**THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

***Volume 2: 1941-2001***

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# PART 4. BETWEEN THE HAMMER AND THE ANVIL (1941-1964)

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## 85. THE NAZI INVASION OF RUSSIA

On June 22, 1941, the feast of All Saints of Russia, the Nazis invaded Russia. With the aid of massive shipments of machinery and food from the Anglo-Americans, the Soviets finally defeated the Nazis in perhaps the most savage and bloody war in history. The main result was the consolidation and strengthening of Communism from Berlin to Vladivostok for another two generations.

The invasion had been prophesied by Elder Aristocles of Moscow in 1911: “You will hear about it in that country where you will be at that time, 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 Bolshevik power, but it will not be so. True, the 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…”[[1]](#footnote-1)

The holy Catacomb Elder Theodosius (Kashin) of Minvody (+1948) 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 calls on God, the Lord will save him from trouble.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

The war compelled the Soviets to try and reactivate an ethnically Russian patriotism. Thus “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.”[[3]](#footnote-3)

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 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.”[[4]](#footnote-4)

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” as a great victory for Russian patriotism over a foreign invader. 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 Sovdepia, 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 prided itself emphatically.

“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.*

“… The antinational and antipopular essence of the Red (Soviet) army is clear to everyone who has come into more or less close contact with this army.

“Every Russian who has preserved his national memory will agree that the Workers and Peasants Red Army (RKKA) *never was either the continuer of the traditions, nor the successor by right, of the Russian Imperial Army* (that is what the White army was and remains to this day). The Red army was created by the Bolsheviks in the place of the Russian Army that they had destroyed. Moreover, the creators, leaders and backbone of the personal make-up of this army were either open betrayers of the Homeland, or breakers of their oath and deserters from the Russian Army. This army dishonoured itself in the Civil war by pillaging and the killing of our Russian officers and generals and by unheard-of violence against the Russian people. At its creation it was filled with a criminal rabble, village riff-raff, red guards, sailors, and also with Chinese, Hungarians, Latvians and other ‘internationalists’. In the make-up of the Red army the communists constituted: in 1920 – 10.5%, in 1925 – 40.8%, in 1930 – 52%, and from the end of the 30s all the command posts were occupied by communists and members of the komsomol. This army was stuffed with NKVD informants and political guides, its destinies were determined by commissars, the majority of whom were Jews; it represented, not a national Army, but the party army of the Bolshevik Communist Party (B) – the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The slogan of this army was not ‘For the Faith, the Tsar and the Fatherland!’, but ‘Give us the Internationale!’ This army was created from the beginning, not for the defence, but for the enslavement of our Fatherland and in order to turn it into ‘the launch-pad of world revolution’; it had to wage an aggressive war against it for the spreading of antitheist communism throughout the world…

“But of course the most terrible blow at this myth is delivered by the Russian Liberation Army [ROA] in the Second World War, which is called ‘the Vlasovites’ by Soviet patriots. The very fact that at various times 1,000,000 (one million!) Soviet citizens served in the German Wermacht must cut off all talk of a ‘great fatherland’ war, for in fact: where, when and in what Fatherland war do people in such numbers *voluntarily* pass over to the side of the opponent and fight in his ranks? Soviet patriots find nothing cleverer to say than to declare these people are innate traitors, self-seekers and cowards. This is a blatant lie, but even if it were true, it remains complete incomprehensible why Russia never knew such a massive ‘betrayal’ in her history. How many wars has Russia waged, and never have there been so many traitors, turncoats and ‘self-seekers’ among us. And yet it was enough for the ‘Fatherland’ war to begin and not just a simple one, but a ‘Great’ one, and hundreds of thousands of people with weapons in their hands passed over to the side of the enemy. Moreover, people were enlisting in the ROA even in 1945, when the fall of Hitler’s Germany and the victory of Stalin was evident…”[[5]](#footnote-5)

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...”[[6]](#footnote-6)

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…”[[7]](#footnote-7)

“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).”[[8]](#footnote-8) 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.

There was also a revival in Transnistria, the formerly Soviet region between the Dniestr and Bug rivers that had come under the control of the Germans’ allies, the Romanians. In September, 1941 the Romanian newcalendarist church sent a mission there under Archimandrite Julius (Skriban) which opened many churches and monasteries. However, it also introduced the new calendar and the Romanian language, even in mainly Ukrainian areas. The Ukrainian Autocephalous and Autonomous Churches were not allowed to operate in these regions by the Romanian authorities. This elicited protests from the Slavic believers.[[9]](#footnote-9)

## 86. THE PSKOV MISSION AND THE CATACOMB CHURCH

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.[[10]](#footnote-10) 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, staffed mainly be members of the Eulogian jurisdiction, 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.

Its third head was Protopriest Cyril Zaits, whose activity, according to Vasilyeva, “suited both the exarch and the occupation authorities. The mission supplied its own material needs, supplementing its resources from the profits of its economic section (which included a candle factory, a shop for church utensils and an icon studio) and from 10% of the deductions coming from the parishes. Its monthly profits of 3-5000 marks covered the expenses of the administration, while the remaining money of the mission went on providing for theological courses in Vilnius.

“Priests were needed to restore church life in a number of parishes. And as he accompanied the missionaries [who were graduates of a theological seminary in Western Europe], … the exarch said: ‘Don’t forget that you have come to a country where in the course of more than twenty years religion has been poisoned and persecuted in the most pitiless manner, where the people are frightened, humiliated, harried and depersonalized. You will have not only to restore church life, but also to arouse the people to new life from its hibernation of many years, explaining and pointing out to them the advantages and merits of the new life which is opening up for them.’”[[11]](#footnote-11)

At the beginning the mission had only two open churches, one in Pskov and one in Gdov. But in November, 1942, Metropolitan Sergius succeeded in opening a theological seminary in Vilnius led by Protopresbyter Basil Vinogradov.[[12]](#footnote-12) And by 1944 there were 200 parishes and 175 priests.[[13]](#footnote-13) Lectures were read on Pskov radio, help was given to Soviet prisoners of war, and a children’s home was created in the church of St. Demetrius in Pskov. The region, on the insistence of Metropolitan Sergius (an NKVD agent, after all), remained ecclesiastically part of the Leningrad diocese under Metropolitan Alexis (Simansky), whose name was commemorated in each service, until anti-German leaflets signed by Alexis were dropped by the Soviet air force on the territory. 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 Church also benefited from the German invasion. The Kiev-Caves Lavra was reopened, and Catacomb Schema-Archbishop Anthony (Abashidze) returned to it with his monks. Archbishop Anthony stayed there until his death in 1942.[[14]](#footnote-14)

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.[[15]](#footnote-15)

Josephite clergy such as Hieromonk Tikhon (Zorin) refused to work with the Pskov mission, but recognized the German authorities. But the Pskov mission was hostile to the Catacomb Church. Thus one of the priests of the Pskov mission, Protopriest Nicholas Zhundy, was appointed superior of the parish in the village of Meletovo, where the Josephite Hieromonk Sergius (Samsonik) was also serving. In December, 1942 he received the command from the mission “in every way to counteract the activities of the Josephite priest”. He was able to carry out this command, “having sorted out parish life in Meletovo”. Nothing more was ever heard of Fr. Sergius…[[16]](#footnote-16)

“On the whole,” writes M.V. Shkvarovsky, “the Catacomb Church in North-West Russia preferred to remain underground. The point was that the ‘Pskov Orthodox Mission’ (1941-1943), which existed with the permission of the commanding officers of the army group ‘North’, was in canonical submission to the Moscow Patriarchate and tried to winkle out the secret communities. Schema-Bishop Macarius (Vasilyev), who settled in the Pskov-Caves monastery at the end of 1941, foretold the unsuccessful end of the war for Germany. Together with the secret Bishop of Pskov John (Lozhkov), he tried to enter into relations with Metropolitan Seraphim (Lyade) of Berlin and Germany, who belonged to ROCOR. However, the hieromonk whom he sent, Nicephorus (Richter-Mellin) was detained in Konigsberg on a train and sent back.

“The well-known historian of the Catacomb Church I. Andreyev (Andreyevsky) wrote that in spite of the insistent demands of the exarch of the Baltic, Metropolitan Sergius (Voskresensky), the True Orthodox priests, who began to serve in some of the opened churches, refused to commemorate the patriarchal locum tenens. ‘Thus, for example, in the city of Soltsy in Novgorod diocese the mitre-bearing Protopriest Fr. V., former dean of the churches of the city of Minsk, who then became a catacomb priest, in spite of the very severe command of the dean of the Novgorod region Fr. Basil Rushanov, categorically refused to commemorate the Soviet Metropolitan Sergius. This was in 1942. And in 1943 and 1944 Fr. B. began to commemorate Metropolitan Anastasy [Gribanovsky, first-hierarch of ROCOR].’

“The fact that most of the communities of the True Orthodox Christians in Leningrad region during the occupation remained underground allowed them to continue their activity even after the end of the war, in spite of the deaths of their leaders…

“In a series of other regions of the country the German High Command was more favourably disposed to the Catacomb Christians: in Bryansk, Orel and Voronezh districts, and also in Belorussia, the Crimea and on the Don.”[[17]](#footnote-17)

Perhaps for this reason, 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. 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.”[[18]](#footnote-18) As Bishop Irinarchus of Tula and Briansk (Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church) witnesses: “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.”[[19]](#footnote-19)

According to one source, between 1941 to 1945 6000 True Orthodox Christians were arrested by the Soviets during the war.[[20]](#footnote-20)

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 emphasized: ‘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…’”[[21]](#footnote-21)

## 87. THE CHURCH IN BELORUSSIA AND UKRAINE

In Belorussia, the Germans tried to create an autocephalous Belorussian Church that would be independent of both Great Russian and Polish influence (Catholic Poles were doing a lot of missionary work in the region). To this end, on October 3, 1941 Metropolitan Panteleimon (Rozhnevsky) and Bishop Benedict of Brest were allowed to create an independent Belorussian Church (to be called “Autocephalous”) whose internal life would be free from interference from the German authorities and in which services would be in Church Slavonic, but whose preaching and ecclesiastical correspondence would be in Belorussian. The two bishops accepted these conditions and on October 6 officially published “Act N 1 of the proceedings of the Council of the Belorussian Orthodox Church”. Archbishop Panteleimon was to move from the Zhirovitsky monastery to Minsk, be called “Metropolitan of Minsk and All Russia” and open a theological seminary.[[22]](#footnote-22)

However, according to one source, neither the metropolitan nor the majority of the Orthodox in Belorussia were willing to break ties with the MP, and at a Council in Minsk in 1942 the Synod of what we may call the Belorussian Autonomous Church insisted that the autocephaly of their Church would have to be approved by the other Autocephalous Churches. This displeased the Germans; they appointed Bishop Philotheus of Slutsk in the place of Metropolitan Panteleimon, who was exiled to the monastery of Lyade.[[23]](#footnote-23) According to another source, however, Metropolitan Panteleimon at first refused to accept the idea of a Belorussian Autonomous Church in communion with the MP, and refused to concelebrate with the MP’s exarch in the Baltic, Metropolitan Sergius (Voskresensky). And that was why the more pliable Bishop Philotheus of Slutsk was appointed as de facto head of the Church in Belorussia.[[24]](#footnote-24)

“In August-September 1942,” writes Michael Woerl, “under pressure from both the Germans and their Belorussian nationalist cohorts, Archbishop Philotheus summoned a council of the Belorussian Church with the blessing of Metropolitan Panteleimon, but only he, Bishop Athanasius, and Bishop Stefan (Sevbo)… were allowed to take part. On the question of the Belorussian Church declaring itself to be autocephalous, the bishops stated that this could not be done without the knowledge and agreement of the other local Churches, which they knew would be impossible because, among other things, a world war was in progress.[[25]](#footnote-25) However, a letter addressed to the heads of the autocephalous Orthodox Churches was signed by Metropolitan Panteleimon and given to the German authorities, but it was never sent.

“Archbishop Philotheus and his fellow hierarchs persistently sought the return of Metropolitan Panteleimon, who finally was allowed by the Germans to return to Minsk in April of 1943. In May of 1944, the council of bishops met, and rejected the idea of seeking the autocephaly that had been attempted by the nationalistic element.”[[26]](#footnote-26)

Throughout this period, 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, they were represented by a bishop and a priest at a ROCOR Council in Vienna, so de facto they were now in communion with ROCOR. At that 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.[[27]](#footnote-27) Another Belorussian hierarch, Bishop Stefan (Sevbo) of Smolensk, had good relations with the Catacomb Church.[[28]](#footnote-28)

\*

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”.[[29]](#footnote-29) 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 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 before fleeing westwards with the retreating Germans.[[30]](#footnote-30)

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.”[[31]](#footnote-31)

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.

Thus S. Raevsky writes: “The autocephalist bishop in Rovno, Platon Artemiuk, was closely linked with the Benderite centre in Derman; he twice went to their headquarters and was twice triumphantly received by them, going between two rows of Benderite youngsters dressed in Gestapo-like uniforms, and sat at a meal with them. Here at the centre it was decided to kill the head of the Ukrainian Autonomous Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Alexis (Gromadsky), and the resolution was put into effect on May 7, 1943.

“The Benderites also killed another hierarch of the Autonomous Church, Manuel (Tarnavsky), who was taken from his flat in Vladimir in Volhynia at night and hanged in the wood. The Benderites mercilessly liquidated the older priests who did not want to betray their oath and enter into the Ukrainian Autocephaly, while the younger ones were beaten almost to death and expelled from their parishes. So many older priests perished, receiving martyric deaths for standing on guard for Orthodoxy.”[[32]](#footnote-32)

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After fleeing to the West after the war the entire episcopates of the Belorussian and Ukrainian Autonomous Churches were received into ROCOR “in their existing rank” on April 23 / May 6, 1946.[[33]](#footnote-33) But many of their flock did not accept this move. Thus one of the Belorussian bishops, Athanasius (Martos), relates the following in his autobiography: “The Belorussians [in Germany] had their grounds for not allowing us into the churches and spiritually serving them, because their archpastors had in February, 1946 united with the episcopate of the Russian Church Abroad, to which Seraphim (Lyade) of Berlin belonged. The Belorussian activists declared that their bishops were traitors because of this, and at their meetings and in their newspapers they called on them to leave the Russian Church Abroad. For this reason the bishops of the Belorussian Church wrote an epistle to their flock explaining the reasons that had compelled them to unite, but they were unsuccessful. A break took place between the Belorussian flock in the emigration and their Belorussian episcopate, which was not healed in the fugure. A small group of Belorussians of Polish orientation created their own church organization called ‘The Belorussian Autocephalous Church’ which was led by the Ukrainian Bishop Sergius Okhotenko, while the majority of the Belorussians went under the omophorion of the Constantinopolitan patriarchate and organized their own parishes in the USA and Canada. The Belorussian bishops received appointments to sees in the Russian Church Abroad in other countries.

“Metropolitan Anastasy, first-hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad and president of the Hierarchical Synod, convened a Council of Bishops in Munich, which took place on May 5, 1946. At this Council the Belorussian and Ukrainian autonomous bishops were received, and united with the hierarchs of the Russian Church Abroad. Thus three episcopal groups that were independent of each other united in the ranks of the Russian Church Abroad. The aim of this union was to achieve more successful spiritual care of the Russians, Ukrainians and Belorussians abroad in the emigration. The Ukrainian autocephalous bishops kept themselves apart and did not enter into any unions. They were joined by almost all the Ukrainians in the camps, and later in the various countries where they settled.”[[34]](#footnote-34)

Although the wartime period of revival of ecclesiastical life in Belorussia and the Ukraine 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.

## 88. THE GENOCIDE OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX

By the beginning of the Second World War, the Orthodox Church, having suffered the most terrible and sustained onslaught from the powers of evil in her history, was almost unrecognizable from her pre-revolutionary glory. The sergianist Moscow Patriarchate, on the one hand, and the newcalendarist 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 those Churches that had fallen away from the truth, so the prospects of their remaining free from the quicksands of “World Orthodoxy” for long were not good. The situation of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad 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 the early months of 1941…

On April 6, 1941 the Germans invaded Yugoslavia. Archbishop Averky writes: “The unexpected German bombardment of Belgrade on April 6, 1941, which soon decided the fate of Yugoslavia, produced such a shattering impression that the capital was completely abandoned, both by the government organs and by the ordinary inhabitants, who fled in indescribable panic for many tens of kilometers. Amidst this complete devastation it was only in the life of the Russian church in Belgrade that no essential changes took place: the services prescribed by the Typicon continued as usual, while priests went with the Holy Gifts around the city, giving communion to the wounded and carrying out prayer services in the refuges. During the raid Metropolitan Anastasy remained at his hierarchical place in the altar, while the clergy took it in turns to serve prayer services in front of the wonder-working Kursk-Root icon of the Mother of God ‘of the Sign’. And this in spite of the fact that five bombs fell in the immediate vicinity of our church, the neighbouring Serbian church of St. Mark burned down, and for a whole two days a gigantic fire from a warehouse full of logs that had been hit by a bomb burned just next to the wall of the church. On the second day, March 25 / April 7, on the very feast of the Annunciation, when there was a particularly violent bombardment, Vladyka Metropolitan was present at the Divine Liturgy which one of the priests celebrated in the basement of the Russian House for the many Russian people who had sheltered there. This liturgy, which was carried out in a situation recalling that of the ancient Catacomb Christians, was sealed for life in the memory of all those who received communion at it. And with the blessing of Vladyka Metropolitan up to 300 people received communion after a general confession (this was in view of the danger of death that clearly threatened everyone).

“Exactly a week later, on Lazarus Saturday, the Germans entered the completely destroyed and deserted city, and difficult years began for the Russian emigration in Yugoslavia. Together with the whole of his Belgrade flock, Vladyka Metropolitan nobly endured hunger and cold and all kinds of restrictions and deprivations, various unpleasantnesses from the German occupying authorities and hostile attacks from that part of the Serbian population which had submitted to the influence of communist propaganda.

“Soon after the occupation of Yugoslavia by the German armies, members of the Gestapo carried out a thorough search in the residence of Vladyka Metropolitan Anastasy, and then took away the clerical work of the Hierarchical Synod.[[35]](#footnote-35) However, they were forced to admit that Vladyka, as a true Archpastor of the Church of Christ, was profoundly alien to all politics, and they left him in peace.”[[36]](#footnote-36)

Deserted by the Croats, the Serbian resistance was soon crushed. 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.”[[37]](#footnote-37) The Bulgarians occupied Yugoslav Macedonia and expelled Metropolitan Joseph of Skopje and Bishop Vincent of Zletovo-Strumica, together with many Serbian priests, to Serbia; seven priests and thousands of laity were killed by the Hungarians in Vojvodina; and the Italians occupied Kosovo, where Albanian nationalists killed and plundered.[[38]](#footnote-38) Nine Serbian hierarchs were killed, including Metropolitans Dositheus of Zagreb and Peter of Bosnia, and Bishops Sabbas of Karlovac, Plato of Banja Luka, Nicholas of Herzegovina and Seraphim of Ryashko-Prizren (the last in an Albanian prison).[[39]](#footnote-39)

In neighbouring Czechoslovakia Bishop Gorazd of Moravia-Silesia, a convert from Catholicism, had since his consecration in 1921 been waging a noble battle returning the Czech lands to the faith of Saints Cyril and Methodius. At the beginning of the war, after being cut off from the Serbian Patriarchate, to which he was canonically subject, he 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 1942 saboteurs killed the Nazi Gauleiter Heidrich in Prague. They were given refuge in the crypt of the Orthodox cathedral of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Prague. When Bishop Gorazd heard about this some days later, he was very disturbed, knowing that if the Germans discovered this hiding-place, then the whole of the Czech Orthodox Church would be subjected to repressions. Before going to Berlin, where Metropolitan Seraphim had invited him to participate in the consecration of a bishop, he asked for the saboteurs to be removed to another hiding-place as soon as possible. Soon the Nazis discovered the hiding-place and on July 18 seven of the saboteurs were killed. Two of the cathedral’s priests and other Orthodox were arrested (the priests were later shot). Bishop Gorazd did not try to save his own life, but took the whole responsibility upon himself. He wrote to the authorities: “I place myself at the disposal of the corresponding authorities and am ready to accept any punishment, including the death penalty.” On July 27 he was arrested, and on September 4, after being tortured, he was shot. The Orthodox Church in Bohemia and Moravia was shut down and its priests sent to camps in Germany.[[40]](#footnote-40)

But by far the worst atrocities were committed against the Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia by the Ustashi and the Catholic Church in the newly independent state of Croatia, which had been recognized by the Vatican. On April 28, 1941, the Catholic Archbishop Stepinac of Zagreb issued an appeal rapturously praising the Ustashi regime of Ante Pavlevich 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 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.[[41]](#footnote-41)

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.”[[42]](#footnote-42)

On May 8, 1944, Archbishop Stepinac reported to the Pope that 240,000 Serbs apostasized 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.[[43]](#footnote-43) 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.”[[44]](#footnote-44)

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.”[[45]](#footnote-45)

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 skin peeled off, salt poured into their wounds, their eyes have been pulled out, their ears, noses and tongues cut off, the priest 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 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 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.”[[46]](#footnote-46)

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 Hermogenes (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 Hermogenes. 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.[[47]](#footnote-47)

Metropolitan Hermogenes was killed by Tito’s partisans in July, 1945.[[48]](#footnote-48)

## 89. ORTHODOXY AND PAGANISM IN MANCHURIA

From 1931 Manchuria with its capital city of Harbin was occupied by the Japanese, which placed an important part of the Russian emigration in what was in effect a militantly pagan country. In the autumn of 1940 the Japanese passed a new law forbidding foreigners to lead religious organizations. Metropolitan Sergius (Tikhomirov) was forced to retire. But in March, 1941 Protopriest Ioann (Ono) was consecrated by ROCOR bishops in Japan as Bishop Nicholas, the first Japanese Orthodox bishop. On his return, some parishioners rejected him. However, with the help of the retired Metropolitan Sergius, the believers were pacified.[[49]](#footnote-49)

In Harbin, in May, 1943, the Japanese placed a statue of their goddess Amateras, the supposed foundress of the imperial race, directly opposite the Orthodox cathedral of St. Nicholas, and demanded that Russians going to church in the cathedral should first make a “reverential bow” towards the goddess. They also required that on certain days Japanese temples should be venerated, while a statue of the goddess was to be put in Orthodox churches.

The question of the admissibility of participating in such ritual venerations was discussed at the diocesan assemblies of the Harbin diocese on September 8 and October 2, 1943, in the presence of the hierarchs of the Harbin diocese: Metropolitan Meletius, Bishop Demetrius and Bishop Juvenal (Archbishop Nestor was not present). According to the witness of the secretary of the Episcopal conference, Fr. Leonid Upshinsky, “the session was stormy, since some objected that… Amateras was not a goddess but the Ancestress.” It was decided “to accept completely and direct to the authorities” the reports of Bishop Demetrius of Hailar and Professor K.I. Zaitsev (the future Archimandrite Constantine), which expressed the official view of the episcopate that participation in the ritual venerations was inadmissible.[[50]](#footnote-50)

However, on February 5, 1944 the congress of leaders of the Russian emigration in Manchuria met in Harbin. The congress opened with a moleben in the St. Nicholas cathedral, after which the participants went to the Japanese temple “Harbin-Jinjya”, where they carried out a veneration of the goddess Amateras. On February 12 the Harbin hierarchs responded with an archpastoral epistle, in which they said: “Since any kind of veneration of pagan divinities and temples is forbidden by the commandments of God…, Orthodox Christians, in obedience to the will of God and his Law, cannot and must not carry out this veneration, for such venerations contradict the basic theses of the Orthodox Faith.” Archbishop Nestor refused to sign this epistle. In March both vicars of the Harbin diocese, Bishop Demetrius and Bishop Juvenal, were summoned to the police, where they were closely interrogated about the circumstances of the illegal distribution of the archpastoral epistle and about the attitude of the flock to this question. On April 28 Metropolitan Meletius was subjected to interrogation. The conversation, which lasted for several hours, produced no result. Referring to his extreme exhaustion and illness, Vladyka Meletius asked that the conversation be continued on May 1. This again produced no result. Bishop Demetrius, who also took part, categorically and sharply protested against the venerations.

On May 2, an Episcopal Convention took place (Archbishop Nestor, as usual, was not present), at which this position was confirmed. Several days later, Metropolitan Meletius presented the text of the Episcopal Convention to Mr. Kobayasi. Kobayasi demanded that he give a written promise not to raise the question of venerations until the end of the war. Metropolitan Meletius asked that the words “if there will be no compulsion to venerations” should be added to the text. Vladyka’s demand again elicited a quarrel. However, in the end Kobayasi gave in. On August 31 the Harbin archpastors sent a letter to Archbishop Nestor in which they appealed to him “to unite with us, return and may your voice sound out in defence of the purity of the Faith and zeal for its confession. Sign (better late than never) our Archpastoral Epistle and announce this publicly – in whatever way and place you can.” In reply, Vladyka Nestor wrote that he did not disagree with his brother archpastors about the inadmissibility of venerating the temples of Amateras.[[51]](#footnote-51)

Eventually the Japanese climbed down - through the courageous confession of Archimandrite Philaret (Voznesensky), the future first-hierarch of the ROCOR. The Japanese tortured him and almost tore out his eyes, but he suffered this patiently. “We have a red-hot electrical instrument here,” they said. “Everybody who has had it applied to them has agreed to our requests. And you will also agree.” The torturer brought the instrument forward. Fr. Philaret prayed to St. Nicholas: “Holy Hierarch Nicholas, help me, otherwise there may be a betrayal.” The torturer commenced his work. He stripped the confessor to his waist and started to burn his spine with the burning iron. Then a miracle took place. Fr. Philaret could smell his burning flesh, but felt no pain. He felt joyful in his soul. The torturer could not understand why he was silent, and did not cry out or writhe from the unbearable pain. Then he turned and looked at his face. Amazed, he waved his hand, muttered something in Japanese and fled, conquered by the superhuman power of the confessor’s endurance. Fr. Philaret was brought, almost dead, to his relatives. There he passed out.

When he came to he said: “I was in hell itself.” Gradually his wounds healed. The Japanese no longer tried to compel the Orthodox to worship their idol…[[52]](#footnote-52)

## 90. ROCOR AND THE NAZIS

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) have been waiting for has come, and they are now truly rising from the dead in those places where the courageous German sword has succeeded in severing their 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!’”[[53]](#footnote-53)

In June, the ROCOR Synod made some suggestions to the German authorities on the organization of the Church in Russia. In June it wrote: “…In the spirit of the canons of the Orthodox Church there exists only one solution in the question of the organization of the Church’s administration, and that is the convening of a Council of Russian hierarchs by the eldest among them and the appointment by this Council of a temporary head of the Church and of the rest of the Church administration.” The final organization of the governing organs and the election of a Patriarch could take place, in the opinion of the Synod, only when ‘hierarchs will be appointed to all the vacant sees and normal relations are established in the country”.[[54]](#footnote-54)

However, the attitude of the Germans to the Orthodox Faith was ambiguous. Hitler was “utterly irreligious”[[55]](#footnote-55), but feigned religious tolerance for political reasons. 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."[[56]](#footnote-56) 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."[[57]](#footnote-57)

The Germans wanted to prepare new priestly cadres who would conform to their views on the Jews. On October 31, 1941 a directive went out from the Main Administration of Imperial Security for the Reich: “The resolution of the ecclesiastical question in the occupied eastern provinces is an exceptionally important… task, which with a little skill can be magnificently solved in favour of a religion that is free from Jewish influence. However, this influence is predicated on the closing of churches in the eastern provinces that are infected with Jewish dogmas…”[[58]](#footnote-58)

One thing the Germans did *not* want was the resurrection of the Great Russian people through the Church. On May 16, 1942 A. Rosenburg, the head of the ministry of the East, said in Riga to a meeting of General and Security Commissars: “The Russian Orthodox Church was a political instrument of the power of tsarism, and now our political task consists in creating other ecclesiastical forms where the Russian Church used to exist. In any case we will hinder the Great Russian Orthodox Church from lording it over all the nationalitie… We should think more about introducing the Latin script instead of the Russian. Therefore it is also appropriate that some churches should remain as far as possible restricted to the province of one General Commissar… It is also appropriate for Estonia and Latvia that they should have their own national churches…”[[59]](#footnote-59)

Again, on August 8, 1942 the head of the German General Commissariat wrote to Archbishop Philotheus, temporary head of the Belorussian Church, forbidding the baptism of Jews, the opening of work-houses attached to monasteries, the opening of theological seminaries and academies without the permission of the German authorities and the teaching of the Law of God in school. He also removed the juridical status of Church marriages. It was becoming clear that the authorities were not intending to give any rights to the Orthodox Church in Belorussia.[[60]](#footnote-60)

On August 12, Archbishop Seraphim (Lyade) wrote from Vienna to Metropolitan Anastasy: “With regard to the question of sending priests to Russia: unfortunately, according to all available data, the higher government authorities are so far not well-disposed towards a positive solution of this question. I made several petitions, but without success. In all probability, the authorities suspect that the clergy from abroad are bearers of a political ideology that is unacceptable for the German authorities at the present time. I did not even succeed in getting permission to transfer several priests to Germany from abroad (for example, Fr. Rodzianko), and according to the information I have received permission was not given because these priests supposedly worked together with émigré political organizations.”[[61]](#footnote-61)

On October 21, 1943, with the permission of the Germans (the first time they had given such permission), Metropolitan Anastasy came to Vienna from Belgrade and convened a Conference of bishops (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”.[[62]](#footnote-62)

“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 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.’”[[63]](#footnote-63)

As the war progressed and the behaviour of the Germans became steadily crueller, the attitude of the Russian Orthodox to them changed. As Metropolitan Anastasy wrote in October, 1945, in response to Patriarch Alexis’ charge that ROCOR had sympathized 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 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…”[[64]](#footnote-64)

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.”[[65]](#footnote-65)

Nevertheless, of the two alternatives – the Germans or the Soviets – ROCOR 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…”[[66]](#footnote-66)

## 91. 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…”[[67]](#footnote-67)

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.

“Having issued the Epistle, Metropolitan Sergius and all the members of the chancellery 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’.[[68]](#footnote-68)

“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 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…’”[[69]](#footnote-69)

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 outfitting of a tank unit. From November, 1941 even the last open church of the Josephites in Leningrad, that of the Holy Trinity in Lesny, 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 Moscow Patriarchate…[[70]](#footnote-70)

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 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.’[[71]](#footnote-71)

“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. [[72]](#footnote-72) 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 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[[73]](#footnote-73) 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). 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 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.”[[74]](#footnote-74)

The three hierarchs also raised the question of opening more churches. Stalin replied that there were no obstacles to this from the side of the government. 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.”[[75]](#footnote-75) According to Archimandrite Ioann (Razumov), Sergius was enchanted by Stalin: “How kind he is!… How kind he is!” he said in a hushed voice…[[76]](#footnote-76)

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…”[[77]](#footnote-77)

Donald Rayfield notes that the metropolitans went to the meeting “all wearing ordinary suits”.[[78]](#footnote-78) 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…”

And so, as Eugene Blum writes, “the Church structure called the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC-MP) was organized with the personal participation of the dictator Stalin in September, 1943. Not one priest of this ‘church’, could LEGALLY carry out servies and rites without the corresponding permission of the ‘competent organs’ – first of all, the secret police of the NKVD-KGB, and was forced to cooperate with them. Every priest, or at least every bishop had to give a signed promise that he would cooperate. He also had to sign that he would not publicize this fact of his recruitment under threat of the death penalty.”[[79]](#footnote-79)

The new Soviet church was given the name of “The Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate” (under Patriarch Tikhon the Church had been called “The Russian Rossijskaia) Orthodox Church”); and it acquired a precarious, semi-legal existence – 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).

Stalin’s new ecclesiastical policy was effective. 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.”[[80]](#footnote-80)

But from the Church’s point of view, the new policy, while it ensured the Church’s physical survival, made it completely a slave of the State. As Rayfield writes: “The Church was now… an arm of the state.”[[81]](#footnote-81)

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-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?”[[82]](#footnote-82)

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.’”[[83]](#footnote-83)

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 anybody of another opinion?”, reply: “No, agreed”.[[84]](#footnote-84)

“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 N 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.”[[85]](#footnote-85)

Sergius was enthroned as “patriarch” on September 12, 1943. On September 14 the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church, later renamed the Council for Religious Affairs, was created with Karpov at its head. Eduard Radzinsky comments: “Karpov was also [since 1940] head of the Fifth Department of the NKVD[[86]](#footnote-86), 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…”[[87]](#footnote-87)

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The Stalin-Sergius pact of 1943 had been preceded by certain conciliatory measures in relation to religion. Thus on November 11. 1939 the Politburo had decreed that arrests of clergy and the persecution of believers should cease, that Lenin’s decree “On the Struggle with the Pope and Religion” and all similar instructions should be repealed and that those arrested in connection with the carrying out of Divine services should be released. Of course, persecutions did not immediately stop by any means, but this measure was a straw in the wind. Again, on October 23, 1942 order N 467 of the NKVD and Narkomiust decreed that bishops recognizing Metropolitan Sergius should be released in preparation for his election as patriarch.[[88]](#footnote-88) So the Stalin-Sergius pact was the consequence of a fairly long period of preparation for a change, not so much in the Soviet regime’s fundamental attitude to religion, as in its tactics towards believers.

The pact’s first result was the appearance, on September 12, of the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, from which, as M.A. Babkin writes, “there began to sound lofty words concerning Stalin. The senior hierarchs called him ‘God-given Leader’ (this came from Patriarch Sergius (Stragorodsky) of Moscow and All Russia) (*JMP* 1943, N. 3, pp. 3-4), ‘our God-given Supreme Leader’, ‘Beloved Leader’, Great Supreme Leader’, ‘Wise Leader, whom the Providence of God has elected and installed to lead our Fatherland on the path of prosperity and glory’ (the expressions of Metropolitan Alexis (Simansky) of Leningrad and Novgorod) (*JMP* 1944, no. 2, pp. 11-12, 1945, no. 2, p. 70, no. 5, p. 10, 1947, no. 11, pp. 4-5), ‘Most Beloved Leader of our People, genius Supreme Commander in Chief of our Army, established by God for his Exploit of Service to our Homeland’, ‘Beloved Leader’, ‘Our genius Supreme Comander in Chief, our God-given Leader’, “Greatest Man of our Time, genius Leader of the multi-million State’ (*JMP* 1944, no. 5, p. 7, no. 10, p. 8, no. 11, p. 20, 1945, no. 5, p. 26) (the words of Metropolitan Nicholas (Yarushevich) of Krutitsa and Kolomna)), etc.”[[89]](#footnote-89)

“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 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.’”[[90]](#footnote-90)

Shortly after being elected Patriarch, 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. On April 28 or 29, 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.[[91]](#footnote-91)

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.[[92]](#footnote-92)

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 Patriarchate did not accept this act since it was carried out without his agreement, but only with his knowledge.[[93]](#footnote-93)

On November 7 a triumphant liturgy was celebrated celebrating the anniversary of the October revolution…

In the same month, according to recently released documents, secret instructions went out from the authorities to encourage the renovationists to join the MP.[[94]](#footnote-94)

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.

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’.”[[95]](#footnote-95)

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.”[[96]](#footnote-96)

On October 16 Karpov sent secret instructions to the regions not to hinder the transfer of renovationists to the Sergianist church.[[97]](#footnote-97)

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 Bishop Manuel (Lemeshevsky) for forcing “venerable” renovationist protopriests to “turn somersaults”, i.e. repent, before the people, in accordance with Patriarch Tikhon’s rules.[[98]](#footnote-98) 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.”[[99]](#footnote-99)

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. The way in which the renovationist-sergianist hierarchs sharply turned course at a nod from the higher-ups was illustrated, in the coming years, by the MP’s sharp change in attitude towards ecumenism, from strictly anti-ecumenist in 1948 to pro-ecumenist only ten years later.

Sergius did more than place the MP in unconditional submission to the God-hating authorities. As Archimandrite (now Bishop) Nectarius (Yashunsky) writes, 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. In this context two of his works are especially indicative: ‘Is There a Vicar of Christ in the Church?’ (*The Spiritual Heritage of Patriarch Sergius*, Moscow, 1948) and ‘The Relationship of the Church to the Communities that have Separated from Her’ (*Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*).

In the first, although Metropolitan Sergius gives a negative answer to the question (first of all in relation to the Pope), this negative answer is not so much a matter of principle as of empiricism. The Pope is not the head of the Universal Church only because he is a heretic. But in principle Metropolitan Sergius considers it possible and even desirable for the whole of the Universal Church to be headed by one person. Moreover, in difficult times in the life of the Church this person can assume such privileges even if he does not have the corresponding canonical rights. And although the metropolitan declares that this universal leader is not the vicar of Christ, this declaration does not look sincere in the context both of his other theological opinions and of his actions in accordance with this theology.” In the second article, 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, concludes 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”![[100]](#footnote-100)

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 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.”[[101]](#footnote-101)

## 92. THE FALSE MOSCOW COUNCIL OF 1945

“Patriarch” Sergius died on May 15, 1944.[[102]](#footnote-102) Lev Regelson writes that “the dithyrambs in his honour exceeded all conceivable limits. His successor, Alexis (Simansky), who together with him had given ‘the green light’ to renovationism, spoke about his ‘unshakeable decisiveness to walk only on your path and follow your own principles’. Ioann (Snychev), the future metropolitan of St. Petersburg, went further than anyone else when he described him as ‘an intellectual giant’.”[[103]](#footnote-103)

Then, writes Shumilo, “with the approval of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church the ‘right hand’ of Sergius, 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….

“It was expected that Stalin would reply to such protestations of loyalty by allowing the convening of a council and the election of a new patriarch. However, Stalin, in spite of the fact that, eight months before, on the eve of the Teheran conference, he had hastily convened a council, now seemed not to be aiming for it. But such suspicions were mistaken. The talented scenarist was acting, according to the expression of V. Alexeev, ‘in accordance with a previously worked out plan’, and was by no means planning to stop using the Church for his criminal aims. As became clear later, he resorted to convening the council 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.“ [[104]](#footnote-104)

In spite of that, 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, was through the efforts of Protopriest Nicholas Kolchitsky and Metropolitan Alexis not admitted to the council and took no part in it.”[[105]](#footnote-105)

Some have seen in the behaviour of Archbishop Luke proof that the MP was not completely sovietized at this time, and that its hierarchy still contained some true bishops. Unfortunately, however, there is clear evidence that Archbishop Luke, like the other hierarchs of the Moscow Patriarchate, was infected by the Soviet bacillus to such an extent that he deviated from Orthodox teaching. Thus in 1948 he stopped the activity of Catacomb Hieromonk Ippolit in Crimea.[[106]](#footnote-106) Moreover, he wrote that Christ’s commandment to love one’s neighbour did not apply “to the German murderers… it is absolutely impossible to love them.” And again: “How shall we now preach the Gospel of love and brotherhood to those who do not know Christ, but who have seen the satanic face of the German who claims to be a Christian?”[[107]](#footnote-107) Such sentiments from one who knew from his own experience how “Christian” his own government was, were possible only for one who allowed revolutionary morality to obscure the light of Christian truth. Indeed, Archbishop Luke (who has recently been canonized by the MP) is known to have said that if he had not been a priest he would have been a communist.[[108]](#footnote-108)

In January, 1945, another council assembled in Moscow, consisting 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. ”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.”[[109]](#footnote-109)

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 on the single will of the patriarch, and through him, of Stalin. For, as Fr. Sergius Gordun has written: “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.”[[110]](#footnote-110)

The power 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.”[[111]](#footnote-111)

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 gifts. It was also decided to ‘show gratitude’ to the foreign bishops for their participation in the Council. 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… Naturally, 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.’”[[112]](#footnote-112)

As was to be expected, the Eastern Patriarchs recognized 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’”.[[113]](#footnote-113)

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.”[[114]](#footnote-114)

The MP’s agreement with the Eastern Patriarchs enabled them to divide the Polish Orthodox between them. The majority of these – 80% - now found themselves within the boundaries of the USSR. “The remaining 20% of Orthodox Christians living in Poland then applied to the Ecumenical Patriarchate to continue their autocephalous status. The Ecumenical Patriarchate refused, but allowed them to be ‘autonomous’ provided they adopted the New Calendar extensively without fail. They therefore adopted the new calendar in full, not allowing the old calendar to exist. But the Moscow Patriarchate then pressured the Ecumenical Patriarchate to grant the Polish Orthodox Church complete autocephaly…”[[115]](#footnote-115)

## 93. THE TRAGEDY OF THE VLASOVITES

After the victory of the Soviets, many Russian émigrés were overwhelmed nostalgia for what they thought was their homeland.[[116]](#footnote-116). Typical of the feelings of many 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…”[[117]](#footnote-117)

Still more tragic was the fate of who were forcibly returned by the western allied governments in accordance with the Yalta agreement. “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.”[[118]](#footnote-118)

The largest category of those forcibly repatriated was composed of those who had fought in the Soviet army. 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…”[[119]](#footnote-119)

Another category was composed of the soldiers who fought on the German side in General A.A. Vlasov’s “Russian Liberation Army”. In May, 1945, in Lienz in Austria, “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. It is interesting that the then 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 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].’…”[[120]](#footnote-120)

A similar tragedy took place in Kempten. On August 25, 1945, Metropolitan Anastasy wrote about it to General Eisenhower from Munich, where ROCOR had just moved its headquarters: “After seven years of terrible war, the sun of peace has arisen over the suffering earth. This peace was won by the heroism of the Allied Armies and by the wisdom, courage and self-sacrificial valour of these leaders. Among these names yours stands in the first place. These names will be blessed by those people to whom the victory of the Allied Armies returned freedom. It was with a feeling of profound satisfaction that this victory was greeted by émigrés from various countries who now live in Germany… Only the Russians, of whom there were more in Germany than the representatives of any other nation, were deprived of this joy. They were forced to remain in a foreign land because between them and their Home was a wall which their conscience and common sense did not allow them to cross… The Russians, of course, love their homeland no less than the French, the Belgians or the Italians love theirs. The Russians are nostalgic for their homeland. If, in spite of this, they still prefer to remain in a foreign land, having no domicile, often hungry and with no juridical defence, this is only for one reason: they want to preserve the greatest value on earth – freedom: freedom of conscience, freedom of the word, the right to property and personal security. Many of them have already grown old and would like to die in their homeland, but this is impossible as long as there reigns there a power which is based on terror and the suppression of the human personality… It is a remarkable fact that not only intelligentsia, but also peasants and simple workers, who left Russia after 1941, when it entered into war, and who were brought up in the conditions of Soviet life, do not want to return to Soviet Russia. When attempts were made to deport them, they cried out in despair and prayed for mercy. Sometimes they even committed suicide, preferring death in a foreign land to returning to a homeland where only sufferings await them. Such a tragic event took place on August 12 in Kempten. In the this place, in the DP camp, there was a large concentration of Russian émigrés, that is, people who had left Russia after the revolution, and also former Soviet citizens who a little later expressed their desire to remain abroad. When the American soldiers appeared at the camp with the aim of dividing these émigrés into two categories and hand over the former Soviet citizens into the hands of the Soviets, they found all the émigrés in church ardently praying to God that He save them from deportation. Being completely defenceless and abandoned, they considered the church to be their last and only refuge. They offered no active resistance. The people only kneeled and prayed for mercy, trying, in complete despair, to kiss the hands and even the feet of the officers. In spite of this, they were forcibly expelled from the church. The soldiers dragged women and children by the hair and beat them. Even the priests were not left in peace. The priests tried by all means to defend their flock, but without success. One of them, an old and respected priest, was dragged away by the beard. Another spat blood out of his mouth after one of the soldiers, trying to pull the cross out of his hands, struck him in the face. The soldiers rushed into the altar in pursuit of the people. The iconostasis, which separates the sanctuary from the church, was broken in two places, the altar was overthrown and several icons were hurled to the ground. Several people were wounded, two tried to poison themselves. One woman tried to save her child by throwing it through the window, but the man outside who caught this child in his arms was wounded by a bullet in the stomach. You can imagine what a huge impression this made on all the witnesses. It especially shocked the Russians, who were in now way expecting such behaviour from American soldiers. Up to that point they had seen in them only help and support. The American authorities have always shown respect and goodwill to Russian churches and church organizations. Many Russians strove to get into the American zone of occupation because of their hope of being defended by the valorous American army… The Russian people consider the tragedy in Kempten to be an isolated case, which took place because of a misunderstanding. They firmly believe that nothing like this will ever happen again. They hope that benevolent help will be given to them as before. They are convinced that the victorious American Army, the Army of a country which is glorified by its love for freedom and humanity, will understand their desire to defend their finest national and religious ideals, for the sake of which they have been suffering for more than 25 years. We joyfully note that we, Russian émigrés in Europe, are not alone in this respect. We have recently received news from the bishops of our Church in the United States that they have not agreed to recognize the newly elected patriarch in Russia. They consider that it would be incompatible with their feeling of dignity and with their priestly conscience to be in subjection to an institution that is under the complete control of the Soviet government, which is trying to use it for its own ends. The voice of our brothers speaks about the convictions of their numerous flock in the USA… We are strengthened in the belief that we stand on the right path in defending our independence from the Muscovite ecclesiastical and political authorities until the establishment of a new order in our country that is based on the principle of true democracy, that is, freedom, brotherhood and justice. In obtaining a glorious victory together with its allies, and in pushing its frontiers forward, Russia could become the happiest of countries, if only if returned to a healthy political and social life. Being convinced that the victory of eternal truth will finally triumph, we continually pray that better days come for her, for Russia, and that peace and prosperity may be established throughout the world after the days of war have passed. May the blessing of the Lord be upon you.”[[121]](#footnote-121)

There is no doubt that the tragedies that took place at Lientz and Kempten constitute serious stains on the reputation of Britain and America – although Metropolitan Anastasy clearly preferred them to the Nazis or the Soviets. They showed that their alliance with the Soviets against the Nazis was bound to lead to immoral actions and the deaths of thousands of innocent people. As the saying goes, if you sup with the devil, you have to use a very long spoon…

In recent years the position of the Vlasovites has been the subject of increasing discussion in Russia, and many have come to sympathize with it, even while the majority continues to regard them as traitors to their Homeland.[[122]](#footnote-122)

But Dmitri Savvin writes: “The logic of the Russian Liberation Movement (RLM) of 1941-45 flows completely from the historical Russian tradition going back to St. Alexander Nevsky. The choice was completely obvious: on the one hand, the independent Bolshevik power, formally ‘ours’ – but the price of this independence was the extirpation of Orthodoxy and the gradual loss of national identity. On the other – enemy occupation, in the conditions of which, as many representatives of the White emigration thought, it would still be much easier to preserve faith, culture and traditions. In essence, the plans of the leaders of the Russian Liberation Movement (RLM) presupposed a repetition of the historical experience of Alexander Nevsky and his heirs: first, in keeping their own religious and cultural identity, and secondly, in gradually becoming stronger and overcoming the foreign conquest…”[[123]](#footnote-123)

It should be noted, however, that Igumen Theodosius of Minvody (+1948), one of the greatest saints of the Catacomb Church, called the Nazi invaders “another Antichrist”.

## 94. ROCOR MOVES TO AMERICA

Archbishop Averky writes: “In September, 1944, when the Soviet armies were already approaching Belgrade, the main mass of Russian inhabitants of the city set off for Vienna. Metropolitan Anastasy with the whole staff of the Hierarchical Synod and the chancellery were also evacuated there. And in Vienna he did not cease to perform Divine services in our two churches – the old embassy church and the new house church – literally under bombs and amidst flaming conflagrations. Here, too, the wonder-working icon every day went round the houses and refuges of Russian people and even of some Austrians who had been penetrated by the greatest respect for our holy object in consequence of the miraculous signs that clearly came from it.

“From Vienna Vladyka Metropolitan and the whole Synod moved first to Karlsbad [on November 10], and then – already after the end of the war – in the summer of 1945 to the city of Munich, which for a time became a major centre of Russian ecclesiastical and public life. In Munich alone and its suburbs about 14 parishes were created, and a very intensive church life was conducted in many places with daily Divine services. In the summer of this year of 1945 Vladyka Metropolian and Metropolitan Seraphim consecrated Archimandrite Alexander (Lovchy), the rector of a Munich parish, as Bishop of Kissingen, a vicariate of the German diocese.

“Wishing to restore the links between the separate parts of the Russian Church Abroad with the Hierarchical Synod after the disruption caused by the war, Vladyka Metropolitan succeeded in obtaining permission to go to Switzerland, and from Geneva he quickly established contact by writing with all the countries containing church communities subject to our Russian Church Abroad, which strengthened the organization of our Church Abroad that was about to collapse.

“In Switzerland Vladyka Metropolitan remained for about 7 months, and in this period he, together with Bishop Jerome who arrived from America, carried out two hierarchical consecrations – Archimandrite Seraphim (Ivanov) as Bishop of Santiago, and Archimandrite Nathanael as Bishop of Brussels and Western Europe.

“By Pascha, 1946 he had returned to Munich, where he soon, on April 23, he convened a Council of Bishops Abroad, in which the bishops of the Autonomous Ukrainian and Belorussian Churches took part with identical rights to those of the representatives of other districts.[[124]](#footnote-124) 15 hierarchs participated personally in this Council, while the rest, from distant countries, sent their wishes and written opinions on the questions on the agenda…

“After the end of the war Vladyka Metropolitan’s attention was mainly concentrated on helping Orthodox Russians to leave devastated Germany and organize a normal Church life in their new places of residence. A whole series of new hierarchical sees was established in various countries, and the hierarchs who had assembled as a result of the war in Western Germany gradually received appointments to these newly-opened sees.

“In September, 1950 Metropolitan Anastasy undertook a journey to the West European diocese, where he carried out two important acts: in Geneva on September 11/24 he consecrated Archimandrite Leonty (Bartoshevich) as Bishop for the Geneva vicariate, and in Brussels on September 18 / October 1 he consecrated the newly constructed memorial church to the Tsar-Martyr and all the Russian people killed during the troubles. On returning to Germany on September 25 / October 8, he consecrated a new church in Frankfurt in honour of the Resurrection of Christ.

“From 1948 a vigorous migration of Russian to the United States of North America had begun, and many began to ask Vladyka Metropolitan to move there also together with the Hierarchical Synod. People in America also asked him to come; there a sad schism had just taken place (in 1946) after the so-called ‘Cleveland council’, at which it was decided [by four out of eight bishops] to move to the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarch Alexis. At the beginning Vladyka Metropolitan wavered, but Munich was becoming more and more empty, and the refugee camps and the parishes in them were gradually closing down. And finally Vladyka President decided to move to where most of his flock had moved and where they were urgently inviting him to come.

“Vladyka Metropolitan Anastasy’s departure for America took place on November 10/23, 1950. The next day he arrived at the airport in New York and was triumphantly received in the Ascension cathedral.

“The next day after his arrival, on November 12/25, Vladyka Metropolitan went to the Holy Trinity monastery in Jordanville, where he carried out a triumphant consecration of the just completed stone monastery church in honour of the Holy Trinity, after which a Hierarchical Council took place in which 11 hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad took part.”[[125]](#footnote-125)

At this Council holy myrrh was sanctified for the first time in ROCOR’s history. Previously, myrrh had been received from the Serbian Church.[[126]](#footnote-126) This act had an important symbolical significance as being normally the act of an autocephalous Church. The Bishops also “adopted a resolution on the issue of the ecumenical movement. It was composed by Archbishop John of Western Europe and Bishops Nathanael of Brussels and Nicon of Florida. This document forbade members of ROCOR any form of participation in the ecumenical movement, and relegated all contacts with non-Orthodox Christians to the sphere of cooperative social activities.”[[127]](#footnote-127)

The ROCOR Synod’s move to North America was timely, because her position on that continent had been shaken in recent years.

“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 Metropolitans Anastasy and 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.”[[128]](#footnote-128)

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.[[129]](#footnote-129) Meanwhile, two American bishops, Alexis of Alaska and Macarius of Boston, joined Moscow, as did Bishop Nicholas (Ono) of Tokyo in November, 1946.[[130]](#footnote-130) In the same month, 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 returned into submission to ROCOR.[[131]](#footnote-131)

“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.”[[132]](#footnote-132)

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 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 wen to 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.”[[133]](#footnote-133)

Such a degree of subordination to Moscow proved unacceptable to the American Metropolia, and the union did not take place for the time being. However, neither did the Metropolita return to ROCOR…

In spite of the defection of the American Metropolia, ROCOR in America continued to grow. Moreover, as Archbishop Vitaly (Maximenko) of Jordanville pointed out, “a normal relationship to the question of Americanisation has been found. Instead of completely renouncing the Russian Church style of life and complete Americanisation, even in the ecclesiastical and Divine services sphere, an American Orthodox Mission attached to the Synod has been organised, headed by an American Archbishop, James (Iakov). He has American clergy, and does missionary work among Americans, organising American parishes out of them.”[[134]](#footnote-134)

In 1949 Bishop Leontius (Filippovich) of Paraguay briefly started commemorating the American Metropolia together with Metropolitan Anastasy, but when placed under ban, returned to ROCOR.[[135]](#footnote-135)

## 95. THE GREEK CHURCH DURING THE WAR

The 1930s and 40s were a time of great distress and physical hardship for the Greek people caused by the economic depression and the European conflict between the communists and the fascists. George Lardas writes: “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 imposed martial law with the consent of the King and the senior politicians, and became dictator.”[[136]](#footnote-136)

The Italian invasion of 1939 was repelled, only to be followed in April, 1941 by the German occupation. Greece was divided between the Bulgarians (in the north), the Germans (in the centre and Athens) and the Italians (in the rest of the country). Many priests perished at the hands of the German, Italian and Bulgarian forces during the occupation of 1941-1944.[[137]](#footnote-137)

In March, 1944 the German SS General Jorgen Strupp demanded from Grand Rabbi Barzilayu a list of names and addresses of all representatives of the Jewish community in Athens. Barzilayu knew that, a year before, the Germans had deported 46,000 Jews from Thessalonica to the death-camps… He appealed to the Greek civil authorities, but without success. However, he did receive support from the newcalendarist Archbishop Damascene (Papandreou) of Athens, with the help of whom about 1400 Jews were saved.[[138]](#footnote-138) Similar examples of courage in defence of the Jews were shown by the metropolitans of Corfu and Zacynthus.

War against the German invaders immediately passed into the Greek civil war between the royalists and the communists. On December 26, 1944 the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and American and French representatives arrived in Athens and met with the warring sides. 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.[[139]](#footnote-139) On September 28, 1946, as the result of a plebiscite, King George II returned to Athens.

Both the State Church and the True Orthodox Church suffered greatly at the hands of ELAS, EAM and other communist guerrilla organizations. More than 200 Orthodox priests were murdered by Communist partisans during the civil conflicts of 1943-1949, often with a bestial cruelty quite up to the standard of their Soviet counterparts. 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.[[140]](#footnote-140)

It was at this time that the two major struggles of the Orthodox Church in this century – against Communism in Russia and Eastern Europe, and against newcalendarist ecumenism in Greece, Romania and the West – began to merge. Thus the Greeks discovered by experience the horrors of Communism, while the new calendarist and Balkan hierarchs were called (in February, 1945) to travel to Moscow and legitimise the “election” of Stalin’s puppet, “Patriarch” Alexis of Moscow. And a few years later, the tentacles of Ecumenism would begin to be felt in the communist world, too.

Among the hieromartyrs of this period was Hieromonk Joseph Antoniou, whose biography as a True Orthodox priest is very illustrative of the sufferings of that period. Fr. Joseph joined the True Orthodox Church from the State Church in 1933, and was assigned to the parish in Carystos on the island of Euboea. He immediately came into conflict with the fierce Metropolitan Panteleimon of Carystia and Skyros, who had already shown his antipathy to the True Orthodox by throwing the 80-year-old Fr. George Antoniou into prison in Chalkis, where he died. Fr. Joseph’s vigorous missionary activity, combined with his charity and healing gifts, only increased the wrath of the new calendarist hierarch, who succeeded in getting Fr. Joseph’s church sealed. Once Fr. Joseph, like a new John the Baptist, publicly denounced the metropolitan for celebrating an uncanonical marriage and having no pity on the couple who would suffer as a result (two years later, they were burned to death in a car accident). Finally, Fr. Joseph had to flee in order to escape arrest, and was assigned to another parish in Dombrana, near Thebes.

On August 4, 1936 the democratic regime was replaced by a royal dictatorship with John Metaxas as Prime Minister. Metaxas was tolerant towards the True Orthodox, but in 1938 the Minister of Public Order, egged on by Archbishop Chrysostom Papadopoulos, gave an order for the arrest of True Orthodox priests and the sealing of their churches. Although this order was soon repealed, Metropolitan Panteleimon used it to urge the authorities in Thebes to arrest Fr. Joseph and seal his churches. Fr. Joseph was cast into prison in Chalkis, deposed and forcibly shaved. On his release he was sent by Metropolitan Germanus to Xylocastron, near Corinth, where he 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.[[141]](#footnote-141)

The divisions among the Greek Old Calendarists remained unhealed. In 1942 Metropolitans Germanus and Chrysostom invited Bishops Matthew and Germanus to talks in order to heal their division. On January 27, 1942 Bishops Matthew and Germanus replied, refusing to meet unless the metropolitans agreed beforehand: “that the Church of Greece has become schismatic through the acceptance of the papist calendar; that its sacraments cannot be valid; that its chrism does not have sanctifying grace; and that the children of the heterodox, on coming to the Orthodox church, must be chrismated again”. If the metropolitans agreed to these conditions, they said, “then our unity will follow automatically without sessions or discussions”. But the two metropolitans rejected this suggestion.[[142]](#footnote-142)

To make things worse, in 1942 Metropolitan Germanus retired from leadership of the Sacred Struggle, and then, according to one version of events, applied for a review of the newcalendarists’ decision to defrock him from their synodical court. Since no document proving Metropolitan Germanus’ application to the newcalendarists has been found, some Florinites believe that it was a newcalendarist forgery designed to create further divisions in the Old Calendarist ranks.[[143]](#footnote-143) In any case, he died in 1944 before any decision was made, having received communion from an Old Calendarist priest.[[144]](#footnote-144) To add to the distress of the True Orthodox, a division took place between Bishops Germanus and Matthew in 1943.[[145]](#footnote-145)

On September 21, 1944 Bishop Matthew issued a “Pastoral Encyclical” which declared that “from the moment the schism befell the Church of Christ through the introduction of the papal calendar, 1) the Churches that accepted the innovation became schismatic, and 2) likewise, the local Churches that concelebrate and in general pray with the innovating Churches themselves bear the same liability”. This implies that not only the new calendarists, but the whole of World Orthodoxy that remained in communion with the new calendarists, was outside the True Church – a position more extreme even than the Encyclical of 1935, which condemned the new calendarists, but not those Old Calendar Churches that remained in communion with them.

In 1945 Bishops Christopher and Polycarp again broke with the State Church and were received by Metropolitan Chrysostom on July 13.

So at the end of the war the True Orthodox were divided into three groups: Metropolitan Chrysostom with Bishops Christopher and Polycarp, Bishop Germanus of the Cyclades, and Bishop Matthew of Bresthena.

## 96. THE SOVIET OFFENSIVE: (1) INSIDE THE USSR

“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.”[[146]](#footnote-146) As M.V. Shkarovsky writes, this 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.”[[147]](#footnote-147)

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 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].”[[148]](#footnote-148)

“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 at [the council].”[[149]](#footnote-149)

“One of the first to recognize the new Soviet patriarch was the former Catacomb Bishop Athanasius (Sakharov) of Kovrov. Together with his spiritual father, Hieromonk Hierax, he distributed to his Catacomb clergy and flock his appeal concerning ‘the legality of the newly elected patriarch’ and the supposed beginning in the country of ‘a regeneration of canonical Orthodoxy’. Contrasting the ‘conciliar election’ of Patriarch Alexis to the unlawful usurpation of the power of the first hierarch by Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky), Bishop Athanasius affirmed that with the death of the latter and ‘the canonical election as patriarch’ of Alexis (Simansky), the reasons leading to a schism in the Church had been automatically removed. This thought of Bishop Athanasius was also supported by the former Catacomb Bishop Gabriel (Abalymov) and some others. Trusting the appeals of these archpastors, the affirmations of the Eastern Patriarchs and the Moscow patriarchate itself, many ‘non-commemorating’ priests (especially on the formerly occupied territories) followed their example, agreed to come out of the underground and receive official registration. Soon the majority of them were retired as hierarchs of the MP, while those who dared to display disagreement were arrested by the NKVD and again sent to the concentration camps. On August 30, 1946, Bishop Athanasius was also arrested, and spent 11 years in prison. When he was freed in 1957, Vladyka was frequently subjected to slander and oppression from the hierarchs of the MP, and was not appointed to a see. Bishop Athanasius died in complete poverty on October 15, 1962 in the village of Petushki, Vladimir province.”[[150]](#footnote-150)

Another leading catacombnik who returned to the patriarchate was Protopriest Basil Veriuzhsky. But he continued to act as if his sympathies remained with the True Church. Thus in April, 1951 the Leningrad head of the Council for the Affairs of the ROC, A.I. Kushnarev, wrote to the president of the Council with some irritation: “… Veriuzhsky, the former rector of the church of the ‘resurrection-on-the-blood’, was repressed in his time as an inveterate Josephite, and on returning to Leningrad did not serve even once, continuing to remain hostile to Soviet power and not wishing to take part in services at which prayers are said for Soviet power. In spite of this, or out of respect for him, the patriarch supports Veriuzhsky in every way. In Moscow they have given him the academic degree of doctor of theology, the first in the Soviet Union, and have ardently wanted to advance him to the rank of professor in the Leningrad Theological Academy, and it is only the disagreement of the authorities that has hindered this protection…”[[151]](#footnote-151)

The faithful Catacomb pastors 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. By 1945 all of them in Moscow province had been arrested.[[152]](#footnote-152) Between 1946 and 1948 4300 clergy were arrested, most of them from the True Orthodox Church. [[153]](#footnote-153)

In the post-war period Catacomb pastors had to be specially wary of MP priests and bishops, who would denounce them to the authorities. They were sometimes careless, forgetting that the freedom they had enjoyed under the German occupation no longer held after the Red Army returned. One example (from 1948) is described in the biography of the famous MP Archbishop Luke of Simferopol. A former Soviet civil servant gives his testimony: “Then Luke told me that in one of the settlements of the Bakhchysarai district lives monk Hippolytus (Veryutin), a former Josephite], who does not recognize him as either an archbishop or a patriarch, and who goes through the villages performing various kinds of religious rites, and he asked me to take measures to prevent these rites.

“Three or four days later, Monk Hippolytus (Veryutin) was summoned by me. He was an elderly man of 80 years living with a farm family in the Bakhchysarai district. During the German occupation he was a priest in the village of Bazarchik, which is now a Postal village of the Bakhchysarai district.

“Veryutin denied having done any sort of rituals. Just the same, he was admonished by me: not having the appropriate registration documents, he couldn’t perform any rituals or ceremonies. After this there were no reports of him performing rituals…”[[154]](#footnote-154)

“In the struggle with alternative underground Orthodox communities in the U.S.S.R.,” writes Shumilo, “special commissions were created by the NKVD and the Council for the Affairs of the ROC in the middle of the 40s. They were occupied in observing, ferreting out and liquidating such groups. The special 5th department created by the NKVD to administer church questions was called just that ‘liquidatory’. A report of the president of the Council for the Affairs of the ROC, G. Karpov, to the deputy president of the Sovnarkom of the USSR, V. Molotov, on October 5, 1944 witnesses to serious anxiety in connection with the activation and spread of the influence of the Catacomb Church, and to measures undertaken by the government. It said: ‘… In the regions with an insignificant number of functional churches, and in the areas where there are no churches, there has been a mass spread of group services in the houses of believers or under the open sky – in cemeteries, by the building of the church, with hundreds of worshippers. Moreover, in these cases believers invite unregistered clergy to carry out the rites. In a series of cases such services are carried out systematically… To a significant extent the activists of these unregistered church groups, and the clergy that belong to them, are hostile to the legal patriarchal Orthodox church, condemning the latter for its loyal attitude to Soviet power… The large numbers of believing fanatics under the influence of these groups are sharply different in their attitudes from the [pro-Soviet] clergy of the legal church. This situation results in all kinds of recidivism, in a significant resurgence of religious feelings in the form of the so-called ‘renewal’ of icons, the spread of ‘holy’ letters, the carrying out of prayer services in fields by wells, various prophesyings, and also agitation about the persecution of religion and the church in the USSR.’ Noting the ineffectiveness of violent measures, since ‘believers seek for the satisfaction of their religious demands in the undergrounds, constructing ‘forest’, ‘cave’ and ‘catacomb’ churches,’ General Karpov makes a Jesuitical suggestion for the struggle with, and establishing control over, the believers: ‘… With the aim of struggling against the illegal church groups where they have assumed large proportions, [I suggest that we] proceed to broaden the net of functioning churches up to two or three per region, not refraining from increasing the opening of churches also in the provinces, and in areas with a significant number of functioning churches, and in those regions where there are none,’ he says in his report.

“Having a vivid example in Nazi Germany, which obtained loyal attitudes and a lowering of the resistance of the local population on the occupied territories, the Soviet regime, besides convening a council and electing a patriarch, decided on a temporary weakening of repressions and offered significant freedom to religious (external-ritual) activity. Striving, as has already been noted, to keep under its control the activity of believers and to weaken the activity of the alternative underground Orthodox communities that had grown in number by the middle of the 40s, in many regions of the country they began again to open churches, whose clergy were obliged to inform the local departments of the Council for the Affairs of the ROC or the NKVD, which had been transformed in March, 1946 into the MGB, about all the details of church-parish life.

“Only in this context can we explain the sharp rise across the country in the opening of churches that had been recently closed by the Soviets. Therefore, if in the first years of its existence (1943-1944) the Council for the Affairs of the ROC unwillingly permitted the opening of churches – which we can see in the one example of Gorky (Nizhni-Novgorod) province, where out of 212 petitions by 1945 only 14 had been satisfied (moreover, in January, 1945 only 22 churches were functioning in the whole of the province, while 1011 were not functioning) – then already in 1946-1948 the picture changes sharply. As is noted in the protocols of the Council for the Affairs of the ROC on March 17, 1947, all 64 of the petitions reviewed were satisfied, while in the protocol for May 20, 1947 62 petitions reviewed on that day are said to have been satisfied. Thus from 1944 to 1947 inclusive, 1270 churches were handed over to the MP in the RSFSR.[[155]](#footnote-155)

“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 monasteries in the USSR, thereby stopping both the growth in numbers and the influence of the Catacomb Church on the population.”[[156]](#footnote-156)

Only in the central regions of Tambov, Lipetsk, Tula, Ryazan and Voronezh was there a certain increase in catacomb activity; many young people took leading positions in the movement.[[157]](#footnote-157) Moreover, in the 1950s there were still quite a large number of wandering catacomb priests and a few holy bishops, such as Anthony (Galynsky), Peter (Ladygin)[[158]](#footnote-158), Michael (Yershov) and Barnabas (Belyaev).[[159]](#footnote-159) However, a new wave of persecution in the early 1950s sharply reduced the numbers of Catacomb Christians in freedom. And so they retreated deeper and deeper into the catacombs, fearing false brethren and abandoning all hope of influencing the broad masses of the people in the near future. From 1958 to 1960 there were massive arrests of “TOC churchmen of the anti-Soviet underground” in the Voronezh, Lipetsk, Tataria and Chuvashia districts, with priests being given sentences of twenty-five years, and laymen – ten years in the camps. In Kiev between 1961 and 1964 1234 people were arrested in cases connected with the True Orthodox Church.[[160]](#footnote-160)

The sufferings of the Catacomb priests and believers is illustrated by the life of Fr. Nicetas from Vyatka province: “Can a man living in freedom stand what a hunted man experiences…? It is hard for us to understand now how real and terrible that threat was. 40 people suffered for Fr. Nicetas at one time. Batyushka went from place to place, they couldn’t catch him, so they began to arrest his spiritual children. One woman was arrested just for giving him some cream. It seems that in her simplicity she didn’t think of hiding that from the persecutors. They tortured those whom they arrested, beat them, demanding the addresses where batyushka was hiding.

“Among those arrested was Matushka Catherine Golovanova. She was arrested twice. The first time they came and tried to torture her to reveal where Fr. Nicetas was; two policemen dressed in civil clothes took her to the house which they had under surveillance – an elderly man and his wife were living there. On seeing matushka, they rejoiced, and the wife, thinking that matushka was accompanied by her own people, started to talk joyfully. Matushka couldn’t stop her because the police were careful that she not give her any sign. The woman gave away the secret of Fr. Nicetas’ whereabouts: ‘O Matushka, dear one, how are you? You know, we accompanied Fr. Nicetas like this: we hung a bag full of shoes on him and he went…’ Matushka finally succeeded in winking at her, the woman stopped short. ‘Well, why have you stopped?’ asked the searchers. ‘I remember nothing…’ ‘We’ll lean on you now – you’ll remember.’ They took off their outer clothing, under which, as under a sheep skin, was the inner wolf – policeman’s uniforms and guns. But it was already late, and the exhausted police wanted to go to sleep. One was dozing at the table, the other was at the threshold – he was evidently guarding the door to prevent matushka running away. Matushka waited and waited, then she opened a window and ran away. She was on the run for half a year, and then they arrested her again. ‘Well, then,” they said, “how did you run away?’ ‘How? Well, they were sleeping and I thought: why should I simply sit here, I opened the window and left.’ ‘You did well,’ they said. But now they didn’t doze. They condemned all forty at one go (according to another source – thirty at the beginning). Matushka Golovanova was the chief culprit. They really gave it to her at the interrogation: many years later Matushka S. saw scars from the interrogations on her back.

“They tortured them so much that some of them couldn’t stand it and revealed the addresses where they could find Fr. Nicetas; but it seems that the pursuers had so despaired of catching Fr. Nicetas that they didn’t believe them even when they told them the truth.

“At the trial one woman in her simplicity said: ‘If you let me go, I’ll go to Fr. Nicetas again the same day.’ Not believing her, they said: ‘We’ve been looking for him for so many years without finding him, and you’ll find where he is in one day?!’

“They gave Fr. Nicetas’ parishioners sentences of many years in length. Matushka Golovanova was given twelve years, two of them in a lock-up…

“While Fr. Nicetas’ spiritual children were going to suffer, he himself had another thirty years of suffering and wanderings ahead of him...”[[161]](#footnote-161)

Many Catacomb Christians were thrown out of their homes and forced to live in dug-outs eating grass and roots. Heavy extra taxes were imposed on them and they worked on dangerous sites. In the war they had refused to join the Red Army, and after the war they sometimes refused even to use electricity and radio, considering it to be “a gift of the Antichrist”. For refusing to allow their children to be taught Marxism or join the pioneer and komsomol movements, they often had them taken away from them.[[162]](#footnote-162)

## 97. THE SOVIET OFFENSIVE: (2) OUTSIDE THE USSR

“Soon after the council, on April 10, 1945, Stalin personally met Simansky [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…”[[163]](#footnote-163)

During his trip to the Middle East, Patriarch Alexis intervened in the Greek civil war by calling on the people to support the Communists and reject the Royalists and British Imperialists (Stalin himself adopted a more neutral stance). In Jerusalem he tried to persuade the ROCOR community to come under his omophorion. But the head of ROCOR’s Spiritual Mission, Archimandrite Anthony (Sinkevich) 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!”[[164]](#footnote-164)

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.”[[165]](#footnote-165)

“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…”[[166]](#footnote-166)

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).”[[167]](#footnote-167)

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.[[168]](#footnote-168) In September, 1945 75 Eulogian parishes were united with the MP. The question of Eulogius’ ban, placed on him by the MP 15 years earlier, was not even discussed, and Nicholas and Eulogius concelebrated in the church of St. Alexander Nevsky. On September 11 the MP decreed that Metropolitan Eulogius should be exarch of these parishes. However, 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). Metropolitan Eulogius twice asked the Ecumenical Patriarch to allow him to return to the MP, but no reply ensued, and he remained dependent on Constantinople, by whom he was also named exarch.[[169]](#footnote-169) His successor, Archbishop Vladimir (Tikhonitsky), supported by his flock, decided in October, 1946 to remain with the Ecumenical Patriarchate.[[170]](#footnote-170)

In September, 1945 ROCOR’s Metropolitan Seraphim (Lukyanov) of Western Europe joined Moscow, and after the death of Metropolitan Eulogius was raised to the rank of patriarchal exarch. However, his Paris flock did not accept him, as a consequence of which 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”.[[171]](#footnote-171)

And so 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…”[[172]](#footnote-172)

On October 18, 1945 Metropolitan Gregory of Leningrad visited Finland, and received the Konevets and Valaamo 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.[[173]](#footnote-173) 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 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 to 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.”[[174]](#footnote-174)

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.[[175]](#footnote-175)

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…[[176]](#footnote-176) The MP would have to wait until 1970 before it regained control of the Japanese Church…

American influence was also discernible in the decision of the Antiochian patriarchate, under pressure from its rich American benefactors, to change to the new calendar in 1948.[[177]](#footnote-177)

## 98. ARCHBISHOP JOHN OF SHANGHAI

In China all the Russian bishops except one – the renowned wonderworker John (Maximovich) of Shanghai – accepted Soviet passports and returned to the MP after the Soviet victory in 1945. The following is an eye-witness account of what took place: “The pressure on Bishop John of Shanghai from the Soviets began even before the end of the Second World War, when the hierarchs of the Church Abroad in Manchuria – Metropolitan Meletius, Archbishops Nestor and Demetrius and Bishop Juvenaly sent letters to the Ruling Archbishop of Peking and China Victor and to Bishop John of Shanghai informing them that on July 26, 1945 they had recognized Patriarch Alexis of Moscow and All Russia, and suggesting that Archbishop Victor and Bishop John follow their example and submit to the new Moscow Patriarch as to the lawful head of the Russian Orthodox Church.

“Not having any communication with the Synod Abroad beyond the bounds of China because of the military actions, and not knowing the true situation of things in Europe, Bishop John wrote about the letter he had received from the hierarchs in Harbin to his superior, Archbishop Victor in Peking, advising him to do nothing with regard to recognizing the Patriarch before the re-establishment of links with the Synod Abroad, while for the sake of clarifying the question of the legality and canonical correctness or incorrectness of the choices of Patriarch Alexis Bishop John advised Archbishop Victor to send him a short greeting on the occasion of his consecration and wait to see what the result would be. In this way he aimed to clarify whether the new Patriarch was a successor in God of the reposed and always recognized by the Church Abroad Patriarch Tikhon and the locum tenens of the Patriarchal Throne Metropolitan Peter (of Krutitsa), or simply a continuer of the politics of the dead Soviet Patriarch Sergius.

“In expectation of a clarification of this question and for the sake of calming that part of the Russian colony in Shanghai that had become pro-Soviet and demanded the recognition of the Moscow Patriarch, Bishop John issued a resolution (ukaz N 650 dated September 6 / August 24, 1945) on the temporary commemoration of Patriarch Alexis during the Divine services instead of the until-then-existing commemoration of ‘the Orthodox Episcopate of the Russian Church’.”[[178]](#footnote-178)

A little earlier, on July 31, Bishop John had written to Archbishop Victor that he considered that “the raising of the name of the President of the Synod Abroad should be kept for the time being, since according to the 14th canon of the First-and-Second Canon of the Local Council [of Constantinople in 861] it is wrong wilfully to cease commemorating the name of one’s metropolitan. But the raising of the name of the Patriarch… should necessarily, in accordance with your ukaz, be introduced throughout the diocese… At the given time no conditions of an ideological character have yet been imposed that would serve as a reason for any change in our ecclesiastical administration abroad. If unacceptable conditions are again imposed in the future, the preservation of the present order of ecclesiastical administration will become the task of that ecclesiastical authority which will manage to be created in dependence on external conditions.”[[179]](#footnote-179)

This form of expression indicated that Bishop John was “hedging his bets”, ready to revoke his commemoration of the Moscow Patriarch if “unacceptable conditions of an ideological character” were to be imposed. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that in this letter he *temporarily* recognized the canonicity of the Moscow Patriarch, declaring: “There is no canonical basis for such independence, since the *lawfulness of the recognized* – both by his own Local Church and by all the other Local Churches – *Patriarch is not in doubt;* and since communication with said ecclesiastical authority (i.e., the Patriarch) has now become possible, therefore the ukaz (of Patriarch Tikhon) of November 7, 1920 is not applicable.” In any case, in August Archbishop Victor sent a telegram to Patriarch Alexis asking for him and Bishop John to be received into his jurisdiction; and from that time Bishop John and his priests started to commemorate the 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, 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.[[180]](#footnote-180) 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.[[181]](#footnote-181)

“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.”[[182]](#footnote-182)

“On the evening of January 15, 1946 Archbishop Victor flew into Shanghai on an aeroplane from Peking and declared that he not only recognized the Patriarch, but had also become a Soviet citizen, having taken a passport of the USSR.”[[183]](#footnote-183)

“Archbishop Victor in vain tried to persuade, demanded and ordered Bishop John to submit and recognize the Patriarch. Finally he came to the regular weekly meeting of the clergy, where he officially informed them of his move to the Soviet church, and demanded that the church servers follow his example, and, having left Bishop John to preside, left the session. After a word from Bishop John calling on the clergy to remain faithful to the Russian Church Abroad, the meeting passed a resolution suggested by him: to report to Metropolitan Anastasy on the faithfulness of the clergy to the Synod Abroad and ask for instructions.

“There was no reply from the Synod for a very long time, and in this period of about seven weeks terrible pressure was exerted on Bishop John from the Soviet authorities, Archbishop Victor, Metropolitan Nestor from Manchuria, from a large part of Russian society which had applied for Soviet passports, from clergy who had moved to that side, and from others. In writing and orally, in the press, in clubs and at meetings the Soviet side tried to prove that the election of the patriarch had been completely legal, in accordance with all the ecclesiastical canons, and suggested as proof the showing of a documentary film on the election of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia.

“Bishop John agreed to see this film, so as personally to see and check the whole procedure of the election, on condition that the film would be shown, not in the Soviet club, where all the Soviet pictures were being shown at the time, but in the hall of a certain theatre.

“Most of the Shanghai clergy came to the showing, including Mitre-bearing Protopriest N. Kolchev, who is now living in San Francisco, Fr. I. Wen and others.

“Before the beginning of the film, and without any warning, the orchestra began to play the Soviet hymn, and Bishop John immediately left the hall. The arrangers of the showing immediately rushed after the hierarch, and, having stopped him in the foyer, began to apologise and tried to persuade him to stay. Bishop John returned to the hall after the end of the hymn, and, having seen the film, declared that in the so-called election of the Patriarch that had been shown there was absolutely no legality, that the election had been conducted in accordance with the classic Soviet model, in which only one candidate was put forward, for whom the representative of every diocese without exception voted identically, reading out a stereotyped phrase, and in which there was nothing spiritual or canonical.

“This declaration by Bishop John still more enraged the Bolshevized circles, and the persecution of Vladyka and the clergy faithful to him intensified still more.

“On March 20, on the day of the patronal feast, Vladyka John was brought a telegram during the Liturgy. Since he never paid attention to anything extraneous whatsoever during the Divine services, Bishop John hid the telegram in his pocket without reading it, and opened it only after the service. In the telegram, which was signed by Metropolitan Anastasy, was written:

“’I recognize the resolution of the clergy under your presidency as correct.’

“This moral support received from the head of the Russian Church Abroad gave fresh strength to the clergy that remained faithful in order to continue their defence of the Orthodox churches from the claims and encroachment of the Bolsheviks.

“In the struggle Vladyka John had no rest, he literally flew from church to church, visiting schools and social organizations and giving sermons in defence of the Synod Abroad, calling on Russian people to be faithful, driving out Soviet agitators from the Orthodox churches and White Russian organizations.

“In this period Vladyka John was subjected to especially strong pressure and threats from both Archbishop Victor and from Metropolitan Nestor, who was to be appointed Exarch of Patriarch Alexis in the Far East.

“Finally, on May 15, there arrived a telegram from Metropolitan Anastasy in Munich raising Bishop John to the rank of Archbishop with his immediate subjection to the Hierarchical Synod. However, it was impossible to publicise this until the official decree was received from the Synod.

“On Friday, May 31, 1946, Archbishop Victor again flew into Shanghai, but this time, on his arrival, he was met by Soviet consular officials, and not by clergy and parishioners. On the same evening, Archbishop Victor proceeded in state to the cathedral surrounded by consular officials and newly enlisted komsomol members and occupied part of the cathedral residence with his suite. That evening the Soviets staged a demonstration, trying to drive Bishop John out of the cathedral and the cathedral residence.

“The next day, June 1, 1946, there arrived the long-awaited official decree [N 108] on the raising of Bishop John to the rank of ruling Archbishop with immediate submission to the Synod.

“The new ruling archbishop told Archbishop Victor of his appointment and suggested that he leave the Cathedral House and leave the bounds of the Shanghai diocese.

“Archbishop Victor, in his turn, gave Archbishop John on June 15 a decree of the Moscow Patriarchate (N 15 of June 13, 1946) on the appointment of Bishop Juvenal from Manchuria at the disposal of Archbishop Victor ‘to take the place of the see of Bishop John of Shanghai, who does not recognize the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate.’

“On June 16, 1946 this decree was published in the Soviet newspapers, and there came the time of open battle for the physical possession of the Cathedral, for the right to celebrate Divine services in it. Archbishop Victor banned our clergy (Fr. Hieromonk Modest, Fr. Medvedev, Fr. K. Zanevsky) from serving in the cathedral, while Vladyka John himself served daily and ordered them to serve with him, forbidding the Soviet priests from giving sermons and himself speaking for them, explaining to the worshippers why the Orthodox Church Abroad did not recognize the Moscow Patriarchate.”[[184]](#footnote-184)

On June 16 Archbishop John declared to the worshippers that he had received the ukaz removing him from administration of the Shanghai diocese, but would not be obeying it: “I will submit to this ukaz only if they prove to me from the Holy Scriptures and the law of any country that the breaking of oaths is a virtue while faithfulness to one’s oath is a serious sin.”[[185]](#footnote-185)

“Feeling that the balance was all the time shifting towards Archbishop John [four Shanghai priests join the MP, but 12 remained with Archbishop John], the Soviet side began to resort to threats, bringing in komsomol members and debauchees, and once there was a serious threat that Archbishop John and other anti-communist leaders of the White Russian colony would be kidnapped and taken away by them onto a Soviet ship. The representatives of our youth, without the knowledge of Vladyka, organized a guard which always followed in his footsteps without him knowing it and guarded him.

“When Archbishop Victor ‘removed’ Archbishop John with his decree and banned him from serving, Vladyka John, instead of leaving the cathedral, went onto the ambon and told the worshippers that he was being removed by Archbishop Victor because he remained faithful to the oath he had given to the Synod Abroad, which they had both sworn. And he went on to serve the whole Liturgy in full!…

“In August, 1946 the Soviet clergy and Soviet citizens ceased to frequent the cathedral church, and the Chinese National Government and the city authorities recognized Archbishop John as the head of the Shanghai Diocese of the Orthodox Church Abroad.”[[186]](#footnote-186)

So keen were the Soviets to bring Bishop John within their fold that they were prepared to bargain with the leaders of the ecumenical movement in the hope tha they would betray him. Thus on August 12, 1946, in a special report to Patriarch Alexis, Protopriest Gregory Razumovsky, a worker in the Department of External Church Relations of the MP, wrote about the conditions laid down by the MP for its participation in the ecumenical movement: “We agree to enter the ecumenical movement if the leaders of the ecumenical movement refuse to give protection to our schismatic (Theophilus, Dionysius, Germanus Aav, Anastasy, John of Shanghai) and display actions exerting the pressure that these leaders are familiar with on the schismatics that they unite with the jurisdiction of his Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow… Either the ecumenists will want to deal with the single integrated (within its former borders) Russian Orthodox Church… Or not one of the Local Orthodox Churches (the Eastern, Balkan and other Churches) will take part in the ecumenical movement. That is our ultimatum. In order that it [the ultimatum] can be satisfied, we must consolidate a block of all the Orthodox and non-Orthodox Churches that are either in on the territory of the USSR or within the sphere of influence of the USSR (the Armenians, Old Catholicss).”[[187]](#footnote-187)

On October 19, 1946 Archbishop Victor was imprisoned in Peking on charges of participating in the anti-comintern union of North Korea and the Russian Fascist organizations, and also of cooperating with the Japanese occupation authorities. However, on October 24, through the intervention of Soviet diplomats, he was released.

