumynskoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi do II Mirovoj vojny” (The Historical Reasons for some Events in the History of the Romanian Orthodox Church before the Second World War), Tserkovnaia Zhizn’ (Church Life), №№ 3-4, May-August, 2000, pp. 57-58.
not the reform of political programs. Therefore, the Legion of the Archangel Michael will rather be a school and army than a political party. The Romanian people, at this point in its history, do not need a great politician, as some mistakenly believe, but a great educator and leader to vanquish the powers of evil and shatter the ranks of evildoers. In order to do this, however, he must first overcome the evil in himself and in his brethren.’

“In order to form a Legionnaire elite, the best from among the youth were selected, beginning with those of high school age. This organization of young men was named Frăția de Cruce (FDC), the Brotherhood of the Cross. Those targeted were screened according to certain criteria: faithfulness and attendance at church, good academic achievement, respectfulness toward others, love of country, honesty, etc. Candidates were not admitted to the FDC automatically but in accordance with certain requirements. It set out be an elite organization that would admit only the best.

“Those admitted found an atmosphere of love, seriousness, and enthusiasm highly suited to their spiritual growth. They received a primarily moral and spiritual education, along Christian lines; they were encouraged to participate in the sacraments of confession, to adhere to a prayer schedule, to fast, to avoid bodily sins, to be merciful, correct, punctual, sympathetic, ready to help others, obedient, and studious. Since work played an important role in Legionnaire training, work camps were organized in which, along with Legionnaires, brothers of the cross participated in the construction and repair of churches, schools, roads, bridges, levees, etc. They worked in an atmosphere of youthful enthusiasm, while the camps also provided an opportunity for the formation and strengthening of spiritual ties.

“Their meetings began with a prayer commemorating those who had died for the Legionnaire cause, followed by a reading from the New Testament. At every meeting, those present took turns introducing a theme having to do with faith, morality, national history, culture, etc. Legionnaire songs were sung and memorized; participants took turns reciting from Legionnaire writings, while the final portions of meetings were reserved for decision-making regarding new goodwill projects that needed to be undertaken such as help for someone in need, collection of assistance for the family of an arrested Legionnaire, or similar work for the benefit of their brethren.

“The young men who gathered together in the FDC made up a real family; they were taught to love one another and to help one another in time of need. The friendship that existed between them sprang from an impressive degree of love and sincerity. The most original part of the meetings was the moment of friendship or sincerity, a form of public ‘confession’ of all mistakes made since the last meeting. This did not replace the sacrament of confession – each of them also confessed to his spiritual father; rather, it was an expression of the trust and sincerity that united them. After they all confessed their
mistakes, each of them reported what mistakes they’d noticed among the others who were present. Then each of them received a ‘penance’…

“In addition to educational activity, the brothers of the cross participated in the political activity of the Legion through the distribution of leaflets and posters and through occasional involvement in electoral propaganda. They also participated in the collection of funds for imprisoned Legionnaires and their families…

“The moral-spiritual component of this education was interwoven with a national-heroic component. The accent was placed on love of country and on knowledge of history and well-known Romanians. There was pronounced consideration of historical struggles and national heroes, the Legionnaires identifying with these heroes and looking to them as models. The intention was to cultivate the heroic and soldierly qualities of these young men: courage, strength of will, steadfastness, a spirit of sacrifice, discipline, the ability to confront danger, etc.

“The Legionnaires’ organization and discipline were of military inspiration, but this freely-assumed discipline did not have an air of dryness and barrack-like rigidity for those involved. The harshness was alleviated by their spiritual relationships and states of spirit. The conduct of a brother of the cross, like that of a Legionnaire, had to be dignified, firm, disciplined, and orderly, like that of a soldier…

“A very important trait for … the Legionnaire … was a sense of justice. While being obligated by their code of conduct not to do anything that would stain their sense of honor or that would prevent them from supporting any just cause, this very sense of honor also required them to react when anyone offended them. This kind of conduct is debatable from a Christian point of view, which advocates humility and requires that one turn the other cheek when struck. When the Legionnaire encountered Christianity in all its profundity in the Communist prisons, this concept of honor turned out to be a source of great difficulty for them, as they realized that the passion of pride can lie behind it…

“Because measures were taken against the Legion such that they were almost constantly persecuted, the education of the brothers of the cross did not follow its natural course. Forced to meet in secret, sheltered from the far-reaching sight of the authorities, without experienced guides, these young men were not always able to benefit from a solid spiritual education. Borne along primarily by enthusiasm and sincerity, they nevertheless lacked a profoundly Christian vision, which most of them would acquire in prison. The seeds sown by training in the Brotherhood of the Cross, despite their shortcomings, were significant [and] important, for the young men received a spiritual foundation based on Christian principles that was much more solid
than any training offered in traditional, academic milieus. The Christian conduct they later displayed in prison found its source in these principles that formed their characters, principles which cultivated the virtues of steadfastness, solidarity, and a spirit of sacrifice, while many non-Legionnaires, as Steinhardt noted, lost their balance, humanity, and self-control.”

Perhaps the finest fruit of the Legionnaire movement was the group of martyrs who suffered in Târgu-Ocna in the 1950s under the spiritual leadership of Valeriu Gafencu, who was imprisoned by the communists precisely because of his training in the Legionnaire spirit. Gafencu was attracted to the religious rather than the political aspects of the movement, was decisively opposed to its occasional violence and anti-semitism, and instilled in the quasi-monastic community that formed around him in the camp-hospital a purely Orthodox spirit of love and self-sacrifice. His group therefore represented Legionnairism purged of all dubious political elements and striving only to fulfil the commandments of God in the spirit of Orthodox Christianity.

The Legionnaires did not separate from the official, new calendar church. Nevertheless, in their own way they represented a separation from the spiritual deadness of that church. Moreover, the Romanian Old Calendarists did not acquire a hierarch until 1955; so it may be permissible to see those new calendarists who died before that date as having died in the Church, just as the Greek Old Calendarists accepted the new calendarists as being in the Church until they received their first bishops...

“With the outbreak of World War II in 1939,” writes Metropolitan Cyprian, “Father Glycherie was set free and, along with his beloved co-struggler, Deacon David Bidascu, fled into the forest. There the two lived in indescribable deprivation and hardship, especially during the winter. In the midst of heavy snows, when their few secret supporters could not get frugal provisions to them, the Fathers were obliged to eat worms! However, Divine Providence protected them from their persecutors and, directed by that same Providence, the birds of the sky would erase traces of the Fathers’ footprints in the snow by flying about and flapping their wings in the snow. And despite the harsh cold, not once did they light a fire, lest the smoke might betray their refuge. (The cold often approaches thirty degrees below zero during the winter in Romania.) Other ascetics were also hidden in the deserts, among them Father Damascene, Father Paisius, et al.”

Western appeasement of Hitler at Munich had the effect of making Stalin change his foreign policy. Instead of joining with the Western democracies in opposing Hitler, Stalin decided to join him. And so in August, 1939, after years of reviling each other, the two states in the persons of their foreign ministers Molotov and Ribbentrop signed a non-aggression pact whose secret protocols in effect divided up the vast regions between the two powers between them. The pact was sealed, writes Richard Overy, “because, in 1939, neither wanted a war with the other. Hitler hoped that the pact would weaken the resolve of Britain and France to confront him over the German-Polish war, launched on 1 September 1939; when it did not, the pact helped to secure the German rear and supplied the German war economy with a large list of essential supplies. Stalin approved the pact, despite the shock it represented to the many thousands of communists worldwide who took Soviet anti-fascism for granted, because it allowed the Soviet Union to consolidate its security position in eastern Europe, acquire vanguard technologies from German industry, and, above all, to avoid war at the side of two capitalist empires, Britain and France, against another capitalist state, Germany.”

Two weeks after Germany invaded Poland from the west, the Soviets invaded from the east; savage repressions immediately took place...

Max Hastings writes: “The secret protocols of the Nazi-Soviet pact, delineating the parties’ territorial ambitions, were unknown in Western capitals until German archives were captured in 1945. But in September 1939, many citizens of the democracies perceived Russia and Germany alike as their foes. The novelist Evelyn Waugh’s fictional alter ego, Guy Crouchback, adopted a view shared by many European conservatives: Stalin’s deal with Hitler, ‘news that shook the politicians and young poets of a dozen capital cities, brought deep peace to our English heart… The enemy at last was plain in view, huge and hateful, all disguise cast off. It was the Modern Age in arms.’ A few politicians aspired to separate Russia and Germany, to seek the support of Stalin to defeat the greater evil of Hitler. Until June 1941, however, such a prospect seemed remote: the two dictatorships were viewed as common enemies of the democracies.”

Although the two dictatorships were indeed the common enemies of the democracies, still some explanation is required why, after so many years of hating and fighting each others, they should now have formed an alliance that left so many of their supporters speechless in surprise and incomprehension...

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Part of the explanation lies in the fact that the Nazis and the communists were more similar than their open enmity appeared to admit. “At the conscious level,” writes Stone, “communists and fascist were schooled to stress their differences. On the other hand, when pressed to summarize their convictions, they often gave strikingly similar answers. One said, ‘For us Soviet patriots, the homeland and communism became fused into one inseparable whole.’ Another put it thus: ‘Our movement took a grip on cowardly Marxism, and extracted the [real] meaning of socialism from it. It also took Nationalism from the cowardly bourgeois parties. Throwing them together into the cauldron of our way of life, the synthesis emerged as clear as crystal – German National Socialism.’ It is not for nothing that people treated to such oratory were apt to think of communists as ‘red fascists’ and of fascists as ‘brown communists’.”

It is not therefore not surprising that the leaders of the two movements should have respected each other. Each was more complimentary of the other than either was of the Western democrats. Thus “Hitler called Stalin ‘one of the greatest living human beings’. The Soviet leader, he said, ‘towered above the democratic figures of the Anglo-Saxon powers’.” Towards the end, he expressed the wish that he had purged his generals as Stalin had so wisely purged his! Stalin for his part considered Hitler to be “a very able man but not basically intelligent, lacking in culture and with a primitive approach to political matters” – which was mild criticism by comparison with what he said of the great majority of his fellow men. Moreover, as Daniel Pipes points out, “Stalin facilitated the Nazi ascent to power in 1933 by refusing to let the German Communist party ally with the Social Democrats. Already in April 1936 the two sides signed an economic agreement; thereafter, Stalin worked hard to reach a political accord with Hitler. ‘We must come to terms with a superior power like Nazi Germany,’ an aide quotes him saying. In early 1938 Stalin initiated diplomatic contact with Hitler and did him more favors, completely staying out of the Czechoslovak crisis and letting collapse the Republican forces in Spain.”

Hitler’s excuse for invading Poland was, as in the case of Czechoslovakia, national self-determination, the ideal of pan-German unity, of the unification of all Germans under one Reich. This ideal required just two further changes: the incorporation of the free city of Danzig, whose population was German, and the creation of a land corridor with East Prussia. When Hitler demanded these concessions from the Poles, they refused.

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720 Stone, Europe, op. cit., p. 945.
722 Fenby, op. cit., p. 239.
Now the Poles were a larger state, and a more courageous race, than the Czechs. But they were also proud – and their pride concealed weaknesses that made them vulnerable. First, as Golo Mann points out, “their state occupied former Russian and former German or Habsburg territory, and it was a Prussian-German tradition to regard the whole Polish state, not just a monstrosity like Danzig, as intolerable in the long run. In 1919 Poland had spread further to the West and to the East than it should have done; in its ambitions it had been as intoxicated by victory and as blind as the other small nations.”

Secondly, in the inter-war period the Poles had alienated two important minorities: the traditionally Orthodox Christian Ukrainians and Belorussians in the East, most of whose churches they had closed down and given to the Catholics, and the Jews, whom they continued to discriminate against.

But of course these weaknesses did not justify Hitler’s bullying. Moreover, the Poles were quite right in rejecting the appeasement course: if they gave Hitler Danzig and the corridor to East Prussia, there was absolutely no guarantee that these would be his last demands. Indeed, Hitler told his generals in May, 1939: “Danzig is not the object at stake. For us it is a matter of expansion in the East... Therefore the question of sparing Poland does not arise and the decision remains to attack Poland at the first suitable opportunity.”

724 Mann, op. cit., p. 460.
725 “Before the beginning of the Second World War,” write V.I. Alexeyev and F. Stavrou, “the Poles had closed hundreds of Orthodox churches on their territory on the grounds that the Tsarist government had in 1875 returned theses churches from the unia to Orthodoxy. The Polish government considered the return of the uniates to Orthodoxy an act of violence, and they in their own way restored justice by means of violence, which, needless to say, elicited protests even from the Catholic and Uniate churches. “The results of these measures of the Polish government were such that, for example, in the region of Kholm out of 393 Orthodox churches existing in 1914, by 1938 there remained 227, by 1939 – 176, and by the beginning of the war – 53 in all.” (“Russkaia Pravoslavnaiia Tserkov’ na Okkupirovannoi Nemtsami Territorii” (The Russian Orthodox Church on German-Occupied Territory), Russkoe Vozrozhdenie (Russian Regeneration), 1980 (IV), № 12, pp. 122-124)

According to Monk Benjamin (“Letopis’ Tserkovnykh Sobytij Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi nachinaia s 1917 goda” (A Chronicle of Church Events of the Orthodox Church beginning from 1917), http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis.htm, part 2, p. 73), in June and July of 1938 150 village churches visited by Ukrainian Orthodox were demolished. On July 16 the Polish Church issued a memorandum on the event, as did the MP on the same day. For further details of the persecution, see Danilushkin, M.B (ed.) Istoria Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi (A History of the Russian Orthodox Church), St. Petersburg: “Voskresenie”, 1997, vol. I, p. 588; K.N. Nikolaiev, ‘’Unia’ i vostochnij obriad” (The ‘Unia’ and the Eastern Rite), Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia), № 6 (1411), March 15/28, 1990. Among the buildings destroyed was the cathedral of St. Alexander Nevsky (in 1927), and the Orthodox cathedrals in Liublin, Kalisha, Vlotslavka, Plotsk and Koltsy (Monk Benjamin, part 1, op. cit., p. 175).

726 In 1931 there were 8,228,000 Ukrainians and Belorussians in Poland (nearly 36% of the total population), and nearly two million Jews (6%) (David Vital, A People Apart: The Jews in Europe 1789-1939, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 763).
The Molotov-Ribbentrop pact brought still more Orthodox into the Soviet maw. “Hitler’s deal with Stalin,” writes Nathanael Davis, “allowed the Soviet to occupy eastern Poland, and 1,200 Orthodox parishes [with a theological seminary in Kremenets] were incorporated into the Soviet Union as a result. Then, in June of 1940, the Soviets occupied Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, among whose 6 million people were almost half a million traditionally Orthodox persons who worshiped in about 300 Orthodox churches. Later in the same month the Soviets compelled the Romanians to cede Bessarabia and northern Bukovina with their 4 million people, 3 million of them traditionally Orthodox. There were between 2,000 and 2,500 parishes in these formerly Romanian lands. These annexations brought the Russian Orthodox Church more than 6 million traditionally Orthodox people and 3,500-4,000 churches with active priests, as well as many monasteries and nunneries, some bishops and seminaries, and other resources. The institutional strength of the church must have increased fifteenfold.”

Further north, the Bolsheviks were also extending their tentacles. Although repulsed from Finland with the loss of 250,000 lives, they took control of the Baltic States without any trouble. In 1939 the MP sent Archbishop Sergius (Voskresensky) of Dmitrov to Riga as the patriarchal exarch in the occupied Baltic States. In December, 1940 he received the Churches of Latvia and Estonia, which had been granted autocephaly by Constantinople, into the MP. Metropolitan Augustine (Peterson) of Riga went into retirement. Then, in March, 1941, after the death of Metropolitan Eleutherius on December 31, he took control of the see of Vilnius and Lithuania.

In December, 1941 Metropolitans Alexander of Tallin and Augustine of Riga travelled to Moscow, repented publicly of the sin of schism and were received into communion.

“Rule over the new diocesan provinces,” writes Dmitri Volkogonov, “was established, naturally, by means of the secret services. As an illustration of the process, the following report was received by Stalin in March, 1941 from B. Merkulov, People’s Commissar for State Security of the USSR:

“There are at present in the territories of the Latvian, Estonian and Lithuanian republics autocephalous [autonomous] Orthodox churches, headed by local metropolitans who are placemen of the bourgeois governments.

727 Davis, op. cit., p. 15.
728 The letter he sent to Metropolitan Alexander of Tallin is cited by Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 15-18.
"In the Latvian SSR there are 175,000 Orthodox parishioners. Anti-Soviet elements, former members of the Fascist organization 'Perkanirust', are grouped around the head of the Synod, Augustin.

"In the Estonian SSR there are 40,000 Orthodox. The head of the eparchy has died. Archbishop Fedosi Fedoseev, who heads an anti-Soviet group of churchmen, is trying to grab the job.

"The NKVD has prepared the following measures:

"1) Through an NKVD agency we will get the Moscow patriarchate to issue a resolution on the subordination of the Orthodox churches of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania to itself, using a declaration from local rank and file clergy and believers for the purpose.

"2) By a decision of the Moscow patriarchate we shall appoint as eparch Archbishop Dmitri Nikolayevich Voskresensky (an agent of the NKGB of the USSR), using for the purpose appropriate requests from the local clergy, which are to be found in the Moscow patriarchate."

The fact that Sergius (Voskresensky) was an agent of the NKGB makes it highly probable that his three fellow metropolitans who were still in freedom – Sergius (Stragorodsky), Nicholas and Alexis – were also agents. Indeed, according to the apostate professor-priest A. Osipov, Patriarch Alexis feared that Nicholas was an agent of the Bolsheviks. He was right to be afraid: Nicholas was an agent. This was confirmed by a secret letter from Beria to Stalin, in which it was proposed “under the cover of NKVD agent B.D. Yarushevich, Archbishop of the Leningrad diocese, to create an illegal residency for the NKVD of the USSR so as to organize the work of agents amidst churchmen”. Nicholas denied that he “had ever collaborated with the communists”. However, KGB defector Major Deriabin testified before the U.S. Senate Internal Security Subcommittee on May 5, 1959 that under instructions from the KGB, he himself had collaborated with Agent Nicholas, and that when a Soviet delegation to the Vienna Conference for Peace was to arrive in Vienna, Colonel Kovalev referred to him a telegram with the order “to take care of the delegation”, and that “Metropolitan Nicholas is an agent of State Security”.

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730 This is probably a mistake for “Archbishop Sergius Voskresensky of Dmitrov”. (V.M.)
This demonstrates, continues Volkogonov, “the reasons behind Lenin’s confident assertion that ‘our victory over the clergy is fully assured’. So complete indeed was that victory that even Stalin and his associates were at times at a loss to know whether someone was a priest or an NKGB agent in a cassock. While boasting loudly of freedom of conscience and quoting copiously from Lenin’s hypocritical statements on how humanely socialism treated religion, the Bolshevik regime, through the widespread use of violence, had turned the dwelling-place of the spirit and faith into a den of the thought-police...”  

735 Volkogonov, op. cit., p. 386.
THE BALKANS AND THE FASCISTS

By the beginning of the Second World War, the Orthodox Church, having suffered the most terrible and sustained onslaught in her history, had lost most of her pre-revolutionary glory. The Moscow Patriarchate, on the one hand, and the Churches of Constantinople, Alexandria, Greece and Romania, on the other, could no longer be counted as truly Orthodox in their official confession. The Churches of Serbia, Bulgaria and Jerusalem were still Orthodox – but they had not broken communion with the heretics, so the prospects of their remaining free from the quicksands of “World Orthodoxy” for long were not good. The situation of the ROCOR was only a little better – she was not in communion with the Moscow Patriarchate, but had not broken decisively with the other heretical Churches, and even her attitude to Moscow was not entirely unambiguous. The Greek Old Calendarist Church was strong in the faith, but tragically divided. The Romanian Old Calendarists were also strong, but as yet had no bishops. The Catacomb Church of Russia was bathed in the glory of a vast multitude of new martyrs and confessors; but the whole apparatus of the most evil and most powerful state in history was directed towards her complete annihilation...

Could the outbreak of world war bring relief to the Orthodox Church? Or would it consolidate the power of the antichristian powers ranged against her? That was the question in October, 1940, when Mussolini invaded Greece through Albania. His forces immediately got bogged down in the face of fierce Greek resistance, and in November, the British occupied Crete. Hitler was contemplating the consequences of this, and whether he should intervene to help Mussolini, when the Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov arrived in Berlin...

Misha Glenny writes: “Hitler wished to invite the Soviet Union to join Germany, Italy and Japan in the Tripartite Pact. Were Stalin to accept the offer to join the Axis, this would create the mightiest political alliance in history, stretching from the Atlantic and Mediterranean to the Pacific. Hitler had hit upon the idea of incorporating the Soviet Union into his scheme partly to preempt a future alliance of the Soviet Union, Britain and, possibly, the United States, and partly because he had become anxious about the gradual westward expansion of the Soviet Union through Finland, the Baltics, Bessarabia and northern Bukovina. In the Molotov-Ribbentrop accord of August, 1939, Hitler had effectively recognized the Balkans as a Russian sphere of interest. Meanwhile, however, Germany’s interest in the region had become more urgent. By persuading the Soviet Union to sign up to the Tripartite Pact, Hitler hoped, among other things, to extinguish Soviet influence in the Balkans. Berlin offered to compensate Moscow by supporting Soviet expansion in what Hitler termed the ‘Großasiatischer Raum’ (greater Asian space). When Molotov asked what ‘Großasiatischer Raum’ actually
meant, the Germans were unable to give him a concrete answer; it has been assumed that it meant India, Central Asia and Iran.

“As Hitler unveiled his vision of the new order, covering half the globe, Molotov sat impassively and, having heard the Führer out, stated he agreed ‘in principle’ to the idea. He then proceeded to raise difficulties about all the individual issues that Hitler had hoped to resolve in Germany’s favour. The Foreign Minister mentioned Finland, Poland and Romania but he also raised for the first time the question of Bulgaria. Molotov claimed that Britain was threatening the security of the Black Sea Straits, which had prompted the Soviet Union to consider an offer ‘of a Russian guarantee to Bulgaria’.

“Molotov’s intervention threatened Wehrmacht plans to invade Greece, which included sending its divisions through Bulgaria. Stalin’s response to the Tripartite proposal arrived by letter two weeks after Molotov’s visit. The Soviet leader was adamant on the issue of Bulgaria: ‘2. Provided that within the next few months the security of the Soviet Union in the Straits is assured by the conclusion of a mutual assistance pact between the Soviet Union and Bulgaria… and by the establishment of a base for land and naval forces of the USSR within range of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles by means of a long-term lease.’

“Hitler needed the Balkans for economic reasons. He could not tolerate Soviet interference in the region, and certainly not a Soviet military presence there. Persuaded that Stalin was becoming too conceited and dangerous as an ally, Hitler decided to destroy the Soviet Union once and for all…”

Hitler especially needed Romania because of her oilfields... Now the Romanians suffered much from both great powers. Ernest Latham writes that on June 26, 1940, Molotov, “acting on the secret annex to the Nazi-Soviet Pact, handed the Romanian minister in Moscow, Gh. Davidescu, a note with a map demanding the return forthwith of Bessarabia and the cession of the northern half of Bucovina, which Russia had never before ruled. On the advice of Germany and Italy, with Hungary and Bulgaria clamoring for their own irredentae, Romania submitted to the Soviet demands and endured the loss of 50,762 sq. km. and 3,776,000 people, more than half of whom, some 2,020,000, were ethnic Romanians. The following August 19 negotiations with Bulgaria began to determine the fate of the Quadrilateral, which was returned to Bulgaria on September 7 with the Treaty of Craiova at a cost to Romania of 7412 sq. km. An exchange of populations ensued with 103,711 Romanians transferred north and 62,272 Bulgarians moved south. The most painful and humiliating loss, however, had occurred a week before in Vienna when Hitler determined that northern Transylvania should be ceded to Hungary. The Vienna Diktat cost Romania 42,243 sq. km and 2,600,000 people about half of whom were ethnic Romanians. 110,000 Romanian refugees fled from

Transylvania to the kingdom adding their care to the other responsibilities of the Romanian social services already buckling under the weight of the 45,000 Polish refugees who had fled from war-torn Poland the previous year. The total Romanian losses in the summer of 1940 were awesome: one-third of her territory, 6,600,000 of her population including 3,000,000 ethnic Romanians, 37% of the arable land, 44% of the forests, 27% of the orchards, 37% of the vineyards, 37% of wheat acreage, 30% of corn acreage, 75% of sunflower acreage, 43% of hemp acreage and 86% of soya acreage.

“September 1940 was arguably the nadir of Romania’s history... [However,] on September 5, 1940, there stepped General Ion Antonescu, called by Carol II from house arrest in the face of widespread rioting and a pending total breakdown of law and orderly governance. The following day he demanded and got the abdication of Carol in all but name, and Mihai for the second time became king of Romania…”

Antonescu formed an alliance with the Legionnaires, whom King Carol had tried to crush. He “dubbed himself Conducător Statului, ‘Leader of the State’ [a title used by the murdered Legionnaire leader Codreanu]: Horia Sima (1907-1993), Commander of the Iron Guard, became Vice-President of the Council of Ministers, and the National Legionary State of Romania was formally established. Antonescu’s alliance with the Iron Guard was one of political expediency, however, not one of ideological conviction; its draconian methods and goals often clashed with his own personal authoritarian agendum. The Legionnaires thus betrayed Antonescu, staging a coup d’état in January of 1941, which, lacking support from the Third Reich of Germany, proved abortive. This enabled Antonescu, with the blessing of Adolf Hitler (1889-1945), to suppress the Iron Guard, thereby consolidating his power as military dictator of Romania.”

However, Hitler, who was preparing Operation Marita, the invasion of Greece, also needed Bulgarian support... The Bulgarians procrastinated, but eventually agreed to join the Tripartite Alliance on the very first day of Operation Marita, March 1, 1941. This left Yugoslavia...

The Yugoslavs were negotiating a treaty in Vienna that was, according to Glenny, “a diplomatic triumph. The only real concession made to the Germans in the secret clauses attached to the published agreement concerned the transport of war materials through Yugoslavia. The Germans were not permitted to send troops across the country; nor did the agreement burden Yugoslavia with any other military obligations towards the Axis powers.

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738 Bujor, op. cit., p. 101, translator’s note.
Although a member of the Tripartite Pact, Yugoslavia would keep her neutrality virtually intact.\textsuperscript{739}

Tragically, however, for the future of Yugoslavia, on March 27 the government was overthrown in a coup led by the head of the Yugoslav air force, General Dušan Simović. The new pro-Allied government renounced the agreement with the Axis powers. In this, writes Glenny, “Simović and his co-conspirators behaved with criminal irresponsibility. The Yugoslavia whose government they seized was no longer the centralized state of King Aleksandar’s time. In August 1939 Cvetković, the Prime Minister, had come to an agreement with Vladko Maček, the man who had assumed the leadership of the Croatian Peasant Party after the murder of Stjepan Radić. The Cvetković-Maček Sporazum (Agreement) had effectively split the country in two, creating an autonomous area of Croatia which included roughly half of Bosnia and Hercegovina. Most Serb opposition parties deeply resented the Sporazum and the authoritarian rule of Prince Regent Pavle. But although the Sporazum posed problems for the future (especially with regard to Bosnia), it was on the whole a radical and successful means of preventing civil war between Serbs and Croats in the troubled international atmosphere of the late 1930s.

“Simović was not in a position to establish control throughout the country unless he could come to an agreement with the Croats, and with Maček, in particular. He secured this agreement, but only under certain conditions. The most important of these was a declaration to stand by the Vienna Agreement, committing Yugoslavia to the Tripartite Pact. Belatedly recognizing that the Yugoslav Army could not possibly resist a German onslaught, Simović and the new government consented to Maček’s condition. So the very reason for organizing a coup in the first place – resistance to the Tripartite Pact – was thrown out by the new government almost as soon as it was formed.

“Yet before Simović persuaded the Croats to back his government, Hitler had undergone a dramatic change of mood. Irritated by the intricacies of Balkan politics, the Führer exploded in fury on receipt of the news from Belgrade. Almost immediately, he tore up the Tripartite Agreement with Yugoslavia, and ordered the Wehrmacht to invade the country. As Maček appeared to be cooperating with Simović, Ribbentrop was persuaded by Mussolini to switch German backing in Croatia to Ante Pavelić and his small gang of fascist thugs, who numbered no more than 360 when they seized control of the government in Zagreb in early April. They were brought to power solely by German guns and Italian politicians, and not by popular sentiment in Croatia, which overwhelmingly backed Maček. The installation of Pavelić’s brutal fascist regime resulted in the single most disastrous

\textsuperscript{739} Glenny, op. cit., pp. 473-474.
episode in Yugoslav history, whose consequences were still being felt in the 1990s...”

Hitler invaded on April 6. Deserted by Pavić’s Croats, the Serbian resistance was soon crushed... The surrender was so rapid that many Serbian units escaped, the so-called chetniks, and formed an anti-Nazi resistance movement led by Draža Mikhailović that was loyal to Prince Pavle’s government-in-exile in London.