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.[[188]](#footnote-188) 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…[[189]](#footnote-189)

On June 14, 1948, the MP’s Metropolitan Nestor of Manchuria and Harbin was arrested – at the request of Soviet representatives. After being tortured by Chinese interrogators, he was transferred to the Lubianka in Moscow. On December 25 he was sentenced to 10 years in the camps for spying, for writing *The Shooting of the Moscow Kremlin* and for carrying out pannikhidas for the Royal Martyrs killed in Alapaevsk. He was released in 1956. [[190]](#footnote-190)

The only clergyman in Manchuria who refused to submit to the Soviets was Archimandrite Philaret (Voznesensky), whom we have met before confessing under torture against Japanese paganism. When the siren-calls inviting the Russians to return to the “Homeland” began to sound, Fr. Philaret spoke out boldly from the ambon, and refused to bless his parishioners to return to the Soviet Union, in spite of the fact that his father, Archbishop Demetrius of Hailar, did return in 1946, and died in the camps on January 31, 1947. Fr. Philaret was forced, against his will, to enter the Soviet church; but he suffered greatly under the burden, and continued to refuse to commemorate the Soviets.[[191]](#footnote-191)

## 99. THE POST-WAR SERBIAN CHURCH

As a result of the occupation of Eastern Europe by the Red Army, and their attendance at the false council of Moscow in 1945, the official Orthodox Churches of Eastern Europe were soon drawn into the communist orbit. In the cases of the Romanian and Bulgarian Churches, this happened after the fall of the Orthodox monarchy. Thus the communist penetration of the Romanian Church began shortly after the abdication of King Michael on December 30, 1947.

The Serbian King Peter remained in exile in England after the war, trying to help the resistance to communism in his homeland from outside. Bishop Akakije (Stankević) writes: “During the Second World War and until 1946, since the German Nazis had imprisoned the Serbian Patriarch Gabriel (Dočić) and later put him into the Dachau concentration camp because of his anti-Nazi statements, the administration of the Serbian Church was taken over by Metropolitan Joseph (Tsvijić) of Skopje, who was parted from his diocese after the Bulgarian occupation of Macedonia. Together with the Patriarch they imprisoned Bishop Nikolai of Žiča, who was the most respected and best loved Serbian bishop among the people, and whose opinion was considered important among the bishops, priests, monks and people. In that period, a number of Serbian hierarchs did not understand the real meaning of the evil of communism that was spreading fast throughout Serbia. Such a soft and inadequate attitude on the part of the Serbian Church towards communism is astonishing when we know that the Synod of the Russian Church Abroad had been in Sremski Karlovtsy even before the beginning of the war, for more than twenty years, and throughout that period it had been warning everyone, explaining the diabolical nature of the communist and sergianist hell… through which their country, Russia, had passed and from which they had been forced to flee for that reason. Also, those frightening warnings began to come true at the very beginning and during the war through all those monstrous evil deeds against the Serbian people, kingdom and Church that were committed by the communist bands in Serbia.

“At that time, the justified position existed that it was not necessary to waste strength and men by confronting the large power of Nazi Germany and her allies (let us remember that at that time there was an order that for every German soldier killed 100 Serbs be killed)…, but that we should turn ourselves exclusively to the internal problem of communism, which was coming over Serbia like a dark shadow. Inspired by this idea, at the beginning of the war, the prime minister of the Serbian government in occupied Serbia, General Milan Nedić, requested from the Synod of the Serbian Church to condemn in the name of the Church the communists and the leader of the liberation movement, the so-called Chetniks, Colonel Dragoliub Mikhailović, who together with the communists started the guerilla struggle against the German occupation army. The Synod replied to this appeal of General Nedić: ‘The Church is above parties, Dragoliub Mikhailović, Ljotić and the communists.’ By the way, the unnatural companionship mentioned above was broken very soon because Mikhailović’s national forces soon became completely at odds with the army organized by the communist party of Yugoslavia led by Joseph Broz Tito. Colonel, later General Mikahilović continued to fight the Germans, but on a much smaller scale, and he forced the communists to leave the territory of Bosnia, and because of that General Nedić was unofficially helping him.[[192]](#footnote-192)

“Such a soft position was not only a result of a misunderstanding of the evil, God-fighting nature of communism, but in some places it was open sympathy with those forces, even communist bands, who were fighting against the Germans. The result of those positions was a very strong anti-German feeling, and contrary to that, great sympathy for the English side among many of the Serb hierarchs. How different was the position of the Russian Patriarch Tikhon towards the communists from the flexible position of the Serbian hierarchs. He was completely trapped by the Bolshevik revolution in 1918, but anathematized the communists and all those who cooperate with them.

“Most of the official church statements during the war were vague. For that reason in 1942 the Serbian patriot and politician Dmitrij Ljotić wrote in his article ‘Neither Hot nor Cold’: “We heard the message of our paternal hierarchs gathered in the Synod and around it. They call on the people to have peace, love and unanimity… They simply called the citizens to peace and unity and love, taking good care how to gain peace, unanimity and love. And to make that position even more visible, they cared very much not to use a single word to explain who are those people in our country who disturb peace, unanimity and love, who kill the priests and other peaceful citizens and insult the Church….

“’… The communists, on account of Red Moscow, want sabotage, disorder, rebellion, which leads to national destruction. General Nedić doesn’t want any of these three because if we avoid them then the Serbian people will live. Even those who were lucky enough to run away to London send us messages to preserve peace, and that people should keep away from sabotage and rebellion.

“’Church representatives pass over all this and speak about peace, love and unanimity, not saying a single word about which course is better: that of General Nedić, or that of the communists. If the message were necessary, it would have been necessary to tell that, too, to the people. If they didn’t want to say that, it would have been more glorious and wiser to keep silent.

“’If our hierarchs could not choose which of these two courses is better, how could they find a way to move themselves from their God-saving dioceses and hide here in Belgrade? Why didn’t they wait for the communists there?’

“By the end of 1944 Soviet troops started to come into Serbia, and in October, 1944 they entered Belgrade together with the Yugoslav communist army. Many of the national forces and the clergy who were aware of the hell awaiting them in Serbia under these rulers, left Serbia together with the defeated Germans, and retreated towards Slovenia. Bishop Nikolai Velimirović was the only one to understand how tragic the situation was, so in Slovenia he gave his blessing to the gathering of all the national anti-communist forces who were grouped there and were retreating before Tito’s troops and the Red Army. Several hundred thousand Serb četniks, the Ljotić volunteers, the Nedić national guard, Slovenian nationalists loyal to the kingdom of Yugoslavia and some Russian White Guards were ready to stand together against oncoming communism. Even General Vlasov with his 400,000 soldiers headed towards Slovenia, as the only ray of hope, the last chance for the communists to be driven away from the borders of Yugoslavia, as they had been in neighbouring Greece. Unfortunately, the allies had the most important role. General Vlasov was stopped by the ‘Allies’ and handed over together with his army to be killed by the Soviets, while the national forces in Slovenia were cheated by the Americans and English, deprived of their arms, and handed over to Tito’s partisans, who in a short period of time and in the most monstrous ways tortured, killed and burned bodies and put into mass graves several hundred thousand men. Just in one day, the partisans killed 62 Serbian priests from Montenegro, who found themselves in Slovenia with the leftovers of Djurishić’s Montenegrin national forces, which had already been reduced to one tenth of their former number by the partisans and Croatian Ustaše while they were passing through Bosnia. A small number of nationalists succeeded in fleeing through Italy and so the killing by the communists did not affect them. In this way, again with the help of the ‘Allies’, Tito’s assumption of power was guaranteed. Bishop Nikolai stayed firm in the United States, where he continued his fight for the liberation of the Serbian Church and State from the communists.[[193]](#footnote-193)

“Some sources report that Metropolitan Joseph [Tsvijović] and the bishops who stayed in the country (Nectarije Krul, Jovan Ilić, Arsenije Bradvarević, Emilian Piperković) openheartedly greeted the Soviet troops and Yugoslav partisan troops. In October, 1944 Metropolitan Joseph delivered a message to the people in which he called the liberation of Belgrade and Serbia the ‘dawning’. On November 12, 1944 in the Saborna church in Belgrade a pannikhida was held for all those killed in the struggle for the liberation of Belgrade. The service was celebrated by Metropolitan Joseph… The priesthood of Belgrade was collecting donations for wounded Soviets and partisans. In the Nativity Epistle of the Holy Synod, they spoke with delight about the new situation arising from the expulsion of the enemies from the country (the occupiers and the liberation of the country)…

“The next big deviation from the pre-war position was the relationship of the Serbian Orthodox Church towards the Soviet Moscow Patriarchate, with which the Serbian Church got in touch immediately after Soviet troops entered Serbia. A delegation from the Moscow Patriarchate headed by Bishop Sergius of Kirovgrad came to Belgrade in 1944.

“In March 1945 Metropolitan Joseph accompanied by Bishop Jovan of Niš and Bishop Emilian of Timočki travelled, at the request of the authorities, to Moscow, where they attended the false Council and the Soviet theatrical enthronement of the new patriarch, Alexis I.

“Tito’s communists, taking over power with the help of America, England and the Soviet Union, at the very beginning showed their openly anti-Christian character. Very fierce anti-Church laws were enforced, and an agrarian reform was made whereby the Church was deprived, right from the beginning, of 70,000 hectares of land, 1,180 church buildings, a printing plant and a pension fund for the clergy. State donations to the Church were stopped, the catechism was thrown out of the schools, the authorities created big problems for the theological schools, the Church had to deliver all the registration books to the State registration offices, etc., etc.

“Right from the beginning, persecutions and killings of clergy began. [[194]](#footnote-194) The first martyr was Metropolitan Joanikije [Lipovac] of Montenegro, who was tortured by Tito’s communists for several months in prison. Partisan Major Kovačević brought him a chalice filled with the fresh blood of murdered Chetniks (that’s how he explained it), and he made the metropolitan commune in that blood. The metropolitan stayed firm, and was killed and burned in Arandzelovats during the night between the 8th and 9th of September, 1945. In this period of the consolidation of their revolutionary authority, the communists were helped by the ‘Allies’, English and Soviet. In 1944 and 1945 there were shootings without trial of all those priests who, as they believed, were unable to adapt to collaboration with the communists. According to incomplete information, the communists in those years killed 98 Serbian priests.[[195]](#footnote-195)

“After all these events, and finally losing trust in the Allies, who at the end, on the orders of Tito, even bombed a lot of Serbian cities and turned them into ruins, Metropolitan Joseph finally took an openly anti-communist position. He started to criticise the actions of the comnmunist authorities in public, but his acts did not influence other bishops to take the same position towards the new godless authorities.

“Since he took such a fearless position towards the communists, Metropolitan Joseph found himself in a very difficult position and he was under a number of pressures. Several times the new authorities organized ‘spontaneous demonstrations’ with red flags, banners and shouts of ‘Down with Joseph!’ During one such anti-religious event, when a large number of demonstraters stopped in front of the patriarchal building, and started to shout the well-known words, ‘Down with Joseph! Down with Joseph!’ the metropolitan came out onto the balcony and in the strong voice with which he usually spoke to thousands of the faithful, shouted as if he did not understand: ‘Down with Joseph? Which Joseph? Broz or Stalin?’[[196]](#footnote-196)

“Just after the end of the war, he rejected the request of the federal minister of internal affairs, Vlade Zečović, to send a message to the clergy that they should not commemorate the king’s name in the Divine services. In rejecting this, he said: ‘The king’s name will be commemorated until the state organization is decided.’ Having seen the firm position of Metropolitan Joseph, the communists changed their threats and tactics. In 1946 he began to receive official delegations from the authorities, bringing him messages that ‘Tito is regretting that he didn’t have the honour of meeting the representative of the Serbian Church, and he is expressing his sincere wish to do this as soon as possible’. The same year Metropolitan Joseph delivered a speech in the patriarchal chapel in which he said: ‘Such a shame and disaster the Serbian people have not undergone since the Turks. Let everyone know that many have broken their teeth attacking the Church. So will the communist beast. Endure, Serb, and don’t be afraid.’ The Soviet Patriarch Alexis I, during his visit to Bulgaria (in June, 1946) expressed the wish to visit the Serbian Church. That message he sent through Bishop Irinaeus Čilić who was in Bulgaria attending the celebration of the 1000-year anniversary of the repose of St. John of Rila the Wonderworker. Metropolitan Joseph did not reply to Patriarch Alexis. After the war, while sending one of his priests to a parish in a village, he gave him a cross and asked him: ‘Do you remember how the Spartan mother saw off her son to the battle, giving him the spear? I give you the cross of Christ, and am sending you to the terrible war with the godless. Here, my son, is the cross and the vow with it or on it.’

“Metropolitan Joseph began to criticise the MP’s subordination to the communists. For example, in a conversation with the American ambassador Harold Schantz he declared that the MP was an extended arm of the Kremlin, which was trying to Bolshevize the Serbian Orthodox Church. {However,} he still did not completely understand the deep meaning of handing over the freedom of the Church to the militant godfighters, which is sergianism; he didn’t in the name of the Serbian Church stop giving the Soviet church communion in prayer and sacraments as well as other support for it.[[197]](#footnote-197)

“The political orientation of the Serbian bishops at that time, from a strictly Orthodox point of view, was not equal to the seriousness of the historical situation in which Serbia and the Serbian Church found themselves. They didn’t attach enough importance to the political system in Serbia, such as the Orthodox autocracy-monarchy, but the tendency was towards modern political options, to the democratic organization of the State, which, as is well-known, is, together with communism, just one of the sides of the Judaeo-Masonic coin… In the early-mentioned discussion of Metropolitan Joseph with the American ambassador he made the contradictory declaration that Stalin had taken over the position of Tsar Nicholas II. According to him, it [communism] was the same type of rule – authoritarian and undemocratic - as tsarism was. He claimed that he was against every type of totalitarian regime, both right and left. Metropolitan Joseph, like all other Serbian bishops, was actually in favour of the system of the liberal democratic kingdom that was enforced in the kingdom of Yugoslavia before the war.

“In the Church and among the people everybody wanted Patriarch Gabriel to return to Yugoslavia, who had been released from German imprisonment [in Dachau] at the end of the war, and still did not come back. Since Metropolitan Joseph rejected many of their requests, the communists had the idea of inviting Patriarch Gabriel, who was temporarily in Italy, to come back to the country, to which, after a time, he agreed.[[198]](#footnote-198) He adopted a more modest position than Joseph. He considered that, with the help of ‘diplomacy’, more coordination with the authorities and keeping away from conflicts, he would save the Serbian Church from total disaster, so he started to declare loyalty to the authorities, although he often criticised their representatives, even Tito himself, concerning their actions against the Church, always declaring he was against the actions, but not the authorities themselves. He managed to avoid enforcing many requests of the communists, likewise the recognition of the communist clergy association, the foundation of the so-called Macedonian Church, as well as the condemnation and defrocking of the hierarchs abroad whose removal was requested by the authorities.

“But he did take part in the Pan-Slavic Congress in Belgrade in 1946 in which he declared gratitude to ‘Mother Russia’ for preserving the unity of the Slavs, repeating the words that Metropolitan Joseph had said at the liberation of Belgrade. On the same occasion he welcomed Tito and Stalin, whom he named ‘the Great’.

“In the year 1948, at the request of the authorities, he attended, in the name of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the false council hosted by the MP in Moscow, even though before that he had for a long time tried not to do so. Still, he did not fulfil many requests of the MP and the communists by which they tried to subordinate the Serbian Church to the MP.

“When Patriarch Gabriel came back to Serbia in 1946, Metropolitan Joseph naturally became his closest associate in ruling the Serbian Orthodox Church. Regardless of the fact that he still openly criticized the communist authorities, he participated, together with Patriarch Gabriel, in all public events and in the MP council of 1948.

“After the repose of Patriarch Gabriel [in 1950], it was clear to all the faithful that the only natural heir should be Metropolitan Joseph. But of course, the godless authorities who were fighting with the Church all the time would not allow Metropolitan Joseph to be elected as Serbian patriarch. Before the election of the patriarch… the UDBA [Yugoslav secret police] arrested Metropolitan Joseph in Belgrade, beat him up, and forced him into a monastery in Bosnia, where they imprisoned him in order to stop his influence on the hierarchs. He was arrested several times, and was banned from living in Belgrade, so he found shelter sometimes in the monastery of Žiča, and sometimes in Ljubostinja. Each time he was arrested and banned from Belgrade, he was heavily beaten. In 1953 he was already very ill, so he was allowed to go back to Belgrade, to the monastery of the Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple, but without the freedom to go anywhere else. As a political prisoner, abandoned by his brother hierarchs, he reposed there on July 3, 1957.”[[199]](#footnote-199)

Some bishops thought that, besides, Metropolitan Joseph, “Metropolitan Nectarius Krulj of Dabro-Bosnia could have been chosen as patriarch. The vote was scheduled for June 10, 1950. The communist regime wanted as the candiate Bishop Vikentije Prodanov of Zleto-Strumička. The bishops’ council rejected this candidate, so the communists used the special police to disable most of the members of the council, and in that way they blocked the worked of the council. The next meeting of the Council to elect the patriarch was scheduled for June 20, 1950. In the meantime the secret police removed the two candidates: Metropolitan Joseph was arrested and imprisoned in Žiča monastery, and Metropolitan Nectarius was pressured to withdraw his candidacy, which he finally agreed on. Frightened by such brutality on the part of the communist authorities, the other bishops in the list of candidates, along with two metropolitans: Damascene of Zagreb and Arsenije of coastal and inland Montenegro, put Bishop Vikentije on the list of candidates. And so with heavy pressure from the secret police, Vikentije Prodanov was chosen as patriarch by one episcopal vote only. Even though he was very obedient to the authorities, the newly chosen Patriarch Vikentije resisted some of Tito’s plans, for example, the forming of the Macedonian Church. So he didn’t last long on the patriarchal throne. He died eight years later.

“After Vikentije, the communists needed a completely loyal person, who would bring the Serbian Church in service to the atheist regime. Such a candidate they found in the person of the widowed priest Chranislav Djorič, who became a monk with the name German and in 1951 became Vikentije’s vicar-bishop. In the campaign electing German as patriarch, the communist regime did not hide its active participation. All the memories of the electing council were very thoroughly worked upon by the secret police. The boss of the Serbian secret police Milan Velić openly said to the members of the electoral council: ‘We want German to be chosen, and he will be chosen, whether you vote for him or not. We want in the person of the patriarch to have a safe and sound friend, and with Vikentije we were too credulous.’ Everyone received an envelope with money. One of the examples of various blackmailing and threats was Abbot Platon Milevoyević of Studenitsa, to whom the bloody boss of the Belgrade secret police, Miloš Minić, came with one associate and told him he would be arrested for public immorality and misuse of money in selling the monastery’s woods unless he voted for German. The secret police claimed that they had all the proofs of all his weaknesses, having mistresses in the monastery, several children born outside wedlock, and so on.” [[200]](#footnote-200)

“Father Macarius, abbot of the famed Dechani Monastery, was given 200,000 dinars ($650) as payment for his coerced vote for Germanus. He came back to his monastery after the election and threw the money at his monks, telling them that he ‘felt like Judas’.

“Many delegates to the Electorate were given a special pen and paper on which they were to cast their ballots, in order to show whether they had kept their promise to the agents of the Secret Police. (Two sworn statements by witnesses).”[[201]](#footnote-201)

According to witnesses in the patriarch’s house, he had a party card. And when he was once accused of embezzling a very large sum of money and was threatened with a court trial, the Serbian equivalent of the KGB (UDBA) saved him and paid the money themselves. Thereafter he was completely “their man”.[[202]](#footnote-202) The Belgrade newspaper *Telegraf* recently confirmed that German was elected by UDBA.[[203]](#footnote-203) As Archimandrite Justin Popovich wrote in 1960: “… The atheist dictatorship has so far elected two patriarchs… And in this way it has cynically trampled on the holy rights of the Church, and thereby also on the holy dogmas.”[[204]](#footnote-204)

In this period, the communists tried to break down the resistance of all those bishops who opposed them. In most cases they succeeded. But there were some exceptions.

For example: “The Bishops’ quarters in Novi Sad, in which Bishop Irenaeus (Tsilits) of Bachka lived, became the target of ‘national rage’ – communist demonstrations that threw a large number of stones at the building with terrible exclamations. During a festal litia in 1946 in one village, when the bishop came out from the church in full vestments, the organized communist crowd threw a number of stones at him. Being hit on the back of his head, Bishop Irenaeus fell on the ground. The raging crowd attacked the bishop, and the priest who was trying to defend him was stabbed by knives. Severely hurt, all covered in blood, his beard pulled out, his vestments torn, spat upon and insulted, Bishop Irenaeus was taken to Novi Sad during the night. As a consequence of these heavy wounds, he spent the rest of his life mostly in his sickbed.

“Metropolitan Nectarius was lynched by the communists. In August 1953 a group of about 150-250 communists (including some women) arrived unexpectedly in the monastery of Osren. They forced their way into the monastery guest-house, and uttering terrible words they came to the bishop’s cell, where they started to hit and push him until he fell to the ground. One of the women was pulling his beard. The calls for help of an old bishop, who was at that time 75 years old, were heard by nobody. They kept on tearing his ryasa, pushing and torturing him. Heavily wounded, he had to leave Tuzla, and go to Belgrade, where he lay in hospital for several months. Metropolitan Nectarius was the spine of the resistance to the communists in the Serbian Orthodox Church. Before the election of German as patriarch, the president of the socialist republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina – his name was Djuro Putsar, his nickname was “the old one” – said to Metropolitan Nectarius and Bishop Basil: ‘The two of you represent 80% of the Council, and if German is not elected, we know who is responsible.’ Metropolitan Nectarius called patriarch German ‘Judas’ son’.

“In 1944 Metropolitan Arsenije was condemned in Cetinje by the national court to ten-and-a-half years’ hard labour for anti-state activities because he did not carry out various requests made by the communists and because he said in his sermons that the Catholic Church did very evil things to Orthodox people. Together with him, seven old Montenegrin priests were condemned too. In 1960, due to serious illness, he was released at the age of 77. Rejected by all, his last days were spent with his daughter and son-in-law. He reposed, humiliated and persecuted by Patriarch German, whom he cursed on the last day of his life. Up to his last hour he rejected the communists and German. Even on his deathbed, the communists asked him to sign a statement by which he approved of the official policy of Patriarch German. Under the pressure of the communists, his funeral was conducted in secret.

“Bishop Vasilije was forced to leave Banja Luka by the communists. At his question whether there was any written document by the state authorities about his ban from Banja Luka, the communists answered: ‘The people does not give written decisions, and it does not make any such decisions. The people has the right to make such decisions, because it is above the authorities, and each authority originates from the people.’ After constant threats to lynch him, he decided to leave for Belgrade. On his way to the railway station, a lot of men and women ran after him, shouting: ‘You wanted it written, here it is written, you will get it from the people, who are waiting for you. Down with the bearded man! Down with the people’s enemies and the collaborators of the occupiers!’ One of them attacked the car and started to curse God. When the bishop had hardly reached the station, an even larger mass of people were waiting for him there. They started to throw tomatoes and stones at him, and when they had surrounded him completely they started to spit at him, pull his beard and hit his head and body. The police was present all the time, but did not react to this public violence. One communist sub-officer kept on getting close to his face, and saying: ‘We are materialists, we only believe in matter, and not in the immortality of the soul, as you priests teach. Confess that it is senseless. You collaborated with the occupiers, and you don’t want to collaborate with today’s authorities. That is why people are making you leave. Confess that you were wrong, and repent.’ He was so badly hurt that he twice fell on the ground. Then they dragged him over the railway line and tore his sleeveless coat and his mandiya. In the train all the passengers kept on insulting him, and as he sat by the window it was broken from the outside. The reason for this lynching was his resistance to compromise with the godless authorities. Still, he couldn’t withstand the communist tortures to the end, and under UDBA pressure he gave his support to Bishop German as candidate for patriarch.

“Bishop Varnava (Nastić) was condemned in 1948 by a communist court to ten years’ hard labour for the ‘crime of treason: he helped to weaken the economy and the military power of the state, he helped terrorist bands, he published enemy propaganda, and he was a spy for the Anglo-Americans.’ He suffered his punishment in Zenitsa jail. All the time he was in total isolation in a dark and damp cell under the greatest affliction of soul and body. The communists immediately cut his hair off and shaved his beard to humiliate him and make him a laughing-stock. They made him dothe hardest jobs because they knew he was physically sensitive and weak in health. They starved him of food and water, tortured him with loneliness and deprived him of information from books or newspapers, with no communication with the outer world, just in order to break down his morale and subject him to their godless commands. In reply to all those tortures, he chanted church songs in his cell. Since no torture could break his spirit, the spirit of Bishop Varnava, the UDBA planned his so-called transfer in 1949 and arranged a traffic accident by crashing a locomotive into a parked, locked railway car in which he and a number of other political prisoners were bound. The impact was so powerful that out of a full car only eleven prisoners survived. Bishop Varnava was thrown through the window while tied together with a Catholic priest who died immediately as they fell. Bishop Varnava stayed alive, but both legs and one arm were broken. People from the train station and other trains ran to help, but police surrounded the car and would not allow anyone to come close to the wounded, and one policeman even turned an automatic gun against the people. One hour later, the UDBA came and took all the wounded to the city hospital nearby, where the doctors immediately started to help. Suddenly an UDBA man came back to the hospital and ordered the doctors to stop helping the wounded and to take them off the operating tables. The protests of the doctors were not considered. Bishop Varnava at that moment was on the operating table with a hole in his heel where a metal rod was to be inserted to help his broken leg heal. All the wounded were put in an army truck on wooden planks and they were driven at a horrific speed over very bad roads, so that two of them died during the trip. In 1960, after several transfers, from one prison to another, where he became severely ill, the much-suffering Bishop Varnava came to the end of his term of punishment. At that moment he submitted a plea to the Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church to be reactivated. Patriarch German did not take his plea before the Synod, but sent him a message: ‘It is necessary that you first regulate your relationship with the authorities’, which practically meant that he had to give a statement of loyalty to the communist regime. From that time the UDBA started to pressure him again. The boss of the religious section of the UDBA Milan Velić sent him a letter signed by about ten hierarchs recommending that he sign the statement of loyalty to the authorities and request that the Holy Synod retire him. Velić brought him the prepared text of his statement, a very cunning document prepared by Bishop Vissarion Kostić in which, among other things, they asked him to praise Tito’s regime, be one with the official position of the Church and to fence himself off from the work of the emigration. When he strongly resisted, the UDBA officer told him: ‘That means you are condemning Patriarch German and the other bishops who have already given such statements.’ Bishop Varnava said: ‘Everybody shall answer before the Last Judgement for his deeds on earth.’ Then the UDBA officer said: ‘You think Patriarch German will answer before the Last Judgement?’ Bishop Varnava answered: ‘The first and the hardest!’

“When Patriarch Vikentije went to Moscow and laid flowers at the tomb of Lenin, Bishop Varnava under his full signature from prison sent a letter saying: ‘In whose name did you go, who did you represent, and who authorised you to put the flowers on the tomb of Lenin? From that wreath that you laid on Lenin’s tomb, take off one leaf in the name of the Serbian priesthood, one leaf in the name of Serbian bishops , one leaf in the name of the Serbian people, and the remaining six leaves will represent you and the members of your delegation.’ Because of this letter, the Hierarchical Synod gathered and pronounced him irresponsible and irrational. That was when his real spiritual torments began, because his brother hierarchs became his enemies. The notorious Bishop Vissarion led the systematic action against Bishop Varnava, who often used to say: ‘Being imprisoned by the communists was sweet for me, but now it is not the communists who are persecuting me, but my brother bishops.’ Lonely, and surrounded by the iron wall of the communist police, Bishop Varnava died in unexplained circumstances.

“During his ordination, on the Feast of the Transfiguration, 1947, in the Saborna church in Belgrade, the newly ordained Bishop Varnava uttered the following prophetic words: ‘When our Lord Jesus Christ sent his apostles into the world, he put before them sacrifice as the programme and way of their lives. And only readiness for apostolic sacrifice made the Galilaean fishermen receive apostolic honour. Lofty honour in the Church of Christ means lofty sacrifice. The Holy Hierarchical Council led by the Holy Spirit chose my unworthiness as bishop of the Church of Christ. By that choice they condemned me to the sacrifice of Christ’s Golgotha. And in condemning me to that highest sacrifice they gave me the loftiest honour that can be given to a mortal man. All I can say is that I shall gladly climb my Golgotha, and I shall never trade that honour for any other under the sun of God. The bishop’s position is a sacrifice on Golgotha because the bishop’s service is apostolic service, and to the apostles the Lord said: “The cup which I am drinking you will drink, and the baptism which I am being baptised with you will be baptised with” (Mark 10.39). And the cup which our Lord drank and the baptism with which he was baptized, what else could it be but the cup of Golgotha and the bloody baptism in His own Blood?… And that is why, though I know the weaknesses of the soul, I am not afraid that my leg will shatter on the road of Golgotha strewn with thorns that I am today undertaking. Even if it wanted to shatter, the light and the warmth of innumerable examples of Christ’s heroes will bring back to it firmness and might.’ This sermon by Bishop Varnava was fulfilled completely through his much-suffering hierarchical service and struggle to defend Church freedom.

“This was the way they prepared the total collapse of the Serbian Church. First by removing unfitting [bishops], and then carefully choosing new bishops sympathetic to the regime, or at least those who would accept the new kind of situation. In the period after the war the existence of the Serbian Church depended on the way the patriarch and the bishops treated Tito’s regime. In the time of Metropolitan Joseph, the patriarchal locum tenens, the Church still, regardless of external persecution, enjoyed internal freedom, because his firm position, if we exclude his lukewarm and flexible position towards the MP, let everybody know that he would firmly hold to the Church canons. And he succeeded. Much more modest, but still firm, was the position displayed by Patriarch Gabriel. The two of them represented the last defence of Church freedom.

“As we have seen, after the death of Patriarch Gabriel, the situation in the Church became more difficult. Using the UDBA, the communists choose Vikentije as patriarch, who did many favours for them. In 1958 the act of the destruction of the Serbian Orthodox Church came to its end when the UDBA imposed as patriarch German, who was an absolutely submissive tool, accepted all the requests of the regime. The first big concessions to Tito were the act of forming the Macedonian Autocephalous Church and the blessing of the pro-communist association of priests (partisans), through which the possibility of total control of the Church was created. Patriarch German told the priesthood in Belgrade: ‘Whichever priest insults Tito, insults me.’ Really the position of the Serbian patriarchate was harder than at any time in its long-lasting history, because for the first time its patriarch and bishops joined the enemies of the Church. In the years after the war most of the Serbian bishops obviously had no ecclesiological consciousness, which is a confessing position of struggle for the purity of the Orthodox faith, which was best illustrated by the presence of the Serbian Church at the councils of Moscow in 1945 and 1948, as well as the fact that not a single bishop or clergyman – though many of them were against the communists and criticised the behaviour of Patriarchs Vikentije and German, - never thought of stopping communion with the red patriarch in Belgrade, which all this time was in full eucharistic communion with the new calendarists…”[[205]](#footnote-205)

## 100. OTHER EAST EUROPEAN CHURCHES

Similar tactics to the KGB’s repression of the Russian Orthodox Church were used in other East European countries… In Romania the communists took over in 1944, but there was strong opposition to them, and it was only after King Michael was forced to emigrate in 1947 that the persecution began in earnest. This took place as follows, in the account of Nun Alexandra (Tatiana Spector):

“In November 1947, King Michael travelled to London for the wedding of his cousins, Princess Elizabeth (later Queen Elizabeth II) and Prince Philip of Greece and Denmark, an occasion during which he met Princess Anne of Bourbon-Parma (his second cousin once removed), who was to become his wife. According to his own account, King Michael rejected any offers of asylum and decided to return to Romania, contrary to the confidential, strong advice of the British Ambassador to Romania.

“Early on the morning of 30 December 1947, Michael was preparing for a New Year's party at Peleș Castle in Sinaia, when Groza summoned him back to Bucharest. Michael returned to Elisabeta Palace in Bucharest, to find it surrounded by troops from the Tudor Vladimirescu Division, an army unit completely loyal to the Communists. Groza and Communist Party leader Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej were waiting for him, and demanded that he sign a pre-typed instrument of abdication. Unable to call in loyal troops, due to his telephone lines allegedly being cut, and with either Groza or Gheorghiu-Dej (depending on the source) holding a gun on him, Michael signed the document.

“Later the same day, the Communist-dominated government announced the 'permanent' abolition of the monarchy, and its replacement by a People's Republic, broadcasting the King's pre-recorded radio proclamation of his own abdication. On 3 January 1948, Michael was forced to leave the country, followed over a week later by Princesses Elisabeth and Ileana, who collaborated so closely with the Soviets that they became known as the King's ‘Red Aunts’. He was the last monarch behind the Iron Curtain to lose his throne.

“According to Michael's own account, Groza had threatened him at gun point and warned that the government would shoot 1,000 arrested students, if the king did not abdicate. In an interview with The New York Times from 2007, Michael recalls the events: ‘It was blackmail. They said, “If you don't sign this immediately we are obliged” — why obliged I don't know — “to kill more than 1,000 students' that they had in prison.’ According to *Time*, Groza threatened to arrest thousands of people and order a bloodbath unless Michael abdicated.”[[206]](#footnote-206)

After the fall of communism in 1990, King Michael returned to rule Romania as a constitutional monarch until his death in 2017.

As Fr. George Calciu writes, “they began to create the same situation that was in Russia. The majority of the political counsellors and Securitate were Russian. They had come from Russia to transmit their experience to the young Romanian communists.”[[207]](#footnote-207)

Fr. George himself passed through the hell of the prison of Piteşti, which experience “altered our souls and hearts, and little by little, one by one, we fell. Namely, we came to deny God and to sever ourselves from our families. We came to forget all that was good in our hearts. Fortunately, this experiment lasted only about three years…”[[208]](#footnote-208)

In his biography of Valeriu Gafencu (+1952), Monk Moise writes: “Among the many prisons of Communist Romania, Piteşti is a particular one. It became famous for the horrible atrocities that happened there as a result of the implementation of that satanic experiment known as re-education…

“In the first part of the year 1948, following an order from Bucharest, the prisoners were grouped according to their age at the time of arrest. All university students were sent to Piteşti. In the first phase, the prisoners, most of them Legionnaires, lived under a rather lax regime. In short time, however, things changed and [what can be identified as] a program of extermination was initiated. The guards became very strict, doling out harsh punishments to the prisoners for perceived offenses. The quality of food deteriorated and they were given just enough food to keep them alive. Beatings, cold and hunger lowered their physical and moral resistance. All of these measures represented only the preparatory phase, so that when re-education was later unleashed, exhausted prisoners would be that much easier to subdue.

“A group of prisoners was brought to Piteşti from Suceava, led by Eugen Țurcanu. Țurcanu was to become famous for crimes and tortures committed at Piteşti and later at Gherla. Eugen Țurcanu and the other Suceava prisoners had gone over to the Communist side and they were identified by prison administration as the tool by which re-education would be implemented. It must be stated from the beginning that re-education was conceptualized at a high level, by leadership in the Ministry of the Interior, Țurcanu and his group being their instruments, essentially. When the experiment was called off, they were executed by the very Communist government they had served, while those who were truly guilty, those in the shadows, went unpunished.

“At first, the Suceava prisoners were scattered throughout the cells, mixed in with the others. They succeeded in gaining the others’ trust with their well-meaning attitude. After some time, at the beginning of December, 1949, the Suceava prisoners, together with other prisoners who were purposefully selected, were brought back together, to inhabit the same cell. One day, Țurcanu and his group announced to the others that they had changed their ideas, that they had given up Legionnairism and had been re-educated, adopting communist ideology. When they recommended to the others that they do the same, there was objection and laughter. Țurcanu and his followerS attacked. They began beating the others, armed with broomsticks and wooden clubs hidden ahead of time under mattresses. Soon thereafter, the prison leadership – director, officers, guards – joined Țurcanu, severely beating the others [who wouldn’t renounce Legionnairism]. This moment marked the beginning of the re-education program, which meant continuous beatings and torture. The prisoners, closely supervised by Țurcanu’s group, were subjected to a regime of constant terror without the possibility of escaping or committing suicide.

“The torture was well-planned; it stopped only when the prisoner was about to die. There were various kinds of torture: beatings, hunger, being forced to maintain the same position 17 hours a day – legs extended horizontally, hands on knees, chest at 90 degrees – and at the slightest wavering, the supervisor would respond with a club. The prisoners were forced to drink urine and to eat excrement from buckets that served as toilets in the cells. They were forced to drink highly-salted water and then left to dry out from thirst; these were some of the may other tortures devised by the sick minds of the torturers. Those who caved [in] were required to ‘unmask’, i.e., to reveal everything they had not confessed at their interrogation, to betray those prisoners who had helped them in prison or those guards who had treated them humanely. Likewise, in order for the destruction to be complete, each one of them was required to profane the memory of whatever had been most important to him in front of everyone in his cell. For example, perhaps someone loved his mother or wife very much. In front of everyone, he was required to denounce them, to make the most obscene and absurd statements about them. Whatever was bright and good in the mind of the one being tortured had to be slandered and dirtied.

“Theological students and those who were devout – ‘mystical bandits’, as they were called – were forced to apostasize, to deny God, to curse everything that had to do with the Christian faith. At Christmas and Pascha, they were forced to sing carols or well-known religious hymns with altered words which profaned Christ and the Virgin Mary. They were forced to participate in blasphemous processions and to celebrated ‘liturgies’ using human waste from buckets in the prison cells, and were then forced to swallow it as ‘Communion’. Some of them were ‘baptized’ in tubs full of excrement. I believe that these things provide sufficient proof of the satanic nature of re-education.

“After the prisoner ‘unmasked’ himself, in order to prove that he had been re-educated, he was required to become a torturer himself and to convince others to give up ‘all bourgeois rottenness’ and to accept communist ideology. Through the use of terror, the prisoners were truly brainwashed. The tortured, no longer able to endure the incessant torment, unable to commit suicide, always closely supervised, finally gave in and were transformed into robots, their hearts turned to stone and, from being victims, they became executioners. Not even after being re-educated did they escape the terror for, at the slightest sign of solidarity with their victims, they were subjected to torture themselves. And thus, living in a state of constant terror, always suspicious of one another, they broke down completely, foregoing the possibility of returning to a normal state. Dumitru Bordeianu, who experienced this experiment, described the experience in his book *Mărturisiri din Mlaștina Disperării* (Confessions from the Mire of Despair). He says that at a given moment a demonic ‘communion’ was created between the torturer and the one tortured. For example, if Țurcanu asked him what he was thinking, he was unable to lie because Țurcanu would have sensed it immediately. From this came the fear of even thinking something which could be considered bad by Ţurcanu: You couldn’t hide anything if you were questioned, while telling the truth was punished.

“Another Satanic aspect of re-education was that everything that one had hidden at the interrogation and that represented a point of support on the path of internal collapse began to torment him so much that he himself requested to ‘unmask’, feeling afterwards a sense of relief like that after sacramental confession, even though the things he confessed were held against him. A strange process occurred, resulting in mutations to the personality of the one tortured, who came to disavow his former beliefs and to accept whatever Țurcanu imposed upon him with the conviction that he was doing good. In the process of brainwashing, ‘his mind was enlightened’, he experienced a sense of relief, he ‘understood’ everything that he had previously rejected and he set out, in full confidence, to bring others into the same state of ‘enlightenment’. For those of us who have not passed through similar demonic states, these things are incomprehensible.

“Most of those who tortured others did so under the dominion of terror, without experiencing the mutations I referred to above. The system was planned in such a way that, as a result of the continual torture, very few were able to hold out to the end. In general, most of them compromised, some of them more, some less, according to the structure and stamina of each.

“From Piteşti, the system was extended to Gherla and the Canal, but due to the fact that word leaked out and there were international protests, the re-education experiment was stopped. If the secrecy had been maintained, re-education would have been applied to every prison in the country.

“Looking at re-education from a spiritual perspective, both those who directed this experiment from the shadows and those who applied it were nothing but instruments of the devil in the destruction of souls. Father Gheorghe Calciu, who went through Piteşti, said, ‘In order to understand what Piteşti was, we must remain above the facts and get at the roots of this evil, try to see the internal mechanisms of perversion and its metaphysical dimension. I believe that Piteşti was a diabolical experiment. What occurred there was a struggle between good and evil, in which the executioners and the victims were simply instruments. It was a diabolical experiment that took place in our country more than in any other place in the world.’

“The satanic character of re-education was clearly seen in the words of Țurcanu, preserved in the memory of one political prisoner: ‘If Christ had passed through my hands, He never would have made it to the cross. He would not have been resurrected. Christianity, that great lie, would never have existed, and the world would have lived peacefully! I am Țurcanu! The first and the last! No one has ever been born who could replace me. No one can lie to me the way that I lie to you fools. I am the true Gospel! I am writing it now. I have something to write on – your carcasses. What I write is true, it’s not a bedtime story for children.’

“Although the devil may have imagined that he won the battle through terror, he had few decisive victories among those who compromised, some more, some less. After the torture stopped, most of those who acquiesced gradually returned to God. Considering the subsequent evolution of the re-educated, the devil won a battle at Piteşti, but not the war. According to Father Calciu, most of them returned to Christ more vehemently than before their trial by fire…”[[209]](#footnote-209)

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During the war, King Boris III of Bulgaria had tried to preserve his country’s neutrality between Hitler and Stalin, and, persuaded by Metropolitan Stefan of Sophia, had refused to allow the Bulgarian Jews to be taken to Hitler’s death-camps. For this he was killed in 1943. Professor Ya.Ya. Etinger writes: “Hitler demanded from his ally Bulgaria the dispatch 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 in his diary: ‘His Majesty completely revoked the measures taken against the Jews.’ On returning from Hitler’s headquarters 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.”[[210]](#footnote-210)

After the death of Tsar Boris, his brother, Prince Cyril, became regent and continued the same policy. But after the Soviet troops entered Bulgaria he was arrested and shot on “Bloody Thursday”, February 3, 1945.[[211]](#footnote-211)

Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev) of Boguchar, who between the world wars had been in charge of ROCOR’s flock in Bulgaria, recognized the election of Patriarch Sergius in 1943, accepted Soviet citizenship and joined the MP. However, according to his spiritual daughter, Abbess Seraphima (Lieven), he continued to call the Soviet power “satanic” and to oppose the infiltration of communist influence into the Bulgarian Church. The archbishop strove to protect his clergy and flock from the communists. For most of his priests were former White officers, and, as Ivan Marchesvky writes, “after assuming power, associations of priests controlled by the communist were infiltrated into the Church of Bulgaria, and 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.”[[212]](#footnote-212)

M.V. Shkarovsky writes that “in the spring of 1946, during the visit to Bulgaria of a church delegation led by Patriarch Alexis I, Archbishop Seraphim expressed his attitude to the Moscow Patriarchate and his unity with it: ‘For twenty-five years we were in disunity with our Mother, the Church of Russia. But this disunity was a purely external phenomenon, for in our hearts there was complete unity with you and with all our brothers in our homeland, and whith those recognize the Patriarchal Church in Russia.’

“However, on leaving the Russian Orthodox Church abroad, Vladyka Seraphim did not begin ‘to throw stones at her’, as certain other hierarchs who joined the Moscow Patriarchate did. Besides, even after 1945 the archbishop sometimes pronounced sharply anti-soviet declarations…”[[213]](#footnote-213)

Moreover, he sharply criticized the ecumenical activity of the Bulgarian Church Thus on April 26, 1949, he wrote to Patriarch Alexis: “All the metropolitans are convinced followers of ecumenism. Both before the Moscow conference of 1948 and after. It is in the ecumenical direction of the Bulgarian hierarch, in their evident condescension to the ecumenical activity of the professors of the theological faculty and its negative attitude towards Orthodoxy, that we must seek one of the main reasons for the emergence of a great evil here – the priests’ union. The latter strives to destroy the power of the episcopage in the person of the Synod, and to be the main distributer of all church property, to allow a married episcopat and the second marriage of clegy, in the end – to form in Bulgaria a living or renovationist church, just as it was in Russia, with the aim of overthrowing the canons and dogmas of the whole Orthodox Church…”[[214]](#footnote-214)

In 1952 the Moscow Patriarchate closed its deanery in Bulgaria, and all the Russian churches in the country were transferred to the Bulgarian patriarchate except the church of St. Nicholas in Sophia.

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The timing of the Council of Moscow in 1948 was clearly aimed at upstaging the First General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, which was also taking place in that month. In line with Stalin’s foreign policy, the delegates denounced the West and the Vatican and condemned the ecumenical movement.[[215]](#footnote-215) Moscow’s hostility to the Vatican was determined especially by its desire to eliminate uniatism in Eastern Europe – that is, churches serving according to the Eastern Orthodox rite but commemorating the Pope.

A start had been made already towards the end of the war, when it was suggested to the uniate episcopate in Western Ukraine that it simply “liquidate itself”. When all five uniate bishops refused, in April, 1945, they were arrested. Within a month a clearly Soviet-inspired “initiative movement” for unification with the MP headed by Protopresbyter G. Kostelnikov appeared.[[216]](#footnote-216) By the spring of 1946 997 out of 1270 uniate priests in Western Ukraine had joined this movement, and on March 8-10 a uniate council of clergy and laity voted to join the Orthodox church and annul the Brest unia with the Roman Catholic Church of 1596. Central Committee documents show that the whole procedure was controlled by the first secretary of the Ukrainian party, Nikita Khrushchev, who in all significant details sought the sanction of Stalin.[[217]](#footnote-217)

In October, 1948 the 1,250,000 uniates of Romania (the Romanian unia had taken place at Blaj in Transylvania in 1697) were united with the Romanian Patriarchate.[[218]](#footnote-218) Then, in April, 1950, a council took place at Prešov in Slovakia attended by 820 delegates, at which it was agreed to revoke the Uzhgorod unia of 1649 and return to Orthodoxy. The “converted” uniates formed a new, East Slovakian diocese of the Czech Orthodox Church.[[219]](#footnote-219)

However, as Archbishop Tikhon of Omsk writes, the merger of the uniates into the MP harmed both the uniates and the MP. It infected the MP, which drew a large proportion of its clergy from the Western Ukraine, with the false asceticism and mysticism of the Catholics. And the uniates, “on being merged into the unorthodox patriarchate, did not come to know the grace-filled ‘taste of True Orthodoxy’. The fruits of this ‘union’ are well known to all today.”[[220]](#footnote-220)

In August, 1948, Metropolitan Dionysius of Poland petitioned the MP to be received into communion, repenting of his “unlawful autocephaly”. In November, the MP granted the Polish Church autocephaly – again. However, because of his “sin of autocephaly”, and because he had accepted the title of “His Beatitude”, Dionysius was not allowed to remain head of the Church.[[221]](#footnote-221) Another reason may have been his participation in the creation of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church during the war. This decision remained in force despite a plea on Dionysius’ behalf by Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople in February, 1950.[[222]](#footnote-222) In 1951, at the Poles’ request, the MP appointed a new metropolitan for the Polish Church.[[223]](#footnote-223) From now on the Polish Church, though with the new calendar, returned to Moscow’s orbit.

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The Stalinist dictator Enver Hoxha took power in Albania in 1944 with the help of Tito’s partisans (however, he broke with Tito in 1949, following Moscow), and retained it until his death in 1985, creating one of the most repressive communist regimes in the world, “the North Korea of Europe”.

“Behind his Balkan curtain,” writes Montefiore, “ Hoxha embarked on a Stalinist-style exercise in social engineering. He sought the creation of an urban working class worthy of the name (hitherto, Albania had been a clan-based peasant society) and the socialization of national life. Forced industrialization followed, while agriculture was re-organized on the Soviet collective-farm model. At the same time, all of Albania gained access to electricity for the first time, life expectancy rose, and illiteracy rates plummeted. Yet the human cost of this social revolution was enormous.

“Hoxha’s secret police, the Sigurimi, were brutal and ubiquitous: hundreds of thousands were tortured and killed. Hoxha’s prime minister Mehmet Shehu spoke openly at a party congress about their methods: ‘Who disagrees with our leadership in some point, a bullet into his head.’ Out of three million Albanians, one million were at some point either arrested or imprisoned in his perpetual terror…

“After the Sino-Soviet split of 1960, Hoxha allied himself with Beijing against Khrushchev’s Soviet Union, which he believed to be abandoning the true path towards socialism laid down by Comrade Stalin. This realignment led to a precipitous decline in Albanian standards of living, as the country had been highly dependent on Soviet grain, and on the USSR as its principal export market. To quell any possible dissent, Hoxha decided to emulate his ne Chinese friends and launched an Albanian Cultural Revolution. From 1967, Albania was officially declared an ‘atheistic’ state with all its mosques and churches closed and clerics arrested. All private property was confiscated by the state, and the number of arrests increased exponentialy.”[[224]](#footnote-224)

Long before that, howeve, in 1948, the head of the Albanian Orthodox Church, Archbishop Christopher of Tirana, was deposed and imprisoned by the communist government for “hostile activity in relation to the Albanian people”.[[225]](#footnote-225) Then, from February 5 to 10, 1950, a Local Council of the Albanian Church took place in Tirana. A new constitution was worked out in which it was declared that the elections of the clergy should take place with the participation of the laity.

A pseudo-patriotic note was sounded in article 4: “Parallel with the development of religious feeling, the Orthodox Autocephalous Albanian Church must instil into believers feelings of devotion to the authorities of the people of the People’s Republic of Albania, and also feelings of patriotism and of striving for the strengthening of national unity. Therefore all the priests and co-workers of the Church must be Albanian citizens, honourable, devoted to the people and the Homeland, enjoying all civil rights.” The episcopate had to pronounce the following oath: “I swear by my conscience before God that I will preserve the faith and dogmas, canons and Tradition of the Orthodox Church, and faithfulness to the people of the Albanian People’s Republic and its democratic principles, as prescribed by the Constitution.”[[226]](#footnote-226)

On March 5 the new head of the Albanian Church, Archbishop Paisius, gave a speech in front of the All-Albanian conference in defence of peace in which he said: “In agreement with the great ideals of love, brotherhood and peace throughout the world on which the Church is based, we will struggle for the holy affair of the liberation of the whole of mankind from hostile encroachments on its peaceful life. This task must be unanimously accomplished by all our clergy, as preachers of peace who are bound to direct the will of the flock to the struggle for peace… We preach peace, but we know that peace is not given *gratis*, therefore we bless the struggle for the final victory over those who are stirring up war…”[[227]](#footnote-227)

## 101. MORE SOVIET COUNCILS

In 1948 the MP celebrated the 450th anniversary of its foundation. The celebrations were attended by representatives of the Ecumenical, Antiochian, Alexandrian, Greek, Serbian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Czechoslovak, Polish and Georgian Churches. (The Georgian Church had been granted autocephaly by Moscow shortly after the Stalin-Sergius pact in 1943. This act was not recognised by Constantinople until the 1990s.) Only Jerusalem and Cyprus, among the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches, were not represented.

Immediately after the celebrations, a Church Council took place. Only the East European Churches within Moscow’s orbit and Antioch attended; the Churches of Constantinople, Alexandria and Greece boycotted it on the grounds that only Constantinople had the right to call such a conference. When KGB Colonel G. Karpov, head of the Department for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church and the real master of ceremonies, learned that Metropolitan Germanus of Thyateira and Great Britain, the representative of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, was not arriving in Moscow until after the working days of the Council, he said: “He is well-known to be an English spy”. And about Patriarch Maximus, who had given Metropolitan Germanus this order, he said: “he has long been ill with schizophrenia and must in the near future go into retirement”.[[228]](#footnote-228) This was no idle threat: the next year Patriarch Maximus was forced into retirement by his Synod on grounds of mental illness, although he was completely sane.[[229]](#footnote-229) Maximus’ place on the ecumenical throne was taken by the 33rd degree Mason Athenagoras, who arrived in Constantinople from America on the private plane of the American President Truman…

The timing of the Council was clearly aimed at upstaging the First General Assembly of the World Council of Churches which was also taking place in that month. In line with Stalin’s foreign policy, the delegates denounced the West and the Vatican and condemned the ecumenical movement.[[230]](#footnote-230) Moscow’s hostility to the Vatican was determined especially by its desire to eliminate uniatism in Eastern Europe – that is, churches serving according to the Eastern Orthodox rite but commemorating the Pope.

A start had been made already towards the end of the war, when it was suggested to the uniate episcopate in Western Ukraine that it simply “liquidate itself”. When all five uniate bishops refused, in April, 1945, they were arrested. Within a month a clearly Soviet-inspired “initiative movement” for unification with the MP headed by Protopresbyter G. Kostelnikov appeared.[[231]](#footnote-231) By the spring of 1946 997 out of 1270 uniate priests in Western Ukraine had joined this movement. On March 8-10 a uniate council of clergy and laity voted to join the Orthodox church and annul the Brest unia with the Roman Catholic Church of 1596. Central Committee documents show that the whole procedure was controlled by the first secretary of the Ukrainian party, Nikita Khruschev, who in all significant details sought the sanction of Stalin.[[232]](#footnote-232)

In October, 1948 the 1,250,000 uniates of Romania (the Romanian unia had taken place at Blaj in Transylvania in 1697) were united with the Romanian Patriarchate.[[233]](#footnote-233) Then, in April, 1950, a council took place at Prešov in Slovakia attended by 820 delegates, at which it was agreed to revoke the Uzhgorod unia of 1649 and return to Orthodoxy. The “converted” uniates formed a new, East Slovakian diocese of the Czech Orthodox Church.[[234]](#footnote-234)

However, as Archbishop Tikhon of Omsk writes, the merger of the uniates into the MP harmed both the uniates and the MP. It infected the MP, which drew a large proportion of its clergy from the Western Ukraine, with the false asceticism and mysticism of the Catholics. And the uniates, “on being merged into the unorthodox patriarchate, did not come to know the grace-filled ‘taste of True Orthodoxy’. The fruits of this ‘union’ are well known to all today.”[[235]](#footnote-235)

It is now known that all the decisions of the Moscow council of 1948 were planned a year and a half before by the Central Committee of the Communist Party.[[236]](#footnote-236) Consequently it is not surprising to see from the hierarchs’ special epistle that their motives were purely political: “The world is going through a stormy time in which the irreconcilable differences between the Catholic and rationalist-Protestant West, on the one hand, and the Orthodox East, on the other, are clearly manifest… We servants of the Orthodox Church have been painfully impressed by the fact that those who are stirring up a new war are children of the Christian Catholic and Protestant world. We are deeply grieved that from the stronghold of Catholicism, the Vatican, and the nest of Protestantism, America, instead of the voice of peace and Christian love we hear blessing of a new war and hymns in praise of atomic bombs and such-like inventions, which are designed for the destruction of human life. All Christians, regardless of nation and creed, cannot help blaming the Vatican for this policy. We fervently beseech the Chief Pastor, our Lord Jesus Christ, that He enlighten the Catholic hierarchy with the light of His Divine teaching and help it to realize the abyss of its sinful fall.”[[237]](#footnote-237)

The most theological contribution to this council came from Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev) of Boguchar (Bulgaria), formerly of ROCOR. He prepared three reports: against the ecumenical movement, on the old and new calendars, and on the Anglican hierarchy. Seraphim expressed a "particular opinion" on the calendar question, considering the council's resolution on this question to have been inadequate. In his report against Ecumenism he stressed that the presence of Orthodox representatives at ecumenical conferences, even as observers, constituted apostasy from Holy Orthodoxy.

Protopriest G. Razumovsky also spoke well: "The Russian Orthodox Church," he said, "had always taught and still teaches that Pentecost, or the descent of the Holy Spirit, has already taken place and that the Christians do not have to wait for a new appearance of the Holy Spirit, but the glorious Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The diminution of the significance of the single sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the prophecy of a future 'third hour', in which the expected Kingdom of the Holy Spirit will be revealed is characteristic of the teaching of the Masons and the heretics; while the newly revealed prophecy of the expected Ecumenical Pentecost can be nothing other than an old echo of the false teaching of these deceived heretics." [[238]](#footnote-238)

On July 15, 1948 a feast in honour of the participants in the Council was laid on by the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church. About 200 people were present. The representative of the Bulgarian Church proposed a toast to Stalin for the communist Prime Minister of Bulgaria. Karpov declared that the guests had become personally convinced in Moscow that the Russian Orthodox Church was completely free and independent of the State. Metropolitan Germanos of Thyateira praised Stalin and called Karpov a minister who “aids the strengthening and flourishing of Orthodoxy in the Soviet Union”. Metropolitan Elias of the Lebanon said that it was only thanks to Stalin that the flourishing of the Russian Orthodox Church had been guaranteed throughout the world.[[239]](#footnote-239)

In July, 1951 the heads of the Churches of Antioch, Russia, Georgia, Romania and Bulgaria gathered in Zagorsk and issued a purely political statement in favour of “peace” and against the USA.[[240]](#footnote-240)

The “theology of peace” – that is, the removal of all obstacles to the communist domination of the world – was becoming the major content of top-level ecclesiastical meetings in the eastern bloc.

For the moment pro-communism was combined with anti-ecumenism (for purely political reasons); but the time would shortly come when the communist masters of the East European Churches would compel the patriarchs to change course and embrace ecumenism – for the sake of giving their pro-communist message a wider audience and deeper penetration…

## 102. THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

In July, 1948, in Amsterdam, the union took place between the two ecumenical movements “Faith and Order” and “Life and Work” into a new organization, the World Council of Churches. Being the only Orthodox Church that had not participated in the council of Moscow that condemned ecumenism, Constantinople was the only Orthodox jurisdiction besides the Cypriot Church present at this essentially Protestant assembly.[[241]](#footnote-241) Moscow was invited, but declined.

In his reply Metropolitan (and MGB agent) Nicholas of Krutitsa took the opportunity to berate his ecclesiastical opponents, expressing the hope that the World Council of Churches would not count as representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church either those Russian Orthodox believers who were under the omophorion of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, or the “schismatics” from the groups of Metropolitan Theodosius in America or Metropolitan Anastasy in Munich, who had nothing in common with the Russian Orthodox Church.[[242]](#footnote-242)

In view of this, it is not surprising that ROCOR was not invited. She would in any case have declined because “we do not participate in the ecumenical movement”.[[243]](#footnote-243) This decision was in line with a gradual disillusion with the ecumenical movement experienced in the inter-war years, culminating in the words of the Second All-Diaspora Council in 1938: “Resolutions of ecumenical conferences often suffer from vagueness, diffusiveness, reticence and a nuance of compromise. Sometimes they develop formulas in which the same expressions may be interpreted differently.”[[244]](#footnote-244)

A.V. Soldatov has chronicled the progressive weakening in the Orthodox position: “At the conference [of Faith and Order] in Geneva in 1920 the spirit of extreme Protestant liberalism gained the upper hand. It came to the point that when the Orthodox Metropolitan Stephen of Sophia noted in his report: ‘The Church is only there where the hierarchy has apostolic succession, and without such a hierarchy there are only religious communities’, the majority of the delegates of the conference left the hall as a sign of protest. At the next conference on Faith and Order [in Lausanne] in 1927, victory again went to the extreme left Protestants. The Orthodox delegation, experiencing psychological pressure at this conference, was forced to issue the following declaration: ‘in accordance with the views of the Orthodox Church, no compromises in relation to the teaching of the faith and religious convictions can be permitted. No Orthodox can hope that a reunion based on disputed formulae can be strong and positive… The Orthodox Church considers that any union must be based exclusively on the teaching of the faith and confession of the ancient undivided Church, on the seven Ecumenical Councils and other decisions of the first eight centuries.’ But the numerous speeches of the Orthodox explaining the teaching of the Church on the unity of the Church seemed only to still further increase the incomprehension or unwillingness to comprehend them on the part of the Protestant leaders of Ecumenism. This tendency was consistently pursued by the Protestants at the conferences in 1937 in Oxford and Edinburgh. Summing up this ‘dialogue’ at the beginning of the century, Fr. Metrophanes Znosko-Borovsky remarks: ‘The Orthodox delegates at Edinburgh were forced with sorrow to accept the existence of basic, irreconcilable differences in viewpoint on many subjects of faith between the Orthodox East and the Protestant West.’

“After the Second World War, the World Council of Churches was created. It is necessary to point out that the movements ‘Faith and Order’ and ‘the Christian Council of Life and Work’ were viewed by their organizers as preparatory stages in the seeking of possible modes of integration of ‘the Christian world’. The World Council of Churches differed from them in principle. It set out on the path of ‘practical Ecumenism’ for the first time in world history, declaring that it was the embryo of a new type of universal church. The first, so to speak founding conference of the WCC in Amsterdam chose as its motto the words: ‘Human disorder and God’s house-building’. At it, as Archbishop Vitaly remarks, ‘every effort was made to destroy the teaching on the One, True, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church’. The leading theological minds of the Protestant world made a series of reports at the Amsterdam conference, in which they focussed with particular clarity the whole depth of the dogmatic and theological disintegration of the Protestant faith and, in particular, ecclesiology. The conclusion of the report of Gustav Aulen became the basic, single dogma of the organization being created: ‘The Church is as it were a synthesis of all churches.’ Another speaker, Clarence Craig, somewhat deepened the arguments of his colleague with the help of a suggested variant translation of the word ‘catholic’ (or ‘conciliar’ in the Slavonic translation of the Symbol of Faith) as ‘integral’. But of particular interest for us was the speech at this conference of the Orthodox priest, noted theologian and Church historian [of the Ecumenical Patriarchate], Fr. Georges Florovsky. Having noted that ‘the Bible, dogmatics, catechesis, Church discipline, Liturgy, preaching and sacrament have become museum exhibits’, Fr. Georges concluded: ‘the only salvation in the work of reviving the Church is in the ecumenical movement’. He affirmed that ‘the Church has not yet defined herself, has not worked out her own theological school definition, does not have her own definition, has not yet recognized herself.’”[[245]](#footnote-245)

According to the rules agreed in Amsterdam, an applicant to the WCC must “recognize the essential interdependence of the churches, particularly those of the same confession, and must practise constructive ecumenical relations with other churches within its country or region. This will normally mean that the church is a member of the national council of churches or similar body and of the regional ecumenical organisation." (*Rules of the WCC*) And article I of the WCC Constitution reads: "The World Council of Churches is a *fellowship of churches* which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures (sic) and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit." And the Constitution also declares that the primary purpose of the fellowship of churches in the World Council of Churches is to call one another to “visible unity in one faith and in one eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and common life in Christ, through witness and service to the world, and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe”. Further, according to Section II of the WCC Rules, entitled *Responsibilities of Membership*, "Membership in the World Council of Churches signifies faithfulness to the Basis of the Council, fellowship in the Council, participation in the life and work of the Council and commitment to the ecumenical movement as integral to the mission of the church.”

Acceptance of these terms clearly entailed a Protestant ecclesiology. In fact, as time went on, the WCC became the home of almost every heresy, earning its home city of Amsterdam the description that the English Catholic poet Andrew Marvell gave it in his poem, “The Character of Holland” in 1653:

*Hence Amsterdam, Turk-Christian-Pagan-Jew,*

*Staple of Sects and Mint of Schism grew;*

*That Bank of Conscience, where not one so strange*

*Opinion but finds Credit, and Exchange*

*In vain for Catholicks ourselves we bear;*

*The universal church is onely there.*

## 103. DIVISIONS IN THE GREEK CHURCH

During this period, while the Greek Old Calendarists increased in numbers, the divisions among them continued and intensified. Metropolitan Chrysostom and his two fellow bishops continued to argue that the new calendarists were potentially rather than actually schismatics. Moreover, in an article in the newspaper *Eleutheria (Freedom)* on November 14, 1945, they said that they would never consecrate bishops because the Old Calendarists did not constitute a Church but a “keeper” against the innovations of the State Church: “We assure all the Church and State authorities that, having full awareness that we are only simple keepers of an institution of Pan-Orthodox importance as the old calendar is, and not representatives of a rebellious church, we shall never and in no case whatsoever carry out ecclesiastical acts such as the consecration of bishops”.[[246]](#footnote-246) At the same time, they issued two encyclicals – on March 11 and July 12, 1946 – which forbade any concelebration with the new calendarists.

At about this time some Matthewites conceived the idea of persuading Bishop Matthew to ordain bishops on his own. Metropolitan Calliopius of Pentapolis writes: “The ‘consecrations’ by a single bishop were decided upon for the beginning of November, 1944. Eugene Tombros [a married priest and the chancellor of the Matthewite Church] and Mother Mariam [the abbess of the Monastery of Keratea] contrived to persuade the old man of Bresthena [Bishop Matthew] to proceed to carry out the consecrations on his own. They first proposed Hieromonk Basil Baltsakis. The project was scuppered thanks to the objections of the Fathers of the Monastery of the Transfiguration, notably Fathers Gregory, Climis, Xenophon and Eugene. Hieromonk Anthony Thanos, the abbot of the monastery (and later metropolitan of Attica) had received Bishop Matthew’s declaration ‘that he would prefer to have his hands cut off rather than proceed to consecrations.’ Four years later, however, when the Fathers had left the monastery, Eugene Tombros and Mother Mariam attained their end and Bishop Matthew proceeded to the consecration of four bishops on his own…”[[247]](#footnote-247)

“In 1947,” writes Jelena Petrovic, Metropolitan Chrysostom “published his ‘Memorandum for the Future Pan-Orthodox Council’, [in which] he wrote: ‘The triumph of Christ's Church [in the USSR] has been achieved by the almighty power of Christ, Who as his means and organ used the eminent leader Stalin and his glorious collaborators, politicians and generals. This is “a change wrought by the right hand of the Most High”.’ This was written in the middle of the Greek civil war - as Bishop Matthew put it, "at a time when the accursed and godless Communist Party of Greece (KKE) was shedding Greek blood. It is a panegyric to the arch-slaughterer of mankind. During the period of 14 years [in which,] as they claim, they have partaken in the holy struggle, they haven't written even a single tiny article or booklet, nor have they even said in the church anything about godless communism; while we, foreseeing the danger from the beginning, have been writing and confessing and preaching against traitorous and anti-patriotic communism."[[248]](#footnote-248)

This criticism was just. And yet Matthew was guilty of similar errors. Thus the Matthewite organ *Kirix Gnision Orthodoxon (Herald of the True Orthodox Christians)* for July, 1949 reported that he had sent his fervent prayers to the newly-created antichristian State of Israel. This state then, to please its patron, the Soviet Union, promptly expelled the ROCOR monastics from the Goritsky convent in Jerusalem and handed it over to the Moscow Patriarchate…[[249]](#footnote-249)

On August 26, 1948, an assembly of Bishop Matthew’s Church made a decision which was on the face of it uncanonical, and which served to deepen the divisions in the True Orthodox Church. They decided “that our most Reverend Bishop Matthew of Bresthena should proceed to the consecration of new bishops, insofar as the other pseudo-bishops of the True Orthodox Christians neither understand nor confess Orthodoxy, nor unite with us, nor even agree to make consecrations. We grant him the authority to proceed both to the election of people and to their immediate consecration, in accordance with the divine and sacred canons and the opinions of our canon law experts, and in accordance with the practice of the whole Church of Christ, which has accepted, in case of necessity (as is the case today) such a dispensation, as we have just heard from our Protosynkellos, Protopriest Eugene Tombros, who explained the validity of the consecration of one Bishop by one Bishop in accordance with the law of our Orthodox Church.”[[250]](#footnote-250)

The reliance of the Matthewites on Fr. Eugene Tombros was, to say the least, unfortunate. This married priest had joined the sacred struggle from the new calendarists in 1936, and was defrocked by them in February, 1938. But then, in July, 1938, after one month in prison, he repented in a letter to the new calendarist Bishop of Corfu, Alexander, and asked for the grace of the priesthood to be restored to him, thereby recognizing the authority and the mysteries of the new calendarist church. On his release from prison, however, he did not return to Bishop Alexander, but went to Athens, where, the next year, he was made Protosynkellos of the Church of Bishops Germanus and Matthew. In this post he did much by his slandering of Bishop Germanus to foment the schism between Germanos and Matthew, after which he acquired an unparalleled and fateful authority in the Matthewite Church.[[251]](#footnote-251) Such a traitor to the Old Calendarist Church was hardly in a position to make judgements about the supposedly “pseudo-Orthodox” Metropolitans Germanus and Chrysostom. Nor could a group of priests led by Tombros “give authority” to Bishop Matthew to proceed to the election and consecration of another bishop on his own.

In September, Bishop Matthew, after warning Metropolitan Chrysostom and Bishop Germanus of what he was about to do, consecrated Spyridon of Trimithun (Cyprus), and then, with Spyridon, Demetrius of Thessalonica, Callistus of Corinth and Andrew of Patras. By this time Bishop Matthew was half-paralyzed, so that his paralyzed right hand had to be lowered onto the head of the ordinand in the altar by Abbess Mariam!

This consecration was uncanonical, not only because it was carried out by one bishop only (see below), but also because Matthew himself was a vicar-bishop – and vicar bishops can ordain nobody higher than a deacon without the permission of their metropolitan (Canon 10 of Antioch). On October 29, 1948 the three Florinite bishops Chrysostom, Christopher and Polycarp reacted angrily to “the indescribable impiety [single-handed consecration] that makes Bishop Matthew guilty before God”, accusing him of being a “false teacher” consecrating new bishops “without any ecclesiastical necessity, but only in order to fulfil his personal interests”. On December 20, Metropolitan Chrysostom wrote a similar letter to the Greek Ministry of Religion that was published in *Vradini.*[[252]](#footnote-252)

In December Archbishop Matthew replied as follows: “We have not proceeded to any coup d’état whatsoever, as the ordination of the new bishops has been maliciously characterised, but have only done our duty as a Hierarch of our bleeding Mother Orthodox Church. That action is what has been dictated to us by the Divine and Holy Canons and the many necessities of our Holy Struggle. We made that decision after persistent appeals of the Holy Clergy around us and the Genuine Orthodox Christian People, from Greece and abroad, who have addressed me over a long period in many appeals, petitions and personal please, and whom I have obeyed for the sole purpose of not wanting to deprive Christ’s Church of Her canonical shepherds, and in order not to be judged by God and the people as a cunning servant who has hidden his talent.”

Now the consecration of a bishop by one bishop only is contrary to the First Apostolic Canon, which decrees a minimum of two or three consecrators, as well as to other sacred Canons. However, St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite writes in his commentary on this canon: “The *Apostolic Constitutions* (Book 8, chapter 27), on the other hand, commands that anyone ordained by a single bishops be deposed from office along with the one who ordained him, except only in case of persecution or some other impediment by reason whereof a number of bishops cannot get together and he has to be ordained by one alone, just as Siderius was ordained bishop of Palaebisca, according to Synesius.”[[253]](#footnote-253) And the same holy father writes: “In times of heresy, according to necessity, not everything is to occur in accordance with the canons which are established in times of peace.”[[254]](#footnote-254) Again, V.K. writes that consecration of a bishop by one bishop only “is allowed by the canons in exceptional circumstances”, “and we have numerous witnesses to this from the history of the Orthodox Church.” [[255]](#footnote-255)

The question is: were the circumstances exceptional enough in the case of Bishop Matthew? In this case it was possible to argue that a dispensation could be invoked on the grounds that: (a) Bishop Matthew had tried and failed to obtain co-consecrators from abroad, and (b) he was the only true bishop in Greece at the time, or (c) no other bishop was able, or would agree, to consecrate bishops with him.

With regard to (a), Archbishop Andrew (one of the priests consecrated by Bishop Matthew) writes that three archimandrites and Fr. Eugene Tombros asked Matthew to go ahead with the consecrations as early as November 28, 1945 (just after Metropolitan Chrysostom’s statement in *Eleutheria*), and that requests for assistance in the consecration of bishops were made to various bishops (presumably foreign ones), but without success.[[256]](#footnote-256)

But was Bishop Matthew really the only true bishop in Greece at that time (condition (b))? That could be maintained only on the assumption that all the other Old Calendarist bishops had fallen away from Holy Orthodoxy. That was certainly not the case with Bishop Germanus. As for Metropolitan Chrysostom, although he had been inconsistent in softening the full force of the Confession of 1935, he had not even been brought to trial.

According to many, Bishop Matthew was pushed into making the consecrations by the protosynkellos of his Synod, Fr. Eugene Tombros, and Abbess Mariam of Keratea. Fr. Eugene had a mistaken ecclesiology according to which any break in communion between groups of bishops inevitably entails the loss of the grace of sacraments in one group. Evidently he was unaware of the many times in Church history in which divisions have taken place that did not constitute full schisms. Such divisions took place between the Roman Church and the Asian Churches (late 2nd century), within the Roman Church (early 3rd century), between the Roman Church and the African Church (3rd century), between St. Meletius of Antioch and Paulinus (4th century), between St. Epiphanius of Cyprus and St. John Chrysostom (early 5th century), between the Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Churches (6th-7th centuries), between St. Wilfrid of York and the rest of the English Church (7th-8th centuries), between St. Theodore the Studite and St. Nicephorus (9th century), between St. Photius the Great and St. Ignatius (9th century), between the Arsenites and the Ecumenical Patriarchate (13th-14th century), between the Serbian Church and the Ecumenical Patriarchate (14th century), between the Russian Church and the Ecumenical Patriarchate (15th-16th centuries), between the Greek kollyvades and the Ecumenical Patriarchate (18th century), between St. Arsenius of Paros and the Ecumenical Patriarchate (19th century), between the Ecumenical Patriarchate (19th century) and the Greek State Church (19th century), between the Bulgarian Church and the Ecumenical Patriarchate (19th century). Fr. Eugene assumed that the simple fact of the division between Matthew and the others meant that one side - in this case, the other side - must have lost grace. [[257]](#footnote-257)

With regard to the third condition (c), there is indisputable evidence (quoted above) that Metropolitan Chrysostom did not want to consecrate bishops for the Old Calendarists. While this can hardly be called “betrayal” – after all, there is no canon which *compels* a bishop to consecrate other bishops, - it was certainly not the act of a man who believed in the real autocephaly of the Old Calendar Church of Greece.

As for the other bishop who might have assisted in the consecrations, Bishop Germanus of the Cyclades, he was in prison for ordaining priests – but would hardly have assisted Matthew in any case, since even before his release from prison he had come to believe that Metropolitan Chrysostom had returned to the Orthodox confession of 1935. For, in a pastoral letter dated 29 October, 1948, Metropolitan Chrysostom had declared unambiguously that the new calendarists had “separated themselves from the Unique Body of Orthodoxy… We consider and believe that the official Church of Greece is schismatic and that the services celebrated by its clergy are deprived of Divine grace.”[[258]](#footnote-258) This encouraged Bishop Germanus, who had been in prison from January, 1948 to January, 1950, to reconsider his position, and on his release he re-entered communion with Metropolitan Chrysostom, who in May, 1950 reaffirmed the Confession of 1935.

“Although Bishop Matthew’s integrity, personal virtue and asceticism were admitted by all,” write the monks Holy Transfiguration Monastery, “his course of action only widened the division between the ‘Matthewites’ and ‘Florinites’.

“The ‘Florinites’ and the ‘Matthewites’ made many attempts at reconciliation, but all were unsuccessful. Stavros Karamitsos, a theologian and author of the book, *The Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane,* describes as an eye-witness the two instances in which Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina personally attempted to meet with Bishop Matthew. Unfortunately, on both occasions – the first, which had been planned to take place on January 19, 1950, at the Matthewite Convent in Keratea at the invitation of [the Matthewite] Bishop Spirydon of Trimythus, and the second, which actually did take place at the Athens Metochion of the Keratea Convent – the abbess and senior nuns of that convent, at the prompting of the Matthewite protopresbyter Eugene Tombros, intervened and would not allow Metropolitan Chrysostom to speak with Bishop Matthew. On the second occasion, in May of 1950, when Bishop Matthew was on his deathbed and had been unconscious for three days, Metropolitan Chrysostom arrived at Bishop Matthew’s quarters and approached his bedside. Standing at his side, Metropolitan Chrysostom bowed down and quietly asked him, ‘My holy brother, how are you feeling?’ To the astonishment of all present, Bishop Matthew regained consciousness and opened his eyes. When he saw the Metropolitan, he sought to sit up out of deference and began to whisper something faintly. At that very moment, the Abbess Mariam of the Convent of Keratea entered the room with several other sisters and demanded that all the visitors leave. Only a few days later, on May 14[/27], 1950, Bishop Matthew died.”[[259]](#footnote-259)

On May 26, 1950, Metropolitan Chrysostom officially returned to the confession of 1947. Together with Bishop Germanus, he sent the following encyclical both to the State Church and to the Matthewites: “In the year of our Saviour 1935 we proclaimed the Church of the innovating new calendarists to be schismatic. We reiterate this proclamation and in consequence ordain the enforcement of the First Canon of St. Basil the Great that the sacraments celebrated by the new calendarists, in that the latter are schismatics, are deprived of sanctifying grace. Therefore no new calendarist must be received into the bosom of our Most Holy Church or be served without a prior confession by which he condemns the innovation of the new calendarists and proclaims their Church schismatic. As regards those who have been baptized by the innovators, they should be chrismated with Holy Chrism of Orthodox origin, such as is found in abundance with us.

“We take this opportunity to address a last appeal to all the True Orthodox Christians, calling on them in a paternal manner to come into union with us, which would further our sacred struggle for patristic piety and would satisfy our fervent desire.

“In calling on you, we remove the scandals which have been created by us through our fault, and to that end recall and retract everything written and said by us since 1937, whether in announcements, clarifications, publications or encyclicals, which was contrary and opposed to the Principles of the Eastern Orthodox Church of Christ and the sacred struggle for Orthodoxy conducted by us, as proclaimed in the encyclical published by the Holy Synod in 1935, without any addition or subtraction, and including the scientific definition ‘Potentiality and Actuality’.”[[260]](#footnote-260)

This humble and thoroughly Orthodox statement persuaded a large number of Matthewites to rejoin Metropolitan Chrysostom. However, it did not satisfy the Matthewite hardliners. What disappointed them was that Chrysostom did not confess that he had been a schismatic since 1935 and turn to the Matthewites to be readmitted into the Church, but rather called on them to be reunited with him. In any case, they did not want to be subject to a hierarch who refused to act as the head of an autocephalous Church and consecrate bishops, thereby threatening the survival of the Church.

However, Chrysostom was not a schismatic. He had not returned to the new calendarists, nor had he been tried or defrocked by any canonical Synod. And he still retained the support of the majority of the bishops and clergy, 850 parishes and about a million laypeople.[[261]](#footnote-261) Although he had wavered on the question of grace, this was neither heresy nor schism, and certainly not automatic apostasy. For, as Metropolitan Macarius (Nevsky) of Moscow, who was himself unlawfully removed from his see in 1917, said: “The Holy Church cannot allow an incorrect attitude towards its first-hierarchs, she cannot remove them from their sees without a trial and an investigation.”[[262]](#footnote-262)

Not every division in the Church constitutes a full-blown schism leading to the loss of sacramental grace of one of the parties. The Apostle Paul speaks of “quarrels” and “differences of opinion” *within* the one Church of the Corinthians (I Corinthians 1.10-14, 11.19). St. John Chrysostom says that these quarrels took place “not because of difference in faith, but *from disagreement in spirit out of human vanity*”.[[263]](#footnote-263) Blessed Theodoretus of Cyr agrees with this.

Again, Protopriest Michael Pomazansky writes: “The unity of the Church is not violated because of temporary divisions of a non-dogmatic nature. Differences between Churches arise frequently out of insufficient or incorrect information. Also, sometimes a temporary breaking of communion is caused by the personal errors of individual hierarchs who stand at the head of one or another local Church; or it is caused by their violation of the canons of the Church, of by the violation of the submission of one territorial ecclesiastical group to another in accordance with anciently established tradition. Moreover, life shows us the possibility of disturbances within a local Church which hinder the normal communion of other Churches with the given local Church until the outward manifestation and triumph of the defenders of authentic Orthodox truth. Finally, the bond between Churches can sometimes be violated for a long time by political conditions, as has often happened in history. In such cases, the division touches only outward relations, but does not touch or violate inward spiritual unity.”[[264]](#footnote-264)

The extreme Matthewite position leads to the following reductio ad absurdum. Let us suppose that Chrysostom was automatically defrocked in 1937 for calling schismatics Orthodox. It follows that all the bishops in the history of the Orthodox Church who transgressed in the same way were also automatically defrocked. Therefore Metropolitan Dorotheus and the Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate were also automatically defrocked in 1920 for embracing the western heretics. Moreover, all those who remained in communion with Dorotheus were also automatically defrocked. But that included the Eastern Patriarchs, the Patriarchs of Russia and Serbia and in general the whole of the Orthodox Church! But then we must conclude, in accordance with strict Matthewite reasoning, that the Church of Christ ceased to exist in 1920! But, of course, the Matthewites do not draw this logical conclusion from their own premises. Therefore their reasoning must be considered to be inconsistent.

## 104. THE NEW CALENDARIST OFFENSIVE

In June, 1950 Archbishop Spyridon Vlachos wrote to the Greek government that the Old Calendar movement was a form of pan-Slavism more dangerous to the nation even than communism! This was followed by a fierce persecution of the Old Calendarists, both Florinites and Matthewites. This community in persecution is a powerful argument that both factions communed of the True Body and Blood of Christ. And there were prominent Old Calendarists who refused to take sides. Thus on being asked which faction he belonged to, Hieromonk Jerome of Aegina replied: “I am with all the factions!”[[265]](#footnote-265)

The renewal of persecution against the True Church was clearly imminent in 1949, when, “the State Church elected Archbishop Spyridon to the primacy; he was to prove the fiercest persecutor yet of the Old Calendarists. Immediately after his election, he required his Bishops to submit details about Old Calendar clergy, parishes, and monasteries in their dioceses. The theological schools were forbidden in the future to accept Old Calendarist students (this order is still in effect, though heretics of various persuasions are not debarred). Finally, on January 3, 1951, at the request of the Holy Synod of the State Church, a decree was issued by the Council of Ministers as follows: ‘… It is decided that: 1) Old Calendarist clergy who do not have canonical ordination by canonical Bishops of our Orthodox Church, and who wear clerical dress, should be deprived thereof; 2) monks and nuns following the Old Calendar should be arrested and confined to monasteries, and those who bear the monastic dress uncanonically should be deprived thereof and prosecuted; 3) the Churches which have been illegally seized by the Old Calendarists should be returned to the official Church, as also the monasteries they possess illegally and capriciously; 4) the execution of the above be entrusted to the Ministries of Public Order, Justice, Religion, and Education.’