The Bulgarians occupied Yugoslav Macedonia, the Hungarians – Vojvodina, the Italians – Kosovo, and the Croatian Ustaše – much of Bosnia. Many bishops, priests and laity were killed in all these occupied regions. The Germans arrested Patriarch Gabriel and Bishop Nicholas Velimirovich; but although the two hierarchs were to spend the whole war in prisons and concentration camps (the last one was Dachau), they refused the Nazis’ suggestion that they collaborate with them.

In neighbouring Czechoslovakia Bishop Gorazd of Moravia-Silesia, after being cut off from the Serbian Patriarchate, to which he was canonically subject, turned to ROCOR’s Metropolitan Seraphim (Lyade) in Berlin, asking him to take his diocese under his protection. Metropolitan Seraphim agreed, and gave him holy chrism and antimensia. However, in September, 1942 “after being tortured, he was shot. The Orthodox Church in Bohemia and Moravia was shut down and its priests sent to camps in Germany.

But by far the worst atrocities were committed against the Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia by the Ustaše and the Catholic Church. On April 28, 1941, the Catholic Archbishop Stepinac of Zagreb issued an appeal rapturously praising the Ustaše regime and calling on all Catholic priests to collaborate with it. Three days before, the government had issued a series of decrees banning the Cyrillic script, closing all Orthodox schools, imposing a special tax on the patriarchate, forcing all Serbs to wear coloured armbands with the letter “P” (for Pravoslovac – Orthodox) and banning the use of the term “Serbian Orthodox religion”. On June 22 the minister of education said that one third of the Serbs in Croatia would be expelled, one third killed and one third converted to Catholicism. In July the arrests of Serbs began. By the

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741 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 20. Once they were asked whether they would call on the Serbian people to rise up against the partisan communists. They replied: “The Serbian Church is not fighting against the communists. The Serbian Church is fighting against the atheists and the atheist ideology, against the atheists on the right and on the left, that is, against the German atheism from outside and our atheism from within and with every other atheism. But the partisans are our lost and deceived children and brothers. When the thunders of military conflict die down, each of them will return to his own peaceful work.”
742 Monk Gorazd, "Sviashchenomuchenik Gorazd" (Hieromartyr Gorazd), Pravoslavnaja Rus' (Orthodox Russia), № 12 (1465), June 15/28, 1992.
autumn over 15,000 Serbs had passed through the camps, and by 1943 there were 300,000 Serbia refugees from Croatia in Serbia.

On December 4, the Croatians passed a law ordering all Church feasts to be celebrated according to the new calendar. The Russian émigrés were informed of this, and were threatened with punishment if they did not obey. Metropolitan Anastasy, however, immediately petitioned for an exception to be made for the Russian parishes, and with the help of the German Evangelical Bishop Hackel, on March 26, 1942, this request was granted. However, no Serb was allowed to visit the émigré services.743

Joachim Wertz writes: "In many villages the massacres followed a certain pattern. The Ustashi would arrive and assemble all the Serbs. They would then order them to convert to Catholicism. Those who refused, as the majority did, were told to assemble in their local Orthodox parish church. They would then lock them in the church and set it ablaze. In this manner many Orthodox men, women and children perished in scores of Serbian settlements."744

According to Archbishop Stepinac’s report to the Pope on May 8, 1944, 240,000 Serbs apostasised to Catholicism. However, many of these returned to Orthodoxy after the war. Hundreds of churches were destroyed or desecrated, and vast amounts of property were confiscated from the Orthodox Serbs. According to German Nazi figures, about 750,000 Orthodox Serbs were killed, including five bishops and 177 other clergy.745 200,000 of these perished in the notorious camp of Jasenovac alone in conditions of appalling brutality, 40,000 of them on the orders of the Franciscan Father Filipovich. Bishop Nicholas Velimirovich inscribed these martyrs into the Church calendar for August 31: “The 700,000 who suffered for the Orthodox faith at the hands of the Roman crusaders and Ustashi during the time of the Second World War. These are the New Serbian Martyrs.”746

743 M.V. Shkarovsky; in Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 35.
745 The Germans knew what was going on. Thus on February 17, 1942 Heindrich, Hitler’s right-hand man in his plan for the destruction of the Jews, wrote to Himmler: “The number of Slavs destroyed by the Croats by the most sadistic methods has reached 300,000… If the Serbs living in Croatia accept Catholicism they are allowed to live without persecution.” (Karlheinz Deschner, With God and Fuhrer, p. 282; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 38).
746 However, more recent scholarship gives generally lower figures for those killed. The Simon Wiesenthal Center calculated that 600,000 Serbs, 30,000 Jews and 29,000 Gipsies were killed (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 21). Mark Almond writes: "Probably about 325,000 Serbs were killed by the Ustasha in the NDH [Independent State of Croatia, which included Bosnia], including about 60,000 at Jasenovac alone. In other words about one in every six Serbs in Pavelic's realm was killed." (Almond, Europe's Backyard War, London: Mandarin, 1994, p. 137. See also Aleksa Djilas, "The Yugoslav Tragedy", Prospect, October, 1995, p. 39). Again, the Serb scholar Bogoljub Kocovic writes that 487,000 Serbs were killed during World War II altogether, as opposed to 207,000 Croats, 86,000 Muslims and 234,000 others; while the Croatian scholar Vladimir Zerjavic gives: 530,000 Serbs, 192,000 Croats, 103,000 Muslims and 202,000 others (Kocovic, Zrtve drugog svetskog rata u Jugoslaviji, London: Libra Books, 1985, pp.
One of those martyred in Jasenovac was an old man called Vukashin. He was standing “in an aura of peace and joy, softly praying to Christ. The executioner was greatly angered by the old man’s peacefulness and saintly composure, and he ordered that he be dragged to the place of execution.

“St. Vukashin was given the usual charge, ‘Accept the Pope or die a most terrible death’.

“The old man signed himself with the honourable Cross and peacefully intoned, ‘Just do your job, my son’.

“The executioner trembled with anger. He brutally slashed off one of the saint’s ears, repeating his charge. The Holy Martyr again peacefully replied, ‘Just continue to do your job, my son.’ And so the irrational persecutor continued: first the other ear, then the nose, and the fingers one by one. Like a new James of Persia, St. Vukashin was ‘pruned as a sacred grapevine of God.’ With each grisly and bloody cut, the noble Vukashin, filled with peace and joy by the Holy Spirit, calmly replied, ‘Just continue to do your job, my son.’

“At length, the vicious torturer gouged out the eyes of the martyr, and the saint once more replied, ‘Just continue to do your job, my son.’ With that, the executioner flew into a rage and slew the holy martyr. Almost immediately, the executioner lost his mind and went completely mad.”

In February, 1942, Dr. Privislav Grisogno, a Croatian Catholic member of the former Yugoslav cabinet, wrote in protest to Archbishop Stepinac: “I am writing to you as a man to a man, as a Christian to a Christian. I have been meaning to do this for months hoping that the dreadful news from Croatia would cease so that I could collect my thoughts and write to you in peace.

“For the last ten months Serbs have been killed and destroyed in Croatia in the most ruthless manner and the value of their property that has been destroyed reaches billions. Blushes of shame and anger cover the faces of every honest Croat.

“The slaughter of Serbs began from the very first day of the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia (Gospic, Gudovan, Bosanska Krajina, etc.) and has continued relentlessly to this very day. The horror is not only in the killing. The killing includes everybody: old men, women and children. With accompanying barbaric torture. These innocent Serbs have been impaled, fire has been lit on their bare chest, they have been roasted alive, burned in their homes and churches while still living, covered with boiling water, then their

102, 174, 182; Zerjavic, Gubici stanovnistva Jugoslavije u drugom svjetskom ratu, Zagreb: Jugoslavensko Viktimolosko Drustvo, 1989, pp. 61, 82).

skin was peeled off, salt poured into their wounds, their eyes have been pulled out, their ears, noses and tongues cut off, the priests have had their beards and moustaches torn off from their skulls, their sex organs severed and put into their mouths, they have been tied to trucks and then dragged along the ground, nails have been pressed into their heads, their heads nailed to the floor, they have been thrown alive into wells and over cliffs, and grenades thrown after them, their heads smashed against walls, their backs broken against rocks and tree stumps, and many other horrible tortures were perpetrated, such as normal people can hardly imagine.

“Their rivers Sava, Drav, the Danube and their tributaries have carried thousands and thousands of their corpses. Dead bodies have been found with the inscription: ‘direction Belgrade – traveling to King Peter’. In a boat which was found on the Sava river there was a heap of children’s heads with the head of a woman (which could have been a head of one of the mothers of the children) with the inscription: ‘Meat for the Jovanova Market in Belgrade’.

“Horrifying is the case of Mileva Bozinic from Stanbandza whose child was removed from her womb. There was also the case of the roasted heads in Bosnia, the vessels full of Serbian blood, the cases of Serbs being forced to drink the warm blood of their slaughtered kin. Countless women, girls and children in front of their mothers were raped or else sent off to Ustashi camps to serve the Ustashi; rapes even took place on the altars of Orthodox churches. In the Petrinje county a son was forced to rape his own mother. The slaughter of the Serbs in the Glina Orthodox church and the murder of Serbs on the altar of the Kladusa church is without precedent in history. There are detailed and original accounts of all these horrors. Even the Germans and Italians were astounded by these crimes. They photographed a large number of cases of such slaughter. The Germans are saying that the Croatians did this also during the Thirty Years War and that is why there has been a saying in Germany since then: ‘God save us from plague, hunger and Croats.’

“The Srem Germans despise us because of this and behave in a more humane fashion with the Serbs. The Italians photographed a vessel with 3.5 kilograms of Serbian eyes, as well as a Croat who wore a necklace strung with Serbian eyes, and another one who came to Dubrovnik with a belt on which severed Serbian tongues were hanging!

“The horrors of the camps in which thousands of Serbs were killed or were left to die from exposure, hunger and cold weather, are too terrible to mention. The Germans have been talking about a camp in Lika where there were thousands of Serbs; but when the Germans got there they found the camp empty, drenched in blood and bloody clothing. In that camp it has been said a Serbian bishop also lost his life. Thousands upon thousands of Serbs in the camp of Jasenovac are still being tortured as they are spending fierce winter in wooden Gypsy shacks with no straw or covering and with a ration
of two potatoes per day. In the history of Europe there have been no similar cases. One would have to go to Asia at the time of Tamerlane, or Genghis-Khan, or to Africa, to the countries of their bloodthirsty rulers to come upon similar situations. These events have shamed the name of Croatia for centuries to come. Nothing can absolve us fully from this ever again. We will not be able to tell even the last wretched man in the Balkans about our thousand year old Croatian culture, because even the Gypsies never perpetrated such cruelties. Why am I writing this to you, when you are not a political personage and cannot bear responsibility for all this. Here is why: in all these unprecedented barbarian crimes which are more than Godless, our Catholic church participated in two ways. A large number of clergy, priests, friars and organized Catholic youth took an active part in all this. It has also happened that Catholic priests became camp guards and Ustashi accomplices and so approved of the torture and slaughter of Christians. A Catholic priest even slit personally slaughtered an Orthodox clergyman. They could not have done all this without the permission of their bishops, and if they did, they would have had to lose their jobs and be taken to court. Since this did not happen, it means that their bishops granted them permission.

“Secondly, the Catholic Church made us of all this to convert the surviving Serbs. And while the soil was still steaming from the innocent victims’ blood, while groans shuddered from the chests of the surviving victims, the priests, friars, nuns carried in one hand the Ustashi daggers and in the other their prayer books and rosaries. The whole of Srem is inundated with leaflets written by Bishop Aksamovic and printed in his printing shop in Djakovo, calling upon Serbs to save their lives and property by converting to Catholicism. It was as if our church wanted to show that it could destroy souls just as the Ustashi authorities destroy bodies. It is an even greater blot on the Catholic church, since at the same time many Orthodox churches and all the Orthodox monasteries have been confiscated, their property plundered as well as many historical treasures. Even the Patriarchal church in Sremski Karlovci has not been spared. All this violence against conscience and the spirit has brought even greater disgrace to the Croat nation and name...

“I write this to save my soul and leave it to you (Archbishop Stepinac) to find a way to save your soul.”748

Although some have claimed that Stepinac tried to restrain the murderers, there can be no doubt about his fanatical hatred of Orthodoxy. Thus on March 27 and 28, 1941, he wrote in his diary: “The spirit of Byzantium – that is, of the

Eastern Orthodox Church – is something so terrible that only the Omnipotent and Omniscient God could tolerate it… The Croats and the Serbs are from two different worlds, two different poles; without a miracle of God they will never find a common language. The schism of the Eastern Orthodox Church is the greatest curse in Europe, perhaps even worse than Protestantism.”

In 1946 Stepinac was tried by the communist government, found guilty of treason to the State and the murder of Serbs, and imprisoned for five years. On coming out of prison he was awarded a cardinal’s hat by the Vatican, and is now a candidate for canonization!…

Another creation of the Ustashi was the so-called “Croatian Orthodox Church”. On June 8, 1942, the Romanian Patriarch Nicodemus raised ROCOR’s Archbishop Hermogen (Maximov) to the rank of metropolitan of this uncanonical church, whose main task was to “Croatize” the Serbs. It enjoyed the full support of the Croatian authorities, but was rejected by the Serbian Church and by ROCOR under Metropolitan Anastasy, who banned Hermogen. However, the Germans did not allow this ban to be published. Moreover, on July 27 the Ecumenical Patriarch, followed by most of the Orthodox Churches in the German orbit, recognized the Croat Church. But believers did not go to it. Metropolitan Hermogenes was killed by Tito’s partisans in July, 1945.

The Greeks, meanwhile, having been conquered by the Germans in April, 1941, saw their country divided between the Bulgarians (in the north), the Germans (in the centre, Athens and Salonika) and the Italians (in the rest of the country). Hunger and disease stalked the land – hundreds of thousands died. Many priests perished at the hands of the German, Italian and Bulgarian forces during the occupation of 1941-1944.

The situation was particularly bad in the Bulgarian zone, where the Bulgarians wanted revenge for their defeats in 1913 and 1918. “In September 1941,” writes R.J. Crampton, “the local Greek population staged a rising, and committed atrocities against Bulgarians; the latter took fearsome revenge in an effort, some believe, to drive the Greeks out of the region.”

“Hitler had sanctioned Bulgaria’s occupation of Western Thrace, not its annexation. The Bulgarians disregarded this fine point. They had just emerged as the most powerful country in the Balkans and saw that possession was nine-tenths of the law. The Bulgarian administration in western Thrace

750 However, according to another version, he was arrested and condemned together with the Catholic Cardinal Stepinač. But while Stepinač received sixteen years in prison, being released after only two years, Metropolitan Hermogen was executed (Ilya Goriachev, in Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 89-90).
was arguably one of the harshest occupational regimes in all Europe. Up to 100,000 Greeks were expelled from the region, and many thousands imprisoned in the island of Thasos. The smallest manifestation of Greek culture was persecuted. The Bulgarians also seized Greek-owned land and distributed it to tens of thousands of Bulgarian peasant colonists…”

In whatever lands the Germans occupied or dominated, the Jews – there were one and a half million in the Balkans – were rounded up and deported. Some local populations – the Ustaše in Croatia, and the Legionaries in Romania – did not need encouraging, and were even more savage than the Nazis. In Bulgaria and Greece, church leaders were found who did their best to protect the Jews. Of particular note are the actions of Tsar Boris of Bulgaria. Professor Ya.Ya. Etinger writes: “Hitler demanded from his ally Bulgaria the despatch of all the Jews of Bulgaria, Macedonia and Thrace to Auschwitz – about 48,000 people were subject to deportation. The head of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Stefan of Sophia, on learning from the chief rabbi Asher Khamanel, the president of the capital’s Jewish community, that ‘the Commissariat for Jewish questions’ had already prepared the first lists of eminent Jews subject to deportation to Hitler’s death camps, openly declared: ‘I will conceal all the Jews in the churches and monasteries, but I will not hand them over for reprisals.’ He personally demanded that Prime-Minister Filov revoke the arrests of Jews in a series of cities in the country. The metropolitan also sent a letter to Tsar Boris, in which he wrote: ‘Let us not commit abominations, for which our good-hearted people will sometime have to feel shame, and perhaps other misfortunes.’ The metropolitan promised that he himself would remain under house arrest until the arrested Jews were released. For this he was accused by the local fascist organizations of ‘betrayal of the race and treachery’. Rabbi Khamanel, whom the police were hunting, was hidden by the metropolitan in his own podvorie. On May 24, the day of the national feast of SS. Cyril and Methodius, thousands of people came out onto the streets of the capital declaring that they would not tolerate the murder of their fellow citizens. Another highly placed clergyman, Metropolitan Cyril of Plovdiv, later patriarch of Bulgaria, also sent an epistle to the tsar. In his letter he demanded that the tsar immediately revoke the barbaric order. Otherwise, declared the metropolitan, he would not answer for the actions of the people and clergy. According to the reminiscences of eye-witnesses, he warned the local police authorities that he had said to the Jews of one of the poorest quarters of the city: ‘I present you my house. Let us see whether they will be able to get you out of there.’ And in a letter to Filov he said that he would go with a cross in his hands to the death camp in Poland ahead of the convoys with the Jews. These many protest actions attained their goal and the deportation was stopped. Tsar Boris III invited the German consul, A. Bickerle, and categorically declared: ‘The Jews of my country are its subjects and every encroachment on their freedom will be perceived by us as an insult to the Bulgarians.’ Prime Minister B. Filov wrote

752 Glenny, op. cit., p. 482.
in his diary: ‘His Majesty completely revoked the measures taken against the Jews.’ On returning from Hitler’s head-quarters on August 28, 1943, Tsar Boris very soon died. There are grounds for supposing that he was killed by the Hitlerites for refusing to carry out the will of the Fuhrer.”

Romanian anti-semitism brought them voluntarily into the Axis camp. The official church even declared a kind of apocalyptic crusade against “Judaeo-Bolshevism”. Thus the new-calendarist metropolitan of Moldavia declared that God had “had mercy on them [the inhabitants of the Soviet-occupied provinces] and sent his archangels on earth: Hitler, Antonescu and [Finland’s] Mannerheim, and they headed their armies with the sign of the cross on their chests and in their hearts a war against the Great Dragon, red as fire, and they defeated him, chased him in chains, and the synagogue of Satan was ruined and scattered in the four directions of the earth and in their place they erected a sacred altar to the God of peace.”

Patriarch Nicodemus of Romania showed that the anti-semitic religiosity of the Iron Guard had penetrated deep into his church’s consciousness: “God has shown to the leader of our country the path toward a sacred and redeeming alliance with the German nation and sent the united armies to the Divine Crusade against destructive Bolshevism... the Bolshevist Dragon... has found here also villainous souls ready to serve him. Let us bless God that these companions of Satan have been found mostly among the sons of the aliens [the Jews], among the nation that had brought damnation upon itself and its sons, since it had crucified the Son of God. If by their side there had also been some Romanian outcasts, then their blood was certainly not pure Romanian blood, yet mixed with damned blood. These servants of the Devil and Bolshevism, seeing that their master, the monster called Bolshevist Russia, will soon be destroyed, are now trying to help him... they disseminate among our people all sorts of bad new words...”

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753 Etinger, Spasennie v Khloikoste (The Saved in the Holocaust); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 52-53.
**THE NAZIS INVADE RUSSIA**

Hitler and Stalin shared the same complete disregard for moral norms, the same contempt for human life and liberty, the same disregard of public opinion, even in their own countries. Paradoxically, it may have been this closeness in evil that made Stalin refuse to believe the mountain of evidence that Hitler was going to invade Russia in 1941. It was as if he felt he could trust Hitler because he was so close to him in character, whereas his distrust of others, even his own followers, bordered on the psychotic...

But there was also an important difference in character between the two men. Stalin, for all his ruthlessness, was cautious and calculating. But Hitler was a megalomaniac who scorned calculation, putting all his trust in sheer force of will and his own destiny. Stalin thought that Hitler, still occupied as he was in mopping up the West, would not dare to open up a second front against Russia. He knew Hitler’s desire for land in the east, and he knew the intelligence reports pouring in that said that Hitler was massing his troops in Poland. But he thought the intelligence reports were fabricated by western agents – Hitler could not be such a fool. But he was wrong. It was he, Stalin, who was shown to be a fool...

The former GRU agent Victor Suvorov has presented a controversial but plausible thesis: that Stalin was in fact planning to attack Hitler, but Hitler “beat him to the punch” in June, 1941. This thesis explains why Stalin’s army, which was the largest army in the world and very well equipped, collapsed so spectacularly. Suvorov argues that the main reason is that Stalin’s army was deployed for an offensive, not a defensive war, and was therefore caught drastically unprepared to resist the German onslaught.

Following Suvorov, Mark Solonin demonstrates that Stalin was in fact preparing a large-scale invasion of Europe, and that he changed the date twice. The initial plan was set for the beginning of the summer of 1942, but later, under the influence of the events in the Balkans and the increasing flow of intelligence information concerning the deployment of the Wehrmacht in Poland, Stalin decided to start the operation in July-August of 1941. And without knowing that fact, Hitler made an anticipatory strike on June 22 - only a few weeks in advance of Stalin.

Whatever the truth about that, the holy Orthodoxy elders had prophesied both the war and its outcome. Thus in 1911 Elder Aristocles of Moscow said: “You will hear that the Germans are rattling their sabres on the borders of Russia... Only don’t rejoice yet. Many Russians will think that the Germans will save Russia from the Bolshevick power, but it will not be so. True, the

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756 Professor David Reynolds, in the BBC film, “World War Two\; 1941 and the Man of Steel”.
Germans will enter Russia and will do much, but they will depart, for the
time of salvation will not be yet. That will be later, later... Germany will
suffer her punishment in her own land. She will be divided...”758 Again, in
1940 the holy Catacomb Elder Theodosius (Kashin) of Minvody said: “There’s
going to be a war, such a terrible war, like the Terrible Judgement: people will
perish, they have departed from the Lord, they have forgotten God, and the
wind of war will carry them away like ashes, and there will be no sign of
them. But if anyone will call on God, the Lord will save him from trouble.”759

The Nazis invaded on June 22, the feast of All Saints of Russia. Their
reasons were: Hitler’s long-term goal of Lebensraum in the East, the
acquisition both of land (for purposes of German colonization) and natural
resources (for military purposes); his hatred of the “Judaeo-Bolsheviks”; and
his determination, as noted above, not to allow Stalin to dominate the
Balkans. The invasion gave renewed impetus to that movement of Russian
patriotism in a Soviet mould that Stalin had been encouraging since 1934.
Thus after he had recovered from the shock of the invasion, Stalin spoke to
the people by radio, calling them by the traditional Orthodox title of “brothers
and sisters”. Again, “Vyacheslav Molotov, the Foreign Minister, gave a radio
address in which he spoke of the impending ‘patriotic war for homeland,
honour and freedom’. The next day the main Soviet army newspaper,
Krasnaia Zvezda, referred to it as a ‘holy war’. Communism was conspicuously
absent from Soviet propaganda in the war. It was fought in the name of
Russia, of the ‘family of peoples’ in the Soviet Union, of Pan-Slav
brotherhood, or in the name of Stalin, but never in the name of the communist
system.”760

Such patriotic appeals were necessary because, as Richard Overy writes,
“by 1942 it was evident that the Communist Party alone could not raise the
energies of the people for a struggle of this depth and intensity. The war with
Germany was not like the war against the kulaks, or the war for greater
production in the 1930s, although the almost continuous state of popular
mobilization which these campaigns produced in some ways prepared the
population to respond to emergency and improvisation. During 1942 the war
was presented as a war to save historic Russia, a nationalist war of revenge
against a monstrous, almost mythical enemy. The words ‘Soviet Union’ and
‘Communism’ appeared less and less frequently in official publications. The
words ‘Russia’ and ‘Motherland’ took their place. The ‘Internationale’, the
anthem of the international socialist movement played on state occasions, was
replaced with a new nationalist anthem. The habits of military egalitarianism
ingrained in the Red Army were swept aside. New medals were struck

758 Quoted in Fomin, Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem (Russia before the Second Coming), Sergiev
759 Chernov, Tserkov’ Katakombnaia na Zemle Rossijskoj (The Catacomb Church in the Russian
Land), MS, Woking, 1980.
commemorating the military heroes of Russia’s past; the Tsarist Nevsky Order was revived but could be won only by officers. Aleksandr Nevsky, the Muscovite prince who drove back the Teutonic Knights in the thirteenth century, was a singularly apt parallel. In 1938 Stalin had ordered Sergei Eisenstein to produce a film on Nevsky. He interfered with the script to make the message clear about the German threat (and the virtues of authoritarianism). In 1939 the film was withdrawn following the Nazi-Soviet pact, but in 1942 it again became essential viewing.”  

However, there was no genuine revival of Russian patriotism. Nor could there be, in spite of the modern peddling of the myth of “the Great Fatherland War”. Hastings writes that “the ‘Great Patriotic War’ Stalin had declared became a reality that accomplished more for the cohesion and motivation of his peoples than any other event since the 1917 Revolution.”  

But this statement can be accepted only if the patriotism referred to is acknowledged as Soviet, not Russian. For, as Anton Kuznetsov writes, “from the very beginning the Bolsheviks showed themselves to be an anti-Russian power, for which the concepts of Homeland, Fatherland, honour and duty do not exist; in whom the holy things of the Russian people elicit hatred; which replaced the word ‘Russia’ with the word ‘Internationale’, and the Russian flag with the red banner; which even in its national composition was not Russian: it was dominated by Jews (they constituted a huge percentage, and at first it seemed as if it was a question of a purely ‘Jewish power’) and foreigners.

“During the 24 years of its domination the Bolshevik (‘Soviet’) power had had enormous successes in the annihilation of historical Russia. All classes were wiped out one by one: the nobility, the merchants, the peasantry, the clergy and the educated class (including all the Russian officers), and all the state institutions of what had been Russia were destroyed: the army, the police, the courts, local administration, charitable institutions, etc. A systematic annihilation of Russian culture was carried out – churches were blown up, museums were robbed, towns and streets were renamed, Russian family and everyday traditions were exterminated, Russian sciences and schools were liquidated, the whole of Russian history was blotted out and spat upon. In the place of the annihilated Russian element a red and Soviet element was created, beginning with the Red army and the Red professors and ending with Soviet orthography and Soviet sport. Our earthly Fatherland, Russia, was in fact destroyed, by terror she was transformed into the Sovdeopia, which was a complete denial of Russia – it was anti-Russia. A Russian person has no right to forget that a consistent denial of Russian statehood is that on which the Soviet regime stood and on which it prided itself with emphasis.

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762 Hastings, op. it., pp. 177-178.
“One has no right to call such a regime a national power. It must be defined as an anti-national, occupying power, the overthrow of which every honourable patriot can only welcome.” 763

As the Bolsheviks retreated, “the NKVD carried out a programme of liquidation of all the prisoners sitting in their jails. In the huge Lukyanov prison in Kiev thousands were shot in their cells. But in Stavropol they still had time to take the ‘contras’, including several old priests and monks, out of the city. They were led out onto the railway line from Kislovodsk to Moscow. At the small station of Mashuk, where the poet Lermontov had his duel, the wagons containing the prisoners were uncoupled from the trains and shunted into a siding at Kamenolomnya. Then the priests and monks were taken out with their hands bound and their eyes covered. In groups of five they were led to the edge of a sheer cliff, and thrust over the edge. Then the bodies were lifted up with hooks and covered with crushed stone and sand before a tractor levelled the area for the next wagon-full…” 764

“There is a myth that the only time Stalin ceased the war against his own people was during 1941 and 1942; but during that period, 994,000 servicemen were condemned, and 157,000 shot, more than fifteen divisions…” 765

The Germans were in general greeted with ecstatic joy. Thus Solzhenitsyn writes: “Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia gave the Germans a jubilant welcome. Belorussia, the Western Ukraine, and the first occupied Russian territories followed suit. But the mood of the people was demonstrated most graphically of all by the Red Army: before the eyes of the whole world it retreated along a 2,000-kilometre front, on foot, but every bit as fast as motorized units. Nothing could possibly be more convincing than the way these men, soldiers in their prime, voted with their feet. Numerical superiority was entirely with the Red Army, they had excellent artillery and a strong tank force, yet back they rolled, a rout without compare, unprecedented in the annals of Russian and world history. In the first few months some three million officers and men had fallen into enemy hands!

“That is what the popular mood was like – the mood of peoples some of whom had lived through twenty-four years of communism and others but a single year. For them the whole point of this latest war was to cast off the scourge of communism. Naturally enough, each people was primarily bent not on resolving any European problem but on its own national task – liberation from communism…” 766

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764 Chernov, op. cit.
765 Montefiore, Stalin, p. 401.
THE RUSSIAN CHURCH DURING THE WAR

By 1939 there were only four bishops, all sergianists, at liberty, and only a tiny handful of Orthodox churches open, in the whole of the country. Stalin had silenced his greatest enemy, the Church of Christ, and the Russian people were now apparently defenceless against the most powerful and antichristian state in human history…

However, the Word of God is not bound, and from 1941, thanks in part to the advance of the Germans deep into Russia, Orthodoxy experienced a miraculous revival. Thus “in the years of the war,” writes Anatoly Krasikov, “with the agreement of the German occupying authorities, 7547 Orthodox churches were opened (as against 1270 opened in 1944-1947 with the permission of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church).”

Even in fully Sovietized regions such as Pskov and the Eastern Ukraine, 95% of the population, according to German reports, flooded into the newly-opened churches.

In the Baltic region, the Germans were quite happy to deal with the MP’s exarch, Metropolitan Sergius (Voskresensky), who quickly showed his loyalty to them. He immediately proceeded to bless the formation of an “Orthodox mission in the liberated regions of Russia”, otherwise known as the “Pskov Orthodox Mission”, whose official aim was the restoration of church life “destroyed by Soviet power”. This mission included within its jurisdiction parts of the Leningrad and Kalinin regions, as well as the Pskov and Novgorod regions, with a population of about two million people. By 1944 it had 200 parishes and 175 priests. Lectures were read on Pskov radio, help was given to Soviet prisoners of war, and a children’s home was created in a church in Pskov.

The mission, on the insistence of Metropolitan Sergius (who was, after all, an NKVD agent), remained subject to the Leningrad diocese under Metropolitan Alexis (Simansky), whose name was commemorated in each service. However, while remaining formally within the MP, Metropolitan Sergius (Voskresensky) carried out the commands of the Germans. For example, in the summer of 1943 he ordered that a thanksgiving service with the participation of all the clergy should take place in Pskov to mark the Germans’ handing back of the land into the hands of the peasantry.

The True Orthodox Church supported neither the Soviets nor the Germans. On the one hand, the elders did not allow their spiritual children to fight in

768 In Latvia, Metropolitan Augustine asked the Germans to allow him to re-establish the Latvian Church within the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. But they refused…
the Red Army, and some Catacomb Christians were martyred for their refusal to do so. On the other hand, they were also wary of the Germans. However, they did take advantage of the possibility granted by the Germans of freedom of worship. Thus the Kiev-Caves Lavra was reopened, and Catacomb Schema-Archbishop Anthony (Abashidze) returned to it with his monks, staying there until his death in 1942. Also in Kiev, Archimandrite Michael (Kostyuk), together with Schema-Abbess Michaela (Shelkina), directed a large community of catacomb monks and nuns. They were even able to build an above-ground church with the permission of the Germans. In the German-occupied north-west, however, they remained underground.

M.V. Shkarovsky writes that “the activity of the True Orthodox Christians seriously worried the higher leadership of the country. It received discouraging reports about a significant rise in the influence of the catacomb movement in the first years of the war. Thus the July, 1943 special communication of the head of the NKVD Administration in Penza province spoke of the activity of more than 20 illegal and semi-illegal groups that arranged prayers in private flats. In some region there were hundreds of these groups. In the report of the president of the Council for the affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church, G. Karpov, to V. Molotov dated October 5, 1944, it was emphasised: ‘In the provinces with an insignificant number of functioning churches, and in the regions where there are no churches, a massive spreading of group worship in the homes of believers or in the open air has been noticed... Moreover, in these cases, believers invite clergy who are not registered to carry out the rite... A significant part of the activists of these unregistered church groups, together with their clergy, are hostile to the legal patriarchal church, condemning the latter for its loyal relationship to Soviet power and for its patriotic stance…”

Chernov, op. cit. Soldatov (op. cit.) writes: “In the Catacomb Church a tradition has been preserved about Schema-Monk Leontius (Mymrikov), who blessed True Orthodox Christians to go to war against the communists”.

Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 32.


Shkarovsky, Rosskaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ pri Staline i Khruscheve (The Russian Orthodox Church under Stalin and Khruschev), Moscow, 2005, pp. 250-251.
On July 7, 1944, as the Red Army returned to the occupied territories, Beria wrote to Stalin asking permission for the deportation of 1,673 Catacomb Christians from the Ryazan, Voronezh and Orel regions to Siberia. As Bishop Irinarchus of Tula and Briansk writes: “In 1943, according to the personal order of Stalin, several hundred Catacomb Orthodox Christians were removed from Tula and Ryazan regions and sent to Siberia. Many of them perished, but not all, glory to God. In Tula region they have been preserved to this day [2004]. The Lord entrusted them to me, and with God’s help I am spiritually caring for them... Before the war only a few Catacomb priests were surviving in Briansk region. But when the region was occupied by the Germans, several hundred churches were opened in it, where they commemorated, not Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) as first hierarch, but Metropolitan Anastasy, the head of ROCOR. In Briansk region the Catacomb Christians were served by Bishop Stefan (Sevbo). Under the pressure of the red army Bishop Stefan and many clergy and laity emigrated to Belorussia, and then to Germany. Vladyka Stefan later ruled the Viennese diocese of ROCOR, and died in 1965.”

How did ROCOR respond to the new situation in Russia? It was natural for ROCOR to welcome the resurrection of Orthodoxy in the German-occupied territories. Thus in his paschal epistle for 1942 Metropolitan Anastasy wrote: “The day that they (the Russian people) expected has come, and it is now truly rising from the dead in those places where the courageous German sword has succeeded in severing its fetters... Both ancient Kiev, and much-suffering Smolensk and Pskov are radiantly celebrating their deliverance as if from the depths of hell. The liberated part of the Russian people everywhere has already begun to chant: ‘Christ is risen!’”

However, the Germans did not want was the resurrection of the Great Russian people through the Church, and they hindered ROCOR’s attempt to send priests into the occupied territories. Moreover, as the war progressed and the behaviour of the Germans became steadily crueler, the attitude of the Russian Orthodox to them changed. As Metropolitan Anastasy wrote in October, 1945, in response to Patriarch Alexis’ charge that ROCOR sympathised with the Nazis: “… The Patriarch is not right to declare that ‘the leaders of the ecclesiastical life of the Russian emigration’ performed public prayers for the victories of Hitler’. The Hierarchical Synod never prescribed such prayers and even forbade them, demanding that Russian people prayed at that time only for the salvation of Russia. Of course, it is impossible to conceal the now well-known fact that, exhausted by the hopelessness of their

774 He described the Catacomb Christians as “leading a parasitical way of life, not paying taxes, refusing to fulfil their obligations and service, and forbidding their children to go to school.” (I.F. Bugayem, “Varvar skaia aktsia” (A Barbaric Action), Oteches tvo (Fatherland), № 3, 1992, pp. 53-73; text in Shkvarevsky, Iosiflyanstvo, op. cit., pp. 262-263).
775 “Interviu s episkopom Irinarkhom Tul’skim i Brianskim (RPATs)” (Interview with Bishop Irinarch of Tula and Briansk (ROAC), Verilograd, № 440, 10 March, 2004).
776 Tserkovnaiia Zhizni’ (Church Life), 1942, № 4; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 41.
situation and reduced almost to despair by the terror reigning in Russia, Russian people both abroad and in Russia itself placed hopes on Hitler, who declared an irreconcilable war against communism (as is well-known, this is the explanation for the mass surrender of the Russian armies into captivity at the beginning of the war), but when it became evident that he was in fact striving to conquer Ukraine, Crimea and the Caucasus and other rich regions of Russia, and that he not only despised the Russian people, but was even striving to annihilate it, and that in accordance with his command our prisoners had been starved to death, and that the German army during its retreat had burned and destroyed to their foundations Russian cities and villages on their path, and had killed or led away their population, and had condemned hundreds of thousands of Jews with women and children to death, forcing them to dig graves for themselves, then the hearts of all reasonable people – except those who ‘wanted to be deceived’ – turned against him...”

G.M. Soldatov writes: “It was suggested to the metropolitan [by the Germans] that he issue an appeal to the Russian people calling on them to cooperate with the German army, which was going on a crusade to liberate Russia from the Bolsheviks. If he were to refuse to make the address, Vladyka was threatened with internment. However, the metropolitan refused, saying that German policy and the purpose of the crusade was unclear to him. In 1945 his Holiness Patriarch Gabriel of Serbia witnessed to Metropolitan Anastasy’s loyalty to Serbia and the Germans’ distrust of him...

“Referring to documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other departments of the German government, the historian M.V. Shkarovsky pointed out that Metropolitan Anastasy and the clergy of ROCOR were trying to go to Russia to begin organizing missionary and charitable work there, but this activity did not correspond to the plans of Germany, which wanted to see Russia weak and divided in the future.”

Nevertheless, of the two alternatives – the Germans or the Soviets – ROCOR quite understandably considered the latter the more dangerous enemy. For Soviet power had been anathematized at the Russian Local Council in 1918, and had subjected the Russian Church to a persecution that was unprecedented in the history of Christianity. Thus in November, 1944 Metropolitan Anastasy addressed the Russian Liberation Movement as follows: “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit! From ancient times there has existed such a custom in the Russian land;
before undertaking any good work, especially a collective work, they used to ask the blessing of God on it. And you have gathered here, dear brothers and fellow-countrymen, you workers and inspirer of the Russian national movement, thereby demonstrating the historical link of the great work of the liberation of Russia with the actions of our fathers and great-grandfathers...

We are now all united by one feeling – a feeling of deadly irreconcilability with the Bolshevik evil and a flaming desire to extirpate it on the Russian land. For we know that as long as it reigns there, no rational human life is possible, no spiritual movement forward; as long as this evil threatens both our fatherland and the whole of Europe, death and destruction will be established everywhere. And insofar as you, dear brothers and sisters, are striving to crush this terrible evil… you are doing a truly patriotic, even more than that, universal work, and the Church cannot fail to bless your great and holy beginning… Dear brothers and sisters, let us all unite around this Liberation Movement of ours, let each of us struggle on this path and help the common great work of the liberation of our Homeland, until this terrible evil of Bolshevism falls and our tormented Russia is raised from her bed…”

In Belorussia and the Ukraine, the Germans encouraged the formation of national Churches independent of the Moscow Patriarchate. A Belorussian Autonomous Church was formed under Archbishop Philotheius of Slutsk (later of Hamburg). Pressure from Belorussian nationalists to form a completely autocephalous Church was rejected. The Belorussian Church had no contact with the MP - the Germans forbade the commemoration of Sergius. So formally speaking the Belorussians were not part of the MP. Moreover, in October, 1943, the Germans for the first time allowed the convening of a Council of ROCOR bishop at which the Belorussians were represented by a bishop and a priest at a Council of ROCOR in Vienna. So de facto they were now in communion with ROCOR.

Present at the council were Metropolitan Anastasy, Seraphim (Lukyanov), Seraphim (Lyade), Benedict (Bobkovsky), Basil (Pavlovsky), Philip (von Gardner), Gregory (Boriskevich). On October 25 the bishops condemned the election of the patriarch as unlawful and invalid, comparing Sergius' compromises to the third temptation of the Saviour, “to whom Satan promised to give all the kingdoms of the world if He would worship him…"

“The conference composed and sent to the German authorities a memorandum which contained a series of bold demands. The memorandum is the best proof of the fact that the Conference took decisions independently, and not at the command of the Nazis. In it first of all should be highlighted the protest against the Nazis’ not allowing the Russian clergy abroad to go to

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779 I.L. Solonevich, “Rossia v kontslagere” (Russia in the concentration camp), Volia naroda (The Will of the People), November 22, 1944; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 78-79.
the occupied territories of the USSR. The memorandum demanded ‘the removal of all obstacles hindering the free movement of bishops from this side of the front’, and the reunion of bishop ‘on occupied territories and abroad’. (A.K. Nikitin, Polozhenie russkoj pravoslavnoj obschiny v Germanii v period natsistkogo rezhima (1933-1945 gg.) [The Situation of the Russian Orthodox Community in Germany in the Nazi period (1933-1945)], Annual Theological Conference PSTBI, Moscow, 1998). A vivid expression of this protest was the consecration by the participants of the Conference of Bishop Gregory (Boriskevich). He was consecrated for the Belorussian Autonomous Church and received the title of Bishop of Gomel and Mozyr. At the Council an appeal to Russian believers was agreed. The conference did not send any greetings to Hitler or other leaders of the Third Reich. The third agreed point was unexpected for the Nazi institutions. De facto it contained a critique of German policy in relation to the Russian Church and included demands for greater freedom: ‘(1) The free development and strengthening of the Orthodox Church in the occupied regions and the unification of all Orthodox ecclesiastical provinces liberated from Soviet power with the Orthodox Church Abroad under one common ecclesiastical leadership would serve as an earnest of the greater success of these parts of the Russian Church in the struggle with atheist communism... (3) It is necessary to give Russian workers in Germany free satisfaction of all their spiritual needs. (4) In view of the great quantity of various Russian military units in the German army, it is necessary to create an institution of military priests... (6) A more energetic preaching of the Orthodox religio-moral world-view... (9) Petition for the introduction of apologetic programmes on the radio... (10) The organization of theological libraries attached to the parishes... (13) Giving Orthodox ecclesiastical authorities the possibility of opening theological schools and the organization of pastoral and religio-moral courses.’”

At this council the election of Metropolitan Sergius as “Patriarch” was condemned as uncanonical, and a bishop, George, was consecrated for the see of Gomel and Mozyr by ROCOR.782 As we have seen, another Belorussian hierarch, Bishop Stefan (Sevbo) of Smolensk, had good relations with the Catacomb Church.783 And after fleeing to the West after the war the entire

781 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 63-64, 64-65; M.V. Shkarovsky, RPTsZ na Balkanakh v gody Vtoroj Mirovoj Vojny [ROCOR in the Balkans in the years of the Second World War]; Bishop Gregory (Grabbe), Arkhierejskij Synod vo II Mirovuiu Vojnu [The Hierarchical Synod in World War II].
783 “Good, albeit also not unambiguous relations were established between the True Orthodox Christians and the Belorussian Church. In particular, thanks precisely to the catacombiki the Belorussian Church took a more anti-patriarchal stand and entered into conflict with Metropolitan Sergius (Voskresensky), who was trying to infiltrate his people into Belorussia. The most ardent relations were with Bishop Stefan (Sevbo) of Smolensk (+1963), who even ordained several priests for the True Orthodox Christians and of whom a good memory was preserved in the 'catacombs'. It was precisely in Smolensk province and Mozhaisk district in
The episcopate was received into ROCOR “in their existing rank” on April 23 / May 6, 1946.784

In Ukraine, the Germans allowed the creation of two Churches independent of the MP. The Ukrainian Autocephalous Church was in essence a reactivation of the Lypkivsky “self-consecrators'” schism, which had flourished in the Ukraine in the 1920s before being eliminated by Stalin, via the Polish Autocephalous Church. Thus on December 24, 1941, Metropolitan Dionysius of Warsaw, at the request of Ukrainian political and social-ecclesiastical activists, appointed Archbishop Polycarp (Sikorsky) of Lutsk as “Temporary Administrator of the Orthodox Autocephalous Church on the liberated lands of Ukraine”.785 Into this Church, without reordination, poured the remnants of the Lypkivsky schism, which soon led it onto the path of extreme Ukrainian nationalism. About 40% of the Orthodox in the Ukraine were attracted into this Church, which was especially strong in the West; but it had no monastic life, and very soon departed from traditional Orthodoxy.

On August 18, 1941, a Council of Bishops meeting in the Pochaev monastery elected Metropolitan Alexis (Gromadsky) as leader of the Ukrainian Autonomous Church, which based her existence on the decision of the 1917-18 Local Council of the Russian Church granting the Ukrainian Church autonomy within the framework of the Russian Church. Although the Germans tended to favour the Autocephalous Church over the Autonomous Church, it was the latter that attracted the majority of believers (55%) and opened the most churches. It even attracted catacomb priests, such as Archimandrite Leontius (Filippovich), who after his consecration as Bishop of Zhitomir restored about 50% of the pre-revolutionary parishes in his diocese and ordained about two hundred priests, including the future leader of the “Seraphimo-Gennadiiite” branch of the Catacomb Church, Gennadius Sekach, before he (Leontius) himself fled westwards with the Germans and joined ROCOR.786 Also linked with the Autonomous Churches was the Georgian Schema-Archbishop Anthony (Abashidze), who lived in retirement in Kiev.

Moscow province that the True Orthodox Christians became so active that they regenerated and greatly increased their flock, which had become very thin on the ground since the repressions of 1937” (Archbishop Ambrose (von Sievers), “Istinno-Pravoslavnie Kristiane i Vojna 1941-1945gg.” (True Orthodox Christians and the War, 1941-1945), Russkoe Pravoslavie (Russian Orthodoxy), № 1 (15), 1999, pp. 23-24).

784 The whole of the Ukrainian Autonomous Church was also received into the ROCOR at this time. See Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia), № 20 (1545), October 15/28, 1995, p. 4; Alexeyev, W. and Stavrou, T., The Great Revival, op. cit., chapter 4. Alexeyev, W. and Stavrou, T., The Great Revival, op. cit., chapter 5; Friedrich Heyer, Die Orthodoxe Kirche in der Ukraine (The Orthodox Church in the Ukraine), Koln: Rudolf Muller, 1953 (in German); “Archbishop Leonty of Chile”, The Orthodox Word, 1981, vol. 17, № 4 (99), pp. 148-154; Bishop John and Igumen Elijah, Taynij Skhimitropolit (The Secret Schema-Metropolitan), Moscow: Bogorodichij Tsentr, 1991; Andrei Psarev, "Zhizneopisanie Arkhiiepiskopa Leontia Chilijskij (1901-1971 gg.)" (A Life of Archbishop Leontius of Chile (1901-1971)), Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’ (Orthodox Life), № 4 (556), April, 1996, pp. 9-14. With the blessing of Schema-
Andrew Psarev writes: “The Ukrainian Autonomous Church was formally subject to the Moscow Patriarchate, insofar as her leading hierarchs considered that they did not have the canonical right to declare themselves an autocephaly. But since the Moscow Patriarchate was subject to the Bolsheviks, in her administrative decisions the Autonomous Church was completely independent, which is why her spiritual condition was different from that of the Moscow Patriarchate.”

On March 30, 1942 the Autonomous Church sent an Archpastoral Epistle to its children, declaring that the newly formed autocephalists were to be considered as “the Lipkovtsy sect”, and all the clergy ordained by them – graceless. In consequence, and because the Autonomous Church did not go along with the extreme nationalist politics of the autocephalists, it suffered persecution in the German-occupied regions both from the autocephalists and the Ukrainian nationalist “Benderite” partisans, who had formed an alliance.

Although the period of revival of ecclesiastical life in these regions was brief, it had important consequences for the future. First, many of the churches reopened in this period were not again closed by the Soviets when they returned. Secondly, some of those bishops and priests who could not, or chose not to, escape westwards after the war went underground and helped to keep the Catacomb Church alive in the post-war period. And thirdly, ROCOR received an injection of new bishops and priests from those who fled westwards to Germany in the closing stages of the war.

Archbishop Anthony (Abashidze), Leontius was consecrated on November 7, 1941 by Archbishop Alexis (Gromadsky) of Volhynia, Bishop Benjamin (Novitsky) of Poltava) and Bishop Damascene (Malyuta) of Kamenets-Podolsky (Sviatitel’ Leontij (Filippovich) Chilijskij”, http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page&pdi=707. Psarev, op. cit., p. 10. The Ukrainian Autonomous Church was also represented at the ROCOR’s Council in Vienna in 1943, which condemned the election of Sergius as uncanonical (Woerl, op. cit.).
THE STALIN-SERGIUS PACT

Not only all patriotic and cultural forces, but also the Church was enrolled in defence of the Soviet “motherland”. Thus on the very first day of the invasion, Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) made an appeal to the nation to support the Soviets. Then the Germans asked the MP’s exarch in the Baltic, Metropolitan Sergius (Voskresensky), who had refused to be evacuated eastwards with the Red Army, to react to it. His response was: “Soviet power has subjected the Orthodox Church to an unheard of persecution. Now the punishment of God has fallen on this power... Above the signature of Metropolitan Sergius of Moscow and Kolomna, the patriarchal locum tenens, the Bolsheviks have distributed an absurd appeal, calling on the Russian people to resist the German liberators. We know that the blessed Sergius, a man of great learning and zealous faith, could not himself compose such an illiterate and shameless appeal. Either he did not sign it at all, or he signed it under terrible threats...”

Sergius Shumilo writes: “The hierarchs of the Moscow Patriarchate on the territories that remained under the Soviets officially declared a ‘holy war’ and unambiguously called on the people to fight on the side of the God-hating regime of Stalin. Thus Metropolitan Sergius, who had usurped for himself the title ‘patriarchal locum tenens’, already on the first day of the war, June 22, 1941, appealed to ‘the Soviet people’, not only calling on them to ‘the defence of the Soviet Homeland’, but also declaring ‘a direct betrayal of pastoral duty’ even the very thought that the clergy might have of ‘possible advantages to be gained on the other side of the front’. With the cooperation of the NKVD this appeal was sent to all the parishes in the country, where it was read after services as a matter of obligation.

“Not having succeeded in starting the war first, and fearing to lose the support of the people, Stalin’s regime in desperation decided to use a German propaganda trick – the cultivation of national-patriotic and religious feelings in the people. As E.I. Lisavtsev affirms, already in July, 1941 unofficial negotiations took place for the first time between Stalin’s government and Metropolitan Sergius. In the course of a programme of anti-Hitlerite propaganda that was worked out in October, 1941, when the German armies had come right up to Moscow, Metropolitan Sergius issued an Epistle in which he discussed the Orthodox hierarchs and clergy who had made contact on the occupied territories with the local German administration. De facto all the hierarchs and clergy on the territories occupied by the Germans, including those who remained in the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate, came under Metropolitan Sergius’ excommunication.

788 M.V. Shkarovsky, Pravoslavie i Rossia (Orthodoxy and Russia); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 31.
“Having issued the Epistle, Metropolitan Sergius and all the members of the chancellory of the MP, together with the Soviet government and the leadership of the Soviet army and the NKVD, were evacuated from Moscow to Ulyanovsk (formerly Simbirsk), where on November 24 Metropolitan Sergius delivered a new appeal to the people, in which he called them to ‘a holy war for Christian civilization, for freedom of conscience and faith’. In all during the years of the war S. Stragorodsky delivered more than 23 similar addresses. Metropolitan Nicholas (Yarushevich) also repeatedly called to a ‘holy war’; his appeals to the partisans and the people in the form of leaflets were scattered in enormous quantities by Soviet military aviation onto the territories occupied by the German armies. However, such epistles only provoked the German command, and elicited reprisals against the local clergy and population. Besides this, Metropolitan Nicholas repeatedly appealed to the ‘erring’ Romanian and Bulgarian Orthodox Churches, to the Romanian and Bulgarian soldiers who were fighting on the side of Germany, and also to the population and Church in Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Greece and other countries. Nicholas Yarushevich himself was appointed a member of the so-called ‘Pan-Orthodox Committee’ created according to a decision of the communist party, and also of the Extraordinary State Commission for the investigation of fascist crimes. And it is precisely on Metropolitan Nicholas, as a member of this commission, that there falls the blame for the lie and disinformation concerning Stalin’s crimes: he was among those who signed the unprecedentedly mendacious declaration to the effect that the shootings of thousands of Polish officers in a wood near Katyn were carried out by the Germans, and not by Soviet punishment squads, as was the case in actual fact. Moreover these were not the only such cases.

“It was for the same propagandistic aims that in 1942, in the printing-house of the Union of Militant Atheists, which had temporarily been handed over for the use of the MP, there appeared in several foreign languages a solidly produced book, The Truth about Religion in Russia, the foreword to which was composed by S. Stragorodsky. As it said in the foreword: ‘... This book is a reply first of all to the “crusade” of the fascists undertaken by them supposedly for the sake of liberating our people and our Orthodox Church from the Bolsheviks’. The whole of the book, from the first page to the last, is overflowing with outpourings of unreserved devotion to Stalin’s regime and with false assurances about ‘complete religious freedom in the USSR’.

“The text of the telegram of Metropolitan Sergius of Moscow on November 7, 1942 addressed to Stalin on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the

789 Sergius wrote: “With complete objectivity we must declare that the Constitution, which guarantees complete freedom for the carrying out of religious worship, in no way constrains the religious life of believers and the Church in general...” Concerning the trials of clergy and believers, he said: “These were purely political trials which had nothing to do with the purely ecclesiastical life of religious organizations and the purely ecclesiastical work of individual clergy. No, the Church cannot complain about the authorities.”
Bolshevik coup sounds like an evil joke, a mockery of the memory of hundreds of thousands of martyrs for the faith who perished during the years of the Stalinist repressions: ‘In your person I ardently and prayerfully greet the God-chosen leader of our military and cultural forces, leading us to victory over the barbarian invasion…’

“However, besides propagandistic and ideological support for the Soviet regime, the clergy and parishioners of the MP also provided serious financial help to the army in the field. Thus in a telegram of Metropolitan Sergius to I. Stalin on February 25, 1943 we are formed: ‘On the day of the jubilee of our victorious Red Army I greet you as its Supreme Commander in the name of the clergy and believers of the Russian Orthodox Church, I prayerfully desire that you experience the joy of complete victory over the enemy… The believers in their desire to help the Red Army have willingly responded to my appeal: they have collected money to build a tank column in the name Demetrius Donskoy. In all about 6,000,000 roubles have been collected, and, besides, a large quantity of gold and silver things…’”

In fact, all parishes in Soviet Russia were required to make contributions to the Soviet war effort. Sergius – the “compatriarch” or communist patriarch, as the Germans called him - announced huge contributions towards the equipping of a tank unit. From November, 1941 even the last open church of the Josephites in Leningrad began to contribute. However, helping the Soviet war effort and remaining True Orthodox were clearly incompatible aims; and in November, 1943 the Trinity parish applied to join the MP...

Shumilo continues: “Taking into consideration this loyal position of the leadership of the MP, and relying on the successful experiment of Nazi Germany on the occupied territories, Stalin, after long hesitations, finally decided on a more broadly-based use of religion in order to attain his own political ends. The more so in that this would help the new imposition of communist tyranny on the ‘liberated’ territories and in the countries of Eastern Europe. ‘First of all,’ wrote the Exarch of the MP in the Baltic region, Metropolitan Sergius (Voskresensky), in his report to the German occupying authorities already on November 12, 1941, ‘for the Soviet state the existence of legal ecclesiastical administration was very important for purposes of advertisement and propaganda. In the foreign Jewish press, which wanted to attract the hearts of its liberal readers to “Stalin’s constitution”, it was possible to point to the existence of the “Patriarchate” as an indisputable proof that in the Soviet state even the Orthodox Church, that support of tsarist reaction, had complete religious freedom. On the other hand, if the patriarchal...

791 Tissifiantskie obschiny v blokadnom Leningrade” (Josephite Communities in Blockaded Leningrad), Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia), № 14 (1731), July 15/28, 2003, pp. 12-13.
administration and its members were annihilated, it would be difficult to bring the press abroad to silence. This would elicit a particularly powerful and long-lasting response among the Orthodox Balkan peoples... The existence of the patriarchal administration was allowed, since its abolition, like any form of open persecution of the Church, would not correspond to the interests of the subtle atheist propaganda, and could elicit politically undesirable disturbances in the broad masses of the Orthodox believers (their number is calculated at from 30 to 60 million) and arouse still greater hatred for the authorities.

"The forcible disbanding of the officially recognized leadership of the patriarchate would inevitably call into existence a secret leadership, which would significantly increase the difficulties of police supervision... In general there has existed in Russia a very lively secret religious life (secret priests and monks; secret places for prayer; secret Divine services; christenings; confessions; communions; marriages; secret theological studies; secret possession of the Sacred Scriptures, liturgical vessels, icons, sacred books; secret relations between communities).

"In order to destroy the catacomb patriarchate also, they would have to execute all the bishops, including the secret ones that would undoubtedly be consecrated in case of need. And if we imagine the impossible, that the whole ecclesiastical organization would be annihilated, then faith would still remain, and atheism would not make a single step forward. The Soviet government understood this, and preferred to allow the existence of a patriarchal administration."792

"But there were other more substantial reasons: already at the end of September, 1941 William Everell, the authorized representative of President Franklin Roosevelt of the USA in Moscow, during negotiations with Molotov and Stalin with regard to drawing the USA onto the side of the USSR in the war with Nazi Germany, raised the question of politics in relation to religion in the USSR. For Roosevelt this was one of the key questions, on which depended the final result of the negotiations and the possibility of giving military help to the USSR. 793 In connection with this, on October 4, 1941 the Soviet deputy foreign minister Solomon Lozovsky assured the delegation of the USA that religion both in the USSR and outside it had a great significance for raising the patriotic spirit in a country, and for that reason, if some faults and mistakes had been admitted in the past, they would be corrected. So as to

793 See D. Volkogonov, Triumf i Tragedia (Triumph and Tragedy), Moscow: Novosti, 1989, book II, part 1, pp. 382-83; Shkvarovsky, Isifianstvo, op. cit, p. 185. Donald Rayfield writes: "Stalin may also have listened to an American envoy, who had pointed out that Congress would not hesitate to send the USSR military aid if religious suppression stopped" (Stalin and his Hangmen, London: Viking, 2004, p. 405). (V.M.)
imitate so-called ‘freedom of conscience’ in the USSR and thereby win over the countries of the West, Stalin began cautiously flirting with religion. But in the beginning not with the Moscow Patriarchate, ... but with the Vatican...

“Cardinal changes in the internal politics of Stalin in relation to the Moscow Patriarchate... took place in the second half of 1943. At the beginning of autumn the leaders of the allied countries in the anti-Hitlerite coalition were preparing for their first personal meeting in Teheran. Stalin placed great hopes on the Teheran meeting, and so he sought out various means of urging on the allies. First of all, public movements in England and the USA for giving help to the USSR were given the most active support. Among these organizations with whose leaders Stalin carried out a personal correspondence, was Hewitt Johnson, the rector of the cathedral church of Canterbury. The Soviet historian V. Alexeev thinks that ‘this was a partner whom Stalin treasured, and who had no small influence in an allied country, where the Anglican church was the state religion.’