“The above plan was put into immediate effect. In a short while, the basement of the Archdiocese in Athens and other towns was filled with the clerical robes of the True Orthodox clergy who were taken there, shaved, often beaten, and then cast out into the street in civil dress; many Priests underwent this process a number of times, while others were arrested and sent into exile. One aged Priest, Father Plato, was beaten to death by the police in Patras, and then hastily buried in a field to cover up the crime. All the Churches in Athens were sealed and their vessels taken, and a few Churches in other parts of Greece were even demolished. Soon no True Orthodox Priest could circulate undisguised, and even monks and nuns were not immune to these profane attacks. The first victim was Bishop Germanus of the Cyclades, who died in the greatest grief when under house arrest on March 24, 1951, and was buried by the Faithful[[266]](#footnote-266); by the personal order of Archbishop Spyridon, they were not permitted to take the body to a Church, and no Priest was allowed to assist; even so, many were arrested at the cemetery. Soon the orphanage of the TOC was seized by the State Church. There is no space here, unfortunately, to describe all the heroic struggles of the Old Calendarists at this time, the demonstrations attended by thousands in the squares of Athens, the catacomb Church services and so forth, which are the glory of our Church.

“The eighty-one-year-old Metropolitan Chrysostom was arrested in February, 1951, and after repeated attempts to change his views, was exiled to the Monastery of St. John in Lesbos, situated on a remote 2,500-foot crag, where he was to remain for over a year. The monks of the monastery behaved sympathetically, but conditions were very hard for an infirm, elderly man. The Metropolitan, however, constantly expressed his joy at being found worthy to suffer for his Faith, and his satisfaction at the resistance and perseverance of the Faithful in the face of persecution. We have a precious proof of his holiness from this bitter time: the police officer whose duty it was to guard him, looked into the Bishop’s cell one evening and, to his amazement, saw him standing in prayer with his hands raised, surrounded by a blinding heavenly light. The guard fell at his feet to ask forgiveness and subsequently became one of his most faithful spiritual children.[[267]](#footnote-267)

“Passion Week of 1952 saw fearful scenes of impiety perpetrated on the TOC, but it was rapidly becoming clear to all that the persecution was producing merely public disorder and complaint, and was achieving nothing in the way of ‘re-uniting’ the Faithful to the State Church; indeed, rather the opposite. Finally, in June, 1952, through the intervention of the new Prime Minister, Plastiras, Metropolitan Chrysostom and the other Bishops were released. Slowly the pressure was relaxed, much aided by the constant protests of Patriarch Christopher of Alexandria, a supporter of the Old Calendarists from the beginning, and eventually two Churches were permitted to function in the city of Athens…. However, it was not until 1954 that the violent measures finally came to an end and the Churches could be safely re-opened.”[[268]](#footnote-268)

It is perhaps no accident that the persecutions against the True Orthodox in Greece took place when the Greek civil war and the great political turmoil of the previous decade had come to an end. Freed from external enemies, the State Church could now return to “the enemy within”. Even some former communist hierarchs were re-employed in the struggle against the True Orthodox, such as Metropolitan Anthony of Elia, who joined the party in 1944 was deposed in 1946, but returned to his see after the amnesty of 1952.[[269]](#footnote-269)

By 1949, however, the communist threat had receded and Greece was firmly back within the sphere of western influence. The time was ripe for the State Church to go forward to full union with the western heretics – but only if its rear could be secured from snipers of the True Orthodox Church. Hence the significance of the election of the persecutor Archbishop Spyridon, who was entrusted with removing this, the main obstacle to the further development of Ecumenism in the western world.

In this period, unfortunately, Metropolitan Chrysostom again wavered in relation to the new calendarists. On December 11, 1950 he declared in the newspaper *Vradini (Evening)* that the Old Calendarists were “a living artery through which clean Orthodox blood flowed into the heart of the Church”, and that the Old Calendarists had condemned the State Church as schismatic only because the State Church had done the same to them (in 1926). And in the same month he declared in the official organ of the Church, *I Foni Orthodoxias* (The Voice of Orthodoxy): “In spite of the cruel persecution that the innovating Church has organized against us, we avoided, at the beginning out of respect for the significance of the Church, to pronounce her schismatic in an ecclesiastical encyclical, at the same time that she declared us to be schismatics in court, condemning our bishops of Megara and Diauleia, in order to justify their decision to depose them. But when we saw that the ruling Synod had decided, contrary to all the holy canons and the age-old practice of the Church, to consider the sacraments of us, the true Orthodox, to be invalid, then we, too, in defence issued this encyclical, so as to calm the troubled conscience of our flock, and not for the sake of acquiring the property of the monastery in Keratea…”[[270]](#footnote-270)

In March, 1951 the Greek Minister of Internal Affairs Bakopoulos issued the following statement concerning the negotiations between Metropolitan Chrysostom and the newcalendarist Archbishop Spirydon: “The negotiations… are going well and have reached the point that the former Bishop of Florina has completely recognized his error… The official Church has exceeded all limits in the concessions it has made. In time it would have rehabilitated the Old Calendar bishops, and ordained their priests… and recognized the sacraments accomplished by them as valid, and churches would have been offered for those who would want to celebrate according to the old calendar. Both the former Bishop of Florina and the other bishops (Germanos of the Cyclades, Christopher of Megara and Polycarp of Diauleia) agreed with all this, and, according to our information, their representatives, distinguished lawyers, had to formulate a corresponding act… Unfortunately, at the last moment irresponsible activists from the lay estate interfered… and influenced the weak character of the former Bishop of Florina, who rejected all that he had said earlier…”[[271]](#footnote-271)

One of the conditions of union with the official Church was the commemoration of the newcalendarist Archbishop Spirydon, on which Metropolitan Chrysostom commented: ‘Oldcalendarism in its essence is an invincibly strengthened protest… The only power which could review this protest and bring a final decision *for* or *against* the calendar innovation is a Pan-Orthodox Council… Our movement is not being stubborn… Our opinions differ from those of the leadership of the Autocephalous Church of Greece… The second reason for the failure is the strange and imprudent hastiness of the competent people to force any kind of decision on us. Thus they suggested that within three or six days the Old Calendarists should agree to commemorate the new calendarist metropolitan in their churches. We, for brevity’s sake, will omit all the other reasons which the making of this suggestion made unacceptable, and ask the Greek people: how is it possible for an Old Calendarist to change his psychological presuppositions so quickly as to consider as his president the metropolitan whom to this day he has considered to be his real enemy and persecutor, and from whom he has suffered much? We, at any rate, have not found this magic wand…”[[272]](#footnote-272)

Metropolitan Chrysostom’s inconsistencies could not fail to undermine the determination of his fellow bishops; and although Bishop Germanos of the Cyclades died as a confessor on March 24, 1951, the other three bishops resigned from their pastoral duties on November 6, 1952, “until a final resolution of the calendar question by a Pan-Orthodox Council”.[[273]](#footnote-273) This decision elicited demonstrations in the streets by the Florinites, which led Metropolitan Chrysostom to withdraw his resignation. However, Bishops Christopher and Polycarp remained as simple lay members of the True Orthodox Church until February, 1954, when they returned to the State Church and were received in their existing rank.[[274]](#footnote-274)

“As a result of this, Chrysostom of Florina remained alone as the head of the larger group of the True Orthodox Church until his death. Several candidates for the episcopacy were presented to him. Bishop Nikolaj (Velimirovic) of the Serbian Church, who was then residing in the United States, offered to help him consecrate new bishops. However, Chrysostom declined the suggestion[[275]](#footnote-275). In answer to the pleas of his flock for bishops, he directed that they come to terms with the bishops Matthew had consecrated and have them somehow regularized according to the canons.”[[276]](#footnote-276)

“The death of the Metropolitan, which occurred on the Feast of the Nativity of the Mother of God, September 7, 1955 (old style), again permits us to glimpse his sanctity behind the veil of great modesty and privacy which he always maintained in his contacts even with his closest assistants. The Bishop, foreseeing his death, summoned his confessor, the Athonite Archimandrite John, on the night before, and made an hour-long general confession. Returning home that evening, he instructed his attendant to spread his bed with new white sheets and coverings. In the morning he was found with his hands crossed on his chest, reposed in the Lord, with no sign of illness. His will reveals that he had no money or possessions to dispose of. The funeral, held in the Church of the Transfiguration at Kypselli, Athens, was attended by tens of thousands who came in grief to venerate the body of their leader, which according to Byzantine tradition was seated in the center of the Church during the funeral; afterwards, the police had to drive back the crowds to permit the body to be taken to the place of burial, the Dormition Convent on Mount Parnes. By a curious coincidence, the bells of all the Churches in Greece were ringing mournfully as he went to his place of rest – the Synod of the State Church having so ordered as a sign of grief at the recent anti-Greek riots in Constantinople. When after six years, as is the custom in Greece, the bones of the Metropolitan were exhumed, the fragrance they produced filled the entire convent for several days, and is still often perceptible.”[[277]](#footnote-277)

In spite of his inconsistencies Metropolitan Chrysostom never entered into communion with the new calendarists. And there are other proofs of his Orthodoxy. Thus Abbess Euthymia of the Dormition Convent writes: “When we buried the ever-memorable hierarch Chrysostom, since he was buried in our Monastery, the whole place was fragrant and the builders who were building the foundation of the church came down from there and asked our elder: ‘Father, what is this fragrance which we can smell where we’re working?’ And they saw the exhumation and understood. I was the one who washed the bones of his Beatitude, and my hands were fragrant the whole night. And this fragrance was perceptible in our Monastery for forty days.

“One nun who had been in the Monastery since the age of seven… said that she had not been baptized… When the Bishop of Florina fell asleep, she sat for forty days at his tomb and besought him to enlighten the elder to baptize her. Then in her sleep she saw him sitting on a throne, and he told her that she was unbaptized and that the elder should look at the holy *Rudder*. And indeed they found that when there are doubts people should be baptized. And there was a consumptive girl who came and took some oil from the lamp of the tomb and smeared her breast with it and was healed.”[[278]](#footnote-278)

Summarising the discords between the bishops in this period, the words of the Athonite Elder Damascene, who shared a cell with Bishop Matthew in the 1920s but joined the “Florinites” in 1982, wrote: “The three ever-memorable Hierarchs Chrysostom of Florina, Germanus of the Cyclades and Matthew of Bresthena struggled for the traditions of the Fathers. But as men wearing flesh and living in the world they fell into error while in this life. However, the three finished their lives in the good Confession and passed away in repentance. And if someone wishes to represent one or other of the three as having been quite without reproach, and that he alone held the truth without any deviation, that man is, in the words of the divine Chrysostom, an erring scoffer, a deceiver and a base flatterer. That is, when he praises everything, both the good and the bad.”[[279]](#footnote-279)

In Cyprus, where the great majority of the Orthodox had accepted the calendar innovation in 1924.[[280]](#footnote-280) The centre of resistance to the innovation was the ancient monastery of Stavrovouni, where Hieromonk Cyprian and a few disciples continued to follow the Orthodox Calendar even after the abbot accepted the innovation. In 1944, these monks were expelled from Stavrovouni, scattered round the island and founded some hermitages which later became monasteries. In 1946 Bishop Matthew sent five monks to Cyprus, and a little later, the protosynkellos of his Church, Fr. Eugene Tombros. In 1948, as we have seen, he consecrated Bishop Spyridon, a Greek, for the True Orthodox of Cyprus.[[281]](#footnote-281)

Galactotrophousa monastery, near Larnaka, was the first monastery of the True Orthodox and had been built at the direct command of the Mother of God. Monk Paul of Cyprus tells the story: “When the monastery was being built – in a poor way, like all the monasteries of the True Orthodox Christians, with mud bricks and straw – one of the monk-builders, a pious and very simple man, but ‘a bird of passage’, was thinking of going elsewhere. While he was relaxing under a tree at midday, the All Holy [Mother of God] appeared to him in majesty, as he told the story, and said: ‘Don’t go.’ He said to her: ‘Why are you standing in the sun? Go into the shade.’ But she said to him again: ‘Stay and build a church and cells for me, and I will bring my treasures here and will live here because they are persecuting me from all sides with their new calendar.’ And then she disappeared.”[[282]](#footnote-282)

Bishop Spyridon, after only nine months on Cyprus, was imprisoned and sent back to Greece by the British at the instigation of the new calendarists. While in prison, he told Abbot Chrysostom of Galactotrophousa monastery to go with him to Greece, where he would be consecrated bishop in his stead. However, the authorities denied him a visa. But in 1957 Monk Epiphanius arrived in Greece and was consecrated Bishop of Kition – which consecration, however, was not recognised by Bishop Spyridon.[[283]](#footnote-283) This caused a schism in the Cypriot Church, and Abbot Chrysostom, who remained faithful to Bishop Spyridon, was defrocked by the Matthewite Synod in Greece. However, the schism was healed, and Abbot Chrysostom was reinstated, in the 1980s.[[284]](#footnote-284)

As regards the new calendarist Church of Cyprus, it was British policy to hinder the consecration of new bishops on Cyprus. After the newcalendarist Archbishop Cyril III died in 1933, and until 1947, the British colonial government did not allow the election of a new first-hierarch. By this time all the metropolitans on the island had been exiled except Leontius of Paphos. In 1950 the new metropolitan became Archbishop Macarius III, who also became the head of the Cypriot government. In September, 1952 there began a struggle for national liberation from the British, and in 1959 independence for the island was achieved, although the British remained in possession of some military bases.

## 105. PATRIARCH ATHENAGORAS OF CONSTANTINOPLE

In 1949 there flew into Constantinople – on President Truman’s personal plane, “Air Force One” – the second Meletius Metaxakis, the former Archbishop of North and South America Athenagoras. To make way for Athenagoras, a Mason of the 33rd degree, Patriarch Maximus V, an opponent of ecumenism, was forced into retirement by his Synod on grounds of mental illness (although he was completely sane).[[285]](#footnote-285) It was not only in the Soviet Union that psychiatry was used to get rid of dissenters…

In 1919 Athenagoras had been appointed secretary of the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece by Metaxakis himself.[[286]](#footnote-286)

By an extraordinary coincidence Athenagoras was a former spiritual son of Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina, so that the leaders of the opposing sides in the Church struggle in the early 1950s were, like David and Absalom, a holy father and his apostate son. In his enthronement speech Athenagoras went far beyond the bounds of the impious Masonic encyclical of 1920 and proclaimed the dogma of ‘Pan-religion’, or “super-ecumenism”, declaring: “We are in error and sin if we think that the Orthodox Faith came down from heaven and that the other dogmas [i.e. religions] are unworthy. Three hundred million men have chosen Mohammedanism as the way to God and further hundreds of millions are Protestants, Catholics and Buddhists. The aim of every religion is to make man better.”[[287]](#footnote-287)

This astonishing apostasy from the Orthodox Faith roused hardly a murmur of protest from the autocephalous Orthodox Churches…

On February 6, 1952 Patriarch Athenagoras wrote to all the Local Churches, mendaciously trying to convince them that membership of the WCC was not incompatible with Orthodoxy: “In accordance with its constitution, the WCC is trying only to unite the common actions of the churches, so as to develop cooperation in the study of the faith in a Christian spirit, in order to strengthen ecumenical thinking among the members of all the churches, and support a wider spreading of the Gospel, and finally to preserve, raise and regenerate spiritual values for humanity within the limits of general Christian standards… We, the members of the Orthodox Church, must take part in this common-Christian movement because it is our duty to share with our heterodox brothers the wealth of our faith, Divine services and Typicon, and our spiritual and ascetic experience…”[[288]](#footnote-288)

In accordance with this instruction, the Orthodox delegates to the Faith and Order conference in Lund in 1952 declared: “We have come here not in order to condemn the other Churches, but to help them see the truth, in a fraternal way to enlighten their thoughts and explain to them the teaching of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, that is, the Greek Orthodox Church, which has been preserved without change since apostolic times.”[[289]](#footnote-289)

This supposed justification of the ecumenical movement – missionary work among the heterodox – has been repeated many times to the present day. But participation in such ecumenical organizations as the WCC not only has not helped Orthodox missionary work: it has quenched it. A clear proof of this was the statement of all the heads of the Local Orthodox Churches in Constantinople in 1992 *renouncing* missionary work among Western Christians…

The Orthodox ecumenists seemed to forget that one cannot hold the fire of heresy in one’s bosom and not be burned, and that the Protestants could use the ecumenical movement for their own missionary work among the Orthodox … Thus 1955 the Faith and Order Working Committee of the WCC proposed an Orthodox consultation with the ultimate aim that, as Dr. M. Spinka put it, “at some future time of the hoped-for spiritual ‘Big Thaw’, when these communions have had a chance to think it over in a repentant or chastened mood, they might perhaps join us!”[[290]](#footnote-290) In other words, the Orthodox had to “repent” of their insistence that the Orthodox Church is the Church, in order to become worthy of entering the new pseudo-Church with the Protestants!

Nevertheless, until the late 1950s, the participation of the Orthodox Churches in the ecumenical movement was hesitant and strained. Athenagoras himself, contrary to his later practice, put restrictions on Orthodox participation in his 1952 encyclical: “Orthodox clergy must refrain from joint concelebrations with non-Orthodox, since this is contrary to the canons, and blunts consciousness of the Orthodox confession of faith”.[[291]](#footnote-291) Again, at the Second General Assembly at Evanston (1954) the Orthodox delegates declared: “We are bound to declare our profound conviction that the Holy Orthodox Church alone has preserved in full and intact the Faith once delivered to the saints.”[[292]](#footnote-292) Again, at the Faith and Order conference at Oberlin (1957), which was centred on the theme, “The Unity we Seek”, the Orthodox declared: “’The Unity we Seek’ is for us a given Unity which has never been lost, and, as a Divine gift and an essential mark of Christian existence, could not have been lost… For us, this Unity is embodied in the Orthodox Church.”[[293]](#footnote-293)

The Orthodox Churches were restrained especially by the fear that the Western Christians would use the ecumenical movement to achieve by peaceful means what they had failed to achieve by force (for example, in Serbia in 1941). In the case of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the fear of losing the holy places to the Catholics and Protestants played an important role. And so widespread and whole-hearted participation of the Orthodox in the ecumenical movement had to wait until, on the one hand, the KGB masters of the East European Churches decided that their vassals’ participation in the movement was in the interests of world communism, and on the other, the Catholics themselves began to recognize the Orthodox as “equal partners” in the Second Vatican Council (1959-1964).[[294]](#footnote-294)

Towards the end of the 1950s Athenagoras began to make feelers towards Rome. Thus on March 17, 1959, at the request of Athenagoras, Archbishop James of North America (a Freemason of the 33rd degree) met Pope John XXIII, the first such meeting for 350 years. The archbishop said: “Your All-Holiness, my patriarch had entrusted me to inform you that the sixth verse of the first chapter of the Gospel of John speaks about you. He is convinced that the man sent from God is precisely you, and the seventh verse explains the meaning of his embassy – ‘he came for a witness, to witness about the light, that all should believe through him’. And so you were elected for this end, although in your essence you are not the light, but you were raised to the Roman see ‘to witness to the light’.”[[295]](#footnote-295)

In April, 1961, Archbishop James began to develop a new theology of ecumenism, declaring: “We have tried to rend the seamless robe of the Lord – and then we cast ‘arguments’ and ‘pseudo-documents’ to prove – that ours is the Christ, and ours is the Church… Living together and praying together without any walls of partition raised, either by racial or religious prejudices, is the only way that can lead surely to unity.”[[296]](#footnote-296) What could these “pseudo-documents” and “religious prejudices” have been if not the sacred Canons which forbid the Orthodox from praying together with heretics?

In April, 1963, Archbishop James said: “It would be utterly foolish for the true believer to pretend or to insist that the whole truth has been revealed only to them, and they alone possess it. Such a claim would be both unbiblical and untheological… Christ did not specify the date nor the place that the Church would suddenly take full possession of the truth.”

This statement, which more or less denied that the Church is, as the Apostle Paul said, “the pillar and ground of the Truth” (I Timothy. 3.15), caused uproar in Greece and on Mount Athos. However, Athenagoras supported James, calling his position “Orthodox”.[[297]](#footnote-297) “Let the dogmas be placed in the store-room,” he said. “The age of Dogma has passed.”[[298]](#footnote-298)

From this time on, the two Masons went steadily ahead making ever more flagrantly anti-Orthodox statements. As we shall see, there was some opposition from more conservative elements in the autocephalous Churches. But the opposition was never large or determined enough to stop them…

At a meeting of the Faith and Order movement in Montreal in 1963, a memorandum on “Councils of Churches in the Purpose of God” declared: “The Council [WCC] has provided a new sense of the fullness of the Church in its unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity. These marks of the Church can no longer be simply applied to our divided churches, therefore.” Although this memorandum was not accepted in the end because of Fr. Georges Florovsky’s objections, it showed how the WCC was encroaching on the Orthodox Church’s understanding of herself as the One Church.

Indeed, it could be argued that the Orthodox participants had already abandoned this dogma. For as early as the Toronto, 1950 statement of the WCC’s Central Committee, it had been agreed that an underlying assumption of the WCC was that the member-churches “believe that the Church of Christ is more inclusive than the membership of their own body”.[[299]](#footnote-299)

At the Second Pan-Orthodox Conference in Rhodes, in September, 1963, the sending of observers to the Second Vatican Council was discussed. There was much disagreement, and eventually a compromise was reached: every Local Church should make the decision independently.[[300]](#footnote-300) It was unanimously agreed that the Orthodox should enter into dialogue with the Catholics, provided it was “on equal terms”. In practice, this meant that the Catholics should abandon their eastern-rite missions in Orthodox territories. The Catholics have never shown much signs of wishing to oblige in this, but they did help to make a dialogue easier by redefining the Orthodox, in Vatican II’s decree on Ecumenism, as “separated brethren” rather than “schismatics”.

By this time the Orthodox had ceased to issue separate statements at ecumenical meetings outlining the ways in which the Orthodox disagreed with the majority Protestant view. “As Father Georges [Florovsky] put it, American Protestants were not alone in seeking within the World Council to stress common elements and to discount the issues that divide. There were also respected Orthodox leaders under the sway of the spirit of adjustment. Certainly on the Russian side there were roots for another approach. As Alexander Schmemann has said of the development of Russian theology in the emigration, in the 1920s and 1930s there had arisen

“‘Two different approaches to the very phenomenon of the Ecumenical Movement and to the nature of Orthodox participation in it. On the one hand we find theologians who acknowledge the Ecumenical Movement as, in a way, an ontologically new phenomenon in Christian history requiring a deep rethinking and re-examination of Orthodox ecclesiology as shaped during the “non-ecumenical” era. Representative names here are those of Sergius Bulgakov, Leo Zander, Nicholas Zernov, and Pavel Evdokimov. This tendency is opposed by those who, without denying the need for ecumenical dialogue and defending the necessity of Orthodox participation in the Ecumenical Movement, reject the very possibility of any ecclesiastical revision or adjustment and who view the Ecumenical Movement mainly as a possibility for an Orthodox witness to the West. This tendency finds its most articulate expression in the writing of Florovsky.”[[301]](#footnote-301)

## 106. ROMANIAN RE-EDUCATION

In the last years of Stalin the satanic nature of communism was revealed on an unprecedented scale and intensity, and soon the East European regimes were showing themselves no less cruel than their Soviet Russian masters.

In Romania the communists took over in 1944, but there was strong opposition to them, and it was only after the king was obliged to emigrate in 1947 that the persecution began in earnest. As Fr. George Calciu writes, “they began to create the same situation that was in Russia. The majority of the political counsellors and Securitate were Russian. They had come from Russia to transmit their experience to the young Romanian communists.”[[302]](#footnote-302)

Fr. George himself passed through the hell of the prison of Piteşti, which experience “altered our souls and hearts, and little by little, one by one, we fell. Namely, we came to deny God and to sever ourselves from our families. We came to forget all that was good in our hearts. Fortunately, this experiment lasted only about three years…”[[303]](#footnote-303)

In his biography of the Romanian martyr Valeriu Gafencu (+1952), Monk Moise writes: “Among the many prisons of Communist Romania, Piteşti is a particular one. It became famous for the horrible atrocities that happened there as a result of the implementation of that satanic experiment known as re-education…

“In the first part of the year 1948, following an order from Bucharest, the prisoners were grouped according to their age at the time of arrest. All university students were sent to Piteşti. In the first phase, the prisoners, most of them Legionnaires, lived under a rather lax regime. In short time, however, things changed and [what can be identified as] a program of extermination was initiated. The guards became very strict, doling out harsh punishments to the prisoners for perceived offenses. The quality of food deteriorated and they were given just enough food to keep them alive. Beatings, cold and hunger lowered their physical and moral resistance. All of these measures represented only the preparatory phase, so that when re-education was later unleashed, exhausted prisoners would be that much easier to subdue.

“A group of prisoners was brought to Piteşti from Suceava, led by Eugen Țurcanu. Țurcanu was to become famous for crimes and tortures committed at Piteşti and later at Gherla. Eugen Țurcanu and the other Suceava prisoners had gone over to the Communist side and they were identified by prison administration as the tool by which re-education would be implemented. It must be stated from the beginning that re-education was conceptualized at a high level, by leadership in the Ministry of the Interior, Țurcanu and his group being their instruments, essentially. When the experiment was called off, they were executed by the very Communist government they had served, while those who were truly guilty, those in the shadows, went unpunished.

“At first, the Suceava prisoners were scattered throughout the cells, mixed in with the others. They succeeded in gaining the others’ trust with their well-meaning attitude. After some time, at the beginning of December, 1949, the Suceava prisoners, together with other prisoners who were purposefully selected, were brought back together, to inhabit the same cell. One day, Țurcanu and his group announced to the others that they had changed their ideas, that they had given up Legionnairism and had been re-educated, adopting communist ideology. When they recommended to the others that they do the same, there was objection and laughter. Țurcanu and his followere attacked. They began beating the others, armed with broomsticks and wooden clubs hidden ahead of time under mattresses. Soon thereafter, the prison leadership – director, officers, guards – joined Țurcanu, severely beating the others [who wouldn’t renounce Legionnairism]. This moment marked the beginning of the re-education program, which meant continuous beatings and torture. The prisoners, closely supervised by Țurcanu’s group, were subjected to a regime of constant terror without the possibility of escaping or committing suicide.

“The torture was well-planned; it stopped only when the prisoner was about to die. There were various kinds of torture: beatings, hunger, being forced to maintain the same position 17 hours a day – legs extended horizontally, hands on knees, chest at 90 degrees – and at the slightest wavering, the supervisor would respond with a club. The prisoners were forced to drink urine and to eat excrement from buckets that served as toilets in the cells. They were forced to drink highly-salted water and then left to dry out from thirst; these were some of the may other tortures devised by the sick minds of the torturers. Those who caved [in] were required to ‘unmask’, i.e., to reveal everything they had not confessed at their interrogation, to betray those prisoners who had helped them in prison or those guards who had treated them humanely. Likewise, in order the destruction to be complete, each one of them was required to profane the memory of whatever had been most important to him in front of everyone in his cell. For example, perhaps someone loved his mother or wife very much. In front of everyone, he was required to denounce them, to make the most obscene and absurd statements about them. Whatever was bright and good in the mind of the one being tortured had to be slandered and dirtied.

“Theological students and those who were devout – ‘mystical bandits’, as they were called – were forced to apostasize, to deny God, to curse everything that had to do with the Chrisian faith. At Christmas and Pascha, they were forced to sing carols or well-known religious hymns with altered words which profaned Christ and the Virgin Mary. They were forced to participate in blasphemous processions and to celebrated ‘liturgies’ using human waste from buckets in the prison cells, and were then forced to swallow it as ‘Communion’. Some of them were ‘baptized’ in tubs full of excrement. I believe that these things provide sufficient proof of the satanic nature of re-education.

“After the prisoner ‘unmasked’ himself, in order to prove that he had been re-educated, he was required to become a torturer himself and to convince others to give up ‘all bourgeois rottenness’ and to accept communist ideology. Through the use of terror, the prisoners were truly brainwashed. The tortured, no longer able to endure the incessant torment, unable to commit suicide, always closely supervised, finally gave in and were were transformed into robots, their hearts turned to stone and, from being victims, they became executioners. Not even after being re-educated did they escape the terror for, at the slightest sign of solidarity with their victims, they were subjected to torture themselves. And thus, living in a state of constant terror, always suspicious of one another, they broke down completely, foregoing the possibility of returning to a normal state. Dumitru Bordeianu, who experienced this experiment, described the experience in his book *Mărturisiri din Mlaștina Disperării* (Confessions from the Mire of Despair). He says that at a given moment a demonic ‘communion’ was created between the torturer and the one tortured. For example, if Țurcanu asked him what he was thinking, he was unable to lie because Țurcanu would have sensed it immediately. From this came the fear of even thinking something which could be considered bad by Ţurcanu: You couldn’t hide anything if you were questioned, while telling the truth was punished.

“Another Satanic aspect of re-education was that everything that one had hidden at the interrogation and that represented a point of support on the path of internal collapse began to torment him so much that he himself requested to ‘unmask’, feeling afterwards a sense of relief like that after sacramental confession, even though the things he confessed were held against him. A strange process occurred, resulting in mutations to the personality of the one tortured, who came to disavow his former beliefs and to accept whatever Țurcanu imposed upon him with the conviction that he was doing good. In the process of brainwashing, ‘his mind was enlightened’, he experienced a sense of relief, he ‘understood’ everything that he had previously rejected and he set out, in full confidence, to bring others into the same state of ‘enlightenment’. For those of us who have not passed through similar demonic states, these things are incomprehensible.

“Most of those who tortured others did so under the dominion of terror, without experiencing the mutations I referred to above. The system was planned in such a way that, as a result of the continual torture, very few were able to hold out to the end. In general, most of them compromised, some of them more, some less, according to the structure and stamina of each.

“From Piteşti, the system was extended to Gherla and the Canal, but due to the fact that word leaked out and there were international protests, the re-education experiment was stopped. If the secrecy had been maintained, re-education would have been applied to every prison in the country.

“Looking at re-education from a spiritual perspective, both those who directed this experiment from the shadows and those who applied it were nothing but instruments of the devil in the destruction of souls. Father Gheorghe Calciu, who went through Piteşti was, said, ‘In order to understand what Piteşti was, we must remain above the facts and get at the roots of this evil, try to see the internal mechanisms of perversion and its metaphysical dimension. I believe that Piteşti was a diabolical experiment. What occurred there was a struggle between good and evil, in which the executioners and the victims were simply instruments. It was a diabolical experiment that took place in our country more than in any other place in the world.’

“The satanic character of re-education was clearly seen in the words of Țurcanu, preserved in the memory of one political prisoner: ‘If Christ had passed through my hands, He never would have made it to the cross. He would not have resurrected. Christianity, that great lie, would never have existed, and the world would have lived peacefully! I am Țurcanu! The first and the last! No one has ever been born who could replace me. No one can lie to me the way that I lie to you fools. I am the true Gospel! I am writing it now. I have something to write on – your carcases. What I write is true, it’s not a bedtime story for children.’

“Although the devil may have imagined that he won the battle through terror, he had few decisive victories among those who compromised, some more, some less. After the torture stopped, most of those who acquiesced gradually returned to God. Considering the subsequent evolution of the re-educated, the devil won a battle at Piteşti, but not the war. According to Father Calciu, most of them returned to Christ more vehemently than before their trial by fire…”[[304]](#footnote-304)

## 107. THE CULT OF STALIN

While chastising the West for its political sins, the MP continued to glorify Stalin in the most shameful way, having truly become the State Church of the Bolshevik regime. Already during the war, the cult of Stalin, probably the greatest persecutor in the history of the Church, reached idolatrous proportions. He was “the protector of the Church”, “the new Constantine”. The first issues of the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, as we have seen, were filled with oleaginous tributes to the “God-given Supreme Leader”.

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…[[305]](#footnote-305)

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 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…”[[306]](#footnote-306)

However, the apotheosis of the Moscow Patriarchate’s 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.[[307]](#footnote-307) “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’.”[[308]](#footnote-308) Again, in *Izvestia* on March 10, 1953, there appeared Patriarch Alexis’ letter 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.”[[309]](#footnote-309) And 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.”[[310]](#footnote-310)

The Catacomb Church condemned the MP’s cult of Stalin. According to Bishop Ambrose von Sievers (admittedly, a dubious source), it was anathematized by a Council in Chirchik, near Tashkent, in the autumn of 1948. It also anathematized the patriarchate’s 1948 council, and declared the canonical leader of the Russian Church to be Metropolitan Anastasius, first-hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad. This Council, which confirmed the decisions of the supposed “Nomadic Council” of 1928, was attended by thirteen bishops or their representatives, and was organized by Fr. Peter Pervushin, who had also played a major role in the 1928 Council.[[311]](#footnote-311)

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 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.*”[[312]](#footnote-312)

The MP’s response to this was to denounce ROCOR as being “unpatriotic”: the only true Russian patriots were those who applauded Stalin’s destruction of the Russian people. Thus Archbishop Luke of the Crimea (later canonized by the MP) wrote: “More than six years has passed since the first bestowal on his Holiness Patriarch Alexis of the order of the Workers’ Red Banner, and now the Government has again bestowed this award on him. For what? For his patriotic activity… Those archpastors and pastors who left the Homeland and their flocks in the years of the greatest upheavals and sufferings, and caused church schisms in Sremsky Karltovtsy, in Paris, in Munich and in North America, have been deprived of patriotism… But we hope our Great Lord and Father Alexis will firmly hold in his hands the rudder of the administration of the Church, paying no attention to the spiteful hissing of the foreign schismatics who call themselves ‘true Orthodox’.”[[313]](#footnote-313)

## 108. ROCOR AT THE CROSSROADS

After the war, ROCOR had to face a difficult problem of self-definition. In her founding Statute or Polozhenie she had defined herself as that part of the Russian Church which was outside Russia while still remaining in communion with the “Mother Church” in the Homeland. Thus in 1945 Metropolitan Anastasy declared that the members of ROCOR “have never considered and do not consider themselves to be outside the enclosure of the Orthodox Russian Church, for we have never broken canonical, prayerful and spiritual unity with our Mother Church… We do not cease to thank God for judging that we should remain the free part of the Russian Church. Our duty is to preserve this freedom until we return to the Mother Church the precious pledge entrusted by her to us. A completely competent judge between the bishops abroad and the present head of the Russian Church could be only a freely and lawfully convened All-Russian Council that is completely independent it its decisions, and in which as far as possible all bishops abroad and especially those now in prison will participate. We are ready to give an account before them of all our actions during our sojourn abroad.”[[314]](#footnote-314)

In this statement there was no official clarification of what ROCOR’s relations with other Local Orthodox Churches in the West were to be, nor precisely who or what constituted the “Mother Church” of Russia, nor who was to be admitted to this All-Russian Council or in what capacity. Nor did any of the ROCOR Councils of the next ten years clarify these matters[[315]](#footnote-315), in spite of the fact that clarification was becoming more and more necessary in view of the ever-increasing deviation of the Local Churches from Orthodoxy.

In view of these ambiguities, it is not surprising that some Catacomb Christians who had fled to the West felt that a different spirit was reigning in ROCOR. Thus Professor I.M. Andreyev wrote: “Not only were we ready to die, but many did die, confident that somewhere *there*, outside the reach of the Soviet authorities, where there is freedom – *there* the Truth was shining in all its purity. *There* people were living by it and submitting to it. *There* people did not bow down to Antichrist. And what terror overwhelmed me when, fairly recently, I managed to come abroad and found out that some people here ‘spiritually’ recognise the Soviet Church. *Spiritually!* Many of us there fell, ‘for fear of the Jews’, or giving in to the temptation of outward cooperation with the authorities. I knew priests of the official Church who, at home, tore their hair out, who smashed their heads making prostrations, begging forgiveness for their apostasy, calling themselves Cain – but nonetheless they did not recognise the Red Church. But these others abroad – it is precisely *spiritually* that they submit to it. What good fortune that our priest-martyrs, in dying, did not find out about this betrayal!”[[316]](#footnote-316)

Before the war ROCOR had had no conflicts with any other Local Church with the exception of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, with which there was conflict, not so much over the question of the new calendar as over the EP’s relations with the Russian renovationists and its “annexation” of large territories formerly belonging to the Russian Church. Although, from a strictly canonical point of view, the Russian refugees should have sought admission into the Local Orthodox Churches on whose canonical territory they lived, these Churches (primarily the Serbian, but also the Bulgarian, the Romanian and the Eastern Patriarchates, especially Jerusalem) did not insist on this, respecting the particular needs of the refugees to stick together in one ecclesiastical organization, and taking into account the desire of the refugees to return eventually to Russia (which most believed would be soon).[[317]](#footnote-317)

However, the triumph of the Soviets in the war dashed the hopes of an early return to Russia. So the refugees had to decide how they were to establish themselves in the West on a more permanent basis. This was made more difficult by the fact that the previously friendly attitude of the Local Churches was beginning to change, partly because they were coming under pressure from the MP to break links with ROCOR, and partly because they themselves, as we have seen, were losing the salt of True Orthodoxy and therefore had less sympathy for the True Orthodox Russians in their midst. But in any case, ROCOR showed no sign of wanting to disband its organization and merge with the Local Churches. Thus in 1947 Archbishop Tikhon, the head of the Paris Exarchate, suggested to Metropolitan Anastasy that his Synod come under the Ecumenical Patriarchate, after which he, Tikhon, would enter into submission to ROCOR. Anastasy refused…[[318]](#footnote-318)

However, this suspension of normal canonical rules could not continue forever. In fact, there was only one completely canonical way for ROCOR to re-establish her canonical status while preserving the integrity of her flock under Russian bishops: to declare herself the *only* truly Orthodox jurisdiction in the West in view of the falling away of the Local Churches into the heresies of ecumenism and sergianism. However, the bishops of ROCOR were not prepared to make such a bold step.

The first reason for this was that they did not appreciate how far the new calendarist churches had departed from True Orthodoxy (they had no contact with the Greek Old Calendarists, who could have told them), and they still hoped for support from them and cooperation with them in matters that were of common concern. And secondly, they feared to repel the tide of Orthodox Christians fleeing from the communist nightmare in Russia and Eastern Europe by a too-strict attitude towards the status of the official churches there, to which most of the new wave of refugees had belonged. Instead, while continuing to berate (but not too strongly) the shortcomings of the MP, ROCOR positioned itself, not as the sole representative of True Orthodoxy in the West, but as the “anti-communist church”, that part of the Russian Church which was in freedom and able to tell the truth about the situation in Russia.

This was not a dishonourable position, but it did not resolve the canonical status of ROCOR, and it bore the not inconsiderable danger of exposing its flock to the winds of false doctrine. Anti-communism was part of a truly viable Orthodox ideology, but only a part. If it was allowed to assume a more important role than the struggle against heresy in general, then ROCOR could well find herself dissolving into the modernist jurisdictions around it, and even, eventually, into the MP if the fall of communism in Russia was not followed by a real repentance in the Russian people.

This problem of self-definition was only partly eased by the transfer of the administration of ROCOR to New York in 1950. America was not, and is not now, the “canonical territory” of any single Local Church, so the anomalous position of ROCOR in America (and other western territories, such as Western Europe and Australia) was less prominent there in view of the anomalous position of *all* jurisdictions in the New World. For it is a fundamental tenet of Orthodox canon law that there should be only one bishop for one territory – the division of the Orthodox flock in one place into various jurisdictions along ethnic lines is forbidden, and was even anathematised by the Ecumenical Patriarchate as the heresy of “phyletism” in 1872.

As we have seen, at ROCOR’s first Council of Bishops in America in 1950, a relatively firm stand against ecumenism was adopted, and ROCOR sanctified its own chrism for the first time. Logically, this should have led to a stricter attitude towards the Orthodox Churches that took part in the ecumenical movement. But under Metropolitan Anastasy this did not take place…

It was at the Hierarchical Council of October, 1953 that the beginning of a real debate on this subject began to surface. Metropolitan Anastasy said: “Archbishop John [Maximovich] says that we have not deviated from the right path pointed out to us by Metropolitan Anthony. We are a part of the Russian Church and breathe with the spirit of the Russian Church of all ages. But it is dangerous to draw from this the extreme conclusion that we are the only Church, and that we need pay no attention to the others or reckon with them. We are going along the right path, and the others have declined from it, but we must not proudly despise the others, for there are Orthodox hierarchs and priests everywhere. The words of Maximus the Confessor are often cited: ‘if the whole universe were to communicate, I alone would not.’ But he said: ‘if’. And when the Prophet Elijah thought that he alone kept the faith, the Lord revealed to him that there were still 7000 others…”

However, Archbishop Averky, supported by Archbishop Leonty, suggested a sharper, more aggressive posture towards the MP, relating to them as to renovationists. Archbishop John replied that the Synod had recently decided to accept Archimandrite Anthony (Bartoshevich) from the MP in his existing rank.[[319]](#footnote-319) And he recalled, according to protocol № 5 for October 3/16, “that the question of concelebrating with clergy of the Moscow Patriarchate had been discussed at the 1938 Council, and it had been accepted that only Metropolitan Sergius was out of communion.” When Archbishop Averky called the MP “the church of the evil-doers”, Archbishop John replied “that it was important to clarify whether this concerns all those in this Church. Among the rank-and-file hierarchs there are very good men, while a strict examination must be applied to those at the head.”[[320]](#footnote-320)

It has been the argument of this book that in this point Archbishop Averky was right and Archbishop John, great saint though he was, was wrong. By 1945 the great majority of the MP hierarchs were ex-renovationists, and “very good” hierarchs must have been very few and far between; and even if they were “good” in a moral sense, their submission to the MP’s submission to the Bolshevik authorities could in no way be counted as good. Moreover, the great majority of the confessing hierarchs of the Catacomb Church, who were in a better position to judge about the MP than the hierarchs abroad, considered the MP to be indeed “the church of the evil-doers”.

As for the necessity of applying a strict examination to those coming from the MP, this had been dramatically proved by the large number of traitors who had infiltrated ROCOR since the war. Already during the war, the renovationist “Bishops” Ignatius (Zhebrovsky) and Nicholas (Avtonomov) had been received, it appears, with the minimum of formalities, and appointed to the sees of Vienna and Munich, respectively, before being removed at the insistence of zealous laymen.[[321]](#footnote-321) Again, the former renovationist and leading ROCOR hierarch in Western Europe during the war, Metropolitan Seraphim (Lyade) of Berlin, secretly petitioned to be received into the MP “in his existing rank” before his death in 1950 – but was refused.[[322]](#footnote-322) Again, Metropolitan Seraphim (Lukyanov) of Paris joined the MP, was received back into ROCOR in his existing orders, and then returned to the MP in 1954. Again, among the twelve Belorussian and Ukrainian bishops who were received “in their existing rank” by ROCOR in 1946, at least one proved to be a Judas – Archbishop Panteleimon (Rudyk), whose immorality left a trail of destruction in various countries before he, too, joined the MP.

Stung by these betrayals, on October 14/27, 1953, the Hierarchical Council decreed that “in cases where it is revealed that those who have received their rank from the hierarchy of the MP by the Communists with the intention of preaching in holy orders the Communist principles of atheism, such an ordination is recognized as neither grace-bearing nor legal.”

Again, on November 9, 1959 the Council decreed that “from now on, if clergy of the MP want to enter into the ranks of our Church Abroad: (1) They must be carefully checked to see whether they are conscious agents of the atheist authorities, and if this is discovered, the Hierarchical Synod must be informed. It may not recognize the validity of the ordination of such a person to the sacred rank; (2) in cases where no such doubts arise, he who is petitioning to be received into the clergy of the Church Abroad is to be received through public repentance. Moreover, a penance may be imposed on him as the Diocesan Hierarch sees fit; (3) such clergy must give a written declaration on their reception in accordance with the form established by the Hierarchical Synod; (4) when laypeople from the flock of the MP are received into the Russian Church Abroad, spiritual fathers must try their conscience with regard to the manner of their actions while they were under the atheist authorities.”

The Council confirmed the following text to be signed by those clergy being received into the communion: “I, the undersigned, a former clergyman of the Moscow Patriarchate, ordained to the rank of deacon (by such-and-such a bishop in such-and-such a place at such-and-such a time) and ordained to the rank of presbyter (by such-and-such a bishop bishop in such-and-such a place at such-and-such a time) and having passed through my service (in such-and-such parishes), petition that I be received into the clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. I am sincerely sorry that I was among the clergy of the Moscow Patriarchate, which is in union with the God-fighting authorities. I sweep aside all the lawless acts of the Moscow hierarchy in connection with its support of the God-fighting authorities and I promise from now on to be faithful and obedient to the lawful hierarchy of the Russian Church Abroad.)”[[323]](#footnote-323)

These measures constituted important steps in the direction of greater strictness towards the MP. And at the 1954 Council of the North American and Canadian dioceses Metropolitan Anastasy declared: “[The MP] does not educate the Russian people, but corrupts it, introducing hypocrisy and lies. Historical trials have visited us, and from them there is no other exit than by way of repentance. But the corrupt authorities do not allow us to set out on this path, but inspire pride and lead to the path of destruction. And responsibility is shared with this corrupt authority by the Soviet Church.

“Let us keep away from her! We do not confuse her with the Mother Church…”[[324]](#footnote-324)

However, in relation to the American Metropolia Metropolitan Anastasy said at the 1953 Council: “They do not have the fullness of truth, they deviate, but this does not mean that they are without grace. We must maintain objective calm with regard to them. We must strive for such unity on the same fundamental concepts of the Temporary Regulations upon which we stand today. Yet it is fair to say that all unity begins with personal contact: Let us love one another that with one mind we may confess. But we seem to regret that the keenness of jurisdictional quarreling has been dulled. But our goal is unity. Certain boundaries were needed as for disciplinary purposes. Now, when many extremes were abandoned in the American Metropolia, we still sharpen the question and speak of them as heretics with whom we can have no contact. Bishop Nicon said that we are very weak. This is not quite true. But externally, we are weaker than our opponents, who have money and the press on their side. The battlefield is not even. If we elevate the conflict, a very difficult situation will arise."[[325]](#footnote-325)

So the metropolitan was advocating retaining contacts and not “elevating the conflict” because the position of ROCOR from an external point of view was weak. This policy could be justified at the time in view of the fact that the Metropolia had not yet been absorbed into the MP. However, ROCOR later abandoned it – when the Metropolia was absorbed into the MP in 1970.

With regard to the Eulogians, Metropolitan Anastasy was also lenient. Thus on October 19, 1956, in response to a statement by Bishop Leontius of Chile that ROCOR should treat the Eulogians as renovationists and not permit any concelebrations, the metropolitan said that the Eulogians were different, since they were not heretics.[[326]](#footnote-326) And yet ROCOR had herself condemned the Eulogians’ teaching on Sophianism as heresy![[327]](#footnote-327)

Metropolitan Anastasy also said: “Metropolitan Anthony [Khrapovitsky] was guided by this rule of St Basil the Great when he said that he was prepared to accept through the third rite both Catholics and Anglicans. He was of the view that as soon as organic ties to heresy are torn and Orthodoxy is accepted, grace is received, as if an empty vessel were filled with grace. We hold to the principle that we can accept those through the third rite whose thread of succession has not been torn. Even the Armenians, who confess a definite heresy, are accepted in their existing rank. Concerning the Anglicans, the question arose because they themselves are not certain that they have succession. If we accept those who depart from heresy, how can we not accept our own [emphasis mine—NV]? They say that Patriarch Alexy sinned more than his predecessor. Whether he sinned more or less, we cannot deny his ordination. Much is said of their apostasy. But we must be cautious. We can hardly make an outright accusation of apostasy. In no place do they affirm atheism. In their published sermons they attempt to hold to the Orthodox line. They took and continue to take very strict measures with regard to the obnovlentsy, and did not tear their ties with Patriarch Tikhon. The false policy belongs to the church authority and the responsibility for it falls on its leaders. Only heresy adopted by the whole Church tarnishes the whole Church. In this case, the people are not responsible for the behavior of the leaders, and the Church, as such, remains unblemished. No one has the audacity to say that the whole Church is without grace, but insofar as priests had contact with the devious hierarchy, acted against their conscience, repentance is necessary. There can be no discussion of ‘chekists in cassocks.’ They are worse than Simon the Sorcerer. In this regard, in every individual case, one must make a special determination, and, if there is suspicion that a chekist is asking to come to us, we must not accept him.”[[328]](#footnote-328)

Metropolitan Anastasy’s extremely liberal attitude towards the reception of Catholics, Anglicans and Armenians is perhaps excusable in that it reflects the extremely liberal attitude of the Russian Church as a whole just before the revolution. However, it disagreed not only with prior Russian practice, but also with the practice of the Greek Church, and with the holy canons themselves (for example: the canons decree that Armenians should be received by Chrismation). Fortunately, this illegitimate practice of “oikonomia” was officially rescinded by the ROCOR Synod under Metropolitan Philaret in September, 1971, when it was decreed that Catholics and Protestants should henceforth be received by baptism. And when the Copts were once allowed to conduct a service in Jordanville, Metropolitan Philaret ordered that the church be cleansed from the defilement of heresy by holy water!

As regards the Metropolitan Anastasy’s assertion that the MP took “very strict measures with regard to the obnovlentsy”, this, unfortunately, was not true. As is well-known, both the first “patriarchs” of the MP, Sergius and Alexis, were former renovationists (obnovlentsy), and, far from repenting of their renovationism, they transformed the MP into an institution that was “renovationist in essence” (St. Cyril of Kazan’s words). Still more seriously, as we have seen, it received into the episcopate a whole series of renovationist protopriests with the minimum of formalities.

In his assertion that “the false policy [of the MP] belongs to the church authority and the responsibility for it falls [only] on its leaders”, Metropolitan Anastasy was unfortunately contradicting the teaching of the Orthodox Church, which considers that lay Christians are rational sheep who can and must separate from heretical leaders. Similarly, his assertion that “only heresy adopted by the whole Church tarnishes the whole Church” would not have been accepted by the hierarchs of the Ecumenical Councils. If the hierarchy of a Church adopts a heretical or antichristian policy, then it is the responsibility of all the lower ranks to rebuke their leaders, and if the rebukes fail, to separate from them because they are no longer true bishops (15th canon of the First-and-Second Council of Constantinople).

The OCA Archbishop John (Shahovskoj) tried to argue that the position of ROCOR towards the MP in this period was hypocritical insofar as it simultaneously called the MP apostate and sorrowed over the persecutions in the USSR and the closure of churches, although, according to its logic, it should have rejoiced over the closure of apostate churches. In reply, the secretary of the ROCOR Synod, Fr. George Grabbe, replied that while calling the MP “apostate” and even, in some cases, using the word “gracelessness”, ROCOR never, at any of its Synodal sessions, expressed any doubt that the pastors and laymen belonging to the MP who were faithful to God were true pastors. Then, citing examples of the infiltration of agents into the hierarchy of the MP, Fr. George continued: “That is the gracelessness we are talking about! We are talking about those Judases, and not about the few suffering people who are vainly trying to save something, the unfortunate, truly believing pastors”.[[329]](#footnote-329)

Of course, this answer raised more questions than it answered. If all or most of the hierarchy were KGB agents, and therefore graceless, how could the priests whom they ordained and who commemorated them be true priests? And how could the laymen be true laymen if they communicated from false bishops and priests? Is it possible in general to speak about faithful priests and laity commemorating a faithless and apostate bishop? These questions never received satisfactory answers and continued to give ROCOR’s witness in relation to the MP an ambiguous character for decades to come. Only on one question was ROCOR clear: that it had no communion with the MP Synod. And so it left SCOBA (the Council of Orthodox Bishops of America) in 1956 when the MP became one of its members.[[330]](#footnote-330)

With regard to the other Churches of World Orthodoxy, a liberal policy was pursued until the retirement of Metropolitan Anastasy in 1964, and ROCOR hierarchs continued to concelebrate intermittently with both the Greek new calendarists and with the Serbian and Jerusalem patriarchates. Thus in 1948 Archbishop Vitaly (Maximenko) concelebrated at the consecration of Bishop Michael Konstantinidas of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, a friend of Metropolitan Anastasy from the days when the latter lived in Constantinople in the 1920s. Again, Bishop Leontius of Geneva concelebrated with Patriarch Timothy of Jerusalem at the Convent on the Mount of Olives in 1954. Jerusalem had promised Moscow that it would break with ROCOR, and Patriarch Timothy explained to Bishop Seraphim of Mahopac in 1952 that he could not serve at the Holy Sepulchre because the Jerusalem Patriarchate recognized the MP. On the other hand, all heads of ROCOR’s Ecclesiastical Mission, as well as the abbesses of the monasteries, were confirmed by official letters issued by the Jerusalem Patriarchate. [[331]](#footnote-331)

Archbishop John (Maximovich) of Western Europe consecrated several new-calendarist bishops, all of whom left ROCOR for “World Orthodoxy” after his death: Bishop Theophilus (Ionescu) of Detroit and his Romanian new calendarists to the Romanian patriarchate (ROCOR defrocked him in 1972), Bishop John-Nectarius (Kovalevsky) of Saint-Denis and his French mission (following the Gallican rite) to the Romanian new calendar church, Bishop Cyril (Ionev), who had ordained for the Bulgarian new calendarists in North America, to the OCA in 1976, and Bishop Jacob (Akkerduik) of the Hague to the MP in 1971 (he complained that ROCOR wanted to “russify” his flock).[[332]](#footnote-332)

There was a moment, according to Fr. Roman Pavlov, when the Synod of ROCOR and Metropolitan Anastasy told Archbishop John that he was not right to receive into communion people who used the new Paschalia. Bishop Gregory Grabbe wrote: “The reposed Archbishop John received already organized groups of Frenchmen and Dutchmen who life was conducted according to the new calendar and with the new Paschalia. However, the Council did not agree with this and obtained his renunciation of the latter.” [[333]](#footnote-333)

Thus ROCOR was neither in official communion with World Orthodoxy nor clearly separated from it: it existed in a kind of canonical limbo, a Church that consecrated her own chrism but did not claim to be autocephalous, a Church of almost global jurisdiction but claiming to be part of the Russian Church *inside* Russia. The question was: which Russian Church *inside* Russia was it part of – the MP or the Catacomb Church?

The answer to this question was left deliberately vague. On the one hand, there was clearly no communion with the *hierarchy* of the MP, which was seen to have compromised itself with communism. On the other hand, it was said that communion had never to have been broken with the suffering *people* of Russia. But which people were being talked about? Those who considered themselves citizens of the Soviet state, or those who rejected such citizenship?

In spite of his lack of communion with the MP, Metropolitan Anastasy appears to have considered it to be the “Mother Church”. Thus he wrote to Metropolitan Theophilus of New York: “Your proposed union with the Patriarchate has not only a spiritual, but a canonical character, and binds you with the consequences. Such a union would be possible only if the Mother Church were completely free…”[[334]](#footnote-334)

In 1957, however, in his last will and testament, Metropolitan Anastasy clearly drew the boundaries as follows: “As regards the Moscow Patriarchate and its hierarchs, then, so long as they continue in close, active and benevolent cooperation with the Soviet Government, which openly professes its complete godlessness and strives to implant atheism in the entire Russian nation, then the Church Abroad, maintaining her purity, must not have any canonical, liturgical, or even simply external communion with them whatsoever, leaving each one of them at the same time to the final judgement of the Sobor of the future free Russian Church…”[[335]](#footnote-335)

Again, on October 18, 1959, in his address at the opening of the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR, he said: “We must not only teach others, but ourselves also fulfil [that which we teach], following the examples of the Moscow saints whom we have commemorated today. They stand before us as Orthodox zealots, and we must follow their example, turning aside completely from the dishonesty of those who have now occupied their throne. Oh if they could but arise, they not only would not recognise any of their successors, but rather would turn against them with severe condemnation. With what zeal would St. Philip be set aflame against the weak-in-faith representatives of the Church, who look with indifference at the flowing of the innocent blood of their flock, and yet do not condemn the enemies of the Church, but try in every way to flatter the atheistic authority. How the great adamantine St. Hermogen would have arisen in righteous indignation, seeing the hierarchy remaining deceitfully silent at a time when atheist propaganda is being widely disseminated, forgetting that by their silence they are betraying God. Let us in every way turn aside from them, but at the same time let us arm ourselves with apostolic zeal. We must avoid every kind of contact with them like the plague. You know that these people with their thoroughly burned consciences will never cease to wage war against us, although they constantly change their methods of warfare.”[[336]](#footnote-336)

In 1961, moreover, he showed that he had not forgotten the Catacomb Church, declaring in the name of ROCOR: “We consider ourselves to be in spiritual unity precisely with the Secret Church, but not with the official administration of the Moscow Patriarchate led by Patriarch Alexis, which is permitted by the atheist government and carries out all its commands…”[[337]](#footnote-337)

Noteworthy, however, is the fact that he said that ROCOR was not in communion only with “the official administration of the MP”, not with the rank-and-file believers. And the Epistle of the Hierarchical Council of 1962, while rebuking the atheists, expressed sympathy for the simple believers and even for the simple priests, while the Great-Martyr Great Russian Church was identified with the whole of the church people, *including those in the Moscow Patriarchate,* but excluding “the small group of clergy having the right to a legal existence”.[[338]](#footnote-338) But how could the priests be inside the Church and the people they served outside it? This was ecclesiological nonsense!

This kind of ambiguity in relation to the Church in Russia was displayed also by Archbishop Vitaly (Maximenko) of Jordanville, who had once served the liturgy on his own breast in a Polish prison. He could, in one and the same article, fiercely criticise Sergius’ policies as leading to the destruction of the Church and express “profound reverence before the exploit of Patriarch Sergius”.[[339]](#footnote-339) However, his final verdict is negative, being fully in the spirit of the Catacomb Church: “They say: the patriarchate has changed nothing, in dogmas, services or rites. No, we reply, the patriarchate has destroyed the essential dogma of the Church of Christ, and has rejected Her essential mission – to serve the regeneration of men, and has replaced it by the service of the godless aims of communism, which is unnatural for the Church. This falling away is more bitter than all the previous Arianisms, Nestorianisms, Iconoclasms, etc. And this is not the personal sin of one or another hierarch, but the root sin of the Moscow Patriarchate, confirmed, proclaimed and bound by an oath in front of the world. It is, so to speak, *dogmatized apostasy…*”[[340]](#footnote-340)

This was an inspired definition: *dogmatized apostasy*. Not simply apostasy “for fear of the Jews”, but *dogmatized* apostasy – that is, apostasy raised to the level of a dogma. When apostasy is justified in this way, it becomes deeper, more serious and more difficult to cure. It becomes an error of the mind as well as a disease of the will. For it is one thing for a churchman out of weakness to submit himself and his church to the power of the world and of the Antichrist. That is his personal tragedy, and the tragedy of those who follow him, but it is not *heresy*. It is quite another thing for the same churchman to make the same submission “not for wrath, but for conscience’s sake” (Romans 13.5) – to use the words of the apostle as perverted by Sergius in his declaration. This is both heresy and apostasy – *dogmatized* apostasy.

However, at another time Archbishop Vitaly said that the Providence of God had placed before ROCOR the duty “of not tearing herself away from the basic massif, the body, the root of the Mother Church: in the depths of this massif, which is now only suffocated by the weight of Bolshevism, the spiritual treasures of Her millennial exploit are even now preserved. But we must not recognise Her contemporary official leaders, who have become the obedient instrument of the godless authorities.”[[341]](#footnote-341)

As V.K. justly comments: “In these words is contained a manifest incongruity. How did Archbishop Vitaly want, without recognising the official leadership of the MP, at the same time not to be torn away from its body? Is it possible ‘to preserve the spiritual treasures’ in a body whose head has become ‘the obedient instrument of the godless authorities’ (that is, the servants of satan and the antichrist), as he justly writes of the sergianist leaders?... The Holy Scriptures say: ‘If the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches’ (Romans 11.16). And on the other hand: ‘A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit’ (Matthew 7.18).”[[342]](#footnote-342)

## 109. THE COMMUNISTS BECOME ECUMENISTS

So far it had been the Ecumenical Patriarchate that had made the running in Orthodox ecumenism. However, in 1959 the MP sent its representative, Metropolitan Nicholas of Krutitsa, to the Orthodox consultation proposed by the Faith and Order Committee near Athens, which indicated that the communists had changed their minds about ecumenism, and decided that the Russian Church’s participation in it would further their cause. This change of mind was partly the result of the fact that, as Fr. Georges Florovsky lamented, from the time of the Evanston conference a progressive takeover took place of the “Faith and Order” concerns by the “Life and Work” concerns.[[343]](#footnote-343) That is, of the two strands of ecumenical activity that had existed before the war – the resolving of dogmatic differences among Christians, and “concern for the world and its problems” – it was the latter that was becoming dominant. And this was of great interest to the communists…

We have seen that, as late as the Moscow council of 1948, the MP, in obedience to its communist masters, had adopted an anti-western and anti-ecumenical position. However, this position began to change in the late 1950s, when the MP began to be pushed into joining the WCC by the Council for Religious Affairs. Thus on January 16, 1958, Metropolitan Nicholas asked the Council how he was to reply to the suggestion of the WCC general secretary that he meet representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church. Comrade Karpov, head of the Council for Religious Affairs, said that he should reply that they in principle agreed to a meeting in June-July of that year.

And so on May 13 Metropolitan Nicholas asserted that “in the last ten years, thanks to the participation of some Orthodox Churches and the non-participation of others in the ecumenical movement, significant changes have taken place witnessing to its evolution towards churchness [tserkovnosti]. Very indicative in this respect have been huge movements in the sphere of German Protestant theology revealing the mystical depths of Orthodoxy and overcoming its traditional rationalism… On coming into contact with our ecclesiastical life, many actors in the ecumenical movement have completely changed their idea of Orthodoxy… Evidently approving of the declaration of the Orthodox participants in the Evanston assembly, we agree to a meeting with the leaders of the World Council of Churches exclusively in the name of our Pan-Orthodox duty – to serve the reunification of all Christians in the bosom of the Church of Christ.”[[344]](#footnote-344)

In 1959, as a sign of the changing times, the MP joined the European Conference of Churches… Then, on June 15, 1960 the new head of the Council for Religious Affairs, Kuroyedov met Patriarch Alexis. As Fr. Sergius Gordun writes, “Kuroyedov declared that he had carefully studied the external activities of the Patriarchate and he had come to conclusion that the situation was quite unsatisfactory. ‘In recent years the Patriarchate has not undertaken a single major initiative for the unification of the Orthodox Churches around the Russian Orthodox Church headed by the Moscow Patriarchate – initiatives, that is, aimed at exposing the reactionary activities of the Pope of Rome and the intensification of the struggle for peace. The Patriarchate is not using those huge opportunities which she enjoys; she has not undertaken a single major action abroad… The Russian Orthodox Church is not emerging as a unifying centre for the Orthodox Churches of the world, usually she adopts a passive stance and only weakly exposes the slanderous propaganda concerning the position of religion and the Church in our country… The Council recommended to Metropolitan Nicholas that he work out suggestions for intensifying external work. However, Metropolitan Nicholas has not fulfilled this request of the Council and has put forward suggestions which in no way correspond to the requirements discussed with the metropolitan in this regard.’ Then Kuroyedov suggested that Metropolitan Nicholas be released from his duties as president of the Department of Foreign Relations and that they be imposed on another, more fitting person.”

The “suggestion” was accepted, and Metropolitan Nicholas was retired on June 21. In July, he asked Archbishop Basil (Krivoshein) of Brussels to tell the world that a new persecution was beginning, and in August repeated this message to western church leaders. In August, Kuroyedov suggested to the patriarch that he retire Metropolitan Nicholas from the Moscow diocese. The patriarch suggested to the metropolitan that he accept the Leningrad diocese, but the latter sharply rejected the offer. On September 9, Metropolitan Nicholas sent a letter to Khruschev. On September 19, the MP Synod retired him. On December 13 he died in suspicious circumstances; many believe he was murdered.[[345]](#footnote-345) Some believe that Metropolitan Nicholas was removed because in 1959 KGB defector Major Peter Deriabin had exposed him before a U.S. Senate Subcommittee as a KGB agent.[[346]](#footnote-346). There is no doubt that he was an agent, as we have seen; but it also appears likely that he sincerely wanted to protect the Church. In any case, his career is yet another illustration of the Lord’s words that one cannot serve two masters, God and Mammon…

The new foreign relations supremo turned out to be Bishop Nikodem (Rotov), who was born in 1929, made priest at the extraordinarily young age of 20, and Bishop of Podolsk on July 10, 1960, at the age of 31.

His arrival on the scene marks a new advance in the apostasy of the MP. For his personality, as Fr. Sergius continues, was “linked with the change in the position of the Moscow Patriarchate in relation to the ecumenical movement. As is well known, the Conference of the heads and representatives of the autocephalous Orthodox Churches, which took place in Moscow in 1948, accepted a resolution declaring that ‘the aims of the ecumenical movement… do not correspond to the ideals of Christianity and the tasks of the Church of Christ as those are understood by the Orthodox Church’. In this connection particular mention was made of the ecumenical movement’s turn towards involvement in social and political life, which was not acceptable for Orthodoxy. This position was maintained by the Moscow Patriarchate until 1960. In a conversation which took place on April 2, 1959, his Holiness Patriarch Alexis informed the Council about the attitude of the Russian Church to the ecumenical movement, and declared that she intended gradually to increase her links with the World Council of Churches and to send her observers to its most important conferences, but would not become a member of this organization. However, a year and a half later this position changed. In the notes of a conversation which took place between Patriarch Alexis and V.A. Kuroyedov on September 15, 1960, there is the following phrase: ‘The Patriarch accepted the recommendation of the Council concerning the entry of the Russian Orthodox Church into the membership of the World Council of Churches and evaluated this as a major action of the Russian Orthodox Church in its activities abroad.’ What was the aim of the Council for the affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church in recommending that the Russian Church enter the World Council of Churches? To conceal, it would seem, the anti-ecclesiastical policy of the Soviet government. Having cornered the Church, the Council wanted to create the image of a free and active Russian Church abroad…”[[347]](#footnote-347)

In November-December, 1960 Patriarchs Alexis and Athenagoras met in Constantinople, and discussed questions related to the Second Vatican Council After their meeting Bishop Nikodem, now president of the MP’s Department of External Relations, gave a press conference at which he said: “The Russian Church has no intention of taking part in the Council, since the union between Orthodoxy and Catholicism cannot take place unless the Vatican renounces from the beginning certain principles – for example, the infallibility of the Pope.[[348]](#footnote-348)

On March 30, 1961 the MP Synod resolved “to consider the entry of the Russian Orthodox Church into the World Council of Churches to be timely, and to ask his Holiness the Patriarch to send a letter to the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches declaring the desire of the Russian Orthodox Church to become a member of the World Council of Churches.”[[349]](#footnote-349)

From September 24 to October 1 the Orthodox Churches in the WCC met on Rhodes under the presidency of Metropolitan Chrysostom of Athens. One of its participants, Archbishop Basil of Brussels, recalls that “the relations of the Orthodox Church with the rest of the Christian world were reviewed in detail. With regard to the Catholic Church, the majority of participants in the conference expressed themselves ‘for the development of relations in the spirit of the love of Christ, with particular reference to the points envisaged by the 1920 encyclical of the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate.’”[[350]](#footnote-350)

Also discussed was a catalogue of topics for a future Pan-Orthodox Council. The MP tried hard to ensure that no topic that might prove embarrassing to the Soviet government was included. For, as Gordienko and Novikov write, “in the course of the debate on the catalogue, the Moscow Patriarchate’s delegation [led by Nikodem] suggested the removal of some of the subjects (The Development of Internal and External Missionary Work, The Methods of Fighting Atheism and False Doctrines Like Theosophy, Spiritism, Freemasonry, etc.) and the addition of some others (Cooperation between the Local Orthodox Churches in the Realisation of the Christian Ideas of Peace, Fraternity and Love among Peoples, Orthodoxy and Racial Discrimination, Orthodoxy and the Tasks of Christians in Regions of Rapid Social Change)… Besides working out the topics for the future Pre-Council, the First Conference passed the decision ‘On the Study of Ways for Achieving Closer Contacts and Unity of Churches in a Pan-Orthodox Perspective’, envisaging the search for contacts with Ancient Eastern (non-Chalcedonian) Churches (Monophysites), the Old Catholic, Anglican, Catholic, and Protestant Churches, as well as the World Council of Churches.”[[351]](#footnote-351) In other words, the Orthodox were to abandon the struggle against Atheism, Freemasonry and other false religions, and were to engage in dialogue towards union with all the Christian heretics – while at the same time persecuting the True Orthodox and using ecumenical forums to further the ends of Soviet foreign policy in its struggle with the Capitalist West![[352]](#footnote-352)

The argument used by Nikodem for removing atheism from the agenda was that discussion of this question might elicit persecution against the Church in Russia. As for Masonry, “it does not exist in contemporary Russia, we don’t know it, Masonry exists only in the West. Consequently, this question is not of general, but only of local Orthodox interest, and for that reason it should not be included in the programme of a general Orthodox Council…”[[353]](#footnote-353) He omitted to mention that the February revolution had been created by 300 Russian Masons…

In November, 1961 Archbishop Nikodem, accompanied by Bishop Anthony (Bloom) of Sourozh, the future Patriarch Alexis (Ridiger) and “a Russian government courier who is responsible for their comfort and all their expenses”[[354]](#footnote-354), went to New Delhi for the Third General Assembly of the WCC. On December 6-7, the MP was accepted as an official member of the WCC. 142 churches voted for, 4 abstained and 3 voted against.

The Vatican immediately warned that the MP’s membership was aimed “at the fulfilling of plans hatched in the Kremlin, which are bound to assist the triumph of Soviet propaganda through ecumenical Christianity”. And sure enough: when an attempt was made to condemn communism, Archbishop Nikodem immediately proposed a resolution listing the vices of capitalism, as a result of which both resolutions were withdrawn.[[355]](#footnote-355)

The KGB-enforced entry of the MP into the WCC, which was followed by the entry of the Romanian Church (in 1961) and of the Georgian Church (in 1962), had a devastating effect on the Orthodox position. For the Soviets not only constituted numerically by far the largest single Church in the WCC; they also controlled, through the KGB, all the other delegates from behind the iron curtain. Communism and Ecumenism therefore met in an unholy union which has been called “Ecucommunism”.[[356]](#footnote-356) As Deacon Andrew Kuraiev writes: “Sergianism and Ecumenism intertwined. It was precisely on the instructions of the authorities that our hierarchy conducted its ecumenical activity, and it was precisely in the course of their work abroad that clergy who had been enrolled into the KGB were checked out for loyalty.”[[357]](#footnote-357)

The Orthodox delegates at New Delhi signed a summary statement which declared, among other things: “We consider that the work of creating the One, Universal Church must unfailingly be accompanied by the destruction and disappearance of certain outmoded, traditional forms of worship”. The idea of “creating” the One Church was blasphemous, and the idea of destroying certain “outmoded” forms of worship - an outright challenge to the Holy Tradition of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church! And, having delivered it, the Orthodox delegates seemed to lose all restraint; for within a decade or two of the New Delhi congress, the ecumenical movement had climbed into the realm of “Super-ecumenism” – relations with non-Christian religions. It was therefore the Congress of the WCC in New Delhi that marked the decisive dogmatic break between “World Orthodoxy” and True Orthodoxy. If, until then, it could be argued, albeit unconvincingly, that the “World Orthodox” had not apostasised, and that only a few of their leaders were ecumenist heretics, this could no longer be maintained after New Delhi.

The General Assembly of the WCC in New Delhi was closely followed by the opening of the Second Vatican Council in 1962, an event as important for ecumenism in the West as had been the founding of the WCC. Vatican II opened the floodgates to Ecumenism in the western world. For, as Malachi Martin writes: “Before the end of the fourth and final session of Vatican II – presided over by Pope John’s successor, Paul VI – some bishops and Vatican personnel had already adopted entirely new and innovative meanings for the idea of ecumenism. The powerful Augustin Cardinal Bea, for example, was a leading figure at the Council and a close adviser to Paul VI, as he had been to Pope John. Bea was seen as the Vatican’s own spearhead in what came to be nothing less than an ecumenical revolution. The Cardinal organized ‘ecumenical gatherings’ that included not only Roman Catholics and Protestants as usual, but Jews and Muslims as well. In time, as was only logical, Buddhists, Shintoists, animist and a host of other non-Christian and even non-religious groups would find a place in the poorly and broadly defined new ‘ecumenism’.”[[358]](#footnote-358)

During the New Delhi Assembly, Nikodem announced that the Vatican had invited the MP to send observers to the Second Vatican Council; but that the MP had laid it down as a condition that there should be “no declarations hostile to our beloved country”. So for most of the next year, the MP chose to emphasise, albeit in a gentle way, the dogmatic differences between the two Churches. [[359]](#footnote-359) However, in September-October, at the Second Pan-Orthodox Conference on Rhodes, it was decided to begin a theological dialogue with the Catholic Church. Moreover, - still more importantly, - at the beginning of October the Council for Religious Affairs told the Central Committee that the participation of observers at the Second Vatican Council would assist the establishment of useful contacts with the Vatican and would bind the Vatican in its promotion of hostile activity against the USSR. This official address of the Council to the Central Committee completed a process of change in attitude towards the Catholic Church and the question of the presence of observers at the Vatican Council from originally negative to a positive recognition of benefit for the Soviet government and for the MP of an improvement in their relations to the Vatican. The decision to allow the sending of observers to the Second Vatican Council was taken at the highest level of Soviet power, the Politburo, on October 10, 1962 (N 58/30).[[360]](#footnote-360)

The arrival of Russian Orthodox observers at the Council produced consternation in French Catholic circles, which accused the Vatican of “selling out” to communism. But the French communist press was delighted: “Since the world socialist system shows its superiority indisputably and enjoys the approval of many hundreds of millions of men, the Church can no longer rest content with crude anti-communism. She has even given an undertaking, on the occasion of her dialogue with the Russian Orthodox Church, that there should be no direct attack on the communist regime at the Council.”[[361]](#footnote-361)

Why did the Vatican accept this condition, which so damaged her standing in the anti-communist West? Probably for the same reason that the MP-KGB agreed to send observers – *to infiltrate the camp of the enemy*. And the possibility exists that their main agent of infiltration was precisely the MP’s Metropolitan Nikodem…

This at first sight unlikely hypothesis gains credibility from the career of Fr. Michael Havryliv, a Russian priest who was secretly received into the Catholic Church in 1973. Fr. Serge Keleher writes: “The Capuchin priest told Havryliv that Metropolitan Nikodem [of Leningrad] was secretly a Catholic bishop, recognized by Rome with jurisdiction from Pope Paul VI throughout Russia. This assertion is not impossible – but neither is it entirely proved.

“On September 6 1975 Havryliv made a sacramental general Confession before Metropolitan Nikodem, who then accepted Havryliv’s monastic vows and profession of Faith to the Apostolic See and the Pope of Rome. Kyr Nikodem commanded Havryliv to order his monastic life according to the Jesuit Constitutions, and presented him with a copy of this document in Russian. This was all done privately; four days later the Metropolitan tonsured Havryliv a monk. On 9 October Kyr Nikodem ordained Havryliv to the priesthood, without requiring the oaths customary for Russian Orthodox candidates to Holy Orders.

“In 1977 Havryliv was reassigned to the Moscow Patriarchate’s archdiocese of L’viv and Ternopil… In Havryliv’s final interview with Kyr Nikodem, the Metropolitan of Leningrad ‘blessed me and gave me instructions to keep my Catholic convictions and do everything possible for the growth of the Catholic cause, not only in Ukraine, but in Russia. The Metropolitan spoke of the practice of his predecessors – and also asked me to be prudent.”[[362]](#footnote-362)

These words indicate the truth behind the mask of the Vatican’s ecumenism; and the fact that Havryliv was reordained by Nikodem show that Rome accepted the sacraments of the Orthodox for only as long as it suited her. The Orthodox were, from Vatican II, not heretics, but “separated brethren”. However, the “separated brethren” still had to return in repentance to their father, the Pope…

The Vatican also decided to invite ROCOR to send observers to the Council. This decision, writes Andrew Psarev, “was a precursor to a lively discussion of the [ROCOR] council session in 1962, where the so-called defensive point of view collided with the ‘missionary’ point of view. An ardent advocate of the ‘defensive’ point of view was Archbishop Averky of Syracuse and Holy Trinity Monastery, who saw the Second Vatican Council as a step in the direction of global apostasy. An opposite point of view was expressed by Bishop Savva of Edmonton, who saw declining the invitation as a loss of an opportunity to bear witness to the truth using a forum provided an opportunity to talk about Orthodoxy, the situation in the Orthodox world, and about the persecuted Russian Church. The support given by Metropolitan Anastasii to the missionary point of view regarding the sending of representatives to the Vatican was the last major influence he had on relations between ROCOR and the non-Orthodox world during the period of his service as the first hierarch.”[[363]](#footnote-363)

And so when the Second Vatican Council opened on October 12, 1962, the only Orthodox present were the MP delegation headed by Metropolitan Nikodem, and the ROCOR delegation headed by Archbishop Anthony of Geneva…

## 110. THE KHRUSHCHEV PERSECUTION

The ultimate intention of the Soviet authorities – the complete destruction of the Orthodox Church – remained unchanged in the post-war period; but their tactics showed some flexibility. The Khrushchev persecution (1959-64) demonstrated how fragile and one-sided was the State-Church accord, and how easily the State’s concessions could be retracted without compunction or compensation.[[364]](#footnote-364)

Until the death of Stalin, while True Orthodoxy was persecuted as violently as ever, “Soviet Orthodoxy” enjoyed a comparatively peaceful period. However, on July 7, 1954 the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party issued a document entitled “On Major Inadequacies in Scientific-Atheist Propaganda and Measures for its Improvement”, which called for a return to the pre-war course of “attacking religious survivals”. That summer some parishioners were persecuted and some churches closed. Public criticisms of this new course were issued by Metropolitan Gregory of Leningrad and Archbishop Luke of Simferopol.

However, in November the Central Committee began to change course again. In 1955 the number of registered churches began to rise, and in 1956 a print-run of 50,000 Bibles was permitted.[[365]](#footnote-365) Then came Khrushchev’s famous speech to the 20th Congress of the Communist Party in 1956, at which the cult of the personality of Stalin was condemned. Soon thousands of people who had been condemned for their religious or political beliefs were returning from the camps, including 293 clergy of the MP and unknown number from the Catacomb Church. In July G. Karpov informed Patriarch Alexis that he did not need to worry about the question of the opening of churches, since this process would now be uninterrupted…[[366]](#footnote-366)

However, on October 4, 1958 the Central Committee sent a secret letter to the Union Republics called “On the inadequacies of scientific-atheist propaganda”. All party and public organizations and state organs were required to attack the Church. There followed the Khrushchev persecution, when most of the seminaries and monasteries and 12-15,000 of the parish churches, together with other “religious survivals”, were destroyed. In accordance with the instructions of the Central Committee and of Khruschev personally, on October 16 the Council of Ministers accept the first anti-ecclesiastical resolutions: “On Monasteries in the USSR” and “On Taxing the Income of Enterprises of Diocesan Administrations, and also the Income of Monasteries”. In the first of these the monasteries were forbidden to take on hired labour, and a significant diminution of land holdings was envisaged, as also of the numbers of communities. Moreover, the 1945 tax on building and land rent was re-introduced, and the tax rate on plots of land was sharply increased. A heavy blow was dealt to the material base of the patriarchate. Raising the tax on the income from candle factories touched every parish. The factories were forced to raise their output prices, but at the same time it was forbidden to change the old prices in the churches. An absurd situation was the result – the parishes, on acquiring the candles, were forced to sell them to themselves at a loss. To make up for this, in many parishes they began to disband the paid choirs and economize on repairs and the upkeep of the churches. The clergy fell into poverty. The patriarchate was flooded by desperate pleas for help from the hierarchs. As a result of the new regulations, all the dioceses found themselves in debt to the state and on the edge of complete insolvency. An appeal was made to the Council for the Affairs of the Orthodox Church, but it was firmly rejected. An appeal to put off the introduction of the new taxes until January 1, 1959 was also rejected.[[367]](#footnote-367)

In November and December a massive purge of Church libraries was carried out; many books were removed, and all foreign literature was placed under censorship. On November 28, the Central Committee accepted a resolution “On Measures to stop pilgrimages to so-called ‘holy places’.” Various methods were used to stop pilgrims visiting 700 such places. In 1958 91 church communities were deprived of registration; the tolling of bells was forbidden; hierarchs were deprived of their telephones, churches were cut off from the water system, repairs were forbidden. In January, 1959, at a closed session of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church, the president, G. Karpov was attacked by I. Sivenkov for having been “too soft” in relation to the Church. In March Karpov, having recovered from illness, counter-attacked. He declared: “Out of the 14 autocephalous Orthodox Churches in the world 9 completely support the initiatives of the Moscow Patriarchate… Now there is a suggestion to prepare and convene, in the course of one or two years, an Ecumenical Council or congress of all the Orthodox Churches in the world… How shall we carry out this work… if we encourage crude administrative methods in relation to the Church and do not react to the distortions in scientific-atheist propaganda?... I consider such actions as the blowing up of church buildings to be inadmissible.” Karpov went on to speak of the mass discontent of the clergy, and of the fact that the patriarch was thinking of retiring; and even suggested making some concessions to the Church. As a result, he kept his post for another year, and a temporary departure from extreme forms of anti-religious aggression was observed in the country.[[368]](#footnote-368)

Nevertheless, by November, thirteen monasteries had been closed, and another seventeen by January, 1960. In spite of a prior agreement between the patriarch and the Council for Religious Affairs, some communities were closed, not gradually, but almost immediately – sometimes within 24 hours. In this period about 200 clergy were compelled by various means to renounce their rank.[[369]](#footnote-369)

Another aspect of the Khrushchev persecution (so called because he was the chief inspirer and strategist of it) was the infiltration of agents into the ranks of the Church. Anatoly Golitsyn, who defected from the KGB in 1961, writes: “As part of the programme to destroy religion from within, the KGB, in the late 1950s, started sending dedicated young Communists to ecclesiastical academies and seminaries to train them as future church leaders. These young Communists joined the Church, *not* at the call of their consciences to serve God, but at the call of the Communist Party in order to serve that Party and to implement its general in the struggle against religion.”[[370]](#footnote-370) As regards the ordinary priests, Fr. Alexander Borisov writes: “Almost everyone was recruited into the KGB. I myself was recruited, and I know that our other priest, Fr. Vladimir, was also recruited. I think those who say they were not recruited are deceiving us… After all, in earlier times one could not become a bishop without making some compromise, it was simply impossible…”[[371]](#footnote-371)

Schema-Monk Epiphanius (Chernov) recounts the following story about a communist party member and his wife, who was secretly a member of the Catacomb Church. When their son was born, she wanted to have him baptised – but not in the Moscow patriarchate. He then “tried to convince his wife of a truth which she was well aware. But in the given case the husband’s words were very convincing and concrete:

“’So you have firmly decided to baptise the child?’

“’Yes, of course!’

“Well, that’s your affair. Only I would like to introduce into this matter a certain correction or rationalisation.’

“’Please, I’m listening.’