“Besides Hewitt Johnson, other hierarchs of the Anglican church were actively involved into the movement for the speediest provision of help to the USSR, including Archbishop Cosmo Lang. More than a thousand activists of the Episcopalian church of the U.S.A. addressed similar appeals to the president of the USA Franklin Roosevelt. Moreover, by the autumn of 1943 the leadership of the Anglican church had addressed the Soviet government through the embassy of the USSR in Great Britain with a request to allow a visit of their delegation to Moscow. As V. Alexeev remarks: ‘On the eve of the Teheran conference the visit of the delegation was recognized as desirable and useful by Stalin. In this situation it was extremely advantageous that the head of the delegation, the Archbishop of York, should be received by the higher leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church headed by the patriarch.’

“In connection with the above-mentioned political perspectives, Metropolitan Sergius (from Ulyanovsk) and Metropolitan Alexis (from Leningrad) were very quickly transported to Moscow on government planes. Together with Metropolitan Nicholas (Yarushevich), they were brought late at night on September 4, 1943 to Stalin in the Kremlin. Besides Stalin, the deputy president of the Sovnarkom of the USSR. V. Molotov and NKVD General-Major G. Karpov took part in the talks. As Alexeev witnesses, relying on G. Karpov’s report, at the meeting ‘Stalin approved of the convening of a council, but advised that a Hierarchical, not a Local council be convened at the given time... The metropolitans agreed. When Sergius touched upon the question of the time necessary for the preparation of the council, Stalin asked him: “Can we not produce a Bolshevik tempo?” Then, turning to Karpov, he asked him to help the leadership of the church to get the bishops to the council as quickly as possible. For this he was to bring in aviation and other forms of transport. Karpov assured Stalin that all the necessary work would be carried out and the council could be opened already in three to four days.
Immediately Stalin and Metropolitans Sergius, Alexis and Nicholas agreed to set September 8 as the opening of the council.

“Here we must note that Karpov’s report\textsuperscript{794} sins through obvious exaggerations, which create the deceptive impression that the initiative in these ‘negotiations’ came from the hierarchs, while Stalin spoke only in the role of a ‘kind magician’ who carried out all their demands. In actual fact the subject of the so-called ‘negotiations’, and the decisions taken during them, had been worked out long before the meeting. Stalin, Malenkov and Beria had examined this question in their dacha already before the middle of the day on September 4. Confirmation of this is given by the speedy transport of Sergius and Alexis to Moscow, and also the spineless agreement of the metropolitans with Stalin’s proposals – ‘the metropolitans agreed’, as it says in Karpov’s report. But the delegation of metropolitans, being loyal to the authorities, could not act differently in their meeting with the dictator, in connection with which Karpov spiced up his report with invented initiatives of Sergius.

“Reviewing the question of the convening of the council, it was decided that Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) should, for political reasons, be proclaimed ‘patriarch of all Rus’ and not ‘of Russia [Rossii]’, as it was under Patriarch Tikhon (Bellavin).\textsuperscript{795} Turning to the metropolitans, Stalin said that the government was ready to provide her with the necessary financial means to support the international image of the Moscow Patriarchate, and also informed them that for the accommodation of the chancellery of the MP he was giving over to them a three-storey house with all its furniture – the past residence of the German ambassador Schulenberg. Obviously, Stalin presented this gift to annoy the Germans, who had opened Orthodox churches on the occupied territories.

“At the end of the meeting Stalin declared that he was intending to create a special organ for control of the Church – the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church (SD RPTs). ‘… In reply the metropolitans thanked the government and Stalin personally for the reception he had given them, his enormous help to, and respect for, the Church, and assured the president of the Sovnarkom of their patriotic position, noting that they looked very favourably on the creation of a new state organ for the affairs of the Orthodox

\textsuperscript{794} According to Karpov’s report, Metropolitan Sergius brought up the question of electing a patriarch right at the beginning of the meeting as being “the most important and most pressing question” (Monk Benjamin, \textit{op. cit.}, part 3, p. 53). This report was published in full in Russian in Monk Benjamin, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 53-60, and in English in Felix Corbey (ed.), \textit{Religion in the Soviet Union: an archival reader}, New York: New York University Press, 1996. (V.M.)

\textsuperscript{795} This was an important symbolic change. The pre-revolutionary Russian Church was rossiiskaia, that is, the Church of the whole of the Russian empire and of all the Orthodox in it, whether they were Russian by race or not. By changing the title to russkaia, Stalin emphasised that it was the Church exclusively of the ethnically Russian people – that is, of the russkikh. Over half a century later, ROAC – the Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church – resumed the title rossiiskaia. (V.M.)
Church and on the appointment of [NKVD Major-General] G. Karpov to the post of its president... Turning to Metropolitan Sergius, Molotov asked him when it would be better, in his opinion, to receive the delegation of the Anglican church in Moscow... Sergius replied that since the council at which they would elect the patriarch would be held in four days, the delegation could be received practically at any time after that. On hearing this, Molotov concluded that it would be appropriate to receive it in a month's time [that is, on the eve of the Teheran conference]. Stalin agreed.”

The three hierarchs also raised the question of opening more churches. Stalin replied that the government had no objections. Then Metropolitan Alexis raised the question of releasing certain hierarchs who were in the camps. Stalin said: “Give me a list, and we shall look at it.”

As a result of this meeting, the Soviet church acquired the right to open a bank account, to publish The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate and a few booklets, to reopen some seminaries and churches, and, most important, to “elect” a new patriarch after the release from prison of some of the most malleable bishops. In return, it had to accept censorship and control of every aspect of its affairs by the newly constituted Council for Russian Orthodox Affairs, which came to be nicknamed “Narkombog” (People's Commissar for God) and "Narkomopium" (People's Commissar for Opium). At first, the Council for Religious Affairs exerted its control downwards via the bishops in accordance with the Church’s rigidly centralized structure. From 1961, however, its control came to be exercised also from below, through the so-

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796 Shumilo, op. cit.
797 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 56. According to Anatolius Levitin-Krasnov, Molotov at one point “said that the Soviet government and Stalin personally would like to know the needs of the Church. While the other metropolitans remained silent, Metropolitan Sergius suddenly spoke up... The metropolitan pointed out the need for the mass re-opening of churches... for the convocation of a church council and the election of a patriarch... for the general opening of seminaries, because there was a complete lack of clergy. Here Stalin suddenly broke his silence. ‘And why don’t you have cadres? Where have they disappeared?’ he said... looking at the bishops point blank... Everybody knew that ‘the cadres’ had perished in the camps. But Metropolitan Sergius... replied: ‘There are all sorts of reasons why we have no cadres. One of the reasons is that we train a person for the priesthood, and he becomes the Marshal of the Soviet Union.’ A satisfied smile touched the lips of the dictator: ‘Yes, of course. I am a seminarian...’ Stalin began to reminisce about his years at the seminary... He said that his mother had been sorry to her very death that he had not become a priest...” (Levitin-Krasnov, Likhie Gody, 1925-1941 (The Savage Years, 1925-1941), Paris: YMCA Press, 1977). Rayfield notes that the metropolitans went to the meeting “all wearing ordinary suits” (op. cit., p. 405). The story (perhaps fictional) goes that on seeing this, Stalin looked up to heaven and said: “Do you not fear Him? You fear me more...” According to Archimandrite Ioann (Razumov), Sergius was enchanted by Stalin. “How kind he is... How kind he is!” he said in a hushed voice (in Sergius Fomin, Strazh Doma Gospodnia. Patriarkh Moskovskij i vseia Rusi Sergij Stragorodskij, (Guardian over the House of the Lord: Patriarch Sergius Stragorodsky of Moscow and All Rus’): Moscow Sretenskij monastery, 2003, p. 702 ©). It was at about this time that Stalin is said to have “told the British ambassador that, in his own way, ‘he too believed in God’. The word began to appear in Pravda with a capital letter.” (Overy, op. cit., p. 162)
called dvadsatky, or parish councils of twenty laypeople, who could hire and fire priests at will, regardless of the bishops. Thus for all its increased size and external power, the MP remained as much a puppet of Soviet power as ever. As Vasilyeva and Knyshevsky write: “There is no doubt that Stalin’s ‘special organ’ and the government (to be more precise, the Stalin-Molotov duet) kept the patriarch under ‘eternal check’. Sergius understood this. And how could he not understand when, on November 1, 1943, the Council made it obligatory for all parishes to submit a monthly account with a detailed description of their activity in all its facets?”

Stalin’s new ecclesiastical policy was effective. Donald Rayfield writes: “Promoting Orthodoxy had been more effective in galvanizing the nation than reiterating the slogans of Stalinism. Stalin may also have listened to an American envoy, who had pointed out that Congress would not hesitate to send the USSR military aid if religious suppression stopped. Right until Stalin’s death Russian metropolitan bishops were delivered in large black limousines to appear on international platforms, such as peace congresses, in the company of such stalwart atheists as Fadeev and Ehrenburg.”

Shumilo continues: “The so-called ‘hierarchical council’... took place on September 8, 1943. In all 19 hierarchs took part in it, six of whom were former renovationists who had been hastily consecrated not long before the ‘council’, and also several loyal bishops who were specially freed from prison and sent to Moscow in planes. At the given assembly there were no bishops from the occupied territories, nor from the emigration, or, still more, those who did not agree with Sergius and his ecclesiastical politics, who continued to languish in Soviet concentration camps. As the patriarchal historian D. Pospelovsky notes: ‘... At that time there were at least some tens of bishops in exile and the camps... Some of the imprisoned bishops refused to recognize the ecclesiastical politics of Sergius after 1927 as the condition of their liberation. At that time the Catacomb Church was still very active.’”

At the 1943 council, contrary to the rules laid down by the 1917-18 Council, only one candidate for the patriarchy was put forward. “I think that this will be made infinitely easier for us by the fact that we already have someone bearing the patriarchal privileges, and so I suppose that an election with all the details that usually accompany such events is not necessary for us,” declared Metropolitan Alexis (Simansky), who put forward the candidacy of Sergius. There was nothing for the delegates to do but submit to the will of “the father of the peoples, Joseph Stalin”, and to the question of Metropolitan Sergius: “Is nobody of another opinion?”, reply: “No, agreed.”

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798 Vasilieva, O., Kniashevsky, P. "Tainaia Vecheria" (The Last Supper), Linternurnaia Rossia (Literary Russia), № 39, September 27, 1991.
799 Rayfield, op. cit., p. 405.
800 Shumilo, op. cit.
801 Shumilo, op. cit.
“At the end of the session the council accepted a resolution read out by Sergius that was unprecedented in its amorality and uncanonicity. It said that ‘every person who is guilty of betraying the common work of the Church and of passing over to the side of fascism is to be counted as excommunicated as being an enemy of the Cross of the Lord, and if he is a bishop or cleric is deprived of his rank.’ Thus practically the whole of the population and clergy of the occupied territories – except, of course, the red partisans – fell under the anathema of the Soviet church, including 7.5 million Soviet prisoners of war, who had become prisoners of the Germans. According to Stalin’s ukaz № 260 of September, 1941, all of them were declared traitors to their Homeland. ‘There are no captives, there are only deserters,’ declared Molotov, commenting on this ukaz.” 802

Sergius was enthroned on September 12. Then the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church was created, headed by Karpov. Since 1940 he had been “head of the Fifth Department of the NKVD, whose assignment was to combat ‘the counterrevolutionary clergy.’ In the NKVD Karpov’s duty was to fight the church, in the council [-] to assist it…” 803

This pact between the supposed representative of Christ and Belial had profoundly ungodly consequences. However, church leaders round the world welcomed it.

“A week after the enthronement,” writes Shumilo, “on the orders of the Sovnarkom, Sergius accepted the long-awaited delegation of the Anglican church led by Archbishop Cyril Garbett in Moscow… In general, in the run-up to the Teheran conference the politics of the Soviet regime was ‘reconstructed’ not only in relation to the Moscow Patriarchate but also in relation to the Vatican. In October, 1943 support had been given to the official Georgian Orthodox and Armenian-Gregorian churches. The regime cooperated with the Muslims in convening in Tashkent a conference of loyal Muslim clergy and believers, in the organization in Bujnaks of a legal spiritual administration of the Muslims of the North Caucasus, in the opening of Muslim theological schools (medrese) in Bukhara, Tashkent, etc. However, it is quite mistaken to think that this ‘warming’ was a fully-fledged offering of freedom to the religious organizations in the USSR. In spite of their external freedom, the religious workers of the country, all without exception, remained hostages of the totalitarian system and remained under the constant strict supervision of the Soviet special services. But in relation to the so-called ‘unreliables’, the communist repressive apparatus continued to operate as before, although the religious workers themselves in all their official declarations categorically denied this, insinuating into popular opinion abroad the false idea that complete freedom of conscience and religious

802 Shumilo, op. cit.
803 Radzinsky, Stalin, p. 508.
organizations had been re-established in the USSR. As V. Alexeev remarks: ‘... The deeply religious F.D. Roosevelt was very satisfied with the new relationship of the authorities to the church in the USSR. These steps undertaken by Stalin also received approval in England, Canada and France, where the position of religious organizations in society was very strong. The Russian emigration was also satisfied with them.’”

In an encyclical dated October 14, 1943, Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) threatened all the clergy who were cooperating with the Germans with an ecclesiastical trial. The Germans countered by confronting Metropolitan Sergius (Voskresensky) with the acts of the Vienna conference of ROCOR, which condemned Sergius’ election as uncanonical, and demanded that he approve of them. In April, 1944, Metropolitan Sergius (Voskresensky) was ambushed and shot, probably by Soviets dressed in German uniforms whose leader was Dr. Aschach, local head of German counter-intelligence.

On October 27, 1943 Metropolitan Sergius wrote to Karpov: “I ask you to petition the government of the USSR for an amnesty for the people named in the attached list, whom I would like to draw into Church work under my administration. I will not take upon myself to decide the question to what extent these people deserved the punishment they underwent. But I am convinced that clemency given them by the Government would arouse them (and give them the opportunity) to apply all their energy to demonstrate their loyalty to the Government of the USSR and to wipe out their guilt completely.” To this declaration was attached a list of 26 clergy, including 24 hierarchs. Most of them, as it turned out, had already been shot or had perished in the camps.

On October 31, after the Georgians congratulated Sergius on his election, Sergius’ representative, Archbishop Anthony of Stavropol and Pyatigorsk, concelebrated with Catholicos Callistratus of Georgia in Tbilisi. So eucharistic communion was re-established without preconditions. Until 1990 the Ecumenical Patriarch did not accept this act since it was carried out without his agreement, but only with his knowledge.

In the period from the Stalin-Sergius pact of September, 1943 to the enthronement of the new “patriarch” Alexis in January, 1945, the 19 bishops of the MP (they had been only four at the beginning of the war) were more than doubled to 41.

804 Shumilo, op. cit. Of course, not all of the Russian emigration – only that (large) part that believed in the good intentions of the Soviet government.
806 GARF, f. 6991, op. 1, d. 5, l. 1; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 66.
807 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 61-63.
Catacomb Bishop “A.” wrote: “Very little time passed between September, 1943 and January, 1945. Therefore it is difficult to understand where 41 bishops came from instead of 19. In this respect our curiosity is satisfied by the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* for 1944. Looking through it, we see that the 19 bishops who existed in 1943, in 1944 rapidly gave birth to the rest, who became the members of the 1945 council.

“From the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* we learn that these hasty consecrations were carried out, in the overwhelming majority of cases, on renovationist protopriests.

“From September, 1943 to January, 1945, with a wave of a magic wand, all the renovationists suddenly repented before Metropolitan Sergius. The penitence was simplified, without the imposition of any demands on those who caused so much evil to the Holy Church. And in the shortest time the ‘penitent renovationists’ received a lofty dignity, places and ranks, in spite of the church canons and the decree about the reception of renovationists imposed [by Patriarch Tikhon] in 1925...’

“As the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* informs us, the ‘episcopal’ consecrations before the ‘council’ of 1945 took place thus: the protopriest who had been recommended (undoubtedly by the civil authorities), and who was almost always from the ‘reunited’ renovationists or gregorians, was immediately tonsured into monasticism with a change in name and then, two or three days later, made a ‘hierarch of the Russian Church’.”

This acceptance of the renovationists was dictated in the first place by the will of the Bolsheviks, who now saw the Sergianists as more useful to them than the renovationists. Thus on October 12, 1943 Karpov wrote to Stalin and Molotov: “The renovationist movement earlier played a constructive role but in recent years has lost its significance and base of support. On this basis, and taking into account the patriotic stance of the Sergiite church, the Council for Russian Orthodox Church Affairs has decided not to prevent the dissolution of the renovationist church and the transfer of the renovationist clergy and parishes to the patriarchal, Sergiite church.”

On October 16 Karpov sent secret instructions to the regions not to hinder the transfer of renovationists to the Sergianist church. Since Karpov wanted the renovationists to join the state church, the rules for their reception were relaxed. Thus in 1944 Metropolitan Alexis (Simansky) severely upbraided...

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Bishop Manuel (Lemeshevsky) for forcing “venerable” renovationist protopriests to “turn somersaults”, i.e. repent, before the people, in accordance with Patriarch Tikhon’s rules.811

As Roslof writes: “The relaxation of rules by the patriarchate reflected the needs of both church and state. The patriarchal synod had full backing from the government and expected to emerge as the sole central authority for the Orthodox Church. So it could afford to show mercy. At the same time, the patriarchate faced a scarcity of clergy to staff reopened parishes and to run the dioceses. Sergii’s bishops had problems finding priests for churches that had never closed. This shortage of clergy was compounded by the age and poor education of the candidates who were available. The patriarchate saw properly supervised red priests as part of the solution to the problem of filling vacant posts.”812

However, the penetration of the patriarchate by these “red priests” meant that the new, post-war generation of clergy was quite different from the pre-war generation in that they had already proved their heretical, renovationist cast of mind, and now returned to the neo-renovationist MP like a dog to his vomit (II Peter 2.22), forming a heretical core that controlled the patriarchate while being in complete obedience to the atheists. Their obedience was illustrated a few years later, when the MP sharply reversed its attitude towards ecumenism, from strictly anti-ecumenist in 1948 to pro-ecumenist only ten years later.

A still clearer sign of their total submission to the atheists is the cult of Stalin which began to take root during the war, and reached truly idolatrous proportions after it. Thus Fr. Gleb Yakunin writes: “From the beginning of the war and the church ‘renaissance’ that followed it, the feeling became stronger in the leadership of the Moscow Patriarchate that a wonderful act of Divine Providence in the historical process had happened in Russia. God’s instrument in this process was, in their opinion, the ‘wise, God-established’, ‘God-given Supreme Leader’.”813 And yet Stalin never changed his basic hostility to the Church. In 1947 he wrote to Suslov: “Do not forget about atheistic propaganda among the people”. And the bloodletting in the camps continued…814

Together with the cult of Stalin went the enthusiastic acceptance of communist ideology and studied refusal to contemplate the vast scale of its blasphemies and cruelties. Thus just after the war the MP expressed itself as

811 See Metropolitan John (Snychev) of St. Petersburg, Mitropolit Manuel (Lemeshevsky) (Metropolitan Manuel Lemeshevsky)), St. Petersburg, 1993, p. 185. Of course, a guilty conscience may also have had something to do with it: both “Patriarch” Sergius and his successor, “Patriarch” Alexis, were themselves “repentant renovationists”.
812 Roslof, op. cit., p. 196.
813 Yakunin, op. cit, p. 190.
follows concerning the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR: “On this day in all the cathedrals, churches and monasteries of our country there will be offered the bloodless Sacrifice, whose beginning was laid by Him Who brought into the world the ideas of love, justice and equality. Deeply moved church-servers will come out onto the ambons and bless their children to hurry from the churches to the voting urns. They will bless them to cast their votes for the candidates of the bloc of communists... They themselves will cast their votes... The ideal of such a person is – Stalin…”

The apotheosis of the cult of Stalin came on the occasion of his birthday in 1949, when a “Greeting to the Leader of the peoples of the USSR” was addressed to him in the name of the whole Church. “Without the slightest hesitation,” write Fr. Gleb Yakunin and a group of Orthodox Christians, “we can call this address the most shameful document ever composed in the name of the Church in the whole history of the existence of Christianity and still more in the thousand-year history of Christianity in Rus’.”

Again, on the day after Stalin’s death in March, 1953, Patriarch Alexis wrote to the USSR Council of Ministers: “In my own name and in the name of the Russian Orthodox Church I express my deepest and sincerest condolences on the death of the unforgettable Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin, the great builder of the people’s happiness. His death is a heavy grief for our Fatherland and all the peoples who dwell in it. His death has been taken with deep grief by the whole of the Russian Orthodox Church, which will never forget his benevolent attitude towards the needs of the Church. His radiant memory will never be erased from our hearts. Our Church intones ‘eternal memory’ to him with a special feeling of unceasing love.” Again, in 1955 he declared: “The Russian Orthodox Church supports the totally peaceful foreign policy of our government, not because the Church allegedly lacks freedom, but because Soviet policy is just and corresponds to the Christian ideals which the Church preaches.”

In response to the MP’s description of Stalin as “the chosen one of the Lord, who leads our fatherland to prosperity and glory”, Metropolitan Anastasy, first-hierarch of ROCOR, wrote that this was the point “where the subservience of man borders already on blasphemy. Really – can one tolerate that a person stained with blood from head to foot, covered with crimes like leprosy and poisoned deeply with the poison of godlessness, should be named ‘the chosen of the Lord’, could be destined to lead our homeland ‘to

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817 Cited in Potapov, What is False is also Corrupt, p. 223.
818 Izvestia, March 10, 1953; Yakunin, op. cit., p. 199.
prosperity and glory’? Does this not amount to casting slander and abuse on God the Most High Himself, Who, in such a case, would be responsible for all the evil that has been going on already for many years in our land ruled by the Bolsheviks headed by Stalin? The atom bomb, and all the other destructive means invented by modern technology, are indeed less dangerous than the moral disintegration which the highest representatives of the civil and church authorities have put into the Russian soul by their example. The breaking of the atom brings with it only physical devastation and destruction, whereas the corruption of the mind, heart and will entails the spiritual death of a whole nation, after which there is no resurrection.”820

Sergius did more than place the MP in unconditional submission to the God-hating authorities. As Archimandrite (now Bishop) Nectarius (Yashunsky) wrote, he introduced a heretical understanding of the Church and salvation: “Metropolitan Sergius’ understanding of the Church (and therefore, of salvation) was heretical. He sincerely, it seems to us, believed that the Church was first of all an organization, an apparatus which could not function without administrative unity. Hence the striving to preserve her administrative unity at all costs, even at the cost of harming the truth contained in her.

“And this can be seen not only in the church politics he conducted, but also in the theology [he evolved] corresponding to it.”

Thus in an article entitled “The Relationship of the Church to the Communities that have Separated from Her” (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), Metropolitan Sergius explained the differences in the reception of heretics and schismatics, not on the basis of their objective confession of faith, but on the subjective (and therefore changeable) relationship of the Church’s first-hierarch to them. Thus “we receive the Latins into the Church through repentance, but those from the Karlovtsy schism through chrismation”.

And so for Sergius, concluded Fr. Nectarius, “the truth of Holy Orthodoxy is not necessary for salvation, but it is belonging to a legal church-administrative organization that is necessary”!821

This heretical transformation of the MP into an “eastern papacy” was described by Fr. Vyacheslav Polosin: “If Metropolitan Sergius was ruled, not by personal avarice, but by a mistaken understanding of what was for the benefit of the Church, then it was evident that the theological foundation of such an understanding was mistaken, and even constituted a heresy

820 I.M Andreyev, Is the Grace of God present in the Soviet Church? op. cit., pp. 32-33 (with some changes in the translation).
821 Hierodeacon Jonah (now Archimandrite Nectarius) (Yashunsky), “Sergianstvo: Politika ili Dogmatika?” (Sergianism: Politics or Dogmatics?), 29 April / May 12, 1993, pp. 2-3, 5 (MS).
concerning the Church herself and her activity in the world. We may suppose that these ideas were very close to the idea of the Filioque: since the Spirit proceeds not only from the Father, but also from the Son, that means that the vicar of the Son... can dispose of the Spirit, so that the Spirit acts through Him ex opere operato... It follows necessarily that he who performs the sacraments of the Church, ‘the minister of the sacrament’, must automatically be ‘infallible’, for it is the infallible Spirit of God Who works through him and is inseparable from him... However, this Latin schema of the Church is significantly inferior to the schema and structure created by Metropolitan Sergius. In his schema there is no Council, or it is replaced by a formal assembly for the confirmation of decisions that have already been taken – on the model of the congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

“The place of the Council in his Church structure is taken by something lacking in the Latins’ scheme – Soviet power, loyalty to which becomes in the nature of a dogma... This scheme became possible because it was prepared by Russian history. But if the Orthodox tsar and the Orthodox procurator to some extent constituted a ‘small Council’, which in its general direction did not contradict... the mind-set of the majority of believers, with the change in world-view of those came to the helm of Soviet power this scheme acquired a heretical character, since the decisions of the central ecclesiastical authorities, which were associated in the minds of the people with the will of the Spirit of God, came to be determined neither by a large nor by a small Council, but by the will of those who wanted to annihilate the very idea of God (the official aim of the second ‘godless’ five-year-plan was to make the people forget even the word ‘God’). Thus at the source of the Truth, instead of the revelation of the will of the Holy Spirit, a deadly poison was substituted... The Moscow Patriarchate, in entrusting itself to the evil, God-fighting will of the Bolsheviks instead of the conciliar will of the Spirit, showed itself to be an image of the terrible deception of unbelief in the omnipotence and Divinity of Christ, Who alone can save and preserve the Church and Who gave the unlying promise that ‘the gates of hell will not overcome her’... The substitution of this faith by vain hope in one’s own human powers as being able to save the Church in that the Spirit works through them, is not in accord with the canons and Tradition of the Church, but ex opere operato proceeds from the ‘infallible’ top of the hierarchical structure.”

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822 Polosin (Sergius Ventsel), "Razmyslenia o Teokratrii v Rossii" (Thoughts on Theocracy in Russia), Vestnik Khristianskogo Informatsionnogo Tsentra (Herald of the Christian Information Centre), № 48, November 24, 1989.
The enormous initial successes of the Germans in Russia came to an end on December 6, 1941, when the Russians counter-attacked and saved Moscow. The next day, the Japanese attacked the American fleet in Pearl Harbour, bringing the United States into the war. Shortly after that, Hitler recklessly declared war on the Americans. The linking of the European and Far Asian theatres, and the entrance of the United States, the world’s greatest industrial power, into the war against the Axis made it genuinely global. The pendulum of war now swung slowly but inexorably against the Axis powers...

The alliance of the three nations of Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union was cemented when Churchill flew into Moscow in May, 1942. It was an unequal relationship from the beginning. The Soviets insisted, often rudely and sarcastically, on the Anglo-Saxons’ opening a second front in the West – something the British and the Americans were not strong enough to do yet. Instead, recognizing the enormous importance of the Soviet-German front for the ultimate outcome of the war, they sent vast quantities of arms and supplies by convoy around the Northern Cape to Murmansk and Archangelsk. Meanwhile, the Americans kept the British afloat with Lend-lease supplies from across the Atlantic.

There could hardly have been a more paradoxical and contradictory alliance than that between the aristocratic British lord and fierce anti-communist, Churchill, and the leader of the communist world revolution, Stalin. There is a Russian proverb that in certain situations one should be ready to use “even the devil and his grandma” - Stalin once quoted this to the British and American leaders. But there is another, English proverb that the Anglo-Saxons could have quoted: “When you go to dinner with the devil, use a very long spoon”. Unfortunately, the Anglo-Saxons tended to follow the Russian proverb more than their own, better one; for the tragic fact was that during the war, in order to drive out one demon, Hitler, they decided to enlist the aid of another, bigger demon, Stalin. As an inevitable result, while the smaller demon was defeated, the larger one triumphed and has proceeded to torment the world to this day...

One British sailor, who later became an Orthodox subdeacon, was on a cruiser in the Mediterranean when he heard the news of the alliance between Britain and the Soviet Union. Turning to a friend of his, he said: “Before, we were fighting for God, king and country. Now we are fighting for king and country.” For, of course, in fighting alongside the devil’s Stalin, they could not be fighting for God...

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824 Subdeacon Paul Inglesby, personal communication.
Demonology occupied the war leaders from the beginning. Thus when Hitler invaded Soviet Russia in 1941, Churchill told the House of Commons that if Hitler had invaded hell, he would have found it in himself “to make a favourable reference to the devil in the House of Commons”.825 Again, when Churchill met Stalin for the first time, in May, 1942, Stalin wished him success in Operation Torch, the invasion of North Africa.

“’May God help you,’ he added.

“’God, of course, is on our side,’ Churchill said.

“’And the devil is, naturally, on mine, and through our combined efforts we shall defeat the enemy,’ Stalin chuckled.”826

Very funny, no doubt, for the devil’s chief agent on earth... But the joke obscured, while at the same time pointing to, a supremely important truth: that God and the devil can never be on the same side, and that while God may use the devil and his servants towards his ultimate, supremely good aim, no human being can attempt to be so clever without destroying himself. For the ends do not justify the means: if we use evil means towards a good end, the end of it all will turn out to be evil...