“’Well, here it is. Tell me, please, have you saved an extra seven rubles which you’re intending to give our ‘pope’ or ‘priest’? If they are extra, give them to me, and I will drink them away, and I’ll baptise the child for you… Tell me, what’s the difference: either he’ll drink them away, or I will. He and I are absolutely the same. And we sit next to each other at party gatherings…. Whether you give the child to him to be baptised or to me, we are both atheists. So it would be better and more humane for you to give the seven rubles to your atheist husband that to an atheist stranger. And listen: your husband is more righteous and decent that that atheist. After all, he pretends to be a believer. But he’s an atheist! Moreover, he pretends so much that he’s even become a priest! While I, honourably and in the sight of all, am an atheist! But I can baptise our child with the same effect as he…

“‘Well, tell me, have I convinced you?’”[[372]](#footnote-372)

While Patriarch Alexis and Metropolitan Nicholas protested against the persecution, they remained completely loyal to Soviet power. Thus in January, 1960, Karpov wrote to the Central Committee: “The patriarch is completely loyal with regards to the authorities, always and not only in official declarations, but also in his entourage he speaks sincerely and with exaltation about the government and Comrade Khruschev. The patriarch does not pay enough attention to work abroad, but even here he accepts all our recommendations…”[[373]](#footnote-373)

Meanwhile, the pressure on the MP was increasing. On March 16, 1961 the Council of Ministers passed a resolution “On the strengthening of control for the fulfilment of the legislation on churches”, which gave power to the local authorities to close churches and remove registrations. On April 18, 1961 the MP Synod decided to present the resolution “On Measures to Improve the Existing Order of Parish Life” for discussion at the Council in July. This measure, which had been imposed on the Church by the Council for Religious Affairs, deprived the priest of all financial and administrative control of his parish, passing it instead to councils of twenty (the dvadtsatky), which were easily controllable by the authorities. As Victor Aksyuchits writes, this “reform” “presented them with new possibilities for destroying the organism of the Church from within. The priests were completely separated from the economic and financial administration of the parishes, and were only hired by agreement as ‘servants of the cult’ for ‘the satisfaction of religious needs’. The diocesan organs of administration of the life of the parishes were suspended… Now the atheist authorities not only carried out the ‘registration’ of the priests and ‘the executive organs’, but also took complete control of the economy and finances of the parishes, appointing the wardens and treasurers, and using all their rights, naturally, to promote the atheists’ aim of destroying the Church.”[[374]](#footnote-374)

Fearing that the July Council might oppose this “reform”, the authorities did not invite to the Council three hierarchs who had expressed themselves against it. Most of the hierarchs were invited, not to a Council, but to a celebration in honour of St. Sergius, and were amazed to learn that a Council was about to be conducted.[[375]](#footnote-375) Archbishop Hermogen of Kaluga, who appeared without an invitation, was not allowed at the session on the grounds that he was not a ruling hierarch. In the absence of all potential opponents, the parish reform was passed. It was also decided that all clergy should be banned from becoming members of the dvadtsatky or the parish councils. Patriarch Alexis cooperated with the parish statute and with other measures harmful to the Church during the Khrushchev persecution.[[376]](#footnote-376)

Meanwhile, in the single year of 1961, 1500 churches were closed in the Soviet Union. In 1963 the Kiev-Caves Lavra was closed. Attempts were made to close the Pochaev Lavra, too, but determined action by the monks and the local inhabitants, some of whom were imprisoned or exiled, saved the day.[[377]](#footnote-377)

On October 14, 1964, Khrushchev died, and the persecution against the MP ceased. The main party ideologist and secretary of the Central Committee, Suslov, thought that it necessary to continue a decisive “struggle against religion”, but in such a way as not to turn the West against them and “not to give rein to all kinds of extremists”. Illegalities, it was agreed, had been committed, and several people were freed from the prisons and camps.[[378]](#footnote-378)

The years 1959-64 were years of persecution throughout Eastern Europe. We shall see how the True Orthodox suffered in Romania. In Bulgaria many priests and monks were held in the approximately 30 death camps, where prisoners were brought up one by one to be slaughtered.[[379]](#footnote-379)

## 111. THE PASSPORTLESS MOVEMENT

After Khruschev’s 1956 speech against Stalin, and especially by the beginning of the 1960s, the pressure on the Catacomb Church was beginning to wane. Thus “when, in 1961,” writes Archbishop Lazarus (Zhurbenko), “the priests’ rights were taken away from them and given to the church council, they quieted down and it was easier for us; at least we could get to our priests and priests began more freely to come to us, to confess and commune us. From 1961 the Moscow Patriarchate calmed down in its attitude towards us. Of course, when foreigners asked representatives of the MP, ‘Does a catacomb church exist?’ the answer was always ‘No’. That was a lie. There were catacomb believers all over Russia, just as there are today…”[[380]](#footnote-380)

The relaxation of pressure from the patriarchate was almost certainly a result of the fact that the patriarchate was now the object of persecution itself. Although the numbers of believers killed and imprisoned was only a fraction of the numbers in earlier persecutions, the Khrushchev persecution of closed some thousands of patriarchal churches and forced many patriarchal priests to serve illegally. These “pseudo-catacombs” did not merge with the True Church and continued to commemorate the Soviet patriarch.[[381]](#footnote-381) However, in 1961 new legislation against secret Christians was passed, of which the most important was the legislation on passports.[[382]](#footnote-382) This measure paradoxically served to swell the numbers of the True Orthodox...

Now passportisation had been introduced into the Soviet Union only in 1932, and only for the most urbanized areas. Already then it was used as a means of winkling out Catacomb Christians. Thus M.V. Shkarovsky writes: “Completing their liquidation of the Josephites, there was a meeting of regional inspectors for cultic matters on March 16, 1933, at a time when passportisation was being introduced. The meeting decided, on the orders of the OGPU, ‘not to give passports to servants of the cult of the Josephite confession of faith’, which meant automatic expulsion from Leningrad. Similar things happened in other major cities of the USSR.”[[383]](#footnote-383)

Most Catacomb hierarchs did not bless their spiritual children to take passports because in filling in the forms information making them liable to persecution.[[384]](#footnote-384) Some leaders, such as Schema-Abbess Michaela of Kiev, sent her nuns out to convince people that the passport was the seal of the Antichrist. Many Catacomb Christians refused passports, not wishing to declare themselves citizens of the antichristian kingdom.[[385]](#footnote-385)

In the 1930s the peasants had not been given passports but were chained to the land which they worked. They were herded into the collective farms and forced to do various things against their conscience, such as vote for the communist officials who had destroyed their way of life and their churches. Those who refused to do this – refusals were particularly common in the Lipetsk, Tambov and Voronezh areas – were rigorously persecuted, and often left to die of hunger. Thus passportisation in the cities and collectivisation in the countryside constituted two forms of the Bolsheviks’ struggle to force everyone in the country to accept the Soviet ideology.

On May 4, 1961, however, the Soviet government issued a decree on “parasitism” and introduced a campaign for general passportisation. In local papers throughout the country it was announced that, in order to receive a Soviet passport, a citizen of the USSR would have to recognize all the laws of Soviet power, past and present, beginning from Lenin’s decrees. Since this involved, in effect, a recognition of all the crimes of Soviet power, a movement arose to reject Soviet passports, a movement which was centred mainly in the country areas.

E.A. Petrova writes: “Protests against general passportisation arose among Christians throughout the vast country. A huge number of secret Christians who had passports began to reject, destroy and burn them and loudly, for all to hear, renounce Soviet citizenship. Many Christians from the patriarchal church also gave in their passports. There were cases in which as many as 200 people at one time went up to the local soviet and gave in their passports. In one day the whole of a Christian community near Tashkent gave in 100 passports at once. Communities in Kemerovo and Novosibirsk provinces gave in their passports, and Christians in the Altai area burned their passports… Protests against general passportisation broke out in Belorussia, in the Ukraine, and in the Voronezh, Tambov and Ryazan provinces…

“Christians who renounced their Soviet passports began to be seized, imprisoned and exiled. But in spite of these repressions the movement of the passportless Christians grew and became stronger. It was precisely in these years that the Catacomb Church received a major influx from Christians of the patriarchal church who renounced Soviet passports and returned into the bosom of the True Orthodox Church.”[[386]](#footnote-386)

However, not all Catacomb Christians refused to have passports – to be consistently and completely outside Soviet society was, after all, exceedingly difficult. Some Catacomb leaders considered it permissible to be a Soviet citizen with a passport so long as one did not sympathize with Soviet power or help it, and criticized those who rejected Soviet citizenship as sinful but accepted its (admittedly very meagre) benefits.

Thus in 1960 Archimandrite Hilarion (Andrievsky), leader of the Catacomb Church in Voronezh, wrote to a “hardline” nun as follows: “To call oneself ‘a citizen of the Soviet state’ by no means signifies recognizing oneself to be ‘a Soviet person’. It does not signify agreement with the communists, it does not signify going together with them, it does not signify working in concert with them and sympathizing with all their undertakings… ‘A citizen of the Soviet state’ and ‘a Soviet person’ are by no means identical concepts: the first is recognition and submission to Soviet power, and the second – is an inner content, a feeling in the soul of man. There is a huge difference between these concepts. I experienced this myself in 1928, thirty-two years ago. When, after a long convoy, I was waiting for a decision on my fate together with other prisoners in Samarkand prison, I was told that I had been left to serve my term of exile in the city of Samarkand itself. Several people in the prison envied me because this, being the former capital of Central Asia, was a large, cultured, interesting city with ancient sites. But then, when I was summoned to the GPU to fill in a questionnaire, my position suddenly changed sharply – it appeared that my replies did not please them. To the question: ‘What is your relationship to the authorities?’, I replied: ‘I recognize it and submit to it in civil matters’. Then they said that ‘this is not much’. But when I asked: ‘What more do you need?’ they replied with another question: ‘But do you sympathize with it?’ I replied directly: ‘No, I do not sympathize with it, and as a believer I cannot sympathize with it in general. Moreover, how can I sympathize with it personally, when they brought me here completely against my will, tearing me away from my relatives and friends!...’ To this they said: ‘You probably need the Tsar’s authority?’ I replied: ‘No, you are mistaken. Read history, and you will see that there were times when the Tsars also fiercely persecuted the Christians.’ All these replies of mine were written down and signed. A little later I was told that there would be a sharp change in my place of exile: from the big beautiful city that I had been assigned to before I was sent to the remote steppe, whence after a five-year stay I was despatched to another exile – in distant Siberia. Thus it became clearly evident from this questionnaire that Soviet power makes a profound distinction between ‘citizenship’ and ‘sympathy’ and does not necessarily merge and confuse these two concepts into one. Otherwise, after my reply about recognizing and submitting to Soviet power, they would not have gone on to ask me about my ‘sympathy’, if this ‘sympathy’ was truly linked with ‘citizenship’. After all, they not only asked me about ‘sympathy’, but punished me for my negative reply, and changed the place of my exile from Samarkand to the remote steppe four hundred kilometres away from it.

“So a ‘citizen’ is not always and necessarily a ‘sympathizer’ with all the communist undertakings, for the concept of ‘citizen’ in itself does not contain this ‘sympathy’; and for that reason there was absolutely no sin in taking part in the census and giving a positive reply to the question about ‘citizenship’ in the Soviet state, in which, as you well know, there are citizen-communists who are completely devoted and sympathetic to it, and there are simply citizens in the sense only of subjects – and the latter are the absolute majority, in whose number are you and I, which is clearly witnessed by your passport, which you yourself took, and you live through it with the rights of ‘citizenship’ in necessary cases (reception of pension, etc.). It is more than strange to say that to take advantage of the rights of a citizen here is not a sin, but to call oneself a ‘citizen’ is, in your opinion, such a terrible sin that you have even excluded all those who took part in the census from Orthodoxy! What amazing light-mindedness! It is this that has engendered such a profound error, which even contradicts simple common logic, not to speak of the greater error that I wrote to you about earlier and which I will not repeat. I will only add that such a spiritual double-mindedness is not pleasing to God. If, in your opinion, it is sinful merely to call yourself a ‘citizen’ of the Soviet state in a census, then to take advantage, as you do, of this citizenship is a still more bitter and responsible act, although you don’t recognize it. (Your passport, your pension, etc. They reproach you!) What use is this?! And how much is said in the Divine services of the December Menaion concerning the participation of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself in the census of Herod, which proves the sinlessness of our participation in the census that has taken place. And in the Menaion for January 5 it is said of Christ: ‘He was registered, but did not work, obeying the commands of Caesar.’ As you can see, here ‘registration’ was in no way bound up with ‘work’ for Caesar. Thus our participation in the census does not necessarily oblige us to work for Soviet power, the more so in that we do not sympathize with communism, as you mistakenly think. In conclusion I want to cite one more argument in favour of our positive reply to the question on ‘citizenship’. We Russians received our holy Orthodox faith from the Greeks, from Constantinople, while the Greeks were in a condition of civil subjection to the Turks – Muslims. However, this Turkish citizenship did not hinder the Greeks from preserving the Orthodox Faith in the course of many centuries. Constantinople is considered to this day to be a cradle of Holy Orthodoxy, a Centre of the Universal Church of Christ. And this historical example clearly shows that Turkish citizenship did not necessarily contain within itself sympathy with the Muslims, just as Soviet citizenship does not necessarily contain within itself sympathy with Communism – which is sinful….”[[387]](#footnote-387)

Fr. Hilarion’s point is well taken. Nevertheless, he erred in seeing no essential difference between the regimes of Pagan Imperial Rome and the Turkish sultanate, on the one hand, and Soviet power, on the other. Perhaps one could indeed be a Soviet citizen without sympathizing with, or helping, Soviet power in any way. But it was extremely difficult; and if “recognition” involved accepting the *legitimacy* of the Soviet regime, then this in itself helped Soviet power to a certain degree. Moreover, any kind of recognition or submission was in direct contradiction with Patriarch Tikhon’s anathema of 1918, which called on the Orthodox to obey the Soviet *in no way whatsoever…*

In the 1970s the detailed questionnaires required in order to receive passports were abandoned, but in 1974 it was made obligatory for all Soviet citizens to have a passport, and a new, red passport differing significantly from the old, green one was issued for everyone except prisoners and the hospitalized. Its cover had the words: “Passport of a citizen of the Soviet Socialist Republics”, together with a hammer and sickle, which was still unacceptable to the passportless, who therefore continued to be subject to prison, exile and hunger. Those who joined the Catacomb Church at this time often erased the word “citizen”, replacing it with the word “Christian”, so that they had a “Passport of a Christian of the Soviet Socialist Republics”.[[388]](#footnote-388)

The issue of passports came down to the question whether the Soviet State should be considered to be “Caesar”, to which “the things of Caesar” are due (payment of taxes, army service), or “the collective Antichrist”, obedience to whom involves compromises unacceptable for the Christian conscience. Although the majority of members of the True Russian Church in this century have not made an issue of this, it remains debatable whether obedience to the 1918 anathema against the Bolsheviks does not in fact require rejection of the Soviet State, Soviet passports, Soviet army service, etc., in a way that only the passportless demonstrated. Certainly, experience demonstrated without a doubt that all attempts of Christians to cooperate in any way with the Soviet regime were worse than useless and only led to compromises in the faith… Since the fall of communism in 1991, as we shall see, the possession of passports has ceased to be such a burning issue. However, the question whether the Soviet Union was a state “established by God” (Romans 13.1), or, on the contrary, an anti-state established by Satan (Revelation 13.2), remains a critical one. The True Orthodox position is that since the Soviet State has been anathematised by the Church, neither it, nor any modern state claiming continuity from it, can command the allegiance of Orthodox Christians. To this day the Russian True Orthodox Church does not commemorate the authorities of the post-Soviet Russian Federation…

Among those who rejected Soviet passports was Schema-Bishop Michael (Yershov), whose flock in the Kazan and Ufa regions remains in existence to this day.

Michael Vasilyevich Yershov was born in 1911 into a poor family. His father became a Bolshevik and persecuted and beat his son, but was later converted by him and repented. In 1931, at the age of twenty, Michael was imprisoned for the first time for his rejection of the Sovietized Moscow Patriarchate. Apart from a short period in the early 1940s, he remained in the camps for the rest of his life, being transported from one end of the GULAG to the other and dying, still in prison, on June 4, 1974. He presented an astounding image of patience and suffering that converted many to the Faith. He was a wonderworker and had the gifts of healing and prophecy. But perhaps his most astounding miracle was worked in the Mordovian camps in 1962, together with his fellow inmate and secret bishop, Basil Vasilyevich Kalinin (+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…[[389]](#footnote-389)

Truly, “the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5.16). For “when Moses prayed to the Lord, the fire was quenched” (Numbers 11.2), and when Elijah prayed to the Lord the heavens were closed and again opened (James 5.17). And when the two True Orthodox bishops Michael and Basil prayed to the Lord, the world was saved from nuclear holocaust…

“Let the world mock us,” wrote Bishop Michael, “but we, poor people, must give all our strength and desire in prayer to God”. “We must strictly watch over ourselves, that we do not fall under the condemnation and wrath of God. We must pour out the balsam of our strength and purity of heart whatever happens, our simple, true and holy prayer to God, which is bound by nothing except simplicity and belief in our eternal inheritance. For the Lord looks on the righteous and on their holy appeals, so that the prayer offered may be the earnest of our strength and the balsam of purification, by which the world might be preserved and the catastrophe which cannot even be expressed in words – God forbid! – might be averted.”

“You yourselves know that a city is preserved if a righteous man is praying in it. Once the righteous man has left the city, the elements rule in the city. And so, dear ones, remember this one thing, that now is not that day on which the universe was created, and everything was brought into being, but now is the day on which danger menaces the creation…”[[390]](#footnote-390)

Besides this pure, simple, burning prayer of a righteous man, Bishop Michael insisted on the pure confession of the True Orthodox Faith. “Between the Church of the Tikhonite orientation [the True Orthodox Church] and the legal church [the Moscow Patriarchate] there is the following difference. The Church of the Tikhonite orientation zealously fulfils all the laws and rules that are prescribed by the Holy Fathers, while the legal church tolerates atheism, does not struggle against iniquity, but is reconciled with it. I recognize the One Apostolic Church. The legal church recognizes Lenin and Stalin, and serves Soviet power and carries out the orders of the atheist antichrists.”[[391]](#footnote-391)

“Do not believe any sects: this is a cunning contemporary politics that has come out from the West. There are even some that are like the Orthodox faith. But you, my brothers and dear ones, must not go anywhere – may the Lord keep you! There are also many enemies of our Orthodox Christian faith, we have many enemies. The first is Catholicism, our most cunning and evil enemy, and the Lutherans, and all the sects, which came out of America and now, like dirt, have spread through the whole earth. It is difficult for us poor people now, we have no defence from men, everyone wants to offend us. But we are faithful. We are the most true patriots of our Mother, the Holy Orthodox Christian Eastern Apostolic Church. We are patriots of Holy Rus’ and we know the tricks of all kinds of people, and we will not deviate in any direction: for Holy Rus’ is sanctified by the sufferings of her own people. Every foot is creeping into Russia and wanting to defile her. No, Russia will preserve all the holy mysteries, even if through small, simple people, but she will show the whole world light, and strength, and greatness. Dear ones, the Orthodox Church will conquer the whole universe. Fear not, my dear ones, the Lord will conquer evil. Amen.”[[392]](#footnote-392)

Bishop Michael was a simple, uneducated man. But he attained the spiritual heights. “In my lifetime I have not studied the sciences, but I have come to know the keys of the universe and have reached the depths of the abyss. It is hard and difficult without the Supreme Creator. With the Creator and His Life-giving Spirit and the righteousness of Christ I have passed through the arena of an indescribable life…”[[393]](#footnote-393)

## 112. THE FLORINITES RECEIVE A HIERARCHY

After the repose of Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina, on September 16, 1955, 92 of his 150 priests gathered together and established a twelve-member Commission to administer the Church. On January 10, 1957 a second Clerical Assembly was held, attended by all the Flornite priests and several zealot monks from Mount Athos. A new twelve-member commission was appointed and three archimandrites – Acacius (Pappas), Chrysostom (Kiousis) and Chrysostom (Naslimes) – were voted worthy of receiving the episcopal rank. Acacius was elected president of the Commission, Auxentius Pastras – deputy president, and general secretary – Chrysostom (Kiousis). The Commission then began to search for a way of restoring their hierarchy.[[394]](#footnote-394)

The Florinites finally succeeded in the following way. First, Archimandrites Acacius Pappas (the nephew of Acacius the elder) and Chrysostom Kiousis were sent to ROCOR’s Archbishop John Maximovich in Brussels. He looked favourably on their request, but said that they would need to obtain the blessing of the ROCOR Synod in New York. The Florinites then sent Archimandrite Acacius the elder to Metropolitan Anastasy in New York. But the metropolitan refused to consecrate him.

**Nun Vassa writes that “a**t the Council of 1959, following the opinion of Metropolitan Anastasy, the Council decided to once again decline the request of the Old Calendarists. While considering this matter, the opinion was expressed that through the principle of oikonomia, they could help their Greek brethren. Metropolitan Anastasy rejected this oikonomia, finding that the ordination of a bishop in this instance would not be constructive but destructive for the Church, first of all because of the condemnations such an act would invoke among the other Local Churches and the Moscow Patriarchate.”[[395]](#footnote-395) In 1978 Metropolitan Epiphanius of Kition (Cyprus) told the present writer that when he visited New York in the 1960s, Metropolitan Anastasy had refused his request on the grounds that it would upset Constantinople… So vital brotherly help to the persecuted Greeks was refused on the grounds that it would irritate the heretics of World Orthodoxy…

In December, 1960 Archimandrite Acacius again arrived at the ROCOR Synod with his nephew, Archimandrite Acacius, and was again refused. According to the account given to the present author by Acacius the younger, Metropolitan Anastasy refused to participate himself in the consecration of Acacius the elder for fear of upsetting the Ecumenical Patriarchate, but did not discourage the consecration in another city and at the hands of other bishops. According to other sources, however, the metropolitan had insisted that no ROCOR bishop take part in such a consecration.[[396]](#footnote-396) On December 22, 1960, Archimandrite Acacius was consecrated as Bishop of Talantion in Detroit, by Archbishop Seraphim of Chicago and the Romanian Bishop Theophilus (Ionescu) of Detroit.

As Anastasios Hudson writes, “this was a secret consecration, and was thus of questionable canonicity, given that the canonical literature presupposes that an ordination is approved by the bishops of the province [cf. I Nicaea, Canon 4]. Akakios, now styling himself Archbishop, returned to Greece and was later joined by ROCOR Archbishop Leonty of Chile, who helped him consecrate six [correct: four] more bishops.

“The committee of archimandrites initially did not accept the consecration, as Archbishop Akakios refused to divulge his consecrators and the circumstances surrounding the event. Members of the committee and laymen proficient in English wrote the ROCOR Synod several letters asking if Fr. Akakios had indeed been consecrated. Not having the knowledge that in face the consecration had occurred, Fr. George Grabbe wrote to Archimandrite Kalliopios (Yannacoulopios): ‘Archimandrite Akakios Papas visited our Synod when he was in the United States and presented a petition for consecration. However, our Synod did not agree to his request. Therefore his consecration by Bishops of our Church did not take place.’ [The new calendarist] Archbishop Iakovos, hearing of the rumors, wrote a letter to Metropolitan Anastassy on June 13, 1961, where he inquired if Archimandrite Akakios (Pappas) had been consecrated. Metropolitan Anastassy confirmed in his reply that Archimandrite Akakios did visit and request consecration, but stated that ‘… our Synod rejected his plea because it did not find it possible to interfere with internal matters of another Orthodox Church, namely the Church of Greece, and had no information about Archimandrite Akakios.’

“In addition to the consecration of Akakios (Pappas), and the ordinations performed in Greece, Bishop Petros [Astifides] of Astoria was also consecrated on November 29, 1962 [old style] at Saint Markella’s Church by Bishop Leonty of Chile and Bishop Seraphim of Caracas. This was also a secret ordination…”[[397]](#footnote-397)

For taking part in the consecration of Akakios, Archbishop Seraphim of Chicago was reprimanded by the ROCOR Synod, but not further punished. Moreover, the Matthewites bitterly contested its canonicity, saying that Acacius the elder had bribed Seraphim. But this accusation is firmly rejected by Acacius the younger (now Metropolitan of Diauleia), who accompanied his uncle throughout the trip.[[398]](#footnote-398) The Matthewites also asserted that Theophilus was a new calendarist, having been appointed to look after the new calendarist Romanian parishes which had joined the Russian Synod. This was true, but did not necessarily invalidate the consecration because he was a member of a Synod which followed the Orthodox Calendar. In other words, his following the new calendar was uncanonical, but insofar as he was a member of a True Orthodox Synod which, for reasons of pastoral condescension, tolerated it for a certain group, he was to be considered a true bishop. Another problem was the fact that in 1971, in a letter to Metropolitan Philaret, Bishop Theophilus denied that he had taken part in the consecration. However, his participation was witnessed both by Archbishop Seraphim, and by Archimandrites Peter and Acacius the younger.[[399]](#footnote-399)

On returning to Greece, Bishop Acacius administered the Church with the aid of a Commission of archimandrites. As we have seen, in May, 1962, Bishop Acacius and the Commission invited Archbishop Leontius of Chile, a member of the ROCOR Synod, to Greece. These two bishops then consecrated: Parthenius (Skurlis) as Bishop of the Cyclades, Auxentius (Pastras) as Bishop of Gardikion, Acacius the younger as Bishop of Diauleia and Gerontius (Margiolis) as Bishop of Salamis. It was also decreed that the newly consecrated bishops should consecrate Archimandrites Chrysostom (Naslimes) and Chrysostom (Kiousis). Chrysostom (Naslimis) was duly consecrated the next year. However, Chrysostom (Kiousis) was not consecrated…

“Later Archbishop Leontius ordained Acacius Douskos a priest in New York. This Acacius was a subdeacon of Archbishop Vitaly of Montreal, and he was ordained without Archbishop Vitaly’s consent. Later he returned to Montreal where he set up a Greek Old Calendar parish independent of Archbishop Vitaly.”[[400]](#footnote-400)

For some years the ROCOR Synod did not recognize the consecrations carried out by Archbishops Seraphim and Leontius. But during the ROCOR Hierarchical Council on November 17/30, 1962, Archbishop Averky of Syracuse and Jordanville said: “I myself would not have decided to carry out the consecration of the Greek Old Calendarists. But at the same time, in the depths of my soul, I cannot help being delighted at the boldness with which Archbishop Leontius carried out this act to which his conscience called him.

“We emphasize that we do not recognize Patriarch Alexis, while all the patriarchs recognize him. We talk about communion with these patriarchs, and thereby we turn out paradoxically to be in communion with Moscow. A vicious circle is the result. In view of this irrational position, it is especially important for us to stand on a firm canonical foundation, preserving the essence, and not the letter, which can lead to the worship of Satan…

“He [Vladyka Leontius] carried out a courageous act of assistance to a fraternal Church, which is now the closest to us in spirit. The Greek Church is now attacked and persecuted. It was a great mistake that we in our time were too condescending to the introduction of the new style, for its aim was to introduce schism into the Orthodox Church. It was the work of the enemies of the Church of Christ. Its fruits are already evident. Even in America there are Greek clergy whose conscience torments them for accepting the new style. The keeping of various traditions in various spheres is bound up with following the old style. With the expulsion of the old style from the church the ascetic principle is also expelled. The Old Calendarists are the closest to us in spirit. The only ‘but’ in the action of Archbishop Leontius consists in the fact that he acted as it were in a non-fraternal manner, contrary to the decision of the council, although from good motives.”[[401]](#footnote-401)

At the same session Archbishop John Maximovich noted: “… The Old Calendarists have been knocking on our doors for six years. The Hierarchical Council cannot take the decision upon itself, since it recognizes that this is an internal matter of the Greeks. We must accept Archbishop Leontius’ explanation as satisfactory, and with that bring our arguments to an end.” Vladyka John also recalled that in the past century there had been similar disturbances in the Antiochian Church. At that time the Constantinopolitan Church had intervened. In the same way the Greek Church had helped the Church of Cyprus. The Council expressed its regret to Archbishop Leontius with regard to his participation in the consecrations of the bishops for the Greek Old Calendarists. Archbishop Leontius, in his turn, expressed his regret that he had not been able to ask Metropolitan Anastasy.[[402]](#footnote-402)

## 113. THE ROMANIANS RECEIVE A HIERARCHY

After the war, the Romanian Old Calendarists led by Hieromonk Glycherie continued to be fiercely persecuted. Nevertheless, as Metropolitan Cyprian writes, “the work of building churches was begun anew, since all of those formerly built had been demolished. In as short an interval of time, between the end of the war and 1950, almost all of the razed churches, as well as the ruins of the Monastery of Dobru, had been rebuilt. Between 1947 and 1948, the large Monastery of Slatioara (for men) was constructed, along with the monasteries of Bradatel Neamt and Bradatel Suceava (both for women).”[[403]](#footnote-403)

Metropolitan Blaise writes: “In 1947 some people from our village went to Archimandrite Glycherie and said: something like freedom has come. The point was that the communists at first tried to win over the people to their side. They told them that they could come out of the woods and build a monastery. And in 1947 they built the monastery of Slatioara – the spiritual centre of our Church.

“It is difficult to say whether our position got worse under the communists or not. But essentially things remained the same – the persecutions continued. The communists destroyed only eight of our churches – not all of them. They were comparatively moderate.

“Before the war the Church was almost completely annihilated. Before the coming of the communists in 1944 we were accused of being Bolsheviks because we had the same calendar as the ‘Russians’. Under the communists, after 1944, they called us followers of Antonescu, Iron Guardists, fascists, enemies of the people. In fact we took part in no political movements or parties. We entered into agreements neither with the civil authorities, nor with the monarchy, nor with the Iron Guardists, nor with the communists, nor with the Masons…

“1947-52 was a period of comparative freedom. The communist authorities even compelled the official church to return to us the icons, iconostases, bells and church utensils which they had removed. But in 1952, at two o’clock in the night of February 1st to 2nd, two lorries loaded with security police came to the monastery and arrested almost all the young monks together with the igumen, sparing only the very aged. They were sentenced to two years’ imprisonment. Four of them died in camp.”[[404]](#footnote-404)

“The aim of this raid,” writes Constantin Bujor, “was to destroy the organization of the Old Calendarist Church, to put a stop to her activities, and thus to abolish her. Arrests were carried out in an abusive manner because the Securitate had unlimited powers – it was a manifestation of Communist totalitarianism under the notorious ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’ promoted nationwide by the Romanian Workers’ Party. During these years, thousands of arrests were made without any legal warrant in order to populate the forced labor camps. But the inhuman treatment of those detained in prisons and labor camps – the nation’s leaders had always turned a blind eye to these abuses – had a negative impact on foreign relations for Romania, which was striving at the time to become a member of the United Nations. In order to extricate themselves from this mess, the Communist leaders sought a scapegoat by organizing a secret trial for a group of officers in charge of the labor camps. One of these officers, Cormoş from Cluj, testified that the officers did not consider themselves culpable, since they were under direct order from the higher authorities, who now were trying to wash their hands of any guilt. Needless to say, the leadership of the country accepted no culpability, and instead condemned the officers either to death or to years of harsh imprisonment. Then, in 1954, after two years, all of the Old Calendarists arrested were set free, together with numerous other political prisoners.

“While the clergy and some of the Faithful of the Old Calendar Church were serving time in prisons and labor camps, in Ardeal more and more believers were returning to the Church Calendar…

“[Nevertheless,] a careful analysis of the situation demonstrated that the persecution was now being intensified, especially against the leaders of the Church, who had already undergone years of harsh imprisonment and other sufferings at the hands of the previous regime. In order to ensure continuity in the leadership, it became necessary to Ordain Priests and Hierarchs to take up the banner of the struggle for the truth. The presence of a Hierarch was absolutely indispensable for the Old Calendar Church. To this end, contact was established with Bishop Galaction in Bucharest, who had in the past expressed his attachment to the Old Calendar, for which he had been condemned at the time of the German Occupation during the First World War.[[405]](#footnote-405) He promised that when conditions at the Slatioara Monastery were favourable, he would come and assume the leadership of the Old Calendar Church. Thus, a delegation of Priests who formed part of the leadership and were personally known to Bishop Galaction was sent to Bucharest – Father Dionisie, Father Evloghie, and Father (later Metropolitan) Silvestru - and persuaded him to come to Slatioara Monastery.”[[406]](#footnote-406)

On April 5/18, 1955 Bishop Galaction publicly declared in a letter to the newcalendarist synod that he had accepted to be the head of the Old Calendarist Church, and on May 8/21 he arrived in Slatioara Monastery, where the people greeted him with the cry: “Axios!”, “He is worthy!” Thus was fulfilled a prophetic vision that Hieromonk Glycherie had had during the war, while in a forest being pursued by enemies: “It was night. Before him, he saw a beautiful Church. Metropolitan Galacteon (Cordun)… appeared. Vladyka was holding Icons and a Cross in his hands, and he was giving each believer in the Church an Icon. When he reached the pious Father Glycherie, he gave him the Cross.”[[407]](#footnote-407)

In November Metropolitan Galaction and Fr. Glycherie were summoned to the police to register and legalise the Church. The faithful were against them going, sensing a trap, but the metropolitan insisted. The result: he was placed under house arrest in the monastery of St. Callinicus at Cernica, while Fr. Glycherie was exiled. However, under the pretext of visiting his doctor, the metropolitan went several times to Moarea Domneasca, which belonged to the Old Calendarists, and consecrated two bishops (Evloghie and Meftodie[[408]](#footnote-408)) and several priests. When this was discovered, about a year later, he was placed under stronger observation in a monastery. But on Good Friday, 1959, Metropolitan Galaction was abducted by Fr. Pavel Mogârzan, Georghe Hincu and the advocate Albu, disguised as Securitate agents. He went the next day to Slatioara… “When, two or three hours [later], the patriarch phoned to find out what the metropolitan was doing, they told him that two officers of the security police had taken him. The patriarch shouted: ‘I didn’t send any officers!’ But the metropolitan was already far away.” [[409]](#footnote-409)

This was not the first dramatic abduction carried out by the Romanian Old Calendarists in this period…

“During the night of November 17, 1956, Archimandrite Glycherie, who had been abducted from his forced labour, was secretly consecrated a bishop [in Moara Domnească]. Then they hid in our monastery [of Slătioara], where every day ordinations took place. A year later they were again arrested.”[[410]](#footnote-410)

At about this time, the future Bishop Pahomie and Hierodeacon Paisie “travelled to Alba County to celebrate the Feast of Saint Nicholas at one of the Churches there. It was soon after the anti-Communist uprising in the Third Hungarian Revolution (October 10/23-October 22/November 4, 1956), had been crushed by Soviet tanks. The Romanian Securitate was monitoring all activities, making arrests, and trying and sentencing individuals. The intention of the monks was apparently known to Securitate forces, because on the way to Râmeţ, Fathers Pahomie and Paisie were detained and taken to Securitate headquarters in Alba Iulia. After a few hours of interrogation, the Fathers were transported later than same night to Aiud, where, the next day, the interrogation continued. The monks began a hunger strike to protest their innocence. After five days of questioning, Father Pahomie was granted a vision at night in his cell, in which the Holy Hieromartyr Cyprian (+304) appeared to him and said, ‘Brother, why have you been arrested, and why are you so distressed?’ Father Pahomie replied that he was distressed because he had been illegally detained. Saint Cyprian told him not to be upset, but to pray to him, and they would be allowed to go home. With much difficulty, Father Pahomie succeeded in communicating his vision to Father Paisie, and both agreed to spend the whole night in prayer. In the morning, they were interrogated once more, signed the transcripts, and were then taken to the prosecutor’s office. After their dossiers had been examined, the monks were released, although by that time it was too late for them to perform the Divine Services for Saint Nicholas’ Day as they had planned…

“The monks returned to Bucharest, where they celebrated the Divine Services for Theophany. The news that in the Bucharest area a ‘hotbed’ of Old Calendarists had been established under the leadership of Bishop Evloghie swiftly reached the Patriarchate, which in turn notified the Securitate. Thus, Father Pahomie and Father Paisie were arrested again, while Bishop Evloghie went into hiding. Taken back to Aiud, where only two months earlier they had been set free, they were sentenced to eight months in prison…”[[411]](#footnote-411)

After being abducted from captivity, Metropolitan Galaction “returned to Slatioara, where he was so weighed down with his sufferings that he was unable to serve the Divine Liturgy”, and died on July 12, 1959.[[412]](#footnote-412)

“The majority of the clergy who had been ordained were however arrested, and were not finally liberated until the amnesty of 1963, when Ceaucescu came to power. In 1958, the Romanian authorities ordered that all the monks under 60 and all the nuns under 55 should leave their monasteries, but, as always in these cases, the order had to be given through the local Metropolitans. Those of the new calendar complied (with one exception) and thousands of monks and nuns found themselves on the streets after a lifetime in their monasteries; the authorities, however, met with an absolute refusal from Saint Glicherie, who declared himself happy to return to prison rather than betray those under his care. Before this, the authorities bowed, though harassment of the monasteries continued, and several monasteries were closed by force…”[[413]](#footnote-413)

One of those who suffered at this time was Father (now Bishop) Demosthenes (Ionita): “In 1957 Metropolitan Glycherie ordained him to the priesthood. Within a month after his ordination, Fr. Demosthenes went to Bucharest to assist Bishop Eulogius who was in hiding. There he was betrayed by an Old Calendar priest and arrested. The authorities demanded that Fr. Demosthenes reveal the whereabouts of the bishop, which he refused to do.

“On July 23, 1958, Fr. Demosthenes was again arrested. He, with a group of chanters, had served a funeral for his cousin in a closed church. A New Calendar priest reported this to the authorities, which resulted in his and the chanters’ arrest. Six officers took Fr. Demosthenes to the city Tirgu-Mures. Upon his arrival, he was led to a room where several guards took off his clothes, and later shaved off his hair and bear. His prison cell had a cement bed with no covers. For five months the civil authorities investigated and interrogated Fr. Demosthenes in an attempt to find some excuse to have him sentenced. The first round of questioning went along these lines:

“Interrogator: What activity does Glycherie have in this country? What measures does he plan against the Communists?

“Fr. Demosthenes: The Metropolitan teaches us to work, pray, and obey the laws of the state.

“Interrogator: Where are you hiding your guns?

“Fr. Demosthenes: Our guns are our church books.

“Chief Interrogator: Why doesn’t he tell us where the guns are? Hang him!

“At this point Fr. Demosthenes lost consciousness and fell to the floor. When he awoke, he found himself in his cell with a doctor. The doctor asked where he hurt and why he had fallen. Fr. Demosthenes responded, ‘I don’t remember.’ The doctor kicked him and responded, ‘This is our medicine for Old Calendarists who want to kill Communists.’

“Fr. Demosthenes spent the next seven years in concentration camps. His experience could comprise a chapter of Solzhenitsyn’s *Gulag Archipelago*. The prisoners were starved, tortured, and denied any form of comfort. At one point Fr. Demosthenes was so exhausted that he could not even remember the Lord’s Prayer. In 1959 the authorities promised all religious prisoners from his camp freedom if they signed a declaration of apostasy. Out of 2,000 prisoners only 90 agreed to sign. In the prison camp in Salcia, Fr. Demosthenes saw prisoners being trampled by horses as he and others worked on building canals and other projects in the freezing winter. Many years later, Fr. Demosthenes met one of the prison guards of Salcia, who informed him that it was indeed a miracle he had survived, for the guards had orders that no one was to leave that camp alive.

“In 1964 Fr. Demosthenes was freed from prison. When his mother saw him for the first time in seven years, she asked, ‘Why did they release you, did you compromise the faith?’ His mother was relieved to hear that her son had not betrayed the Church; this was her main concern. After three weeks he was again under house arrest. Fr. Demosthenes fled to the forests and lived in hiding for five more years.”[[414]](#footnote-414)

## 114. SHOWDOWN IN SAN FRANCISCO

In 1961 the foundation stone for a new ROCOR cathedral in San Francisco was laid. However, ROCOR Archbishop Tikhon of San Francisco fell ill, so Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles was appointed to be temporary administrator of the diocese and in charge of the building of the cathedral. He discovered a scandal involving the financing of the project, - it appears that more than $150,000 had been stolen by the warden of the parish, Eugene Khrapov, - and demanded that fund raising should be stopped and that the money necessary to complete the building should be secured and accounted for in a bank account before they proceeded any further with the construction. A new parish council was elected; but Archbishop Tikhon, at the request of Khrapov and other former parishioners of Archbishop John (Maximovich) when he was ruling bishop of Shanghai, petitioned the Synod to appoint Archbishop John to come to San Francisco and solve the problem.[[415]](#footnote-415) Archbishop John duly received the blessing of the ROCOR Synod to transfer his see from Brussels to San Francisco at the end of 1962.

Upon his arrival, Vladyka took the side of his former Shanghai parishioners, and permitted the founding of a “Society of Laymen” which, according to the secretary of the Synod, Fr. George Grabbe, constituted an authority parallel to, and in rivalry with, the diocesan authority of the bishops. “Vladyka Metropolitan wrote to Vladyka John, that he should not permit this organisation. He was silent and accepted from them the organisation of a festivity on his namesday. This society, headed by dark personalities, is intending to seize power over the whole of the Church Abroad through Vladyka John. After this society has developed in California something similar will follow in other countries, too, for these people have large resources from somewhere or other. In complete secrecy, for example, they have bought Vladyka John a house, about which he has told nobody anything, but it has become known from the newspaper… The editor of *Russkaia Zhizn’ (Russian Life)* Delyanich, who is connected with the solidarists and Shakhovskoy [the Metropolia Archbishop of San Francisco] has, with another woman, bought this house for $62,000 with a cash down-payment of $9000, and within a month transferred it into the name of Vladyka John.”[[416]](#footnote-416)

However, Archbishop John reported to the Synod that on his arrival he found the affairs in the community in a state of “paralysis; the parish council consisted mainly of supporters of Archbishop Anthony, who refused to acquaint him with the documentation, and when they finally gave it to him, it was in a state of “deliberate disorder”.[[417]](#footnote-417)

But Fr. George had a different story: “The parish Council elected under Vladyka Anthony at first tried to cooperate with Vladyka John, although they were unhappy with his appointment. But then came complaints that Vladyka was ignoring the Council, was handing over its functions to outsiders, was not agreeing to call for contributors to the building of the cathedral, was trying to fill up the parish with supporters of Khrapov who did not have the right to vote so as to have a vote at a general assembly, and was doing nothing to correcdt the charter on the instructions of the Cathedral, etc. One has to say that it appears that the majority of the complaints were justified.” Fr. George concluded: “Vladyka John, instead of reconciling the parties… introduced an unheard of exacerbation of relations. Such spite as exists now has never and nowhere been seen among us. Moreover, the parishioners were divided approximately 50/50.”[[418]](#footnote-418)

In May, 1963 Vladyka John was summoned to a session of the Synod. The discussions went on for four hours behind closed doors. Finally, it was decided by a majority of votes to remove him from San Francisco.

When Vladyka returned with this news to San Francisco, there was massive unrest and a petition with many signatures was sent to the Synod asking that their beloved archpastor not be removed. The opposing party also redoubled their efforts. In his report to the Synod of July 23, Vladyka John wrote: “There was a danger of massive fights, I tried to hold people back as far as I could, my presence restrained this zeal not according to reason, but to my profound sorrow everything that was done to establish peace in my flock in the course of four months was destroyed at one blow in one day.” Metropolitan Anastasy telephoned Vladyka John and spoke with him for one hour, as a result of which conversation the temporary administration of the diocese was given back to Vladyka John for another six months…

But passions did not cool. On July 9 there was due to take place the re-election of the members of the parish council and the warden. But Vladyka Anthony’s supporters were categorically against this. The Synod decided to send its observers to the election. “However, St. John publicly declared that neither the Synod nor the Sobor had the right to interfere in the internal affairs of his diocese.”[[419]](#footnote-419) The situation by this time was getting out of hand… Among the many telegrams sent to the Synod in support of Vladyka John, it was found that more than 1000 of them had been signed several times by the same people, including reposed people!

Khrapov and Vladyka John were now sued for financial mismanagement. The court ordered that the building of the cathedral be stopped until the end of the trial. The opponents of Vladyka John summoned several ROCOR bishops to the trial: Archbishops Nicon (Rklitsky), Anthony (Sinkevich) of Los Angeles, Vitaly (Ustinov) of Canada and Seraphim (Ivanov) of Chicago. On the opposing bench with Archbishop John were Archbishops Averky and Leonty, and Bishops Savva and Nektary. Also appearing for the opposition was Fr. George, who had been sent by Metropolitan Anastasy to declare during the trial that the Synod had the complete right to be involved in diocesan affairs. “This elicited shouts in the ecclesiastical public that ‘Grabbe is judging the saint’”.[[420]](#footnote-420) In his report to the Synod Vladyka John wrote: “At the first hearing there arrived the secretary of the Synod, Protopresbyter George, one of the most influential members of the clique. His constant meetings with lawyers for the plaintiffs attracted attention to himself… It is with pain that I have to see and observe the collapse of the Church Abroad, which is beneficial only for her enemies. We, her hierarchs, cannot allow this, nor that one organized group should lord it over the rest of the episcopate and should by any means introduce that which it desires…”[[421]](#footnote-421)

Archbishop John was acquitted of financial mismanagement, and on August 13, the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR decided to confirm him in the see of San Francisco. However, on August 18, there was an “Extraordinary meeting of the Initiative group of the opponents of Archbishop John”. At this meeting a “Group standing for the purity of the Synod” declared that they were not alone, that “the American Council of Churches [a mainly Protestant organization] has already taken note of Archbishop John’s entourage, and has promised support” (*Novaia Zaria* (New Dawn)*,* № 8618, 20 August, 1963). Vladyka John was accused that “already for half a year he has been conducting negotiations with the Greek and Serbian Churches… so as to join one of them… and for this aim he is trying to take possession of the property of the Joy of All Who Sorrow cathedral… Vl. John has surrounded himself by people with a communist past.”

Nun Cassia writes : « It turned out that St. John was more right [as regards the rights of a diocesan bishop vis-á-vis the Synod], but from a practical point of view his links with the ‘laymen’ almost brought the Church Abroad to a schism – which, of course, would only have played into the hands of the enemies of Orthodoxy. The ‘Society of Laymen’ created by Khrapov pursued far from peaceful ends ; its members were linked with circles inimical to ROCOR and wanted in any way possible, if not to destroy, at any rate to weaken it – in particular, through introducing a schism into it. Insofar as Khrapov and the ‘laymen’ possessed very large finanical resources, they were able to unleash a whole campaign in the newspapers blackening the ROCOR Synod and attacking individual hierarchs. The ‘Society of Laymen’ proclaimed the thesis that not one of the resolutions of the Synod or Sobor could be valid if it was not confirmed by the laymen, and tried in every way to undermine the authority of the hierarchy, demanding reforms in the Church that were completely mindless from a canonical point of view. On the other hand, the ‘Society of Laymen’ even as if were to buy up the Synod, contributing through St. John a cheque for $250,000 for the needs of the Synod. However, the Synod refused to accept this contribution until the Society was reorganized into a Church Brotherhood…. In the end Metropolitan Anastasy understood that he was not capable of dealing with the administration, and, having summoned an extraordinary Council, suggested electing a new First-Hierarch, who became St. Philaret.

« In his first speech at metropolitan at the Council, the holy hierarch Philaret declared as regards the activity of the ‘laymen’ : ‘They will not frighten us,’ quoting Stolypin. After this the ‘laymen’ and their supporters among the hierarchs, in particular Archbishop Averky of Syracuse and Archbishop Leonty of Chile, were quiet for a time, but then their activity was renewed. The ‘laymen’ denounced not only Fr. George Grabbe, but also Metropolitan Philaret, and in general the hierarchy of ROCOR. »[[422]](#footnote-422)

The bitterness caused by this affair lingered on, and in 1966 Archbishop Averky wrote to Metropolitan Philaret: “A tendency has appeared among a small group of bishops to create ‘its own party’ and strive for all power in the Church. Scandals have begun among us which, alas, are leading our Church to destruction, all the while broadening and deepening their activity from that time until now.”[[423]](#footnote-423)

On the other side, A.G. Shatilova, the daughter of Fr. George, declared that Archbishop John, by his continued support for Khapov, was preparing to create a schism in ROCOR. But “God saved him through his sudden death” in July, 1966. For Metropolitan Philaret had just signed an ukaz banning him from serving, and had bought a ticket to San Francisco. “But in the end the metropolitan flew on this ticket to the funeral of the archbishop...”[[424]](#footnote-424)

Whatever the truth about this affair, - and there is much that remains obscure about it, - there can be no doubt that Archbishop John *is* a saint, as was accepted by many of his opponents in this affair, and as is witnessed by his incorrupt relics and the extraordinary abundance of his miracles. [[425]](#footnote-425) His tomb, which is located in the crypt of the cathedral he was finally able to build, to the Mother of God “The Joy of All Who Sorrow”, in San Francisco, has become a major place of pilgrimage for Orthodox Christians of all nationalities. Archbishop John remains probably the best-known and most universally loved personality in the whole history of the Russian Church Abroad.[[426]](#footnote-426)

# Part 5: THE ZENITH OF ECUMENISM (1964-1990)

## 115. A NEW ROCOR METROPOLITAN

On May 14/27, 1964, Metropolitan Anastasy retired (he died in 1965). Known as “most wise” already from the time of the 1917-18 Council, his period as first hierarch represents a “holding operation”, a preservation of the *status quo* in a very difficult period interrupted by the chaos of the Second World War. It left certain important questions unanswered – questions that would have to be answered unambiguously sooner or later. But it at any rate kept the voice of opposition to the MP alive in the West.

There was such animosity between the supporters of the two candidates for the vacant post, Archbishops Nikon and John Maximovich, that to avoid a schism Archbishop John withdrew his own candidature and put forward in his place the youngest bishop, Philaret (Voznesensky) of Brisbane.[[427]](#footnote-427) In fact, Fr. Christopher Birchall writes that Philaret’s election was “entirely due to the prompting and influence of Archbishop John”.[[428]](#footnote-428)

The suggestion was then universally accepted, and Bishop Philaret was enthroned by Metropolitan Anastasy himself in a service that used the ancient text for the enthroning of a metropolitan of Moscow for the first time in centuries.

The new metropolitan’s endurance of torture for Christ at the hands of the Japanese pagans in Manchuria has already been described. During the Soviet occupation he continued to show great courage, refusing to accept a Soviet passport or commemorate the authorities, although he unwillingly found himself in the Moscow Patriarchate. Later, the Chinese even unsuccessfully tried to blow up the confessor in the house in which he was living.

Archimandrite Philaret left China in 1961, only after almost the whole of his flock had left Harbin. “While striving to guard my flock from Soviet falsehood and lies,” he recounted, “I myself sometimes felt inexpressibly oppressed – to the point that I several times came close to the decision to leave altogether – to cease serving. And I was stopped only by the thought of my flock: how could I leave these little ones? If I went and stopped serving, that would mean that they would have to enter into service to the Soviets and hear prayers for the forerunners of the Antichrist – ‘Lord, preserve them for many years,’ etc. This stopped me and forced me to carry out my duty to the end.

“And when, finally, with the help of God I managed to extract myself from red China, the first thing I did was turn to the First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, Metropolitan Anastasy, with a request that he consider me again to be in the jurisdiction of the Russian Church Abroad. Vladyka Metropolitan replied with mercy and love, and immediately blessed me to serve in Hong Kong already as a priest of the Synodal jurisdiction, and pointed out that every church server passing into this jurisdiction from the jurisdiction of Moscow must give a special penitential declaration to the effect that he is sorry about his (albeit involuntary) stay in the Moscow jurisdiction. I did this immediately.”

Soon Fr. Philaret flew to Australia and arrived in Sydney. The ruling Archbishop of Australia accepted him with joy and love, and already in the first weeks of Fr. Philaret’s stay in Australia began to speak about the possibility of ordaining him as a Bishop. In 1963 he was ordained Bishop of Brisbane, a vicariate of the Australian diocese. In his sermon at his nomination as Bishop Archimandrite Philaret said to the Archpastors who were present:

“Holy Hierarchs of God! I have thought and felt much in these last days, I have reviewed and examined the whole of my life – and… I see, on the one hand, a chain of innumerable benefactions from God, and on the other – the countless number of my sins… And so raise your hierarchical prayers for my wretchedness in this truly terrible hour of my ordination, that the Lord, the First of Pastors, Who through your holiness is calling me to the height of this service, may not deprive me, the sinful and wretched one, of a place and lot among His chosen ones…

“One hierarch-elder, on placing the hierarchical staff in the hands of a newly appointed bishop, said to him: ‘Do not be like a milestone on the way, that points out for others the road ahead, but itself remains in its place…’ Pray also for this, Fathers and Archpastors, that in preaching to others, I myself may not turn out to be an idle slave.”

The new metropolitan faced a daunting task. For he had, on the one hand, to lead his Church in decisively denouncing the apostasy of World Orthodoxy, communion with which could no longer be tolerated. And on the other, he had to preserve unity among the members of his own Synod, some of whom were in spirit closer to “World Orthodoxy” than True Orthodoxy…

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The first Official Epistle of a Hierarchical Council of ROCOR under her new metropolitan was dated June 4/17, 1964, and appeared to continue the line adopted by Metropolitan Anastasy in relation to the MP: "They [the God-opposing Communists] have contrived a new, truly diabolical plan in their war against the faithful: it is now forbidden by the godless government of the USSR for children and young men and women from the ages of 3 to 18 to be allowed into God's churches and to be communed with the Body and Blood of Christ. And in order to mock the Church even more, this directive by the authorities has to be enforced by the clergymen themselves – they are the ones who must prohibit youth from approaching the Chalice of Christ and demand the removal of children and youth from the churches"….

"But the true situation is this: not many clergymen are left in the USSR, not many open churches are left, the faithful rarely can attend services And now even at these rare services, which Christians, if they are not extremely old men and women, attend at the risk of being tagged by the active Soviet "watchers" and thus lose their jobs--parents cannot bring their young children, who, in their tender childhood and youth, so need graceful communion to the Fountain of life--to Christ the Savior, just as young little saplings need the light and the warmth of the sun."

This Epistle appeared to accept the MP as a grace-bearing institution – nearly thirty years after the leading hierarchs of the Catacomb Church had rejected that position. However, in his 1965 Epistle “to Orthodox Bishops and all who hold dear the Fate of the Russian Church”, Metropolitan Philaret gave the first signs that he was going to adopt a more uncompromising approach that attributed a more prominent role to the Catacomb Church than during the time of his predecessor:

“In recent days the Soviet Government in Moscow and various parts of the world celebrated a new anniversary of the October Revolution of 1917 which brought it to power.

  “We, on the other hand, call to mind in these days the beginning of the way of the cross for the Russian Orthodox Church, upon which from that time, as it were, all the powers of hell have fallen.

  “Meeting resistance on the part of Archpastors, pastors, and laymen strong in spirit, the Communist power, in its fight with religion, began from the very first days the attempt to weaken the Church not only by killing those of her leaders who were strongest in spirit, but also by means of the artificial creation of schisms.

  Thus arose the so-called ''Living Church" and the renovationist movement, which had the character of a Church tied to a Protestant-Communist reformation. Notwithstanding the support of the Government, this schism was crushed by the inner power of the Church. It was too clear to believers that the ‘Renovated Church’ was uncanonical and altered Orthodoxy. For this reason people did not follow it.

  “The second attempt, after the death of Patriarch Tikhon and the rest of the locum tenentes of the patriarchal throne, Metropolitan Peter, had greater success. The Soviet power succeeded in 1927 in sundering in part the inner unity of the Church. By confinement in prison, torture, and special methods it broke the will of the vicar of the patriarchal locum tenens, Metropolitan Sergius, and secured from him the proclamation of a declaration of the complete loyalty of the Church to the Soviet power, even to the point where the joys and successes of the Soviet Union were declared by the Metropolitan to the joys and successes of the Church, and its failures to be her failures. What can be more blasphemous than such an idea, which was justly appraised by many at that time as an attempt to unite light with darkness, and Christ with Belial. Both Patriarch Tikhon and Metropolitan Peter, as well as others who served as locum tenens of the Patriarchal throne, had earlier refused to sign a similar declaration, for which they were subjected to arrest, imprisonment, and banishment.

  “Protesting against this declaration—which was proclaimed by Metropolitan Sergius by himself alone, without the agreement of the suppressed majority of the episcopate of the Russian Church, violating thus the 34th Apostolic Canon—many bishops who were then in the death camp at Solovki wrote to the Metropolitan: ‘Any government can sometimes make decisions that are foolish, unjust, cruel, to which the Church is forced to submit, but which she cannot rejoice over or approve. One of the aims of the Soviet Government is the extirpation of religion, but the Church cannot acknowledge its successes in this direction as her own successes’ (Open Letter from Solovki, September 27, 1927).

  “The courageous majority of the sons of the Russian Church did not accept the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, considering that a union of the Church with the godless Soviet State, which had set itself the goal of annihilating Christianity in general, could not exist on principle.

  “But a schism nonetheless occurred. The minority, accepting the declaration, formed a central administration, the so-called ‘Moscow Patriarchate,’ which, while being supposedly officially recognized by the authorities, in actual fact received no legal rights whatever from them; for they continued, now without hindrance, a most cruel persecution of the Church. In the words of Joseph, Metropolitan of Petrograd, Metropolitan Sergius, having proclaimed the declaration, entered upon the path of ‘monstrous arbitrariness, flattery, and betrayal of the Church to the interests of atheism and the destruction of the Church.’

  “The majority, renouncing the declaration, began an illegal ecclesiastical existence. Almost all the bishops were tortured and killed in death camps, among them the locum tenentes Metropolitan Peter and Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan, who was respected by all, and Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd, who was shot to death at the end of 1938, as well as many other bishops and thousands of priests, monks, nuns, and courageous laymen. Those bishops and clergy who miraculously remained alive began to live illegally and to serve Divine services secretly, hiding themselves from the authorities and originating in this fashion the Catacomb Church in the Soviet Union.

  “Little news of this Church has come to the free world. The Soviet press long kept silent about her, wishing to give the impression that all believers in the USSR stood behind the Moscow Patriarchate. They even attempted to deny entirely the existence of the Catacomb Church.

  “But then, after the death of Stalin and the exposure of his activity, and especially after the fall of Khrushchev, the Soviet press has begun to write more and more often on the secret Church in the USSR, calling it the ‘sect’ of True-Orthodox Christians. It was apparently impossible to keep silence about it any longer; its numbers are too great and it causes the authorities too much alarm.

  “Unexpectedly in the *Atheist Dictionary* (Moscow, 1964), on pages 123 and 124 the Catacomb Church is openly discussed. '’True-Orthodox Christians,’ we read in the *Dictionary*, ‘an Orthodox sect, originating in the years 1922-24. It was organized in 1927, when Metropolitan Sergius proclaimed the principle of loyalty to the Soviet power.’ ‘Monarchist’ (we would say ecclesiastical) ‘elements, having united around Metropolitan Joseph (Petrovykh) of Leningrad' (Petrograd) — the Josephites,’ or, as the same Dictionary says, the Tikhonites, formed in 1928 a guiding centre, the True-Orthodox Church, and united all groups and elements which came out against the Soviet order’ (we may add from ourselves, ‘atheist’ order). ‘The True-Orthodox Church directed unto the villages a multitude of monks and nuns,’ for the most part of course priests, we add again from ourselves, who celebrated Divine services and rites secretly and ‘conducted propaganda against the leadership of the Orthodox Church,’ i.e, against the Moscow Patriarchate which had given in to the Soviet power, ‘appealing to people not to submit to Soviet laws,’ which are directed, quite apparently, against the Church of Christ and faith. By the testimony of the *Atheist Dictionary*, the True-Orthodox Christians organized and continue to organize house, 'i.e., secret, catacomb churches and monasteries... preserving in full the doctrine and rites of Orthodoxy.’ They ‘do not acknowledge the authority of the Orthodox Patriarch,’ i.e., the successor of Metropolitan Sergius, Patriarch Alexis.

  “’Striving to fence off’ the True-Orthodox Christians ‘from the influence of Soviet reality,’ chiefly of course from atheist propaganda, ‘their leaders... make use of the myth of Antichrist, who has supposedly been ruling in the world since 1917.’ The anti-Christian nature of the Soviet power is undoubted for any sound-thinking person, and all the more for a Christian.

  “True Orthodox Christians ‘usually refuse to participate in elections,’ which in the Soviet Union, a country deprived of freedom, are simply a comedy, ‘and other public functions; they do not accept pensions, do not allow their children to go to school beyond the fourth class...’ Here is an unexpected Soviet testimony of the truth, to which nothing need be added.

  “Honour and praise to the True-Orthodox Christians, heroes of the spirit and confessors, who have not bowed before the terrible power, which can stand only by terror and force and has become accustomed to the abject flattery of its subjects. The Soviet rulers fall into a rage over the fact that there exist people who fear God more than men. They are powerless before the millions of True-Orthodox Christians.

“However, besides the True Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union and the Moscow Patriarchate, which have communion neither of prayer nor of any other kind with each other, there exists yet a part of the Russian Church—free from oppression and persecution by the atheists the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. She has never broken the spiritual and prayerful bonds with the Catacomb Church in the home land. After the last war many members of this Church appeared abroad and entered into the Russian Church Outside Russia, and thus the bond between these two Churches was strengthened yet more—a bond which has been sustained illegally up to the present time. As time goes on, it becomes all the stronger and better established.

  “The part of the Russian Church that is abroad and free is called upon to speak in the free world in the name of the persecuted Catacomb Church in the Soviet Union; she reveals to all the truly tragic condition of believers in the USSR, which the atheist power so carefully hushes up, with the aid of the Moscow Patriarchate, she calls on those who have not lost shame and conscience to help the persecuted.

  “This is why it is our sacred duty to watch over the existence of the Russian Church Outside of Russia. The Lord, the searcher of hearts, having permitted His Church to be subjected to oppression, persecution, and deprivation of all rights in the godless Soviet State, has given us, Russian exiles, in the free world the talent of freedom, and He expects from us the increase of this talent and a skilful use of it. And we have not the right to hide it in the earth. Let no one dare to say to us that we should do this, let no one push us to a mortal sin. For the fate of our Russian Church we, Russian bishops, are responsible before God, and no one in the world can free us from this sacred obligation. No one can understand better than we what is happening in our homeland, of which no one can have any doubt. Many times foreigners, even Orthodox people and those vested with high ecclesiastical rank, have made gross errors in connection with the Russian Church and false conclusions concerning her present condition. May God forgive them this, since they do not know what they are doing.

  “We shall not cease to accuse the godless persecutors of faith and those who evilly cooperate with them under the exterior of supposed representatives of the Church. In this the Russian Church Outside of Russia has always seen one of her important tasks. Knowing this, the Soviet power through its agents wages with her a stubborn battle, not hesitating to use any means: lies, bribes, gifts, and intimidation. We, however, shall not suspend our accusation.

  “Declaring this before the face of the whole world, I appeal to all our brothers in Christ—Orthodox bishops—and to all people who hold dear the fate of the persecuted Russian Church as a part of the Universal Church of Christ, for understanding, support, and their holy prayers. As for our spiritual children, we call on them to hold firmly to the truth of Orthodoxy, witnessing of her both by one's word and especially by a prayerful, devout Christian life.”

The prominence given to the Catacomb Church by Metropolitan Philaret was timely. The True Orthodox Christians inside the Soviet Union were going through a very difficult period. True bishops were exceedingly few: Schema-Bishop Peter (Ladygin) of Nizhegorod died in Glazov in 1957, leaving no successor, as did Bishop Barnabas (Belyaev) of Pechersk in Kiev in 1963 and Bishop Michael (Yershov) of Chistopol in the Mordovian camps in 1974. Catacomb priests served their widely scattered flocks in the greatest secrecy without any archpastoral support. Many now began to commemorate the first-hierarchs of the Russian Church Abroad, who thereby became de facto the leaders of the whole of the Russian Church…

## 116. THE LIFTING OF THE ANATHEMAS

Since the founding of the World Council of Churches in 1948, the leader of the ecumenical movement on the Orthodox side had been the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras. The key figure on the Catholic side was Pope John XXIII, who early in the 1960s convened the three-year Vatican II Council, which thrust forward an ecumenist agenda. “One of the council’s key documents, Unitatis Redintegratio (Restoration of Unity), issued in 1964, identified “restoration of unity among all Christians” as a key long-term goal. The document described baptized Christians who profess faith in another church as “separated brethren”, not as “heretics”, the term commonly used for centuries prior.”[[429]](#footnote-429)

Olga Chetverikova writes: “Setting as one of its central aims the leadership of Catholicism in the movement for Christian unity, the Council formulated its own ecumenical conception, as an alternative to the way of the Protestants, which allowed it to open itself out to dialogue to other religions, while keeping untouched its position on the power of the pontiff. In the dogmatic constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium), it was affirmed that the Church of Christ, ‘established and constructed in this world as a community remains in the Catholic Church ruled by the successor of Peter and the bishops in communion with him’, but now it was added that ‘even outside her membership there exist many principles of sanctification and truth, which, being gifts, are proper to the Church of Christ, and propel towards Catholic unity’. Thus the Council defined two basic points in its relations with other churches. It affirmed that it was possible to receive ‘the whole fullness of means of salvation’ only through the Catholic Church, but at the same time it recognized that other ecclesiastical communities, linked to her by virtue of baptism, ‘can, in different ways, corresponding to the particular situation of each church or community, truly engender the life of grace’, and ‘they are capable of opening access to saving communion’. Although the latter ‘suffer from certain faults, nevertheless they are endowed with significance and weight in the mystery of salvation’. The main reversal in ecumenical consciousness consisted in the conclusion that ‘those who believe in Christ and have been baptized in the right manner are in definite communion with the Catholic Church, albeit not complete, while full communion is possible only with the recognition of the power of the successor of Peter, that is, the Pontiff of Rome.’”[[430]](#footnote-430)

The new ecumenist course was sealed on January 5 and 6, 1964, when Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople met in Jerusalem and prayed together. This was a clear transgression of Apostolic canon 45 concerning relations with heretics. Archbishop Chrysostom of Athens said: “While the Pope is going to the Holy Land to kneel before the Saviour’s sepulchre, you (Athenagoras) are going to kneel before the Pope and bury Orthodoxy.”[[431]](#footnote-431)

On January 23 / February 5, 1964 a large number of Athonite monks, including the abbots of four monasteries, protested against this ecumenical activity: “the undersigned Fathers of the Holy Mountain, abbots, priest-monks and monks, learning of the recent machinations and plots against our blameless Orthodox Faith by the Papal insurrection and of the pro-uniate actions and statements of the Ecumenical Patriarch and his co-workers, do proclaim with a stentorian voice that we denounce these uniate tendencies and leanings, and remains steadfast and unshaken in our Orthodox Faith…”[[432]](#footnote-432) Unfortunately, however, this “stentorian voice” became more and more muted, until only the Monastery of Esphigmenou remained out of communion of the Ecumenical Patriarchate…

The calendar question again reared its head during this period. Thus during the Second Pan-Orthodox Conference, the Church of Greece had threatened to boycott the meeting if the calendar question were raised. “But the representatives of the Jerusalem Patriarchate,” writes Bishop Ephraim, “insisted that the calendar be placed upon the agenda for discussion, and with good reason. The Jerusalem Patriarchate is especially interested in settling the calendar issue because of its position as a place of pilgrimage. When Athenagoras met Pope Paul in Jerusalem, he went afterwards to Bethlehem to attend the service for Christmas (which, of course, is celebrated there according to the Old Calendar). In the meantime, the new calendarists were celebrating Epiphany in Constantinople. By the time Athenagoras returned to Istanbul, Epiphany had already been celebrated. In other words, Athenagoras himself, because of this calendar confusion, celebrated two Christmases but did not celebrate Epiphany that year. Also, many pious pilgrims came from Greece to celebrate Christmas in Bethlehem, not knowing that the Jerusalem Patriarchate follows the Old Calendar… They arrive in Bethlehem and discover that it is only St. Spyridon’s day and that Christmas is two weeks away. They have only arranged to stay for a few days, and few are those who have made the provisions or have the money to wait for two weeks. In their dismay, they beg the priests there to chant a few Christmas troparia and, of course, the priests refuse, because not only is it not Christmas according to their reckoning, but they are also in the midst of the fast. The pilgrims return to Greece confused and disheartened since they did not get to celebrate Christmas, even in Bethlehem, and Christmas has already been celebrated in Greece. Therefore, that year they do not celebrate Christmas anywhere. This happens annually there – hence Jerusalem’s concern.”[[433]](#footnote-433)

“Immediately after the Holy Land meeting,” writes Fr. George Macris, “a proclamation of the whole monastic community of Mount Athos to ‘the pious Orthodox Greek people and the whole of the Orthodox Church’ denounced the ‘pro-uniate actions and statements’ of the Patriarch and his co-workers.”[[434]](#footnote-434)

In 1964 several parishes in the USA, Canada and Australia under Archbishop Photius, formerly of Paphos (Cyprus), left the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Their basic reasons were the dependence of the patriarchate on the Turks, the rapprochement with the Catholics, and the dictatorial behaviour of Archbishop James. In this year the Turks increased their harassment of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople. Much property was confiscated, and 15,000 Greeks were deported.

This led some to speculate that the Patriarch’s rapprochement with the Pope was elicited by his need to find powerful friends to support him in the West – just as in 1274 and 1439. Thus in April, 1965, Archbishop James pleaded with the Pope to help the Patriarch. The Pope promised his support, whereupon the two hierarchs prayed together.[[435]](#footnote-435)

Further intense activity led, on December 7, 1965, to the “lifting of the anathemas” of 1054 between Orthodoxy and the Papacy. The announcement was made simultaneously in Rome and Constantinople. It included the following words: “Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I with his synod, in common agreement, declare that: a) They regret the offensive words, the reproaches without foundation, and the reprehensible gestures which, on both sides, have marked or accompanied the sad events of this period [viz. in the 11th century]. b) They likewise regret and remove both from memory and from the midst of the Church the sentences of excommunication which followed these events, the memory of which has influenced actions up to our day and has hindered closer relations in charity; and they commit these excommunications to oblivion. We must recognize that the sentences were directed at particular persons and not at the Churches, and did not aim to break ecclesiastical communion between the sees of Rome and Constantinople.”[[436]](#footnote-436)

“In short,” writes Peter Hebblethwaite in his biography of Paul VI, “1054 had been an accident, much ado about nothing very much, frozen into permanent schism only by later ‘non-theological’ events.”[[437]](#footnote-437)

The Tomos was historically inaccurate: both sees recognized in 1054 that a break in ecclesiastical communion had taken place between them. Moreover, in saying that the schism of 1054 was based on “reproaches without foundation”, the Patriarch was in effect saying that the Papacy was not, or never had been, heretical – although the Papacy had renounced none of its heresies, and Pope Paul VI had reasserted papal infallibility as recently as Vatican II. Thirdly, while relations with excommunicated individuals or Churches can be restored if those individuals or Churches repent, anathemas against heresies cannot be removed insofar as a heresy remains a heresy forever.

And yet in December of 1968 Athenagoras announced that he had inserted Pope Paul VI’s name into the Diptychs, thereby signifying that the Pope was not a heretic and was in communion with the Orthodox Church. And he made the following formal renunciation of True Christianity and welcome to the coming Antichrist: “We must pray and struggle that Jerusalem becomes a place of dialogue and peace. So that together we may prepare the way for the return of Jesus, the Mahdi of Islam, the Moshiach [Messiah] of Israel, our Lord”.

Archbishop Chrysostom of Athens denied that the Patriarch had the authority to act independently of the other Orthodox Churches. And he said: “I am convinced that no other Orthodox Church will copy the Ecumenical Patriarch’s action.”[[438]](#footnote-438) Unfortunately, he was wrong: in March, 1966 the Synod of the new calendarist Church of Cyprus approved the lifting of anathemas.[[439]](#footnote-439)

ROCOR had three observers at the Vatican Council who witnessed the ceremony of the “lifting of the anathemas”. One of them, Archimandrite Ambrose (Pogodin), after describing the ceremony with evident sympathy, wrote: “The Russian Church Abroad did not recognize the actions of Patriarch Athenagoras, considering that the patriarch was obliged to do this only with the agreement of all the Orthodox Churches, because the matter of the schism between the Eastern and Western Churches concerned all the Orthodox Churches – it was not only the personal relations between the Pope and the Patriarch of Constantinople. We, observers from the Russian Church Abroad, received by telephone the order from our ecclesiastical authorities not to be present at the ceremony of the mutual lifting of the anathemas between the Constantinopolitan and Roman Churches. But we, having taken counsel amongst ourselves, thought that such a demonstration would have been harmful for our Church, which we represented with dignity. However, our demonstration would have remained unnoticed: what would the absence of three people in a mass of tens of thousands of people signify?!”[[440]](#footnote-440)

At this critical moment, on December 15, 1965, Metropolitan Philaret issued the first of a series of “Sorrowful Epistles” designed to warn the Orthodox against ecumenism.[[441]](#footnote-441)

First, he wrote to Patriarch Athenagoras protesting against his action: “The organic belonging of the Orthodox to the union of the contemporary heretics does not sanctify the latter, while it tears away the Orthodox entering into it from Catholic Orthodox Unity… Your gesture puts a sign of equality between error and truth. For centuries all the Orthodox Churches believed with good reasons that it has violated no doctrine of the Holy Ecumenical Councils; whereas the Church of Rome has introduced a number of innovations in its dogmatic teaching. The more such innovations were introduced, the deeper was to become the separation between the East and the West. The doctrinal deviations of Rome in the eleventh century did not yet contain the errors that were added later. Therefore the cancellation of the mutual excommunication of 1054 could have been of meaning at that time, but now it is only evidence of indifference in regard to the most important errors, namely new doctrines foreign to the ancient Church, of which some, having been exposed by St. Mark of Ephesus, were the reason why the Church rejected the Union of Florence… No union of the Roman Church with us is possible until it renounces its new doctrines, and no communion in prayer can be restored with it without a decision of all the Churches, which, however, can hardly be possible before the liberation of the Church of Russia which at present has to live in the catacombs… A true dialogue implies an exchange of views with a possibility of persuading the participants to attain an agreement. As one can perceive from the Encyclical Ecclesiam Suam, Pope Paul VI understands the dialogue as a plan for our union with Rome with the help of some formula which would, however, leave unaltered its doctrines, and particularly its dogmatic doctrine about the position of the Pope in the Church. However, any compromise with error is foreign to the history of the Orthodox Church and to the essence of the Church. It could not bring a harmony in the confessions of the Faith, but only an illusory outward unity similar to the conciliation of dissident Protestant communities in the ecumenical movement.”[[442]](#footnote-442)

Tatiana (now Nun Cassia) Senina writes: “Metropolitan Philaret sent a similar address to another leader of the ecumenical movement – the American Archbishop James. However, the apostate hierarchs paid no attention to his exhortations. The ecumenical movement continued to gather speed. The holy Hierarch Philaret looked with sorrow on the falling away from the faith of the once Orthodox Churches. And he called the epistles which he sent to all the hierarchs of the Orthodox Church just that – ‘Sorrowful Epistles’. In his first Epistle, written in 1969, St. Philaret says that he has decided to turn to all the hierarchs, ‘some of whom occupy the oldest and most glorious sees’, because, in the words of St. Gregory the Theologian, ‘the truth is betrayed by silence’, and it is impossible to keep silent when you see a deviation from the purity of Orthodoxy – after all, every bishop at his ordination gives a promise to keep the Faith and the canons of the holy fathers and defend Orthodoxy from heresies. Vladyka quotes various ecumenist declarations of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and clearly shows, on the basis of the patristic teaching and the canons, that the position of the WCC has nothing in common with Orthodoxy, and consequently the Orthodox Churches must not participate in the work of this council. The holy Hierarch Philaret also emphasises that the voice of the MP is not the voice of the True Russian Church, which in the homeland is persecuted and hides in the catacombs. Vladyka calls on all the Orthodox hierarchs to stand up in defence of the purity of Orthodoxy.

“Vladyka Philaret wrote his second ‘Sorrowful Epistle’ on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, 1972. In it he noted that although in the last two years hierarchs had made declarations about the heterodoxy of the ecumenical movement, not one Orthodox Church had declared that it was leaving the WCC. Vladyka placed as the aim of his Second Epistle ‘to show that abyss of heresy against the very concept of the Church into which all the participants in the ecumenical movement are being drawn’. He recalled the threatening prophecy of the Apostle Paul that to those who will not receive ‘the love of the truth for salvation’ the Lord will send ‘strong delusion, that they should believe a lie. That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness’ (II Thessalonians 2.10-12). St. Philaret’s third Epistle was devoted to the so-called ‘Thyateira Confession’ of Metropolitan Athenagoras [of Thyateira and Great Britain], the exarch of the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate in Europe – a document written in a completely heretical spirit, but which did not elicit any reaction from the leaders of the ‘official churches’. Evidently Vladyka Philaret hoped at the beginning that at any rate one of the bishops of ‘World Orthodoxy’ might listen to his words, which is why he addressed them in his epistles as true Archpastors of the Church. Besides, attempts at exhortation corresponded to the apostolic command: ‘A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition reject, knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself’ (Titus 3. 10-11). It was fitting, before accepting an anathema against the apostates, to try and convert them from their error.

“Alas, no conversion took place, and the ecumenical impiety continued to pour out. Vladyka addressed his word not only to bishops, but also to their flock, untiringly explaining the danger of the new heresy. While telling about the zeal of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, who slapped the face of Arius when he blasphemed against the Son of God, Vladyka said: ‘O how often we do not have enough of such zeal when it is really necessary to speak for the insulted and trodden-on truth! I want to tell you about one incident that took place not long ago and which it would have been difficult even to imagine several years ago – and now we are going further and further downhill all the time. One man came from Paris and said that the following incident had taken place at a so-called “ecumenical meeting’. Of course, you know what ecumenism is; it is ***the heresy of heresies*.** It wants to completely wipe out the concept of the Orthodox Church as the guardian of the Truth, and to create some kind of new, strange church. And so there took place this ‘ecumenical meeting’. Present were a so-called Orthodox protopriest from the Paris Theological (more exactly, heretical) Institute, a Jewish rabbi, a pastor and a Catholic priest. At first they sort of prayed, and then began the speeches. And then (forgive me for saying such things from the holy ambon, but I want to show you what we have come to) the Jewish rabbi said that the Lord Jesus Christ was the illegitimate son of a dissolute woman…

“’But that’s not the main horror. The Jewish people has opposed God for a long time… - so there’s nothing surprising in this. But the horror was that when he said this ***everyone*** was silent. Later, a man who had heard this terrible blasphemy asked the ‘Orthodox’ protopriest: ‘How could you keep silent?’ He replied: ‘I didn’t want to offend this Jew.’ It’s wrong to offend a Jew, but to insult the All-Pure Virgin Mary is permitted! Look at the state we have come to! How often does it happen to us all now that we do not have the zeal to stand up, when necessary, in defence of our holy things! The Orthodox cleric must zealously stand up against blasphemy, just as the holy Hierarch Nicholas stopped the mouth of the heretic… But now, unfortunately, we have become, as the saying goes, ‘shamefully indifferent to both the evil and the good’. And it is precisely in the soil of this indifference, of a kind of feeling of self-preservation, that the heresy of ecumenism has established itself – as also apostasy, that falling away which is becoming more and more evident… Let us remember, brethren, that Christian love embraces all in itself, is compassionate to all, wishes that all be saved and is sorry for, and merciful to, and love every creature of God; but where it sees a conscious assault on the truth it turns into fiery zeal which cannot bear any such blasphemy… And so must it always be, because every Orthodox Christian must always be zealous for God.”[[443]](#footnote-443)

As Basil Lourié wrote: “Athenagoras … did not consider [the Latins] to be heretics. But his denial of their hereticalness was not the manifestation of a special love for them: Athenagoras did not recognise the existence of heresy in general! On hearing of a certain man who saw heresy everywhere, Athenagoras said: ‘I don’t see them anywhere! I see only truths, partial truths, reduced truths, truths that are sometimes out of place…’

“The teaching of the Church, of the Holy Fathers, is based on the rock of the confession of the fullness of the Truth incarnate in Christ, which is organically incapable of being mixed with lies. The ecumenists consciously choose the sand of ‘partial truths’ cemented by the lie of the denial of Christ as the true Son and Word of God.

“Why can Athenagoras and people like him, who are characterised by their own kind of deep faith, asceticism and even capacity for sacrifice, completely consciously go against, not simply individual Fathers, but even all of them taken together? Why have they come to the decision that certain decrees of the Fathers in relation to the Church and the dogmas may supposedly have lost their force in our time? There can only be one answer: their Orthodox faith was been mixed with certain tares, which have grown up and suffocated the shoots of Truth. The tares are faith in something about which the Lord did not announce to the Church. This is what we read in this connection in Athenagoras himself: ‘Palestine has again become the centre of the world… We must pray and struggle that Jerusalem may again become a place of dialogue and peace. So that we may together prepare the way for the return of Jesus, the Mahdi of Islam, the Messiah of Israel, our Lord.’ ‘In Jerusalem Abraham met Melchizedek, a priest of the Most High God, a mystical foreshadowing of the Word which is present in all peoples and in all religions.’ (This is how Athenagoras explains why he and the Roman Pope Paul VI decided to meet in Jerusalem.) The union with the Latins was seen by Athenagoras in connection with this coming advent of the person he called Jesus: ‘Unity may be attained unexpectedly, as is the case with everything great. As can happen with the return of Christ, Who, as He said, will come as a thief. Catholicism is now in a vortex. Everything is possible.’ Neither Athenagoras nor the other ecumenists refer to any other positions based on Church Tradition. And not surprisingly. The teaching of the Church foresees the union of all peoples, not around Christ, but around him whom the Jews call the Messiah, and the Muslims Mahdi [the Antichrist]. ‘When the Son of Man comes will He find faith on the earth?’ (Luke 18.8).

“But this Tradition of the Church has ceased to be of interest to them because they have accepted another: faith that some special age has dawned precisely now. If all the people of this age understand its content, they will turn out to be much more closely united with each other than with their co-religionists of previous ages. The people of this age are united by certain ‘pan-human’, as they put it, values of their own, values which are much more important to them than the heritage of the past, which disunites them. This is that age of which the bearers of the so-called ‘Russian religious philosophy’ (particularly Soloviev, Berdyaev, Florensky and Bulgakov) became the heralds throughout the world. These people expressed in a pseudo-Christian language the idea of the coming of a ‘new age’ – the age of some new, post-New Testament ‘revelation of the Holy Spirit’, which would be given in the last times, and which they borrowed from occult teachings. (See, for example, the letter on the Holy Spirit in Florensky’s *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth*.) For these people there exists some kind of special ‘age of the Fathers’, which is already completely past. With it have also gone into the past the canons of the Fathers. In our time, instead of the Fathers there are those who have received the new revelation of the new age. And so for the Orthodox Church today ecumenism is not a particular problem which might pass some countries by. But at the same time it is only a particular case of a more widespread phenomenon – the placing of the whole of contemporary civilisation on a new principle of unity. It is on this principle that the universal religion which Hieromonk Seraphim Rose of blessed memory (+1982) called ‘the religion of the future’, the religion of the Antichrist, is being created at the present time.

“This principle is much more clearly formulated in various movements of the ‘New Age’ and Masonry type, while ecumenism is called to carry out only one particular task: force the entry into this new unity of such people as would wish to preserve their unity with traditional forms of religion. The Antichrist will have to satisfy everyone…”[[444]](#footnote-444)

Hieromonk Seraphim wrote with regard to an article written by Archbishop James entitled “A New Epoch?”: “I suddenly felt that I had found an insight into the ‘essence of Iakovism’. Is it not, indeed, the basic heresy of *chiliasm*? What else, indeed, could justify such immense changes and monstrous perversions in Orthodoxy except the concept that we are entering entirely new historical circumstances, an entirely new *kind* of time, in which the concepts of the past are no longer relevant, but we must be guided by the voices of the new time? Does not Fr. Patrinacos, in past issues of the *Orthodox Observer*, justify Patriarch Athenagoras – not as a theologian, not as a traditionalist, but precisely as a *prophet*, as one whose heresies cannot be condemned because he already lives in the ‘new time’, ahead of his own times? Patriarch Athenagoras himself has been quoted as speaking of the coming of the ‘Third Age of the Holy Spirit’ – a clearly chiliastic idea which has its chief recent champion in N. Berdyaev, and can be traced back directly to Joachim of Fiore, and indirectly to the Montanists. The whole idea of a ‘new age’, of course, penetrates every fiber of the last two centuries with their preoccupation with ‘progress’, and is *the* key idea of the very concept of Revolution (from French to Bolshevik), is the central idea of modern occultism (visible on the popular level in today’s talk of the ‘age of Aquarius’, the astrological post-Christian age), and has owed its spread probably chiefly to Freemasonry (there’s a Scottish Rite publication in America called ‘New Age’). (I regret to say that the whole philosophy is also present in the American dollar bill with its masonic heritage, with its novus ordo saeculorum and its unfinished pyramid, awaiting the thirteenth stone on top!) In Christian terms, it is the philosophy of Antichrist, the one who will turn the world upside down and ‘change the times and seasons.’… And the whole concept of ecumenism is, of course, permeated with this heresy and the ‘refounding of the Church’.”[[445]](#footnote-445)

## 117. A SECOND ROMANIAN HIERARCHY

There was another Old Calendar hierarchy in Romania whose origins went back to the immediate post-war period.[[446]](#footnote-446)  In 1948, at the request – more precisely, order - of the Soviets, the new calendarist Romanian Church was obliged to surrender its parishes in the diaspora and let them come under the jurisdiction of the Moscow patriarchate. Worried by the danger this posed for their flock, several bishops, foremost among them Grigorie Leu of Husi and Chesarie of Tomis, decided to send the priests Florian Galdau and Vasile Leu, the son of Bishop Grigorie, to help the aged and sick Metropolitan Visarion Puiu. Since Fr. Vasile’s wife had died, he was tonsured on August 21, 1948 in preparation for consecration to the episcopate with the name Victor.

On August 21, 1948 the two priests left Romania, and after jumping from the train at Isanova railway station, entered Yugoslavia, where they were arrested and interrogated by Yugoslav security. They succeeded in escaping and reached Austria. There, after staying for a time in a camp, they were set free by the Allied Forces and began to serve in a church in Salzburg. Eventually, after a meeting of Romanian exiles from all over the diaspora, the Autonomous Romanian Orthodox Archiepiscopate of Western Europe was set up. Since Metropolitan Visarion was ill and paralysed in a sanatorium in Switzerland, Fr. Vasile was sent, with Visarion’s blessing, to the Russian Church Abroad in Munich to be consecrated to the episcopate.

ROCOR had already given some help to the Romanian Church. Thus in the early 1930s ROCOR appealed to the Serbian Church on behalf of Russian Orthodox Christians persecuted in Romania. And Bishop Seraphim (Lyade) of Vienna was sent to Bessarabia to minister to Russian Old Calendarists led by Hieromonk Gamaliel of Niamets monastery, and ordain priests there.[[447]](#footnote-447)

Now, at the request of representatives of the Romanian Archiepiscopate, Seraphim (now Metropolitan of Berlin) joined Bishop Stephen (Sevbo) of Vienna and Bishop Philip (Gardner) of Potsdam in consecrating Fr. Vasile in Munich in December, 1949, giving him the new name Vasile-Victor. However, the files of the German diocese of ROCOR reveal no record of this consecration, and there is also no record that Philip Gardner was ever a bishop…[[448]](#footnote-448)

Even before his consecration Bishop Vasile-Victor had been founding Romanian Orthodox parishes on the basis of a strong anti-communist position. He met King Michael in Switzerland, gave the sacrament of confession to Queen Anna, and met the old King Carol in Paris. He also broadcast in Romanian from the BBC in London and several radio stations in Austria, and was a regular contributor to Paris Radio. He issued thousands of certificates to Romanian refugees to enable them to obtain visas in western countries.

In Romania, meanwhile, Bishop Victor-Vasile’s father, Bishop Grigorie, had suffered the abolition of his diocese of Husi, and on February 25, 1949 was summoned to Bucharest for discussions. Being a strong anti-communist who had warned about the transformation of the Romanian Church into a “Sovrom patriarchy”, he was not allowed to return a healthy man. Three days later he died, probably from poisoning.

On August 16, 1952 Bishop Victor-Vasile was arrested in Vienna, injected with some substance, and kidnapped. Three days later he woke up in a Soviet prison. He was transported to the Lubyanka in Moscow, where he was interrogated for seven months and charged with working for the English and American secret services. Beria himself sometimes took part in the interrogations. He refused to ask for a pardon, and also refused to delegate anyone to make such a request on his behalf. “I consider communism to be the main enemy of the Christians,” he said, “and that is why this is the goal of my life.”

At the Bucharest District Law Court on November 16, 1954 he declared: “I realize that you want to find out whether I collaborated with the English information service. I said and I repeat that I haven’t spied for anybody. I am an enemy of this Romanian regime, which has turned the country into a kind of prison. I carried out this activity because the communist regime is a straitjacket for the soul and essence of the Romanian people. The only decision that would honour me and the law court would be my condemnation to death.”

On November 20, 1954 he was condemned to death for treason (resolution № 2417). However, he was not executed, but passed through all the prisons of Romania. In 1964 he was released. His file in the security archives is 300 pages long and reveals that he made no compromise with the authorities.

After his release, Bishop Victor-Vasile refused to join the Romanian patriarchate, but instead set off for the monastery of the Old Calendarists at Slătioara in Moldavia, where he was accepted as a bishop at first (he served with them for seven years, according to one account). However, canonical differences with the other Old Calendarists forced him to return to Bucharest. It appears that Bishop Victor-Vasile took a stricter attitude towards the Romanian new calendarists, rebaptising and remarrying them, and also could not recognize the validity of the consecration of Metropolitan Galaction, since it had been carried out in 1935, after the calendar change.

On the other hand, the Slatioara Old Calendarists did not accept Victor-Vasile’s consecration because he did not have ordination papers, and because ROCOR had no records of his consecration.[[449]](#footnote-449)

On leaving Slatioara, Bishop Victor-Vasile joined the followers of Fr. Gamaliel, who, like St. Glicherie, was a hieromonk of Neamt and rejected the calendar change, but who differed from Glicherie from the beginning over the baptism issue as also over beards (he regarded men who shaved as automatically excommunicated). Nifon Dobrogeanul and Mina were his followers, and Bishop Victor now ordained Niphon to the episcopate single-handedly. Later Niphon, also single-handedly, but with the agreement of Bishop Victor, consecrated Clement and Cassian. Victor’s activity was confined to his flat in Bucharest because the communists placed him under virtual house arrest in order to restrict his contact with the faithful. That is why, when he died in 1978, he was taken to Cernica monastery and buried by the new calendarists there. Only a few laymen from his flock, and no priests, were present.

On April 19 / May 2, 2008 Metropolitans Cassian of Moldavia and Gerontius of Vrancea officially entered into communion with Metropolitan Cyricus of Mesogaia and Lavriotiki, a rebel from the Greek Matthewite jurisdiction, in a joint celebration in Romania. In a joint statement, all the other Greek Old Calendarists were condemned, and the union between ROCOR and the Greek Old Calendarists in 1971 declared to be a Masonic plot. And in an apologia reproduced in English on the “Kyrikite” website the “Kyrikites” declared: “According to the writings of St. Theodore the Studite, whose canon is quoted in the Synodal Decision, the bishops of the Romanian Catacomb Church were accepted based on their Confession of Faith, and their Apostolic Succession **was sealed by the Act itself**, which Metropolitan Kirykos read out aloud during the Divine Liturgy, just prior to entering into communion with them. The Decision states "By this act we RECOGNIZE, SEAL AND APPROVE your Apostolic Succession, **asking the Holy Spirit to fill anything that may be lacking, and known only to God**." The last phrase in bold is an exact quotation from the prayer for ordination of bishops. So Metropolitan Kyrikos appears to have tried to *reordain* the Romanian bishops – evidently without their knowledge.[[450]](#footnote-450)

## 118. THE FALL OF THE SERBIAN AND BULGARIAN CHURCHES

According to a report dated October 18, 1961 and prepared by the United States Senate’s Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary, in 1950, on the death of Patriarch Gabriel of Serbia, the Communists “made certain that the new patriarch would be a ‘cooperative’ one, and forced the election of a weak man, Bishop Vikentije Prodanov, who became a manageable tool of communist propaganda.”[[451]](#footnote-451) He was elected patriarch, as Hieroscheamonk Akakije writes, “with heavy pressure from the secret police” and “by one episcopal vote only. Even though he was very obedient to the authorities, the newly chosen Patriarch Vikentije resisted some of Tito’s plans, for example, the forming of the Macedonian Church. So he didn’t last long on the patriarchal throne. He died eight years later.

“After Vikentije, the communists needed a completely loyal person, who would bring the Serbian Church in service to the atheist regime. Such a candidate they found in the person of the widowed priest Chranislav Djorič, who became a monk with the name German and in 1951 became Vikentije’s vicar-bishop. In the campaign electing German as patriarch, the communist regime did not hide its active participation. All the memories of the electing council were very thoroughly worked upon by the secret police. The boss of the Serbian secret police Milan Velić openly said to the members of the electoral council: ‘We want German to be chosen, and he will be chosen, whether you vote for him or not. We want in the person of the patriarch to have a safe and sound friend, and with Vikentije we were too credulous.’ Everyone received an envelope with money. One of the examples of various blackmailing and threats was Abbot Platon Milevoyević of Studenitsa, to whom the bloody boss of the Belgrade secret police, Miloš Minić, came with one associate and told him he would be arrested for public immorality and misuse of money in selling the monastery’s woods unless he voted for German. The secret police claimed that they had all the proofs of all his weaknesses, having mistresses in the monastery, several children born outside wedlock, and so on.” [[452]](#footnote-452)

“Father Macarius, abbot of the famed Dechani Monastery, was given 200,000 dinars ($650) as payment for his coerced vote for Germanus. He came back to his monastery after the election and threw the money at his monks, telling them that he ‘felt like Judas’.

“Many delegates to the Electorate were given a special pen and paper on which they were to cast their ballots, in order to show whether they had kept their promise to the agents of the Secret Police. (Two sworn statements by witnesses).”[[453]](#footnote-453)

According to witnesses in the patriarch’s house, he had a party card. And when he was once accused of embezzling a very large sum of money and was threatened with a court trial, the Serbian equivalent of the KGB (UDBA) saved him and paid the money themselves. Thereafter he was completely “their man”.[[454]](#footnote-454) The Belgrade newspaper *Telegraf* recently confirmed that German was elected by UDBA.[[455]](#footnote-455)

As Archimandrite Justin Popovich wrote in 1960: “… The atheist dictatorship has so far elected two patriarchs… And in this way it has cynically trampled on the holy rights of the Church, and thereby also on the holy dogmas.”[[456]](#footnote-456)

In this period, the communists tried to break down the resistance of all those bishops who opposed them. In most cases they succeeded. But there were some exceptions. For example: “The Bishops’ quarters in Novi Sad, in which Bishop Irenaeus (Tsilits) of Bachka lived, became the target of ‘national rage’ – communist demonstrations that threw a large number of stones at the building with terrible exclamations. During a festal litia in 1946 in one village, when the bishop came out from the church in full vestments, the organized communist crowd threw a number of stones at him. Being hit on the back of his head, Bishop Irenaeus fell on the ground. The raging crowd attacked the bishop, and the priest who was trying to defend him was stabbed by knives. Severely hurt, all covered in blood, his beard pulled out, his vestments torn, spat upon and insulted, Bishop Irenaeus was taken to Novi Sad during the night. As a consequence of these heavy wounds, he spent the rest of his life mostly in his sickbed.

“Metropolitan Nectarius was lynched by the communists. In August 1953 a group of about 150-250 communists (including some women) arrived unexpectedly in the monastery of Osren. They forced their way into the monastery guest-house, and uttering terrible words they came to the bishop’s cell, where they started to hit and push him until he fell to the ground. One of the women was pulling his beard. The calls for help of an old bishop, who was at that time 75 years old, were heard by nobody. They kept on tearing his ryasa, pushing and torturing him. Heavily wounded, he had to leave Tuzla, and go to Belgrade, where he lay in hospital for several months. Metropolitan Nectarius was the spine of the resistance to the communists in the Serbian Orthodox Church. Before the election of German as patriarch, the president of the socialist republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina – his name was Djuro Putsar, his nickname was “the old one” – said to Metropolitan Nectarius and Bishop Basil: ‘The two of you represent 80% of the Council, and if German is not elected, we know who is responsible.’ Metropolitan Nectarius called patriarch German ‘Judas’ son’.

“In 1944 Metropolitan Arsenije was condemned in Cetinje by the national court to ten-and-a-half years’ hard labour for anti-state activities because he did not carry out various requests made by the communists and because he said in his sermons that the Catholic Church did very evil things to Orthodox people. Together with him, seven old Montenegrin priests were condemned too. In 1960, due to serious illness, he was released at the age of 77. Rejected by all, his last days were spent with his daughter and son-in-law. He reposed, humiliated and persecuted by Patriarch German, whom he cursed on the last day of his life. Up to his last hour he rejected the communists and German. Even on his deathbed, the communists asked him to sign a statement by which he approved of the official policy of Patriarch German. Under the pressure of the communists, his funeral was conducted in secret.

“Bishop Vasilije was forced to leave Banja Luka by the communists. At his question whether there was any written document by the state authorities about his ban from Banja Luka, the communists answered: ‘The people does not give written decisions, and it does not make any such decisions. The people has the right to make such decisions, because it is above the authorities, and each authority originates from the people.’ After constant threats to lynch him, he decided to leave for Belgrade. On his way to the railway station, a lot of men and women ran after him, shouting: ‘You wanted it written, here it is written, you will get it from the people, who are waiting for you. Down with the bearded man! Down with the people’s enemies and the collaborators of the occupiers!’ One of them attacked the car and started to curse God. When the bishop had hardly reached the station, an even larger mass of people were waiting for him there. They started to throw tomatoes and stones at him, and when they had surrounded him completely they started to spit at him, pull his beard and hit his head and body. The police was present all the time, but did not react to this public violence. One communist sub-officer kept on getting close to his face, and saying: ‘We are materialists, we only believe in matter, and not in the immortality of the soul, as you priests teach. Confess that it is senseless. You collaborated with the occupiers, and you don’t want to collaborate with today’s authorities. That is why people are making you leave. Confess that you were wrong, and repent.’ He was so badly hurt that he twice fell on the ground. Then they dragged him over the railway line and tore his sleeveless coat and his mandiya. In the train all the passengers kept on insulting him, and as he sat by the window it was broken from the outside. The reason for this lynching was his resistance to compromise with the godless authorities. Still, he couldn’t withstand the communist tortures to the end, and under UDBA pressure he gave his support to Bishop German as candidate for patriarch.

“Bishop Varnava (Nastić) was condemned in 1948 by a communist court to ten years’ hard labour for the ‘crime of treason: he helped to weaken the economy and the military power of the state, he helped terrorist bands, he published enemy propaganda, and he was a spy for the Anglo-Americans.’ He suffered his punishment in Zenitsa jail. All the time he was in total isolation in a dark and damp cell under the greatest affliction of soul and body. The communists immediately cut his hair off and shaved his beard to humiliate him and make him a laughing-stock. They made him dothe hardest jobs because they knew he was physically sensitive and weak in health. They starved him of food and water, tortured him with loneliness and deprived him of information from books or newspapers, with no communication with the outer world, just in order to break down his morale and subject him to their godless commands. In reply to all those tortures, he chanted church songs in his cell. Since no torture could break his spirit, the spirit of Bishop Varnava, the UDBA planned his so-called transfer in 1949 and arranged a traffic accident by crashing a locomotive into a parked, locked railway car in which he and a number of other political prisoners were bound. The impact was so powerful that out of a full car only eleven prisoners survived. Bishop Varnava was thrown through the window while tied together with a Catholic priest who died immediately as they fell. Bishop Varnava stayed alive, but both legs and one arm were broken. People from the train station and other trains ran to help, but police surrounded the car and would not allow anyone to come close to the wounded, and one policeman even turned an automatic gun against the people. One hour later, the UDBA came and took all the wounded to the city hospital nearby, where the doctors immediately started to help. Suddenly an UDBA man came back to the hospital and ordered the doctors to stop helping the wounded and to take them off the operating tables. The protests of the doctors were not considered. Bishop Varnava at that moment was on the operating table with a hole in his heel where a metal rod was to be inserted to help his broken leg heal. All the wounded were put in an army truck on wooden planks and they were driven at a horrific speed over very bad roads, so that two of them died during the trip. In 1960, after several transfers, from one prison to another, where he became severely ill, the much-suffering Bishop Varnava came to the end of his term of punishment. At that moment he submitted a plea to the Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church to be reactivated. Patriarch German did not take his plea before the Synod, but sent him a message: ‘It is necessary that you first regulate your relationship with the authorities’, which practically meant that he had to give a statement of loyalty to the communist regime. From that time the UDBA started to pressure him again. The boss of the religious section of the UDBA Milan Velić sent him a letter signed by about ten hierarchs recommending that he sign the statement of loyalty to the authorities and request that the Holy Synod retire him. Velić brought him the prepared text of his statement, a very cunning document prepared by Bishop Vissarion Kostić in which, among other things, they asked him to praise Tito’s regime, be one with the official position of the Church and to fence himself off from the work of the emigration. When he strongly resisted, the UDBA officer told him: ‘That means you are condemning Patriarch German and the other bishops who have already given such statements.’ Bishop Varnava said: ‘Everybody shall answer before the Last Judgement for his deeds on earth.’ Then the UDBA officer said: ‘You think Patriarch German will answer before the Last Judgement?’ Bishop Varnava answered: ‘The first and the hardest!’

“When Patriarch Vikentije went to Moscow and laid flowers at the tomb of Lenin, Bishop Varnava under his full signature from prison sent a letter saying: ‘In whose name did you go, who did you represent, and who authorised you to put the flowers on the tomb of Lenin? From that wreath that you laid on Lenin’s tomb, take off one leaf in the name of the Serbian priesthood, one leaf in the name of Serbian bishops , one leaf in the name of the Serbian people, and the remaining six leaves will represent you and the members of your delegation.’ Because of this letter, the Hierarchical Synod gathered and pronounced him irresponsible and irrational. That was when his real spiritual torments began, because his brother hierarchs became his enemies. The notorious Bishop Vissarion led the systematic action against Bishop Varnava, who often used to say: ‘Being imprisoned by the communists was sweet for me, but now it is not the communists who are persecuting me, but my brother bishops.’ Lonely, and surrounded by the iron wall of the communist police, Bishop Varnava died in unexplained circumstances.

“During his ordination, on the Feast of the Transfiguration, 1947, in the Saborna church in Belgrade, the newly ordained Bishop Varnava uttered the following prophetic words: ‘When our Lord Jesus Christ sent his apostles into the world, he put before them sacrifice as the programme and way of their lives. And only readiness for apostolic sacrifice made the Galilaean fishermen receive apostolic honour. Lofty honour in the Church of Christ means lofty sacrifice. The Holy Hierarchical Council led by the Holy Spirit chose my unworthiness as bishop of the Church of Christ. By that choice they condemned me to the sacrifice of Christ’s Golgotha. And in condemning me to that highest sacrifice they gave me the loftiest honour that can be given to a mortal man. All I can say is that I shall gladly climb my Golgotha, and I shall never trade that honour for any other under the sun of God. The bishop’s position is a sacrifice on Golgotha because the bishop’s service is apostolic service, and to the apostles the Lord said: “The cup which I am drinking you will drink, and the baptism which I am being baptised with you will be baptised with” (Mark 10.39). And the cup which our Lord drank and the baptism with which he was baptized, what else could it be but the cup of Golgotha and the bloody baptism in His own Blood?… And that is why, though I know the weaknesses of the soul, I am not afraid that my leg will shatter on the road of Golgotha strewn with thorns that I am today undertaking. Even if it wanted to shatter, the light and the warmth of innumerable examples of Christ’s heroes will bring back to it firmness and might.’ This sermon by Bishop Varnava was fulfilled completely through his much-suffering hierarchical service and struggle to defend Church freedom.

“This was the way they prepared the total collapse of the Serbian Church. First by removing unfitting [bishops], and then carefully choosing new bishops sympathetic to the regime, or at least those who would accept the new kind of situation. In the period after the war the existence of the Serbian Church depended on the way the patriarch and the bishops treated Tito’s regime. In the time of Metropolitan Joseph, the patriarchal locum tenens, the Church still, regardless of external persecution, enjoyed internal freedom, because his firm position, if we exclude his lukewarm and flexible position towards the MP, let everybody know that he would firmly hold to the Church canons. And he succeeded. Much more modest, but still firm, was the position displayed by Patriarch Gabriel. The two of them represented the last defence of Church freedom.

“As we have seen, after the death of Patriarch Gabriel, the situation in the Church became more difficult. Using the UDBA, the communists choose Vikentije as patriarch, who did many favours for them. In 1958 the act of the destruction of the Serbian Orthodox Church came to its end when the UDBA imposed as patriarch German, who was an absolutely submissive tool, accepted all the requests of the regime. The first big concessions to Tito were the act of forming the Macedonian Autocephalous Church and the blessing of the pro-communist association of priests (partisans), through which the possibility of total control of the Church was created. Patriarch German told the priesthood in Belgrade: ‘Whichever priest insults Tito, insults me.’ Really the position of the Serbian patriarchate was harder than at any time in its long-lasting history, because for the first time its patriarch and bishops joined the enemies of the Church. In the years after the war most of the Serbian bishops obviously had no ecclesiological consciousness, which is a confessing position of struggle for the purity of the Orthodox faith, which was best illustrated by the presence of the Serbian Church at the councils of Moscow in 1945 and 1948, as well as the fact that not a single bishop or clergyman – though many of them were against the communists and criticised the behaviour of Patriarchs Vikentije and German, - never thought of stopping communion with the red patriarch in Belgrade, which all this time was in full eucharistic communion with the new calendarists…”[[457]](#footnote-457)

From the time of the election of Patriarch German in 1958, and with the exception of a very few clergy, the communists were now in complete control of the Serbian Patriarchate. Archimandrite Justin Popovich wrote on the catastrophic situation of the Church at this time: “The Church is being gradually destroyed from within and without, ideologically and organizationally. All means are being used: known and unknown, open and secret, the most subtle and the most crude… And all this is skilfully dissolved, but in fact it is the most deadly of poisons with a sugar coating… The most elementary and rudimentary logic demonstrates and proves: cooperation with open atheists, the cursed enemies of Christ and the Orthodox Church of Christ, is illogical and anti-logical. We ask those who seek such cooperation, or already cooperate, or – terrible thought! – compel others to cooperate, with the words of Christ: ’What communion can there be between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what is there in common between light and darkness? What agreement can there be between Christ and Belial?’ (II Corinthians 6.14-15). Do you not hear the Christ-bearing Apostle, who thunders: ‘If we, or an angel from heaven begins to preach to you that which we have not preached to you, let him be anathema!’ (Galatians 1.8). Or have you, in the frenzy of the atheist dictatorship, gone completely deaf to the Divine truth and commandment of Christ: ‘You cannot serve God and Mammon’ (Matthew 6.24)?”[[458]](#footnote-458)

The result of the subjection of the Serbian Church to the communists was predictable: “an alarming tendency on the part of the hierarchy of the ‘Mother Church’ to abandon true Orthodoxy and embrace heresy… the worst heresy that has ever assaulted the Orthodox Church – the heresy of ‘ecumenism’.”[[459]](#footnote-459)

In 1965 the Serbian Church entered the World Council of Churches. In September, 1966, two inter-Orthodox Commissions were established in Belgrade to negotiate with the Anglicans and the Old Catholics. In 1967 Patriarch German said to the Roman Catholic bishop of Mostar: “The times are such that our sister Churches have to lean on each other, to turn away from that which divided us and to concentrate on all that we have in common.”[[460]](#footnote-460)

The next year he recognized Catholic marriages, and became one of the presidents of the WCC. In 1985, at a nuns’ conference, he welcomed two Catholic bishops “with special honour” into the sanctuary, and then all the conference members (Orthodox, Catholics and Protestants) recited the Creed together in the Liturgy.[[461]](#footnote-461) In 1971 he signed the following WCC statement in Geneva: “The powerful Breath of renewal will blow into the mighty arena of the Church, as well as into each of her communities; for these are not simple administrative units, but they all constitute a part of the one great Christian Church.”

Patriarch German liked to justify his ecumenism by quoting the Serbian proverb: Drvo se na drvo naslanja; a čovek na čoveka – “Tree leans on tree and man on man.” But the Free Serbs had an answer to this. “We can also quote the proverbs of our people: S’kim si, onaki si. – ‘You are like those with whom you associate.’ If you find your fellowship with heretics, you begin to share their erroneous thinking and eventually become a heretic. As an American proverb goes: ‘Birds of a feather flock together.’”[[462]](#footnote-462)

Commenting on the decision of the Orthodox Churches to become “organic members” of the WCC, Fr. Justin wrote: “Every true Orthodox Christian, who is instructed under the guidance of the Holy Fathers, is overcome with shame when he reads that the Orthodox members of the Fifth Pan-Orthodox Conference in Geneva [in June, 1968]… on the question of the participation of the Orthodox in the work of the World Council of Churches, considered it necessary ‘to declare that the Orthodox Church considers itself to be an organic part of the World Council of Churches.’

“This assertion is apocalyptically horrifying in its un-orthodoxy and anti-orthodoxy. Was it necessary for the Orthodox Church, that most holy Body of the God-Man Christ, to become so debased to such a pitiful degree that its theological representatives – some of whom were Serbian bishops – have begun to beg for ‘organic’ participation and membership in the World Council of Churches, which will supposedly become a new ‘Body’ and a new ‘Church’, which will stand above all other churches, in which the Orthodox Churches and the non-orthodox churches will appear only as parts. God forbid! Never before has there been such a betrayal and abandonment of our holy Faith!

“We are renouncing the Orthodox Faith of the God-Man Christ, and organic ties with the God-Man and His Most Holy Body: we are repudiating the Orthodox Church of the holy apostles, the Fathers, and the Ecumenical Councils – and we wish to become ‘organic members’ of a heretical, humanistic, humanized and man-worshipping club, which consists of 263 heresies – every one of which is a spiritual death.

“As Orthodox Christians we are ‘members of Christ.’ ‘Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute?’ (I Corinthians 6.15). We are doing this by our organic union with the World Council of Churches, which is nothing other than the rebirth of atheistic man, of pagan idolatry.

“The time has finally come for the patristic Orthodox Church of Saint Sabbas, the Church of the holy apostles and Fathers, of the holy confessors, martyrs and new-martyrs, to stop mingling ecclesiastically and hierarchically with the so-called ‘World Council of Churches’, and to cast off forever any participation in joint prayer or services, and to renounce general participation in any ecclesiastical dealings whatsoever, which are not self-contained and do not express the unique and unchangeable character of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church – the Orthodox Church – the only true Church that has ever existed.”[[463]](#footnote-463)

ROCOR’s attitude towards the Serbian Church now began to change. Thus on September 14/27, 1967, Archbishop Averky of Jordanville wrote to Metropolitan Philaret: “With regard to the question of the Serbian Church, whose Patriarch German is a stooge of the communist Tito, as the Serbs themselves are convinced, calling him ‘the red patriarch’. We have heard this from many clergy and laity who have fled from Serbia. How can we recognize, and have communion in prayer with, ‘the red patriarch’, who maintains the closest friendly relations with red Moscow? Cannot our Hierarchical Council make *erroneous* decisions? Do we in the Orthodox Church have a doctrine about the *infallibility of every Council of Bishops*?”

Archbishop Averky’s attitude to the Serbs was confirmed by the ROCOR Council of Bishops in 1967, which resolved to annul the resolution of the Council of Bishops in 1964 on the preservation of prayerful communion with the hierarchy of the Serbian Orthodox Church.[[464]](#footnote-464)

Metropolitan Agathangel (Pashkovsky) of New York writes: “Already on May 19 / June 1, 1967 the following resolution marked “Top Secret” was accepted by our Hierarchical Council in connection with [the Serbian Church’s] ecumenical activity: ‘In addition to the resolution of the present Council of Bishops on relations with the Serbian Orthodox church, the suggestion of his Eminence the First Hierarch and President of the Council of Bishops Metropolitan Philaret has been accepted and confirmed, that all the Reverend Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad should refrain from concelebration with the hierarchy of the Serbian Orthodox Church.’ As far as I know, this resolution has never been repealed in a council.”[[465]](#footnote-465) Early in 1970, Metropolitan Philaret of New York announced to the members of the ROCOR Synod that since the Serbian Patriarch German had chosen to serve as Chairman of the World Council of Churches, ROCOR should avoid joint prayer and service with him, while at the same time not making a major demonstration of the fact.[[466]](#footnote-466)

Nevertheless, communion with the Serbs continued. For many hierarchs and priests of ROCOR had been brought up in Serbia, and out of gratitude felt that the Serbs should not be condemned or excommunicated. To what extent this attitude was truly motivated by gratitude, and to what extent simply by fear of ROCOR’s losing its last friends in “World Orthodoxy”, is a moot point. In any case, it was contrary to the canons of the Church, which require the breaking of communion with all those in communion with heresy. Such an act would have been truly loving, for true love for the Serbs dictated that it should be pointed out to them into what an abyss their ecumenism was leading them, an exhortation which would have acquired greater weight by a full break in communion…

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Did any of the Serbs break from the now definitely heretical patriarchate? Inside Serbia, nobody broke completely, although in 1971 Archimandrite Justin broke off relations with the patriarch, while retaining contact with the other bishops.[[467]](#footnote-467) In the Serbian emigration, there was a bigger rebellion in 1963, when Germanus and his Synod decided to divide the diocese of Bishop Dionysius of America and Canada into three. Claiming to see in this a communist plot, Dionysius refused to accept the decision, made his diocese autonomous and broke communion with the patriarch and his synod.

On March 27, 1964 the Serbian Synod defrocked Dionysius. Then three pro-Belgrade priests were ordained bishops in his place. Dionysius and his supporters refused to recognize these acts, for which the patriarchate condemned them as graceless schismatics.

However, this rebellion was not all that it seemed. Fr. Joseph of Avila writes: “In 1963 the American-Canadian diocese left the patriarchate of Belgrade. The American-Canadian diocese headed by Bishop Dionisije (Milivojevič) belonged to the Serbian Church in the United States. Besides Bishop Dionisije, since 1946 in the US there lived the Serbian Bishop Nikolai Velimirovič. Several years after the war, he was active in events in the Serbian emigration in the USA, he was rector of the theological school at Libertyville, and associate lecturer at the Academy of St. Vladimir and at the theological school in Holy Trinity monastery in Jordanville. In the 50s Bishop Nikolai withdrew from public life and he started living in the Russian monastery of St. Tikhon in Pennsylvania, where in the monastery theological school he lectured Pastoral and Dogmatic Theology and Homiletics, and later in 1955 he became rector of the theological school.

“Several Serbs at that time went to the Russian Church Abroad, among them former judge of the church court of the diocese of Žiča Jovan Saračevič. Under the name of Savva he was made a monk by Archbishop Leonty of Chile, was ordained as hieromonk in Argentina and later was chosen as a bishop of ROCOR in Edmonton, Canada.

“At the beginning of the 1950s, because of the bad situation in the Serbian Church, Michael Tošovič joined the Russian Church Abroad. He was one of the important people in Serbian True Orthodoxy. In the year 1952 he was chosen as teacher and lecturer of the Holy Bible and Greek language in the Russian seminary of Holy Trinity in Jordanville. In Jordanville he became a monk with the name Arsenije. Later he became a hieromonk and after that an archimandrite. In the middle of the 50s, with the blessing of Metropolitan Anastassy, he began to published the theological journal, *Srpski misionar*, in which he revealed the falling away of the Serbian Church, the Moscow Patriarchate and World Orthodoxy. Fr. Arsenije tried to convince the Serbs that since the Serbian patriarchate was enslaved by the communists, it was necessary to separate from the patriarchate and was in favour of founding a Serbian Church Abroad like the Russian Church Abroad.[[468]](#footnote-468) Bishop Nikolai Velimirovič supported this idea of Fr. Arsenije, but in 1956 he reposed. Bishop Nikolai died under very suspicious circumstances, and there is very serious supposition that he was killed.[[469]](#footnote-469)

“In 1963 the American-Canadian diocese with Bishop Dionisije left the Serbian patriarchate. The direct cause for the split was Bishop Dionisije’s suspension in May, 1963 because of moral and disciplinary transgressions. Dionisije claimed that he was suspended because he was anti-communist and that all the accusations were made up by the communist authorities, who were aiming to remove him and enslave the Serbian Church in the States using bishops loyal to the communists.

“In August, 1963 the clergy-laity assembly of the American-Canadian diocese refused obedience to the Serbian patriarchate. The followers of Dionisije claimed that the guilt of their bishop was invented, and they themselves brought up several accusations against the patriarchate, such as accepting Patriarch German from the communist authorities and his submission to those authorities, the foundation of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, the splitting of the American-Canadian diocese into three parts and the enthroning of three new bishops, all at the orders of the communists, as well as the accusations that the new bishops were loyal to the communists, etc.

“Although most of the accusations against the patriarchate were well-founded, and for that reason Dionisije had more than enough reasons to separate, many facts indicate that his sincerity was questionable.

“In 1963 Djoko Slijepčevič, a Church historian with an anti-communist orientation, but at the same time the follower of Patriarch German, wrote: ‘Dionisije is trying to defend himself by his anti-communism, which was quite problematic for a long time, and later nothing else but a pile of empty phrases. What is really anti-communist about Bishop Dionisije?’ On June 28, 1962, *Srpska Borba*, Bishop Dionisije’s main ally and defender today, stated several of his ‘anti-communist’ slips. These are: in his article on November 7, 1957 but published in *Amerikansky Srbobran* on January 16, 1959, Bishop Dionisije was telling the chetniks about Karl Marx’s example of unity. The newspaper *Srpska Borba* explains: ‘Maybe there is some logic in this act of Bishop Dionisije, because even the manner in which he led the action for a ‘Serbian gathering’ and the ideas that he disclosed in his article on the foundation of the Association of Ravnogortsy, really are much closer to Karl Marx and his proletarians than to the holy things and interests of the Serbian nation and Serbian Orthodox Church.

“’It could be said that in this case Bishop Dionisije was a victim of confusion both in a logical and an ideological sense: he was confused, but later ‘he gained his eyesight and found the right way’. The facts tell a completely different story: Bishop Dionisije sent his regards to Stalin, praised and glorified Tito and his People’s Liberation Army, and of course was for a long time on the payroll of Tito’s embassy in New York.

“’*Glas Kanadskikh Srba* twice, on July 25 and September 12, 1963, openly stated that Bishop Dionisije “in the autumn of 1944 through Dr. Šubšič greeted Marshal Tito and his courageous People’s Liberation Army in a telegram. He was on the payroll of the Yugoslav communist embassy in Washington until the leaders of Serb nationality in the US promised that they would give him financial support. He was the only one of the Serbian bishops who, on October 23, 1958, delightedly greeted the foundation of the Macedonian Orthodox Church as ‘a grand act and very useful for our Church” (*Glas Kanadskikh Srba*, September 12, 1963).

“’In the same article in which he revealed this opinion, and which is entitled ‘His Holiness Kir German, the fifth patriarch of the renewed patriarchate of Peč’ (*Glas Kanadskikh Srba*, October 23, 1958) Bishop Dionisije had this to say in trying to praise the new patriarch: ‘The first great act of the new patriarch, which is perhaps of ultimate importance for the whole of the Serbian Orthodox Church, was the satisfactory solution of the question of the so-called Macedonian Church’. At that time, Bishop Dionisije had not the slightest doubt as regards the regularity of the election of Patriarch German, because he wrote this as well: ‘And so the Holy Spirit and the electoral council of the Serbian Orthodox Church has decided that on the throne of the Serbian patriarchs should come Bishop German of Žiča, indisputably a very capable and gifted man, active and full of every virtue’ (*Glas Kanadskikh Srba*, October 23, 1958).’[[470]](#footnote-470)

“Slobodan Draškovič, who in 1963 was one of the main followers of Dionisije and played a major role in the National Church Council of the American-Canadian diocese at which this diocese decided to disobey the patriarch, wrote in 1967: ‘There is no need to talk a lot about Bishop Dionisije. His policy, not only until May, 1963, but later as well, was marked by a policy of co-existence with the hierarchy of the enslaved and enchained Orthodox Church in Yugoslavia, in contrast with the very clear and strong decisions of the National Church Council. On March 1966, after almost four years of struggle against the Joseph Broz’s Patriarch German, he complained against German to the notorious Soviet agent, the ‘Russian Patriarch’ Alexis, and sought justice from him.’[[471]](#footnote-471)

“The fact that Dionisije split from the Church only for personal reasons is shown by the fact that he several times stated he was against any split from the Mother Church - until he was suspended and understood that he would be condemned.

“Besides this, it was not only the anti-communism of Bishop Dionisije that was problematic. In 1957 the American-Canadian diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church headed by Bishop Dionisije became a member of the heretical church organization, the National Church Council of America. Dionisije did not stop at that, but already then (in the 50s) he started to practise the most extreme ecumenism.

“In *Orthodox Russia* (no. 17, 1959) the following note was printed: ‘On Sunday, 15/28 August in Buffalo (Lakavana) there took place the consecration of the newly built Serbian church of St. Stefan. The all-night vigil was served by the parish priest Miodrag Djurič, accompanied by two Serbian priests and one Anglican priest. In the morning the triumphant reception of Bishop Dionisije and Anglican Bishop Scafe took place. 15 priests were serving, among them Serbs, Anglicans, Belorussians, Ukrainian samosviaty and Ukrainians under Archbishop Palladius. Besides Bishop Dionisije, as the oldest hierarch, Bishop Scafe also took part in the service. He made some exclamations in the service, kissed Bishop Dionisije, and they said: ‘Christ is among us, He is and will be’. He communed together with Dionisije in the Holy Gifts, and after that Bishop Dionisije gave communion to all the serving priests. At the banquet Bishop Scafe spoke of his admiration for Orthodoxy and how happy he was that America was having a chance to see beautiful Orthodox services on its land. He stated that in accordance with his abilities he was making a donation of $2500.

“‘… Just before the consecration of the church Bishop Scafe called Bishop Dionisije and the local priest of Lacavan to his side and showed them that the Episcopalians had sent $75,000 to our church in Yugoslavia. At this point Bishop Scafe showed pictures of those in the Orthodox world with whom he had communed before: the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Constantinople, as well as our Vikentije. As he was going to commune with Bishop Dionisije the next day, at the banquet he gave a gift of $2500 for the church in Lacavan.’[[472]](#footnote-472)

“Concerning the Church situation among the Serbs abroad, Fr. Arsenije Tosovich wrote in 1964: ‘Bishop Dionisije recently for the first time referred positively to *Misionar* for its writing about separating from the enslaved patriarchate in Yugoslavia and for the letter Bishop Nikolai.’ And then he condemned Hieromonk Arsenije as the one who was ‘for the separation from the patriarchate’. And it was only when he was suspended and it was clear that he would be condemned, that he reminded us that the Church in Yugoslavia was not free and that he was being persecuted not only because he was guilty but because the communists wanted it. To tell the truth, nobody did more for the communists and for dissolving the Serbs in America than that same great Serb and great anti-communist Dionisije. If Tito was looking all over the world for a man for this job, he could not find a better one than this Dionisije, even if we don’t mention his blessing telegrams on the occasion of the liberation of Belgrade ‘to the father of the people, Stalin’….

“… And so if Bishop Dionisije was wrong, it doesn’t mean that the patriarchate was right and that the Serbian Church in Yugoslavia was free and that we should unconditionally submit to its decisions. On the contrary. Everything was said about that in the above-mentioned article of 1954, including the fact, for example, that all candidates for the hierarchy had to be approved by the communist central committee. The central committee of course would approve only of those candidates who were theirs or at least did not have any dispute with them. We, who are free, and who don’t want to put our necks under the communist yoke, cannot and should not accept in any way the communist choice of hierarchs. That would mean those candidates first have to receive Satan’s blessing and seal, and then be consecrated as hierarchs!…

“So far the American diocese and the whole emigration has had one unsuccessful bishop, Dionisije Milivojevich, and now there are five of them: three sparrows and two Dionisijes. Stefan, Firmilian and Grigorije, because of their dependence on the enslaved patriarchate, and his dependence on the communist godless authorities, will be obliged, whether willingly or not, ‘to fly over the sea’, keep in touch with the patriarch, and through him with the religious commission and communist authorities…

“…. Since these three hierarchs are willingly going into communist enslavement, and thereby have to submit to the godless authorities, there arises the question of their grace and the question of our submission to them. Of course, the answer to both questions can be only no. ‘For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?’ (II Corinthians 6.14-15).

“We have two Dionisijes, that is, Dionisije Milivojevič and Irinej Kovačevič, who are both illegal and graceless. The first was condemned by the authority that enthroned him and which he constantly acknowledged. It is understandable that now he is trying to deny the right of that authority to condemn him, but that does not save him. Irinej Kovačevič was consecrated by Ukrainian samosvyaty, who themselves are not lawful and have no grace, so they could not give him what they themselves did not have. In his message for the Nativity of the Lord Dionisije has promised us more of these samosvyaty hierarchs. For this consecration Bishop Dionisije turned to the ROCOR and American Metropolia, but only the samosvyaty accepted.

“With regard to that subordination of the official church to the godless authorities, we should do as the Russians did in the same case. Will we found a Catacomb Church, as it was in Russia, which will not acknowledge the official Serbian Church and its capitulation before the godless authorities? We don’t know. But we know what the emigration should do, it is the foundation of the Serbian Church Abroad. What Bishop Dionisije is doing now is nothing, since he is under suspension and he is guilty of many things and should have been defrocked long ago. For two decades he has been leading the American-Canadian diocese, and now we see her pitiful end. And the same thing would have happened with the Church Abroad if he had been the leader. But will the Serbian emigration do something in this direction, or will it go on following the leader without a head? We cannot tell for sure. In any case, honourable and God-loving Serbian emigrants, who have God and faith in the Church in the first place in their lives, should remember that each hierarch who comes to freedom but out of submission of Patriarch German and in connection with the godless communist authorities and their representatives, is not a real hierarch and has no grace of God in him. In the same way, the suspended Bishop Dionisije and his samosvyat Irinej and all the others whom he may invent are not real and have no grace. To the Serbian God-loving emigration it is left that until the foundation of the Serbian Church Abroad the Serbian God-loving emigration should turn for their spiritual needs to the representatives of our sister Church, the Russian Church Abroad. She is the only one in the world that has remained faithful and undefiled as the Bride of Christ.’[[473]](#footnote-473)”[[474]](#footnote-474)

Cast out in this way, three dioceses and about forty parishes of the Free Serbs, as they now called themselves, applied to join ROCOR. Two archbishops – Averky of Jordanville and John (Maximovich) of San Francisco - supported them. However, other bishops, including Archbishop Vitaly of Canada, were opposed, and the Free Serbs’ petition was rejected. The quarrel was so heated that two Russians were excommunicated.[[475]](#footnote-475) After being rejected by ROCOR, the Free Serbs then briefly came into communion first with two Ukrainian bishops of the Polish Orthodox Church and then with the Patriarchate of Alexandria. Fleeing the Ecumenism of the latter, they briefly found refuge with the “Florinite” Greek Old Calendarists led by Archbishop Auxentius, on September 11/24, 1981.

Whatever their canonical status, the Free Serbs did oppose ecumenism – until their reabsorption into the patriarchate in 1991. Moreover, not all the Free Serbs joined the patriarchate, and some parishes remain independent to this day.

Moreover, there were some anti-ecumenists in the patriarchate. Thus in November, 1994 Bishop Artemije of Raska and Prizren, in a memorandum to the Serbian Synod, said that ecumenism was an ecclesiological heresy, and that the Serbs should withdraw from the WCC.[[476]](#footnote-476)

More recently, he has written: “The result of this participation [of the Serbs in the WCC] was reflected in certain material aid which the Serbian Orthodox Church periodically received from the WCC in the form of medicine, medical care and rehabilitation of some individuals in Switzerland, student scholarships, and financial donations for certain concrete purposes and needs of the SOC, such as the construction of a new building by the Theological School. We paid for these crumbs of material assistance by losing, on the spiritual plane, the purity of our faith, canonical consistency and faithfulness to the Holy Tradition of the Orthodox Church. The presence of our representatives (and Orthodox representatives in general) at various and sundry ecumenical gatherings has no canonical justification. We did not go there in order to boldly, openly and unwaveringly confess the eternal and unchangeable Truth of the Orthodox Faith and Church, but in order to make compromises and to agree more or less to all those decisions and formulations offered to us by the non-Orthodox. That is how we ultimately arrived at Balamand, Chambésy and Assisi, which taken as a whole represent infidelity and betrayal of the Holy Orthodox Faith.”[[477]](#footnote-477)

Logically, in order to make his actions conform with his words, Bishop Artemije should have left the Serbian Synod. Nevertheless, his words remain true, and constitute a clear condemnation of the position of the Serbian Church since its entry into the WCC in the 1960s. At the present time, Bishop Artemije is in schism from the official Serbian patriarchate, but not for reasons of ecumenism; and he claims to be still in communion with the rest of World Orthodoxy…

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In 1968 the Bulgarian Church adopted the new calendar. The change was imposed, according to one account, at the insistence of the WCC, which in 1965-66 had sent letters on the subject to the churches; but according to another account – on orders from the Moscow Patriarchate, which wished to see how the people reacted to the change in Bulgaria before proceeding with the same innovation in Russia.[[478]](#footnote-478) In the event, only the Russian Women’s Monastery of the Protecting Veil in Sophia refused to accept the change.

Bishop Photius of Triaditza writes: “For some months before the introduction of the reform, *Tserkoven Vestnik* informed the astonished believing people that the reform was being carried out ‘in accordance with the ecumenist striving of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church…’ The Bulgarian clergy and even episcopate were completely unprepared to resist the calendar innovation, while the people, suspecting something amiss, began to grumble. The calendar reform was introduced skilfully and with lightning suddenness by Patriarch Cyril – an ardent modernist and ‘heartfelt’ friend of the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras! Everyone knew that the patriarch was on good terms with the communist authorities (for his ‘services’ to it he received the title of ‘academic’ – member of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences!) Everyone also knew of his despotic temperament: he did all he could to persecute and annihilate his ideological opponents.”[[479]](#footnote-479)

In fact, the Bulgarian Church’s change to the new calendar had been dictated by the Russian communists, who wanted to introduce the innovation into the Russian Church, too, but wanted to “test the waters” by trying it out on the Bulgarians first.[[480]](#footnote-480) This was confirmed by the HOCNA (now TGOC) Bishop Sergius of California, who writes: “In 1971 Metropolitan Nikodim of Leningrad visited Alaska in order to venerate the relics of St. Herman. In an effort to distance itself from the MP, the then-new OCA had not invited the MP hierarchs to participate in the August, 1970 canonization of that Saint. Metropolitan Nikodim (and his OCA guide, Father Kyril Fotiev) spent 5 days in Sitka en route to Kodiak and I was the local host. During several long conversations, Metropolitan Nikodim mentioned that he was intent on adopting the civil calendar for the MP, and as a test case, had brought about Bulgaria’s switch from the patristic to the civil calendar.”[[481]](#footnote-481)

However, when the only Orthodox in Bulgaria who rejected the innovation turned out to be the *Russian* women’s monastery at Knyazhevo, Sophia, the Russians decided to hold back from introducing it in Russia…

However, while deciding not to adopt the new calendar, the MP had already, in 1967, declared: “Bearing in mind the practice of the Ancient Church, when East and West (Rome and the Asian bishops) celebrated Pascha at different times, while preserving complete communion in prayer between themselves, and taking into account the experience of the Orthodox Church of Finland and our parishes in Holland, as also the exceptional position of the parishioners of the church of the Resurrection of Christ amidst the heterodox world, [it has been resolved] to allow Orthodox parishioners of the Moscow Patriarchate living in Switzerland to celebrate the immovable feast and the feasts of the Paschal cycle according to the new style.”[[482]](#footnote-482)

In 1964, some parishes of the Bulgarian patriarchate in the USA petitioned ROCOR to ordain their leader, Archimandrite Cyril (Ionchev), to the episcopate. The petition was granted, and in August Metropolitan Philaret and four other bishops ordained him. However, in 1968 the Bulgarian patriarchate adopted the new calendar, and soon the Bulgarian parishes began to agitate that they be allowed to use the new calendar. In 1971 Bishop Cyril gave a report on this subject to the Hierarchical Council in Montreal, and in 1972 he and his parishes joined the American Metropolia with the permission of ROCOR.[[483]](#footnote-483)

Concerning the correctness of the Julian calendar, the Bulgarian Old Calendarist Archimandrite Sergius (Iazadjiev) relates the following:

“In August of 1971, Nikolai [now Hieromonk Theophan] and I were coming back from rest and medical treatment at Narechen. Passing through the town of Plovdiv, we called in at the Metochion of Zographou to venerate the tomb of the Holy King Boris [+906]. Schema-monk Seraphim of Zographou was in attendance at the tomb. He told us that recently (1969-70), under pressure from the Geneva-based World Council of Churches, the Jerusalem Patriarchate had introduced the 'New Julian' Calendar (as had the Bulgarian, Macedonian, and other Patriarchates, since there was overwhelming pressure at the time to introduce the New Calendar). That same year, on Great Saturday, when from time immemorial the Holy Fire descends on the Lord's Sepulchre, this year the Fire did not appear. Shocked, Patriarch Benedict of Jerusalem commanded that the Old Calendar, which had been in use until then, be restored immediately in the jurisdiction of his Patriarchate. The next year, the Holy Fire once again descended on the Lord's Sepulchre on Great Saturday; the same occurs even until the present.”[[484]](#footnote-484)

## 119. “THE HERESY OF HERESIES”

In the second half of the 1960s opposition to Ecumenism in the Local Orthodox Churches was gradually suppressed. Some “conservative” hierarchs died, such as Patriarch Christopher of Alexandria (in 1967); others were more forcibly removed or replaced, such as Archbishop Chrysostom of Athens and the leaders of some of the Athonite monasteries. Others were effectively silenced by bribery, such as the Orthodox Church of America. The Greek State Church was worn down by a mixture of bribes and political arm-twisting. The bribes came from the Vatican in the form of the return of the relics of Saints Andrew, Titus and Isidore to the Greek State Church, and of St. Sabbas to the Jerusalem Patriarchate. The Greeks found it difficult on the one hand to give thanks for the return of these relics, and on the other hand to put up a firm resistance to the lifting of the anathemas against Rome.

Another clever move on the part of the Vatican was to allow 3000 Catholics in Corfu and on the Ionian islands to celebrate Pascha in 1967 on 30 April, the Orthodox date. As the journal *Ekklesia* pointed out: “The decision evokes natural suspicion that fundamentally this is a propaganda move and an attempt to proselytize the Orthodox population of Corfu.”[[485]](#footnote-485) As full union beckoned, it became less important to the papists on which day they and the Orthodox celebrated the feasts as long as it was the same day.

There is other evidence that the Pope was attempting to force the pace in this year. Thus in May the Catholic Ecumenical Directory was published, which allowed Catholics to take communion in Orthodox churches if they were isolated or could not receive Catholic sacraments for a long period. And yet in March Patriarch Athenagoras had said that Orthodox could not (yet) receive “sacramental grace from a priest who is not himself Orthodox”. Then in July the Pope travelled to Constantinople, where he prayed together with the Patriarch. This visit was returned in October, when Athenagoras visited Rome, and the two prelates sat on equal and identical thrones – “an event which must be unprecedented in the annals of papal Rome, and for which there was certainly no parallel at the Council of Florence in 1438-9.”[[486]](#footnote-486)

This exchange of visits was made easier by the fact that on April 21 a military coup had taken place in Greece. On May 10 the newly established government promulgated a “compulsory law” which dismissed the Synod, replaced it by a Synod chosen by the government, retired Archbishop Chrysostom as being too old, and replaced him with Archimandrite Jerome, who had been a member of the central committee of the World Council of Churches since 1954. This act was very reminiscent of the way in which the revolutionary government chose Chrysostom Papadopoulos in 1922 and must be presumed to have had the same aim – the replacement of the existing incumbent by one more closely identified with the West and Ecumenism.

The new archbishop quickly showed his credentials by coming to “full agreement” with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and issuing the following statement in his enthronement address: “Our relations with non-Orthodox confessions must be marked by Christian love and by mutual respect, so as to foster friendship; but at the same time we must preserve our dignity and our firm adherence to the Orthodox faith and teaching. As a pre-condition for any closer relations, we must insist on the condemnation of proselytism.”[[487]](#footnote-487)

The only problem about this seemingly conservative statement was that “firm adherence to the Orthodox faith” and “the condemnation of proselytism” are incompatible, in that if we believe that the Orthodox Faith is the True Faith we are bound to hope and work for the conversion of people of other faiths.[[488]](#footnote-488) We condemn proselytism among the Orthodox, not because it is “unfair” and goes against some kind of ecclesiastical non-aggression pact, but because it takes people away from the saving ark of the One True Church. By the same token we support Orthodox missionary work among the heterodox because it brings the heterodox to salvation, in fulfilment of the Saviour’s words: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28.19).[[489]](#footnote-489)

Archbishop Jerome of Athens also introduced several innovations, as Fr. Basile Sakkas writes:

“(a) that the priests cut their hair and their beards and go about in civilian dress.

“(b) that the use of organs and mixed choirs singing in harmony be adopted in the churches, although this is in contradiction of the Tradition of the sacred music of our Church.

“(c) that Mattins be suppressed and two Liturgies be served instead ‘in order to facilitate the faithful’. In this manner, anyone can enter in the middle of the first Liturgy and leave in the middle of the second, just like in the cinema. Hence, we adopt the practices and conceptions of the Latins.

“(d) that there be a change of the Paschalia (this is still being debated furiously). The proposal here is that the date of the celebration of Pasch be fixed so that it always occurs on the second Sunday of April.

“(e) that for ‘archaeological’ concerns, the iconostases in the churches be taken down.

“(f) that the sacrament of Holy Baptism be changed (read ‘mutilated’) little by little. Forget for a moment that the triple repetition of the Symbol of Faith has almost everywhere fallen into oblivion and instead of blessing the waters used for the baptism with the appropriate prayers, previously blessed holy water is simply added (as though the Fathers who prescribed that the Symbol of Faith be recited three times and that the waters be blessed directly knew nothing and we are therefore obliged to correct them). Moreover, the exorcisms are suppressed and the children are made to sit in the baptismal font and then water is poured upon their heads by the hands of the priest and thus there is no *immersion…”*[[490]](#footnote-490)

There were other, more political reasons for the coup in the Church. Athenagoras was favoured by the Americans as being the man best able, on the one hand, to effect a rapprochement between Turkey and Greece, and, on the other, to resist the influence of the Soviet-dominated Moscow Patriarchate. So his opponents in the Greek Church had to be removed.[[491]](#footnote-491)

But the majority of the monks on Mount Athos were still fiercely opposed to the lifting of the anathemas. Therefore in November, 1967, an exarchate consisting of three bishops of the newly constituted Greek Church was sent to Athos to try and reconcile the monks and bring those monasteries that had broken communion with the ecumenists back into obedience to the patriarchate. In this mission, however, they failed – for the time being.

In 1968 the Fourth General Assembly of the WCC took place in Uppsala. Patriarch German of Serbia was one of the six presidents, and remained in that post for the next ten years. Uppsala considerably furthered the ecumenical movement. The Orthodox, as the new general secretary Carson Blake joyfully pointed out, were now taking full part in all the sections and committees and not, as often in the past, issuing separate statements disagreeing with the majority Protestant view.

Now only ROCOR, the Russian Catacomb Church and the Greek and Romanian Old Calendarists stood in the way of the complete triumph of Ecumenism. It was time for this last remnant of the True Church of Christ to renounce all hesitations, all false hopes, all temptations to compromise in the face of the completely unambiguous apostasy of the official churches of “World Orthodoxy”. It was time to declare that Ecumenism was not simply uncanonical, but heresy, and not simply heresy, but “the heresy of heresies”.

This definition came in a report that Archbishop Vitaly (Ustinov) of Canada gave to the Synod of ROCOR on the Uppsala Assembly of the WCC: “At the opening of the Assembly an ecumenical prayer was read in the name of all those assembles: ‘O God our Father, You can create everything anew. We entrust ourselves to You, help us to live for others, for Your love extends over all people, and to search for the Truth, which we have not known…’ How could the Orthodox listen to these last words? It would have been interesting to look at that moment at the faces of the Orthodox hierarchs who had declared for all to hear that they, too, did not know the Truth. Every batyushka of ours in the remotest little village knows the Truth by experience, as he stands before the throne of God and prays to God in spirit and in truth. Even *The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, which is completely subject to the censorship of the communist party, in citing the words of the prayer in its account of this conference, did not dare to translate the English ‘truth’ by the word ‘istina’, but translated it as ‘pravda’ [‘righteousness’]. Of course, everyone very well understood that in the given case the text of the prayer was speaking without the slightest ambiguity about the Truth. Perhaps the Orthodox hierarchs have resorted, in the conference, to the old Jesuit practice of reservatio mentalis, but in that case if all these delegates do not repent of the sin of communion in prayer with heretics, then we must consider them to be on the completely false path of apostasy from the Truth of Orthodoxy… Ecumenism is the heresy of heresies because until now each heresy in the history of the Church has striven to take the place of the true Church, but the ecumenical movement, in uniting all the heresies, invites all of them together to consider themselves the one true Church.”[[492]](#footnote-492)

On December 16, 1969, the MP Synod resolved to allow Catholics and Old Ritualists to receive communion from Orthodox priests if they asked for it.[[493]](#footnote-493) The MP’s Archbishop Basil of Brussels recalled: “It fell to me to defend the good name and Orthodoxy of the Russian Church at the Pan-Orthodox conferences (those like the Pan-Orthodox commission for dialogue with the Anglicans) with the following argumentation: ‘This resolution of the Synod was elicited by a completely special situation of believers, and in particular of Catholics in the Soviet Union. Where there is not one Catholic church of priest for thousands of kilometres. Such a resolution was made by the Synod of Constantinople and Patriarch Joachim II in 1878 in relation to the Armenians. Theologically, it is difficult for me to justify such oekonomia, but I cannot judge the Russian hierarchs who live in contemporary Russia in difficult conditions. They know better than we what they are doing.’ This argumentation satisfied everyone, even on Athos, but everything was destroyed by Metropolitan Nicodemus giving communion [to Catholic students] in Rome. ‘What ‘pastoral oikonomia” forced him to commune Catholics where there are so many Catholic churches?’ they asked me. The only reply that I could give was: ‘Your hierarchs even worse when they give to communion to everyone indiscriminately.’ ‘Our hierarchs, like Archbishop James of America or Athenagoras of London, are traitors to Orthodoxy, we have known that for a long time (replied to me Abbot George of the monastery of Grigoriou on Athos). But that the Moscow Patriarchate, the Russian Orthodox Church, which we respect for her firmness in Orthodoxy, should act in this way in the person of Metropolitan Nicodemus, shocks us and deeply saddens us.’ I recounted this reaction to Metropolitan Nicodem. He even became angry: ‘It’s not important what they say on Athos. Athos is not an Autocephalous Church.’”[[494]](#footnote-494)

Neither side in this argument seemed to understand that the giving of communion to a heretic *in any circumstances* is harmful for that heretic so long as he remains in his heresy. More Orthodox, therefore, was the robust response of the ROCOR Synod, which on March 31, 1970 condemned the MP resolution as follows: “The decision of the Moscow Patriarchate to give access to Roman Catholics to all the sacraments of the Orthodox Church… both violates the sacred canons and is contrary to the dogmatic teaching of Orthodoxy. By entering into communion with the heterodox, the Moscow Patriarchate alienates itself from unity with the Holy Fathers and Teachers of the Church. By this action it does not sanctify the heretics to whom it gives sacraments, but itself becomes a partaker of their heresy.” Archbishop Averky (Taushev) of Jordanville commented: “Now, even if some entertained some sort of doubts about how we should regard the contemporary Moscow Patriarchate, and whether we can consider it Orthodox after its intimate union with the enemies of God, the persecutors of the Faith and Christ’s Church, these doubts must now be completely dismissed: by the very fact that it has entered into liturgical communion with the Papists, it has *fallen away from Orthodoxy* and can no longer be considered Orthodox.”[[495]](#footnote-495)

This stronger attitude to the MP was paralleled by a reiteration of the Russian Church’s originally very uncompromising attitude towards the revolution. Thus on January 1, 1970 the ROCOR Synod confirmed Patriarch Tikhon’s 1918 anathema against the Bolsheviks, adding 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.”[[496]](#footnote-496)

It should be pointed out that at this time of rapprochement between the MP and the Vatican, the KGB had managed to penetrate the Vatican. As I.I. Maslova writes, in August, 1970, “the KGB informed the Central Committee that ‘in the course of carrying out the given undertakings the agents of the organs of state security succeeded in making personal approaches to Pope Paul VI and his immediate entourage”. “Useful influence” was exerted, and specially prepared materials were “put forward” in which the thought was emphasized that hostile actions on the part of the Vatican and its centres (especially in the emigration) against the USSR would complicate the position of believers and clergy in the country and, in particular, hinder the establishment of closer relations between the ROC and the Catholic Church.”[[497]](#footnote-497)

## 120. MOSCOW AND THE METROPOLIA

On the very same day that ROCOR condemned the MP for “partaking in heresy” through its relationship with the Vatican, Metropolitan Irenaeus of All America and Canada and Metropolitan Nicodem (Rotov) of Leningrad signed an Agreement giving autocephaly to the American Metropolia – a deal which was accepted by no other Autocephalous Orthodox Church. On April 2, a delegation of the Japanese Orthodox Church set off for Moscow, where on April 10 it received from Patriarch Alexis a *Tomos* of Autonomy. On the same day Archbishop Nicholas (Kasatkin) of Japan was canonised.[[498]](#footnote-498) In this way, as part of the deal with the Metropolia, the Japanese Church, which formerly had been under the Metropolia, came under Moscow’s jurisdiction. However, the MP’s parishes in North America, which were supposed to come under the Metropolia – or the Orthodox Church of America, as it was now called – did not do so.

On June 24 Patriarch Athenagoras in a letter to Patriarch Alexis touched on two important questions: the authority competent to grant autocephaly, and the factors and conditions necessary for a correct proclamation of autocephaly. With regard to the first question he declared that “the granting of it is within the competence of the whole Church.” But to a Local Church “is proper only the right to receive the first petitions for independence from those concerned and to express whether the bases suggested for it are worthy of justification”. With regard to the second question, Patriarch Athenagoras expressed the opinion that in order to announce an ecclesiastical autocephaly that aims to satisfy purely ecclesiastical needs, the opinion of the clergy and laity, the judgement of the Mother Church and the expressed will of the whole Church is required. Considering that these conditions had not been fulfilled in the giving of autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in America, the patriarch called on the Russian Church to apply “efforts to annul the canonical confusion that has been created”. Otherwise, he threatened to regard the action “as if it had never taken place”.[[499]](#footnote-499)

Of course, the patriarch had a point. But since his own patriarchate, by creating a whole series of unlawful autocephalies since the 1920s, was the first sinner in this respect, it is not surprising that his voice was not heeded…

Hieromonk Seraphim Rose wrote of the union of the Metropolia with Moscow: “The American Metropolia doubtless fell into this trap out of naiveté, and already its hierarchs are demonstrating that its so-called ‘independence’ conceals a subtle form of psychological dependence.” Newspaper articles showing that Metropolitan clergy and bishops had begun to apologize, not only for the Soviet domination of the church organization, but even for the Soviet system itself. One priest “admits some Soviet bishops are Soviet agents, that the whole autocephaly follows political trends set forth by the Soviet government; Bishop \_\_\_\_ is quoted as saying that he found the Soviet people to be happy and well dressed, and if some complain about the Government, well, so do Americans.” Elsewhere Fr. Seraphim quoted the same bishop as saying, “As Americans we have to reassess our ideas of life in the Soviet Union.” Such statements, Fr. Seraphim wrote, “reveal the ‘autocephaly’ as an important tool for Moscow in politically ‘neutralizing’ public opinion in the West.”

Asserting that it was far worse to capitulate to a nihilist state in freedom than under compulsion, Fr. Seraphim wrote to a priest of the Metropolia: “You will find in our midst great sympathy and pity for all but the leading hierarchs of Moscow – and even for some of them you will find fellow-feeling owing to the inhuman circumstances under which they have been forced to betray Orthodoxy… But this fellow-feeling cannot allow us who are free to… place ourselves in the same trap she [the MP] was *forced* into! And this the Metropolia has done… With every fiber of our being and every feeling of our soul we are repulsed by this *free* act of betrayal… Do you not grasp the immensity of your spiritual bondage?”

“Is ‘stepping out onto the world Orthodox scene’ really so important to the Metropolia that it must do it at the expense of the suffering Russian Orthodox faithful? To give one small example: Metropolitan Nicodemus is the Metropolia’s great ‘benefactor’, and no one can doubt that his success with the Metropolia has strengthened his position with the Moscow Patriarchate. On the other hand, the layman Boris Talantov in the USSR has openly called Metropolitan Nicodemus a betrayer of the Church, a liar, and an agent of world anti-Christianity, for which statements (among others) he was imprisoned by the Soviets; Metropolitan Nicodemus tells the West that he was in prison for ‘anti-governmental activities’. On January 4 of this year Boris Talantov died in prison, undoubtedly the victim of Metropolitan Nicodemus (among others). Can the Metropolia feel itself to be on the side of this confessor? I don’t see how it can.”[[500]](#footnote-500)

In March, 1969, the Great Council of the Metropolia made a last Orthodox statement on Ecumenism before succumbing to the heresy: “The basic goal of the ecumenical movement… is the unity of all Christians in one single body of grace. And here the Orthodox Church firmly confesses that such a genuine unity is founded, above all, on the unity of faith, on the unanimous acceptance by all of the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Traditions as they are wholly and integrally preserved by the Church. Real love for brothers separated from us [sic – a misleading description of heretics, who are not our brothers in Christ] consists therefore not in silencing all that divides us, but in a courageous witness to the Truth, which alone can unite us all, and also in a common search for the ways to make that Truth evident to all. Only in this way did the Orthodox Church always understand her participation in the ecumenical movement…

“However, within the ecumenical movement there has always existed another understanding of unity. This other understanding seems to become more popular today. It recognizes virtually no importance at all in agreement in faith and doctrine, and is based on relativism, i.e., on the affirmation that the doctrinal or canonical teachings of the Church, being ‘relative’, are not obligatory for all. Unity is viewed as already existing, and nothing remains to be done except to express it and strengthen it through ecumenical manifestations or services. Such an approach is totally incompatible with the Orthodox concept of the ecumenical movement.

“The differences between these two approaches is best illustrated by the attitudes towards concelebration and intercommunion among divided Christians. According to the Orthodox doctrine, the prayers and the sacraments of the Church, especially the Divine Eucharist, are expressions of full unity – in faith, in life, in service of God and man – as given by God. This unity with other Christians we seek, but we have not reached it yet. Therefore in the Orthodox understanding, no form of concelebration, i.e., no joint participation in liturgical prayer or the sacraments, with those who do not belong to the Orthodox Church can be permitted, for it would imply a unity which in reality does not exist. It would imply deceiving ourselves, deceiving others, and creating the impression that the Orthodox Church acknowledges that which in fact she does not acknowledge.”[[501]](#footnote-501)

## 123. THE THEOLOGY OF PEACE

Paralleling the development of ecumenism was the so-called “movement for peace” and “theology of peace”, whose origins can be traced to the founding of NATO to defend Europe against Soviet aggression on April 4, 1949. From the viewpoint of Marxism-Leninism, NATO was not a defensive organization but a threat to world peace. In line with this position, the MP organized a series of ecumenical conferences “in defence of peace” with representatives not only of the Christian confessions, but also of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, Shintoism and Sikhism. Insofar as these religious “fighters for peace” worshipped completely different gods or (in the case of Buddhism) no god at all, there was no place at these conferences for the specifically *Christian* understanding of peace. Thus there was no mention of the fact that peace on earth is possible only if there is peace with God, which is obtained only through faith in the redeeming work of Christ, Who “is our peace” (Ephesians 2.14), and through a constant struggle with evil in all its forms, including atheism and communism. Moreover, as Kurochkin writes, “on the pages of the ecclesiastical press and on the lips of those speaking before the believers, the similarity and closeness of the communist and Christian social and moral ideals was proclaimed more and more often.” And so the cult of Stalin was transformed into the cult of communism; for “the patriarchal church, having conquered the renovationists, was forced to assimilate the heritage of the conquered not only in the field of political re-orientation, but also in the sphere of ideological reconstruction.”[[502]](#footnote-502)

The gospel of “Communist Christianity” appeared in an encyclical of the patriarchate “in connection with the Great October Socialist Revolution”, which supposedly “turned into reality the dreams of many generations of people. It made all the natural riches of the land and means of production into the inheritance of the people. It *changed the very essence of human relations*, making all our citizens equal and excluding from our society any possibility of enmity between peoples of difference races and nationalities, of different persuasions, faiths and social conditions.”[[503]](#footnote-503)

Insofar as the MP confessed that the revolution “changed the very essence of human relations” for the better, it renounced the Christian Faith for that of the faith of the Antichrist. This aspect of the MP’s apostasy is often forgotten. And of course now, since the fall of communism, the MP no longer talks about its enthusiasm for the antichristian creed of communism. But by any normal definition of words, the hierarchs of the MP ceased to be, not only Orthodox in any meaningful sense, but also Christian at this time…

“The so-called ‘theology of peace’,” wrote Protopresbyter George Grabbe, “is in essence the chiliastic preaching of the Kingdom of God on earth, with the help of the planting of communist socialism. In their address to the Moscow council before the election of the patriarch in 1971 the Priest Nicholas Gainov and three laymen raised questions in relation to the speeches of Metropolitan Nicodem [of Leningrad] and his co-workers. They cited his words on the union of people amongst themselves in ‘the service of reconciliation’ with the aim thereby of ‘seizing the Kingdom of God that is coming in strength’. *The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* wrote: ‘For the Christian religion there can be no indifferent or neutral spheres of activity. The changes that are taking place in the world are viewed by Christianity as the action of the Providence of God, the manifestation of the power of God with the aim of establishing the Kingdom of God on earth’ (1962, № 12, p. 12).

“The peace which the Moscow patriarchate is clamouring for is not spiritual peace, but political peace, and moreover, a false peace, for the so-called ‘theology of peace’ is linked with the deceptive propaganda of the Soviets. In trying to echo communist propaganda, the patriarchate is involuntarily falling into the preaching of a certain kind of chiliasm, that is, the attainment of a golden age and general peace by human means of a political character. If the Saviour said: ‘Seek first of all the Kingdom of God, and all the rest will be added to you,’ the Moscow patriarchate puts the question in the reverse order: the Kingdom of God must be attained through the external means of the communist social order.

“That is why, in his report ‘Peace and Freedom’ at the local conference of the movement for peace in Holland in 1963, Metropolitan Nicodem called for the Church to come closer to this world. ‘From ancient times,’ he said, ‘the apologists of the unchangeability of social relations have begun to incline the thoughts of Christians to complete alienation from the world with the aim of drawing them away from burning social problems, for the struggle for the reconstruction of society on the principles of justice. Under the long influence of this pseudo-Christian preaching whole generations of narrow fanatics have been educated and grown up with distorted ideas about Christianity’ (*J.M.P.*, 1963, № 1, p. 40).

“What is Metropolitan Nicodem renouncing in these words? He is renouncing the patristic and ascetic past, he is trying to turn the Church from striving for heaven to the path of earthly social tasks. His Kingdom of God on earth is the communist order.

“He is echoed by Protopriest V.M. Borovoj, who expressed himself still more vividly: ‘Systematic theology and the historical churches have never been on the side of the revolution for the simple reason that they were prisoners of the cosmo-centric understanding of reality, prisoners of the static understanding of an order established once and for all on earth. Only in the last decades, when profound changes, a kind of revolution, have taken place in philosophical, theological and scientific thought as the result of an anthropocentric view of the cosmos, an evolutionary conception of the universe and a new rethinking of the whole history of humanity – only after all this has there appeared the possibility of working out a theology of development and revolution’ (*J.M.P.*, 1966, № 9, p. 78)…

“By moving in this apostatic direction the Moscow patriarchate has already lost Christianity itself, replacing it with the religion of this world. Contrary to the word of the Saviour (Matthew 6.24), it is trying to serve two masters, and, as the Saviour warned, it has arrived at the point where it is careless with regard to Christianity but ardent in serving atheist communism.”[[504]](#footnote-504)

## 124. THE COUNCILS OF 1971

In May-June, 1971 there was a council of the MP attended by 75 hierarchs, 85 clergy and 78 laymen, representatives of many other Orthodox Churches and the general secretary of the WCC. It confirmed all the previous decisions made by the MP since 1945. Only one candidate for the patriarchate (Patriarch Alexis had died in April) was put forward: the weak Metropolitan Pimen, who was elected unanimously in an open ballot (a secret ballot was not allowed by the all-powerful Metropolitan Nicodemus). The former KGB Lieutenant-Colonel Constantine Preobrazhensky writes: “They say that the first Communist within the church was Patriarch Pimen. He was a Senior Officer of the Red Army, and joined the Communist Party at the front. There could not have been any officers who believed in God, nor officers who were not Communist Party members. More than that, they were all forced to fight religion. That means that the future patriarch of the MP renounced his faith” [[505]](#footnote-505)

The Council also confirmed the 1961 statute taking control of the parishes away from the bishops and clergy[[506]](#footnote-506), as well as Metropolitan Nicodem’s report on the decision to give communion to Catholics, in which he said that the measure was justified “insofar as we have a common of faith with them in relation to the sacraments”.[[507]](#footnote-507)

The MP council also resolved: “to entrust to the higher ecclesiastical authority of the Russian Orthodox Church to continue efforts to reunite with the Mother Church the so-called Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (the Karlovtsy schism), the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church Abroad and other scattered children of hers… In view of the fact that the activity of supporters of the so-called Russian Orthodox Church Abroad… against the Mother Russian Orthodox Church and against the Holy Orthodox Church as a whole is harming Holy Orthodoxy, the higher ecclesiastical authority of the Moscow Patriarchate is entrusted with realizing in the nearest future the necessary canonical sanctions in relation to the apostate assembly..., the Karlovtsy schism and its unrepentant followers.”[[508]](#footnote-508)

ROCOR’s Hierarchical Council reacted to the MP council by passing two resolutions. The first, dated September 1/14, 1971 declared: “The free part of the Russian Church, which is beyond the frontiers of the USSR, is heart and soul with the confessors of the faith who… are called ‘the True Orthodox Christians’, and who often go by the name of ‘the Catacomb Church’… The Council of Bishops recognizes its spiritual unity with them…”

The second, of the same date, is called "Resolution of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia Concerning the Election of Pimen (Izvekov) as Patriarch of Moscow": "All of the elections of Patriarchs in Moscow, beginning in 1943, are invalid on the basis of the 30th Canon of the Holy Apostles and the 3rd Canon of the 7th Ecumenical Council, according to which, ‘if any bishop, having made use of secular rulers, should receive through them Episcopal authority in the Church, let him be defrocked and excommunicated along with all those in communion with him’. The significance that the Fathers of the 7th Council gave to such an offence is obvious from the very fact of a double punishment for it, that is, not only deposition but excommunication as well, something unusual for ecclesiastical law. The famous commentator on Canon Law, Bishop Nicodemus of Dalmatia, gives the following explanation of the 30th Canon of the Holy Apostles: ‘If the Church condemned unlawful influence by the secular authorities in the ordination of bishops at a time when the rulers were Christians, then it follows that She should condemn such action all the more when the latter are pagans and place even heavier penalties on the guilty parties, who were not ashamed of asking for help from pagan rulers and the authorities subordinated to them, in order to gain the episcopate. This (30th) Canon has such cases in view’. If in defence of this position examples are given of the Patriarchs of Constantinople who were placed on the Throne at the caprice of the Turkish Sultans, one can reply that no anomaly can be regarded as a norm and that one breach of Canon Law cannot justify another.

"The election of Pimen (Izvekov) as Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia at the gathering calling itself an All-Russian Church Council in Moscow the 2nd of June of this year, on the authority of the 3rd Canon of the 7th Ecumenical Council and other reasons set forth in this decision, is to be regarded as unlawful and void, and all of his acts and directions as having no strength."

However, in 1974 ROCOR did confirm one measure adopted by the MP’s 1971 Council: the removal of the curses on the old rites and those who observed them.[[509]](#footnote-509) This did not by itself make the Old Ritualists Orthodox; but it removed the main obstacle to their rejoining the Orthodox Church, taking to its logical conclusion Tsar Paul’s introduction of the yedinoverie in 1801, which allowed Old Ritualists who joined the Orthodox Church to retain their use of the Old Rites.

On September 28, 1971, ROCOR’s Hierarchical Council decreed: “The lack of accord of the decree of the Moscow Patriarchate, concerning the granting of communion to Roman Catholics, with Orthodox dogmatic teaching and the Church canons is completely clear to any person even slightly informed in theology. It was justly condemned by a decree of the Synod of the Church of Greece. The holy canons do permit the communication of a great sinner who is under penance (epitimia) when he is about to die (I Ecumenical 13, Carthage 6, Gregory of Nyssa 2 and 5), but there is not a single canon which would extend this to include persons foreign to the Orthodox Church, as long as they have not renounced their false doctrines. No matter what explanation Metropolitan Nicodemus and the other Moscow hierarchs might try to give of this act, it is completely clear that by this decision, even though with certain limitations, communion has been established between the Moscow Patriarchate and Roman Catholics. Furthermore, the latter have already made the decision to permit members of the Orthodox Church to receive communion from them. All this was particularly clearly demonstrated in the service held on December 14, 1970, in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, when Metropolitan Nicodemus gave communion to Catholic clerics. It is perfectly clear that this act could not be justified by any need. By this act the Moscow Patriarchate has betrayed Orthodoxy. If the 45th Canon of the Holy Apostles excommunicates from the Church an Orthodox bishop or cleric who has ‘only prayed together with heretics’, and the 10th Apostolic Canon forbids even prayer together with those who are excommunicated, what can we say about a bishop who dares to offer the Holy Mysteries to them? If catechumens must leave the church before the sanctification of the Gifts and are not permitted even at point of death to receive communion until they are united to the Church, how can one justify the communicating of persons who, being members of heretical communities, are much farther away from the Church than a catechumen, who is preparing to unite with her? The act of the Moscow Synod, which was confirmed by the recent Council of the Moscow Patriarchate in Moscow, extends the responsibility for this un-Orthodox decision to all participants of the Moscow Council and to their entire Church organization. The decision to admit Catholics to communion is an act that is not only anticanonical, but heretical as well, as inflicting harm on the Orthodox doctrine of the Church, since only true members of the Church are called to communicate of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist. The Moscow decree, logically considered, recognizes as her members those who, through their doctrinal errors, in both heart and mind are far from her.”

By calling the MP’s decision “heretical”, as Archbishop Averky pointed out, ROCOR in effect declared that the MP was outside the Church, bringing it back into line with the decision made by the ROCOR Synod under Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) in 1928…

On the same day the Council issued an important statement on the reception of heretics, considerably “tightening up” its practice: “The Holy Church has from antiquity believed that there can be only one true baptism, namely that which is accomplished in her bosom: ‘One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism’ (Ephesians 4.5). In the Symbol of Faith “one baptism” is also confessed, while the 46th canon of the Holy Apostles indicates: ‘We order that a bishop or priest who has accepted (that is, recognized) the baptism or sacrifice of heretics should be deposed.’

“However, when the zeal of any heretics in their struggle against the Church weakened, and when there was a question of their mass conversion to Orthodoxy, the Church, to ease their union, accepted them into her bosom by another rite. [There follows a discussion of St. Basil the Great’s first canonical epistle.]

“And so St. Basil the Great, and through his words the Ecumenical Council, in establishing the principle that outside the Holy Orthodox Church there is no true baptism, allowed out of pastoral condescension, so-called oikonomia, the acceptance of certain heretics and schismatics without a new baptism. And in accordance with this principle, the Ecumenical Councils allowed the reception of heretics by various rites, taking account of the weakening of their fierceness against the Orthodox Church….

“In relation to the Roman Catholics and Protestants who claim to preserve baptism as a sacrament (for example, the Lutherans), the practice was introduced from the time of Peter the First of receiving them without baptism, through the renunciation of heresy and chrismation of Protestants and unconfirmed Catholics. Before Peter Catholics were baptised in Russia. In Greece the practice also changed, but for almost three hundred years, after a certain break, the practice of baptising those who came from Catholicism and Protestantism was again introduced. Those who are received by another rite are not recognized as Orthodox in Greece. In many cases also such children of our Russian Church were not even allowed to receive Holy Communion.

“Bearing in mind this circumstance, and the present growth of the ecumenical heresy, which tries completely to wipe out the difference between Orthodoxy and every heresy, so that the Moscow Patriarchate, in spite of the sacred canons, has issued a resolution allowing Roman Catholics to be communed in certain cases, the Hierarchical Council has recognized the introduction of a stricter practice to be necessary, that is, that all heretics coming to the Church should be baptized, and that only insofar as it is necessary and with the permission of the bishop, from considerations of oikonomia, should another practice be allowed in relation to certain people, that is, the reception into the Church of Roman Catholics and Protestants who have been baptised in the name of the Holy Trinity through renunciation of heresy and chrismation.”[[510]](#footnote-510)

This decision brought the practice of ROCOR back into line with the practice of the Russian Church under Patriarch Philaret in the early seventeenth century, and of the Greek Church since 1756.

“It should be noted,” writes Psarev, “that, within the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, it was Bishop James of Manhattan, who led the American Orthodox Mission for a period of time, who first began the reception of Catholics by baptism, regarding which he informed the Council of Bishops in 1953.”[[511]](#footnote-511) Now the Russian bishops followed the lead taken by their “convert” colleague…

## 125. THE ROCOR – GREEK OLD CALENDARIST UNION

This last decision was also undoubtedly influenced by the happy fact that at the same time ROCOR had achieved union with the second Greek Old Calendarist Synod, that of the Matthewites. For the practice of both Greek Old Calendarist Synods, the Florinites and Matthewites, was stricter in relation to the reception of heretics was stricter than ROCOR’s. Unfortunately, however, most of the ROCOR hierarchs paid scant attention to this decision…

On December 18/31, 1969, Metropolitan Philaret and his Synod officially recognized the Florinite hierarchy led by Archbishop Auxentius[[512]](#footnote-512), and wrote to him: “The many trials which the Orthodox Church has endured from the beginning of its history are especially great in our evil times, and consequently, this especially requires unity among those who are truly devoted to the Faith of the Fathers. With these sentiments we wish to inform you that the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad recognizes the validity of the episcopal ordinations of your predecessor of blessed memory, the reposed Archbishop Acacius, and the consequent ordinations of your Holy Church. Hence, taking into account also various other circumstances, our hierarchical Synod esteems your hierarchy as brothers in Christ in full communion with us.”[[513]](#footnote-513)

The members of the Florinite Synod now were: Archbishop Auxentius and Metropolitans Gerontius of Piraeus, Acacius of Diauleia and Chrysostom (Naslimis) of Magnesia. In July, 1971 Auxentius and Gerontius ordained Metropolitans Paisius (Euthymiadis) of Euripus and Euboea, Chrysostom (Kiousis) of Thessalonica, Callinicus (Khaniotis) of Thaumakou and Acacius (Douskos) of Canada. And in 1973 Metropolitans Anthony (Thanasis) of Megara and Gabriel (Kalamisakis) of the Cyclades were ordained.