Evidently, the deep meaning of this joke continued to occupy the minds of the leaders, because they returned to it at the Teheran conference in 1943.

“’God is on our side,’ Churchill said. ‘At least I have done my best to make Him a faithful ally.’

“’And the devil is on my side,’ Stalin chipped in. ‘Because, of course, everybody knows that the devil is a Communist and God, no doubt, is a good Conservative.’…”827

Stalin was now in a much more powerful position than he had been in 1941, and so he was not afraid to point out the great gulf between Soviet Communism and British Conservatism, even hinting that the two were not on the same side. Churchill, of course, as an old anti-communist warrior, was well aware of this - as Roosevelt, apparently, was not. Or if Roosevelt was aware, he chose to ignore this difference, while increasingly highlighting, to Churchill’s great embarrassment, the ideological differences between

826 Fenby, op. cit., p. 152.
827 Fenby, op. cit., p. 239. He repeated the point once more in Teheran.
imperialist Britain and the supposedly anti-imperialist United States. For Churchill was now in a much weaker position in relation to both Stalin and Roosevelt, being almost entirely dependent on Stalin to defeat Hitler on land, and on Roosevelt to supply his island with arms and food by sea. And so he was afraid to highlight any ideological differences between the three.

In fact, by this time both Churchill and Roosevelt were well on the path towards full appeasement of the bloody dictator – an appeasement that was even worse than that of Munich, and which had a much profounder and more degrading influence on the behaviour of the western democracies.

It all began very differently, with the agreement known as the Atlantic Charter in August, 1941. Britain and America agreed then that they would seek no territorial gains in the war; that territorial gains would be in accordance with the wishes of the peoples concerned; that all peoples had the right to self-determination; that trade barriers were to be lowered; that there was to be global economic cooperation and advancement of social welfare; that the participants would work for a world free of want and fear; that the participants would work for freedom of the seas; and that there was to be disarmament of aggressor nations, and a postwar common disarmament. In September a number of other western and Asiatic nations signed up to these principles. And on January 1, 1942 the Soviet Union and China, among other countries, also signed up.828

But of course the Soviets had no intention of granting self-determination to the countries they had conquered during their alliance with the Nazis (the Baltic States, Eastern Poland, Bukovina and Bessarabia), and were still less inclined to give them up after they had reconquered them during the war. As Norman Stone writes, “Churchill did not have the strength to resist Stalin, and the Americans did not have the will.”829 Already by the time of the Teheran Conference in November, 1943 they had effectively given in.

Indeed, already on February 20, 1943, Roosevelt wrote to the Jew Zabrousky, who acted as liaison officer between himself and Stalin, that the USSR could be assured of control of most of Europe after the war with full equality with the other “tetrarchs” (Britain, America and China) in the postwar United Nations Security Council: “You can assure Stalin that the USSR will find herself on a footing of complete equality, having an equal voice with the United States and England in the direction of the said Councils (of Europe and Asia). Equally with England and the United States, she will be a member of the High Tribunal which will be created to resolve differences between the nations, and she will take part similarly and identically in the selection, preparation, armament and command of the international forces which,

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under the orders of the Continental Council, will keep watch within each State to see that peace is maintained in the spirit worthy of the League of Nations. Thus these inter-State entities and their associated armies will be able to impose their decisions and to make themselves obeyed…

“We will grant the USSR access to the Mediterranean [overriding the territorial claims of Turkey]; we will accede in her wishes concerning Poland and the Baltic, and we shall require Poland to show a judicious attitude of comprehension and compromise [i.e. surrender to all Stalin’s demands]; Stalin will still have a wide field for expansion in the little, unenlightened [sic!] countries of Eastern Europe – always taking into account the rights which are due to the fidelity of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia – he will completely recover the territories which have temporarily been snatched from Great Russia.”

The essential truth of the Zabrousky letter was confirmed by Cardinal Spellman in a book by R.I. Gannon, SJ, The Cardinal Spellman Story. Describing a long talk he had had with Roosevelt on September 3, 1943, he wrote: “It is planned to make an agreement among the Big Four. Accordingly the world will be divided into spheres of influence: China gets the Far East; the US the Pacific; Britain and Russia, Europe and Africa. But as Britain has predominantly colonial interests it might be assumed that Russia will predominate in Europe. Although Chiang Kai-shek will be called in on the great decisions concerning Europe, it is understood that he will have no influence on them. The same thing might become true – although to a lesser degree – for the US. He hoped, ‘although it might be wishful thinking’, that the Russian intervention in Europe would not be too harsh.

“League of Nations: The last one was no success, because the small states were allowed to intervene. The future league will consist only of the four big powers (US, Britain, Russia, China). The small states will have a consultative assembly, without right to decide or to vote. For example, at the armistic with Italy, the Greeks, Yugoslavs and French asked to be co-signers. ‘We simply turned them down.’ They have no right to sit in where the big ones are. Only the Russians were admitted, because they are big, strong and simply impose themselves.

“Russia: An interview with Stalin will be forced as soon as possible. He believes that he will be better fitted to come to an understanding with Stalin than Churchill. Churchill is too idealistic, he [Roosevelt] is a realist. So is Stalin. Therefore an understanding between them on a realistic basis is probable. The wish is, although it seems improbable, to get from Stalin a pledge not to extend Russian territory beyond a certain line. He would certainly receive: Finland, the Baltic States, the Eastern half of Poland,

Bessarabia. There is no point to oppose these desires of Stalin, because he has the power to get them anyhow. So better give them gracefully.

“Furthermore the population of Eastern Poland wants to become Russian [!]. Still it is absolutely not sure whether Stalin will be satisfied with these boundaries. On the remark that Russia has appointed governments of communist character for Germany, Austria and other countries which can make a communist regime there, so that the Russians might not even need to come, he agreed that this is to be expected. Asked further, whether the Allies would not do something from their side which might offset this move in giving encouragement to the better elements, just as Russia encourages the Communists, he declared that no such move was contemplated [!!]. It is therefore probably that Communist Regimes would expand, but what can we do about it. France might eventually escape if it has a government à la Leon Blum. The Front Populaire would be so advanced, that eventually the Communists would accept it. On the direct questions whether Austria, Hungary and Croatia would fall under some sort of Russian protectorate, the answer was clearly yes. But he added, we should not overlook the magnificent economic achievements of Russia. Their finances are sound. It is natural that the European countries will have to undergo tremendous changes in order to adapt to Russia, but in hopes that in ten or twenty years the European influences would bring the Russians to become less barbarian.

“Be that as it may, he added, the US and Britain cannot fight the Russians...”

The eventual post-war outcome, though very bad, was not quite as bad as Roosevelt envisaged. But no thanks to him! His attitude of wholesale defeatism and surrender in relation to Stalin, his plans, in spite of his democratic ideals and his acceptance of the Atlantic Charter, to surrender most of Europe to the worst despotism in human history (while trying to break up the far milder tyranny of Britain over her colonies), involuntarily makes one think that he was somehow bewitched or even enrolled by Stalin to serve the interests of Soviet Communism alone!

The excuse given by Roosevelt that the Russians could take everything they wanted anyway was false. The Allies’ shipments of all kinds of supplies (at huge risk and great losses along the North Cape Arctic route) were very important to the Soviet war effort832, and they could have threatened to stop

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831 Spellman, in de Poncins, op. cit., pp. 89-90.
832 Ferguson writes: “All told, Stalin received supplies worth 93 billion roubles, between 4 and 8 per cent of Soviet net material product. The volumes of hardware suggest that these official statistics understate the importance of American assistance: 380,000 field telephones, 363,000 trucks, 43,000 jeeps, 6,000 tanks and over 5,000 miles of telephone wire were shipped along the icy Arctic supply routes to Murmansk, from California to Vladivostok, or overland from Persia. Thousands of fighter planes were flown along an ‘air bridge’ from Alaska to Siberia. Nor was it only hardware that the Americans supplied to Stalin. Around 38 per cent of Soviet
these in exchange for concessions. But the Americans seemed determined to allow the Soviet maximum freedom to do what they liked without regard to the Atlantic Charter or the rights of smaller nations. This was true not only of Roosevelt but also of his Foreign Secretary, Hull. “What he wanted from the conference was a grand declaration on the post-war international organization. The future of smaller European nations was of no concern to him – ‘I don’t want to deal with these piddling little things,’ he told Harriman, adding that Poland was a ‘Pandora’s box of infinite trouble’ best left unopened” 833

But the British could not easily give up on Poland, for whose sake they had entered the war in September, 1939. So Churchill continued to support the Polish government-in-exile and its underground army in Poland while Stalin built up another, communist underground army. One of the reasons why he stopped on the eastern side of Vistula and did not allow the Red Army to aid the Warsaw uprising in August, 1944 was his desire to winkle out the Polish royalists and have them destroyed – whether by the Germans or his own men.

Nevertheless, Churchill, too, made unacceptable compromises. Thus he, like the Americans, turned a blind eye to Stalin’s slaughter of 20,000 of Poland’s elite at Katyn, accepting the lie that the Germans had done it. Again, when Foreign Minister Eden visited Stalin in October, 1943, he “carried a note by Churchill recognising that Moscow’s accession to the Atlantic Charter had been based on the frontiers of June 11, 1941, and taking note of ‘the historic frontiers of Russia before the two wars of aggression waged by Germany in 1914 and 1939’” 834 In other words, Germany’s conquests in Poland after the shameful Molotov-Ribbentrop pact were not to be recognised, but Russia’s were!

The difference between Roosevelt and Churchill was that the latter, unlike the former, sometimes got angry with the dictator and did wrestle some concessions from him. Thus his famous percentages agreement with Stalin in October, 1944 over spheres of influence in Eastern Europe was firmly adhered to by Stalin, enabling Greece to escape the communist yoke. And yet this concession could have been greatly improved on if only the Americans had accepted the British plan, put forward at Quebec in August, 1943, of attacking Hitler in the Western Balkans. In the next month, Italy surrendered; so the time was right. The implementation of such a plan would not only have saved the Balkans from communist domination: it would have shortened the war.

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833 Fenby, op. cit., p. 208.
834 Fenby, op. cit., p. 207.
with Germany considerably. However, as Misha Glenny writes, “the Americans stalled, insisting instead on driving up through difficult Italian terrain in preparation for Operation Dragoon, the seaborne assault on southern and western France. ‘I still don’t understand,’ noted General Rendulić, the man coordinating the Wehrmacht’s struggle against Tito, ‘why the Allies gave up their drive across the Balkans after they had taken Sicily in August [1943]. Instead, they sustained many losses over a period of months as they squeezed their way through the narrow roads of the Italian peninsula before finally landing on the West coast of France, far away from all the strategic theatres of war. I am convinced that by giving up an assault on the Balkans in 1943, the Allies have postponed the end of the war by a year.’”

However, the major decisions had already been made at Teheran. “Now the fate of Europe is settled,’ Stalin remarked, according to Beria’s son. ‘We shall do as we like, with the Allies’ consent.’”

Ferguson’s comment is apt: “The wartime alliance with Stalin, for all its inevitability and strategic rationality, was nevertheless an authentically Faustian bargain, though Britain and America were able to settle their debts to the Soviet Satan with the souls of others…”

836 Fenby, op. cit., p. 211. My italics (V.M).
837 Ferguson, op. cit., p. 511.
THE BALKANS AND THE COMMUNISTS

The Teheran agreement, and the Allies’ decision not to invade the Western Balkans, sealed the fate of the Balkan nations: with the exception of Greece, they were all to become communist in the post-war world. And yet the victory of communism, and its near-victory in Greece, did not take place on an empty space. The roots of this victory go far back into the pre-war years.

Communism had been a growing problem in the inter-war years. In Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Greece the communists were held at bay by Orthodox kings who freed themselves from parliamentary control – King Alexander of Yugoslavia from 1929, and King Boris of Bulgaria from 1934. In Greece, “the Communist party made a small but significant showing in Parliament for the first time in 1935. That same year the monarchy was restored and King George II returned to Greece. In 1936 Communist agitation disrupted the country, and to forestall civil war John Metaxas [a protector of the True Orthodox Christians] imposed martial law with the consent of the King and the senior politicians, and became dictator.”838

Only in Romania were the communists not a major problem – the danger there was from the fascists. But there, too, the king took control. King Carol, writes Mark Mazower, “had the popular fascist leader Codreanu arrested and shot, created his own new Party of the Nation which struck observers as ‘a complete flop’, and presided over a Government of National Union.

“Thus despite the region’s early experience of democratic politics, mass parties of left and right failed to survive. By the end of the 1930s, the parliamentary system and political parties had disappointed the hopes invested in them by liberal intellectuals. Few mourned their passing…”839

However, growing ethnic tensions (especially in Yugoslavia) combined with worsening economic conditions and unemployment on the land undermined the authority of the kings. Finally, with the coming of the Nazis they were forced to flee or abdicate. Only Tsar Boris of Bulgaria remained in power, keeping his country out of military alliances with either the fascists or the communists by cleverly playing them off against each other.

In Yugoslavia and Greece, Nazi occupation elicited guerilla resistance movements of both royalist and communist kinds. However, in Yugoslavia the communist partisans under Tito proved more successful than the royalist chetniks under Mikhailović because they were better organized, more ruthless (if the Nazis killed ten Yugoslavs for every German killed, this didn’t

bother them) and recruited more volunteers from non-Serb nationalities. And so the British transferred their support from the chetniks to the partisans. 

In spite of this support, towards the end of the war Tito was determined to resist any encroachment on Yugoslavia from British troops in Italy. This drew a sharp rebuke from Stalin, who had agreed a 50-50 split with Churchill in Yugoslavia. And so, as Glenny writes, “the leadership of the new [communist] Yugoslavia made some formal concessions to the Big Three. They invited Ivan Šubašić, Prime Minister in the royal government in exile, to become Foreign Minister, to show that the new regime enjoyed a broad democratic base. On the ground, however, they imposed a harsh revolutionary justice. As German troops streamed out of Yugoslavia, the Croat fascist leader, Ante Pavelić, and 1-200,000 Ustaša troops and civilians set off for the Austrian border on 7 May 1945, with Partisan forces in hot pursuit. They got as far as Bleiburg, a small Austrian border town, before being surrounded by British troops to the north and Partisans to the south. With RAF Spitfire buzzing overhead, about 30-40,000 soldiers, including Pavelić, managed to disappear into the surrounding woods and then deep into Austria. But the remainder were taken prisoner by Partisan forces amid scenes of carnage. Some 30,000 Ustaše were killed on the four-day march towards the Slovene town of Maribor. On 20 May, near the village of Tezna, ‘50,000 Croat soldiers and about 30,000 refugees, mainly women and children, were executed over a five-day period… A macabre end to the ‘Independent State of Croatia’.

“In Serbia, the Chetniks fared little better even though many had fought bravely against the Germans. Mihailović, the Chetnik leader, led a small band of fighters into the mountains of eastern Bosnia. He was eventually caught, tried and executed in 1946 as an alleged war criminal. But thousands of Chetniks became fugitives in a twilight world. Many were secondary-school pupils when they joined the resistance. Now, they were hunted in villages and towns throughout Serbia. Thousands hid from the secret police in Belgrade, moving at dusk from one safe place to the next. Occasionally, they

840 Fr. James Thornton writes: “Tragically, America and Britain were deceived by communists agents within their own ranks, who sought to besmirch the reputation of Mihailovich by circulating the outrageous lie that he was collaborating with the Germans, while assuring everyone that the rival communist Partisan leader, Josip Broz Tito, was the true friend of the West. This was confirmed beyond question in 1997 when, as [Gregory Freeman, the author of The Forgotten 500] shows, declassified British documents revealed that a Soviet agent, James Klugman, “was principally responsible for sabotaging the Mihailovich supply operation and for keeping from London information about how much Mihailovich forces were fighting the Germans and how much successes they were having.” Upon reaching America, that disinformation was amplified by Soviet agents in key positions within our own government. Because of Klugman’s activities, supplies were recounted to Tito, thus assuring the post-war communist takeover of Yugoslavia. Yet, despite this horrifying volte-face, General Mihailovich remained faithful to his Western Allies, not only assuring the safety of the 500 airmen, but assisting in “Operation Halyard,” the extremely perilous airlift operation that returned all the men to Allied-controlled Italy.”
would risk capture by visiting their families. In place of the bright adolescent who had left three or four years before, mothers and fathers now saw a ‘tall, grim-looking young man… who appeared… on their doorstep with one hand always clutching something in the pocket of his raincoat and whose eyes were ringed with dark circles.’

“Arrested by the Gestapo during the war, Dimitrije Djordjević, a young Chetnik leader, survived Mauthausen only to fall into the hands of the Gestapo’s communist successor when he returned to Belgrade. ‘Both organizations had in common the violence with which they imposed their authority. The Gestapo destroyed the body; Ozna [the Yugoslav equivalent of the KGB] raped the soul. The Gestapo killed by shooting and by imprisonment in death camps; Ozna engaged in brainwashing, demanding repentance for sins not committed and self abnegation. ‘The difference was one of physical as opposed to spiritual annihilation.’

“OZNa, Odsek za zaštitu naroda (Department for the Protection of the People), modelled itself on the Soviet secret police, the NKVD. But during the war, under the dour leadership of Aleksandar Ranković, the Communist Minister of the Interior, it matured independent of Soviet control. Ranković built a network of informers and a devoted political police whose efficiency gave birth to the popular Orwellian rhyme, Ozna sve dozna (Ozna finds out everything). He aimed to make OZNa omnipresent, recruiting ‘in every block of flats, in every street, in every village and in every barrack room’. The Nazi and Ustaše camps throughout Yugoslavia were turned over for use by the communists. Tens of thousands of people were executed in 1946-7 while hundreds of thousands were interned. In 1947, there were so many men in camps or prisons that the penal system started to buckle under the strain. The mass arrests had removed so many young men from the labour market that the economy was being disrupted. Against Ranković’s better judgement the Party was forced to declare amnesty for tens of thousands.

“Thanks chiefly to OZNa, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (Komunistička Partija Jugoslavije – KPJ) was able to neutralize all political opposition soon after the elections of November 1945, which was comprehensively rigged. The communist monopoly on power took hold in Yugoslavia much earlier than anywhere else in eastern Europe…”

In September, 1944, as the Germans left Greece, the communist partisans of ELAS (Ellenikos Laikos Apeleutherotikos Stratos) with their two political sponsors, EAM and KKE (the Communist Party), and OPLA (KKE’s nascent secret police), poured down from their mountain strongholds in the north and were soon in control of four-fifths of the country. They caused great suffering to the people they were supposed to liberate, and more than 200 Orthodox priests were murdered by Communist partisans during the civil

841 Glenny, op. cit., pp. 530-532.
conflicts of 1943-1949, often with a bestial cruelty worthy of their Soviet counterparts. The only non-communist resistance movement, EDES, which was loyal to King George II, was esconced in north-western Epirus in much smaller numbers.

Among the hieromartyrs of this period was Hieromonk Joseph Antoniou. In 1938 he was imprisoned by the new calendarists. On his release he was sent by the True Orthodox Bishop Germanos of the Cyclades to Xylocastron, near Corinth. Once installed in Xylocastron, he brought his parents there and continued his apostolic activity. During the German occupation, communist guerillas entered the area and occupied several of the villages. Fr. Joseph fearlessly denounced their false teaching and terrible cruelties against the people. Two or three times they warned Fr. Joseph to stop speaking against them. But he replied: “You are waging the anti-Christian communist struggle, but I am waging the opposite struggle, the Christian struggle.”

Soon the decision was taken by the communists to execute the troublesome priest... Shortly after Pascha, 1944, an unknown old man entered the church where Fr. Joseph was serving, and told him that throughout the service he had seen blood flowing from under this cassock. From that time, Fr. Joseph prepared himself for martyrdom. Attacks on priests were increasing at this time. Only three months before Fr. Joseph was killed, he invited Bishop Germanus of the Cyclades to baptize the son of his spiritual son John Motsis. The local communist chief ordered the bishop to leave immediately.

On July 20 Fr. Joseph celebrated the Liturgy in the village of Laliotis. Then the communists entered the house where he was staying, arrested him and threw him into prison, where he was tortured. On July 22, he was taken out of prison with another young man by three guerillas. On seeing the youth of the executioners, Fr. Joseph sadly shook his head and urged them not to commit the crime. The communists forced their victims to dig their own graves, killed the young man, and then turned to Fr. Joseph.

He was allowed to sing his own funeral service. Then one thrust a knife into his back, but the blade broke. While another knife was being fetched, the executioners smoked and watched Fr. Joseph’s death agony. He said: “I will be the last victim of this knife, but the one who kills me will be the first to die from this knife.” After killing the martyr, as the executioners were returning, they quarrelled and the one who had killed Fr. Joseph was killed by his comrades, while the first one was later executed by the Germans... In September, 1945, Fr. Joseph’s father and brother, with the help of his donkey, found and exhumed his body. It was fragrant. A heavenly light was often seen over the tomb of the hieromartyr during the evenings.842

However, atheism never gained a strong foothold in Greece – in a poll carried out in 1951 only 121 out of 7,500,000 people declared themselves to be atheists. It is this fact, together with the strength of the True Orthodox Old Calendarist movement, which probably saved the Greeks from the horrors of a permanent communist yoke. But it came close to that, nevertheless... “By the end of 1944, membership of EAM has been estimated at about two million, an astonishing figure in a country of seven million. They had been drawn to the movement because it established rudimentary health and education facilities, food supplies where necessary and, above all, a sense that for the first time the peasantry actually mattered to the men and women of the cities. The stage was set for victory in Athens where the KKE held enormous popular appeal. But the order to march on the city was never issued...”

Nevertheless, by mid-December most of Athens was in communist hands: only the very centre, “Scobia”, named after the British General Scobie, was outside their control. What saved Greece were two military mistakes, and the informal alliance between the British and the Soviets based on Churchill’s agreement with Stalin allowing him 90-10 dominance in Greece. The mistakes were, first, KKE’s order to ELAS forces in the north to attack the royalists of EDES in the north-west, and secondly the consequent abandonment by ELAS troops of the siege of Salonika, allowing its defenders, the British India division, to sail to Piraeus and reinforce Scobie’s hard-pressed soldiers in Athens.

Then, on December 26, 1944, Churchill and American and French representatives arrived in Athens and met with the warring sides. The new calendarist Archbishop Damascene also tried to mediate. Churchill eventually persuaded the Greek king to make Archbishop Damascene the temporary head of the government on condition that the communists did not form part of it. This, the Varkiza Agreement of February 9, 1945, “led to the disbandment of ELAS. In exchange, the provisional government headed by General Plastiras promised an amnesty for political crimes and the disbanding of the right-wing formations that had collaborated with the Nazis. EAM/ELAS continued to control the Greek interior and much of Macedonia. Plastiras’s government enjoyed little support and the General was unable to administer the entire country; yet in Attica and the Peloponnesse, the Government was at least the nominal power. As the communists receded, the brutal killers of χ, a right-wing paramilitary organization, and other anti-communist groups, roaming the Athenian walkways and the mountains and coasts of the Peloponnesse. White Terror was eager to prove that it was more than a match for Red Terror.

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843 Bishop Kallistos (Ware); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, p. 14.
844 Glenny, op. cit., part 3, p. 79.
“Popular support for the communists waned after the Varkiza Agreement. Their behaviour during the December uprising had alienated many ordinary Greeks, not only because of the murder of hostages. In Aegean Macedonia, they had fought with the SNOF, the Titoist Liberation Front representing tens of thousands of Slav Macedonians still living in Greece. EAM had permitted the publication of Slav newspapers and encouraged cultural autonomy for the Slavs which many Greeks considered a real threat to the country’s sovereignty.

“The Right was in contrast bolstered by the Varkiza Agreement. Over the next twelve months, the National Guard, the police and the army expanded rapidly to a strength of almost 200,000 well-armed men. In areas like the Peloponnese and Epirus, where monarchists and rightists drew their traditional strength, these forces were swift to exact revenge on the communists. The authorities were unable to prevent the lumpen fascists of χ from infiltrating the security forces. Inside the Army’s officer corps a new conspiracy, the Sacred Bond of Greek Officers (IDEA), disseminated its anti-communist and expansionist philosophy. With their allies in the government, IDEA members weeded out suspected liberal or left-wing sympathizers from the officer corps.

“The absence of war improved the material circumstances of most Greeks, who benefited from a heroic effort made by United Nations Refugee and Rehabilitation Agency (UNRRA). The British presence curbed the more extreme political violence in the major towns and introduced a greater professionalism into the police force. But as one bumbling administration after another fell, it was hard to disguise the fact that British troops were propping up a sordid coalition of unforgiving nationalists and businessmen intent on reviving the hugely exploitative interwar economy. The elections called under American and British pressure in March 1946 were boycotted by the KKE... The populist administration which was swept into office redoubled the repression against communists and their sympathizers. Pressure for actions mounted in the ranks of ELAS, emboldened by the return of veteran fighters from Yugoslav camps. When King George was welcomed back in September 1946 after a dubious plebiscite restoring the monarchy, chaos was come again...”

Romania and Bulgaria were directly in the path of the Red Army, and had in any case been given up by Churchill to Stalin’s tender mercies, so they had no chance. The only difference was that the Romanians were relatively worse treated because of their Russophobia, while “there was less looting, rape and expropriation in Bulgaria than elsewhere. In general, Bulgarians welcomed the liberating troops with polite enthusiasm. The Soviets found the local

Communist Party larger and better-organized than its Romanian counterpart [only 1000 members under Ana Pauker at the beginning].”

Nevertheless, communists will be communists, and in the end there was little to choose between the sufferings of the different Balkan countries. Thus after the death of Tsar Boris, his brother, Prince Cyril, was arrested by Soviet troops and shot on “Bloody Thursday”, February 3, 1945. Again, as in all communist countries, the Orthodox Church in Bulgaria was persecuted: so-called associations of priests controlled by the communists were infiltrated into the Church of Bulgaria, as into neighbouring Serbia. “After assuming power,” writes Ivan Marchevsky, “the communists began to destroy the clergy: a third of the 2000 members of the clergy was killed. Then they began to act in a different way: Vladykas appointed ‘from above’ ordained obedient priests…”

And so, after the horrors of fascist occupation, most of the Balkans fell under the even worse horrors of the communist yoke. Only Greece escaped – but only after the Civil War between the royalists (supported by Britain and the United States) and the communists (supported by Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria) that ended in 1949, leaving Greece bitterly divided and in ruins. And yet, “If My people had heard Me, if Israel had walked in My ways, quickly would I have humbled their enemies, and upon their oppressors would I have laid My hand…” (Psalm 81.12-13).

847 Glenny, op. cit., p. 545.
THE MOSCOW COUNCIL OF 1945

“Patriarch” Sergius died on May 15, 1944. “They say that not long before his death [he] had a vision of Christ, after which he sobbed for a long time over the crimes he had committed.”\textsuperscript{848} It would be good to know that this Judas had really repented of his terrible crimes; but there is no evidence that he ever tried to mitigate, let alone reverse, their impact on Church life...

The former renovationist Metropolitan Alexis (Simansky) of Leningrad entered into the rights of the patriarchal locum tenens. Metropolitan Alexis’ first act as locum tenens was to send a telegram on May 19, 1944 to Stalin, in which he thanked him for the trust he had showed him, promised to continue the politics of Stalin without wavering and assured him of his love and devotion to the cause of the party and Stalin...

Stalin now needed to convene a council to elect a new patriarch. He convened it “at the beginning of 1945, that is, in time for the official meeting of the heads of the governments of the USSR, USA and Great Britain from February 4 to 12 in Yalta, which had for Stalin a strategically important significance. With this aim, already at the end of November, 1944 a congress of bishops had been carried out in Moscow at which they were given special instructions and commands on the order in which the council was to be carried out and the role of each of them in it. It was here that the projected conciliar documents were drawn up, and the order for the election of the new Soviet patriarch was drawn up. The former Catacomb Archbishop Luke (Vojno-Yasensky), who had been freed from a camp during the war and united to the MP, reminded the gathered bishops of the resolution of the Local Council of 1917-1918 to the effect that the patriarch had to be elected by secret ballot from several candidates. But none of the sergianist bishops decided to support this resolution and the single candidate, as had been planned, remained Metropolitan Alexis (Simansky). Since Archbishop Luke did not agree with this violation of the conciliar norms, he was through the efforts of Protopriest Nicholas Kolchitsky and Metropolitan Alexis not admitted to the council and took no part in it.”\textsuperscript{849}

The council consisted of four Russian metropolitans, 41 bishops and 141 representatives of the clergy and laity. Also present were the patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch and Georgia, and representatives of the Constantinopolitan, Romanian, Bulgarian, Serbian and other Churches. In all there were 204 participants.