The Matthewites continued to denounce the Florinites as schismatics, but for the rest of the True Orthodox world this act by the ROCOR Synod dispelled any lingering doubts about their canonicity. So on September 1/14, 1971, the Matthewites sent an exarchate, consisting of Metropolitans Callistus of Corinth and Epiphanius of Kition (Cyprus) and the Chancellor, Protopriest Eugene Tombros, to the Synod of ROCOR in New York.[[514]](#footnote-514) They went, as the Matthewites wrote to the Russians some years later, “in order to come into contact with your Synod and regularize spiritual communion with you for the strengthening of the Holy Struggle of Orthodoxy”.[[515]](#footnote-515) Or, as Metropolitan Epiphanius put it in a letter to Metropolitan Philaret, “I went to carry out with you a common duty 48 years late. I went with the conviction that, through human weakness, we carried out in 1971 what we should have done in 1924… I believed that in entering into sacramental communion with you I became with you the same Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.”[[516]](#footnote-516)

But the Matthewites, according to their own account, did not immediately seek communion in prayer with the Russians. First they asked what the Russians’ attitude to the new calendarists was. The Russians replied that the introduction of the new calendar was a mistake, and promised, in the person of Archbishop Philotheus of Hamburg, that they would not henceforth concelebrate with the new calendarists. However, they did not say whether they regarded the new calendarists as having valid sacraments.

Apparently satisfied with this reply, the Matthewites asked for the Russians to pass judgement on their own canonical situation. More precisely, the exarchate in their letter of September, 1971 wrote that their Synod had entrusted them “to enter into negotiations with your Holy Synod with regard to the sacred struggle for Orthodoxy. As regards the question of our ordinations (the ordination of a bishop by one bishop) we communicate the following to your Holy Synod.”

There then followed a short justification of Bishop Matthew’s ordinations, concluding that “there could not remain any doubt” about their canonicity. “In view of this,” they concluded, “we present the present petition for the review of your Holy Synod, and we are ready to accept any decision it makes on the basis of the holy canons”.

But if there could be no doubt about Matthew’s ordinations, what, precisely were the Matthewites asking the Russians to do? Simply to agree with them, and then enter into communion with them without more ado? But in that case their readiness “to accept any decision [they made] on the basis of the holy canons” was somewhat disingenuous, since they had already made it clear that, in their opinion, the only canonical decision was to accept their point of view…

Having examined the Matthewite case, on September 15/28, the Russians presented, in writing, a dogmatic-canonical examination of the case of ordinations by one bishop only. They noted that while single-handed ordinations of bishops were strictly speaking uncanonical, they might be justified by special circumstances (the existence of persecution, and the lack of another bishop in the vicinity). And so three single-handed ordinations carried out by Bishop Gabriel of Zarna in 1825 were recognized as justified by the Constantinopolitan Synod of 1834, whereas his ordination of Procopius was not recognized as justified and was deemed to be invalid. Both Gabriel and Procopius were forgiven and restored to their Episcopal rank. In other words, it rested with the decision of a later Synod to recognize the original ordinations as valid or invalid…

The Russians continued: “The demand that at least two bishops should participate in the ordination of a bishop has yet one more explanation. According to the words of the Apostle Paul: ‘The lesser is blessed by the greater’ (Hebrews 7.7). It is evident that when a bishop ordains a priest, this principle is observed. But for a bishop one bishop is not ‘greater’. ‘Greater’ for him is a Council of Bishops. Therefore the ordination of a bishop by one bishop violates the Orthodox principle of ecclesiastical hierarchy.

“Consequently, in spite of the fact that the zeal of the followers of Bishop Matthew in preserving the ecclesiastical traditions and the ecclesiastical calendar is praiseworthy, the bishops who received their ordinations from Matthew are not in any way to be reproached, with the exception of their ordination itself, nevertheless many preferred to remain without a bishop than submit to them, to the extent that their appeared a hierarchy [the Florinites] which had both zeal in defending the ecclesiastical traditions and ordinations performed by canonical bishops.

“Any ordination carried out without observing the canons is already in essence invalid, even if it is carried out by completely canonical bishops… Hence we can understand why the ordination of Archbishop Acacius and the following ordinations elicited doubts among many until they were confirmed and legalised by the decision of (our) Synod.

“However, by means of oikonomia unlawful actions can receive the force of sacraments without repeating their performance. St. Basil the Great writes in his First Canon about the Cathars, who were deprived of the gifts of the Holy Spirit insofar as they were schismatics. But by means of oikonomia he allowed them to be received into communion without a new baptism. And the Eighth Canon of the First Ecumenical Council speaks about them as follows: ‘Concerning those who once called themselves ‘Pure’, but have been united to the Catholic and Apostolic Church, it is pleasing to the Holy and Great Council that after the laying of hands upon them, they should remain in the clergy.’

“There exist various opinions in relation to how these words, ‘the laying on of hands’, should be understood. Aristene understands them in the sense of chrismation. His opinion is shared by Bishop John of Smolensk. Apparently, however, a more authoritative opinion was given by St. Tarasius at the Seventh Ecumenical Council. When someone asked him how the words on the laying on of hands in the Eighth Canon of the First Ecumenical Council should be understood, he explained that this was not an ordination, but something else, signifying only a blessing. We can agree with Bishop Nicodemus Milash that, on the basis of the authoritative interpretation of St. Tarasius, ‘… the meaning of these words in the given Canon of Nicaea is that when the Novationist clergy passed over from schism to the Church, the Orthodox bishop or priest had to lay hands on their heads, as takes place in the sacrament of repentance, and then read over them a definite prayer reconciling them with the Church’. Such was the order of reception of the Donatists into the Church, who were much more stubborn schismatics than the Novationists (Canon 79 of the Council of Carthage).

“From what has been said at the beginning of the present Definition it is evident that the Old Calendarists led by the hierarchy of Matthewite ordination cannot be compared with such schismatics as the Donatists and Novationists. These Old Calendarists did not sin as regards Orthodoxy, but they only violated hierarchical order in their striving to defend the Orthodox teaching when the ordination of bishops was carried out by Bishop Matthew on his own. The simple recognition of their ordinations could elicit a scandal, as being a direct violation of the First Apostolic Canon, the Fourth of the First Ecumenical Council and the Third of the Seventh Ecumenical Council.

“It is evident from the cited examples that there is sufficient basis to apply oikonomia in relation to them, in accordance with the Eighth Canon of the First Ecumenical Council and the 79th of the Council of Carthage.

“Taking into account all that has been said above, and also the desire to attain the union of all those who are devoted to True Orthodoxy that was expressed by Archbishop Auxentius, the Hierarchical Council adopted the following decision:

“1. To recognize the possibility of fulfilling the petition of Metropolitans Callistus and Epiphanius. To that end, two bishops must perform the laying-on of hands over them. They, in turn, must subsequently perform the same over their brethren, and all bishops [must perform the same rite] over the priests.

“2. To oblige Metropolitans Callistus and Epiphanius, as well as their brethren, to take all possible steps to unite their hierarchy, clergy, and people with those who are headed by his Beatitude, Archbishop Auxentius.

“3. To inform his Beatitude, Archbishop Auxentius, concerning the aforesaid [decision].

“4. To delegate the Most Reverend Archbishop Philotheus and Bishop Constantine to fulfil the provision of paragraph one of this Resolution at Transfiguration Monastery in Boston.”[[517]](#footnote-517)

It must be recognized that with regard to the vital question whether Matthew’s original ordinations were valid or not this Definition was ambiguous – probably deliberately so. On the one hand, it cited canons, such as the 8th of the First Ecumenical Council and the 79th of the Council of Carthage that related originally to schismatics. On the other hand, it deliberately rejected comparison with these schismatics, saying: “it is evident that the Old Calendarists led by the hierarchy of Matthewite ordination can*not* be compared with such schismatics as the Donatists and Novationists”. So were the Matthewites schismatics or not, in the Russians’ opinion? We cannot say for certain…

The laying on of hands, together with the reading of several prayers from the service for the consecration of bishops[[518]](#footnote-518), duly took place, on September 17/30 and September 18 / October 1. On the same day (October 1) Metropolitan Philaret wrote to Archbishop Auxentius: “They [Metropolitans Callistus and Epiphanius] laid before us the question of their hierarchy, and declared that they relied completely on the decision of our Council, which they were obliged to accept whatever it might be.

“We rejoiced at the humility and firm Orthodox faith with which they came to us. Therefore we treated them with brotherly love and the hope that their good feelings would serve the affair of a general union. We based our decision also on the fact that the indicated hierarchs agreed to do all they could to unite with your Church. That is, what seemed to you and us unrealizable, with the help of the grace of God turned out to be possible. We hope that your Beatitude, being led by the Holy Spirit, will treat them with brotherly love and that through your and our joint efforts all will be united by you…”

However, almost immediately there was much controversy over the precise meaning of what the Russian bishops had done to the Matthewite bishops. Some claimed that these were real ordinations (kheirotoniai), adducing the following facts: (a) that the Russians in their text of September 15/28 explicitly stated that they were not simply going to recognize the Matthewite orders, (b) that the Russians in the same text explained that in the history of the Church the clergy of certain graceless schismatics, such as the Catharoi, were received into the clergy of the Orthodox by kheirothesia, simple laying-on of hands, and not by re-ordination, which was an exercise of economy but by no means a recognition of the schismatics’ ordinations, and (c) that, as Bishop Laurus, the secretary of the Russian Synod pointed out on a trip to Greece, the kheirothesias on Metropolitans Callistos and Epiphanius were carried out, not on the same, but on successive days, which clearly implied that they were equivalent to ordinations.[[519]](#footnote-519)

Against this view, however, are the following facts: (a) the words of the Act, in which the word kheirothesia and its Russian equivalent, and not kheirotonia and its Russian equivalent, are used[[520]](#footnote-520); (b) the English text of a letter sent by Metropolitan Philaret to Archbishop Andrew, in which the sacrament was described as “the laying-on of hands which was given as a Blessing for Your Beatitude’s Sacred Hierarchy”[[521]](#footnote-521); (c) the English text of a letter sent by Metropolitan Philaret to Metropolitan Epiphanius, in which the sacrament was described as no more than “a prayer of absolution”[[522]](#footnote-522) – presumably the removal of the stain attaching to the Matthewite orders because of their derivation from one bishop only; (d) the text of an Encyclical of the Florinites, which said that the Florinites had been informed that “the Synod of the all-sacred Philaret has decided to recognize as canonical the pseudo-bishops of the reposed Mr. Matthew”[[523]](#footnote-523); and (e) a letter of Protopriest George Grabbe, secretary of the ROCOR Synod: “Bishops Callistus and Epiphanius were not ordained by our Synod. They were accepted into communion as bishops with only the laying of hands on them, already in bishops’ vestments, according to the 8th canon of the First Ecumenical Council. That was to rectify the irregularity caused by the founding of their hierarchy through the ordination originally performed by one bishop.”[[524]](#footnote-524)

Another important consideration here is: why did the Russians not hand this question over to the Florinites? After all, they recognized the Florinites as a truly Orthodox Greek hierarchy, so the question of the status of another Greek hierarchy was surely a matter for them rather than for ROCOR. There appear to be two possible answers to this question. Either the Russians took this matter into their own hands because they believed (as did the Matthewites) that the Florinites would not accept the ordinations of the Matthewites and so the union would not take place. Or they were not convinced that the Florinites were the *only* True Orthodox in Greece…

“Unfortunately, the conditions laid down by the Russian Church Abroad and agreed to by the Matthewite representatives were only partially implemented in Greece. The Matthewite Synod agreed to the first condition (that the rite of kheirothesia be performed over their bishops), but refused to comply with the second (that the same rite by performed over their priests and deacons), though a number of their clergy persistently requested it. In a privately published memorandum, dated March 17, 1977, Metropolitan Epiphanius of Cyprus – and also Metropolitan Callistus of Corinth, in private memoranda and open letters which he wrote – rebuked their fellow Matthewite bishops and clergy for showing bad faith and for bearing the burden of guilt in the breakdown of their negotiations with the Florinites and the souring of their relations with the Church Abroad.”[[525]](#footnote-525)

For a very short period the two Greek Synods called each other “brothers in Christ”, and in the opinion of the present writer this is what they in fact were (and are). For it makes no ecclesiological sense to claim that two Churches which derive their orders or correction of their orders from the same source, are in communion with each through that source, and have the same confession of faith, can be of a different status ecclesiologically. That there was no difference in faith between the two Synods was confirmed on June 5, 1974, when, in an encyclical to its clergy, the Auxentiite Synod reaffirmed that the new calendarists were schismatics with no grace of sacraments and should be received into the True Church by chrismation: “The ministration of the Holy Gifts to the new calendarists has been forbidden since the beginning of the schism of the official Church; and you must observe this line of conduct unswervingly in a spirit of discipline towards our ecclesiastical traditions. If someone joins our ranks from the new calendar, an indispensable condition of his acceptance is the confession of faith and the condemnation of every heresy and innovation, including the new calendar, by the acceptance of which the Greek Church became schismatic from 1924, as the reformer Archbishop Chrysostom Papadopoulos himself averred, and in consequence of which its sacraments are deprived of sanctifying grace. If people who have been baptised in that Church convert to the Faith, they must again be chrismated with holy chrism of canonical origin, in accordance with the First Canon of St. Basil the Great.”[[526]](#footnote-526)

This confession of the faith removed the main obstacle to union with the Matthewites – the suspicion that the Auxentiites really recognised the new calendarists. However, it had no effect on the Matthewites, who went even further to the right by rejecting the 1971 kheirothesia, declaring: “1. We accepted spiritual communion with the Russian Synod after an oral declaration-assurance with regard to agreement and unity in the faith, i.e. the confession-ecclesiology of the True Orthodox Church. 2. We accepted the kheirothesia as an external act – and wholly formal, in order to efface the pretext of anticanonicity which the followers of the former [Bishop] of Florina, i.e. the Acacians, had put forward in opposition to unity, and not as something that affected the Hierarchy, which was dogmatically complete and perfect. 3. We accept that there were canonical breaches (irregularities), but what moved us was the fact that the Russians, in accordance with the declarations of the Exarchate, had confessed the True Confession. However, when the opposite started to reveal itself, after desperate attempts which lasted for approximately four years, we were compelled to break off spiritual communion, being indifferent to the issue of the kheirothesia, because neither had anything been added to us, nor subtracted from us. … 4. Yes, as has been revealed, the act of 1971 was a robber act, which had been previously constructed by the enemies of the Church.”[[527]](#footnote-527)

Again, on November 28, 2007 the Matthewite Synod under Archbishop Nicholas declared: “The so called *laying-on-of-hands* which was performed by the ROCOR in 1971, according to the faith of the Genuine Orthodox Church of Greece and according to its ecclesiastical totality, neither added to, nor gave legitimacy, wholeness, grace or power to the high-priesthoodness of the Bishops of the Church of the GOC of Greece - and in a strict *canonical review* should never have been permitted to have taken place.”[[528]](#footnote-528)

## 126. CAUCASIAN SAINTS

The meeting and union, however temporary, of the Russian and Greek True Orthodox was a sign of the times. With the relaxation of persecution in the Soviet Union, the hitherto isolated national Churches were beginning to extend feelers towards each other. One area in which some interrelations had never been interrupted was the eastern Black Sea Coast, where Russians, Georgians and Pontic Greeks mixed and worshipped together.

Nun Helena was born in Minsk, Belorussia of noble parents who were related to both the Russian and the Greek ruling families (through Queen Olga of the Hellenes, Abbess Tamara Romanov of the Convent of the Ascension, Eleon, Jerusalem was her cousin). According to Olga Abramides, who had been healed by the saint and lived with her for some months in her hermitage, the family of the blessed one had nine children (six daughters and three sons), all of whom embraced the monastic life at an early age.

Helena and her sister Nina struggled under the direction of a certain virtuous abbess in a coenobitic monastery near Batumi, in Georgia, in order to learn the monastic life. The only photograph of Mother Helena shows her wearing the great schema.

At this time there died a virtuous bishop in the Batumi area. During his burial the face of the virtuous bishop sweated, and came down in streams which the faithful standing by gathered up with reverence. Mother Helena took some of this “holy water” and kept it for the next 75 years. Through her faith, and the faith of those sufferers who came to her, this “holy water” became wonder-working.

After the revolution, the monastery in which the sisters were struggling was destroyed by the Bolsheviks, and they sought refuge in the Caucasus mountains, in an impassable ravine one hour’s walk from the village of Chin, in a thick forest of evergreen trees. For the first two years of their struggle here, the sisters lived in complete isolation. Their only food was a little warm water and a prosphora once a day, which appeared in a miraculous way. Later, when the villagers learned about them and began to help them, and they began to cultivate a garden, the fresh prosphora ceased to come…

During the winter they lived in an underground passage. Then the villagers helped them to build a typical Russian cell made out of trunks of trees with a stove. They ate only once a day – boiled potatoes. They never had oil. For Pascha, “to honour the day”, they ate one egg.

The nuns had no communion with the official Churches of Russia or Georgia, and when clergy from these Churches would come up to meet them, Mother Helena would not let them into her cell, nor allow them to celebrate Divine services. For confession and communion they themselves went down to Sukhumi to an exiled priest of Bulgarian origin.

Once some secret policemen tried to catch them. However, Mother Helena was hidden in a miraculous manner, so they found only Mother Nina.

“Are you praying?” one of them asked.

“Yes,” she replied, “for all the Christians. And also for you, since you were baptized in the Name of Christ but have denied Him.”

In 1957 the hermitage was struck by fire. Flames were destroying everything. Then Mother Helena knelt down, raised her hands to heaven and fervently prayed to the Mother of God to help her servants. The Mother of God appeared and put out the fire! And as a sign of her appearance she left the mark of her immaculate foot there. From that time many people came to the hermitage to venerate the foot-print of the Mother of God.

To repair the damage caused by the fire, Mother Helena accepted help from the villagers and pilgrims. A twenty-year-old young man called Christopher Damianides and 42 other Christians worked for three months there to erect new buildings. (Christopher had come a long way from Kazakhstan on hearing of the fame of the saint, although he was very ill. And Mother Helena had healed him after putting him on a strict fast.)

The hermitage was built from wood. So to reconstruct it they had to use huge trees up to 50 metres high. After the completion of the works, Mother Helena called the Christians together, thanked them and said that the next day “Christopher will be able to leave”. The following day, however, she asked him to stay, because “they would have a great temptation”. And indeed, they had many problems from the local Forestry department, because the trees had been cut down without its permission.

After the work was done, some of the faithful offered to Matushka that they use a tree in order to construct a fence around the hermitage.

“No,” she said, “we shall not cut down another tree. But if God wills this work, He Himself will send it us.”

That night there was a terrible storm, and the next morning everyone saw to their amazement that a fir-tree of enormous proportions had been uprooted and stretched from the water right to the boundary of the hermitage. So, in accordance with the saint’s prophecy, the Lord Himself had sent wood to fence it round, in a manner that exceeded human and natural strength.

They had also build a little chapel inside the hermitage. When it was completed, Matushka called the young Christopher, together with Theodore Boukharides, and sent them to the village, saying: ‘There where the Georgians have built a school, there is a buried church dedicated to Saints Constantine and Helena. You excavate it and you will find a hidden icon.” The two young men obediently dug for the church, but could not find anything, and so set off back to the hermitage. Matushka Helena sent them there again, this time with clear and accurate instructions (how many steps to the right and to the left). The young man dug, and this time they found a big icon of the All-Holy Mother of God. While they were bringing it to the hermitage, Matushka, informed “from above” about the discovery, went to meet them holding the honourable Cross and wonderworking holy water. She took the icon, kissed it and put it in the chapel. Then, in the presence of about 50 faithful, the church was filled with a wonderful fragrance. “Come, my children,” she said, “come and see the grace of the Holy Spirit.”

Through the grace of God, Mother Helena knew who were coming to visit her; she called them by their Christian names and said who would be received and who not. She did not receive those with little faith or those burdened by mortal sins.

Once (according to the witness of the monk Fr. Luke Panides) she was visited by a mother with a sick child, who was carrying some food. Matushka did not receive her. Later, when asked she explained that “all of them in the family are unbelievers”. Another time, she told her visitors to sit in a room containing the icon of the Lord not-made-with-hands. While they all saw that the eyes in the Lord’s face were open, one woman saw that they were closed.

“Why is that, Gerontissa?” asked one man.

“John,” she replied, “I am not hindering her, but the Lord Himself, because she practices magic.”

Mrs. Despoina Kalaitzides got to know Mother Helena in 1965 together with a relative of hers. Matushka – who had not seen them before – said to her:

“You are the daughter of Alexandra and you are very like her. I see your father Panagiotes dressed in green.”

Before Despoina and her relative, the hermitage had been visited by two Russian women, bringing some food. However, Blessed Helena had again not received them. Later Matushka Nina told Despoina and her relative that the Russian women had a sick child and on an earlier visit Matushka Helena had advised them to keep the fasts of the Church in order that the child should be healed. And indeed, the child was healed. However, “the Russians easily forget”, and since they were careless, in the end the child fell ill again. And she did not receive the food because it had been stolen from a state institution where they worked.

One evening a bear started groaning mournfully outside the hermitage of the saint. Matushka was frightened at the beginning. However, the cries of the animal forced her to interrupt her prayer. Then she saw that the bear’s paw was wounded. The blessed one plucked up courage, came closer to the bear and bound up the wound.

A few days later the bear returned peacefully, holding in its paws some maize. Matushka received the animal’s gift gratefully, but when she understood that it had taken it from some farm, doing injustice in this way to some unsuspecting farmer, she “scolded” the bear and showed him a piece of wood, indicating in this way that in the future it should bring her firewood. From then on the animal brought firewood, demonstrating in this way his gratitude to the saint.

When sick people came to Matushka, she would counsel them to fast and pray, “for this kind cometh not out except by prayer and fasting” (Matthew 17.21). And since there were no priests to read the Gospel, she would read the Gospel, sprinkling the sick with “holy water” and anointing them with oil from the lampada of the Mother of God. And in accordance with the faith of the sick people, the Lord performed miracles. From the sick she demanded only faith in the power of God and a Christian life thenceforth. At that time there were many “healers” in the Soviet Union. When the sick could not go to the hermitage themselves, their relatives sent their clothes there so that Matushka should bless them.

Like a true nun, Mother Helena had prepared her own grave while she was still alive, outside the hermitage. The simple people, during her lifetime, would take earth from the grave and it would work miracles.

One of the first to be healed through the prayers of Mother Helena was “Katya from Krasnodar”, who suffered from epilepsy. After her healing Katya stayed at the hermitage and became a nun with the name Catherine.

Olga Simeonides witnesses that when she was newly married and her son George was one year old, she fell mentally ill. She was oppressed, didn’t want to be in the house, feared lights and people, etc. With her mother and husband she went to many psychiatrists, with no result. Then a lecturer in psychiatry who was probably a believer discreetly recommended that the prayers of the Church for driving out demons be read. These prayers also did not work, but they did make the condition evident: Olga produced symptoms of demon-possession, and attacked the priests (of the official Georgian Church). Finally her mother in despair began to visit “magicians” and “healers”. At one such visit to a well-known medium, God had mercy on her: the medium, compelled by the grace of God, told her:

“Sit down and listen. You have to find a woman; only she will be able to heal your daughter. She has seven Gospels. At the third your daughter’s illness will be loosed.”

“Since the wretched husband and parents of Olga did not know where to go, they brought the sick woman to her house. For the next month Olga remained lying in a dark room, wrapped in a bed sheet, with absolutely no food or water. There was an icon of the Deisis in the room. One day she heard a sound. Starting up, the sick woman saw a nun standing in front of the icon.

“I am sorry for you,” she said. “Give me your hand, so that I can lift you up. You have twelve days left to live.”

Olga found the courage to stretch out her hand, and hardly had the unknown nun touched her than she felt a supernatural power go through her. Her strength returned and she was completely healed!

When this miracle became known, the thoughts of all turned to “Matushka Helena of Chin”. Olga visited the hermitage to thank her, and recognized in the face of the blessed one the unknown nun who had healed her. Then the saint told her about the satanic bonds of magic, with which, with the permission of God, she had been bound.

“Don’t seek to find out who was responsible,” she said, “because then you will die from sorrow.”

The wife of a very high-ranking Soviet general fell mentally ill. No psychiatrists could help her, so her husband took her – at great risk to himself, since people of his rank were supposed to be atheists – to the hermitage of Chin. Matushka Helena healed the woman. Then the general offered to bring electricity to the hermitage. Matushka refused”

“We are nuns,” she said. “Wax and oil are sufficient for us.”

The general then offered to bring water from the sides of the hill into the depths of the ravine by aqueduct. She accepted this gift.

Matushka Helena was also a prophetess. In 1955 Christopher Damianides, aged 18, was told by his parents to go to Matushka to ask her whether there would be a war.

“No,” she replied. “There will be no war.”

“And how will the situation develop?” asked Christopher.

“The eighth leader [of the Soviet Union] is called Michael [i.e. Michael Gorbachev, the eighth Soviet leader since Lenin]. He will be young and good-looking. He will change the situation. However, there will come great poverty. But finally good times will come…”

Many Pontiac Greeks living in the region wanted to return to Greece. She warned them that they must go only to the Old Calendar Church:

“In Greece there is the new calendar. Don’t go to the churches where it is followed… If Greece returns to the Old Calendar, it will triumph. Otherwise it will perish.”

Matushka Helena died in 1977 (her sister Nina died between the years 1957 and 1959). A Russian-style “open” wooden church has been erected over her grave, and a monk called Boris lives at the hermitage. Her relics have not been uncovered yet. But the earth from her grave is refreshed by a fragrant myrrh which, especially at night, makes the whole area fragrant. And the saint once appeared in a dream to the person who buried her and said:

“Don’t move me, for the oil has reached my eyes…”[[529]](#footnote-529)

Nun Helena was not the last saint of the region. In the early 1980s a small secret community of monastics was discovered in the high mountains about 60 kilometres from Sukhumi by the KGB. 18 monastics managed to take shelter in a cave. The pursuers in a helicopter threw a cask full of burning liquid into the entrance and set it on fire. All those hiding in the cave perished. Their names were: Irina, Maria, Eudocia, Ulyana, John, Gregory, Basil, Andrew, Stephen, and others.[[530]](#footnote-530)

## 127. GREEK ZEALOTS AND ECUMENISTS

Although persecution against the True Orthodox was less fierce in Greece than in Russia, and less than in the 1930s or 1951-52, it still existed in the early 1970s. “The following are only some of the many means used by the Greek regime and the official Church to persecute Old Calendarists: a) priests of the Old Calendarist Church are deprived of the elementary rights accorded to even non-Orthodox Greek ecclesiastics (e.g. Catholics, Protestants, Jews). Their sacramental acts are considered by the state to be null – thus thousands of marriages are declared invalid and thousands of infants are deemed ‘natural’ (unbaptized). b) Old Calendar women cannot inherit from their husbands. c) Old Calendar churches are constantly being forcibly closed. d) Old Calendar clerics are frequently violently removed from their posts by the civil authorities at the request of the official church. e) Old Calendarist clerics of Greek nationality abroad are refused a passport signifying their clerical status, although such passports are given to Catholic and Protestant clerics and to Jewish rabbis. The sacraments (marriages, baptisms) performed by them abroad are not recognized by the civil authorities. This is done to intimidate Greeks abroad not to adhere to the Old Calendar Church, and is a clear infringement of the liberty of conscience of those Orthodox desiring to uphold Orthodox Tradition.”[[531]](#footnote-531)

In spite of these persecutions, “by 1973, the Auxentian Synod had ten bishops, 123 churches in Greece, thirty-nine monasteries and convents, several charitable organizations, numerous periodicals, and most of the traditional Orthodox faithful in Greece.”[[532]](#footnote-532) In 1975, according to a new calendarist estimate, “of the two Old Calendarist groups, the followers of the later Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina have about 120 parishes, perhaps 70-80 monks and more than 600 nuns; the followers of the late Archbishop Matthew of Keratea have about 50 parishes, 150 monks and 500 nuns. But these figures may well be too low.”[[533]](#footnote-533) Other sources indicate that in the later 1970s there were about 50,000 Old Calendarists, with about a third of the 1200 monks on the Holy Mountain being zealots who refused to commemorate the Ecumenical Patriarch.[[534]](#footnote-534)

By comparison, the Romanian Old Calendarists were much more numerous at this time: about one million faithful led by three bishops, Glicherie, Evloghie and Silvestru. There were 12 hieromonks, about 45 married priests and 5 deacons. There were also two monasteries, Slătioara, with 80 monks, and another with 25. There were two convents with 100 and 50 nuns each, and a skete, Dobru with 35 nuns, besides some 100 or so nuns living in the parish churches.”[[535]](#footnote-535)

Meanwhile, the new calendarist Greeks were going still further than the Soviet Russians by extending their “eucharistic hospitality” even to the Protestants. Thus in 1971 Patriarch Athenagoras told a group of thirty American and five Greek priests: “And what is taking place today? A great spirit of love is spreading abroad over the Christians of the East and the West. Already we love one another… already in America you give communion to many from the holy chalice, and you do well! And I also here, when Catholics and Protestants come and ask to receive communion, I offer them the holy cup! And in Rome the same thing is happening, and in England, and in France. Already it is coming by itself!”[[536]](#footnote-536)

Now the lifting of the anathemas in 1965 had caused the majority of monasteries, sketes and dependencies of Mount Athos to cease commemorating the patriarch. However, on November 13, 1971 a special session of the Holy Assembly, the governing body of Mount Athos, resolved that “on the issue of resuming the commemoration of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, each Holy Monastery, as a self-governing entity, is to remain free to choose a course of action in accordance with its conscience”.[[537]](#footnote-537) However, although Esphigmenou, along with other monasteries, remained faithful to this resolution, the abbots of St. Paul’s and Xenophontou monastery were removed and replaced by hand-picked appointees.

In 1972 Esphigmenou raised the flag “Orthodoxy or Death” over the monastery in protest against the joint prayer service held by Athenagoras and the Pope, and broke communion with the other monasteries. However, in July Athenagoras died, and hopes were raised that his successor, Demetrius, would abandon his predecessor’s uniatism and return to Orthodoxy. But these hopes were dashed when, at his enthronement speech on July 5/18, the new patriarch affirmed his commitment to Ecumenism and the WCC, and spoke about “the pressing need to initiate dialogues first of all with Islam, and then with the other great monotheistic religions.”[[538]](#footnote-538)

Later that year Demetrius addressed the Mohammedans on one of their feasts: “The great God whose children we all are, all of us who believe in and worship him, wishes us to be saved and to be brothers. He wishes this to be so even though we belong to different religions. In these religions, however, we have learned both to recognize the holy God as the beginning and end of all, to love each other and to think only good things – which things let us practise towards each other.”[[539]](#footnote-539)

This did not prevent the Sacred Community of the Holy Mountain from issuing an encyclical to the monasteries on July 8/21, instructing them to resume the commemoration of the Ecumenical Patriarch. “A new climate has been established between the Holy Mountain and the Ecumenical Patriarchate,” the encyclical stated. “With the death of Patriarch Athenagoras, the reasons which led certain holy monasteries to break off the commemoration of their bishop’s name now exist no longer.”

Nevertheless, even after this statement and the visit to the Holy Mountain of an exarchate from the Ecumenical Patriarchate in September, seven monasteries still refused to commemorate the patriarch. And one of them, Esphigmenou, began to commemorate Archbishop Auxentius instead.[[540]](#footnote-540)

In September, 1973, another exarchate arrived on the Holy Mountain. It condemned Esphigmenou’s rebellion. Then, “on 11 March 1974 the Ecumenical Patriarch wrote to the Holy Community, announcing his decision. Penalties were imposed on thirteen monks. These included Archimandrite Athanasius, Abbot of Esphigmenou, the two epitropoi and the secretary of the monastery, who were to be expelled immediately from the Mountain... Archimandrite Eudocimus, Abbot of Xenophontos, was to be deposed and expelled from his monastery, but permitted to live in some other Athonite House. The abbots of the two other communities – Archimandrites Dionysius of Grigoriou and Andrew of St. Paul’s – were to be deposed unless within two months they resumed the commemoration of the Patriarch’s name…

“On the arrival of the Patriarch’s letter, the police cut the telephone line to Esphigmenou and installed a guard outside the monastery. Meanwhile the monks kept the gates closed and hung from the walls a large black banner inscribed ‘Orthodoxy or Death’. They warned the civil governor that they would resist any attempt to effect a forcible entry. In a declaration smuggled to the outside world, they stated that they continued to regard themselves as canonically subject to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, but did not recognize the present occupant of the Patriarchal throne, since ‘he is an enemy of Orthodoxy’.”[[541]](#footnote-541)

The monks of Esphigmenou were encouraged in their stand by a great miracle worked by the Holy Martyr Agathangelus, a monk of Esphigmenou. At the most critical moment in the struggle, the monks on entering the sanctuary were met with a great fragrant cloud. On examination, they found that the cloud was coming from the relics of St. Agathangelus; and they took this to mean that the saint was approving of their struggle against the greatest heresy of the age…

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In May, 1975 the WCC published an agreed statement of the Faith and Order Commission entitled *One Baptism, One Eucharist and a Mutually Recognised Ministry*, proclaiming a thoroughly Protestant doctrine of ecclesial and sacramental unity. As the title suggests, this document was aimed at the mutual recognition by the churches of each other’s sacraments. For example: “Our baptismal unity in Jesus Christ constitutes a call to the churches to overcome their divisions and achieve full visible union” (p. 10). And “the full recognition by churches of each other’s baptisms as the one baptism into Christ should be possible for all when Jesus Christ has been confessed as Lord by the candidate… and when baptism has been performed with water ‘in the name of the Father , the Son and the Holy Spirit’” (p. 16).

It should be remembered that the WCC includes sects which deny the Divinity of Christ, and that none of the member-churches except the Orthodox (and not even all of them) baptised in the apostolic manner with full threefold immersion.

The document also included a theologically incoherent doctrine of the transformation of the bread and the wine in the Eucharist, and the extraordinary statement that “the churches should test their liturgies in the light of the eucharistic agreement recently obtained” (p. 27) – as if the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom needed revision in the light of Protestant theology!

The Orthodox could hardly claim not to be committed to this document’s doctrines, for one of its chief architects was the Russian Protopresbyter Vitaly Borovoy, and none of the Churches disowned him. Moreover, it was a revision of previous statements “in the light of responses received from the churches” – including, presumably, from the Orthodox churches.

In the same year of 1975, Archbishop Athenagoras of Thyateira and Great Britain published, with the explicit blessing and authorisation of Patriarch Demetrius, his *Thyateira Confession*, which expressed the novel idea that the Church is a house without walls which anyone can enter freely. And he wrote: “Orthodox Christians believe that the following Churches have valid and true Priesthood or Orders. The Orthodox, the Roman Catholic, the Ethiopian, the Copto-Armenian and the Anglican. The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Patriarchate of Alexandria, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Patriarchate of Romania and the Church of Cyprus half a century ago declared officially that the Anglican Church has valid Orders by dispensation and that means that Anglican Bishops, Priests and Deacons can perform valid sacraments as can those of the Roman Catholic Church.”[[542]](#footnote-542)

Athenagoras also asserted that “the idea that Masonry is a religion is mistaken”…[[543]](#footnote-543)

When Metropolitan Philaret criticized *The Thyateira Confession*[[544]](#footnote-544), Athenagoras responded with a fierce attack on ROCOR, declaring: “Of course the door of the Church is Holy Baptism which the Orthodox Church has recognised as being validly administered by Roman Catholics, the Copts, the Armenians, the Old Catholics and Anglicans, the Lutherans, the Methodists and some other Christian groups.”[[545]](#footnote-545)

Again, at the WCC’s General Assembly at Nairobi in 1975, the Orthodox delegates, having signed an agreement to recognize the sacraments of the non-Orthodox delegates, had declared that “the Orthodox do not expect the other Christians to be converted to Orthodoxy in its historic and cultural reality of the past and the present and to become members of the Orthodox Church” – which gave the lie to their excuse that they were participating in the ecumenical movement “to witness to the non-Orthodox”.[[546]](#footnote-546)

Some residual opposition to ecumenism remained in some of the Local Churches – especially in Greece, where the opposition of Esphigmenou kept the issue high on the agenda. Thus, as Archimandrite (later Metropolitan) Callistus (Ware) reported, “during May, 1978, after visiting the Ecumenical Patriarch, Dr. Potter and Archbishop Scott, the Chairman of the Central Committee of the WCC, went to Athens for discussions there with the Synodical Commission on Inter-Orthodox and Inter-Christian Relations. It seems that the explanations offered from the side of the WCC totally failed to meet the Greek Orthodox objections. In an interview with the *New York Times*, Archbishop Seraphim of Athens stated that the Church of Greece was now considering withdrawal from membership in the WCC…

“Orthodox elsewhere are thinking along the same lines as Archbishop Seraphim. Speaking to the Clergy Conference of the Greek Archdiocese on 7 November, 1978, Archbishop Athenagoras of Thyateira and Great Britain likewise argued that Orthodoxy should withdraw from full membership of the WCC. In his view the Orthodox Church ought to have the same relation with the WCC as the Roman Catholic Church has with the Orthodox, that is to say, should send observers to WCC meetings and participate in discussions, but without voting and without being organic members of the World Council.”[[547]](#footnote-547)

In April, 1980 another warning against ecumenism was issued by the Fathers of Mount Athos, who since the return of Vatopedi in 1975 were now all solidly Old Calendar, though most remained in communion with the Ecumenical Patriarch. And yet high-level negotiations between Orthodox and Catholics went ahead on the islands of Patmos and Rhodes in May and June of 1980. During these talks, news came – hastily denied by the Vatican – that Pope John-Paul II had pronounced papal infallibility to be “not negotiable”. And on June 5, the day after the ending of the talks in Rhodes, the Pope declared that papal infallibility was “the key itself for certainty in professing and proclaiming the faith…”[[548]](#footnote-548)

## 128. THE THIRD ALL-EMIGRATION COUNCIL

In 1974 the Third All-Emigration Council of ROCOR took place in the monastery of the Holy Trinity in Jordanville, New York. Just as the First Council, held at Karlovtsy in 1921, had defined the relationship of ROCOR to the Bolshevik regime and the Romanov dynasty; and the Second Council, held in Belgrade in 1938, defined her relationship to the Church inside Russia; so the Third Council tried to define her relationship to the ecumenical and dissident movements. As Metropolitan Philaret, president of the Council, said in his keynote address: “First of all, the Council must declare not only for the Russian flock, but for the entire Church, its concept of the Church; to reveal the dogma of the Church… The Council must determine the place our Church Abroad holds within contemporary Orthodoxy, among the other ‘so-called’ churches. We say ‘so-called’ for though now they often speak of many ‘churches’, the Church of Christ is single and One.”[[549]](#footnote-549)

By this time, many non-Russians, impressed by the metropolitan’s zealot stance, had sought refuge in ROCOR; and in 1969-71 this movement was strengthened by the entrance of two Greek Old Calendarist Synods into communion with her. Thus ROCOR was no longer an exclusively Russian jurisdiction in the make-up of her members, and she could no longer be seen as simply an outpost of Russian Orthodox anti-communism. She was a multi-ethnic, global, missionary Church fighting the pan-heresy of ecumenism on a number of fronts throughout the world.

However, such a vision of ROCOR was shared by only a minority of her hierarchs. Among the “zealots” who did were Archbishops Averky of Syracuse, Anthony of Los Angeles and Nikodem of Great Britain[[550]](#footnote-550), and Protopresbyter George (later Bishop Gregory) Grabbe.[[551]](#footnote-551)  However, most of the other hierarchs were less interested in the struggle against ecumenism than in saw the struggle to preserve *Russianness* among the Russian émigrés.

This created a problem for a Church that was rapidly filling up with non-Russian converts who were either “born Orthodox” of other Orthodox nations (Greece, Serbia, Romania, etc.) or converts from Catholicism or Protestantism. In either case they had joined ROCOR, not because of its Russianness, but because of its stance against ecumenism (and communism). It was not that the preservation of Russianness as such was not an undoubted good. The problem arose when it hindered the missionary witness of the Church to non-Russians.

Such phyletistic tendencies inevitably led to a loss of Church consciousness in relation to ecumenism, and to a feeling that ROCOR was closer to Russians of the MP, ecumenist though they might be, than to True Orthodox Christians of Greek or French or American origin. Tensions began to rise between the Russians and the non-Russians in ROCOR. In the middle, trying to keep the peace, was the Metropolitan, Archbishop Averky, Archbishop Andrew of Rockland (a disciple of St. Nektary of Optina and the metropolitan’s confessor), Bishop Nektary of Seattle, Fr. George Grabbe, and some outstanding converts such as the Californian Hieromonk Seraphim Rose.

The unofficial leader of the lukewarm group of bishops was Archbishop Anthony of Geneva. He was supported by Archbishop Philotheus of Hamburg, Bishop Paul of Stuttgart[[552]](#footnote-552) and Bishop Laurus of Manhattan – the hierarch who as metropolitan was to lead ROCOR into the Moscow Patriarchate in 2007. Later the group was joined by Bishop Mark of Germany…

This group of hierarchs had passively acquiesced in Metropolitan Philaret’s “Sorrowful Epistles”, and in the union with the Greek Old Calendarists. But they began to stir when the consequences of this were spelled out by the “zealots” in ROCOR: no further communion with the new calendarists and the patriarchates of Serbia and Jerusalem. Thus they were irritated when the leader of one of the Greek Old Calendarist parishes within ROCOR, Fr. Panagiotes Carras, sent an appeal to the Synod of Bishops on August 24, 1974 on behalf of all “non-Russian monasteries, parishes, and laity of ROCOR”, in which he called on the ecumenists to be labelled as heretics who had lost the Holy Spirit and who should be subjected to the canonical sanctions that apply to heretics and schismatics. In response, Metropolitan Philaret moved for an official statement that the MP was graceless. According to the witness of a seminarian present at the Council, the majority of bishops and delegates would have supported such a motion. However, at the last minute the metropolitan was persuaded not to proceed with the motion on the grounds that it would have caused a schism.[[553]](#footnote-553)

Archbishop Anthony was a powerful hierarch who had already once apostasized to the Moscow Patriarchate.[[554]](#footnote-554) He continually proclaimed that the MP was a true Church. And inn his address to the 1974 Council, entitled “Our Church in the Modern World”, he declared: “By the example of our First Hierarchs [Anthony and Anastasy] we must carefully preserve those fine threads which bind us with the Orthodox world. Under no circumstances must we isolate ourselves, seeing around us, often imagined, heretics and schismatics. Through gradual self-isolation we will fall into the extremism which our metropolitans wisely avoided, we will reject that middle, royal path which until now our Church has travelled… By isolating ourselves, we will embark upon the path of sectarianism, fearing everyone and everything, we will become possessed with paranoia.”[[555]](#footnote-555)

This somewhat hysterical appeal not to show “paranoia” and separate from the World Orthodox at just the point when they were embarking upon “super-ecumenism” was criticized by Fr. George Grabbe: “The report does not mention to the degree necessary, maybe, that life goes on, and the sickness of ecumenism deepens and widens more and more. Condescension, oikonomia, must under different circumstances be applied differently, and to different degrees. In doses too great it can betray the Truth.” Then Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles recalled that “we have many Greek [Old Calendarist] parishes. Our concelebration with the new calendarists was very bitter for them.”

Archbishop Anthony particularly resented the influence of the Greek Old Calendarists and the Greeks within ROCOR. As he wrote to Fr. George Grabbe after the Council: “To trail along behind the Greek Old Calendarists, taking Fr. Panteleimon [Abbot of the Greek-American monastery of the Holy Transfiguration in Boston] for a prophet – this I cannot do. From my point, I am deeply convinced that this would be a betrayal of the Church. For you and me who used to have such universal teachers as Metropolitan Anthony and Archbishop Gavriil… Now even though we see the absurdities committed by the Greek Old Calendarists, we are still trying to accommodate and placate them, though we ourselves are slipping into a sect, cutting ourselves off from universal unity” [[556]](#footnote-556)

The struggle for the true faith between the zealots and their opponents in ROCOR continued with increasing intensity into the 1980s. It exposed more than the heretics of World Orthodoxy: it also exposed a rottenness at the heart of ROCOR. For too long ROCOR had occupied a kind of indeterminate, neutral position in relation to the heretics of World Orthodoxy. On the one hand, ROCOR never officially accepted sergianism or ecumenism or the new calendar. But on the other hand, she refused to issue definitive condemnations of these heretical phenomena, allowing the opinion to gain hold that sergianists, ecumenists and new calendarists, while in error, were not outside the True Church, and still had the grace of sacraments.

Fr. Steven Allen writes: “From the start, one needs to recognize that the ROCOR never formally broke communion with any jurisdiction of World Orthodoxy except the Moscow Patriarchate, the Evlogian Parisian schism, and the North American Metropolia/OCA schism, i.e., the other Russian groups.

“Many in the Genuine Orthodox Church of Greece, used to decades of detailed, agonizing, and careful articulations of, and impassioned arguments about, ecclesiology, find it hard to realize that for most of its history, most of ROCOR's bishops and clergy did not think carefully about such questions, except perhaps in regard to the Moscow Patriarchate and the other Russian groups. There were outstanding individuals in the ROCOR, such as the Holy Confessor Metropolitan Philaret, who saw clearly how ROCOR should deal with the apostasy of global ‘World Orthodoxy,’ but most of the ROCOR bishops and clergy simply had an instinctive (albeit healthy) distaste for modernism and ecumenism that never led them further - to undertake the process of rational discussion necessary to make clear decisions about these problems.

“The ROCOR's official policies regarding concelebration with jurisdictions other then those mentioned above, were never consistent, and the policy as it developed in the 1960's and onward, of mostly not concelebrating, was unwritten and de facto, not de jure. The ROCOR synod allowed the diocesan bishops almost complete discretion in this matter, and therefore the practice varied from one diocese to another. The most obvious contrast was between the North American dioceses, which were generally strict, and the European diocese, most of whose clergy, following the lead of their ‘abba,’ Abp. Anthony of Geneva, always saw themselves as part of ‘World’ Orthodoxy and were willing to concelebrate with anyone other than the Soviets and the Evlogians, including the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

“Thus ROCOR had completely pro-World Orthodox bishops and clergy who denied that the ecumenism of ‘World’ Orthodoxy was an impediment to concelebration and naturally objected loudly to anathematizing the ecumenists.”[[557]](#footnote-557)

Of particular importance in view of ROCOR’s official communion with the Greek Old Calendarists was its liberal attitude to the new calendarists. Thus on September 12/25, 1974 the Synod declared: “Concerning the question of the presence or absence of grace among the new calendarists the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad does not consider herself or any other Local Church to have the right to make a conclusive decision, since a categorical evaluation in this question can be undertaken only by a properly convened, competent Ecumenical Council, with the obligatory participation of the free Church of Russia.” (This was quoted by Metropolitan Philaret in his letter to Archbishop Andreas dated October 5, 1974 (ref. no. 3/50/760)). Again on September 18 / October 1, 1974 the ROCOR Council of Bishops declared: “Manifesting good will [towards the Orthodox Greeks], the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad has called and addressed separate groups of the Church of the Old Calendarists to find the path to make peace and attain fraternal unity. However, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad has no canonical power over the Church jurisdictions in Greece and therefore cannot interfere in their life with decisions that would be obligatory in questions of their disagreements.”

Although ROCOR officially refused to call the new calendarists graceless, there is evidence that Metropolitan Philaret’s personal views were stricter and closer to those of the Greeks. Thus on September 20, 1975, he wrote to Metropolitan Epiphanius of Kition, the leader of the Old Calendarist Church of Cyprus, with whom he continued to have friendly relations even after the Matthewite Synod to which Epiphanius belonged had broken communion with ROCOR: “From the beginning our Russian Church has known that the calendar innovation was unacceptable, and has not dared to move this boundary set by patristic tradition, for the Ecclesiastical Calendar is a support of the life of the Church and as such is fortified by decrees of Holy Tradition.

“However, it is obvious to all that the calendar innovation caused a schism in the Greek Church in 1924, and the responsibility for the schism weighs exclusively on the innovators. This is the conclusion that will be reached by anyone studying the Patriarchal *Tomoi* (as that of 1583) and taking into account the wretched and self-evident fact of the schism and the frightful punishments, persecutions and blasphemies which those who have cleaved to the patristic piety of Holy Tradition have undergone.

“Thinking in this way, our Holy Synod has decreed that we ‘flee’ concelebrations with the new calendarist modernists. We do not concelebrate with them, nor do we give permission or a blessing to our clergy for such a concelebration. In order to assure you of the truth of what we say, we inform you that whenever a community in the diaspora is received into our Church, they are required to follow the patristic Calendar of the Orthodox Church…” [[558]](#footnote-558)

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Also discussed at the Council was the so-called “dissident movement” in the Soviet Union. This arose in the second half of the 1960s, as détente developed between the Communist and Capitalist superpowers. It affected both the political sphere (the works of such figures as Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn) and the religious sphere (Solzhenitsyn again, Bishop Hermogen of Kaluga, the priests Yeshliman, Yakunin and Dudko, the layman Boris Talantov). Since many of the dissidents were members of the MP, their existence gave the less zealous hierarchs of ROCOR the excuse to declare that the MP still had the grace of sacraments.

Two main streams were discernible in the dissident movement, which may be called, recalling the debates of the nineteenth-century intelligentsia, the Westernisers and the Slavophiles.[[559]](#footnote-559)

The Westernisers were mainly concerned to correct abuses within the Church, to re-establish freedom of conscience and freedom of expression. They sought and received much support in the West, and were in turn much influenced by modern western modes of thought, especially – and in this they departed from traditionally Orthodox modes of thought – Ecumenism. The Slavophiles were less well received and understood in the West. Their main emphasis was on the restoration of traditional Russianness – Russian religion, Russian art and architecture, Russian culture in all its forms, which Soviet culture had so damaged and distorted.

The two streams were not always sharply differentiated and could fuse together in the thought and activity of a single man. Thus Alexander Solzhenitsyn, though usually considered to be a Slavophile, nevertheless shared many of the characteristics of the westernizing dissidents, not only in his human rights activity, but also in his Ecumenism. And, purified of their heterodox elements, both streams could be said to tend (unconsciously as yet) towards the True Orthodox Church, which remained more radical and still more courageous in Her confession than the dissidents and more truly representative of the best of Old Russia than the Slavophiles.

The dissident movement within the Church began, among the clergy, with the 1965 open letter of the Priests Nicholas Yeshliman and Gleb Yakunin to President Podgorny, in which they protested against the subservience of the Church to the State, particularly in not resisting the Khrushchev persecution, in giving control of the parishes to the State-controlled dvadsatsky, in the handing over of lists of those baptized to the local authorities, in not letting children and adolescents under 18 participate in church life, and in ordaining only those candidates to the episcopate and priesthood who were pleasing to the Council for Religious Affairs. This letter was ignored by the patriarchate, and in 1966 both priests were forbidden from serving… Among the laity, the most significant dissident, as we have seen, was the philosopher Boris Talantov, who was imprisoned for exposing the activities of the Kirov Bishop John in the closing of churches and suppression of believers. He was slandered publicly on the BBC by Metropolitan Nicodemus of Leningrad, and was eventually sent to prison in Kirov, where he died in 1971.

In an article entitled “Sergianism, or adaptation to atheism”, which had the subtitle “The Leaven of Herod”, Talantov denounced Metropolitan Sergius’ 1927 declaration as a betrayal of the Church, and the MP as “a secret agent of worldwide antichristianity”. Sergianism had not only not “saved” the Church, but, on the contrary, had assisted the loss of true ecclesiastical freedom and turned the Church administration into the obedient tool of the atheist authorities. “Metropolitan Sergius,” he wrote, “by his adaptation and lies saved nobody and nothing except himself.”

In another samizdat article entitled “The Secret Participation of the Moscow Patriarchate in the struggle of the CPSS against the Orthodox Christian Church” Talantov wrote: “The Moscow Patriarchate and the majority of bishops participate in organized activities of the atheist authorities directed to the closing of churches, the limitation of the spreading of the faith and its undermining in our country… In truth the atheist leaders of the Russian people and the princes of the Church have gathered together against the Lord and His Christ”.[[560]](#footnote-560)

In 1972, Alexander Solzhenitsyn wrote an open “Lenten Letter” to Patriarch Pimen, describing the patriarchate as being “ruled dictatorially by atheists – a sight never before seen in two millenia!” “The Russian Church,” he wrote, “expresses its concern about any evil in distant Africa, while it never has anything at all to say about things which are wrong here at home.” And he went on: “By what reasoning is it possible to convince oneself that the planned destruction of the spirit and body of the church under the guidance of atheists is the best way of preserving it? Preserving it for whom? Certainly not for Christ. Preserving it by what means? By falsehood? But after the falsehood by whose hands are the holy sacraments to be celebrated?”[[561]](#footnote-561)

Solzhenitsyn’s appeal “not to live by the lie” was seen by some to lead logically to the adoption of a catacomb existence for the Church. Thus Fr. Sergius Zheludkov replied: “What are we to do in such a situation? Should we say: all or nothing? Should we try to go underground, which in the present system is unthinkable? Or should we try somehow to accept the system and for the present use those opportunities that are permitted?”[[562]](#footnote-562) However, Solzhenitsyn himself neither belonged to the Catacomb Church nor even believed in Her existence.

This position eminently suited those hierarchs of ROCOR, such as Anthony of Geneva, whose attitude to events in Russia was dictated as much by political as by spiritual or ecclesiological considerations.[[563]](#footnote-563) They were sincere anti-communists and despised the kow-towing of the MP hierarchs to communism. On the other hand, they would not have dreamed of denying that the MP was a true Church. The position of these hierarchs was threatened by the anti-ecumenist zeal of Metropolitan Philaret, Archbishop Averky and the Boston monastery. But the expulsion of Solzhenitsyn to the West in 1974 presented them with an opportunity. Archbishop Anthony promptly brought Solzhenitsyn to the Council in Jordanville, where he created a sensation by his rejection of the zealot view.

Then Anthony himself read a report calling on ROCOR to support the dissidents, in spite of the fact that they were ecumenists and in the MP. He was countered by Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles, who, while respecting the courage of the dissidents, objected to a recognition that would devalue the witness of the true catacomb confessors.

Another important dissident was the Moscow priest Fr. Demetrius Dudko, who conducted open meetings in his church that attracted many and influenced many more. Unlike Solzhenitsyn, he knew of the Catacomb Church, and wrote of it in relatively flattering terms: “We all recognize Patriarch Tikhon and we look on Patriarch Sergius’ [acts] as a betrayal of the Church’s interests to please the authorities. The following (Patriarchs) – Alexis and the present Pimen – only go on the road already opened. We have no other hierarchy. The Catacomb Church would be good – but where is it? The True Orthodox Church – these are good people, morally steadfast; but they have almost no priesthood, and you simply can’t find them, while there are many who are thirsting. And one has to be ministered to by the hierarchy we do have. Immediately the question arises: are they ministering to us? Basically, they are the puppets of the atheists. And another question: at least, are they believers? Who will answer this question? I fear to answer…”[[564]](#footnote-564)

Such sentiments were close to the truth, and naturally elicited sympathy from members of ROCOR.

Less well known – because edited out of his books as published in the West[[565]](#footnote-565) - was Fr. Demetrius’ ecumenism. The right attitude to him would have been to applaud his courage and the correct opinions he expressed, while gently seeking to correct his liberalism and ecumenism. In no way was it right to treat him as if he were a true priest in the True Church, and an example to be followed that was no less praiseworthy than those of the true confessors in the catacombs.

But that is precisely what many in ROCOR now began to do. And even the 1974 Council was tempted, declaring: “The boundary between preservation of the Church and seductive self-preservation was drawn by his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, his lawful locum tenens Metropolitan Peter, Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan, Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd and the Solovki confessors headed by Archbishop Hilarion (Troitsky). In recent years, this boundary has again been clearly drawn by Archbishop Hermogenes, several priests, among them Nicholas Gainov and Demetrius Dudko, the laypeople of Vyatka led by Boris Talantov, the defenders of the Pochaev Lavra such as Theodosia Kuzminichna Varavva, and many others. This boundary has also been drawn by Solzhenitsyn in his appeal ‘Do not live by the lie!’ Not to live by the lie and to honour the memory of the holy martyrs and confessors of our Church – this is the boundary separating the true Tikhonites from ‘the sergianist leaven of Herod’, as wrote Boris Talantov, the rebukers of the present leaders of the patriarchate who died in prison. In our unceasing prayers for each other, in our love for the Lord Jesus, in our faithfulness to the ideal of the past and future Orthodox Russia, the faithful archpastors, pastors, monks and laymen on both sides of the iron curtain are united. Together they constitute the Holy Church of Russia, which is indivisible just as the seamless robe of Christ is indivisible.”[[566]](#footnote-566)

This was a serious distortion: to place the confessors of the Catacomb Church on the same level as sergianist dissidents. A case could be made for considering that Boris Talantov was a true martyr, since he denounced the MP in terms identical to those employed by the Catacomb Church and may well have died out of communion with the MP. But Dudko and Solzhenitsyn did not share the faith of the True Church, and did not join it even after the fall of communism… [[567]](#footnote-567)

Fr. Seraphim Rose criticized Solzhenitsyn as follows: “Let us return to the belief of Solzhenitsyn and all the defenders of the Moscow Patriarchate that the betrayal of her hierarchs does not affect the Church's faithful. This view is based on an entirely false view of the nature of the Church which artificially separates the hierarchs from the believing people and allows ‘church life as normal’ to go on no matter what happens to the Church leaders. On the contrary, the whole history of the Church of Christ persuades us of the exact opposite. Who else was it but the Bishops of Rome who led the Church of the West into apostasy and schism and heresy? Is it the fault of ordinary believing Roman Catholics that they, the largest group of ‘Christians’ in the world, are today outside the Church of Christ, and that in order to return to the true Church they must not only reject the false doctrines of Rome, but also completely reform their religious mentality and unlearn the false piety which has been transmitted to them precisely by their bishops? Today, it is true, the Moscow Patriarchate allows Roman Catholics to receive its Sacraments and implicitly already teaches the ecumenist doctrine that these Catholics too are ‘part of the Church’. But this fact only shows how far the Moscow Patriarchate has departed from the universal Orthodox tradition of the Church into an erroneous ecclesiology, and how correct the True Orthodox Church is in refusing to have communion with an ecclesiastical body which not only allows its policies to be dictated by atheists, but openly preaches the modern heresies of ecumenism and chiliasm.”[[568]](#footnote-568)

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Unknown at the time was the adoption of a new long-range global strategy by the Soviet leadership, in which the dissident movement was planned to play an important role.

Thus in a memo to the CIA dated 1978 the former KGB agent Anatoliy Golitsyn wrote: “At the time of the adoption of the long-range strategy in the period 1958 to 1960, there was strong internal opposition to the Soviet régime from dissatisfied workers, collective farmers, intellectuals, clergy, Ukrainian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Jewish nationalists, etc. These oppositionists did not call themselves ‘dissidents’ and nor did the KGB call them ‘dissidents’.

“On the contrary, the KGB and the Party referred to them as ‘enemies of the régime’… The KGB was instructed to adopt new methods to deal with this opposition, based on the experience of the GPU (the Soviet political police) under Dzerzhinsky in the 1920s…

“This entailed the creation of a false opposition in the USSR and other countries… The current ‘dissident movement’ is just such a false opposition designed and created by the KGB…

“The main objectives which the Soviet rulers are trying to achieve through the ‘dissident movement’ are as follows:

“(a) To confuse, neutralise and dissolve the *true* internal political opposition in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

“(b) To prevent the West from reaching the genuine internal opposition in the USSR by introducing to the West a false KGB-controlled opposition. This explains the easy access of the Western media to the alleged ‘dissidents’;

“(c) To influence the foreign policy of the United States through the ‘dissidents’ in the interests of the Communist long-term strategy and exploit this issue in the strategy’s final phase.”[[569]](#footnote-569)

Golitsyn was talking mainly about political dissidents. Nevertheless, it may be that some of the church dissidents, too, were, if not signed-up agents, at any rate naïve and unwitting tools in the hands of the enemies of the faith, who permitted all their contacts with the ROCOR because they foresaw the corrosive effect such contacts would have.

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Voices were heard at the 1974 Council arguing for union between ROCOR and the schismatic Paris and American Metropolia jurisdictions. Love, they said, should unite us, and we should not emphasize our differences. Metropolitan Philaret, however, pointed out that love which does not wish to disturb our neighbour by pointing out his errors is not love but hatred![[570]](#footnote-570)

The divisions that were beginning to emerge between Metropolitan Philaret and the majority of other hierarchs were expressed by him in a letter to one of his few allies, Protopresbyter George Grabbe, the Secretary of the Synod. Describing a meeting with the hierarchs, he wrote: “I saw how truly alone I am among our hierarchs with my views on matters of principle (although on a personal level I am on good terms with everyone). And I am in earnest when I say that I am considering retiring. Of course, I won’t leave all of a sudden, unexpectedly. But at the next Sobor I intend to point out that too many things that are taking place in our church life do not sit well with me. And if the majority of the episcopacy agrees with me than I will not raise the matter of retiring. But if I see that I am alone or see myself in the minority then I will announce that I am retiring. For I cannot head, nor, therefore bear the responsibility for that with which I am not in agreement in principle. In particular, I do not agree with our practice of halfway relations with the American and Parisian schismatics. The Holy Fathers insistently state that long and obdurately continuing schism is close to being heresy, and that it is necessary to relate to stubborn schismatics as to heretics, not allowing any communion with them whatsoever (how Vladyka Anthony’s hair would stand on end at such a pronouncement! But I remain unyielding)…

“There are very many other matters, too, in particular about Solzhenitsyn, concerning whom I continue to remain more than just cautious…”[[571]](#footnote-571)

In January, 1975 Fr. Seraphim Rose wrote: “…our bishops are inclining dangerously now to the path of compromise— the last Sobor said nothing in support of the Zealots, even those suffering on Mt. Athos, and seems to want to be friends with everyone; Archbp. Anthony of Geneva especially is advocating “condescen¬sion” toward new calendar and everything that isn’t “dogma.” The letter of the Bishops to Metropolia was very weak and, as Archbp. Averky and Bp. Nektary told us, shouldn’t have been sent in that form (without a call to return to the truth and step away from the world's ways). The sad thing is that our Synod has justification for separate existence only if it is zealot, gives an example to the other fallen or falling away “jurisdictions”—but to be wishy-washy and just dragging along behind the apostasy has no meaning at all.”[[572]](#footnote-572)

## 129. THE FALL OF DISSENT

In 1976 the ROCOR Synod issued an Epistle to the Russian people which, after declaring unity with the Catacomb Church, went on to say to dissident members of the MP: “We also kiss the cross that you have taken upon yourselves, O pastors who have found in yourselves the courage and strength of spirit to be open reproachers of the weakness of spirit of your hierarchs, who have surrendered before the atheists… We know of your exploit, we pray for you and ask your prayers for our flock that is in the diaspora. Christ is in our midst! He is and shall be!”[[573]](#footnote-573)

“Christ is in our midst! He is and shall be!” are words that Orthodox priests exchange in the altar after the ordination of the Holy Gifts. Their use here implies the recognition of the dissidents as co-celebrants with ROCOR, members of the same Church. Clearly the influence of the dissidents was having a corrosive effect on the ecclesiology of ROCOR.

In February, 1976 the Matthewites broke communion with the Russians, claiming that the Russians had broken their promise to give them a written confession that the new calendarists were graceless, and that Archbishop Anthony of Geneva was continuing to have communion with the new calendarists.[[574]](#footnote-574) This was true; and his ecumenist activities continued even after the break with the Matthewites. Thus at Pascha, 1976, he asked permission for pastoral reasons to serve with Russian clerics of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in Europe.[[575]](#footnote-575) In October he again concelebrated with several heretics at the funeral of Archbishop Nicodemus of Great Britain. And in May, 1977 he travelled to Birmingham, England to concelebrate with the local Serbs.

Archbishop Anthony’s ecumenist actions caused several priests and parishes to leave him for the Matthewites, including those of Fr. Basile Sakkas in Switzerland and of Hieromonk Cassian (Braun) in France, and a parish in England. Metropolitan Philaret expressed disapproval of Archbishop Anthony’s canonical transgressions, but he was not in sufficient control of his Synod to obtain his repentance.[[576]](#footnote-576)

In the same critical year of 1976 the well-known Brotherhood of St. Herman of Alaska in Platina, California began to turn away from its previously zealot course to a markedly softer line in relation to the MP and World Orthodoxy.[[577]](#footnote-577) They were influenced in this direction partly by the “dissident fever” that was now raging through most of the Russian part of ROCOR, and partly by the “moderate” ecclesiology of the Greek Old Calendarist Metropolitan Cyprian of Fili. However, a still more important influence may have been a series of controversies – on evolution, on the soul after death, on Blessed Augustine of Hippo – conducted exclusively in the “convert” part of ROCOR between the Platina Brotherhood and the Greek-American monastery in Boston.

In all these controversies, in the present writer’s opinion, Platina – and in particular, Platina’s chief theologian, Hieromonk Seraphim Rose - was right as against Boston, led by Archimandrite Panteleimon. But the negative impression that the Platina monks formed of Boston as a result led them to error in the one area of controversy in which the Boston monastery was right – the canonical status of World Orthodoxy and the MP. Arguing that the Boston monastery’s “super-correctness” was leading them to abandon the “Royal Way” as regards the status of the World Orthodox, Platina came out strongly on the side of the liberal wing of ROCOR led by Archbishop Anthony and his idolisation of Fr. Demetrius and the other dissidents.

Another important issue was relations with the Serbian Church. The Serbs, as we have seen, had joined the WCC in 1965, their ecumenism extended to official acceptance of the canonicity of the Anglican Church[[578]](#footnote-578), and they were as fully under the thumb of the communists as the MP. In spite of this, Archbishop Anthony, continued to serve with the Serbs, citing the pre-war hospitality of the Serbs to ROCOR in his justification.

In this connection Metropolitan Philaret wrote to him: “I consider it my duty to point out to you, Vladyka, that your assertion that we must thank the Serbian Church for her treatment of us, I fully accept, but only as regards her past – the glorious past of the Serbian Church. Yes, of course, we must keep the names of their Holinesses Patriarchs Demetrius and Barnabas in grateful memory for their precious support of the Church Abroad at that time when she had no place to lay her head.

“There is no denying that a certain honour is due the Serbian Church for her refusing to condemn our Church Abroad at the parasynagogue in Moscow in 1971, and also on later occasions when Moscow again raised the matter. But then, on the other hand, she did participate in the aforementioned parasynagogue, when it elected Pimen, and the Serbian hierarchs did not protest against this absolutely anti-canonical election, when he who had already been chosen and appointed by the God-hating regime was elected. Our Sobor of 1971 did not, and could not, recognize Pimen, whereas the Serbian Patriarchate recognized and does recognize him, addressing him as Patriarch, and is in full communion with him. And thus she opposes us directly, for we attempt at all times to explain to the “Free World” that the Soviet Patriarchate is not the genuine representative and head of the much-suffering Russian Church. But the Serbian Church recognizes her as such, and by so doing commits a grave sin against the Russian Church and the Russian Orthodox people.

“How can there be any talk here of a special gratitude to her? Oh, if the Serbian Church would, while recognizing our righteousness, likewise directly and openly, boldly recognize the unrighteousness of the Soviets! Well – then there would truly be something for us to thank her for! But now, as it is, while extending one hand to us, she extends her other hand to our opponents and the enemies of God and the Church. If it pleases you, having shut your eyes to this sad reality, to thank the Serbs for such ‘podvigs’ of theirs, then that is your affair, but I am not a participant in this expression of gratitude.

“How dangerous are compromises in matters of principle! They render people powerless in defence of the Truth. Why is it that the Serbian Patriarchate cannot resolve to sever communion with the Soviet hierarchy? Because she herself is travelling along the same dark and dangerous path of compromise with the God-hating communists. True, she has not progressed along that path to the extent that the Soviet hierarchy has, and she attempts to preach and defend the faith, but if the shades and nuances here are quite different, yet, in principle, the matter stands on one and the same level.”[[579]](#footnote-579)

In 1979, in response to a series of protests by Fr. Demetrius against what he saw as excessive strictness on the part of ROCOR towards the MP, Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, breaking the rule imposed by Metropolitan Anastasy (and reasserted by Metropolitan Philaret) that ROCOR members should have no contact, “even of an everyday nature”, with Soviet church clergy, wrote to Dudko: “I hasten to console you that the part of the Russian Church which lives in freedom beyond the bounds of the homeland, has never officially considered the Moscow Patriarchate, which is recognized in the USSR, as graceless…. We have never dared to deny the grace-filled nature of the official church, for we believe that the sacraments carried out by her clergy are sacraments. Therefore out bishops received your clergy into the Church Abroad in their existing rank… On the other hand, the representatives of the Catacomb Church in Russia accuse us of not wanting to recognize the Moscow Patriarchate as graceless.”[[580]](#footnote-580)

However, in 1980, Fr. Demetrius was arrested, which was closely followed by the arrest of his disciples Victor Kapitanchuk and Lev Regelson. Then Dudko issued a recantation on Soviet television in which he confessed that his “so-called struggle with godlessness” was in fact “a struggle with Soviet power”. Kapitanchuk and Regelson confessed to having “criminal ties” with foreign correspondents and of mixing religious activity with politics, while Kapitanchuk said that he had “inflicted damage on the Soviet state for which I am very sorry”. Both men implicated others in their “crimes”.

Metropolitan Philaret had been proved right – although many continued to justify Dudko and denounced those who “judged” him. But it was not a question of “judging”, but of the correct discerning of the boundaries of the Church and the correct attitude to those outside it. The metropolitan wrote that the tragedy had overtaken Dudko because his activity had taken place from within the MP – that is, “outside the True Church”. And he continued: “What is the ‘Soviet church’? Fr. Archimandrite Constantine has said often and insistently that the most terrible thing that the God-fighting authorities have done to Russia is the appearance of the ‘Soviet church’, which the Bolsheviks offered up to the people as the True Church, having driven the real Orthodox Church into the catacombs or the concentration camps. This false church has been twice anathematized. His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon and the All-Russian Church Council anathematized the communists and all their co-workers. This terrible anathema has not been lifted to this day and preserves its power, since it can be lifted only by an All-Russian Church Council, as being the canonically higher Church authority. And a terrible thing happened in 1927, when the leader of the Church, Metropolitan Sergius, by his shameful apostate declaration submitted the Russian Church to the Bolsheviks and declared that he was cooperating with them. In the most exact sense the expression of the prayer before confession was fulfilled: ‘fallen under his own anathema’! For in 1918 the Church anathematized all the co-workers of communism, and in 1927 she herself entered into the company of these co-workers and began to praise the red God-fighting authorities – to praise the red beast of which the Apocalypse speaks. And this is not all. When Metropolitan Sergius published his criminal declaration, the faithful children of the Church immediately separated from the Soviet church, and the Catacomb Church was created. And she in her turn anathematized the official church for her betrayal of Christ… We receive clergymen from Moscow not as ones possessing grace, but as ones receiving it by the very act of union. But to recognize the church of the evil-doers as the bearer and repository of grace – that we, of course, cannot do. For outside of Orthodoxy there is *no* grace; and the Soviet church has deprived itself of grace.”[[581]](#footnote-581)

Looking at this tragedy from a psychological point of view, we can see that Dudko’s vulnerability consisted, not so much in the fear of physical torture, as in the KGB’s ability to induce in him a feeling of false guilt, guilt that he had objectively harmed the Soviet State. This tragedy exposed an inescapable dilemma facing all the dissidents: that action aimed to restore the freedom of the Church was necessarily anti-soviet, insofar as the Soviet State and the Orthodox Church represented incompatible aims and ideologies. Therefore every committed campaigner for Church freedom sooner or later had to admit that he was working against Soviet power – if not by physical, at any rate by spiritual, means, and that he had to work outside the political and ecclesiastical institutions of Soviet power. So the failure of the dissidents was the natural consequence of the refusal to obey the Apostle’s command: “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers” (II Corinthians 6.14). They refused to obey Patriarch Tikhon’s adjuration to the faithful to have no communion at all with the communists, “the outcasts of humanity”. They tried to do good from within an accursed evil - the pact between Metropolitan Sergius and the Communists which, in the words of a samizdat document dating from the early 1970s, “tied the Church hand and foot by imposing on her a loyalty not only to the State, *but mainly to the communist ideology*.”[[582]](#footnote-582)

## 130. THE GEORGIAN CHURCH

The Georgian Church, like the Russian, suffered from the anti-religious policies of Khruschev in 1959-64. And again, like the Russian, it was completely under the control of the KGB.[[583]](#footnote-583) Thus declassified documents from the KGB archives contain the following assessment for 1982: "Through the work of our agents the Russian Orthodox, Georgian and Armenian churches maintain staunchly loyal positions".[[584]](#footnote-584)

Patriarch Ephraim II may have been nominated by the KGB in 1960, and bowed to their pressure. As Zviad Gamsakhurdia, the future president of independent Georgia, wrote: “From 1965 I became much more active in church affairs… Between 1965 and 1969 I and my friends drew many young people towards an interest in religion. We gave them spiritual literature, explained the basic doctrines of religion, argued with atheists until gradually we attracted a significant number of Georgian young people to the Church. This was especially noticeable at Eastertide when all the churches overflowed. The income of the Church greatly increased, its bank balance grew, and so did the number of those applying to enter the seminary.

“All this aroused a great deal of concern in government circles. As is well known, the Soviet government tries by all means to deflect young people from religion. This happened in Georgia too.

“The authorities began by blackmailing and pressurizing Ephraim II. Georgia was filled with damaging rumours about him. I shall not repeat any of them, but will only report what I know definitely and what I am personally convinced is the truth.

“The pressure from the authorities alarmed Ephraim II. He was not like those strong and high principled Patriarchs, Ambrosy Kalaya or Kalistrat Lintsadze. All this slowly affected the style and content of his preaching and his relationship with us, the young flock of the Georgian Church. If before Ephraim had spoken boldly, expressing covert opposition to the Soviet regime (the newspapers even used to criticize his sermons), in his later years his preaching became empty, his appeals merely patriotic, so that it was hard to believe that it was a Christian pastor who spoke. The only bold appeal he made was to believing women to have large families. ‘Be fruitful and multiply!’ was the chief theme of his preaching at that time. Naturally all this had a bad effect on the young laity, who expected much from a Patriarch. (In addition, a number of priests unworthy of the name caused abuses in the Church which repelled and disillusioned young people …)

“Ephraim made no secret of the fact that it was the KGB who forbade him to lend books to the young believers. Once he even joked about it: ‘You know that when Moscow calls the tune, we must dance to it, or it will go ill with us.’”[[585]](#footnote-585)

One of the senior bishops in the Georgian Church at this time was Metropolitan Ilia (Shiolashvili) of Sukhumi, who from 1963 to 1972 was Rector of the Georgian Orthodox Theological Seminary. In 1962 he had been recruited by the Georgian KGB Unit V with the codename “Iverieli”.[[586]](#footnote-586) And when the future Georgian president Edward Shevardnadze became Georgian party First Secretary in 1972, there began a long, “symphonic” relationship between the two men which lasted until Shevardnadze’s fall from power in 2003. Ilia proved his worth to his employers when, as Metropolitan of Sukhumi in the 1970s, he betrayed the Catacomb Bishop Gennady (Sekach) to the authorities.[[587]](#footnote-587) And he was an ardent ecumenist, travelling to many ecumenist forums in many countries as the representative of the patriarchate of Georgia. Ilia set his face firmly against the dissident movement among Georgian Orthodox Christians, which combined concern for human rights with a campaign against Church servility and corruption with a strong emphasis on Georgian nationalism. In 1975-77, the leaders of this movement – Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Valentina Pailodze and Merab Kostava – were all arrested and given sentences in the camps. Gamsakhurdia, however, recanted on Soviet central television; and the reduction in his sentence to two years’ exile suggested that he had made a “deal” with the authorities.

      On November 9, 1979, “Catholicos-Patriarch David V of Georgia died. *Religion in Communist Lands* reports that, upon the death of Patriarch David V, Metropolitan Ilia was *appointed* Patriarchal locum tenens of the Georgian Orthodox Church by the Holy Synod. Leading the delegation dispatched by Patriarch Pimen of Moscow to the funeral of Patriarch David was Metropolitan Alexis (Ridiger) of Tallinn and Estonia, the present Patriarch of Russia, and Pimen's direct successor. The *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* notes that ‘during his stay in Tbilisi, the head of the delegation from the Russian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Alexis, paid a visit to T. D. Onoprishvili, representative of the Council for Religious Affairs of the USSR Council of Ministers in the Georgian SSR’ (*JMP,* No. 3, 1978, p. 43)…

“…the most likely candidate for the patriarchal throne seemed to be Metropolitan Gaioz (Kepatishvili) of Tsilkani, on whose side were the majority of the bishops and clergy. Another contender was Metropolitan Ilia of Sukhumi and Abkhazia, who also had a sizable following. Metropolitan Gaioz and his supporters forcibly occupied the Patriarchal headquarters, having ejected the watchman and lone nun, supporters of Ilia, who had been guarding it. Thereupon telegrams were sent to all the heads of the Local Orthodox Churches, announcing that Metropolitan Gaioz had been ‘elected’ *Locum Tenens* of the Patriarchal throne. Oddly enough, these telegrams got no further than the local post office. It seems that the appropriate ‘competent organs’ of state had by this time already reached a decision. (More on this below.) Then the militia burst into the headquarters of the Patriarchate, in turn forcibly expelled the followers of Metropolitan Gaioz, and ushered in those of Metropolitan Ilia, who was then declared locum tenens*.* And, of course, this time his telegrams reached their destination. The new locum tenens hastily ordained several bishops from among his supporters in the clergy, thus ‘packing the court’.

“Metropolitan Gaioz was forced, for appearance sake, to participate in the election and enthronement of Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia II. He was made to place the Patriarchal panagias and cross around the neck of the new Primate -- a bitter pill to swallow indeed! Soon thereafter Metropolitan Gaioz was arrested and charged with various crimes, including theft of church property, speculation in foreign currency, and moral depravity. The public prosecutor asked for the maximum sentence permitted by the law code then in force, which was fifteen years imprisonment. However, the plaintiff on behalf of the Church, Archimandrite Nicholas Makharadze, demanded the death penalty! Metropolitan Gaioz was eventually sentenced to fifteen years in prison…

      “… In 1979 Patriarch Ilia II was… elected one of the six presidents of the World Council of Churches… He then inserted the new title into the text of his official commemoration during the church services: ‘For our Great Lord and Father, Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia, Archbishop of Mtskheta and Tbilisi, *President of the World Council of Churches,* Ilia II’! He likewise used the title when issuing his annual Paschal and Christmas encyclicals, and in all published accounts of his ecumenical activities abroad (e.g.: *Grapevine Cross,* No. 2, 1981, p. 3)…”[[588]](#footnote-588)

## 131. “NIKODIMOVSHCHINA”

From the 1970s we see the ascendancy in the MP of a school of thought devoted to the interests of communism and ecumenism simultaneously, which has been called “Nikodimovshchina” from its first leader and originator, Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov), KGB Agent “Sviatoslav”. Nikodim’s frenetic activity travelling all around world was soon bearing fruit as regards to turning the Western churchmen towards communism. “The *Great Soviet Encyclopaedia* recorded that by 1972 the WCC had been converted from a ‘pro-Western’ to a ‘progressive’ orientation in its policies on peace, disarmament and related matters. Assiduous advocacy by the Christian Peace Conference and others of the view that Christianity and communism were natural allies in support of the national liberation movement induced the WCC to provide funds for African guerilla movements...”[[589]](#footnote-589)

As for ecumenism, and in particular Catholic-Orthodox ecumenism, Alexander Soldatov writes: “In the Moscow Patriarchate it is widely believed that [Nikodem] was a secret cardinal, and also the prophecy of Blessed Pelagia of Ryazan addressed to Nikodim: ‘You will die like a dog at the feet of your pope’. The metropolitan really did die at the age of 48 during a reception by Pope John-Paul I [in 1978]. In spite of his young age by hierarchical standards, Nikodim did a great deal. He was the first in the history of the Russian Church to serve with the Catholics, absorbed the Catholic mass, practiced spiritual exercises according to the method of Ignatius Loyola, and idolized pontiffs, especially the ‘red pope’, John XXIII, to whom he devoted his master’s dissertation. He went to the Vatican every year; from 1968 he began to take with him Volodya Gundiaev, the present patriarch. In 1969, when Patriarch Alexis I was dying, Nikodim was able to push through the Synod the decision to make it obligatory for Orthodox priests to give communion to Catholics ‘in the case of mortal danger’. This decision was condemned even by the ecumenically-minded Greeks [and condemned as “heretical” by the Russian Church Abroad in 1971].

“The Russian émigré and well-known theologian Archbishop Basil (Krivoshein) explained this tendency as follows: ‘Metropolitan Nikodim was drawn to Catholicism above all by the idea he had of it as a powerful, strictly disciplined, single Church. In vain did they tell him many times that such a picture did not correspond to contemporary reality… Metropolitan Nikodim was in no way willing to renounce his conviction! It was the external appearance that worked on him.’”[[590]](#footnote-590)

Ever since writing his master’s thesis on Pope John XXIII, the man who led the Catholic Church onto the ecumenical scene at the Second Vatican Council, Nikodim had been trying to do the same for the MP. Hierodeacon (now Igumen) Theophanes (Areskin) writes: “Metropolitan Nikodim begins his exposition of his ecumenist faith with an Orthodox thesis on the unity of the whole human race in Adam: ‘Mankind, the whole Adam (in the expression of St. Macarius the Great) is united by means of the Incarnation, Cross and Resurrection of the last Adam (I Corinthians 14.45), the second Man, the Lord Who “for us men” came down from the heavens (I Corinthians 15.47), and, having tasted “death for us all by the grace of God” (Hebrews 2.9), “is the Saviour of all men” (I Timothy 4.10)… We all, in accordance with the ineffable wisdom of God, have been bound from the beginning with the bonds of unity and brotherhood’. But further on Metropolitan Nikodim reveals his understanding of this unity: ‘Christ died for all men, and, as the new Adam, he laid the beginning for a new humanity… The fullness of the grace-filled gifts is communicated to people by the Holy Spirit in the Church of Christ. However, it would be a dangerous error to consider that Christ, the Redeemer of the whole world, does not extend His saving influence on the whole of humanity.’ This saving influence consists, according to Metropolitan Nikodim, ‘in faith in Christ Jesus, acting through love in each separate person, as in the whole of humanity, with which we are united by our common human nature. God redeemed us into an undivided, indivisible, unchanging and unconfused union with this nature through the incarnation of the Only-Begotten Son.’ ‘By taking on and deifying our nature in the Divine Incarnation the Chief and Accomplisher of our faith (Hebrews 12.2) and of eternal salvation (Hebrews 5.9), our Lord Jesus Christ reconciled, united and related *the whole of humanity with God, and all people with each other*’. ‘The Church as the Kingdom of God is likened to leaven which penetrates into all the parts of the whole that is humanity, into the whole world, and acts with that measure of power which corresponds to the moral level of the bearers of Christ’s truth. And although far from all people actively and consciously abide in the Church, *the Church abides in all through the love of Christ*, for this love is not limited by any part of humanity, but is distributed to all people.’ Hence ‘the activity of the Spirit of God is not limited by confessional limits. His manifestation is completely and, above all, unconditionally revealed in the Church, but the traces of His presence are evident everywhere where there are the fruits of spiritual life: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness…’ Therefore all people, the whole Body of humanity (Adam), are invisibly united with God and is a certain ‘invisible Church’. The organization of the Church is understood by Nicodemus as ‘the visible Church’, in which ‘baptism defines the *visible* belonging to Christ’. Metropolitan Nikodim consciously confesses the ‘baptism’ of Protestants to be true, turning to his ‘brothers in Christ’, the Protestants, the members of the WCC: ‘Through the mystery of holy Baptism we are engrafted onto the saving Divine Vine…’ But the visible Church ‘is called to realize the fruits of the Incarnation and Redemption in the life of her *immediate* members.’