\textsuperscript{848} Shumilo, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{849} Shumilo, op. cit.; Fr. Sergius Gordun, “Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ pri Svyateishikh Patriarkhakh Sergii i Aleksii” (The Russian Orthodox Church under their Holinesses Patriarchs Sergius and Alexis), \textit{Vestnik Russkogo Kristianskogo Deizhiena (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement)}, vol. 158, 1-1990, p. 92.
"A significant amount of money," writes Shumilo, "was set apart by Stalin for its preparation. The best hotels of the capital, the "Metropole" and "National" were placed at the disposal of the participants of the council gratis, as well as Kremlin government food reserves, government "ZIS" automobiles, a large government house with all modern conveniences and much else. Stalin was also concerned about the arrival in the USSR of representatives of foreign churches, so as to give an international significance to the given action. As V. Alexeev notes: ‘... By having a local council Stalin forestalled possible new accusations of the council’s lack of competency and representativeness, etc. for the election of a patriarch from the foreign part of the Orthodoxy clergy... So that the very fact of the election of a new patriarch should not elicit doubts, the patriarchs of the Orthodox churches and their representatives from Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia and the Middle East were invited for the first time to Moscow.’ And although in the actual council only three patriarchs – those of Georgia, Alexandria and Antioch – took part, representatives from other local churches also arrived; they were specially brought to Moscow by Soviet military aeroplanes.

“The council opened on January 31, 1945 with a speech of welcome in the name of the Soviet Stalinist regime by the president of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church, NKVD Major-General G. Karpov. He noted that the council ‘was an outstanding event in the life of the Church’, whose activity was directed ‘towards helping the Soviet people to secure the great historical aims set before it’, that is, the construction of ‘communist society’.

“In its turn the council did not miss the opportunity yet again to express its gratitude and assure the communist party, the government and Stalin personally of its sincere devotion. As the address put it: ‘The Council profoundly appreciates the trusting, and to the highest degree benevolent and attentive attitude towards all church undertakings on the part of the state authorities... and expresses to our Government our sincerely grateful feelings’.

“As was planned, the sole candidate as the new Soviet patriarch was unanimously confirmed at the council – Metropolitan Alexis (Simansky). Besides this, a new ‘Temporary Statute for the Administration of the Russian Orthodox Church’, composed by workers at the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church and the chancellor of the MP, Protopriest Nicholas Kolchitsky, was accepted at the council. This Statute radically contradicted the canonical principles of Orthodoxy. ‘This Statute turned the Moscow patriarchate into a certain likeness of a totalitarian structure, in which three people at the head with the so-called “patriarch of Moscow and all Rus” received greater power than a local council, and the right to administer the Church in a still more dictatorial fashion than Peter’s synod. But if the emperors up to 1917 were nevertheless considered to be Orthodox Christians,
now the official structures of the Church were absolutely subject to the will of the leaders of the God-fighting regime. Church history has not seen such a fall in 2000 years of Christianity!” By accepting in 1945 the new Statute on the administration of the Russian Orthodox Church that contradicted from the first to the last letter the conciliar-canonical principles of the administration of the Church confirmed at the All-Russian Local Church Council of 1917-1918, the Moscow patriarchate once more confirmed its own Soviet path of origin and development, and also the absence of any kind of link or descent from the canonical ‘Tikhonite’ Church, which legally existed in the country until 1927.”

The MP, having meekly submitted to the rule of the totalitarian dictator Stalin, was now in effect a totalitarian organization itself. All decisions in the Church depended effectively on the single will of the patriarch, and through him, of Stalin. And this critical dependence on the atheist state continued throughout the Soviet period (and after).

For, as Fr. Sergius Gordun writes: “For decades the position of the Church was such that the voice of the clergy and laity could not be heard. In accordance with the document accepted by the Local Council of 1945, in questions requiring the agreement of the government of the USSR, the patriarch would confer with the Council for the Affairs of the Orthodox Church attached to the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR. The Statute did not even sketchily outline the range of questions in which the patriarch was bound to agree with the Council, which gave the latter the ability to exert unlimited control over church life.”

The power over the Church that the 1945 council gave to the atheists was revealed in the secret 1974 Furov report of the Council for Religious Affairs to the Central Committee: “The Synod is under the control of the Council for Religious Affairs. The question of the selection and placing of its permanent members was and remains completely in the hands of the Council, and the candidature of the non-permanent members is also agreed beforehand with responsible members of the Council. All issues which are to be discussed at the Synod are first discussed by Patriarch Pimen and the permanent members of the Synod with the leaders of the Council and in its departments, and the final ‘Decisions of the Holy Synod’ are also agreed.”

After the enthronement of Alexis (on February 4), Stalin ordered the Council to congratulate Alexis and give him “a commemorative present. The value of the gift was determined at 25-30,000 rubles. Stalin loved to give valuable presents. It was also decided to ‘show gratitude’ to the foreign bishops for their participation in the Council.

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850 Shumilo, op. cit.
851 Gordun, op. cit., p. 94.
The commissariat was told to hand over 42 objects from the depositories of the Moscow museums and 28 from the Zagorsk state museum – mainly objects used in Orthodox worship – which were used as gifts for the Eastern Patriarchs. Thus, for example, Patriarch Christopher of Alexandria was given a golden panagia with valuable stones... The patriarchs were expected to reciprocate, and they hastened to express the main thing – praise... Patriarch Christopher of Alexandria said: 'Marshal Stalin,... under whose leadership the military operations have been conducted on an unprecedented scale, has for this purpose an abundance of divine grace and blessing.'”

As was to be expected, the Eastern Patriarchs recognised the canonicity of the election, “hastening,” as Shumilo says, “to assure themselves of the support of the head of the biggest and wealthiest patriarchate, which now, moreover, had acquired ‘the clemency [appropriate to] a great power’”. The price they paid for the favour of this “great power” was an agreement to break communion with ROCOR. As Karpov reported: “The Council was a clear proof of the absence of religion in the USSR [!] and also had a certain political significance. The Moscow Patriarchate in particular agreed with Patriarch Christopher of Alexandria and with the representatives of the Constantinople and Jerusalem patriarchates to break links with Metropolitan Anastasy, and on the necessity of a joint struggle against the Vatican.”

The results of the joint victory of the Red Army and the MP were not slow to manifest themselves, both inside and outside Russia. Andreev writes: “The Underground or Catacomb Church in Soviet Russia underwent her hardest trials after February 4th, 1945, that is, after the enthronement of the Soviet Patriarch Alexis. Those who did not recognize him were sentenced to new terms of imprisonment and were sometimes shot. Those who did recognize him and gave their signature to that effect were often liberated before their terms expired and received appointments... All secret priests detected in the Soviet zone of Germany were shot.” Commenting on these words, M.V. Shkarovsky writes: “The given fact is partly confirmed by documents in the archives of the security police. In 1944-45 in the camps a whole series of cases on counter-revolutionary organizations was fabricated. In these, many clergymen were sentenced to an increase in their sentence or were shot.”

Towards the end of the war the NKVD GULAG administration made the following decisions: “1. To enrol qualified agents from among the prisoners who are churchmen and sectarians, ordering them to uncover the facts

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853 Alexeyev, "Marshal Stalin doveriaet Tserkvi" (Marshal Stalin trusts the Church), Agitator, 10, 1989, pp. 27-28.
854 Shumilo, op. cit.
856 I.M. Andreev (Andreevsky), "The Catacomb Church in the Russian Land".
857 Shkarovsky, Russkiaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkva’ pri Staline i Khruscheve (The Russian Orthodox Church under Stalin and Khruschev), Moscow, 2005, p. 205.
concerning the anti-Soviet activity of these prisoners. 2. In the process of the agents’ work on the prisoners, to uncover their illegal links with those in freedom and coordinate the work of these links with the corresponding organs of the NKVD.” As a result of these instructions, many catacomb organizations among the prisoners were liquidated. For example, “in the Ukhtoizhemsky ITL an anti-Soviet group of churchmen prisoners was liquidated. One of the leaders of this group, the priest Ushakov, composed prayers and distributed them among the prisoners. It turned out that he had illegal links with a Bishop Galynsky [a Catacomb hierarch].”

“An internal result of the Moscow council of 1945 that was positive for the Soviet regime was the fact that, thanks to the participation in it of the Eastern Patriarchs, the appearance of ‘legitimacy’ and ‘canonicity’ had been given to this Stalin-inspired undertaking, which led into error not only a part of the Orthodox clergy and hierarchy in the emigration [about which, more below], but also many of the True Orthodox Catacomb pastors in the USSR, who naively did not suspect that there might have been any anti-canonical crimes.”

The Catacomb pastors who remained faithful to Orthodoxy were in a still more difficult position after than before the war. Those who come into the open during the German occupation were again deprived of their churches and forced to go underground. “And again, as in the 30s, repressions were renewed against the clergy who did not accept the ‘Soviet church’. Thus in Moscow province alone, where there had been more than ten Catacomb pastors in 1941, by the beginning of 1945 general searches had been carried out and all the clergy of the True Orthodox Church had been arrested.

“As was to be expected, thanks to the massive arrests of priest and active parishioners of the Catacomb Church and the opening of churches for the MP, the government succeeded in obtaining a reduction in the number of ‘headless underground groups’, the passive members of which began to turn to the legal clergy, while the ‘stubborn fanatics’ ‘isolated themselves’ from the external world. Besides this, for the more successful ferreting out of the illegal communities of the Catacomb Church the MP, too, was drawn in, beginning a ‘struggle with sectarianism’ with the cooperation of the MGB and the Council for the Affairs of the ROC. Many instances are known in which monks or priests of the MP, recruited by the MGB, were sent into catacomb communities and informed against their members, in connection with which the most active among them were arrested. The creation of such a system of informing was not slow in producing the results that the regime needed: already by the middle of the 50s Soviet state security had succeeded in revealing and ‘dissolving’ more than 50% of the Catacomb communities and

858 Irina Osipova, Khotelos’ by vsiekh poimenno nazvat’ (I would like to call all of them by name), Moscow: Fond ‘Mir i Chelovek’, 1993, pp. 161, 193.
859 Shumilo, op. cit.
monasteries in the USSR, thereby stopping both the growth in numbers and the influence of the Catacomb Church on the population.”\textsuperscript{860} Only in the central regions of Tambov, Lipets, Tula, Ryazan and Voronezh was there a certain increase in catacomb activity; many young people took leading positions in the movement.\textsuperscript{861} And in the 1950s there were still quite a few wandering catacomb priests and a few holy bishops, such as Anthony (Galynsky), Peter (Ladygin) and Barnabas (Belyaev).\textsuperscript{862} Many more were released by Khruschev’s 1956 amnesty.

“Soon after the council, on April 10, 1945, Stalin personally met [Patriarch Alexis]. At the meeting, besides Stalin, there took part the people’s commissar for foreign affairs V.M. Molotov, and from the MP [NKVD agent] Metropolitan Nicholas (Yarushevich), who soon became president of the newly created Department of External (i.e. international) Church Affairs (OVTsS), and Protopriest N. Kolchitsky – chancellor of the MP, in charge of questions of international relations. This is how Patriarch Alexis later recalled this meeting: ‘... Full of happiness at seeing face to face him whose name alone is pronounced with love not only in every corner of our country, but also in all the freedom-loving and peace-loving countries, we expressed our gratitude to Joseph Vissarionovich... The discussion was a completely unforced conversation of a father with his children.’ As V. Alexeev affirms, citing the correspondence between [Patriarch Alexis] Simansky and G. Karpov, at the meeting ‘besides discussing intra-ecclesiastical problems, the conversation first of all concerned the tasks of the Russian Orthodox Church in the field of international relations... The Church, according to Stalin’s conception, had to play a significant role in facilitating the international contacts of the USSR, using its own channels’. Soon after this meeting, on May 28, 1945, Patriarch Alexis unexpectedly set off on a ‘pilgrimage’ to the Middle East, where he met not only prominent religious personalities, but also the heads of governments and other influential politicians...”\textsuperscript{863}

\textsuperscript{860} Shumilo, op. cit. As Archbishop Lazarus (Zhurbenko) said: “The catacomb believers feared the Moscow Patriarchate priests even more than the police. Whenever a priest came for some reason or other, he was met by a feeling of dread. The catacomb people would say, ‘A red detective has come.’ He was sent deliberately, and he was obliged to report everything to the authorities. Not infrequently, hierarchs and priests told the people outright, directly from the ambon, ‘Look around, Orthodox people. There are those who do not come to church. Find out who they are and report to us; these are enemies of the Soviet regime who stand in the way of the building of Socialism.' We were very much afraid of these sergianist-oriented priests.” ("Out from the Catacombs", Orthodox America, vol. X, № 10 (100), June, 1990, pp. 5-6)

\textsuperscript{861} Shkvarovsky, Iosifianstvo, op. cit., pp. 192-197.

\textsuperscript{862} On Bishop Peter, see "Kratkoe opisanie biografii menia nedostojnago skhiepiskopa Petra Ladygina" (A Short Description of the Biography of Me, the Unworthy Schema-Bishop Peter Ladygin); Tserkovnaia Zhizn' (Church Life), №№ 7-8, July-August, 1985. On Bishop Barnabas, see V. Moss "Holy Hieroconfessor Barnabas of Pechersk", Orthodox Life, January-February, 1995.

\textsuperscript{863} Shumilo, op. cit.
During his trip to the Middle East, Patriarch Alexis intervened in the Greek civil war by calling on the Greek people to support the Communists and reject the Royalists and British Imperialists (Stalin, as we have seen, adopted a more neutral stance). In Jerusalem he tried to persuade the ROCOR communities to come under his omophorion. But the head of ROCOR’s Spiritual Mission, Archimandrite Anthony (the future Archbishop of Los Angeles) firmly rejected his advances. With the agreement of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, the patriarch was allowed to visit the convents on Eleon and Gethsemane. The hierarchs, surrounded by English police and Russian KGB agents, entered the church on Eleon just as the nuns were singing: “Blessed is the man walketh not in the counsel [soviet in Slavonic] of the ungodly”. None of the nuns in either of the convents asked for the hierarchs’ blessing. The patriarch was annoyed, but was heard to say: “What discipline Archimandrite Anthony has!”

Three years later, the Soviets, supported by the new Israeli government, forcibly seized some ROCOR churches, injuring some monastics. On December 1, 1948, the military governor of Jerusalem presented to Hierodeacon Methodius, the representative of Archimandrite Anthony, a demand that he hand over the keys of the Mission’s properties to the representatives of the MP who had arrived from Moscow. “This note was presented to Fr. Methodius by the representatives of the MP, who were accompanied by a group of strong young men in uniform from the Soviet embassy and several observers from the Israeli government. Fr. Methodius refused outright to hand over the keys of the church that had been entrusted to him. Then the young men in uniform surrounded the clergyman and began to beat him. The Israeli observers did not take part in the beating, but did not defend him either. Might took its toll: beaten to the point of unconsciousness, Fr. Methodius was thrown into a ditch, the keys were taken from his belt, and the ‘transfer of property’ took place. It should be noted that a significant part of the property handed over by the Israeli authorities supposedly into the possession of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1948 was later sold to the Israeli government by the Soviet authorities in 1964.”

“After visiting the countries of the Middle East, Metropolitan Nicholas, who had accompanied the Soviet patriarch, set off at the end of June for England, where he was received at Buckingham palace by King George VI. Metropolitan Nicholas made a successful attempt to exert political influence on the king with the aim of forming a ‘democratic image’ for the totalitarian regime of Stalin in British government circles…”

865 Protopriest Victor Potapov; “RPZTs i sud’by russkoj Palestiny” (ROCOR and the Destinies of Russian Palestine); “How ROCOR lost Jerusalem”, Vertograd-Inform, № 20, October, 2000, pp. 23-36.
866 Shumilo, op. cit The MP took complete control of ROCOR’s properties in Israel in 1997.
Metropolitan Nicholas “sounded out the ground for the organization of parishes of the Moscow Patriarchate in London and the participation of the Anglicans in the planned World Conference of Christian Churches in Moscow. In the course of the visit the archbishop of York issued some anti-catholic declarations, calling the Vatican the common enemy of Orthodoxy and Anglicanism. This gave G. Karpov an excuse, in his report to the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) to draw the conclusion that ‘the Anglican church, like the Russian Orthodox church, has a negative attitude towards the Vatican and is ready to take part in undertakings directed against the Vatican, although it has so far adopted a passive position in this matter’ (RTsKhIDNI, f.17, op. 125, d. 407, l. 37).”

Metropolitan Nicholas then went to Paris, where his propaganda was so successful that a law on Soviet passports was passed (on June 14, 1946), after which more than 3000 Russians living in France hurried to the Soviet embassy to take their passports. After the victory of the Soviets, many Russian émigrés were swept up by a feeling of nostalgia for what they thought was their homeland. In the words of the writer Vladimir Nabokov, they began to “fraternize with the Soviets because they sense in the Soviet Union the Soviet Union of the Russian people.” Typical of the feelings of many at the time were the words of Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris, full of emotion but with no spiritual, ecclesiastical content: “The holy Mother Russian Church is calling us to return to her bosom. Shall we decline this maternal call? Our soul has suffered enough in exile abroad. It is time to go home. The higher ecclesiastical authorities promise us a peaceful development of church life. I want to kiss my native Russian land. We want peace in the bosom of our native Mother Church – both us old men, in order to find a final peace, and the young and the middle-aged, in order to work on the regeneration of the Homeland, and to heal her yawning wounds. Without fear or doubt, and without disturbance, let us go to our native land: it is so good, so beautiful…”

And so in September, 1945 75 Eulogian parishes were united with the MP. The question of Eulogius’ ban, placed on him by the MP fifteen years earlier for his refusal to submit to it, was not even discussed, and Nicholas and Eulogius concelebrated in the church of St. Alexander Nevsky. On September

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867 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 86, 97. However, the Russian community in London remained unitedly loyal to ROCOR for time being. It was only when the French-Russian monk Anthony (Bloom) arrived as Orthodox chaplain for the Fellowship of SS. Alban and Sergius that a division began. In 1950 Fr. Anthony was made vicar of the newly created MP parish. In 1957 he was consecrated to the episcopate. In 1963 he was appointed Exarch of the MP in Western Europe, and in 1966 – Metropolitan.


870 Eulogius, Puti nojzh zhitvi (The Ways of My Life), p. 613; in Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 81. Eulogius did not return in the end, as we shall see below.
11 the MP decreed that Metropolitan Eulogius should be exarch of these parishes. However, Eulogius was still under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. So he asked him for permission to return to the MP, but no reply ensued, and he remained dependent on Constantinople, by whom he was also named exarch.\textsuperscript{871} His successor, Archbishop Vladimir (Tikhonitsky), supported by his flock, decided in October, 1946 to remain with the Ecumenical Patriarchate.\textsuperscript{872}

In September, 1945 ROCOR’s Metropolitan Seraphim (Lukyanov) of Western Europe joined the MP, and after the death of Metropolitan Eulogius was raised to the rank of exarch. However, his Paris flock did not accept him, so he returned to ROCOR, but then again returned to the MP, where he died as metropolitan of Odessa. In one of his letters abroad Metropolitan Seraphim wrote that he was constantly watched by a “nanny”.\textsuperscript{873}

In view of these facts Shumilo is quite justified in writing: “It was precisely thanks to the lying pro-Soviet propaganda of the hierarchy of the Moscow Patriarchate that tens of thousands of émigrés, among whom were quite a few clergy and even bishops, believing in the spectre of freedom, began to return to the USSR at the end of the Second World War, where the Soviet concentration camps and prisons were waiting for them... These tragic pages of the history of our Fatherland have been sealed by rivers of innocent blood on all succeeding generations. And to a great degree the blame for this, for the tens of thousands of destroyed lives and crippled destinies, lies on the first Soviet patriarch Sergius Stragorodsky and his church, who by deed and word served the God-fighting Soviet totalitarian system...”\textsuperscript{874}

On October 18, 1945 Metropolitan Gregory of Leningrad visited Finland, and received the Konevets and Valamo monasteries together with two parishes in Helsinki into his jurisdiction. He also received written assurances from the hierarchs of the Finnish Orthodox Church that they would soon return from Constantinople to Moscow.\textsuperscript{875} However, as Timo Siukonen writes, the MP finally had to admit defeat in its struggle to gain control over the Finnish Church. “The Winter War (1939-1940) and the Continuation War (1941-1944) decisively changed the position of the Finnish Orthodox Church. The loss of the ceded territories of Karelia meant that the church had to give

\textsuperscript{871} Monk Benjamin, \textit{op. cit.}, part 3, p. 94.
\textsuperscript{872} Monk Benjamin, \textit{op. cit.}, part 3, pp. 114-115. On December 25, 1945 the Soviet deputy foreign minister V. Dekanozov wrote to G. Karpov: “The successes of Nicholas of Krutitsa have not been established and could easily be destroyed. Comrade Bogomolov (the ambassador in France) thinks that the sending of constant representatives of the MP to Paris should be speeded up and the first successes of Nicholas confirmed, otherwise the Anglo-Americans will seize the foreign Orthodox organizations into their hands and turn them into a weapon against us” (GARF, f. 6991, op. 1, d. 65, l. 452).
\textsuperscript{873} Monk Benjamin, \textit{op. cit.}, part 3, pp. 94-95.
\textsuperscript{874} Shumilo, \textit{op. cit.}
\textsuperscript{875} M.V. Shkarovsky; Monk Benjamin, \textit{op. cit.}, part 3, p. 95.
up 90 per cent of its property, and 70 per cent of its members were settled in different parts of Finland as displaced persons. According to [Juha] Riikonen's thesis, the Moscow Patriarchate tried to dictate to Finland, as it did to other churches in the Soviet sphere of power. The Russian Orthodox Church was a part of the foreign relations apparatus of the Soviet Union.

“Initially the linkage was proposed by Moscow Patriarch Alexis after Victory Day celebrations in May 1945. Gregory, the Metropolitan of Leningrad and Novgorod, was sent to Kuopio for discussions. In the talks Gregory demanded that the Finnish Orthodox Church put an end to its isolation, and that the lost daughter should come back to its true father.

“In December 1945 Herman asked Alexis if the Finnish church would be allowed to keep the new calendar that it had adopted, as well as an autonomy that would be as extensive as what it enjoyed under Constantinople. Alexis gave a negative answer to both questions. After that, Herman suspended preparations for an extraordinary synod.

“A survey of church members in 1946 reinforced the negative view of a linkage, and the matter was not discussed for years at meetings of the ecclesiastical executive. ‘The pressure from Moscow was too direct, and dismissive of Finland's legal decision-making system’, Riikonen believes.

“According to the thesis, two different administrative cultures clashed in the handling of the matter. Moscow's style clearly indicated a totalitarian way of dealing with issues.

“The Finnish national government felt that choosing which patriarchate to be a part of was a matter for the Finnish Orthodox Church to decide on its own.

“The Security Police saw the situation as problematic. It felt that the arrival of Bishop Michael in Finland in 1954 was a clear sign of attempts to turn Orthodox congregations into a cover for Soviet espionage’, Riikonen notes.”

“The Finnish Orthodox Church was in a tight corner for more than ten years, as the Moscow Patriarchate tried to coddle, connive, and command it to come back to its fold - away from the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

“The plans came to nothing. Archbishop Herman managed to steer the church in very difficult waters, and it was not until the spring of 1957 that the
Finnish Orthodox Church was able to claim final victory in its struggle to remain independent.”

However, the Soviet church had successes elsewhere, including the defection of the ROCOR Bishop John of Urmia (Iran) to Moscow – but he later rejoined ROCOR when he moved to America. This tug-of-war between the Soviet and American spheres of influence was felt everywhere. Its influence was felt even on Mount Athos, where Archimandrite Justin of the Russian monastery of St. Panteleimon petitioned to come under the MP.

One of the few defeats suffered by the Soviets in the ecclesiastical arena at this time was in Japan. On March 27, 1946 Bishop Nicholas (Ono) and his consistory petitioned to be received into the MP, and on April 3 Patriarch Alexis agreed. However, Japan was at that time under the military occupation of the American General MacArthur, one of whose advisors, Colonel Boris Pasch, was the son of Metropolitan Theophilus (Pashkovsky), head of the American Metropolia, who advised his son to hinder the union of the Japanese Church with Moscow. The son heeded his father, and the union did not take place at this time. Two bishops sent by Moscow to further the union arrived at Vladivostok, but were not allowed to sail to Japan by the American authorities. The MP would have to wait until 1970 before it regained control of the Japanese Church…

In the conditions of the Cold War, which began immediately after the World War, the Soviets were especially interested in the United States of America and in the possibility of infiltrating American life through its pocket Soviet church.

“One On October 26-27 [1944] the hierarchs of the Church Abroad in North America Archbishop Vitaly, Bishop Jerome and Bishop Joasaph took part in the Hierarchical Council of North America, in which the election of Metropolitan Sergius to the Russian patriarchal throne was discussed. A resolution was passed recognizing the election and indicating that the Patriarch Sergius of Moscow should be commemorated at Divine services – without, however, removing the commemoration of [ROCOR] Metropolitans Anastasy and Metropolitan Theophilus of North America. Following this conciliar decision, Metropolitan Theophilus issued an ukaz on the commemoration of all three hierarchs in all the parishes of North America. This resolution was signed also by the ROCOR hierarchs Vitaly (Maximenko), Tikhon (Troitsky), Joasaph and Jerome.”

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877 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 102-103.
879 Protopriest Alexander Lebedev. Pora uzhe nam znat’ svoi u istorii (It’s time we knew our history); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 65.
On May 31, after the death of Sergius, a Council of the Bishops of North America under the presidency of Metropolitan Theophilus and with the participation of Archbishop Vitaly issued an ukaz on the commemoration of the patriarchal locum tenens, Metropolitan Alexis, in all the churches. Meanwhile, two bishops, Alexis of Alaska and Macarius of Boston, joined Moscow. Then, in November, 1946, at a clergy-laity council in Cleveland, with the agreement of Metropolitan Theophilus but without the agreement of the other bishops, the council was recognized to be the supreme legislative and administrative organ of the American metropolia – an act which reduced the power of the bishops to almost nothing. The council decided – against the protests of five out of the nine bishops – to return to the MP. Metropolitan Theophilus then wrote to the five dissenting bishops that they were excluded from his metropolia, and ordered that their names be removed from commemoration from the parishes before Pascha. The five dissenters, led by Archbishop Vitaly (Maximenko), returned into submission to ROCOR.

“In preparation for the council,” writes Andreyev, “it was very interesting and characteristic that the same persons who fought for the Moscow jurisdiction and the split from the [ROCOR] Synod and ‘helped’ Metropolitan Eulogius in Europe, moved from Paris to America and began to ‘help’ Metropolitan Theophilus [the leader of the American Metropolia]. With unusual knowledge of church matters, these professors of engineering and other fine arts began to state authoritatively that ‘the Moscow Patriarchate has not deviated from the dogmas, canons and rites of Orthodoxy in any way, and the politics conducted by its head, even though it is condemned today by many, cannot have a decisive influence on its canonical position.’ In this way the Cleveland council prepared itself by only a formal cooperation with the Synod Abroad, and then, completely backing down from its position, pronounced this resolution: ‘We are passing the resolution to request His Holiness, the Patriarch of Moscow, to reunite us to his bosom and be our spiritual father, under the stipulation that we preserve our full autonomy, which exists at the present time. Since the hierarchical authority of the patriarchate is incompatible with the hierarchical authority of the Synod Abroad of the Russian Orthodox Church, the American Church is discontinuing any administrative subordination to the Synod Abroad.”

In 1947 Metropolitan Gregory, Patriarch Alexis’ ambassador, brought a draft Statute of “the autonomous administration” of the Russian Orthodox Church in North American and Canada. In it, as Alexander Bogolepov writes, “the Moscow Patriarch attempted to make subject to his own confirmation the

880 Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 75.
881 Archbishop Vitaly (Maximenko), Motivy noej zhizni (Motifs of my Life), 1955; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 117-118.
election of any American Metropolitan, as well as the elections of the diocesan bishops. Patriarch Alexis, in his Ukase of February 16, 1945, recommended two candidates of his own (Metropolitan Benjamin and Archbishop Alexis) to the All-American Sobor for election as Metropolitan. The Patriarch’s Ukase went on to say that this imposed no limitation on the right of the All-American Sobor to nominate and elect its own candidate, but at the same time it was pointed out that the Moscow Patriarchate had the canonical right to refuse to confirm the candidate so elected for any reason whatsoever. According to Metropolitan Gregory’s Draft Statute, the Metropolitan and the Bishops of the American Church were subject to approval by the Moscow Patriarch and could be deposed by him. This would make possible the gradual replacement of the entire episcopate; diocesan bishops would all be replaced by bishops agreeable to Moscow. According to the same draft, the decrees of the All-American Sobor would be subject to confirmation by the Bishops’ Sobor, and, by the same token, its entire activity would be subordinated to an episcopate faithful to Moscow.”

Such a degree of subordination to Moscow proved unacceptable to the American Metropolia, and the union did not take place. However, neither did the Metropolia return to ROCOR, remaining in a kind of limbo until 1970…

A particularly absorbing struggle took place for the Church in China. All the Russian bishops except one – the renowned wonderworker John (Maximovich) of Shanghai – accepted Soviet passports and returned to the MP. For a time Bishops John had followed his superior, Archbishop Victor of Peking, in commemorating the Soviet patriarch. However, Bishop John now began to be opposed by his flock. Thus when his priest, Fr. Peter tried to introduce the commemoration of the patriarch in the convent ruled by Abbess Adriana (later of San Francisco), she forbade him, and told him to go back to Bishop John and tell him that this was wrong. At about this time, on September 28, 1945, Bishop John received a telegram from Metropolitan Anastasy in Geneva telling him that the Synod Abroad was functioning, that the parents of Vladyka John were alive and living in Germany, and that he, the metropolitan, asked him to tell him about the situation of the Church in China. Bishop John immediately stopped commemorating the Soviet patriarch, and on September 29 he telegraphed Archbishop Victor that he had re-established contact with the Synod.

One of Bishop John’s spiritual children tells how he repented of his brief commemoration of the Soviet patriarch every time he met another bishop, even down to the time he lived in the U.S.884

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“The next telegram came in the month of November from the United States from Archbishop Tikhon of Western America and San Francisco, in which Vladyka Tikhon informed him that Metropolitan Anastasy, Archbishops Vitaly, Joasaph, Jerome and he had come into contact with each other and asked Bishop John to be with them and not to recognize the Moscow Patriarchate.

“This was all that Bishop John had to know, and when, at the beginning of December, 1945 there arrived a letter from Archbishop Victor informing him that he recognized Patriarch Alexis, Bishop John categorically refused to accept the new Patriarch, in spite of terrible pressure, exhortations and threats.”

On November 26, 1947, in defiance of the Soviets, the Chinese government in Nanking confirmed Bishop John as head of the Russian Spiritual Mission in China. But in 1948, as the communists came closer to power, Archbishop John evacuated his flock of 6000 to the Philippines, and then to the United States. He himself left Shanghai on May 4, 1949. His refusal to join the Soviets undoubtedly saved both the physical and the spiritual lives of himself and his flock. Those 10,000 Russian Orthodox in Shanghai who accepted Soviet passports and returned to the “Fatherland” were not so fortunate…
Thus as a result of the victory of the Red Army in 1945, the Moscow Patriarchate, the largest church in Orthodoxy, was transformed into “an agent of worldwide antichristianity”, in the words of the Kirov confessor Boris Talantov.

Many years later, an article on an MP web-site produced this astonishing blasphemy: “The ‘atheist’ USSR, trampling down death by death, resurrected and saved the world. Only because ‘godly’ and ‘ungodly’ soldiers died in their millions do we live today and the whole population of the world, the whole of humanity, is alive. It would be no exaggeration to think that that terrible and great war and great Victory in that Great war caused the first sociologically large-scale micro-resurrection, a reproduction by the peoples of the USSR of the exploit of Christ. May 9, 1945 became the most convincing witness of the fact that 2000 years ago Christ was resurrected. Therefore our Great Victory is the feast of feasts, it is Pascha…”

This blasphemy was endorsed in 2010 by Patriarch Cyril (Gundiaev), who described the deaths of the millions of Soviet citizens in the Second World War as “a nation-wide propitiatory sacrifice” to God for the sins of the Russian people. If those millions had died for Christ, then it might indeed have been a propitiatory sacrifice, being united to the propitiatory Sacrifice of Christ Himself. But since it is known that the vast majority died, not for Christ, but for Stalin, these deaths not only did not wipe out any sins, but rather added to the already vast and unprecedented bacchanalia of evil that constituted the whole period from 1917 to 1945.

you, the Homeland calls you!’ In 1946 they trustingly entered the USSR, and were all immediately captured and incarcerated for 10 years, while the ‘Mother Church’ was silent, not raising her voice in defence of those whom she had beckoned into the trap. In order to be ‘re-established’ in their hierarchical rank, they had to accept and chant hymns to Sergianism, and accept the Soviet patriarch. And what then? Some of them ended their lives under house arrest, others in monastery prisons, while others soon departed for eternity.” (Nativity Epistle, 2000/2001).


VICTORS’ JUSTICE

As the proverb goes, the wheels of God’s justice grind slowly, but they grind very fine... At the end of the Second World War, vast injustices remained (of which more anon), but in relation to Germany it appeared that justice had indeed been done. In 1918 justice had not really been done: Germany had not really paid for starting the First World War, for invading neutral countries, for inventing the killing of civilians by aerial bombardment (from zeppelins), for wiping out whole nations (the Herero of South-West Africa), for destroying Orthodox Russia and releasing the revolution. After all, although Germany had lost millions of men, her own territory had not been touched. And, most importantly, she had not repented of her sins, but insisted, on the contrary, that a great injustice had been done to her... But in 1945 it was a different matter: after still greater sins, her homeland was completely devastated, much of it occupied by the most barbarian army in history – that of the Soviet Union. But this time she did not complain; and in her post-war behaviour she showed genuine and deep contrition. Justice, most Germans themselves recognized, had been done...

This is disputed by Max Hastings: “Among Germans in the summer of 1945, self-pity was a much more prevalent sensation than contrition: one in three of their male children born between 1915 and 1924 were dead, two in five of those born between 1920 and 1925. In the vast refugee migrations that preceded and followed VE-day, over fourteen million ethnic Germans left homes in the east, or were driven from them. At least half a million – modern estimates vary widely – perished during their subsequent odysseys; the historic problem of Central Europe’s German minorities was solved in the most abrupt fashion, by ethnic cleansing.”

However, the passage of time, and denazification, did its work. Later generations of Germans, even though they were born only during or after the war, felt a certain collective guilt for the sins of their fathers. And the extraordinary success story that is Germany since the war surely witnesses to the fact that they have learned their lesson...

The other Axis power that was mightily punished in 1945 was, of course, Japan. A pagan country that sins is, by virtue of its lesser knowledge of God’s laws, less guilty than a Christian one. And yet Japan’s appalling treatment especially of the Chinese, but also of Allied prisoners of war and Korean women, merited severe punishment. And they got it... But their repentance was more superficial than that of the Germans; their enthusiastic acceptance of the American occupiers so charmed the latter that they even allowed the Emperor Hirohito to keep his throne – to the fury of many Allied veterans.

890 Hastings, op. cit, pp. 653-654.
891 The Chinese lost fifteen million people in the war (Hastings, op. cit., p. 669).
“In the aftermath of the war,” wrote Japanese writer Kazutoshi Hando in 2007, “blame was placed solely on the Japanese army and navy. This seemed just, because the civilian population had always been deceived by the armed forces about what was done. Civilian Japan felt no sense of collective guilt – and that was the way the American victors and occupiers wanted it. In the same fashion, it was the Americans who urged that no modern Japanese history should be taught in schools. The consequence is that very few people under fifty have any knowledge of Japan’s invasion of China or colonisation of Manchuria…”

The Nuremburg war trials have been condemned as “victors’ justice”. If this is taken to mean that the victors invented new crimes unknown to jurisprudence, and that they applied these definitions retrospectively to deeds committed before the definitions had been made, then this is true, but relatively trivial. After all, nobody doubts that the accused were guilty as charged, and that trials of this kind, however impromptu their juridical basis, were far better than the summary execution of 50,000 of Germany’s elite that Stalin had once demanded.

But the charge becomes more credible and serious when it is remembered that only the Nazis were tried for war crimes, while the victors, both the Soviets and the Anglo-Americans, were accused of nothing. “The crux of the case at Nuremburg,” writes Niall Ferguson, “as agreed by the victorious power in London in the summer of 1945, was that the leaders of Germany and Japan had premeditated and unleashed ‘aggressive war’ and ‘set in motion evils which [had left] no home in the world untouched’. They were accused, firstly, of the ‘planning, preparation, initiation, or waging of a war of aggression, or war in violation of international treaties, agreements and assurances, or participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of the foregoing’. Yet whose side had the Soviet Union been on in 1939? By the same token, the charges against the Japanese leaders who stood trial in Tokyo included ‘the wholesale destruction of human lives, not alone on the field of battle… but in the homes, hospitals, and orphanages, in factories and fields’. But what else had the Allies perpetrated in Germany and Japan in the last months of the war?”

Let us look first at the Soviets. In 1939-41, during their alliance with Hitler, they had invaded and conquered Eastern Poland, the Baltic States, Bessarabia, Northern Bukovina and Finland, killing, plundering and exiling thousands. During the war with Hitler, they acted with an unprecedented savagery, not only against the Germans, and not only against their own people (the NKVD killed many Gulag prisoners as they retreated), but also against many other civilians of all races whom they encountered on their bloody path (the 50,000

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892 Hando, in Hastings, op. cit., p. 673.
893 Ferguson, op. cit., pp. 578-579.
Polish victims at Katyn may be taken as symbolising the Soviet war crimes of this period. Finally, in 1945, the Red Army conquered Eastern Germany and Berlin, leaving behind an unparalleled path of murder and rape. As Richard Evans writes: "Women and girls were subjected to serial rape wherever they were encountered. Rape was often accompanied by torture and mutilation and frequently ended in the victim being shot or bludgeoned to death. The raging violence was indiscriminating. Often, especially in Berlin, women were deliberately raped in the presence of their menfolk, to underline the humiliation. The men were usually killed if they tried to intervene. In East Prussia, Pomerania and Silesia it is thought that around 1,400,000 women were raped, a good number of them several times. Gang-rapes were the norm rather than the exception. The two largest Berlin hospitals estimated that at least 100,000 women had been raped in the German capital. Many caught a sexually transmitted disease, and not a few fell pregnant; the vast majority of the latter obtained an abortion, or, if they did give birth, abandoned their baby in hospital. The sexual violence went on for many weeks, even after the war formally came to an end. German women learned to hide, especially after dark; or, if they were young, to take a Soviet soldier, preferably an officer, as a lover and protector…"  

The Soviets justified themselves on the grounds of their right “to have a bit of fun”, as Stalin put it, at the expense of the Germans, who had been so cruel to them both on their own territory (about three million Russian POWs died in Nazi labour camps) and in the Soviet Union (where most of the twenty seven million who died were civilians killed by one side or the other). But if vengeance has to be the law, then it can only be against the guilty, not against the innocent, and not against women and children. But the Soviet beast, being a hater of all men, spared nobody – not even its own soldiers. Thus during the war the Bolsheviks executed 157,000 of their own soldiers (the figures for the Wehrmacht were 15-20,000) and almost a million were arrested.

895 Ferguson, op. cit., p. 539.
896 Alexander Yakovlev, A Century of Russian Violence in Soviet Russia, Yale University Press, 2003. Protopriest Michael Ardov writes: “I remember quite well the years right after the war, 1945, 1946, and how Moscow was literally flooded with cripples, soldiers who were missing arms and legs, returning from the war, and then, suddenly, they all disappeared. Only later did I learn that they were all picked up and packed off to die on the island of Valaam, in order not to spoil the view in the capital. There was no monastery there then. You can just imagine for yourselves the conditions that they had to endure there while living out their last days. They were so poor, and were reduced to begging in order to survive. This is how they were treated, just so that the capital should not be spoiled by their presence! This I remember quite well. Besides this, as we all know that, because of Stalin and his military leaders, an enormous number of Soviet citizens were taken out of the country as prisoners. The government immediately disowned them; they were immediately branded traitors. And the consequences of this were that when they, for some reason or another, came back to our country, most of them were whisked off to Stalin’s labour camps. This is how they treated the veterans then…” (“Avoiding participation in the Great Victory Services", sermon given on May 8, 2005, Vertograd, May 18, 2005; translated in The Hoffman Wire, May 18, 2005). Shumilo writes: “Under the pretext of restoring ‘socialist legality’ whole families, and even
As for the Anglo-Americans, they were faced with a major problem shortly after D-day, in the summer of 1944, when large numbers of Russian soldiers in German uniform began to be captured by them. Of these, some had put on German uniform involuntarily, forced to it by the threat of death or the terrible conditions in the German POW camps. Others, like the million-strong “Russian Liberation Army” of General Andrei Vlasov, volunteered to fight in the German army, not out of love of Nazism, but simply in order to help in the destruction of the hated Soviet regime. Among the Vlasovites, some had been Soviet citizens, but others were former White soldiers who had fled from Russia after the Civil War and had never been Soviet.  

Most of these men did not want to be repatriated to Russia, but pleaded to stay in the West, which created a major problem for the British government. Lord Selborne, Minister for Economic Warfare, who was also in charge of secret espionage and sabotage (SOE), argued passionately that they should be allowed to stay because they had not voluntarily donned German uniforms, they had suffered terribly already, and would probably be shot if returned to Russia. Churchill was for a time inclined to listen to Selborne, but the Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, argued that they had to return the prisoners if Stalin insisted on it, that to anger the Soviets would be dangerous for the war effort, that the British had “no legal or moral right” to interfere in the way they were treated in Russia, and that if they did not accede to Soviet demands British and American prisoners liberated from German camps by Soviet forces might not be repatriated to the West. Unfortunately, by September, Eden had won the argument, and thousands of Russians began to be deported from Britain to Murmansk and Odessa. At Yalta in February, 1945, the Big Three secretly decreed that all Soviet nationals be repatriated to the “Homeland”.

A particularly poigniant case of mass repatriation took place in May-June, 1945, in Lienz in Austria, when “the English occupying authorities handed over to Stalin to certain death some tens of thousands of Cossacks who had fought in the last months of the war on the side of Germany. Eye-witnesses of this drama recall that the hand-over began right during the time of the final liturgy, which Smersh did not allow to finish. Many Cossacks tried to hurl themselves into the abyss so as not to be delivered to the communists, and the first shots were heard from the Soviet occupational zone already a few minutes after the hand-over.”

settlements, were sent to Siberia, mainly from Western Ukraine, Belorussia and the Baltic region. By the end of the 40s, Soviet Marshal Zhukov had ordered the forcible removal from Western Ukraine to Siberia, Kazakhstan and other regions of more than 600,000 people” (op. cit.).

897 The following account is taken mainly from Nicholas Bethell, The Last Secret, London: Futura, 1976.

898 Archbishop Savva (Raevsky), “Lienz”, Orthodox Life, vol. 56, № 4, 2005, pp. 2-8. The head of ROCOR, Metropolitan Anastasy, blessed the Cossacks who had formally ended their lives through suicide because they did not want to fall into the hands of the Reds, to be given a
Many of the British soldiers involved in the handover had come to like the Cossacks and were deeply distressed that, first, they had to lie to them about the coming handover, and secondly, that they had to use force to hand them over. Some confessed that they had been wrong; but most justified themselves on the grounds that they were following the orders of the politicians and had no choice. It is interesting to note, however, that in the Nuremberg trials this excuse, in the mouth of Nazi defendants, was not considered sufficient... Another aspect of the tragedy is that among the Cossacks handed over were men who had never been Soviet citizens, including the famous White Generals Krasnov and Shkuro. So the British “over-fulfilled” their “duty” according to the Yalta agreement, which specified only “Soviet nationals”.

A. Soldatov writes: “The memory of the ‘Vlasovtsy’ is dear to many children of the Russian Church Abroad (ROCOR)... In the memorial cemetery of ROCOR in Novo Diveyevo near New York there stands an obelisk which perpetuates the memory of all the officers and soldiers of the Russian Army of Liberation, who perished ‘in the name of the idea of a Russia free from communism and fascism’...” The relevance of such a slogan, “Russia free from communism and fascism” is as relevant now as it was in 1945...

And so “from 1945 to 1947, 2,272,000 people were handed over by the Allies to the USSR. Of these more than 600,000 had served in the ‘eastern forces’ of the German army. About 200,000 managed to remain in the West.” According to Shumilo, however, “more than 6 million ‘Soviet’ prisoners of war, ‘Osty’ workers, refugees and émigrés were forcibly repatriated to the U.S.S.R. up to 1948. The majority of them perished within the walls of Stalin’s NKVD.”

Allied hypocrisy – and cruelty – was evident on a no less massive scale in the terrorist bombing of civilians. The Allies condemned the Germans for bombing civilians at Guernica in the Spanish Civil War and Coventry in 1940, and the Japanese for bombing Chinese in 1937. However, Churchill himself had ordered such bombing in the Iraqi rebellion in 1920. And already from May, 1940 the British began drawing up plans to send bombers to targets that could not be called strictly military. In December, Mannheim town centre was bombed. In October, Churchill declared: “The civilian population around the target areas must be made to feel the weight of war.” Throughout 1941 he repeatedly emphasized the need for Bomber Command to target the morale

church burial. ‘Their actions,’ he wrote, ‘are closer to the exploit of St. Pelagia of Antioch, who hurled herself from a tall tower so as escape desecration [rape].’...”

899 Soldatov, “Radosti Paskhi i Skorb’ Pobedy” (The Joys of Pascha and the Sorrow of Victory), Moskovskie Novosti (Moscow News) and Vertograd, № 520, May 14, 2005.
900 Soldatov, op. cit., p. 11, footnote 6.
901 Shumilo, op. cit.
902 Ferguson, op. cit., p. 558.
of ordinary Germans.” In March, 1942 it was decided to adopt the plan of the government’s scientific advisor Lindemann to bomb working-class German homes with the final aim of destroying 50 percent of all houses in the larger cities. With the Americans in full agreement, this paved the way for the horrific Allied bombings of Hamburg (45,000 killed, 250,000 homes destroyed in July, 1943), Lubeck, Cologne and, finally, Dresden (35,000 killed, 95,000 homes destroyed in February, 1945).

In all, writes Hastings, ”between 1940 and 1942, only 11,228 Germans were killed by Allied bombing. From January 1943 [the month in which Roosevelt declared the “unconditional surrender” policy in Casablanca] to May 1945, a further 350,000 perished, along with unnumbered tens of thousands of foreign PoWs and slave labourers. This compares with 60,595 British people killed by all forms of German air bombardment including V-weapons between 1939 and 1945.”

Of course, military targets were also hit, together with munitions factories. And there can be no doubt that this contributed to the defeat of the Germans. Thus already in the spring of 1943 70 percent of the German fighter force was diverted from the east to the west, thereby greatly helping the Soviet advance. And by D-Day most of those planes had been shot down, thereby greatly helping the Allied advance. Speer called the air war “the greatest lost battle on the German side”.

However, the crucial point is that the killing of soldiers and military equipment was not the main aim of the bombing campaign: it was civilian casualties that were seen, not as inevitable, albeit regrettable “collateral damage”, but as essential to the main purpose of the bombing, which was, in Churchill’s words, “the progressive destruction and undermining of the morale of the German people to a point where their capacity for armed resistance is fatally weakened”. But, as Bishop George Bell of Chichester (a friend of Bishop Nikolai Velimirović) said in 1943: “To bomb cities as cities, deliberately to attack civilians, quite irrespective of whether they are actively contributing to the war effort, is a wrong deed, whether done by the Nazis or by ourselves.” Notwithstanding, on February 16, 1945, just after the Dresden bombing, SHAEF gave a press conference at which it was announced that the new Allied plan was to “bomb large population centres and then to attempt to prevent relief supplies from reaching and refugees from leaving them – all part of a programme to bring about the collapse of the German economy”...

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903 Ferguson, op. cit., p. 559.
904 De Poncins, op. cit., p. 57.
905 Hastings, op. cit., p. 480.
906 Ferguson, op. cit., pp. 566-568.
907 Ferguson, op. cit., p. 562.
908 Ferguson, op. cit., p. 570.
909 De Poncins, op. cit., p. 41.
But this was not the end of the senseless slaughter. In the Pacific theatre the destruction of civilians was just as massive and pitiless. Early in 1945 the American General MacArthur “liberated” Manila in the Philippines at the cost of 100,000 civilian dead, together with 1000 American and 16,000 Japanese. And yet “the Philippines campaign was a mistake,” says Hando, who lived through the war. ‘MacArthur did it for his own reasons. Japan had lost the war since the Marianas were gone.’ The Filipino people whom MacArthur professed to love paid the price for his egomania in lost lives – something approaching half a million perished by combat, massacre, famine and disease – and wrecked homes.”

After the Marianas, the Japanese could have been starved into submission without any further bombing. That would have been unpleasant enough; but at least it would have given them the option to end the war at a time of their choosing without the horrors that came now. For “on March 9, 1945, Tokyo suffered the first of a succession of raids that claimed the lives of between 80,000 and 100,000 people, ‘scorched and boiled and baked to death’, as [the American commander] LeMay frankly put it. Within five months, roughly two fifths of the built-up areas of nearly every major city had been laid waste, killing nearly a quarter of a million people, injuring more than 300,000 and turning eight million into refugees. Besides Tokyo, sixty-three cities were incinerated. Japan’s economy was almost entirely crippled...

“Why, then, was it necessary to go further – to drop two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki? LeMay could quite easily have hit both these targets with conventional bombs. As if to make that point, Tokyo was scourged with incendiaries one last time on August 14 [after the dropping of the atomic bombs] by a horde of more than a thousand aircraft; it was the following day that the Emperor’s decision to capitulate was broadcast, not the day after Hiroshima. In all probability, it was the Soviet decision to dash Japanese hopes of mediation and to attack Japan that convinced all but the most incorrigible diehards that the war was over. Defeat in the Pacific mattered less to the Japanese generals than the collapse of their much longer-held position in Manchuria and Korea. Indeed, it was the Soviet landing on Shikotan, not far from Japan’s main northern island of Hokkaido, that forced the military finally to sign the instrument of surrender. Historians have sometimes interpreted Harry Truman’s decision to use the Bomb against Japan as a kind of warning shot intended to intimidate the Soviet Union; and explosive overture to the Cold War. Others have argued that, having seen $2 million spent on the Manhattan Project, Truman felt compelled to get a large bang for so many bucks. Yet if one leaves aside the technology that distinguished the bombs dropped on August 6 and August 9 – and the radiation they left in their wakes – the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was simply the culmination of five years of Allied strategic bombing. Roughly

910 Hastings, op. cit., p. 575.
as many people were killed immediately when the bomb nicknamed ‘Little Boy’ exploded 1,189 feet above central Hiroshima on the morning of August 6 as had been killed in Dresden six months before, though by the end of 1945 the Japanese death toll had risen much higher, to as many as 140,000 in Hiroshima and 70,000 in Nagasaki… “911

It has been argued that the Bomb saved many lives that would have been lost in an invasion of the Japanese mainland which the fanatical Japanese would have contested every step of the way.912 This is difficult to be sure about, especially if we take into account the possibility, mentioned above, of simply starving the Japanese into surrender. Moreover, the American policy of “unconditional surrender” probably contributed more to the prolongation of the war in the east – as in the west - than anything else.

This policy in relation to Germany became known as “the Morgenthau plan” after Roosevelt’s Jewish Secretary to Treasury, Henry Morgenthau, who, with his deputy, Harry Dexter White, formulated it in detail. “Stated in its simplest terms,” writes Dr. Anthony Kubek, the editor of the Morgenthau Diaries, “the objective of the Morgenthau Plan was to de-industrialize Germany and diminish its people to a pastoral existence once the war was won. If this could be accomplished, the militaristic Germans would never rise again to threaten the peace of the world. This was the justification of all the planning, but another motive lurked behind the obvious one. The hidden motive was unmasked in a syndicated column in the New York Herald Tribune in September 1946, more than a year after the collapse of the Germans. The real goal of the proposed condemnation of ‘all of Germany to a permanent diet of potatoes’ was the Communization of the defeated nation. ‘The best way for the German people to be driven into the arms of the Soviet Union,’ it was pointed out, ‘was for the United States to stand forth as the champion of indiscriminate and harsh misery in Germany’ (issue of 5th September 1946). And so it then seemed, for in a recent speech Foreign Minister Molotov had declared the hope of the Soviet Union to ‘transform’ Germany into a ‘democratic and peace-loving State which, besides its agriculture, will have its own industry and foreign trade’ (10th July 1946). Did Russia really plan on becoming the saviour of the prostrate Germans from the vengeful fate which the United States had concocted for them? If this was indeed a hidden motive in the Morgenthau Plan, what can be said of the principal planner? Was this the motive of Harry Dexter White? Was White acting as a Communist but without specific instructions? Was he acting as a Soviet agent when he drafted the plan? There is no confession in the Morgenthau Diaries in which White admits that he was either ideologically a Communist or actively a Soviet agent. But it is possible, given an

911 Ferguson, op. cit., pp. 573-574.
912 And in Japanese prison camps throughout the Far East. The author’s wife was about to be send on a death ship from Java to the Celebes islands when the Bomb was dropped, ending the war. This probably saved her life.

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understanding of Soviet aims in Europe, to reconstruct from the Diaries how White and certain of his associates in the Treasury worked assiduously to further those aims. From the Diaries, therefore, it is possible to add significant evidence to the testimonies of J. Edgar Hoover [head of the CIA] and Attorney General Herbert Brownell that Harry Dexter White was ideologically a Communist and actively a Soviet agent from the day he entered the service of the United States Government.\textsuperscript{913}

The State Department had a plan diametrically opposed to that of Morgenthau and Dexter, which was that there was to be no “large-scale and permanent impairment of all German industry”; instead it called for “eventual integration of Germany into the world economy”.\textsuperscript{914} On hearing of it, Morgenthau flew to England in August, 1944 and managed to get General Eisenhower on his side. Finally, after strong opposition from the Secretaries of State and War, Roosevelt came down on the side of Morgenthau, and at the Quebec Conference in September, an initially angry and resistant Churchill was won over with the promise of a $6.5 billion loan... Foreign Secretary Hull wrote in his Memoirs: “The whole development at Quebec, I believe, angered me as much as anything else that had happened during my career as Secretary of State. If the Morgenthau Plan leaked out, as it inevitably would – and shortly did – it might well mean a bitter-end German resistance that could cause the loss of thousands of American lives.

“... I still feel that the course proposed by the Treasury would in the long run certainly defeat what we hope to attain by a complete military victory, that is, the peace of the world, and the assurance of social, economic and political stability in the world... I cannot believe that they (the Treasury proposals) will make for a lasting peace. In spirit and in emphasis they are punitive, not, in my judgement, corrective or constructive. They will tend through bitterness and suffering to breed another war, not to make another war undesired by the Germans or impossible in fact... the question is not whether we want Germans to suffer for their sins. Many of us would like to see them suffer the tortures they have inflicted on others. The only question is whether over the years a group of seventy million educated, efficient and imaginative people can be kept within bound on such a low level of substinence as the Treasury proposals contemplate. I do not believe that is humanly possible... Enforced poverty... destroys the spirit not only of the victim but debases the victor... it would be a crime against civilization itself.”\textsuperscript{915}

Fortunately, the Morgenthau Plan was never fully realised – in the west, at any rate; and after the war the generous Marshall Plan helped to place Western Europe back on its feet and prevent it from going Communist...

\textsuperscript{913} Kubek, in de Poncins, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 100.
\textsuperscript{914} De Poncins, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 104.
\textsuperscript{915} Hull, in De Poncins, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 113, 114.
However, the Morgenthau Plan was leaked, and “as a result German resistance was strengthened. The Nazi radio was shouting day and night that the Germans would become starving peasants if they surrendered. General Marshall complained to Morgenthau that the leakage to the press was disastrous to the war effort, for nothing could have been greater in its psychological impact upon Germany than the news of Morgenthau’s coup at Quebec in September 1944. Until then there was a fair chance, according to intelligence reports, that the Germans might discontinue resistance to American and British forces while holding the Russians at bay in the east in order to avoid the frightful fate of a Soviet occupation. This could have shortened the war by months and could have averted the spawning of a malignant Communism in East Germany which has plagued Europe for the past twenty years. According to Lt.-Col. Boettiger, the President’s son-in-law, the Morgenthau Plan was worth ‘thirty divisions to the Germans’.”

The decisions of the Yalta Conference, with Morgenthau in attendance, turned out to be quite compatible with his Plan. However, there was still strong resistance from State and War. And so, on March 21, the Jews wheeled in their biggest gun – the New York financier and close friend of the President, Bernard Baruch. In a meeting with the War Cabinet, he “was asked where he stood on the German problem. According to Morgenthau’s report to his staff, Baruch replied that his recent trip to Europe had made him much stronger for the decentralization of Germany than when he left. The Treasury Plan was much too soft, Baruch said, and its author practically ‘a sissy’. He would ‘cut his (Clayton’s) heart out if he doesn’t behave himself’, the financial wizard declared, adding ominously: ‘he won’t be able to stay around Washington after I get through with him.’ Clayton had either to get ‘right’ on this German ‘thing’ or ‘leave town’. Baruch was adamant. ‘All I have got to live for now,’ he said, ‘is to see that Germany is de-industrialized and that it’s done the right way, and I won’t let anybody get in my way’. He became so emotional that tears came to his eyes. ‘I have never heard a man talk so strongly as he did,’ exulted Morgenthau, adding that he ‘got the feeling from Baruch that he realizes the importance of being friendly with Russia…”

Indeed, the Jews around Roosevelt were now working hand-in-glove with the Soviets (and their numerous spies in the administration), determined to dismember, deindustrialize and communize Germany, extract huge reparations and make her workforce virtual slaves of the victors. This was a Carthaginian peace to make the “Carthaginian peace” of 1918 look like a picnic… However, in April Roosevelt died, and the new president, in spite of being a 33-degree Mason, did not like the Jewish plan. When Morgenthau asked to be made part of the delegation to Potsdam, and threatened to resign if he was not, Truman accepted his resignation. Jewish vengeance stalled…

916 De Poncins, op. cit., p. 115.
917 De Poncins, op. cit., p. 123.
However, there were still 140 of “Morgenthau’s boys” from the Treasury in the military government in Germany, and the Allied Commander Eisenhower soon showed where his sympathies lay, during the surrender negotiations in May…

Admiral Doenitz, Hitler’s successor, was desperate that as many Germans soldiers and civilians as possible should escape to the British and American zones of occupation – he knew about the Morgenthau Plan, but still considered the Anglo-Saxons a safer bet than the rampaging Bolsheviks in the east. However, the Morgenthau-influenced order of Joint Chiefs of Staff JCS 1067 ordered Eisenhower to stop at the Elbe, leaving the whole area to the east, including Berlin and Prague, to the Red Army. Doenitz’s conclusion, as he proclaimed on the radio on May 1, was that “as from this moment, the British and the Americans are no longer fighting for their own countries, but for the extension of Bolshevism in Europe”.