“And so, according to Metropolitan Nikodim, all people are ‘Christians’, it is true that the Church of Christ, the Body of Christ, the New Adam, is one, but it is not yet united into one ecclesiastical organization under one leader. The aim of the ecumenists is to create this *mediation*, that is, one single visible ecclesiastical organization for all. In this way the ecumenical Church and the world become indistinguishable from each other. It is not difficult to find the primary source of this faith. It is sergianism – a heretical teaching that the Church, the Body of Christ, is a simple ecclesiastical organization, just like ordinary secular organizations, political parties, communities, commercial structures, etc.”[[591]](#footnote-591)

Nikodim’s links with the Vatican went much further than an intellectual affinity. He was in fact a high-ranking Jesuit and secret Vatican bishop! This at first sight unlikely hypothesis gains credibility from two witnesses. The first is from the True Orthodox hieromonk Fr. Tikhon Kozushin: “In 1989 I and several other Orthodox ‘informals’ were invited to lunch at the French embassy. Among other guests there was an elderly man from France of Czech origin. He introduced himself as the director of a Catholic boarding-school in Medon, a suburb of Paris and a high-ranking officer of the Jesuit order. And then he said that Metropolitan Nikodim was also a secret-official officer of the order who was quite close to the Pope.”[[592]](#footnote-592)

The second witness is Fr. Michael Havryliv, a Russian priest secretly received into the Catholic Church in 1973. Fr. Serge Keleher writes: “The Capuchin priest told Havryliv that Metropolitan Nikodim was secretly a Catholic bishop, recognized by Rome with jurisdiction from Pope Paul VI throughout Russia. This assertion is not impossible – but neither is it entirely proved.

“On September 6 1975 Havryliv made a sacramental general Confession before Metropolitan Nicodemus, who then accepted Havryliv’s monastic vows and profession of Faith to the Apostolic See and the Pope of Rome. Kyr Nicodemus commanded Havryliv to order his monastic life according to the Jesuit Constitutions, and presented him with a copy of this document in Russian. This was all done privately; four days later the Metropolitan tonsured Havryliv a monk. On 9 October Kyr Nicodemus ordained Havryliv to the priesthood, without requiring the oaths customary for Russian Orthodox candidates to Holy Orders.

“In 1977 Havryliv was reassigned to the Moscow Patriarchate’s archdiocese of L’viv and Ternopil… In Havryliv’s final interview with Kyr Nicodemus, the Metropolitan of Leningrad ‘blessed me and gave me instructions to keep my Catholic convictions and do everything possible for the growth of the Catholic cause, not only in Ukraine, but in Russia. The Metropolitan spoke of the practice of his predecessors – and also asked me to be prudent.’”[[593]](#footnote-593)

These words indicate the truth behind the mask of the Vatican’s ecumenism; and the fact that Havryliv was re-ordained by Nikodim show that Rome accepted the sacraments of the Orthodox for only as long as it suited her. The Orthodox were, according to Vatican II, not heretics, but “separated brethren”. However, the “separated brethren” still had to return in repentance to their father, the Pope…

The intriguing question is: which master was Nikodim really serving – the Soviets or the Vatican? His pro-Soviet statements on the international stage were notorious. But his love of Catholicism also seems to have been sincere.

In any case, the Catholics with their “liberation theology” were moving ever closer to communism, while Nikodim was rushing to meet them from the other direction. Thus Soldatov writes: “Nikodim’s sympathies with Catholicism were interwoven with a very specific ‘theology of communism’. He considered the Soviet socialist system to be the closest to Christianity and dreamed of a powerful Orthodox USSR.

“A group of church dissidents addressed the Local Council of the ROC of the MP in 1971, a which Nikodim was almost elected patriarch. Their lengthy address ‘On the newly-appeared false teaching of Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov)’ called this teaching ‘apocalyptic religious communism’.”

The death of Nikodim in 1978 in Rome at the feet of Pope John-Paul I, who read the prayers for the departing of the soul over him[[594]](#footnote-594), was a graphic symbol of the true direction of inter-Christian ecumenism – aided and abetted by the KGB – in a distinctly pro-Soviet direction. And, as Lev Regelson writes, “after Pope John-Paul I said of him ‘This is a person from whom I can learn how one must love the Church’, it was almost guaranteed that the following Pope would be pro-Soviet…” But then the famous dissident priest Fr. Gleb Yakunin “sat down to write a letter to the Vatican in which he exposed the antichristian activity of Metropolitan Nikodim. I know all this at first hand, because I helped him in his work on this letter. Finally it was read out at the Conclave for the election of the new Pope and produced such a strong impression And that is what would have happened if the same Fr. Gleb Yakunin had not intervened. I know all this at first hand because I help him work on this letter. Finally, it was read out at the Conclave for the election of the new Pope, and produced such a powerful impression – in the words of one of the cardinals passed on to Fr. Gleb – that the Polish cardinal Woitila was elected as Pope. He was a convinced ‘anticommunist’, who knew of the methods of the Soviet secret service from personal experience. Many investigators had supposed, with good reason, that the 27-year pontificate of John-Paul II played a decisive role in the beginning of the weakening of Soviet global expansion, and thereby in the fall of the USSR, which without this expansion lost ‘the meaning of its existence’…”[[595]](#footnote-595)

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Nikodim’s place both as chief ideologist of the MP, Metropolitan of Leningrad and leader of the “Nikodimovshina” school of theology, was taken by his pupil, the future “Patriarch” Alexis II (Ridiger). And when Pope John-Paul died a few days after Nikodim, Alexis celebrated a festive service for the repose of his soul in the Moscow Cathedral of the Epiphany, while another of his disciples, the present Patriarch Cyril (Gundyaev), celebrated a similar service in the Alexander Nevsky Lavra in Leningrad.[[596]](#footnote-596)

Alexis, an Estonian by birth (he was bishop in Tallin before his transfer to Leningrad), had been a KGB agent with the codename “Drozdov” since 1958 and an active ecumenist for almost as long as his mentor.

Following the directions of the KGB, Alexis was sent as a delegate to the Third General Assembly of the WCC in New Delhi in 1961, with Metropolitan Nikodem and Archbishop Anthony (Bloom), an important agent of influence living in England. He became a member of the Central Committee of the WCC from 1961 to 1968, president of the World Conference, “The Church and Society” in Geneva in 1966, and a member of the Commission “Faith and Order” of the WCC from 1961 to 1968.

In the 1974 Furov report to the Central Committee of the USSR Alexis (together with his predecessor Patriarch Pimen) was placed in the category of those bishops who “affirm both in words and deeds not only loyalty but also patriotism towards the socialist society; strictly observe the laws on cults, and educate the parish clergy and believers in the same spirit; realistically understand that our state is not interested in proclaiming the role of religion and the church in society; and, realizing this, do not display any particular activeness in extending the influence of Orthodoxy among the population.”[[597]](#footnote-597)

According to a KGB document of 1988, “An order was drafted by the USSR KGB chairman to award an honorary citation to agent DROZDOV” [i.e. Alexis] for unspecified services to state security.[[598]](#footnote-598)

“Already in 1966,” writes Hierodeacon (now Igumen) Theophan, “in his speech before the delegation of the German Evangelical church at a conference in Moscow, the future head of the MP in the name of Christ Himself declared that ‘Jesus Christ considers His own, that is, as Christians, all those who believe in Him and obey Him, and this is more than the Orthodox Church.’ If we remember that, according to Orthodox teaching, Christ adopted people to Himself only in His Hypostasis, that is, in His Body which is the Orthodox Church, then it is obvious that the metropolitan is here confessing a christological heresy, considering as Christians those who are outside the Church – calling them ‘God’s’, that is, the Church’s.

“Alexis still more clearly confesses that all the non-Orthodox Christians are the Church of Christ in his report to the 8th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, published in the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* in 1980 (№№ 1-3). Here, blasphemously mixing up and identifying the concepts of the presence of God in the world and His energies and presence in the Church, the metropolitan very distinctly reveals his heretical teaching on the “all-embracing and unconditional” Incarnation of Christ, which automatically turns the whole of humanity, all Christians, Muslims, pagans, and in general all ‘men of good will’ into members of the Body of Christ, that is, the Church! Metropolitan Alexis openly teaches that the same grace of the Holy Spirit acts in the non-Orthodox churches – the participants in the WCC – as in the Orthodox Church: ‘We (the CEC) have learned to pray together, to understand the spirit and depth of prayer for each other, to feel the breath of the grace of the Holy Spirit in joint prayer to the Lord … we must thank God for the joy of our communion in Christ, for the joy of the ever-increasing experience of brotherhood and sisterhood in Christ in our work.’ Thus it was precisely in joint prayers with heretics that the archpastor felt the breath of ‘the grace of the Holy Spirit’! We should note that ‘ecumenical prayer’ is a very important moment in the ecumenical dialogue, it not only witnesses to the presence among the ecumenists of some common ‘god’ to whom this prayer is raised, but it is also a practical recognition of the action of the Holy Spirit in heterodoxy, thereby aiding the aggiornamento of the churches. This is what the future head of the MP says on this subject: ‘The aggiornamento of the churches is attained in the first place by prayer and brotherly love; joint prayers create a special atmosphere, a spiritual mood; (he goes on to cite A.S. Khomiakov) prayer is the life of the Church and the voice of her love, the eternal breathing of the Spirit of God. We believe that through joint prayers the breathing of the Spirit of God jointly enriches us all.’

“According to Orthodox teaching, it is precisely the Holy Spirit that makes a man a member of the Church of Christ, a Christian. But Metropolitan Alexis recognises that the Holy Spirit works in heretics just as in the Orthodox Church, and therefore heretics, like Orthodox Christians, are the Church of Christ: ‘We believe that the Holy Spirit – visibly or invisibly – continues until now His saving activity in the world. You and I, dear brothers and sisters, representing various Churches and the human race, live *by the same real and grace-filled power* of Pentecost’. From this there follows an open admittance on the part of the metropolitan that the heretical communities are the Church and the Body of Christ: ‘We, the Orthodox, are lovingly disposed to our non-Orthodox brothers, for we have all *been baptized in one Spirit*, and we have all *been made to drink into one Spirit* (I Corinthians 12.13).’ Here the Apostle Paul’s eucharistic (even liturgical) terminology has not been used in vain, so as once more to emphasise: Orthodox and heretics are not simply a divided Church, but the Body of Christ, organically one in the Holy Spirit.

“The source of this teaching of Metropolitan Alexis on the Holy Spirit is a heretical Christology, whose essence consists in the assertion that ‘we all have been received into the nature of Jesus Christ the God-man as an integral nature. And this truth forces us to believe that every person striving towards goodness and righteousness does the work of Christ on earth, even if he intellectually has not known Christ or has even rejected Him. From the Godmanhood of Christ it follows that the path into the Kingdom of God has been opened to all men. Consequently, with the Incarnation of the Son of God the whole of humanity becomes His potential Church, and in this sense the boundaries of the Christian Ecumene (or the pan-human family) are far wider than the boundaries of the Christian world.’ Hence Metropolitan Alexis’ teaching becomes understandable: insofar as Christ has received into His Hypostasis the *common* nature of man, all people, that is, all human hypostases of all generations are saved and remain in Christ, that is, in the Church. In other words, Christ has saved the whole nature of man, and consequently, according to the thought of Metropolitan Alexis, all people.

“However, according to the Orthodox teaching, ‘God the Word, on becoming incarnate, did not take on the nature viewed as an abstraction in pure thought,… nor the nature contemplated in species (that is, viewed in all the hypostases of the human race – H. Th.), for He did not take on all the hypostases, but He took on that which received its existence in His Hypostasis’. That is, it is impossible to say that since God the Word became Man, all people are saved by virtue of being men. But Metropolitan Alexis affirms that in the humanity of Christ is contained all men’s hypostases. Such a teaching was confessed in the 11th century by the Monk Nilus of Calabria, who taught that all human hypostases are present or are contained in the humanity taken on by the Lord and are ‘co-deified’ together with Him. The Orthodox Church anathematized Nilus and his heresy: ‘If anyone dogmatises that all human hypostases are in the flesh taken on by the Lord and are co-deified with it, let him be anathema, for this is empty chatter, or, rather, manifest impiety.’ And although the metropolitan makes the qualification that humanity for him is only ‘the potential church’, nevertheless he later on unambiguously speaks of the whole of humanity as of the Church – the Body of Christ, the Temple of the Holy Spirit: ‘Christ redeemed, cleansed and recreated a common human nature for all, while the Holy Spirit morally transfigures each human personality, gives the Christian the fullness of grace, makes him a temple of God and dwells in him, raises the growth of spirituality in the mind and the heart, leads him to every truth and gives him spiritual gifts to his benefit: to one – the word of wisdom, to another – the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit… and other gifts (I Corinthians 12.7-11), so that human talents should be revealed more fully.’ In this way, insofar as God the Word has been incarnate in a common human nature, His Body is the divided Christian Church in the combination of all its separate parts. However, the saving action of the Holy Spirit is poured out even beyond the bounds of the Body of Christ, penetrating into and deifying the body of the whole of humanity: ‘The all-embracing and most powerful force of the Holy Spirit is spread out onto the whole life of our world, transforming it in the course of the historical process of the struggle between good and evil.’

“And so, thanks to a clever substitution of concepts, the real difference between the grace of the Holy Spirit, by which God providentially preserves the world in existence and leads people to the Church, and the deifying mystical presence of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ, the Church, is destroyed, which completely abolishes the difference between the Church and the world: now ‘the cultural efflorescence of European and world Christianity’ is declared to be an action of the Holy Spirit, and even the Salt-2 treaty between Brezhnev and Carter concerning the limiting of strategic offensive weapons is also ‘a manifestation of the invisible power of the Holy Spirit acting in the world for the good of the whole of humanity.’

“The consequences of this ‘pan-human Pentecost’ are expressed by the metropolitan mainly in the terms of humanism and peace-making: ‘Christian concern for questions of social justice’, ‘the elements of the movement for peace’, Christians’ service to people and their ‘involvement in all the complexity of the real life of the world’. In this way the life of grace in the Body of Christ is substituted by a humanistic ‘serving the affairs of the world’.

“It is understandable that this ‘theology of peace’ should be very convenient for the dialogue not only with any heretical Christian communities, but also with any religions, even with utopian teachings like communism.

“But how is such a faith compatible with the Orthodox teaching on the uniqueness and singleness of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church? Yes, admits Metropolitan Alexis, ‘the oneness and unity of the Church is an ecclesiological axiom’, but in actual fact ‘an invisible unity as the unity of Christ and the Holy Spirit lives in the visible multitude of Churches, each of which has its particular face’, affirms the metropolitan, citing his brother in ecumenism, Professor Archbishop Vladimir (Sabodan). Before us here is the classical ecumenist ecclesiology – ‘the branch theory’, which was invented by Archbishop Stylianos of Australia (Constantinopolitan patriarchate), or, using the language of Soviet theological thought, the ecclesiology of ‘the traumatized Body of Christ’, a fruit of the refined minds of the ‘ecumenist theologians’ of the MP – the main teacher and implanter of the ecumenist heresy in the MP was Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov).”[[599]](#footnote-599)

However, just as the new phenomenon of Catholic-Orthodox ecumenism created problems for the Orthodox Church’s conception of herself as exclusively the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, so did it create problems for traditional Catholic believers, who not only believed that it was the Roman Church that was the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, but also that the Mother of God had promised at Fatima to “convert” Russia, calling on the Pope to “consecrate” her to her Immaculate Heart.

Thus one of the leaders of the “Blue Army” of Fatima believers, Fr. Nicholas Gruner, writes: “God asked for the consecration of a specific country – Russia. Now, centuries ago, Russia was known as Holy Mother Russia. It had been, so to speak, consecrated to God, but the Catholics of that country fell into schism not so much directly but through the bishops – between them and Rome. The Catholics of Constantinople fell into schism in 1054 and people from Russia followed suit over time. They have been separated from the True Church ever since. Also, Russia was, in a sense, ‘consecrated’ to the devil in 1917 to be the instrument of atheistic Communism and its worldwide war against God; to deny God’s existence, to fight God in every way.

“Thus God calls for a public reparation, a solemn ceremony by the Pope and the bishops of the world consecrating Russia to the Immaculate Heart – to call people back to the service of God.”

However, no Pope has yet specifically consecrated Russia. In fact, when Pope John Paul II consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1984 he specifically acknowledged that this was not the consecration of Russia.

Another Fatima fanatic, Atila Sinke Guimaraes, writes: “From 1917 until today, the schismatic Russian Church has not changed any of its erroneous doctrines on the Holy Trinity, Papal infallibility, and the immaculate Conception of Mary. It also sustains the same spirit of arrogance towards Rome that it has held for the last 1,000 years”.In this way does the modern, ecumenist Vatican coexist with the old-fashioned, pre-Vatican II Roman Catholicism speaking, whose aim is not union with the Orthodox on the basis of equality, but the complete absorption of Orthodoxy under “the Holy Father”….

## 132. ARCHBISHOP MARK OF BERLIN

The influence of the KGB on Church life extended well beyond the borders of the Soviet Union and beyond the ranks of the East European Churches. In 1979 a layman of ROCOR, Mark Arndt, was arrested at Leningrad airport for importing anti-Soviet material and then released. In view of the later importance of Mark as ROCOR’s Archbishop of Berlin, the following words written about him in 2004 by a former KGB operative, Constantine Preobrazhensky, acquire considerable importance:-

“In 1979 the future Archbishop Mark [of Berlin] was arrested at the Soviet border for importing anti-Soviet literature. Nobody knows on what date. Nor does anybody know how long Mark was detained by the KGB, whether for one day or several…

“At that time Mark Arndt was an activist of NTS, the People’s Labour Union, which had once been a warlike anti-Soviet organisation but was then properly crammed with KGB agents.

“Some Russian émigrés today say: ‘What if the KGB simply frightened Mark and then let him go with God’s blessing?’

“I assure you as a retired lieutenant-colonel of the KGB: this could not have happened. Because the import of anti-Soviet literature came under article 70 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR, “Anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda”. It was considered an especially dangerous state crime and promised a considerable jail sentence.

“And how then, after arresting Mark, would the chekists have given an account of their work? Explained that they had let him go? And where would the concrete result so valued by the KGB be? Or, as they say there, ‘the dry remains’?

“But nobody would have allowed him to be released!

“After all, every foreigner who fell for righteousness’ or unrighteousness’ sake into the hands of the KGB was considered to be a fat, tasty chicken. He could have been exchanged for a Soviet spy who had fallen into captivity, or used for communist propaganda.

“All this would have been considered to be a great success and promised rewards for the chekists. But if they released him, there would have been no bonus. After all, the KGB is a military system. Every step there has to be agreed with tens of bosses.

“The chekists could have released him only in exchange for a still greater bonus. And they give that for the recruitment of a foreigner.It is considered the greatest achievement in the work of a chekist. His career would have been on the up.

“They teach how to recruit foreigners who are arrested by them in the Minsk KGB school…

“They worked on Mark. He would even have had to spend the night in the KGB…

“Sergius Grigoryants [the founder of *Glasnost*] told me the following: ‘… The fact that the KGB let Mark go in such a “humane” fashion shows that a love match may have been set up between them.’…

“There are *agents of influence*, who act on the politics of their country in a spirit that is useful for Russia. But as a rule they do not break its laws.

“If Archbishop Mark is truly an agent of the KGB, then he belongs to this category. Does his activity correspond to the external political aims of the Putin administration? Undoubtedly yes. It helps submit the Church Abroad to Moscow, so as to take the Russian emigration under the control of the FSB [the new name for the KGB]…”[[600]](#footnote-600)

Archbishop Mark immediately and sharply responded to Preobrazhensky’s accusations: “I have never and nowhere been arrested, and I will not comment on every absurdity”.

More recently, Preobrazhensky has returned to the attack on Archbishop Mark, citing the witness of Bishop Irenaeus of Verney and Semirechiye of the Russian True Orthodox Church, who in 1990, as Protopriest Vladimir Klipenshtein, was appointed rector of the church of St. Symeon of the Wonderful Mountain in Dresden by Archbishop Mark. To his surprise he discovered that this church had formerly been in the MP, but that in that year the government of United Germany had decided to return all the Russian churches to ROCOR – and were prepared to enforce that decision by force if necessary. Fr. Vladimir joyfully phoned Archbishop Mark to tell him about this, but received the unexpected reply:

“I’m ready hang myself because of your actions!”

“But where then am I to serve?” said Fr. Vladimir in amazement.

“Rent a flat and serve at home!” shouted Archbishop Mark.

“It was strange: it was he who had appointed Fr. Vladimir as rector of the church, but now he was not allowing him to serve in it! Where was the logic in that?”

Fr. Vladimir later learned that, over ten years before a part of ROCOR was engulfed by the MP, Archbishop Mark served with his patriarchal “double”, Archbishop Theophan of Berlin and Germany. Moreover, although he visited the Dresden parish and served with its patriarchal rector, Fr. George Davidov, he never took the church from him. Then Fr. Vladimir found out from the German counter-espionage service that all the patriarchal priests in Germany were KGB agents!

Fr. Vladimir’s inquiries were extremely displeasing to Archbishop Mark, who recalled him to his monastery of St. Job in Munich, and then told him that he would not be serving in Germany, whereupon he returned to his homeland.

“Bishop Irenaeus noted in a conversation with me that if at that time, in 1999, Mark’s work on the cadres in favour of Moscow had become widely known, this would have elicited such a scandal that last year’s ‘union of the Churches’ could not have taken place. The more so in that at that time the leader of the Church Abroad was Metropolitan Vitaly, who was known for his categorical rejection of the Bolsheviks, the chekists and ‘the Soviet patriarchate’.

“’I am convinced that it was precisely Mark who led the conspiracy to remove Metropolitan Vitaly in 2000,’ noted Bishop Irenaeus.”[[601]](#footnote-601)

## 133. PENTECOSTALISM AND ORTHODOXY

Pentecostalism may be said to date back precisely to New Year’s Eve, 1900, when “the age of the Spirit” and “the new Pentecost” is supposed to have dawned. “For some time before that moment,” wrote Hieromonk Seraphim Rose, “a Methodist minister in Topeka, Kansas, Charles Parham, as an answer to the confessed feebleness of his Christian ministry, had been concentratedly studying the New Testament with a group of his students with the aim of discovering the secret of the *power* of Apostolic Christianity. The students finally deduced that this secret lay in the ‘speaking in tongues’ which, they thought, always accompanied the reception of the Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles. With increasing excitement and tension, Parham and his students resolved to pray until they themselves receive the ‘Baptism of the Holy Spirit’ together with speaking in tongues. On December 31, 1900, they prayed from morning to night with no success, until one young girl suggested that one ingredient was missing in this experiment: ‘laying on of hands’. Parham put his hands on the girl’s head, and immediately she began to speak in an ‘unknown tongue’. Within three days there were many such ‘Baptisms’, including that of Parham himself and twelve other ministers of various denominations, and all of them were accompanied by speaking in tongues. Soon the revival spread to Texas, and then it had spectacular success at a small Negro church in Los Angeles.[[602]](#footnote-602) Since then it has spread throughout the world and claims ten million members [in 1983].

“For half a century the Pentecostal Movement remained sectarian and everywhere it was received with hostility by the established denominations. Then, however, speaking in tongues began gradually to appear in the denominations themselves, although at first it was kept rather quiet, until in 1960 an Episcopalian priest near Los Angeles gave wide publicity to this fact by publicly declaring that he had received the ‘Baptism of the Holy Spirit’ and spoke in tongues. After some initial hostility, the ‘charismatic renewal’ gained the official or unofficial approval of all the major denominations and has spread rapidly both in America and abroad. Even the once rigid and exclusivist Roman Catholic Church, once it took up the ‘charismatic renewal’ in earnest in the later 1960s, has been enthusiastically swept up in this movement. In America, the Roman Catholic bishops gave their approval to the movement in 1969, and the few thousand Catholics involved in it then have since increased to untold hundreds of thousands, who gather periodically in local and nationwide ‘charismatic’ conferences whose participants are sometimes numbered in the tens of thousands. The Roman Catholic countries of Europe have also become enthusiastically ‘charismatic’, as witnessed by the ‘charismatic’ conference in Summer, 1978, in Ireland, attended by thousands of Irish priests. Not long before his death Pope Paul VI met with a delegation of ‘charismatics’ and proclaimed that he too is a Pentecostal.”[[603]](#footnote-603)

Although Pentecostalism was slower than Ecumenism to penetrate Orthodoxy, we have already seen its influence in the words of Metropolitan Alexis (Ridiger), when speaking about a “pan-human Pentecost”. It gave a tremendous boost to Ecumenism, becoming the “heart”, as Ecumenism was the “mind” of the new religion of the future. No attention was paid to the question whether the spirit behind the tongues was the Holy Spirit or not. To those who endeavoured to obey the command: “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God” (I John 4.1), it seemed clear that it was not, and that the Apostles’ words to the Corinthians applied also to the Pentecostalists: “If ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received [i.e. a different spirit from the Holy Spirit],… ye might well bear with him” (II Corinthians 11.4).

Although Pentecostalists assert that their gift of tongues is the same as that which was given to the early Church, they forget that even in the early Church this gift had its counterfeits. Thus Archbishop Averky of Syracuse, commenting on the twelfth chapter of St. Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians, writes: “among the Corinthians many began to look on these grace-filled manifestations of the Holy Spirit as a reason for vainglory and arrogance. While striving to acquire one of the more striking gifts, they even fell into self-deception, and without acquiring any gift at all, they were in a frenzy, pronouncing disjointed and incomprehensible words, and sometimes, in the darkness of their minds and hearts, they shouted out blasphemous thoughts, pronouncing, for example, anathema on Jesus. Here was evident the influence of pagan prophetesses like Pytheas or the Sibyl. In an artificially induced false inspiration, foaming at the mouth and with loosened hair, they shouted out either incomprehensible or ambiguous utterances and produced a powerful impression on people who insistently demanded answers from them. The contemporary sectarians – the khlysty, the Pentecostalists – are like them. The Apostle warns the Christians against a pagan approach and attitude to spiritual gifts.”[[604]](#footnote-604)

## 134. SUPER-ECUMENISM (1)

“Inspired” by Pentecostalism, the ecumenists now plunged into the much broader sphere of inter-religious relations – that is, into “Super-Ecumenism”. For the so-called “age of the Spirit”, ignoring the voice of the Spirit: “Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers, for… what concord hath Christ with Belial?” (II Corinthians 6.14-15), invited to reunion not only Christians of all denominations but also members of all the other religions. Thus in 1970 the Pentecostal Pope Paul VI spoke of “the Hebrew and Islamic peoples, and Christians… these three expressions of an *identical* [my italics – V.M.] monotheism”, and confessed that “we are all sons of the same Father, and,… therefore, all brothers”.[[605]](#footnote-605) Evidently he did not know the words of the Apostle John: “Whosoever denieth the Son [and both Jews and Mohammedans deny the Son], the same hath not the Father” (I John 2.23). Nor those of the Lord Himself: “No man cometh unto the Father but by Me” (John 14.6).

Another important influence, paradoxically, on Catholic ecumenism was the ecumenism of the Russian religious philosophers such as Soloviev and Berdiaev. Thus Patriarch Athenagoras noted the influence of Berdiaev on one of the architects of the Second Vatican Council, Cardinal Jean Daniélou, as well as on himself.[[606]](#footnote-606) And in a speech made on December 12, 1992, Pope John-Paul II said: “I confess the same Christian faith as was the faith of Soloviev.”[[607]](#footnote-607)

Catholic Super-Ecumenism was set in motion by the Second Vatican Council’s decree, Nostra Aetate (Declaration on the Relations of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, October 28, 1965): "Even though the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ, neither all Jews indiscriminately at that time, nor Jews today, can be charged with the crimes committed during his passion." And yet the Jewish religion to this day justifies the killing of Christ, saying in the Talmud that He was a magician and His Mother a prostitute!

The Orthodox were not far behind the Catholics, especially in relation to the Mohammedans. Thus in 1970, “the WCC sponsored a conference in Ajaltoun, Lebanon, between Hindus, Buddhists, Christians and Moslems, and a follow-up conference of 23 WCC ‘theologians’ in Zurich in June declared the need for ‘dialogue’ with the non-Christian religions. At the meeting of the Central Committee of the WCC at Addis Ababa in January of this year, Metropolitan Georges Khodre of Beirut (Orthodox Church of Antioch) shocked even many Protestant delegates when he not merely called for ‘dialogue’ with these religions, but left the Church of Christ far behind and trampled on 19 centuries of Christian tradition when he called on Christians to ‘investigate the authentically spiritual life of the unbaptized’ and enrich their own experience with the ‘riches of a universal religious community’ (*Religious New Service*), for ‘it is Christ alone who is received as light when grace visits a Brahmin, a Buddhist, or a Moslem reading his own scriptures’ (*Christian Century*, February 10, 1971).”[[608]](#footnote-608)

Evidently the Metropolitan had forgotten that “all the gods of the heathen are demons” (Psalm 95.5)…

In 1975 the Orthodox delegates at the WCC General Assembly in Nairobi declared: “The Orthodox do not expect the other Christians to be converted to Orthodoxy in its historic and cultural reality of the past and the present and to become members of the Orthodox Church.”

As the 1970s and 1980s progressed talk of unity was succeeded by action, and communal services not only between Christians of different denominations, but also between Christians and non-Christians, became common. Thus on June 29, 1980, in Atlanta, Georgia, the Greek Archbishop James of New York served an “unprecedented” ecumenical service with various Catholics, Protestants and even Jews... Even clergy of Serbian Patriarchate were conducting ecumenical services with the participation of heterodox clerics and even rabbis and women.

On January 22, 1981, the Ecumenical Press Service reported that the WCC was working on plans to unify all the Christian denominations into a single new religion which, the ecumenists hoped, would be generally accepted. To this end, a “preliminary plateau” was to be formed which would consolidate existing agreements between the churches. This would then lead to the formation of a universal council which would become a single body with sufficient authority to formulate a new confession of the apostolic faith![[609]](#footnote-609)

Also clear by this time was the *politicisation* of the WCC along the lines of the Moscow-inspired “movement for peace”, as we can see from a cursory reading of the titles of the public statements of the 33rd and 34th sessions of the Central Committee of the WCC in 1981 and 1982: “The Churches and the Refugee Crisis”, “Statement on Namibia”, “Increased Threats to Peace and the Task of the Churches”, “Statement on South African Government Raids on Squatter Camps”, “On Northern Ireland”, “Statement on the Second Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Disarmament”, “Statement on Lebanon”, “Statement on Extrajudicial Executions”.[[610]](#footnote-610)

In 1982 the MP convened a conference entitled “Religious workers for saving the sacred gift of life from nuclear catastrophe” in Moscow. It disclaimed any attempt “to produce some common syncretistic religion”. Nevertheless, the message implicit in its gathering of representatives of all the world’s religions under the chairmanship of the MP was that material prosperity is more important than truth.[[611]](#footnote-611)

Again, Fr. Lev Gillet highlighted the so-called “ecumenism of the concentration camps”. “For it was in such places as Buchenwald, Dachau and Auschwitz (not to mention the camps of the Stalinist world)”, writes Fr. Sergius Hackel, “That ‘Christians belonging to different Churches discovered through their common sufferings and their burning charity a deep unity at the foot of the cross’. Furthermore, ‘this ecumenism had its witnesses, its martyrs’. And Fr. Lev mentions three to represent them all: the Protestant pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-45), the Catholic priest Josef Metzger (1887-1944), and the Orthodox nun Maria Skobtsova (1891-1945). ‘All three were killed for Christ, all three were witnesses for the ecumenical fellowship of blood which is expressed in this sentence from the [1943] testament of Metzger: ‘I feel myself as closely united to my believing and conscientious Protestant brothers in Christ Jesus through Baptism and our common experience in the same Lord, as to the brethren with whom I share the fellowship of the Holy Sacrament’. The symbolic lighting of candles in the chapel of the twentieth-century martyrs in Canterbury Cathedral at the outset of Pope John Paul’s visit to Great Britain (in 1982) was, among other things, a reminder of what such ecumenism can mean.”[[612]](#footnote-612) But if Orthodox, Catholics and Protestants who suffered at the hands of the Nazis were all martyrs, what about the victims of the Jewish holocaust? Soon the industry of the holocaust would be compelling Christian leaders to pay homage also to these “martyrs”, whose religion of the Talmud breathes the most extreme hatred of Christ and Christians!

In proof of this, persecution of Christians in Israel has continued. Thus in November, 1979 Archimandrite Philoumenos, guardian of Jacob’s Well for the Jerusalem Patriarchate took shelter when a group of people, believed to be fanatical Zionists, broke into the monastery and attacked him with hatchets. His face was cloven in two, his eyes plucked out and the fingers of his right hand, used to make the sign of the cross, were chopped into pieces. The murder took place a week after a Zionist group had come to the monastery claiming that it was a Jewish holy place and demanding that all the crosses and other religious iconography be removed. His body was later found to be incorrupt.[[613]](#footnote-613)

In fact, the concept of martyrdom exposes ecumenism for the lie that it is. For if all religions are holy and equal, then so are their martyrs. But this is impossible. For then Jews who are killed by Muslims are as “holy” as Muslim suicide bombers. And Jews who suffer at the hands of Christians are as holy as Christians who suffer at the hands of Jews. And Catholics who suffer at the hands of Nazis and Stalinists are as holy as Orthodox who suffer at the hands of Catholics. And Orthodox who die for Sovietism and the Soviet church (i.e. in the MP) are as holy as Orthodox who die against Sovietism and against the Soviet church…

## 135. THE ANATHEMA AGAINST ECUMENISM

Two ecumenical events combined to elicit a powerful response from the True Orthodox Church. The first took place in 1982, when an inter-denominational eucharistic service was composed at a conference in Lima, Peru, in which the Protestant and Orthodox representatives to the WCC agreed that the baptism, eucharist and ordinations of *all* denominations were valid and acceptable.[[614]](#footnote-614) The second came in 1983, at the Vancouver General Assembly of the WCC, which began with a pagan rite performed by local Indians and contained prayer services in which Orthodox hierarchs as well as representatives of many non-Christian religions took part.

The Vancouver Assembly unanimously approved a statement entitled “My Neighbor's Faith and Mine, Theological Discoveries Through Interfaith Dialogue: A Study Guide” (Geneva: WCC, 1986). After claiming the need "a more adequate theology of religions," the statement declared “that in Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word, the entire human family has been united to God in an irrevocable bond and covenant. The saving presence of God's activity in all creation and human history comes to its focal point in the event of Christ. . . because we have seen and experienced goodness, truth, and holiness among followers of other paths and ways than that of Jesus Christ..., we find ourselves recognizing a need to move beyond a theology which confines salvation to the explicit personal commitment to Jesus Christ.”

When the Greek Old Calendarist Metropolitan Gabriel of the Cyclades attempted to address the Vancouver Assembly, he was not allowed to speak by the ecumenists. The *New York Times*, however, published his report, which included the following words: “Modern ecumenism is the reflection of the latest radical, atheistic and anti-Christian anthropomorphism which has as its principle that God is as necessary to man as man is to God. This radical anthropomorphism continues to struggle through the WCC to make the salvific message of Christ simply a servile element of the socio-political and earthly needs of man Thus it struggles for the actualisation of the unity of the Christian world without Christ, who is ‘the Way, the Truth and the Life’ of the Church and the faithful. Dogmatic and ethical minimalism, spiritual nihilism, humanistic pacifism and horizontal social activism lead to a union of the Christian world without Christ. So these attempts of the WCC constitute the modern blasphemy of the Holy Spirit par excellence and declare a deep crisis of faith in the Western Christian world…”[[615]](#footnote-615)

The Synod of ROCOR, also meeting in Canada, condemned this latest and most extreme manifestation of ecumenism as follows: “In its decision of 28 July / 10 August, our Council explained that the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia does not participate in the World Council of Churches insofar as the latter attempts to represent those assembled in it, representatives of religions differing in their opinions, as though they had some sort of unity in faith. In reality, though, this very position is a lie, inasmuch as they, members of various confessions and sects, have not given up their points of disagreement with each other, much less with the Orthodox Church, in dogmas and in fundamental attitudes. In the name of unifying formulas, these differences of opinion are not destroyed, but are just set aside. Instead of the unshakable truths of the faith, they try to see only opinions, not obligatory for anyone. In reply to the confession of the one Orthodox Faith, they say together with Pilate: ‘What is truth?’ And the nominally Orthodox members of the Ecumenical Movement more and more deserve the reproach of the Angel of the Church of Laodicea: ‘I know your works: you are neither hot nor cold: O if only you were hot or cold’ (Revelation 3.15). A clear manifestation of such false union was the serving of the so-called Lima Liturgy…”

Then the Synod anathematised ecumenism, declaring: “To those who attack the Church of Christ by teaching that Christ’s Church is divided into so-called ‘branches’ which differ in doctrine and way of life, or that the Church does not exist visibly, but will be formed in the future when all ‘branches’ or sects or denominations, and even religions will be united in one body; and who do not distinguish the priesthood and mysteries of the Church from those of the heretics, but say that the baptism and eucharist of heretics is effectual for salvation; therefore to those who have communion with these aforementioned heretics or advocate, disseminate, or defend their new heresy of Ecumenism under the pretext of brotherly love or the supposed unification of separated Christians, **Anathema**.”[[616]](#footnote-616)

The Anathema against Ecumenism was welcomed with joy by the True Orthodox not only in ROCOR, but also in Greece and on Mount Athos, and may be considered the single most important ecclesiastical act of the True Orthodox Church in the second half of the twentieth century. It and the 1918 anathema on communism and those who cooperate with it constitute the two pillars upon which Russian True Orthodoxy is founded in this period. For many who had been worried that ROCOR was not being firm and clear enough in her dealings with the ecumenists, it put an end to their doubts and reaffirmed their faith in her at a time when the Greek Old Calendarist Church was going through a very difficult period.

Some criticized the anathema for not spelling out precisely which bodies fell under it and were therefore outside the True Church – although many important anathemas in Church history have not mentioned names.[[617]](#footnote-617) Nevertheless, the implication of this anathema was clear: all Orthodox Churches that were fully participating members of the WCC fell under it.

As I.M. writes: “There is no heresy without heretics and their practical activity. The WCC in its declarations says: The Church confesses, the Church teaches, the Church does this, the Church does that. In this way the WCC witnesses that it does not recognize itself to be simply a council of churches, but the one church. And all who are members of the WCC are members of this one false church, this synagogue of Satan. And by this participation in the WCC all the local Orthodox churches fall under the ROCOR anathema of 1983 and fall away from the True Church. In their number is the Moscow Patriarchate…”[[618]](#footnote-618)

However, ROCOR priest Alexander Lebedev attacked the validity of the anathema, calling the idea that the anathema strikes down all ecumenists “the heresy of universal jurisdiction”.

The present writer replied to Fr. Alexander: “… It seems to me that you confuse two things: the Church as an external organisation, and the Church as a mystical organism, to use the terminology of Hieromartyr Catacomb Bishop Mark (Novoselov) (+1938). It seems to me that you are right as regards the Church as an external organisation, but wrong as regards the Church as a mystical organism. Let me explain.

“An anathema excludes the person anathematised from the holy mysteries, from membership of the Holy Church. In the first place, of course, that applies to the local Church of which that person is a member. It applies to other Churches only to the extent that the leaders of those other Churches agree with the original anathema and "sign up to it", as it were. Thus the heretic Arius was originally anathematized by the Bishop of Alexandria, which meant that he was excluded from receiving the sacraments throughout the Church of Alexandria. However, not all the bishops of neighbouring Churches agreed with this anathema, so Arius was able to receive communion in other Local Churches. To this extent the anathema was only of local significance. It required the convening of the First Ecumenical Council before Arius was anathematized "universally" - and even then, the anathema was not universally received, as the history of the Church in the next fifty years demonstrates.

“It is a different matter when we consider an anathema sub specie aeternitatis, in its mystical, super-terrestrial significance. From that point of view, the anathematization of a heretic begins in the heavens. Thus even before Arius had been "locally" anathematized by St. Alexander of Alexandria, the Lord appeared to his predecessor, St. Peter, with a torn cloak, and in answer to St. Peter's question: "O Creator, who has torn Thy tunic?", replied: "The mindless Arius; he has separated from Me people whom I had obtained with My Blood" (St. Demetrius of Rostov, *Lives of the Saints*, November 25). So not only Arius, but all those who followed him, had been separated from the Church by the anathema of Her First Bishop, the Lord Jesus Christ, years (or rather, aeons) before even the first "local" anathema had been uttered. All heresies and heretics are anathematized "from all eternity" by the eternal Lord, for just as every truth is approved by the Truth Himself from all eternity, so is every lie condemned by Him from all eternity, being condemned with "the father of lies" to the gehenna of fire (Revelation 22.15).

“The task of hierarchs on earth is to discern the decisions of the heavenly Church, and then apply these heavenly decisions on earth, in space and time. As St. Bede the Venerable (+735) writes: "The keys of the Kingdom designate the actual knowledge and power of discerning who are worthy to be received into the Kingdom, and who should be excluded from it as being unworthy" (Sermon on the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, *P.L.* 94, col. 219). From this point of view, it matters not a jot whether a heretic is anathematized locally or universally, since he has already been anathematized by the heavenly Church. Or rather, it matters in this sense: that if the heretic has been anathematized locally, but this anathema is not accepted by the rest of the Church, then the rest of the Church is under the grave danger of falling under this same anathema. For the local anathema, if it is just, is the reflection of a heavenly anathema; and the anathema of the heavenly Church is universal….

“This explains why, when local Churches anathematized a heresy, they never qualified the anathema (as you, Fr. Alexander, would like to qualify ROCOR's anathema against ecumenism) by saying: "but of course, this applies only to the heretics in our local Church". On the contrary: history shows that local Churches freely anathematized heretics, not only in their own Churches, but also in others. Thus Nestorius, a heretic of the Church of Constantinople, was first condemned by a local Synod of the Church of Rome under St. Celestine; the Monothelite heretics were first condemned by a local Synod, again, of the Church of Rome; and the Papist heretics were first condemned by a local Synod of the Church of Constantinople.

“Consider what St. Maximus said of the Monothelites: "In addition to having excommunicated themselves from the Church, they have been deposed and deprived of the priesthood at the local council which took place recently in Rome. What Mysteries, then, can they perform? Or what spirit will descend upon those who are ordained by them?" Note that the saint says that the heretics have excommunicated themselves; for as the Apostle Paul writes, "he that is such is subverted, and sins, being condemned of himself" (Titus 3.11). But the heretics' self-condemnation and self-exclusion from the Church as a mystical organism must be followed by their exclusion from the Church as an external organization, lest others be infected with their heresy. Hence the need for councils of bishops to anathematize them, following the rule: "A heretic after the first and second admonition reject" (Titus 3.10), and: "If he refuses to listen to the Church, let him be unto you as a heathen and a publican" (Matthew 18.17). And clearly St. Maximus considered that the anathema of the local Church of Rome had validity throughout the Ecumenical Church.

“Administrative matters and moral falls are the business of local Churches and councils. However, heresies of their very nature are of universal significance, having the potential to infect the whole Church. That is why the appearance of a heresy in one local Church is not the business only of that local Church, but of all the local Churches - and every local Church can and must anathematize it.

“Even the anathema of single bishopric has universal power and validity if it is uttered in the Holy Spirit, in accordance with the eternal Truth. Thus in 1069 the bishops of the metropolitanate of York, in the north of England, solemnly anathematized both the Pope of Rome and his stooge, William the conqueror, the first papist king of England. All the evidence is that they did not know that the Church of Constantinople had already anathematized Rome in 1054. So they were not simply confirming the word of a higher authority. They did not need a higher authority. They were successors of the apostles, with the power to bind and to loose. And they used that power, not for personal gain (on the contrary: they paid for their boldness with their lives), even against the most senior bishop in Christendom…

“In the same way, in 1983 the Sobor of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad, using the power to bind and to loose given them by the Bishop of bishops, the Lord Jesus Christ, translated onto earth, into space and time, the completely binding and universally applicable decision already arrived at from all eternity by the Council of the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Ecumenism is, was and always will be a heresy, indeed "the heresy of heresies", and the ecumenist heretics are, were and always will be outside the Church, the mystical Body of Christ. The decision of the ROCOR Sobor in 1983, confirmed with no change to its universal wording in 1998, expelled these already self-condemned and Divinely condemned heretics also from the external organization of the Church - and woe to any man, of whatever Church, who despises that decision, for he will then surely fall under the same anathema…”[[619]](#footnote-619)

One ROCOR hierarch rejected the anathema – Archbishop Anthony of Geneva. Since 1974, as we have seen, he had been the leader of the faction opposing any hardening of ROCOR’s attitude towards “World Orthodoxy”. Now he ordered the Paris Mission of ROCOR, led by Archimandrite Ambroise Frontier, to concelebrate with new calendarists, and not with Old Calendarists, when in Greece – which caused the whole mission to leave ROCOR and join the Greek Old Calendarists. He was even accused of concelebrating with Roman Catholics.[[620]](#footnote-620) After the Paris mission left him, Archbishop Anthony began to distribute epistles and “explanations” written by him with the aim of justifying the concelebrations with clergy of the “official churches” that were taking place in his diocese.[[621]](#footnote-621)

Unfortunately, the ROCOR Synod was by now too weak to check his harmful influence… Metropolitan Philaret was the only hierarch willing and able to fight for the True Orthodox confession against Archbishop Anthony. However, he had very few allies in the Synod. Even a conservative such as Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) would not go so far as him. As Bishop Gregory’s daughter, Matushka Anastasia Shatilova, recalls: “[Metropolitan Philaret] had especially many quarrels with Archbishop Anthony of Geneva… mainly on ecumenist questions… with the Serbs, the Antiochians and all kinds… Unfortunately, Archbishop Anthony was distinguished for his very sharp character and wrote several very boorish letters, to which the Metropolitan replied a little sharply… Vladyka Gregory was distinguished by somewhat great diplomacy and was afraid that to speak in this way could create too great problems… [and] restrained the declarations of the Holy Hierarch Philaret concerning the lack of grace in the MP. For example, he used to say: ‘… tell 60 million Russian people that they are not chrismated, and have been baptized only according to the laymen’s rite…’ The Metropolitan was prepared to say this, but Vladyka Gregory thought that for the sake of Church construction it would be more correct not to put it so sharply…”[[622]](#footnote-622)

## 136. THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE FLORINITE SYNOD

In the early 1970s the Florinite Synod under Archbishop Auxentius, appeared to be in a strong position as a result of its union with ROCOR. At this point, however, Auxentius began ordaining unworthy men and receiving priests from the new calendarists whose reputation was already besmirched.[[623]](#footnote-623) As a result, in 1974, following the commandment: “Be not partakers of other men’s sins” (I Timothy 5.2)), Metropolitans Acacius of Diauleia, Gabriel of the Cyclades and Chrysostom (Kiousis) of Thessalonica stopped attending meetings of the Synod. Chrysostom left because Auxentius wanted to consecrate a bishop for Germany, Marcian, who had been caught red-handed without a rasa in the “red light” district of Athens.[[624]](#footnote-624) These three bishops were joined by Bishop Peter of Astoria[[625]](#footnote-625), and on September 9, 1976 all four bishops wrote a letter to the ROCOR Synod in which they criticized Auxentius for his receiving priests from the new calendarists who had been defrocked for immorality.[[626]](#footnote-626)

Sadly, the process of disintegration did not stop there. In June, 1977,Metropolitan Callistus of Corinth, being unhappy with the Matthewites’ break with the Russians and the Matthewites’ rejection of the kheirothesia of 1971 (he was one of the two bishops who had secured the union with the Russians in 1971), broke communion with the Matthewites and joined the Holy Synod.[[627]](#footnote-627) However, he was soon to rue his association with Auxentius. In 1978, a Portuguese priest of ROCOR, Joao Rocha, unhappy with Archbishop Anthony of Geneva’s refusal to create a diocese in Portugal, applied to join the True Orthodox Church of Greece. To the fury of Archbishop Anthony, Archbishop Auxentius baptised and reordained him on the grounds that he was a convert who had never had Orthodox baptism[[628]](#footnote-628) before consecrating him as Bishop Gabriel of Lisbon together with Metropolitan Callistus, who later claimed that he had been deceived.

Profoundly disillusioned with Auxentius, from February 20 to 23, 1979, Metropolitan Callistus, together with Metropolitan Anthony of Megara, ordained eight archimandrites to the episcopate, who were, in order of ordination: Cyprian (Koutsoubas) of Fili and Orope, Maximus (Tsitsibakos) of Magnesia, Callinicus (Sarantopoulos) of Achaia, Matthew (Langis) of Oinoe, Germanus (Athanasiou) of Aiolia, Calliopius (Giannakoulopoulos) of Pentapolis, Mercurius (Kaloskamis) of Knossos and Callinicus (Karaphyllakis) of the Twelve Islands.[[629]](#footnote-629) During the services, Archbishop Auxentius was commemorated; but they had not informed him! It was only on February 27 that they called Auxentius and asked for his approval. The “Callistites” claimed that this was only a “temporary and curable deviation from the canonical order” whose aim was the cleansing of the Church from moral vices, especially sodomy, since “men have been raised to the priesthood who are both unworthy and incapable.”[[630]](#footnote-630)

However, on March 21, 1980 the Callistite Synod consecrated Holy Chrism. This was bold, hardly the act of a Synod that considered itself a “temporary and curable deviation from the canonical order”. Moreover, it now entered into communion with another Local Church. Thus in 1979 it received Bishop Silvester as emissary of the True Orthodox Church of Romania, and decided, having examined both the circumstances of the case and the historical/canonical basis, synodically to recognise the validity of the consecration performed by Galaction alone, as of those that followed.[[631]](#footnote-631) In April, 1980 the Callistites entered into official communion with the True Orthodox Church of Romania under the presidency of Metropolitan Glycerius.

Some years later, Archbishop Kallinikos of Athens, a member of the Callistite Synod at that time, claimed that in 1981 Metropolitan Callistus, together with Metropolitan Callinicus of Achaia and Metropolitan Cyprian of Fili went to Romania and performed the act of cheirothesia on the Romanian bishops in order to regularize their position. This was officially denied by the Romanian Synod in 2010[[632]](#footnote-632), as also by the translator for the two sides, Bishop (then Hieromonk) Ambrose.

At 6 p.m. on February 27, the same day on which he was informed of the Callistite ordinations[[633]](#footnote-633), Archbishop Auxentius met Metropolitans Gerontius and Callinicus “in order to formulate a position on the sedition brought about by its members, Callistus of Corinth and Anthony of Megara, who illegally severed themselves from the body [of the Holy Synod] and high-handedly undertook to consecrate bishops. Upon discussing this matter at length, on the basis of the holy canons of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of Christ, [the Holy Synod] unanimously decreed and imposed upon the two seditious Metropolitans the punishment of deposition, as the holy canons themselves enjoin. [The Holy Synod decrees] that this decision be released and published straightway in the Athenian press. Since there was no time to convoke the assembly of the clergy, upon deliberation, because of the gravity of the event, it decided this very day to consecrate new bishops for [the Holy Synod’s] restoration and replenishment. Various points of view were exchanged and proposed by all the holy hierarchs…”

Then, according to the minutes of the meeting, no less than *ten* new bishops were elected and ordained in the following order:Euthymius (Orphanos) of Stavropolis (later Thessalonica), Paisius (Loulourgas) of Gardikion (later of America), Theophilus (Tsirbas) of Christianoupolis (later Patras), Athanasius (Postalas) of Platamon (later Larissa), Maximus (Vallianatos) of the Seven Islands, Stephen (Tsikouras) of Kardamila (later Chios), Paisius (Phinikaliotis) of Aegina, Gerasimus (Vrakas) of Talantion (later Thebes), Athanasius (Haralambidis) of Grevena (later Acharnae) and Justin (Kouloutouros) of Marathon (later Euripus).

Some days later, the newly augmented Auxentiite Synod met in order to confirm the invalidity of the Callistite ordinations and the deposition of the Callistites as “conspirators, factionalists, establishers of unlawful assemblies and schismatics”.[[634]](#footnote-634) Strangely, according to the minutes, while 13 bishops were present, only 8 signed the conciliar encyclical. The bishops who were present but apparently did not sign were Gerontius, Callinicus, Stephen, Paisius of Gardikion and Paisius of Aegina. Another curious feature of the minutes of this meeting is that some of bishops had changed their titles from the list of those present to the list of those who signed the encyclical.[[635]](#footnote-635)

But the strangest aspect of this Auxentiite “counter-coup” was the *extraordinary speed* with which it was accomplished. Three senior bishops *on one and the same day* (February 14 or 27): (1) heard of the Callistite ordinations, (2) met in order to condemn them and depose the Callistites, (3) drew up a list of 10 candidates for the episcopate, (4) assembled the 10 candidates (were they all waiting in the next room?), (5) obtained the permission of the two other members of the Synod, Paisius of Euripus and Acacius of Canada (this is not mentioned in the minutes, but Bishop Macarius assures us it happened), and (6) ordained them. Another source says that two of the new bishops (Athanasius of Larissa and Stephen of Chios) were ordained on one and the same day in different churches by different bishops.[[636]](#footnote-636)

Even the extremely pro-Auxentiite Bishop (now Archbishop) Macarius admits, with almost British under-statement, “that Archbishop Auxentius did act in a rather hurried manner…”[[637]](#footnote-637)

Thus the size (8 bishops), unexpectedness and uncanonicity of the Callistite coup was exceeded, if that were possible, by the still greater size (10 bishops), unexpectedness, uncanonicity – and extraordinary speed - of the Auxentiite counter-coup! The explanation Bishop Macarius gives for this extraordinary speed - “things were in such a wild and unexpected state” – is weak, to say the least. A much more likely explanation is that the Auxentiite coup was not a wild reaction to a totally unexpected event, but a carefully planned reaction to an already foreseen event: the Auxentiites knew of the Callistite coup well in advance, and were therefore able to plan their own counter-coup well in advance, and put it into effect immediately they heard about the Callistite ordinations. In fact, there are some indications that Auxentius was not totally opposed to the Callistite coup, in that it “freed his hands”[[638]](#footnote-638) to consecrate those whom *he* wanted as bishops – and of whom he knew that several of his bishops, the future Callistites, would not approve.

On the other hand, one of those newly ordained by Callistus, Callinicus of the Twelve Islands, claimed that the whole venture was planned by one of the newly-ordained bishops and his own spiritual father, Metropolitan Cyprian of Fili, without Auxentius’ knowledge. Metropolitan Callinicus writes: “I was urgently summoned to Athens, knowing nothing about what was going on, and to my great surprise heard my Elder Cyprian tell me to prepare to be ordained to the episcopate during the vigil service that would begin in a short time. To the appropriate question of the writer why he himself (Fr. Cyprian) or this or that hieromonk (I mentioned a few names) should not be ordained, I learned that Fr. Cyprian as well as the other hieromonks I mentioned had already been ordained, and that Archbishop Auxentius was aware of the ordinations!”[[639]](#footnote-639)

However, when all the bishops were in the sanctuary taking off their vestments, Cyprian said to one of them, "Now, how are we going to explain all this to Archbishop Auxentios?" Callinicus overheard this and realised that his spiritual father had lied to him. He believed that the whole venture was planned by Cyprian, and that he had deceived Callistus and Anthony into believing that Auxentius had given his permission.[[640]](#footnote-640)

However, the Cyprianite Bishop Ambrose of Methone disagrees: “Having followed personally all the events in question, I can assure you that Metropolitan Cyprian had absolutely nothing to do with the planning of the ordinations; indeed, though he had very friendly relations with Metropolitan Callistus, he had up to that time never met Metropolitan Anthony. He consulted the brotherhood, and his confessor, Archimandrite Ambroise Frontier, before accepting the proposition of the two metropolitans. He was in fact opposed to some of the candidates proposed, but was not in a position to veto them.”[[641]](#footnote-641)

While it seems very unlikely that Auxentius gave his permission (here we agree with Bishop Macarius), it is equally unlikely, for the reasons given above, that Auxentius did not know what was going to happen. Probably both sides knew already, before their split, that the candidates to the episcopate of the one side would not be acceptable to the other; so *both* sides prepared coups.

From a tactical point of view, Callistus and Anthony made a serious mistake when they “jumped the gun” and carried out their ordinations first. For their admittedly uncanonical act, however good the motivation (the cleansing of the Church from the tares sown by Auxentius), was made to appear as black as night, and the storm it raised covered the still more daring and uncanonical counter-coup of the Auxentiites…

The Callistite Synod also tried to approach ROCOR, but was rebuffed. On May 11, 1980 the ROCOR Synod declared: “Metropolitan Callistus, accompanied by Bishops Cyprian, Matthew and Calliopius, arrived to personally attend the session of the Synod of Bishops. They greeted the First Hierarch and the members of the Synod and reported on the grievous internal state of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians which is the result, they say, of improper measures taken by Archbishop Auxentius in directing the life of the Church which have led to a rift in relations with the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. They cited as examples irregular ordinations, regarding which Metropolitan Callistus asked for forgiveness for having taken part in the ordination of John Rosha as bishop of Portugal, explaining that he had done so on the basis of incorrect information imparted to him by Archbishop Auxentius. Archbishop Auxentius, in Metropolitan Callistus’ words, has not only caused a break in relations with the Russian Church, but has also spread disorder in his own Church by supporting the abbess who has written a book against the holy hierarch Nectarius of Pentapolis. Later he performed many unnecessary ordinations without examining the candidates sufficiently. In making his decisions, Archbishop Auxentius has ignored all of his bishops with the exception of Metropolitan Gerontius. Performing the ordination of John Rosha, Archbishop Auxentius misled (the concelebrating hierarchs), saying that Archbishop Anthony of Geneva had not only given John a canonical release, but was even going to take part in his ordination. After discovering the true state of affairs, several members of their Synod proposed writing a letter of explanation to the Russian Synod of Bishops, but Archbishop Auxentius would not consent to this.

“Archbishop Callistus finds preservation of relations with the Russian Orthodox Outside of Russia absolutely essential. In view of this, he and Bishop Anthony of Megara decided to separate themselves from Archbishop Auxentius and ordained eight bishops for the administration of the Church, dividing the Church into dioceses. They are petitioning for the restoration of communion.

“Archbishop Auxentius, on his part, has addressed the Synod of Bishops in a letter dated April 12, accusing Archbishop Callistus and Bishop Anthony of Megara of perpetrating a schism.

“*RESOLVED.* Lovingly honouring the podvig of our brethren who have suffered considerably in Greece for their defence of the True Orthodox Faith, the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia is deeply saddened that division reigns among them. The simultaneous appeal of both Archbishop Auxentius and Archbishop Callistus to his Eminence Metropolitan Philaret bears witness to the depth of the divergence between them. The Russian bishops have no authority to investigate local problems in Greece in detail, much less mutual accusations. And so the Synod of Bishops, as early as 1976, resolved to remain aloof from any decisions and interference in the internal affairs of the Church in Greece. Moreover, for a comprehensive decision in favour of one or the other party, a detailed study of each accusation and the circumstances attendant thereon would be necessary, which seems impractical for the Synod of Bishops. Even less are the Russian bishops able to investigate the regularity of the many ordinations of bishops now performed.

“However, there is no doubt that several ordinations which have been performed by Archbishop Auxentius, especially in the recent past, and which have caused a change in our mutual relations, have entailed serious violations of the canons of the Church and could serve as a basis of an ecclesiastical trial against those who performed them. The ordination of bishops performed by him without need and without such bishops having diocesan territory especially gives rise to doubts and suspicions.

“The Synod of Bishops understands the anxiety of Metropolitan Callistus and values his concern for the preservation of communion with the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, as well as his desire to establish genuine ecclesiastical peace and canonical order in Greece. Without doubt, however, such order will never be established until all bishops ordained under dubious circumstances are removed. It would be best then for all bishops who are above suspicion to assemble in order to divide the dioceses among themselves according to territory; and the remaining bishops should be content to go into retirement.

“Only after the removal of all bishops suspected of canonical crimes can a beginning be made for a correct canonical organization of the True Orthodox Church in Greece which would attract to itself and unite all those clergy and laity who are seeking a normal ecclesiastical order.

“Be that as it may, having no authority for the Council to resolve problems which arise in Church life in Greece, the Synod of Bishops will watch all that goes on there attentively, offering up prayers that the Lord will help our Greek brethren to set aright the correct canonical order of life which would make possible the restoration of normal relations with them…”

Metropolitans Acacius and Chrysostom disapproved of both the coup and the counter-coup, but were especially scathing about Auxentius’ new ordinations. As they wrote: “The ‘three hierarchs’ (the archbishop and the metropolitans of Piraeus and Phthiotis) blatantly and scandalously nourished for years the ground for the creation of suitable conditions for the ordination… of people who do not have a good external or internal image… You removed Synodal hierarchs for no other reason than that they sought moral and legal order in the Church administration and the cleansing of the clergy… You displayed unbelievable vengefulness against those hierarchs who rebuked your iniquities… You ordained without any examination the uneducated, the elderly and paralysed and other who were weighed down by accusations concerning moral and other crimes of which they had been officially charged in the Holy Synod… We judge your act to be worse than the uncanonical act of Bishops Anthony and Callistus…” These words were probably aimed especially at Bishop Euthymius, as we shall see later…

Notwithstanding this fierce rebuke, the Auxentiite Synod made several approaches to Metropolitans Acacius and Chrysostom. But the latter resisted these blandishments, believing that their concerns for the cleansing of the Church had not been addressed. However, on January 28, 1980, the two metropolitans addressed a letter to Auxentius entitled “The Correct Road that will lead out of the Dead-End”, in which they suggested that ROCOR be asked to act as mediators between the “Callistites” and “Auxentiites”.

And they put forward a second suggestion in case this first one was rejected: “that all the bishops should abdicate. We shall all live private lives from now on… Three hieromonks known for their morality, decency and faith, preferably from Mount Athos, should be ordained as bishops to feed and administer the Church by those bishops who took no part in the coups. In this way all the divisions, personality struggles and counter-accusations will cease, and the troubled people of the True Orthodox Christians will be united… We personally, for the sake of the Church and the spiritual unity of the flock, will be the first to give our places over to the new spiritual leaders and live private lives. We pray that all the others will follow us…”[[642]](#footnote-642)

It is a pity that neither of these suggestions was acted upon. Instead, on September 16, the Auxentiite Synod removed Metropolitan Chrysostom from his see in Thessalonica and on October 23 raised Bishop Euthymius to the rank of metropolitan to take his place. However, the majority of the flock in Northern Greece continued to remain faithful to Metropolitan Chrysostom; and on November 23 tens of priests from Katerini to Messoropi to Sidirokastron left the Auxentiites and joined Metropolitan Chrysostom.

In 1981 the Auxentiite Synod removed the penalties it had imposed on Metropolitans Acacius and Chrysostom. Then, in the next year, it reimposed them. Then the Synod itself split, with one part remaining with Auxentius and the other following Metropolitan Gerontius of Piraeus. Bishop Macarius, who likes to dwell in detail on all the other divisions, passes this one over very hastily: “In the meantime a division broke out, the Lord alone knows for what reason He allowed it, in the canonical [according to Macarius: Auxentiite] Holy Synod. I don’t think it is necessary to spend any more time on this short division…”[[643]](#footnote-643)

However, this “short division” related to an issue that was to become increasingly important – that of the *legal corporations*. Now this issue was important because Churches as such are not registered in Greece with the single exception of the new calendarist State Church. So the only way any religious community can acquire legal status and some legal protection (apart from the general protection provided by freedom of worship) is through registering as an association, corporation or foundation.[[644]](#footnote-644)

Bishop Photius writes: “In the beginning, there existed the corporation ‘The General Fund of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece’, which had control of about 25 churches. It was under the control of the Auxentiite-Gerontians, who in the period 1971-1976 had removed from the board the four hierarchs – Acacius, Auxentius, Peter and Gabriel – who disagreed with them. In 1979, with the coup, the Auxentiite-Gerontians removed from the ‘General Fund’ all those who had taken part in the coup. Thus Callistus of Corinth, Anthony of Megara, Cyprian of Orope, Maximus of Magnesia, Callinicus of Achaia, Matthew of Oinoe, Germanus of Aiolia, Calliopius of Pentapolis, Mercurius of Knossus and Callinicus of the Twelve Islands were removed from the board of the ‘General Fund’ and founded the corporation ‘the Greek Church of the True Orthodox Christians’. More accurately: they were inscribed into an already existing corporation having the same name, which had been founded by Calliopius many years before.[[645]](#footnote-645)

“In June, 1983, the hierarchs Maximus of Magnesia (from now on ‘of Demetrias’) and Callinicus of the Twelve Islands left the Antonio-Callistites and joined the Auxentiites. They were received through cheirothesia (whose content must have been a simple prayer of forgiveness).[[646]](#footnote-646) The same happened later with Germanus of Aiolia. These three were removed from the corporation ‘The Greek Church of the True Orthodox Christians’. The Auxentiite-Gerontians did not inscribe them into the ‘General Fund’.

“In the same year a struggle broke out between the Auxentiites and Gerontius for control of the ‘General Fund’. Gerontius emerged as winner from the struggle.”[[647]](#footnote-647)

The Callistites also began to split up, over the old question whether the new calendarists had valid sacraments or not. As we have seen, in 1983 three metropolitans – Maximus, Germanus and Callinicus of the Twelve Islands – joined Auxentius. In 1984 four other metropolitans – Anthony, Callinicus of Achaia, Matthew and Calliopius – joined the Gerontians. Meanwhile, Metropolitan Cyprian was giving communion to new calendarists on the grounds that the new calendarist church was “not yet condemned” and therefore still the “Mother Church” of the Old Calendarists.[[648]](#footnote-648) And he rejected Metropolitan Callistus’ ecclesiology, saying that it was "without witness, unproven, anti-patristic, and hence un-Orthodox”.[[649]](#footnote-649) In other words, he regarded Callistus’ views to be heretical – even if he did not use the word “heretical” for diplomatic reasons. This disillusioned Metropolitan Callistus, who had always maintained the official view of the True Orthodox Church of Greece since 1935 that the new calendarists had no sacraments. So he retired to his monastery, where he died in isolation in 1986…[[650]](#footnote-650)

## 137. THE FOLLIES OF ARCHBISHOP AUXENTIUS

As we have seen, in 1978 Archbishop Auxentius took a member of ROCOR’s West European diocese, John Rosha, baptized him and ordained him as Bishop Gabriel of Lisbon. In June, 1984, he ordained a second Portuguese bishop, James, without the knowledge of part of his Synod. “Auxentius had promised his clergy that he would call them and listen to their opinions before any episcopal ordination. Therefore, in order to bring about this ordination, he summoned a few of them (those whom he wanted) and decided, in spite of the reasonable objections of two or three clerics, that Hieromonk James should be elected as assistant bishop to Bishop Gabriel of Lisbon.”[[651]](#footnote-651)

Not content with this uncanonicity, Auxentius proceeded to another. “Both Auxentius and Gabriel had promised before God, the hierarchs and the priests present at that time that James would remain as Gabriel’s assistant, so that he would not be able to take part in the ordination of another bishop with Gabriel. However, in October, 1984, we were informed to our astonishment that the two Portuguese ‘bishops’ had ordained yet another Portuguese bishop and two Italians, with the blessings and prayers of Auxentius,”[[652]](#footnote-652) and the participation of Metropolitans Gerasimus, Maximus, Germanus and Athanasius of Larissa. One of the new bishops, the Italian Gabriel of Aquileia, turned out to be a fervent supporter, if not worshipper, of the fascist dictator Mussolini![[653]](#footnote-653)

Moreover, Auxentius – acting *completely on his own* this time, now gave this new group a “Tome of Autonomy”![[654]](#footnote-654)

In 1987 this newly “autonomous” Church split up, with the Metropolitan Eulogius of Milan being received into the Polish Orthodox Church.[[655]](#footnote-655)

In 1990 Metropolitan Gabriel followed, claiming that he had not known that Auxentius confessed that the new calendarists had no grace, which, he said, was a “heretical opinion”. He took with him two bishops, 60 parishes and about 80,000 laity. Soon this Portuguese church was practising a particularly strange form of ecumenism.[[656]](#footnote-656)

After Gabriel’s death, Bishop Joao was elected metropolitan and confirmed by the Polish Synod. Subsequently, the Polish Church, alarmed by the eccentric practices of the Portuguese diocese, excised it from their communion.[[657]](#footnote-657)

In 1993 the “Synod of Milan” joined the “Patriarchate of Kiev” led by the KGB agent Philaret Denisenko, and was given yet another “Tome of Autonomy” by them…[[658]](#footnote-658)

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By this time the Greek True Orthodox Church was disintegrating so fast that the Auxentiite and Gerontian Synods (which now included most of the defunct Callistite Synod) decided to cast aside their differences and unite. And so on January 4/17, 1985, they came together and agreed: (1) to recognise the ordinations of 1979 on both sides, (2) to remove the penalties they had placed on each other, and (3) remove the accusations they had cast against each other. The reunited Synod of 17 bishops comprised: Archbishop Auxentius and Metropolitans Gerontius of Piraeus, Callinicus of Phthiotis, Anthony of Megara, Maximus of Demetrias, Callinicus of Corinth, Matthew of Oinoe, Germanus of Aitolia, Calliopius of Pentapolis, Callinicus of the Dodecanese, Euthymius of Thessalonica, Athanasius of Larissa, Stephen of Chios, Maximus of Cephalonia, Athanasius of Acharnae, Gerasimus of Thebes and Justin of Euripus.[[659]](#footnote-659)

It should be noted that the original “rebels” against the Auxentiite Synod, Metropolitans Acacius, Chrysostom, Gabriel and Peter, still refrained from joining this union, fearing that it simply covered up crimes, and would soon disintegrate. They were soon to be proved right…

More surprising, even Bishop Macarius criticises the union, saying: “Immeasurable grief takes hold of my heart”. Why? Because the recognition of the ordinations on both sides meant that the small group of formerly Callistite bishops whom he blames for subsequent events – especially Callinicus of Achaia and Calliopius of Pentapolis – and who had not, unlike the other penitent Callistite bishops, received cheirothesia from Auxentius, were not forced to repent of having been schismatics and receive cheirothesia.

But Bishop Macarius fails to see that if, as he believes, Auxentius was essentially blameless and all those who broke communion from him thereby became schismatics, then the group of Gerontian bishops to which he belonged (and belongs) – Callinicus of Phthiotis and Euthymius of Thessalonica – *also became schismatics* when they broke away from Auxentius in 1983, *and should also have received cheirothesia*. In fact, it could be argued that insofar as the Gerontians broke away from Auxentius over the question of who controlled certain church buildings – in other words, over “filthy lucre” (I Peter 5.2), their motivation was worse than that of the Callistites, and they deserved a more severe penalty. So, as the English proverb goes: “Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones…”

In the opinion of the present writer, however, *all* sides - Callistites, Auxentiites and Gerontians – were guilty in different ways and to different degrees, and so union between them was possible without hypocrisy only on the basis of mutual forgiveness of sins, recognition of orders and removal of all bans. Or if, as Bishop Macarius asserts, this was impossible on canonical grounds, then the only solution was for all 17 bishops to retire…

In any case, the union collapsed when it emerged that Auxentius had secretly ordained Dorotheus Tsakos, a former new calendarist priest who had been defrocked by the new calendarists in 1968 for homosexuality. Tsakos had then twice been ordained “metropolitan” by Old Calendarist episcopi vagantes. In July, 1985 he began to show priests an ordination certificate purporting to prove that he had been ordained “Metropolitan of Sparta and all the Peloponnese”. The priests were troubled to see that the signatures of Archbishop Auxentius and Metropolitan Gerasimus of Thebes were on this document. Tsakos claimed that he had been ordained by Metropolitans Gerasimus of Thebes and Maximus of Cephalonia on the orders of Archbishop Auxentius; but he refused to reveal (by covering the relevant part of the ordination certificate with his hand) on what date the ordination had taken place.

On July 6/19, 1985, at a meeting of the Holy Synod, the three metropolitans involved denied that the ordination had taken place. Auxentius admitted that his signature might be genuine because he did sometimes sign blank ordination certificates to be filled in later (a revealing confession in itself!). But he denied – and always continued to deny – that he knew anything at all about the ordination of Tsakos. However, immediately after this meeting of the Synod, Gerasimus of Thebes confessed that the ordination had taken place as Tsakos had stated, and signed a written affidavit to that effect in the presence of eight other bishops.

Fr. Basil of Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, tried to minimise the significance of this confession by pointing out that Gerasimus twice confessed that he had participated in the ordination and twice denied it. Moreover, Gerasimus and the other witnesses were inconsistent in the date they ascribe to the event. Therefore, wrote Fr. Basil, “what is the value of such depositions, made by false witnesses who contradict and refute themselves?… Which one of all these written depositions says the truth? When did the ordination take place? In 1983? In 1984? In 1985? We admit that we see no possibility of finding any clue.”[[660]](#footnote-660) “What is the validity of such depositions, made by witnesses who contradict and refute themselves?”[[661]](#footnote-661)

However, is it not usual for a criminal caught red-handed in a criminal act to lie and then to change his testimony when his lie is exposed? In any case, why should Gerasimus have admitted to the crime even once if he was innocent? Moreover, there were other eyewitness testimonies confirming Gerasimus’ guilt. One of these was the Reader Pericles Tsakiris, whom the translator of Fr. Basil’s letter rather furtively and obliquely sought to blacken in a footnote.

As a result of their inquiries the committee came to the following conclusions, which any unprejudiced observer must agree with: (a) the ordination of Dorotheus Tsakos did take place, at the hands of Metropolitans Maximus and Gerasimus, and on the orders of Archbishop Auxentius; (b) the date was probably after Pascha, 1985 (in his last deposition, in January, 1986, he confirmed under oath that the ordination had taken place on July 5, 1985); and (c) the participants in the event, having been sworn to secrecy by Auxentius, lied to the Holy Synod and for fairly obvious reasons tried to obscure the date of the event.

Fr. Basil went on to claim that before the investigative committee could complete its work, the seventeen bishops who eventually defrocked Auxentius had created a schism. Therefore, he said, even if the ordination did take place, it is not Auxentius but his accusers who are the guilty ones!

This was *the exact opposite of the truth!* The fact of the matter was that in September, while the investigating committee was still carrying out its work and interrogating witnesses (as far as they could, for Auxentius and Maximus refused to cooperate in any way), a group of Auxentiite bishops decided to declare the affair of Dorotheus Tsakos “closed”, regarding “every attempt to revive it as anticanonical and an attack on the Church”. They also declared that the invitation to the metropolitans to give evidence to the investigating committee the next day was “anticanonical”, “parasynagogical” and “counter to the will of the Holy Synod” - although the Holy Synod had appointed the investigating committee only two months before!

It is interesting to note which bishops signed this astonishing attempt to silence the work of the investigating committee: the oath-breaking and Mussolini-loving Portuguese and Italians Gabriel, James, Eulogius, Theodore and Gregory, *who were not even members of the Holy Synod*; Auxentius, Athanasius, Maximus and Germanus, *who had participated in the uncanonical ordinations of the Portuguese and Italians and* (in the cases of Auxentius and Maximus) *Tsakos;* and the Americans Paisius and Vincent, who had been closely associated with Auxentius in the early 1980s (for example, in the Auxentiite union with the Free Serbs in 1982) and later joined the new calendarists. In other words, these bishops who were now trying to stop the work of the investigating committee were in essence the same group of bishops who had been associates of Auxentius before the union of January, 1985, and had caused such damage to the Church before that date.

In spite of this provocation, the investigating bishops patiently continued their work. They invited Auxentius to appear before the Synod three times, but he refused. Then Auxentius, anticipating the announcement of his deposition, formed an “anti-Synod” and called on the president of the Synodical Court, Metropolitan Gerontius, to appear before a five-member pseudo-Synod to answer a false charge of having married two persons of the same sex in 1981! Gerontius convincingly refuted this charge (which has never, to our knowledge, been brought up again). Finally, on October 22, Auxentius, Maximus, Gerasimus, Athanasius and Germanus were deposed for “consecrating” Tsakos, for lying to the Synod and for creating a schism.[[662]](#footnote-662)

Even Archbishop Macarius admitted that Auxentius’s actions in this period were indefensible, but characteristically chose not to go into detail on a matter that clearly embarrassed him, writing that Auxentius and the bishops that still remained loyal to him “undertook a series of hurried and uncanonical defrockings of many of our hierarchs.”[[663]](#footnote-663)

He was reticent because one of the hierarchs defrocked by Auxentius was Macarius’ fellow-worker, Metropolitan Euthymius of Thessalonica, whom Auxentius accused of initiating his trial and deposition in order to avoid investigation of moral charges against himself: “while an order was given that a judicial examination should be put into operation in order to elucidate the accusations against the moral situation of Metropolitan Euthymius Orphanos, they turned round and incompetently initiated an examination against us to see whether we had indeed proceeded to nominate and consecrate Archimandrite Dorotheus Tsakos as Metropolitan of Patras…”

Auxentius defrocked Euthymius on October 31, 1985 (№ 2137/18) for “factionalism, conspiracy and rebellion”. Also defrocked was his elder, Iakovos Papadelis, “on the basis of accusations of moral falls against him by Athonites”.[[664]](#footnote-664)

And yet in spite of this Archbishop Macarius vehemently rejected the validity of Auxentius’ defrocking by – among others – his own party of Gerontius, Callinicus and Euthymius! And some years later, in 1997, his Synod (headed at that time by Callinicus of Phthiotis and now, in 2005, by Macarius himself) declared that “the altercations during the year 1985 between the blessedly reposed hierarchs Auxentius and Gerontius arose from the plots of third parties and… the verdicts of both are uncanonical and invalid… It is understood that we recognize and also bless all the priestly services and other sacred ecclesiastical actions of the aforementioned Archbishop and Metropolitans, except the ordinations which they performed after 1985 to the present, which we reserve the right to examine upon the petition of the ordinands.”[[665]](#footnote-665)

However, this made no sense. If, as Archbishop Macarius asserted time and time again, Auxentius was the last true archbishop of the True Orthodox Christians (before himself), and he remained true throughout the stormy period 1979-1985, and his defrocking in 1985 was uncanonical, then he (Macarius) condemned himself and his own party on at least three counts: (1) for breaking with Auxentius over the issue of the legal corporation in 1983, (2) for unjustly defrocking Auxentius for the ordination of Tsakos, and (3) for remaining in communion with Euthymius after Auxentius defrocked him and his elder. But Macarius wishes to exonerate *both* Auxentius (although he admits that his actions in 1985 were wrong) *and* himself and his party – while laying all the blame on mysterious “plots of third parties”.

Auxentius’ defenders sought to demonstrate that Orthodox Christians are not allowed to break communion with their lawful ecclesiastical authority unless that authority has proclaimed heresy, and even if that authority has committed flagrant crimes. This is true – so long as the possibility of bringing the sinning archbishop to trial exists. But Fr. Basil appeared to reject the possibility that metropolitans can bring their archbishop to trial for any other charge than heresy. In this opinion he was mistaken. There have been many occasions in Church history when archbishops have been defrocked by their fellow bishops in accordance with the Holy Canons for transgressions other than heresy. If such were not the case, then as long as the archbishop did not proclaim heresy he could commit murder and adultery and remain first-hierarch of the Church – which is halfway to Papism…

In March, 2014, when the True Orthodox Church of Greece under Archbishop Kallinikos entered into a union with the Cyprianites, they removed all bans on Archbishop Auxentius. However, none of his episcopal ordinations were accepted as valid…[[666]](#footnote-666)

## 138. A NEW FLORINITE ARCHBISHOP

In November, 1985, Metropolitan Gerontius approached Metropolitan Chrysostom and invited him to the join the Synod that had been purged of Auxentius and his supporters. Chrysostom replied in a conciliatory manner, thanked Gerontius “for your recognition of the righteousness of our (four bishops’) break of relations with the Synod”, but insisted on the fulfilment of two conditions before he could join: “the removal of Bishop Euthymius from my diocese” and the seeking of the written opinion of theologians on the degree to which “economy” (condescension) could be employed with regard to the earlier canonical questions that had not yet been resolved. This was necessary “in view of the extremely detailed deadlock into which our Holy Struggle has come…”

The opinions of six theologians (three priests and three laymen) were duly sought. They said that the four bishops – Acacius, Chrysostom, Gabriel and Peter – could join the Synod led by Gerontius provided that the new president of the Synod should not be any bishop who had been involved in the Callistite coup or Auxentiite counter-coup of 1979. This was an eminently reasonable condition, since all of the participants in the coup and counter-coup of 1979, not to mention the Gerontian schism of 1983, had besmirched their reputations, and would not have had the authority to unite the Church for long. The new archbishop could only come from one of the four bishops – Acacius, Chrysostom, Gabriel and Peter - who had taken no part in these events, but who had pointed out the need for a cleansing of the Church from the tares sown by Auxentius. This need was now, belatedly, recognised by all.

Of these four bishops, Metropolitan Peter, as living in America and as having rejected the encyclical of 1974, was clearly not a candidate. And he joined the Synod first. Thereby, it must be admitted, he created another problem for the new archbishop, whoever he might be, in that he would have to see that Metropolitan Peter conformed to the 1974 encyclical…[[667]](#footnote-667)

Finally, in January, 1986, Metropolitan Chrysostom joined, and was elected archbishop by ten votes to six. It will be remembered that Chrysostom had been elected as second candidate for the episcopate (after Acacius Pappas) as far back as the pan-clerical congress in April, 1957.[[668]](#footnote-668) So there was a certain historical justice in his being elected archbishop now, some thirty years later.

However, Bishop Macarius writes: “My conscience forces me to condemn the election of Chrysostom as archbishop as totally uncanonical because, first and foremost, it was made as a result of the uncanonical defrocking of the canonical Archbishop Auxentius, whose throne Chrysostom seized while the archbishop still alive, making him an adulterous free-rider…”

Macarius here fails to mention the rather important fact that Chrysostom took no part in the defrocking of Auxentius. That was done by Gerontius and his faction – that is, Bishop Macarius’ own faction! As for “seizing” the throne, what kind of “seizure” are we talking about when Chrysostom in no way imposed himself, but was first invited by Gerontius to join the Synod, and was then elected in a perfectly canonical election?! So if Chrysostom was an “adulterous free-rider”, the Gerontian bishops were those who prepared the bedchamber and even invited the lovers into it!

“Secondly,” continues Bishop Macarius, “during the proceedings of the election, there were present two Metropolitans of Thessalonica, Chrysostom and Euthymius, and both of them voted as such, something that is totally contrary to the Holy Canons.”[[669]](#footnote-669)

This is a more just accusation. Nevertheless, it may well be asked: whose fault was it that there were two metropolitans of Thessalonica? Chrysostom had been made metropolitan of the city much earlier than Euthymius, and the Gerontians, as Chrysostom noted, had recognised the justice of his struggle against corruption in the Church. Clearly, therefore, if one of the two metropolitans was an adulterer bishop, it was Euthymius!

The issue was the more serious in that the flock in Thessalonica was divided, with one part refusing to accept Euthymius because of his reputation – throughout Greece - as a homosexual. It was agreed that the dissident parishes in Thessalonica should be allowed to commemorate Chrysostom for one year while they got used to the idea that they were now in communion with Euthymius. However, when the year was over, they had still not got used to it, and refused to commemorate Euthymius. Clearly, the only solution to the problem was a canonical ecclesiastical trial of Euthymius.…

Almost immediately the problem of the legal corporations raised its head again. 8 hierarchs – Gerontius of Piraeus, Callinicus of Phthiotis, Euthymius of Thessalonica, Stephen of Chios, Athanasius of Acharnae, Justin of Euripus, Paisius of America and Vincent of Aulona (the last two joined a little later) – belonged to the board of the corporation “General Fund of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece”. 4 hierarchs – Anthony of Megara, Callinicus of Achaia, Matthew of Oinoe and Calliopius of Pentapolis – belonged to the board of the corporation “Greek Church of the True Orthodox Christians”.