In his Memoirs Doenitz explains that “the latest operations which [Eisenhower] had ordered showed that he was not in the least aware of the turn taken by world politics at that moment. After his troops had crossed the Rhine at Remagen, America had achieved her strategic object of conquering Germany. From this moment the paramount objective should have become political, namely, the occupation of the largest possible area of Germany before the arrival of the Russians. Thus it would have been judicious for the American commander to have pushed rapidly East in order to be the first to seize Berlin. But Eisenhower did not do this. He kept to the military plan which had been drawn up for the destruction of Germany and its occupation in collaboration with the Red Army, and so he stopped at the Elbe. Thus the Russians were enabled to take Berlin and conquer whatever they could of eastern Germany. Perhaps this policy had been dictated by Washington, but he did not understand how radically the world situation was to be transformed from this moment…”918

On May 5 Doenitz succeeded in negotiating a partial capitulation with the British General Montgomery. However, when his envoy flew on to see Eisenhower, the latter demanded immediate, unconditional surrender on all fronts, including the Russian. But the Germans were terrified to fall into Russian captivity, and Doenitz knew that his men would simply refuse to do it. Fortunately, however, General Jodl found a more understanding attitude in General Bedell Smith, Eisenhower’s Chief of Staff, who extracted a delay of 48 hours. And so “between 5th of May, the date of the armistice concluded with the British, and 9th May, the date of the general capitulation, Admiral Doenitz, by means of all the resources at his disposal, succeeded in rescuing three million German soldiers and civilians, who thus escaped Russian slavery owing to the understanding of Field-Marshal Montgomery.”919

918 De Poncins, op. cit., p. 69.
919 De Poncins, op. cit., p. 72.
But many were left behind to be captured by the Russians, the agents of the Jewish vengeance... “Obviously,” Eisenhower was to write in his Memoirs, “the Germans sought to gain time in order to bring back into and behind our lines the maximum number of men who were still fighting in the East. I began to have had enough. I ordered Bedell Smith to tell Jodl that if he did not immediately stop dragging out the negotiations, we would go so far as to use force in order to prevent the refugees from crossing.”

“This,” writes De Poncins, “in fact is just what the Americans did. [Most of Schroeder’s army, for example, were not allowed to cross the American lines.] Thus by his obstinate intransigence, Eisenhower handed over hundreds of thousands, and perhaps even millions, of innocent Germans to the appalling Bolshevik tyranny – which, for the majority, meant either death or the concentration camps and, for the women, the prospect of certain violation.”

All in all, civilians were the biggest losers in the Second World War. As Hastings writes, “combatants fared better than civilians: around three-quarters of all those who perished were unarmed victims rather than active participants in the struggle.” Was this justice? Could the savage vengeance carried out on the Germans by the Soviets and the Jews, with the connivance of the Americans and the British, be justified on the basis of the Germans’ undoubted criminality? If this was justice, it was partial, flawed, all too human; some of the criminals were condemned, many went scot-free. For almost every crime that the Germans committed, except the wholesale slaughter of Jews, was imitated by the Soviets and the Anglo-Americans. But they were the judges, and so could not be brought to justice. True justice for the events of World War Two was not done in 1945; true justice would have to wait for the Last Judgement...

“What all this reminds us [of],” writes Ferguson, “is that in order to defeat an enemy they routinely denounced as barbarian the Western powers had made common cause with an ally that was morally little better [in fact – worse] – but ultimately more effective at waging total war. ‘The choice before human beings,’ George Orwell observed in 1941, ‘is not... between good and evil but between two evils. You can let the Nazis rule the world: that is evil; or you can overthrow them by war, which is also evil... Whichever you choose, you will not come out with clean hands.’ Orwell’s Animal Farm is nowadays revered as a critique of the Russian Revolution’s descent into Stalinism; people forget that it was written during the Second World War and turned down by no fewer than four publishers (including T.S. Eliot, on behalf of Faber & Faber) for its anti-Soviet sentiments. Nothing better symbolized the blind eye that the Western powers now turned to Stalin’s crimes than the

920 De Poncins, op. cit., p. 72.
921 De Poncins, op. cit., p. 72.
American Vice-President Henry Wallace’s visit to the Kolyma Gulag in May 1944. ‘No other two countries are more alike than the Soviet Union and the United States,’ he told his hosts. ‘The vast expanses of your country, her virgin forests, wide rivers and large lakes, all kinds of climate – from tropical to polar – her inexhaustible wealth, [all] remind me of my homeland… Both the Russians and the Americans, in their different ways, are groping for a way of life that will enable the common man everywhere in the world to get the most good out of modern technology. There is nothing irreconcilable in our aims and purposes.’ All were now totalitarians…”

What all this demonstrates is that this, the most evil of all wars, defiled everybody who was involved in it at the political level. Even the western democracies, who came into the war in order to defend themselves against the evil of Nazism, were defiled by their alliance with the still greater evil of Communism. They forgot the apostolic word: “Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers” (II Corinthians 6.14)...

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923 Ferguson, op. cit., pp. 532-533.
EPILOGUE: THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN HOLOCAUST

The Second World War is usually portrayed as a glorious triumph of good over evil... That evil was crushed in the persons of Hitler, Mussolini and Hirohito and their despotic regimes was indeed a good. But in fact this was a victory so pyrrhic, so catastrophic both in its short- and its longer-term consequences for the world that a radical revision is required, not so much of the actual history of the period from 1914 to 1945 so much as its moral and religious significance.

The first and most important consequence was that the possibility of a restoration of the Orthodox Autocracy, the only God-pleasing form of political life, was postponed for several generations. The Russian revolution of 1917 had removed the last of the Orthodox Autocrats, but the spirit of the Autocracy - and therefore the possibility of its restoration - lived on in the Russian Orthodox (and, to a lesser extent, the Balkan Orthodox) people. The Bolsheviks were well aware of that, which is why, as late as 1944, they tortured to death Catacomb Church Archimandrite Michael (Kostiuk) of Kiev because he was suspected of being a Romanov, a pretender to the Russian Throne... However, the vast slaughter of the bearers of the Orthodox Autocratic consciousness, the Orthodox Christians of Russia and the Balkans, - which reached climaxes in 1914-21 (in Russia and Serbia), in 1922-23 (in Greece), in 1928-37 (in Russia), in 1941 (in Croatia) and in 1941-45 (in Russia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria and Greece), with continuing slaughter in the post-war period until 1949, - meant that, even if the possibility of a restoration of the Orthodox Autocracy had presented itself in the post-war period, there would not have been enough genuine Orthodox monarchists alive to make its survival and flourishing feasible. Only in the Russian Church Abroad, which after the war took up its headquarters in New York, was the Orthodox Autocratic consciousness maintained and nourished.

The attention of western historians and publicists has been fixed on the Jewish holocaust. (We will not enter the thorny question of how many millions actually died.) However, scarcely any attention has been focussed on the far larger Orthodox Christian Holocaust. It is a striking fact that the majority of those killed on the killing fields of early twentieth-century Europe - tens of millions of people - were Orthodox Christians. Why?

Undoubtedly the primary reason for this was the wrath of God against His backsliding people, “If My people had heard Me, if Israel had walked in My ways, quickly would I have humbled their enemies, and upon their oppressors would I have laid My hand” (Psalm 81.12-13). But they did not hear Him, but allowed heresies such as ecumenism to penetrate their midst, and did not stand up for the Orthodox Autocrat and God-given defender of the Orthodox commonwealth.
The main instruments of God’s wrath against His people were Jews, Catholics and Communists. All three categories were also mightily punished – the Jews in Russia and Poland especially (but also throughout the Balkans), the Communists in Russia and Greece, and the Catholics in Poland and Yugoslavia. And the Germans, who had done so much evil against the Orthodox peoples since 1914, finally received their punishment in their own land, as Elder Aristocles had prophesied in 1911. So the word was fulfilled on them as it had been on the Assyrians in the Old Testament: “Shall the axe boast against Him Who chops with it? Or shall the saw exalt itself against Him Who saws with it?” (Isaiah 10.15).

But God’s wrath against His people was mixed with mercy. Thus the heresy of ecumenism, thanks to Stalin’s vigilance against western influence, did not penetrate significantly into communist Eastern Europe until the early 1960s, when the KGB ordered the Sovietized Moscow Patriarchate to enter the World Council of Churches. Again, Greece was saved from communism thanks to British and American intervention on the side of the royalists. Again, many millions of Orthodox were enabled to escape the holocaust and enter the relative safety of the West, where thousands of western converts joined their ranks. Last but not least, millions (probably) of new martyrs and confessors joined the ranks of the intercessors for Orthodoxy in the Heavenly Kingdom.

And yet Orthodoxy has not flourished in the more than 70 years that have passed since 1945, but has undergone an apparently inexorable decline. The main reason for that, I believe, is that the post-war generations did not learn or take to heart the lessons to be drawn from the holocaust period. What were those lessons?

The first was that the Orthodox Christian Autocrat was indeed “he that restraineth” the coming of the Antichrist (II Thessalonians 2.7). For after his removal “the collective Antichrist” of Soviet power gained power in Russia, while its scarcely less terrible twin, Nazi power, wrought terrible havoc throughout the whole of Eastern Europe. The natural and right reaction to this would have been repentance for betraying the Tsar and a recognition that the Autocracy is the only political system under which Orthodox Christianity can flourish. But this reaction did not take place. Instead, the idea has taken root that the saviour of Orthodoxy can only be democracy – that ancient Greek heresy abhorred by the Holy Fathers which showed itself, through its behaviour in the Second World War, to be little different in essence from its totalitarian opponents. Thus true Orthodox monarchism has all but disappeared from the Orthodox countries. And even those who are not seduced by democratism cling to the deceptive illusion of constitutional monarchy – that is, monarchism ruled from behind the scenes by a “democratic” clique of New World Order functionaries.
It is only with the triumph of Soviet power in 1917 that we find totalitarian despotism established for more or less lengthy periods over very large populations. The Second World War established this power over a vast territory from Berlin to Vladivostok; the Chinese revolution of 1949 brought the world’s most populous nation into the net; and the power of totalitarianism continued to spread throughout the world for the next forty years. In all these lands, moreover, we find the characteristic traits of Soviet Communism: terror, atheism and mass murder. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that the first four horsemen of the Apocalypse, emerging after the breaking of the first four seals, describe precisely the period 1917-1949. Even the precise extent of communist tyranny by 1949 – one quarter of the earth’s surface – is described there: “And I looked, and behold a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a quarter of the earth’s surface, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth” (Revelation 6.8).

It is sometimes argued that totalitarianism ended in 1991 with the triumph of democracy over Soviet Communism. However, totalitarian regimes still flourish in China, North Korea, Burma, Cuba and parts of Africa and the Middle East. Moreover, the democracies of North America, the European Union and the neo-Soviet Russian Federation are steadily increasing their control over their citizens in a more subtle, less violent, but essentially no less totalitarian way – democracy there is turning into despotism again.

The major powers that escaped totalitarianism in 1945, such as the United States, Britain and France, were both more tolerant of traditional religion and less inclined to mix religion with politics. But in the second half of the twentieth century the democracies have carried on the antichristian revolution with hardly less success than the anti-democratic totalitarian regimes of the first half, albeit in less violent ways. Thus the Nihilist dreams of Nechaev and Nietzsche, which became nightmarish reality in the era of Stalin and Hitler, have given way to more peaceful visions of life without God (at least in any form recognizable to traditional monotheism) but with education and clean water, human rights and computer games.

The aim of this continuation of the revolution by non-violent means – its “positive”, “creative” phase, as opposed to the “negative”, “destructive” phase up to 1945 – is the same as before: to reconcile a renewed mankind to a completely this-worldly faith and hope. The first, violent, nihilist phase of the revolution was necessary in order to root out the old, other-worldly faith. In Lenin’s famous phrase, “you can’t make an omelette without breaking eggs.” But now mankind can proceed to a new age of universal prosperity and happiness from which all sorrow and pain will have fled away and in which, consequently, the “opium” of traditional religion will no longer be necessary.
“The spirit of violence,” writes Fr. Seraphim Rose, “has been most thoroughly incarnated, in our century, by the Nihilist regimes of Bolshevism and National Socialism; it is to these there have been assigned the principal roles in the Nihilist task of the destruction of the Old Order. The two, whatever their psychological dissimilarities, and the historical ‘accidents’ which placed them in opposing camps, have been partners in their frenzied accomplishment of this task. Bolshevism, to be sure, has had the more ‘positive’ role of the two, since it has been able to justify its monstrous crimes by an appeal to a pseudo-Christian, messianic idealism which Hitler scorned; Hitler’s role in the Nihilist program was more specialized and provincial, but nonetheless essential.

“Even in failure – in fact, precisely in the failure of its ostensible aims – Nazism served the cause of this program. Quite apart from the political and ideological benefits which the Nazi interlude in European history gave to the Communist powers (Communism, it is now widely and erroneously believed, if evil in itself, still cannot be as evil as Nazism), Nazism had another, more obvious and direct, function. Goebbels explained this function in his radio broadcasts in the last days of the War. ‘The bomb-terror spares the dwellings of neither rich nor poor; before the labor offices of total war the last class barriers have had to go down… Together with the monuments of culture there crumble also the last obstacles to the fulfilment of our revolutionary task. Now that everything is in ruins, we are forced to rebuild Europe. In the past, private possessions tied us to a bourgeois restraint. Now the bombs, instead of killing all Europeans, have only smashed the prison walls which kept them captive… In trying to destroy Europe’s future, the enemy has only succeeded in smashing its past; and with that, everything old and outworn has gone.’

“Nazism thus, and its war, have done for Central Europe (and less thoroughly, for Western Europe) what Bolshevism did in its Revolution for Russia: destroyed the Old Order, and thus cleared the way for the building of the ‘new’. Bolshevism then had no difficulty in taking over where Nazism had left off; within a few years the whole of Central Europe had passed under the ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’ – i.e., Bolshevist tyranny – for which Nazism had effectively prepared the way.”

But once old-fashioned nihilism has done its annihilatory job, it is time to go “beyond Nihilism” into “the new age”. “The new age,” continues Rose, “which many call a ‘post-Christian’ age, is at the same time the age ‘beyond Nihilism’ – a phrase that expresses at once a fact and a hope. The fact this phrase expresses is that Nihilism, being negative in essence even if positive in aspiration, owing its whole energy to its passion to destroy Christian Truth, comes to the end of its program in the production of a mechanized ‘new earth’ and a dehumanized ‘new man’: Christian influence over man and over

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society having been effectively obliterated, Nihilism must retire and give way
to another, more ‘constructive’ movement capable of acting from autonomous
and positive motives. This movement... takes up the Revolution at the point
where Nihilism leaves off and attempts to bring the movement which
Nihilism began to its logical conclusion.”

Again, he wrote: “The Nihilism of Hitler was too pure, too unbalanced, to
have more than a negative, preliminary role to play in the whole Nihilist
program. Its role, like the role of the purely negative first phase of
Bolshevism, is now finished, and the next stage belongs to a power possessing
a more complete view of the whole Revolution, the Soviet power upon which
Hitler bestowed, in effect, his inheritance in the words, ‘the future belongs
solely to the stronger Eastern nation.’”

For two generations, until the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, the negative
and positive, Nihilist and post-Nihilist, phases of the revolution coexisted in a
state of cold war. The Cold War nearly turned hot in 1962, during the Cuban
missile crisis. It was averted, not by diplomacy, as the world would have it,
but by the prayers of two True Orthodox Russian bishops, Michael Yershov,
who spent over forty years of his life in the GULAG until his death, and Basil
Kalinin, who died in 1995. “It was August, 1962. The Cuban crisis! The
attention of the world was glued to it, and it affected even the special section
hidden in the Mordovian forests. ‘It has to be...! Khruschev has penetrated
into the bosom of the Americans!’ That was how the zeks [criminal inmates]
interpreted it. People living beyond the barbed wire admitted the possibility
that in time of war the local authorities would annihilate them, as the most
dangerous politicals, first of all.” “At the special section the zeks insisted that
Moscow had issued an order that in time of war the politicals and recidivists
would be annihilated first of all. The Cuban crisis was soon resolved, and our
camp calmed down. Many years later I heard that the fears of the zeks in 1962
had not been without foundation. They had really been threatened with
annihilation at that time.” “In 1964, soon after the fall of Khruschev, a colonel
from the Georgian KGB came to our camp. And he said, among other things:
‘Khruschev adopted the policy of the complete physical annihilation of the
politicals, and first of all the recidivists. During the Cuban crisis everything
was prepared for your shooting - even a pit was dug’.” [Bishop] Basil
Vasilyevich Kalinin remembered that the holy hierarch [Michael] once
unexpectedly aroused him from sleep with the words: “Six minutes are
remaining. Get up, Basil, and pray! The world is in danger!” And then he
learned that this was the critical moment in the Cuban crisis...

925 Rose, op. cit., p. 88.
926 Rose, op. cit., p. 77.
927 I.V. Ilichev, Voin Khristov Vernij i Istinnij: Tajnij Episkop IPTs Mikhail (Yershov) (Faithful and
True Warrior of Christ: Secret Bishop Michael (Yershov), Moscow: Bratonezh, 2011, pp. 499-
500.
So two authentic bearers of the Orthodox Autocratic consciousness saved the world from annihilatory war between Despotism and Democracy... Finally, Despotism, defeated in the race for economic and military predominance with Democracy, decided to accept that she was no longer in the vanguard of History, but a step behind. The Communists retired hurt but not really defeated, the Masons moved back into Russia, and Jewish oligarchs returned to control of the means of production from which Stalin had almost banished them... To the architects of the new age, it looked as if the Soviet Union, so necessary in the first, violent phase of the revolution, but so cumbersome and obstructive now, was to be consigned to the dustbin of history. Russia was about to join “the international community” of free nations “capable of acting from autonomous and positive motives”...

The Yeltsin era (1991-2000) produced important gains. The most important of these was freedom of religion: open opposition to the Moscow Patriarchate was permitted, the Russian Church Abroad was permitted to open parishes in Russia, and the remnants of the Catacomb Christians poured into it. Also important was freedom of the press: the horrific scale of the crimes of the Stalin era became public knowledge, the MP hierarchs were exposed as KGB agents who had consciously obeyed the God-hating communist state for generations, and even the Communist Party was put on trial (but acquitted). However, repentance for the Soviet past was intermittent and superficial; the KGB, though humbled, was not destroyed; many of the worst aspects of Western Capitalism were allowed to develop unchecked; and the official church, after an initial fright, regained the initiative. “Sergianism” was justified as a “wise” move, and the most serious fruit of Sergianism – the MP’s participation in the heretical ecumenical movement – intensified.

As the liberal era of the 1990s came to an end, a kind of pseudo-Russian patriotism came to the fore. However, as Protopriest Lev Lebedev wrote, “fatherland”, “Russia”, “the State” had become idols, more important that the true Faith, without which they are worthless: “The ideological idol under the name of ‘fatherland’ (‘Russia’, ‘the state’) has been completely preserved. We have already many times noted that these concepts are, in essence, pagan

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928 It was as New Hieroconfessor Theodore (Rafanovsky, +1975) had prophesied: “The communists have been hurled at the Church like a crazy dog. Their Soviet emblem - the hammer and sickle - corresponds to their mission. With the hammer they beat people over the head, and with the sickle they mow down the churches. But then the Masons will remove the communists and take control of Russia.” In January, 1992 the first of several affiliates of the Grand Lodge Nationale Française was founded in Moscow (Richard Rhoda, “Russian Freemasonry: A New Dawn”, paper read at Orient Lodge № 15 on June 29, 1996, http://members.aol.com/houltonme/rus.htm). Boris Yeltsin became a Mason in 1992. Vladimir Putin became one in Germany.

929 Jews continued to occupy prominent positions in post-war Communist Eastern Europe, especially in Poland and Romania (see Michael Hoffman, “Pope John Paul II: The Judas Iscariot of Our Time”, The Hoffman Wire, April 4, 2005, revisionisthistory.org). However, their influence began to wane in the Soviet Union, and by the 1970s it was more strongly felt in the anti-Soviet dissident movement, which looked to the West.
ideological idols not because they are in themselves bad, but because they have been torn out from the trinitarian unity of co-subjected concepts: Faith, Tsar, Fatherland (Orthodoxy, Autocracy, People)...

“Everything that one might wish to be recognized and positive, even the regeneration of the faith, is done under the slogan of ‘the regeneration of the Fatherland (Russia)! But nothing is being regenerated. Even among the monarchists the regeneration of the Orthodox Autocratic Monarchy is mainly represented as no more than the means for the regeneration of the Fatherland. We may note that if any of the constituent parts of the triad – Orthodoxy, Autocracy, People – is torn away from the others and becomes the only one, it loses its power. Only together and in the indicated hierarchical order did they constitute, and do they constitute now, the spiritual (and all the other) strength and significance of Great Russia. But for the time being it is the ideological idol ‘fatherland’ that holds sway…”

This extraordinary mixture of Orthodoxy, Nationalism and Communism – or “Ecclesiastical Stalinism”, as it is known - was the most horrific sign of the lack of repentance of the MP even now that it was free from Soviet oppression. It was supported by, among others, the former idol of ROCOR’s liberals, Fr. Demetrius Dudko. “Now the time has come,” he wrote, “to rehabilitate Stalin. And yet not him himself, but the concept of statehood. Today we can see for ourselves what a crime non-statehood is and what a blessing statehood is! No matter how many cry that in Soviet times many perished in the camps - how many are perishing now, without trials or investigations... If Stalin were here, there would be no such collapse.... Stalin, an atheist from the external point of view, was actually a believer, and this could be proved by facts if it were not for the spatial limitations of this article. It is not without reason that in the Russian Orthodox Church, when he died, ‘eternal memory’ was sung to him... The main thing is that Stalin looked after people in a fatherly manner. Stalin legitimately stands next to Suvorov!”

According to a 2005 survey, 42% of the Russian people, and 60% of those over sixty, wanted the return of “a leader like Stalin.” Their wish was granted... On January 1, 2000 KGB Colonel Putin came to power... With Putin the Russian revolution has entered what may be its culminating phase. His regime, which claims to be the successor both of the RSFSR and the USSR, may be described as neo-Soviet without Marxism but with “Orthodoxy” – and all under the control of the KGB/FSB. It draws support from a heady mixture of conflicting constituencies: nationalists and democrats and monarchists, conservative Orthodox and pagan mystics and atheists, westerners and capitalists and Slavophiles.

930 Lebedev, Velikorossia (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, p. 655.
931 Dudko, “Mysli sviaschennika” (The Thoughts of a Priest), http://patriotica.narod.ru/history/dudko.
932 Orlando Figes, “Vlad the Great”, New Statesman, 3 December, 2007, p. 34.
Putin’s propagandist Yegor Kholmogorov has written: “Putin’s power was, from the very beginning, non-electoral in origin, it was not a matter of being ‘appointed by Yeltsin’, but of what the Chinese call ‘the mandate of heaven’, an unquestioned right to power...” Putin was indeed resembling a Chinese emperor more than a democratic politician, not only in his political style, but also in his fabulous personal wealth...

“For those who claim,” writes Professor Olga Ackerly, “that the ‘CIS is different from the USSR’ and Putin is a ‘practising Orthodox Christian’, here are some sobering facts. The first days and months Putin’s presidency were highlighted by the reestablishment of a memorial plaque on Kutuzovsky Prospect where Andropov used to live. The plaque was a symbol of communist despotism missing since the 1991 putsch, bearing Andropov’s name – a former head of the KGB, especially known for his viciousness in the use of force and psychiatric clinics for dissidents. On May 9, 2000, Putin proposed a toast to the ‘genius commander’ Iosif Stalin and promoted many former KGB officers to the highest state positions...

“Important to note is that the Eurasian movement, with ties to occultism, ecumenism, etc. was recently revived by Putin, and a Congress entitled ‘The All-Russian Political Social Movement’, held in Moscow in April of 2001, was ‘created on the basis of the Eurasist ideology and inter-confessional [sic!] harmony in support of the reforms of President Vladimir Putin.’ The movement is led by Alexander Dugin, a sexual mystic, National Bolshevik Party member, son of a Cheka cadre, personally familiar with the so-called ‘Black International’, advisor to the State Duma, and participant in Putin’s ‘Unity’ movement.”

From 2003 Putin moved to reverse the main gains of the liberal 1990s – religious freedom, and a more open and honest attitude to the Soviet past. Churches were seized from True Orthodox Christians and their websites hacked; elections were rigged, independent journalists were killed, and independent businessmen imprisoned on trumped-up charges; and new history books justifying Stalinism were introduced into the classrooms. The red flag and hammer and sickle were restored to the armed services, as well as the melody (if not the words) of the Soviet national anthem. Youth organizations similar to the Hitler Youth were created. And in general Putin’s Russia began to resemble Nazi Germany in the 1930s.

933 Kholmogorov, “Kremlevskij Mechtatel’” (Kremlin Dreamer), Spetnaz Rossii (Russia’s Special Forces), 2000/2.
Banking on the high price of Russian oil, Putin began to rebuild Russia’s economic and military might – but the corruption and imbalances within the Russian economy have hindered the diversification of the economy that he needs. State- and privately-organized crime has flourished under his patronage. The MP has shown complete loyalty to Putinism, and takes an enthusiastic part in the criminal economy, as is illustrated by the activities of Patriarch Cyril (Gundiaev), who, while intriguing for a unia with the Vatican, imports tobacco and alcohol duty-free and is now one of the richest men in Russia.\footnote{“After the fall of the Soviet Union, the church received official privileges including the right to import duty-free alcohol and tobacco. In 1995, the Nikolo-Ugreshky Monastery, which is directly subordinated to the patriarchate, earned $350 million from the sale of alcohol. The patriarchate’s department of foreign church relations, which Kirill ran, earned $75 million from the sale of tobacco. But the patriarchate reported an annual budget in 1995-1996 of only $2 million. Kirill’s personal wealth was estimated in Moscow News in 2006 to be $4 billion.” (http://news-nftu.blogspot.com, February, 2009). Putin’s wealth has been estimated by The Guardian, among other newspapers, as $40 billion.}

In 2007, Putin brokered a union between the majority of the Russian Church Abroad and the Moscow Patriarchate, which owed more than a little to the resurgent influence of the KGB/FSB.\footnote{Konstantin Preobrazhensky, KGB/FSB’s New Trojan Horse: Americans of Russian Descent, North Billerica, MA: Gerard Group Publishing, 2008.} This is the most serious blow to the True Church and Holy Russia since the official Church under Metropolitan Sergius submitted to Stalin in 1927. Even in the darkest days of Stalinism the voice of the Russian Church Abroad told the truth about Russia; but now that voice is much weaker, surviving only in the Russian True Orthodox Church (and its sister, the Serbian True Orthodox Church)...

However, as the poet Fyodor Tiutchev, you cannot measure Russia by a conventional yardstick. Great reversals are possible in her as in no other nation. And many of the holy prophets and elders of Russia prophesied that the Russian people will repent, the revolution will be destroyed and Holy Russia resurrected through the prayers of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors. In one of those prophecies, the Holy Nun-Martyr and Great Princess Elizabeth Fyodorovna declared: “If we look deep into the life of every human being, we discover that it is full of miracles. You will say, ‘Of terror and death, as well.’ Yes, that also. But we do not clearly see why the blood of these victims must flow. There, in the heavens, they understand everything and, no doubt, have found calm and the True Homeland - a Heavenly Homeland. We on this earth must look to that Heavenly Homeland with understanding and say with resignation, 'Thy will be done.' Great Russia is completely destroyed, but Holy Russia and the Orthodox Church, which ‘the gates of hell cannot overcome’, exists and exists more than ever. And those who believe and who do not doubt for one moment will see ‘the inner sun’ which enlightens the darkness during the thundering storm... I am only convinced that the Lord Who punishes is also the same Lord Who loves...
“Even though all the powers of hell may be set loose, Holy Russia and the Orthodox Church will remain unconquered. Some day, in this ghastly struggle, Virtue will triumph over Evil. Those who keep their faith will see the Powers of Light vanquish the powers of darkness. God both punishes and pardons…”

The world today is dominated by despotisms pretending to be democracies (Russia and China) and democracies transforming themselves gradually into despotisms (the United States and the European Union). Autocracy and the Autocratic consciousness having been more or less wiped out in the period 1917-45, there appears no hope for world sunk into a depth of religious, moral, social and political anarchy unprecedented in human history. To the fallen human mind there seems to be no hope, no possibility that the apostasy can be checked, let alone reversed. But “love hopeth all things” (I Corinthians 13.7); and it was at a similar moment of blackness and despair that the Roman army in York raised on their shields the Emperor Constantine, who proceeded to drive out the tyrant persecutors, and exalt true Christian piety throughout the civilised world. Let us pray to Almighty God, for Whom all things are possible, that He will raise up a New Constantine in our fallen land, that we may sing: “Ye faithful Christian kings, forechosen by divine decree, rejoice. Receiving from God the Precious Cross, make this victorious weapon your glory, for by it the tribes of the enemy that rashly seek battle are scattered unto all ages...”

939 Festal Menaion, Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, Mattins, Canon, Canticle Eight, troparion.