The remaining 4 hierarchs – Archbishop Chrysostom, Peter of Astoria, Maximus of Magnesia and Callinicus of the Twelve Islands – did not belong to any board. Overtures towards a union of the two corporations were made by the board of the “Greek Church of the True Orthodox Christians” to the board of the “General Fund”. But these overtures were rejected.

The outlines of the schism of 1995 can already be discerned in these figures. Clearly, the faction headed by Gerontius, and including the notorious Euthymius, could control the Synod if it wanted, for it had half the votes in the Synod and control of many more churches than the others through the “General Fund”. Much would depend on how Metropolitan Gerontius used his power. And much would depend on how the other members of his faction would act when he died and they ceased to have the majority in the Synod. Metropolitan Gerontius died in 1994, on the eve of the schism…

## 139. THE ECCLESIOLOGY OF METROPOLITAN CYPRIAN

On January 20, 1984 an article appeared in the new calendarist newspaper *Orthodoxos Typos* criticizing Metropolitan Cyprian, the last heir of the Callistite coup d’état, and the only one who did not repent of it, for giving the sacraments to hundreds of new calendarists. In the February-March issue of his journal, *Agios Kyprianos,* Cyprian did not deny these charges but simply called them "purely personal attacks". In September, Cyprian was banned from serving by Metropolitan Anthony and the Synod to which he then belonged for entering into communion of prayer with Patriarch Nicholas of Alexandria the previous month. Cyprian rejected this act, and early in 1985 he formed a new “Synod of Resistors” with Metropolitan Giovanni (Bascio) of Sardinia, a former Capuchin monk who, after being in the MP and the Nestorian heresy, had been baptized and ordained by the Callistites in 1982.[[670]](#footnote-670)

Cyprian’s position was based on a new ecclesiology which is worth examining in some detail.Stavros Markou writes: “Bishop Cyprian justified his separation from the other Callistite hierarchs in 1985 by asserting that it was a matter of faith; that is, he taught that the new calendar State Church, though ailing, had not yet been condemned by a Church Council, and therefore still had full canonical status. He rested his argument on the 1937 private letter of Metropolitan Chrysostom while ignoring both the Encyclical of 1935, which had been issued by the entire hierarchy of the True Orthodox Christians, and Metropolitan Chrysostom’s later Encyclical of 1950, not to mention the encyclical of 1974, issued by Archbishop Auxentius’s Synod (to which authority the then Archimandrite Cyprian was subject). Bishop Cyprian has maintained that Metropolitan Cyprian’s 1950 encyclical was not a true expression of his confession, but made under duress and with the hope that it would appease the Matthewite bishops. Here, however, it should be noted that the Encyclical of 1950 expressed not merely the view of Metropolitan Chrysostom, but of the entire [Florinite] Synod…

“Furthermore, in making this claim concerning Metropolitan Chrysostom’s Encyclical of 1950, Bishop Cyprian ignores certain other elements. Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina had spoken his convictions in clear conscience and had maintained them with integrity. Nothing less could be expected from a man of his stature. Since he was a man of such stature, it is not entirely honest to dismiss so lightly the formal synodical and official Encyclical of 1950 in which Metropolitan Chrysostom repudiated and disavowed everything [sic!] said and written by him previously. In this encyclical, he affirmed that the new calendarists must be received by chrismation and that their mysteries are invalid…

“Bishop Cyprian also ignores the earlier encyclical of 1935. In addition, Metropolitan Callistus, one of the bishops who illegally consecrated Archimandrite Cyprian as a bishop, had always expressed the same view taken by the Matthewite bishops (i.e., that sacramental grace had departed from the State Church the instant it had changed the calendar in 1924).

“In connection with this, in his publication *Agios Kyprianos* (July, 1983, p. 210), Bishop Cyprian complained that Metropolitan Callistus, who consecrated him to the episcopate, ‘proceeded to publish and circulate a booklet entitled *Apologia* and an open letter entitled *Epistle of Confession*… without previous consultation with the other members of our Sacred Synod.’ Concerning these two publications of Metropolitan Callistus, Bishop Cyprian wrote that the views expressed therein are ‘without witness, unproven, anti-patristic and hence un-Orthodox’.

“Yet Metropolitan Callistus’s confession of faith was known to all, both young and old, and it never changed throughout the years. Neither was it a ‘personal’ matter, as Bishop Cyprian might have said, but rather was proclaimed publicly by Metropolitan Callistus, both in writing and from the ambo: there was – he said openly and consistently – no sanctifying grace in the new calendar State Church…”[[671]](#footnote-671)

Bishop Cyprian’s ecclesiology was expounded in his book, *Ecclesiological Theses.* “The Orthodox Church as a whole is unerring and invincible,” he writes. “It is possible, however, for Christians and for local Churches to fall in faith; that is to say, it is possible for them to suffer spiritually and for one to see a certain ‘siege of illness within the body of the Church’, as St. John Chrysostom says. It is possible for Christians to separate and for ‘divisions’ to appear within the Church, as the Apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians. It is possible for local Churches into fall into heresy, as occurred in the ancient Orthodox Church of the West, which fell into the heresies of Papism and Protestantism and finally into the panheresy of ecumenism.

“Spiritual maladies within the Church are cured either by repentance or by judgement. Until the judgement or expulsion of a heretic, schismatic, or sinner – either by the Church or, in a more direct manner, by the Lord -, the opinion of a believer cannot be a substitute for the sentence of the Church and of her Lord, Jesus Christ, even if the resolution of a situation be prolonged until the Second Coming. As is well known, in the Scriptures, the Church is likened to a field replete with ‘wheat’ and ‘tares’, in accordance with Divine and ecclesiastical economy. Sinners and those who err in correctly understanding the Faith, yet who have not been sentenced by ecclesiastical action, are simply considered ailing members of the Church. The Mysteries [sacraments] of these unsentenced members are valid as such, according to the Seventh Ecumenical Council, as, for example, the President of the Synod, St. Tarasios, remarks: ‘[their] Ordination’ ‘is from God’. By contrast, should expositors of heresy punish the Orthodox opposed to them, these punishments are ecclesiastically invalid and groundless ‘from the time their preaching began’ (i.e., from the moment they began preaching heresy), as St. Celestine of Rome wrote and as the Third Ecumenical Synod agreed.”[[672]](#footnote-672)

When a bishop preaches heresy “publicly” “and bareheaded in the Church”, continues the metropolitan, the Orthodox Christians should immediately separate themselves from him, in accordance with the 31st Apostolic Canon and the 15th Canon of the First-and-Second Synod of Constantinople. Such action by the Orthodox does not introduce schism, but rather serves to protect the Church from schisms and divisions. “He who preaches heresy or he who brings innovation into the Church divides her and abrogates her oneness or unity. He who opposes the preaching of heresy, or who separates himself from it, is eager to save the oneness or unity of the Church. The aim of opposition and separation is the combatting of heresy, the defense of the Orthodox Faith, and the preservation of the unity of the Orthodox Church, indeed of Orthodoxy itself.”[[673]](#footnote-673)

So far so good. However, at this point, as he turns to apply these principles to the heresy of ecumenism and its forerunner, the innovation of the new calendar, the metropolitan makes some distinctly controversial statements. “With regard to the innovation in the festal calendar, Orthodox are divided into two parts: into those who are ailing in Faith and those who are healthy, into innovators and opposers – into followers of innovation, whether in knowledge or in ignorance, and those opposed to it, who have separated themselves from heresy, in favor of Orthodoxy. The latter are strugglers for oneness among the ‘divided’, as the Seventh Ecumenical Synod calls those who so separated for the Orthodox unity of the Church. The followers of the festal calendar innovation have not yet been specifically judged in a Pan-Orthodox fashion, as provided for by the Orthodox Church. As St. Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain writes, the violator of established precepts is considered sentenced, insofar as he is judged by ‘the second entity (which is the council or synod).’ Since 1924, the innovators have been awaiting judgement and shall be judged on the basis of the decisions of the holy Synods, both Oecumenical and local, and, to be sure, on the basis of the ecclesiastical pronouncements of the sixteenth century against what were then Papal proposals for changes in the festal calendar. In this respect, those who have walled themselves off from the innovators have actually broken communion ‘before [a] conciliar or synodal verdict,’ as is allowed in the Fifteenth Canon of the First-and-Second Synod. That is to say, the innovators are still unsentenced. Consequently, their Mysteries are valid…”[[674]](#footnote-674)

“Every innovationist member of the divided Greek Church is capable of changing over to opposition against the Ecumenist innovation. This can be accomplished through repentance… A return to Orthodoxy can also take place through a formal renunciation of heresy… Therefore, the Orthodox Tradition of the Holy Oecumenical Synods and of the Holy Fathers of the Orthodox Church prescribes that that part of the divided Greek Church that is ailing in Faith be received by one of the foregoing means of repentance and returned to the ranks of Orthodoxy. For they are not condemned schismatic or heretical Christians, but members of the Church who have not yet been brought to trial.”[[675]](#footnote-675)

It is not true that the innovators were “still unsentenced”. In May, 1935, all the Old Calendar Metropolitans of the Church of Greece came together and synodically condemned the new calendarists as schismatics without the grace of sacraments. Concerning the implications of this declaration with regard to the question of grace, the metropolitans made themselves crystal clear in an encyclical issued on June 8/21, 1935: “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 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.’”[[676]](#footnote-676)

Now some have argued that this conciliar decision was later rejected by the leader of the Greek Old Calendarists, Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina, and that it therefore represents only an “extremist”, “Matthewite” position. However, the doctrine that schismatics have no grace is not a specifically “Matthewite” position, but is based on many canons and patristic sayings, notably the First Canonical Epistle of St. Basil the Great. In fact, as Bishop Ephraim of Boston points out, the new calendarists and the Moscow Patriarchate have adopted a distinctly “Matthewite” position in relation to the True Orthodox, declaring that they have no grace of sacraments – while at the same time declaring that the Western heretics do have grace![[677]](#footnote-677) In any case, it is not true that Metropolitan Chrysostom renounced the Council of 1935. From 1937 to 1950 he appeared to doubt it, introducing the notion (unknown in patristic literature, as Bishop Ephraim again correctly points out), of “potential schism”. But in 1950 he repented of these doubts and openly and unambiguously returned to the confession of 1935. Some have said that in private correspondence he claimed to have been pushed into making this confession by “extremists”, that he made it for the sake of unity and that it did not represent his true thinking. It seems extremely unlikely that such a great confessor could have dissembled in his confession of faith. But in any case, even if he had private doubts, it is his public confession that we must judge him by – and that, from 1950 to the end of his life, was thoroughly Orthodox.

Now Cyprian does not mention the Council of 1935, nor Nor Metropolitan Chrysostom’s encyclical of 1950, nor the Old Calendarist Council under the presidency of Archbishop Auxentius in 1974 (when Metropolitan Cyprian himself was under his omophorion), which explicitly declared that the new calendarist ecumenists had no grace of sacraments. The reason for these omissions cannot be that he does not know of their existence. The reason can only be – although he does not write this explicitly – that he rejects their validity, or at any rate the validity of their decisions in relation to the ecumenists. To understand why he does this, let us now turn to his theory of the Councils and their relationship to heretics.

Of central importance in Metropolitan Cyprian’s argument is his concept of the “Unifying Synod”, that is, a Synod that unites the heretics to Orthodoxy, such as the Seventh Ecumenical Council. By implication – although, again, he does not state this explicitly here – a Synod that simply condemns the heretics without uniting them to Orthodoxy (such as the decisions of the Greek Old Calendarist Councils of 1935 and 1974 against the new calendarists, or the 1983 anathema of the Russian Church Abroad against Ecumenism) is of less significance and is not in fact competent to expel heretics from the Church. Indeed, it is difficult to see, according to Metropolitan Cyprian’s theory, how or when any heretic has been expelled from the Church. For if, before the convening of a Unifying Synod, the heretics are not outside the Church but simply an ailing faction *within* the Church, and if a Unifying Synod does not expel heretics from the Church but simply unites the ailing and the healthy parts of the same Church in a closer union, there seems to be no mechanism for the expulsion of heretics *from* the Church altogether – in other words, there are no *Separating* or *Expelling* Synods. It would not be inconsistent with his theory to suppose that those heretics who refuse to be unified by the Unifying Synod are thereby expelled from the Church altogether; but this is not stated explicitly (at any rate, in the position paper under review), so heavy is the emphasis on the supposed fact that these Synods unified rather than expelled the heretics.

Metropolitan Cyprian develops his concept of a “Unifying Council” as follows: “During the reign of the iconoclastic innovation, for example, it was impossible for an Orthodox Synod of the entire Church to be convened. For this reason, such a Synod was convened when the iconoclastic heresy was no longer in power, that is, in 787, as the Seventh Oecumenical Synod of union. The same Seventh Oecumenical Synod writes through its Fathers that the Synod took place ‘so that we might change the discord of controversy into concord, that the dividing wall of enmity might be removed and that the original rulings of the Catholic [Orthodox] Church might be validated.’ That is, it was convened so that the differing factions of the Church, divided up to the time of the Synod – the Iconoclasts disagreeing with the Orthodox belief and the Orthodox opposed to the iconoclastic heresy -, might be united by means of an agreement within Orthodoxy.”

This is inaccurate both as regards the Ecumenical Councils in general and as regards the Seventh Council in particular. First, there were some Ecumenical Councils that took place without the participation of heretics – the Second and the Fifth. According to the reasoning of Metropolitan Cyprian, these must be considered not to be “Unifying” and therefore lacking in full validity! And yet there is no “more valid” Council in Orthodox history than the Seven Ecumenical Councils. Moreover, after several of the Ecumenical Councils many of the heretics were not only not “united”, but remained in bitter enmity to the Orthodox Church. Thus there were many Arians after the First Council, many Nestorians after the Third and many Monophysites after the Fourth – in fact, all three heresies are very numerous to the present day. Even the Seventh Council was only temporarily “unifying”, since the iconoclastic heresy broke out again some years later. Thus according to the reasoning of Metropolitan Cyprian, we must eliminate the First, Third and Fourth Ecumenical Councils from the category of “Unifying Council”.

Secondly, even those Councils which took place with the participation of heretics did not receive them until they had renounced their heresies. They made it quite clear that the heretics were *outside* the Church until such a renunciation. However, if, as Metropolitan Cyprian asserts, heretics cannot be considered to be outside the Church until they have been condemned at a “Unifying Council” in which they themselves participated, then not only were the Arians, Nestorians, Monophysites and others still “members of the Church weak in faith” until the Unifying Councils that condemned them, but, as Hieromonk (now Bishop) Nectarius (Yashunsky) pointed out, “we shall have to recognize the Roman Catholics and Protestants as ‘as yet uncondemned members of the Church’, because since the time of their separation there has not been (and until ‘their union in Orthodoxy’ there cannot be) a Council of the united (undivided Universal Church) in common with them!”[[678]](#footnote-678)

“As far as the Seventh Council is concerned,” continues Hieromonk Nectarius, “not only did it not consider the iconoclasts to be a part of the Church, but they themselves did not pretend to be such.” In support of this statement, Fr. Nectarius quotes from the Acts of the Seventh Ecumenical Council. “These are the words of the uniting iconoclasts. Thus Basil, bishop of Ancyra, said: ‘As far as I was able, I investigated the question of the icons and converted to the Holy Catholic Church with complete conviction.’ Theodore, bishop of Myra, said: ‘... I beseech God and your holiness to unite me, the sinful one, to the Holy Catholic Church.’ (pp. 41, 43 in the edition of the Kazan Theological Academy). ”

And here are the witnesses of the holy Fathers of the Council: “His Holiness Patriarch Tarasius said: 'What is now to be our relationship to this heresy that has again arisen in our time?' John, the most beloved of God, locum tenens of the apostolic throne in the east, said: 'Heresy divides every man from the Church.' The Holy Council said: 'That is evident.' The Holy Council said: 'Let the bishops who are standing before us read their renunciations, insofar *as they are now converting to the Catholic Church.*’“ (p. 48).

Thirdly, the exceptional importance of Ecumenical or “Unifying” Councils should not lead us to cast doubt on *local* Councils’ authority to expel heretics from the Church. Many of the heretics of the early centuries were first cast out of the Church by local Councils. For example, Arius was cast out by a local Council presided over by St. Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, in 321 and again in 323 (the First Ecumenical Council did not take place until 325). Again, local Councils convened at Rome condemned the Nestorians (under Pope St. Celestine), the Monothelites (under Pope St. Martin) and the Iconoclasts (under Pope Gregory III) – in each case *before* the convening of the Third, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils, which never disputed the validity of these local Councils, but rather *confirmed their decisions*.

Thus when the heretical bishop Theodosius in conversation with St. Maximus the Confessor disputed the validity of the local Council under St. Martin that condemned the Monothelites on the grounds that it was not convened by an emperor, St. Maximus replied that the validity of a Council depended on its recognising “the true and immutable dogmas”, not on who convened it or how general it was. Again, when the same saint was asked in the Emperor’s palace why he was not in communion with the Throne of Constantinople, he replied: “… They have been deposed and deprived of the priesthood at the local council which took place recently in Rome. What Mysteries, then, can they perform? Or what spirit will descend upon those who are ordained by them?”[[679]](#footnote-679)

Again, Bishop Theophan the Recluse points out that before the beginning of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, its president-to-be, St. Tarasius, bewailed the fact that “we (the iconoclastic Church of Constantinople) are being anathematised by them (the other Local Churches in Local Councils) every day”.[[680]](#footnote-680)

If local Councils did not have the authority to expel heretics from the Church, we should have to condemn many local Councils for exceeding their competency and assuming an authority that did not belong to them. These would include many of the Councils of the Early Church, which expelled such heretics as Marcion and Sabellius; the local Councils of the Great Church of Constantinople between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries that expelled the Roman Catholics; and the Councils of the Russian Church presided over by Patriarch Tikhon that anathematized the communists and their co-workers in 1918 and the renovationist heretics in 1923. However, the Church, which has the mind of Christ, has accepted all of these acts as lawful and valid. To think otherwise is to suppose that for the last several hundred years the Church has – God forbid! - lost her God-given power to bind and to loose since the convening of the last Ecumenical or Pan-Orthodox Council![[681]](#footnote-681)

The danger to which the false Cyprianite ecclesiology exposes its followers can be seen from the behaviour of one of Cyprian’s bishops, Chrysostomos (Gonzales) of Etna, California. On July 18, 1986 he wrote an open letter to the new calendar Archbishop James (Koukouzis) in which he said that his synod had cut itself off from the rest of the Old Calendar Church because it believed that the new calendar church was the mother church. “We never denied the existence of the Grace in our Mother Church” – that is, the new calendar church. And then he went on to say: “We are not another Church over and above the Mother Church”. He congratulated James on “his many accomplishments” and hoped that there would one day figure among his “many accomplishments” “the bringing of your Orthodox brethren (Old Calendarists) together with you” (where?). And he ended his open letter by saying: “I the youngest and least among the traditionalist bishops in this country, ask your forgiveness for any involuntary offense and humbly kiss your right hand.”

Such treachery against the Old Calendarists could not go unpunished, and on November 5/18, 1986, Archbishop Chrysostom’s Synod proceeded to defrock Metropolitans Cyprian and “John of Sardinia, and those ordained by them, to wit: a) Chrysostomom Gonzales (Mexican), b) Niphon Gigoundou (Kenyan), c) Chrysostom Kouskoutsopoulos, d) Chrysostom Marlasis and three more, that is: one Swedish, one Italian and one Austrian of whom their identities are unknown to us, all of whom compose the innovative "Holy Synod of Resistance”. The Cyprianites were deposed for creating a schism, for giving communion to new calendarists (“because he without discernment gives the Holy Mysteries of our Church to modernizing, schismatic and ecumenist new calendarists”) and for preaching that the new calendarists have grace of sacraments (“because he has fallen from the Orthodox faith… and embraced ecumenist false beliefs, namely, that the schismatic new-calendarists make up the unaltered One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church., which is the treasury of saving grace”).[[682]](#footnote-682) The judgement was signed by Archbishop Chrysostomos and Metropolitans Gerontius, Callinicus (of Thaumakou), Anthony (of Attica and Megara), Maximus (of Demetrias and Magnesia), Callinicus (of Achaia), Matthew (of Oinoe), Calliopius (of Pentapolis), Callinicus (of the Dodecanese), Euthymius (of Thessalonica), Stephanos (of Chios), Athanasius (of Acharnae) and Justin (of Euboea).

The judgement points out that in September, 1984, after Cyprian had prayed with the ecumenist Patriarch Nicholas he had been summoned to give an account of himself, but had not appeared. Then, on September 19, he had been banned from serving for 40 days, but had continued to serve. Finally, on April 5, 1985 Cyprian and Giovanni of Sardinia had formed their own Synod and separated from the GOC Synod.

The Cyprianites contested the decision on procedural grounds, in that they had not been given notification of the trial[[683]](#footnote-683), on factual grounds, in that they had not concelebrated with Patriarch Nicholas[[684]](#footnote-684), and on canonical grounds, in that they could not be judged by the Chrysostomites anyway since they had never formed part of their Synod.

This latter defence was very weak: the “Florinite” bishops as a whole formed a single group, in spite of schisms. If Florinites could not judge Florinites, then who – the new calendarists?! More serious was the criticism that if Cyprian was defrocked for giving communion to new calendarists, why not Peter of Astoria also, since he also gave communion to new calendarists, considering them to be Orthodox? The problem became especially acute when, in May, 1994, Archimandrite Paul Stratigeas, Peter’s nephew and chancellor of the diocese of Astoria, admitted in an interview to the New York *National Herald*: “I provide the Mysteries to the followers of the new calendar.” However, Archimandrite Paul sincerely repented, and later, as Metropolitan of Astoria in succession to Peter, decreed that new calendarists who came to church seeking communion must first have confession, and then, during confession, be instructed that they must repent of the heresies of the new calendarists and receive Chrismation.

In 1997 Archpriest Lev Lebedev had a debate with the Cyprianites, which, he wrote, “concerned a very important matter. The Synod of the Resisters of Metropolitan Cyprian has officially declared that the ecumenist churches are also grace-filled and the sacraments there valid. I understood (in the debate) better and deeper *what* they wanted to say. And they to a large extent took in my criticism. Vladyka Cyprian referred in particular to the opinion of our Hieromartyr Cyril of Kazan, and affirmed that the sacraments are valid, but are *to the condemnation* of the conscious ecumenists, but are saving for the simple, ignorant people. But I said that insofar as, in this way, the grace of God works *differently* in the ecumenist churches from in the Orthodox who reject heresy, the Synod of Resisters *must not and cannot* make *official* declarations, neither about the presence of grace nor about the lack of grace in these churches. It is sufficient that he on principle has no Eucharistic communion with them and reproaches ecumenism as a heresy. Otherwise, the result is a great temptation for the Orthodox (especially in Russia) and a whole series of theoretical theological misunderstandings. The debate is not over. But I am prepared to ascribe the mistake of the Synod of Cyprian to the realm of ‘personal theological opinions’, which does not destroy my unity with them, since on the whole Cyprian himself and all his bishops and monks are undoubtedly people who think and live in a very Orthodox way!”[[685]](#footnote-685)

Metropolitans Cyprian and John “proceeded to consecrate new bishops for their self-styled ‘Synod of Those in Resistance’. Unfortunately, many of the newly-consecrated bishops for the Cyprianite Synod were of similar ill-repute as their consecrators. Among the first Cyprianite bishops to be consecrated were Chrysostom (Mariasis) of Christianoupolis, Ambrose (Baird) of Methone, Michael (Pirenta) of Nora, and Symeon (Minihofer) of Lampsacus. This latter bishop, among others, has a very interesting history. Born Helmut Clemens Kyrillus Symeon Minihofer-Windisch, he was ordained and consecrated by bishops of the so-called ‘American Orthodox Catholic Church’ – a Roman Catholic organization of Brazilian origin, in schism from the Vatican. In 1978, he was elected as ‘Patriarch’ Cyril of the ‘American Orthodox Catholic Church’, though he resided in Switzerland. ‘Patriarch’ Cyril resigned from his position in 1985, and was accepted into the ‘Synod of Those in Resistance’ under Bishop Cyprian, who installed him as Symeon, the titular bishop of Lampsacus.

“At some point during this time, a certain Bishop Eulogius of Milan (formerly of the ‘Lisbonite’ schism) was accepted into the ‘Synod of Those in Resistance’, in which he assisted Bishop Cyprian in performing more consecrations. Among the new bishops consecrated were Chrysostom (Gonzales) of Etna, Niphon (Kigundu) of Uganda, Auxentius (Chapman) of Photike, Photius (Siromachov) of Triaditsa, and Chrysostom (Alemangos) of Sydney. Unfortunately, all of these bishops have the same typical defects as their consecrators: they are either unacceptable on canonical grounds or confess an ecclesiology that is contrary to the teachings of the Orthodox Church.”[[686]](#footnote-686)

The Cyprianites continued to go their own way supported only by the Romanian and Bulgarian Old Calendarists and (from 1994 until the early 2000s) ROCOR. However, ROCOR’s Bishop Gregory Grabbe criticised ROCOR’s union with Cyprian, writing: “It is strange to hear from a bishop who affirms his Orthodoxy the thought that the Church can ‘be divided’. The Holy Fathers taught that it always was, is and will be the one Bride of Christ.” In general Bishop Gregory considered that Cyprian “and his episcopate confesses their own, and *by no means Orthodox* teaching on the possibility of the grace-filled action of the Holy Spirit in churches that have clearly become heretical”. And recalling ROCOR’s 1983 anathema against the branch theory of the Church, Bishop Gregory concluded: “In truth, not having looked into the matter seriously and forgetting about this anathematization which was affirmed earlier, our Council, however terrible it may be to acknowledge it, *has fallen under its own anathema.*”[[687]](#footnote-687)

Metropolitan Cyprian died in 2013 without having repented of his heretical ecclesiology. In March, 2014, however, the Greek TOC under Archbishop Kallinikos entered into union with the Cyprianites, and all bans on “blessed” (makaristos) Cyprian were removed. All the ordinations of the Cyprianite Synod were also accepted, including – fatefully for the True Orthodox Church of Russia – the uncanonical hierarchy which they created with the apostate from Russian True Orthodoxy, Bishop Agathangel of Odessa…[[688]](#footnote-688)

By 1992 the Romanians had two million believers, four bishops, eighty parishes, nine large monasteries and many smaller ones, making them by far the largest True Orthodox jurisdiction in the world. Moreover, in their leader, Metropolitan Glycherius, who died on June 15/28, 1985, they have one of the most saintly figures in twentieth-century Church history. In 1997, in response to numerous visions, his relics were uncovered and found “to be dissolved to bones, but full of fragrance”.[[689]](#footnote-689)

However, the Romanians always had a stricter ecclesiology than the Cyprianites, chrismating new calendarists. So the question arises: why did they remain in communion with Cyprian and not with the other Greek Old Calendarists, to whom they were closer in terms of ecclesiology? The answer seems to have been that when the Callistite hierarchs made contact with the Romanians in the late 1970s, it was Cyprian who gave them help at a time of communist oppression. And for this they continued to be grateful.[[690]](#footnote-690)

## 140. BOSTON SEPARATES

Metropolitans Acacius of Diauleia and Gabriel of the Cyclades had refrained from joining the Synod under Archbishop Chrysostom, and in a publication entitled *An End to Silence* (1986) they fiercely criticised their former colleague’s agreement to become archbishop.

In retrospect, and in view of the collapse of the Synod again in 1995, it must be admitted that there was some justice in their criticism. The problems in the dioceses of Thessalonica and Astoria had not been resolved, and would not be resolved in the period 1985-1995. On the other hand, it could be argued that *someone* had to lead the remnants of the former Auxentiite Synod, and such a leader had to come from one of Metropolitans Acacius, Gabriel and Chrysostom, who alone had not participated in the sins of that Synod.

And it was now the turn of Metropolitans Acacius and Gabriel to make a mistake, when, early in 1987, they received under their omophorion 40 mainly Greek-American parishes led by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston.

When Metropolitan Philaret died on November 21, 1985, the Boston monastery immediately expressed its support for his successor, Metropolitan Vitaly (Ustinov), Thus on February 10, Archimandrite Panteleimon wrote: "The Synodal Church is a real standard of Orthodoxy.... Therefore, discerning where the Truth is found, we remain in unity under our bishops in the midst of many trials and temptations...because grace abides in the Synod.... We uphold our Synod primarily and foremostly as a standard of Orthodoxy. All others have betrayed the Truth. This was demonstrated of late by the election of our new Metropolitan.”[[691]](#footnote-691)

However, the same council which elected Metropolitan Vitaly also, writes Fr. Alexey Young, “appointed a special commission of two bishops to visit the Boston monastery and begin a private investigation into charges of sexual perversion. The commission presented its report at a meeting of the Synod on May 29, 1986, receiving testimony in person from four monks who had left the Holy Transfiguration Monastery. Fr. Panteleimon was present and denied the charges, but asked to be relieved of his position as abbot. The bishops granted his request, placing the monastery temporarily under Archbishop Anthony (Sinkevich) of Los Angeles and Southern California. The monks at the monastery in Boston, however, ignored this and elected one of their own – another monk who had also been charged with immorality – as abbot.

“For the next several months, information and testimony continued to be gathered, with no predetermination of Panteleimon’s guilt or innocence. Looking back, the bishops may well feel that they should have hastened the investigation, for, during this period of time, an unprecedented explosion of protest erupted from the supporters of Fr. Panteleimon. The bishops were bombarded by hundreds of letters, petitions, phone calls, and personal visits – all of them protesting their ‘Elder’s’ innocence and the unfair, even ‘un-American’ way in which they believed his case was being handled.[[692]](#footnote-692)

“Simultaneously, Fr. Panteleimon began to make public his own list of grievances, announcing that the bishops were, practically speaking, abandoning the Anathema against Ecumenism and beginning to compromise the Faith. Secret plans and negotiations, he charged, were being worked out with the Moscow Patriarchate so that the Church Abroad could unite with the Mother Church by 1988 (the millennium of the Baptism of Russia). According to Panteleimon, this meant that the hierarchs had become, or were in the process of becoming, *heresiarchs*, and that the faithful had better look to their souls! This was a complete reversal of his published views of only months before.

“On November 25, 1986, Metropolitan Vitaly was asked by the Synod of Bishops to suspend Fr. Panteleimon and the abbot [Isaac] who had been uncanonically elected to succeed him, pending a canonical trial.[[693]](#footnote-693) This was done on December 3; nine days later, Vitaly received a letter announcing that the monastery in Boston had left the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia and was taking refuge under an unnamed Greek Old Calendar bishop.[[694]](#footnote-694) Synod headquarters immediately declared this action to be ‘… a flagrant violation of the holy canons of the Church and… an attempt to avoid the consequences of any final decision a spiritual court might have made concerning the accusations [of immorality]… [This is an attempt] to flee from the spiritual authority of the Church’s hierarchy…’”[[695]](#footnote-695)

In their defence, the Bostonites declared that they were fleeing the ecumenism of ROCOR, its relapse into its former lax ways in relation to the “World Orthodox” only a year after the anathema against ecumenism…

This anathema, as we have seen, was signed by all the ROCOR bishops and was entered into the Synodicon to be read on the Sunday of Orthodoxy each year. This was the achievement, within the Synod, especially of Metropolitan Philaret, the righteousness of whose stand against ecumenism and the MP was revealed on November 8/21, 1998, when his body was found to be incorrupt.[[696]](#footnote-696) However, he found very little support among his fellow-bishops, and was only rarely able to impose his will, especially on the West European diocese under Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, from which several priests and parishes fled in the 1970s. Even with the more conservative hierarchs he sometimes had problems. Thus he once ordered the sprinkling with holy water of the church in the Monastery of the Holy Trinity, Jordanville, after Archbishop Averky had permitted Copts to serve there.[[697]](#footnote-697)

After Metropolitan Philaret’s death, a certain weakening in the confession of ROCOR *was* discernible, even if the contrast between the period before and after the metropolitan’s death was not as sharp as the Bostonites made it out to be. Thus early in 1986 Archbishop Anthony of Geneva blessed the French Mission of ROCOR under Archimandrite Ambroise (Frontier) to concelebrate with the new calendarists when they were in Greece, but not with the Old Calendarists. They considered this to be contrary to the 1983 anathema and wrote to him: “In sending your clergy to concelebrate with the ecumenists or new calendarists, you place them under this anathema, which is a grave error… When you say that your clergy who desire to concelebrate with the ecumenists or new calendarists must, beforehand, ask for your blessing, you remind (us) of a father of a family, who would permit his children who would wish to throw themselves into the fire, to do so.”[[698]](#footnote-698)

Again, in October, 1986, at a clergy conference of the Midwest Diocese, Bishop Alypius of Cleveland, standing next to the icon of the Mother of God of Kursk, declared that “in spite of all the difficulties occurring throughout world-wide Orthodoxy, our Synod of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad does not judge any other jurisdiction as being without grace or in heresy.”[[699]](#footnote-699)

Still more seriously, at Christmas, 1984, Archbishop Vitaly issued an Epistle declaring that the 1983 anathema was *not* of universal significance, but applied only to ecumenist members of ROCOR.[[700]](#footnote-700) Of course, the anathema was issued by a Local Council, not an Ecumenical one. But, as we have seen, this by no means meant that, as Vitaly and the opponents of the anathema were trying to say, the anathema in fact had *no power* over anyone outside ROCOR – which was equivalent, in effect, to annulling it.The Bostonites seized on this as evidence of the fall of ROCOR. But since the epistle was published only *after* their departure, it was not direct justification of that departure…

In the opinion of the present writer, on the one hand the Bostonites *did* have a prima facie case for leaving ROCOR on the grounds of betrayal of the anathema against ecumenism. Moreover, it is clear that this was the decisive issue for many of the rank-and-file clergy and laity who followed them. On the other hand, the timing of the departure, the haste with which they left, and the abundant evidence of moral transgressions, makes it likely that the issue of ecumenism was not the real reason for *the leaders’* flight, but rather a fig-leaf to cover their fear of conviction at their forthcoming trial.

This is confirmed by Fr. (now Metropolitan) Anthony Gavalas: “My position when we left the Synod was that we should commemorate no-one until we saw our way clearly in the confusion. I was told that while this would be possible for the monastery, it would be destructive to the Parishes. Then, within a few hours, we were told that we must all go under Archbishop Acacius immediately so that the monastery would be covered in the face of suspensions and depositions of Frs. Panteleimon and Isaac, and I, of course, cooperated.”[[701]](#footnote-701)

Among the hierarchs, only Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) supported the Boston monks. The Synod, he believed had acted hastily in relation both to them and to his son, Archimandrite Anthony, who had been defrocked.[[702]](#footnote-702) Bishop Gregory was promptly sacked from his post of Secretary of the ROCOR Synod after over fifty years work at the centre of the Church administration.[[703]](#footnote-703)

Patrick Barrett considers that the schism could have been avoided if Bishop Gregory had still been at the helm: “Both Father Panteleimon and Father Isaac were prepared to step aside. True panic only hit the monastery and the parishes allied to it when the Synod refused to allow Father Justin to be named acting abbot. That’s when people began to believe that the synod’s true purpose was to seize the monastery. Then people began to think, well, they’ve eliminated Bishop Gregory and now they’re going after Father Panteleimon, so they’re obviously trying to take out everybody who opposes union with the MP. Bishop Gregory could have handled this situation easily. In fact, many of the people who ended up leaving ROCOR in 1986 were calling Bishop Gregory hoping for help or reassurance, but who was Bishop Gregory? By then, he was nobody to the Synod. Bishop Gregory had moral authority with the monastery and those parishes, with his help, the synod could even have removed Fathers Panteleimon and Isaac and still not lost the monastery and parishes.”[[704]](#footnote-704)

Be that as it may, the Bostonites fled to Metropolitans Acacius and Gabriel. However, in the summer of 1987, with the exception of Fr. Anthony Gavalas of Astoria, New York, all of the 40 parishes left the two metropolitans *giving no canonical reason* and came under the omophorion of Auxentius. Now it may be asked: why did the Bostonites not join Auxentius in the first place? The answer is clear: the crimes of Auxentius were known to Panteleimon, and more than one person who knew him well has testified that for several years before he joined Auxentius he considered him to be a traitor to Orthodoxy. It was because of this strongly expressed rejection of Auxentius that the Bostonites did not join him at the beginning, but instead joined the two independent metropolitans, who were not tainted with Auxentius' crimes.

So far, an argument can be adduced in defence of the Bostonites’ actions. But then why, only six months later, did they leave the two metropolitans and join Auxentius? Because Metropolitan Gabriel, disturbed by the accusations against Panteleimon, had separated from Metropolitan Acacius. This meant that the Bostonites now had no possibility of achieving one of their principal aims – a bishop or bishops of their own for America. Auxentius’ Synod, on the other hand, was notoriously willing to consecrate new bishops. So it became expedient to keep silent about Auxentius’ crimes (which, according to witnesses, Fr. Panteleimon had been more than willing to condemn in previous years), and to seek refuge in this most unsafe haven.

That the Bostonites were seeking a bishop of their own is evident from a letter of Fr. Niketas Palassis to Fr. Anthony Gavalas: “Frankly, we were stunned and sorrowed by Metropolitan Gabriel’s departure. Actually, it appeared we had been detoured and led into a dead-end street. Without a second bishop to give us support and credibility, we face the prospect of being one of the hundreds of vaganti groups which flood our nation. Without at least a second bishop we can have no hope that the clergymen who are watching us so carefully will ever join with us. Conversations with several of them have confirmed that fact. They are not attracted to us with a single bishop…”[[705]](#footnote-705) Further proof is provided by the letter of the Bostonites’ secretary, dated July 2/15, 1987 to Metropolitan Acacius, in which he writes: “It is evident to all that without a hierarch who knows both English and Greek and who has sufficient theological training, the flock in America, which is constituted of both English and Greek-speaking faithful, cannot be properly served.”

However, it was obvious that their bishop’s not knowing English was not a canonical reason for leaving him. So the Bostonites invented another reason: in the last six months, they said, they had “formed a more precise picture of ecclesiastical matters which – to an especially greater extent in recent times – have become obscured under the prism of subjective judgements, or unverified information, and this because of the difficulties of communication between the New World and Greece. Thus, they have arrived at the conclusion and conviction that, today, the reasons for your position of protest and voluntary absence from the meetings of the Synod of Archbishop Auxentios have ceased.”[[706]](#footnote-706)

These statements are extremely vague – we are given no idea of what new facts emerged that could so radically change their opinion of Auxentius and prove his innocence. In truth, there were no such facts. The Bostonites were thoroughly acquainted with the Church situation in Greece; it was not new knowledge that had changed the situation but the departure of Metropolitan Gabriel from their Church.

Another Bostonite argument was that since Metropolitan Acacius had stated both that “if you are able to find hierarchs who have Apostolic succession, you should turn to them”, and that “the judgement, the choice and the formulation of your future course depends on you”[[707]](#footnote-707), this meant that he had blessed them to join Auxentius. But Metropolitan Acacius’ extremely negative attitude towards Auxentius was well known to all. It was obvious that by a “hierarch who has Apostolic succession” he did not mean Auxentius. This was evident from the letter he wrote to his spiritual children when he heard that they were going to invite Auxentius to their conference in Worcester, Massachusetts in July, 1987:-

“While we were preserving vividly and indelibly the wonderful image of all that we had seen and heard during our recent visit to your Orthodox parishes, suddenly the information came, like a lightning bolt out of a clear sky, that a few of your spiritual leaders are thinking of going under the irrevocably fallen former Archbishop Auxentius.

“We hope that it is only some malicious rumour designed to defame your Orthodox ecclesiastical communities before all Orthodox everywhere and to render futile the struggle you have waged on behalf of the strictness of Orthodoxy. That is what we believe, for only the utmost madness and morbid recklessness would otherwise explain the subjugation of a Movement on behalf of piety and the preservation of the traditional genuineness of our Holy Orthodoxy under a leader who so tragically failed and brought the Church of the True Orthodox in Greece into contempt and disrepute.

“A multitude of uncanonical actions and illegal ordinations done with supreme disdain for the authority of our Holy Church, the ungodfearing trampling down of the Sacred Canons, and the devious manner of the’ordination to the episcopate’ of the piteous and miserable Dorotheus Tsakos render Auxentius guilty before Divine and human justice, as well as before the impartial and unbribable judgement of history itself.

“Can it be that you seek refuge in such a wreckage of a house? Shudder, O sun, and groan, O earth! If that be the case, you will with your own hands destroy your own work and raze your spiritual edifices to the ground. Moreover, you offer to your enemies unexpected arguments against yourselves. These are much more powerful than the arguments with which they presently seek to sully the reputation of the pious and virtuous clergymen who, at the present moment, stand at the head of your struggle!

“And, above all, such a thoughtless and frivolous action will sever the unity of your ecclesiastical communities because those among you whose souls have a more acute sense of smell will not be able to tolerate the stench of that devious failure Auxentius’ condemned and illegal actions.

“It is out of a pained heart that we write the above so that the beacon of Orthodoxy will not be so ignominiously extinguished, the beacon which is lit by the strictness of your Orthodoxy and your blameless ecclesiastical ethos.

“And besides, as long as you came freely and unconstrained by anyone and committed the episcopal supervision of your parishes to me, I condemn any discussions with Auxentius as divisive acts and I advise you to cut them off completely.

“Do not forget that ‘he who acts in secret from his bishops serves the devil’, according to St. Ignatius the Godbearer…”[[708]](#footnote-708)

However, the Bostonites concealed the letter of their archpastor from his flock and, to the great distress of many clergy and laity, removed almost all their parishes from the jurisdiction of a true bishop to that of a condemned schismatic, *giving no canonical justification whatsoever for their act.*

In December, the former French mission of the Russian Church Abroad in Paris, led by Archimandrite Ambroise Frontier, left the Chrysostomites because of dissatisfaction with a priest in the south of France and followed the Bostonites under Auxentius’ omophorion.[[709]](#footnote-709) Before his death in 1994, Auxentius ordained several bishops for this group, who now call themselves “The Holy Orthodox Church in North America” (HOCNA). And so Auxentius’ Church, which had almost died out in Greece, received a new lease of life. He proceeded to acquit the Bostonite leaders of homosexuality.[[710]](#footnote-710)

However, in 2012 Abbot Isaac admitted publicly that the charges against Fr. Panteleimon were true… This, together with HOCNA’s embracing of the name-worshipping theory, led to most of HOCNA’s clergy and parishes leaving and joining the Florinite Old Calendarists under Archbishop Kallinikos of Athens…

## 141. SUPER-ECUMENISM (2)

In the second half of the 1980s Pope John Paul II began to raise the tempo of super-ecumenism. While remaining conservative in his moral teaching, he showed himself to be the most extreme radical in his dogmatic teaching. Thus in 1985 he blessed the publication, by the Vatican’s Pontifical “Commission for Union with Non-Christians”, a twelve-page document containing new directives “for a correct presentation of Jews and Judaism in sermons and in the catechism of the Catholic Church”.

The twelfth paragraph of this document declared: “Heeding the same God, Who has spoken on the foundation of the same word (that the Jews have), we must bear witness according to the same remembrance and with a common hope in Him Who is the Lord of history. Therefore it is necessary for us to take upon ourselves the obligation to prepare the world for the coming of the Messiah, working together for social justice, for the respect of the rights of the human personality, and of the nation, and of international social reconstruction. The law of love for one’s neighbour, the common hope of the Kingdom of God, and the great heritage of the prophets motivate us, both Christians and Jews, to do this. Such a conception, taught sufficiently early through the catechism, would educate young Christians for a cooperation and collaboration with the Jews which would exceed the limits of simple dialogue.”[[711]](#footnote-711) It would indeed, for it would involve Catholics becoming Jews, awaiting the same “Messiah” that the Jews are waiting for – that is, the Antichrist!…

Then, in 1986 the Pope invited the leaders of all the world’s religions to pray for “peace in our time”. “On the joint prayers in Assisi (Italy) we have documentary films. How useful it would be to show them to the zealots of ‘Orthodoxy Soviet-style’! Behind the tribune there followed, one after the other, Catholics, Protestants, African idolaters in war-paint, Red Indians in feathers, an invoker of snakes, the Dalai Lama, who confesses himself to be a god, Metropolitan Philaret [Denisenko] of the Moscow Patriarchate, and many, many others, raising up prayers behind the tribune – each in his own style: the Red Indian smoked the pipe of peace, the invoker of snakes brought his cobra. And over all this there ruled, as the chief pagan priest, the Pope of Rome, whom the whole of this multi-coloured crowd in feathers, tattoos, loin-cloths and metropolitan mitres came up to greet in a luxurious, colourful and unending queue – over which there hovered, unseen, the ‘positive relationship’ and blessing of Patriarch Pimen…”[[712]](#footnote-712)

An Italian Catholic newspaper, *Si Si No No* wrote: “Never has our Lord been so outraged, never have His holy places been so profaned, His Vicar so humiliated, His people so scandalized by His own ministers, as at Assisi. The superstitions of the several false religions practised at Assisi pale by comparison with the betrayal of our Lord by these ministers. In St. Peter’s the bonzes adored the Dalai Lama (for them, a reincarnation of Buddha). In that church a statue of the Buddha was placed atop the Tabernacle on the main altar. In St. Gregory’s the Red Indians prepared their pipe of peace on the altar; in Santa Maria Maggiore’s, Hindus, sitting around the altar, invoked the whole range of Hindu gods; in Santa Maria degli Angeli’s, John-Paul II sat in a semi-circle of wholly identical seats amidst the heads of other religions so that there should be neither first nor last.”[[713]](#footnote-713)

Even as ecumenism reached its zenith, difficulties were encountered. The Pope, in particular, in spite of his extreme ecumenism, was having difficulties in his relations with the Jews, with the Anglicans and with the Orthodox, not to mention the liberal wing of his own confession.[[714]](#footnote-714) Thus in May, 1987, during his visit to Germany, the Pope planned to canonize Edith Stein, a Jewish convert to Catholicism who became a Carmelite nun and was tortured to death by the Nazis in Auschwitz. In memory of this new saint the Polish Carmelite Order decided to construct a small monastery on the site of the former concentration camp. But this aroused great fury among the Jews, who claimed that Auschwitz was “a Jewish monument” and that the canonization of a Jewish convert to Catholicism was “not particularly tactful”, since it implied that for the Pope only those Jews who converted to Catholicism were good. Eventually, the Jews dropped their objections to the canonization; but the nine Catholic nuns were forced to leave Auschwitz and abandon their plans of building a monastery there.[[715]](#footnote-715)

Again, difficulties arose in relations with the Anglicans because of the Anglican decision, in March, 1987, to allow women to serve as priests by a 317 to 145 vote. This decision was made in spite of the fact that it had been made quite clear to the Anglicans that their ordination of women priests would endanger ecumenical relations with the Orthodox and the Catholics. It demonstrated that the real inner dynamic of ecumenism is *not the desire for union, but the desire for the new* – that is, modernism and secularism in all its forms, including feminism.

Although Rome remained committed to a male celibate priesthood, it, was affected by these modernist winds, as Malachi Martin wrote: “A peculiar piece of desecration of Christ’s Church is being committed by the anti-church in its fomenting of the feminist movement among female religious. Jesus, in his sufferings, had at least the consolation of knowing that the women among his followers did not scatter like scared rabbits, nor did they betray him. They stayed with him to the bitter end of Calvary. Today, the women’s movement in the Church, certainly allowed and in some cases encouraged by the anti-Church, is bent on desecrating the Body of the Church in the Sacrament, in the sacred vows of religion, in the precious function of priest, pastor and teacher. All this can be traced to the Judas complex, part of the mystery of iniquity that is now operating in high gear throughout the Roman Catholic institutional organization.”[[716]](#footnote-716)

A third difficulty was the increasing tension in Catholic-Orthodox relations. These relations had reached a new high in November, 1987, when Patriarch Demetrius went to Rome and concelebrated with the Pope (up to but not including communion from a common chalice[[717]](#footnote-717)); at which point it seemed as if nothing could prevent the full union of the Orthodox Churches with Rome. But while the Pope’s ecumenism was welcome, his anti-communism was not – at least in the eyes of the KGB agents in cassocks who constituted the leaders of East European Orthodoxy. Thus in 1986 Patriarch Pimen publicly criticised the Pope for criticising socialism and dialectical materialism. “We speak out,” he said, “for the cooperation of Christians, Marxists and all people of good will… which only increases our perplexity at those sections of the recent Encyclical of Pope John-Paul II, Dominum et vivificantam which are devoted to materialism and Marxist doctrine…. [The encyclical] contains elements directed towards the division and opposition of Christians and Marxists… In the encyclical an attempt is made to analyse the system of materialism… as an ideology… It is quite obvious that such a combined application of materialist doctrine to life can be found first of all in the socialist states and countries, which have chosen the socialist path of development… It is precisely in these countries that the creation of a new life by the efforts of believers and unbelievers working together is being realised… This reality, as we understand it, contradicts those positions of the encyclical in which it is affirmed that materialism as a system of thought has as its culmination – death… Insofar as ‘signs of death’ are indicated in relation ‘to the dark shadow of materialist civilisation’, the impression is created, in the context of a critique of Marxist doctrine, that in all this the states and people who follow the socialist path of development are guilty… It remains to express our profound sadness at such a position.”[[718]](#footnote-718)

Even in an age distinguished by unheard-of betrayals of Orthodoxy, this amazes one by its audacity: the leader of the Russian Orthodox Church officially defending the doctrine of materialism!!!

A critical point was reached in the millennial year of the Baptism of Rus’ in 1988. Since the Baptism of Rus’ in 988 had taken place when the Eastern and Western Churches were in full communion, this festivity might have been expected to have ecumenical potential. However, the nationalist revival had begun in the Baltic States, and the Russian secular and ecclesiastical authorities feared that if the Pope were invited to the country, his presence might provide a focus for separatist sentiment in the Baltic and Ukraine as it had in Poland earlier in the decade. So they offered him an invitation on condition he did not visit those areas; which offer was refused…

Encouraged by the radicalism of their “elder brother”, the Pope, Orthodox leaders plunged to new depths of apostasy. Thus in 1989 Patriarch Parthenius of Alexandria declared: The prophet Mohammed is an apostle. He is a man of God, who worked for the Kingdom of God and created Islam, a religion to which belong one billion people… Our God is the Father of all men, even of the Muslims and Buddhists. I believe that God loves the Muslims and the Buddhists… When I speak against Islam or Buddhism, then I am not found in agreement with God… My God is the God of other men also. He is not only the God of the Orthodox. This is my position."

A Greek newspaper fittingly commented on these words: “So ‘Mohammed is an apostle’ and the new-martyrs, then, are ‘not found in agreement with God!’”[[719]](#footnote-719) Another newspaper said: “He denies Christ and likens himself to Mohammed!”[[720]](#footnote-720) Which amounted, according to the theologian A.D. Delimbasis, to “the mortal sin of denial of one’s faith. Even were Patriarch Parthenius to repent of this, he can be accepted in the Orthodox Church only as a layman. ‘Should he repent, let him be received as a layman,’ says the Canon [Apostolic Canon 62].”[[721]](#footnote-721)

The newspapers and theologians might criticise the patriarch’s blasphemy, but not one of the Local Orthodox Churches did. On the contrary: they seemed by their actions to express their approval of the Alexandrian patriarch’s conversion to Islam, and strove to imitate it. Thus Metropolitan Pitirim of Volokolamsk, the head of the MP’s publishing department, instead of using the new-found freedom of his Church to publish desperately needed Bibles and patristic literature, blessed the publication of – the Koran!

Extreme though Catholic ecumenism might be, it did not go so far as to include communism and dialectical materialism in its embrace. In fact, as is well-known, Pope John-Paul II played a part in the downfall of communism in his native Poland, and hence in the rest of Eastern Europe. The “honour” for taking ecumenism to the extreme even of embracing materialism belongs, unfortunately, not to the Catholics, but to the pseudo-Orthodox.

The only exception to this trend of Orthodox super-ecumenism was Patriarch Diodorus of Jerusalem, who left the ecumenical movement on May 22, 1989, declaring with his Synod: “The Orthodox Church firmly believes that She possesses the full, complete truth and that She is the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, the repository of Divine Grace and Truth. She alone is the ark of security within which the unsullied teachings and sacred Tradition of the Faith are to be found and the fullness of their salvific character and expression. Further participation by the Orthodox in the dialogues is now becoming harmful, damaging and, indeed, dangerous. The non-Orthodox are taking advantage of these theological dialogues and are using these contacts against the Orthodox Church. Here in the Holy Land especially they are now saying, ‘Together with the Orthodox we are trying to find the truth.’ Thus, day after day they are increasingly successful in their proselytising and draw Orthodox believers into their ranks. The non-Orthodox are also showing photographs and video films to our people in which our representatives appear embracing the non-Orthodox and they tell our faithful: ‘the union of the churches has come; come to our churches for joint prayers.’ To such acts must also be added their tempting offers of houses (and housing is a pressing problem for the majority of the Arab population), offers of jobs and of financial assistance if the Orthodox will only join their religion. This draining away or, rather, bleeding of our Orthodox flock, but above all our primary desire and obligation to preserve the purity of the Orthodox Faith and Tradition from the dangerous activities of non-Orthodox has compelled us to put an end to the dialogues, not only with the Anglicans who for some time now have been ordaining women, but also with the Roman Catholics, the Lutherans, as well as with those Protestant denominations with whom the Church of Jerusalem has only more recently had theological dialogues.”[[722]](#footnote-722)

Patriarch Diodorus showed that he was serious by refusing to sign the agreement of Chambésy with the Monophysites in 1990; he strongly criticized the official intercommunion between the Antiochian and Alexandrian patriarchates and the Monophysites; and in 1992, at the meeting of the heads of the Orthodox Churches in Constantinople in 1992, he argued forcefully for breaking *all* dialogue with the Vatican (see next chapter). However, these objections were exceptions to the general rule, which was: the rapid spread, even beyond the increasingly porous iron curtain, of both inter-Christian and inter-faith Ecumenism…

## 142. ROCOR AND THE CATACOMBS

The crushing of the dissident movement in the Soviet Union in the early 1980s had a temporarily sobering effect on ROCOR, and led to a very important ecclesiastical act: the canonization of the Holy New Martyrs of Russia, headed by Tsar-Martyr Nicholas II, in New York in November, 1981. News of this event seeped into the Soviet Union, and ROCOR’s icon and service to the new martyrs became more and more widely used even among members of the MP. It was these prayers to the holy new martyrs, more than the support of the Pope for anti-communists in Poland, that was the real catalyst for glasnost’ and perestroika, and hence the fall of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe as a whole.

The weakening of communism raised hopes of a mass movement of believers out of the MP into the True Church. But this raised the question: which Church – the Catacomb Church inside Russia, or ROCOR? In either case, the question of the relationship between ROCOR and the Catacomb Church needed to be clarified.

For some years, the ROCOR Synod had continued to have contacts with Catacomb clergy, some of whom began to commemorate Metropolitan Philaret while others were actually received under his omophorion. Thus in 1977, after the death of their Catacomb archpastor, Archbishop Anthony (Galynsky-Mikhailovsky), fourteen clergy - Igumens Barsanuphius, Nicholas and Anthony, Hieromonks Michael, Michael, Raphael, Nicholas, Nicholas, Nathaniel, Epiphany, Basil, Prochorus and Sergius, and Priests Alexis and Michael - were received “at a distance” into ROCOR.[[723]](#footnote-723)

The presence of a sizeable group of Catacomb clergy under the omophorion of ROCOR naturally led to the raising of the question of the consecration of a bishop for the Catacomb Church. Vitaly Shumilo writes: “The question of the reestablishment of the episcopate of the Catacomb Church was raised at the Hierarchical Synod of ROCOR [in 1981]. It was decided secretly to tonsure and ordain to the episcopate a clergyman of the West European diocese whose sister lived in the USSR [Hieromonk Barnabas (Prokofiev)], thanks to which he could more easily obtain a visa. The Council entrusted this secretly ordained bishop to secretly ordain Fr. Lazarus to the episcopate in order that he should lead the catacomb clergy and their communities.”[[724]](#footnote-724)

According to Matushka Anastasia Shatilova, the daughter of Bishop Gregory Grabbe, the decision was made by Metropolitan Philaret, Archbishop Vitaly and Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, and she, as being the person who printed the documents, was the only other person who knew about it.[[725]](#footnote-725) In the next year, 1982, Archbishop Anthony and Bishop Mark of Berlin consecrated Hieromonk Barnabas as Bishop of Cannes.[[726]](#footnote-726) He then travelled secretly to Moscow and ordained Fr. Lazarus as Bishop of Tambov in his flat on May 10.[[727]](#footnote-727)

In May, 1990, when Lazarus was able to travel to New York, cheirothesia was performed on him by ROCOR bishops in order to correct his original cheirotonia at the hands of one bishop only.

Since this event aroused considerable controversy, it is necessary to delve a little more into its background…

At the beginning of the 1960s, Monk Theodosius (Zhurbenko), the future Archbishop Lazarus, made contact, via Archimandrite Eugene (Zhukov) of Mount Athos, with ROCOR’s Archbishop Leontius (Filippovich) of Chile, who had been a catacomb priest in the Ukraine from 1937 before being consecrated Bishop of Zhitomir by the Ukrainian Autonomous Church in November, 1941.

“By means of coded correspondence,” writes Shumilo, “many widowed True Orthodox pastors and believers had communion through Monk Theodosius with ROCOR Archbishop Leontius (Filippovich) of Chile, through whom spiritual direction and communion of the True Orthodox Church was realized with the Russian Church Abroad.

“After establishing the correspondence, Archbishop Leontius took an active part in the life of the clergy and flock of the Catacomb Church. He secretly received under his omophorion many catacomb priests. In the widowed Catacomb Church in the Homeland the True Orthodox clergy and believers began to consider Archbishop Leontius to be their kir-hierarch. Thus in the 1960s, thanks to the efforts of the future catacomb Archbishop Lazarus, secret spiritual communion was established between the widowed Catacomb TOC in the Homeland and ROCOR, and in the TOC – the commemoration of the first-hierarchs of ROCOR…

“Vladyka Leontius had the intention of secretly visiting the USSR to carry out ordinations also in the Catacomb Church. But these plans were not destined to be realized. Not having the opportunity to go to the USSR, he gave his written blessing to resort to such enforced practices as the reception of priesthood from hierarchs of the MP who had not soiled themselves by cooperation with the communist authorities and ecumenism.[[728]](#footnote-728) Thus Archbishop Leontius sent Monk Theodosius (Zhurbenko) under obedience to be ordained by his former cell-attendant, who had been imprisoned for twelve years in Stalin’s camps in Kolyma, the disgraced Bishop Benjamin (Novitsky) of Irkutsk. During the years of the German occupation Vladyka Leontius was in obedience to Bishop Benjamin, who had been the deputy of the Pochayev Lavra, and in 1941 he received ordination to the episcopate from his hands. Vladyka Benjamin was completely against the MP’s apostasy from the faith and so remained in disgrace.

“In 1971 the former Monk Theodosius was secretly ordained as Priest Lazarus (Zhurbenko) for the Catacomb Church.

“Hieromonk Lazarus worked tirelessly at gathering into one the catacomb communities scattered and dispersed throughout the USSR. By the middle of the 1970s he had founded a series of secret catacomb monasteries in the Kuban. He tonsured into the schema with the name of Seraphim the well-known catacomb elder-confessor Fr. Vissarion (Markov) from Tambov, who in his will entrusted the care of his catacomb flock to Fr. Lazarus. Before his death Fr. Timothy (Nesgovorov), who had been ordained by Schema-Bishop Peter (Ladygin), and others entrusted their flocks to the care of Fr. Lazarus. By the end of the 1970s many widowed catacomb communities from Kazakhstan and Siberia to the Ukraine and Belorussia had come under the care of Fr. Lazarus. They all… and oriented themselves on spiritual union with ROCOR, the canonicity of whose episcopate was irreproachable.”[[729]](#footnote-729)

However, many Catacomb Christians did not recognize Fr. Lazarus, considering his ordination in the MP to be completely invalid. According to one source, he sought ordination in the MP only after being refused it by Archbishop Anthony Galynsky – which may explain his hostile attitude towards Archbishop Anthony later.[[730]](#footnote-730) According to another source, on returning to the Catacomb Church after four years in the MP, Fr. Lazarus was instrumental in betraying Catacomb Christians to the KGB and in sowing such distrust towards Bishop Theodosius (Bakhmetev) (+1986) that almost the whole of his flock deserted him.[[731]](#footnote-731)

As a result, according to Shatilova, the highly experienced Josephite priest Fr. Michael Rozhestvensky became “the initiator of the complete rejection of the then priest Lazarus Zhurbenko because of the latter’s departing to the MP for his ordination. At a meeting of catacomb clergy in the city of Tambov in 1978, in the presence of the still-living Abbot P., Fr. Vissarion and others, Fr. Michael confirmed this position.”[[732]](#footnote-732) This fact, according to Matushka Anastasia, was completely unknown to the ROCOR Synod when they came to decide on the consecration of a bishop for the Catacomb Church. Otherwise, she says, the ROCOR bishops would hardly have chosen to consecrate Lazarus to the episcopate.

The candidacy of Fr. Lazarus was put forward by Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, who had received him into his diocese, and then, on January 11, 1981, raised him to the rank of archimandrite in absentia.[[733]](#footnote-733)

Archbishop Anthony had been asked by Fr. Gleb Yakunin to consecrate a catacomb bishop for Russia, and Lazarus’ name had been put forward by Stefan Krasovitsky and Zoya Krakhmalnikova. But Yakunin, Krasovitsky and Krakhmalnikova were all dissident members of the MP. So ROCOR’s first bishop inside Russia, according to this version, turned out to be the candidate, not of the Catacomb Church, but of dissident circles in the MP…[[734]](#footnote-734)

Matushka Anastasia also claims that there was no other candidate than Fr. Lazarus, and that the bishops did not know of the existence of another good candidate in the person of Fr. Michael Rozhdestvensky.[[735]](#footnote-735)

However, Vladimir Kirillov disagrees: “Judging from all the evidence, Fr. Michael was the candidate of Metropolitan Philaret (well-known to him and a true catacomb pastor), while the ‘moderate’ Vladyka Lazarus was pleasing to Archbishop Anthony (in the documents of Vladyka Anthony the name of Fr. Michael does not figure once). And the blessing for the ordination was given precisely to Fr. Michael by Metropolitan Philaret.

“History is silent as to whether Fr. Michael was told of the desire to make him a bishop or not. Let alone whether he agreed to it or not. It is a mysterious story. After all, all the contacts were through Fr. Lazarus, who did not begin this affair in order to put forward the candidature of another man. In any case, Bishop Barnabas [who consecrated Fr. Lazarus in 1982] was informed by Fr. Lazarus that Fr. Michael had not appeared at the meeting and that the only candidate was – he.”[[736]](#footnote-736)

Vladimir Kirillov argues that Fr. Lazarus engineered his own consecration at the expense of Fr. Michael. He put before Archbishop Anthony the idea “that chaos and savagery reigned in Russia because of the absence of a lawful bishop [Lazarus claimed that the last true bishop had died in 1957] and that for that reason many sympathizing priests sympathetic in the MP stayed there. And if only a bishop would appear, things would go well (of course, this turned out to be pure bluff). In the end the desire matured in Vladyka Anthony to help his brothers in Russia, the more so in that there was such a knowledgeable catacomb person as Fr. Lazarus (who, by the way, was not a person chosen by the catacombs and spoke exclusively in his own name).”[[737]](#footnote-737)

Kirillov even claims – on the basis of the testimony of Vladyka Lazarus himself – that there was some kind of prior agreement to ordain, not Fr. Lazarus, but Fr. Michael: “In principle, according to the agreement, [Bishop Barnabas] should have ordained Fr. Michael to the episcopate. But, as Vladyka Lazarus told the author of these lines in 1994, Fr. Michael refused and then he [Lazarus] had to ‘take his place’.”[[738]](#footnote-738)

According to both Shatilova and Kirillov, when Vladyka Barnabas was searching for a worthy candidate for ordination to the rank of Bishop of the Catacomb Church, Fr. Lazarus craftily suggested the widowed Fr. Michael, and himself was called to invite him to be ordained to the episcopate. On receiving the invitation with the signature of Hieromonk Lazarus (Zhurbenko), Fr. Michael naturally did not go. Vladyka Barnabas was left with neither a choice nor time, and he was forced to consecrate Hieromonk Lazarus to the episcopate. Fr. Michael’s position in relation to Vladyka Lazarus remained unchanging to the very end of his life [in 1988].[[739]](#footnote-739)

Be all that as it may, “after Vladyka Lazarus’ secret ordination,” writes Shumilo, “many catacomb communities of the TOC in the Kuban, Ukraine, in the Central Black Earth region of Russia, the Northern Caucasus, Belorussia, Siberia, Kazakhstan, Bashkiria and other regions, united around him.

“From the moment of the reestablishment of a canonical hierarchy in the Catacomb Church in the Homeland there began its gradual regeneration and building up. The secret Bishop Lazarus in a self-sacrificing way, in spite of the great risk for his own life, tirelessly went round the catacomb communities of the TOC scattered throughout the whole boundless expanse of Holy Russia, which had been turned by the God-fighters into the atheist USSR, serving secretly at night, preaching, confessing, communing and ordaining new catacomb priests. In the period from 1982 to 1990 alone Bishop Lazarus ordained about 20 new catacomb clergy for the TOC. Many catacomb priests who accepted ordination from the uncanonical catacomb hierarchies of the ‘Sekachites’ and the ‘Alfeyevites’ were united to him through correction of their ordinations.”[[740]](#footnote-740)

## 143. GLASNOST’ AND PERESTROIKA

On November 8/21, 1985 Metropolitan Philaret died in unclear circumstances. Some say that he died a natural death from cancer; others – that he was poisoned. In the first ROCOR Council that took place after his death Archbishop Vitaly was elected metropolitan (he had polled an equal number of votes with Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, but was then elected by lot).

He proceeded to remove Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) as Secretary of the Synod (although Archbishop Seraphim of Chicago protested strongly); Bishop Lavr became his replacement, with Bishop Hilarion as his deputy (both leading apostates to the MP in 2007). The head of the Orthodox Palestinian Society, Bishop Gregory’s son, Archimandrite Anthony Grabbe, was removed from this post just as the Orthodox Palestine Society was about to launch a court case against the Soviet government, in which, it was thought, the Society was likely to win a hundred million dollars. A veritable revolution was taking place in the leadership of ROCOR – to the advantage of the Soviet State and Church…[[741]](#footnote-741)

The effects were soon being felt in the administration of the Church. Bishop Gregory himself, writing to Metropolitan Vitaly in 1994, wrote: “For a very long time now in fact, since the first days of your leadership of our Church Abroad I have with great anxiety and turmoil of heart been tracing how quickly she has begun to slide into the abyss of administrative disorder and canonical chaos… Our woes began with the first Hierarchical Council to take place after the death of Metropolitan Philaret… On the disorganisation of our Chancellery I can judge from a series of signs. Thus I was sent from Russia copies of your letters to Archbishop Lazarus and Bishop Valentine. First, I very soon managed to find out that these documents were unknown to both Secretaries of the Synod, to whom I handed over these copies. Moreover, the very subject of these letters, by the delicacy of their content, demanded their presentation by you for discussion in the Hierarchical Synod. But it turned out that the letters were not only dispatched without the knowledge of the Secretaries, but also had a whole series of other defects which quite clearly demonstrated the bankruptcy of your personal Chancellery. Although Russian notepaper was available, the letters to Russia were sent on English notepaper; they not only had no numbers, but even no dates. In the letter to Archbishop Lazarus there was no indication of whom it was being sent to, while Bishop Valentine’s title was incomplete. Finally, the very text of the letters was by no means brilliant grammatically and stylistically. Moreover, it also emerged (which is especially terrible) that at the bottom of both letters was not your signature in your own hand, but a facsimile! The Synodal House ceased to exist as the centre of our administration. The sessions of the Synods and Councils were usually arranged in any place, only not in the Synodal House. Besides, you are rarely in New York, Vladyka Hilarion is often away, and the Chancellery in his absence does not function in our former centre there is often not a single responsible person capable of giving correct information, or of understanding what to do with information received from outside. Often the responsible person turns out to be the telephonist on duty at the time. There have been many complaints against your secretary…

“For all the years of the existence of the Church Abroad we have enjoyed respect and glory for nothing else than for our uncompromising faithfulness to the canons. They hated us, but they did not dare not to respect us. But now we have shown the whole Orthodox world that the canons are for us just an empty sound and we have become a laughing-stock in the eyes of all those who have any kind of relationship to Church questions. Look: you yourself, at the Council in Lesna, permitted yourself to say that for us, the participants in it, this was not now the time to examine canons, but we had to act quickly. You, holding the tiller of the ecclesiastical ship, triumphantly, in front of the whole Council, declared to us that now we had to hasten to sail without a rudder and without sails. At that time your words appalled me, but I, knowing of your irritation towards me because I insist that we have to live in accordance with the canons, still hoped that all was not lost and that our Bishops would somehow shake off the whole nightmare of these last years. Think, Vladyko, of the tens of thousands of Orthodox people we have deceived both abroad and in Russia. Don’t calm yourself with the thought that if there is some guilt somewhere, then it lies equally on all our hierarchs. The main guilt will lie on you, as the leader of our Council. I have had to hear from some Bishops that sometimes the Synod decrees one thing, and then you, taking no account of previous resolutions, on your own initiative either change them or simply rescind them. And look now, as has already become quite well known, after the stormy March session of the Synod, it dispersed without making a single resolution. During it the question was discussed of banning the Russian Hierarchs from serving. Nevertheless, you demanded that the Secretariat that it send of an ukaz banning bishops who were not even under investigation. Both from the point of view of the 34th Apostolic canon, and from an ecclesiastical-administrative point of view, this is unprecedented lawlessness. Remember, Vladyko, your reproachful speech against Metropolitan Philaret, when in 1985 you for ten minutes non-stop fulminated against him for transgressing the 34th Apostolic canon. The crimes of Metropolitan Philaret seem to me to be miniscule by comparison with what is happening now.”[[742]](#footnote-742)

The transition from the leadership of St. Philaret to that of Metropolitan Vitaly in 1986 in effect created a revolution in ROCOR.[[743]](#footnote-743) From 1986 a “purge of the cadres” began (which continued after 1994 and again after 2000), as leading opponents of the union with Moscow were removed and replaced by pro-Moscow ecumenists. The leaders of the pro-Moscow clique were Bishops Mark, Lavr and Hilarion.

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Jean-Francois Revel wrote in 1985: “The Soviet Union… is undoubtedly sick, very sick. It will die, that’s certain,… because it is in and of itself a society of and for death. But the prime question of our time is which of the two events will take place first: the destruction of democracy by communism or communism’s death of its own sickness? It seems to me that the second process is advancing less rapidly than the first…”[[744]](#footnote-744)

However, in the same year of 1985, the Soviets’ perception that they had to catch up with the United States in the economic and military fields propelled to the fore a leader, Gorbachev, who was prepared to begin a partial democratization of the country. By the Providence of God, his reforming efforts, though designed to modernize and strengthen the communist Soviet State, led to its downfall and the resurgence of religion…

“In his first speech as leader,” writes Bernard Simms, “Gorbachev announced his intention to maintain ‘military-strategic parity with the aggressive NATO’. Like the tsarist modernizers of old, Gorbachev’s first concern was not economic liberalization, popular standards of living or democratization but technological backwardness and low economic growth. What was innovative about his approach, however, was that it did not just conceive of internal change as a means to increasing external power through greater military mobilization. Instead, Gorbachev sought to expose and reform abuses in what he regarded as a basically just system. He also hoped that a more conciliatory attitude towards dissidents would reduce the international battering the Soviet Union had received over human rights since the mid-1970s.

Gorbachev now proclaimed a policy of reconstruction (‘Perstroika’) – a ‘revolution[ary]… acceleration of the socio-economic and cultural development of Soviet society’ – and openness (‘Glasnost’’). Greater freedom of expression, Gorbachev believed, would mobilize the intelligentsia and reduce incompetence and corruption. Dissidents were released, police repression was greatly eased, civil rights groups emerged, there was a revival of the [official] Russian Orthodox Church and a vibrant public sphere moved from the underground into the open…”[[745]](#footnote-745)

At first, the communists showed no sign of the religious liberalization that was to come. In November, 1986, Gorbachev told party officials in Tashkent that religious faith and party membership were incompatible (this was probably aimed at Muslim communists): “There must be no let-up in the war against religion because as long as religion exists Communism cannot prevail. We must intensify the obliteration of all religions wherever they are being practised or taught.”[[746]](#footnote-746)

Again, in November, 1987 Gorbachev said to the Politburo: “Perestroika is no retreat from communism but rather a step toward the final realization of Marxist-Leninist utopia: a continuation of Lenin’s ideas. Those who expect us to give up communism will be disappointed. In October, 1917 we parted from the Old World, rejecting it once and for all. We are moving toward a new world, the world of communism. We shall never turn off that road. Perestroika is a continuation of the October revolution…

“Comrades, do not be concerned about all you hear about glasnost’ and democracy. These are primarily for outward consumption. There will be no serious internal change in the USSR other than for cosmetic purposes. Our purpose is to disarm America and let them fall asleep. We want to accomplish three things: (1) the Americans to withdraw conventional forces from Europe, (2) the Americans to withdraw nuclear forces from Europe, and (3) the Americans to stop proceeding with SDI [the Star Wars Defence System].”[[747]](#footnote-747)

As Vladimir Bukovsky and Pavel Stroilov write: “By the beginning of the 1980s, the Soviet leadership had finally woken up to the fact that their system had entered a period of profound structural crisis. On the one hand, their economic model, unproductive and wasteful by definition, like all socialist models, had brought them to the brink of bankruptcy. On the other, their very ‘success’ in exporting that model to other countries was becoming an unbearable burden to carry on their shoulders. With their troops bogged down in Afghanistan, and with the Polish crisis looming large on their doorstep, the ‘cost of Empire’ had become virtually unsustainable. Simply put, they had suddenly realised that their economic base was too small for their global ambitions. Added to that a new round of the arms race forced on them by Ronald Reagan, falling oil prices and a growing discontent at home, and one could understand their sudden urge for reforms. A final blow came with Reagan’s obsession with the ‘Star Wars’ project. The Americans might have been bluffing, but the Soviets had to follow suit regardless, trying to compete in the very sphere where they were most behind the West – high-tech.”[[748]](#footnote-748)

Again, in 1987 Gorbachev’s chief ideologist, Alexander Yakovlev, said concerning the millenium of the Baptism of Rus’ in 1988: “To God what is God’s, to the Church what is the Church’s, but to us, the Marxists, belongs the fullness of truth. And on the basis of these positions any attempts to represent Christianity as the ‘mother’ of Russian culture must be decisively rejected. And if the Russian Middle Ages merit the attention of historians, such cannot be said of the 1000-year date of Orthodoxy.”[[749]](#footnote-749)

However, Gorbachev’s need to pass from what Sir Geoffrey Hosking called “Mark 1” to “Mark 2” perestroika, dictated a change in policy towards the Church, too.[[750]](#footnote-750) For the success of perestroika required the upholders of the new, more liberal order to include members of the Church, not just party hacks. The problem was: how could there be sincere Christians in the Soviet church as it had been created by Stalin and his successors?

In March, 1988 Constantine Mikhailovich Kharchev, the head of the Council for Religious Affairs, told representatives of the higher party school in Moscow: “We attained our greatest success in controlling religion and suppressing its initiative amidst the priests and bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church. At first this gave us joy, but now it threatens to bring unforeseen consequences in its train… Now a priest often has no connection with his parish, but he is born somewhere else, and is often even of a different nationality. He comes once a week to the parish in a car, serves the liturgy… and wants to know nothing more. Many even like this, after all they are not responsible for anything: neither for their flock, nor for the money, nor for the repair of the church. The official in giving him his licence warns him: take your 350 roubles, and don’t poke your nose into anything…

“We, the party, have fallen into a trap of our own anti-ecclesiastical politics of bans and limitations, we have cut the pope off from the believers, but the believers have not begun as a result to trust the local organs more, while the party and the state is increasingly losing control over the believers. And in addition, as a consequence, we witness the appearance of unspiritual believers, that is, those who carry out the ritual side [of Church life] and are indifferent to everything. And the main thing – are indifferent to communism… It is easier for the party to make a sincere believer into a believer also in communism. The task before us is: the education of a new type of priest; the selection and placing of a priest is the party’s business.”[[751]](#footnote-751)

The critical point came in April, 1988, when Gorbachev met the patriarch and the senior metropolitans of the MP and staked out a new Church-State concordat reminiscent of the one between Stalin and Sergius in 1943. This concordat, combined with the underlying growth in religious feeling that had now been going on for several years, and the recovery of courage made easier by glasnost’ and the release of most of the religious and political prisoners, made the millenial celebrations in June a truly pivotal event. Moreover, the very wide publicity given to the celebrations in the media gave a powerful further impulse to the movement of religious regeneration.

The fruits were soon evident for all to see. Most religious and political prisoners were freed; permission was given for the reopening of many hundreds of churches (1,830 in the first nine months of 1990); and religious societies and cooperatives of almost all denominations sprang up all over the country. Programmes on Orthodox art and architecture, and sermons by bearded clergy in cassocks, became commonplace on television; and commentators from right across the political spectrum began to praise the contribution of the Orthodox Church to Russian history and culture. There was openness, too, on the terrible cost to Russia of Leninism and Stalinism – one estimate, by the scientist D.I. Mendeleev, calculated that there were 125 million innocent victims of the communist yoke.[[752]](#footnote-752)

There were negative aspects to this process. The True Orthodox Church remained outlawed; resistance to the opening of churches by local officials continued in the provinces; and religious activists objected to the adulterous mixing of religion and nationalism, and religion and humanist culture.[[753]](#footnote-753) Moreover, the suspicion continued to exist that the party’s new-found respect for religion was simply a tactical ploy, a case of reculer pour mieux sauter.

Such scepticism had some basis in reality. After all, no leading communist announced his conversion to Christianity. Moreover, in April, 1988, the month in which Gorbachev met the patriarch, an unsigned article in *Kommunist* hinted that the real aim of Gorbachev’s rapprochement with the Church was to communize the Church rather than Christianize the party. And yet, if that was the party’s aim, it backfired. For unlike the concordat of 1943, which did indeed have the effect of communising the Church, the concordat of 1988 seems to have helped to free Orthodox Christians from bondage to Communist ideology and coercion. For if the Church hierarchs continued to pay lip-service to “Leninist norms”, this was emphatically not the case with many priests and laity, of whom Fr. Gleb Yakunin (liberated in 1987) was probably the most influential and best known.

This was most strikingly evident in March, 1990, when the elections returned 300 clerics of various faiths as deputies at various levels, including 190 Russian Orthodox, while the Communist Party candidates in the major cities were routed. In April, the Christian Democratic Movement, led by RSFSR deputies Fr. Gleb Yakunin, Fr. Vyacheslav Polosin and philosopher Victor Aksyuchits, held its founding congress. Then, on May 19, the birthday of Tsar Nicholas II, the Orthodox Monarchist Order met in Moscow, and called for the restoration of Grand-Duke Vladimir Kirillovich Romanov to the throne of all the Russias. Grand-Duke Vladimir was a member of ROCOR, so his recognition by the monarchists inside Russia would have meant an enormous increase in prestige for ROCOR at the expense of the patriarchate. However, the Grand-Duke spared the patriarchate this embarrassment by apostasizing to it and then dying in November, 1991.[[754]](#footnote-754)

As communism began to collapse, rebellions broke out in the outlying republics. The most important of these was in the Western Ukraine, where the MP recruited many of its clergy. The MP’s spiritual impotence was illustrated above all by its almost complete surrender of its western borderlands to the movement for Ukrainian ecclesiastical autocephaly. As we have seen, this movement began at the council of Lvov in 1946, when Stalin integrated the Uniates or Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC), who are Catholic by faith, but Orthodox in ritual, into the MP, and forced those Uniates who did not want to become Orthodox to go underground. When Gorbachev came to power, the Uniates began agitating for the legalization of their Church.

They were supported, surprisingly, by the chairman of the Council for Religious Affairs, Constantine Kharchev, who insisted that local authorities keep the law in their dealings with believers and suggested the legalization of the Uniates and the free election of bishops. This roused the MP and members of the Ideology department of the Central Committee to complain about Kharchev to the Supreme Soviet. Kharchev was removed in June, 1989; but he made a telling comment about those who had removed him: “I suspect that some members of the Synod, from force of habit, have counted more on the support of the authorities than on their own authority in the Church.”[[755]](#footnote-755)

The UGCC finally achieved legalization in January, 1990, just after Gorbachev met the Pope in Rome. This represented the second major diplomatic triumph of the Vatican in the communist bloc (after the legalization of Solidarnost in Poland) and the beginning of the re-establishment of Catholic power in Russia. However, even before they had recovered their freedom in law, the Uniates started taking over churches in Western Ukraine which they considered to be theirs by right. By December, 1991, 2167 nominally Orthodox parishes had joined the Uniates. Deprived of the help of the local authorities, who showed every sign of being on the side of the uniates, and discredited by its associations with communism, the MP seemed helpless to stop the rot.[[756]](#footnote-756) In October, 1989, a retired patriarchal bishop, Ioann Bondarchuk, announced the creation of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC). He was immediately placed under ban by the patriarchate. However, the patriarchate decided to make some concessions to Ukrainian nationalist feeling by creating, in January, 1990, a supposedly autonomous but pro-Moscow Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC-MP), led by Metropolitan Philaret (Denisenko) of Kiev. Later, Philaret was defrocked and anathematised by the MP, so he formed a third independent Orthodox Church in the Ukraine – the so-called “Kievan Patriarchate” (UOAC-KP).

Meanwhile, relations between the Orthodox and Catholics continued to deteriorate; and in March the Uniates withdrew from quadripartite discussions between Roman Catholics, Uniates, Russian Orthodox and the UOC-MP. Then, in June, the UAOC convened its first All-Ukrainian Council in Kiev, at which Mstyslav (Skrypnyk), who had been the leader of the Ukrainian autocephalists in the USA, was enthroned as the first patriarch in Ukrainian history. The UAOC received a further significant boost after the Ukraine achieved independence at the end of 1991. In general the Russian Orthodox were opposed to the separation of Russia from Ukraine, regarding the Russians, Ukrainians and Belorussians as essentially three parts of one Slavic race who should keep together on the basis of their closely related religion, culture and history. However, this was not the view of most Ukrainian believers – or, at any rate, of those living in the western regions where Catholic influence was strongest. “The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church,” said Anatolius Krasikov, “is the expression of the resolute will of the Ukrainian people to finally liberate itself from the imperial [Russian] Orthodox Church which is an instrument of spiritual oppression against the Ukrainian people, aiming at its complete russification and enslavement.”[[757]](#footnote-757)

Contrary to the hopes and expectations of many, the MP remained devoted to the ideology of the failing Soviet regime to the very last minute. And yet even the patriarchate began to show signs of change under the influence of glasnost’. The first sign was at the church council in June, 1988, when the 1961 statute making priests subordinate to their parish councils was repealed. Then came the canonisation of Patriarch Tikhon in October, 1989. And then, on April 3, 1990 the Synod issued a declaration in which it (i) declared its neutrality with regard to different political systems and ideologies, (ii) admitted the existence of persecutions and pressures on the Church in the past, and (iii) tacitly admitted the justice of some of the criticism directed against it by the dissidents.[[758]](#footnote-758) Finally, in May, Metropolitan Vladimir of Rostov, the head of a commission formed to gather material on priests and believers who had been persecuted, said that “up to now, the details of the repression of the Russian Orthodox Church have been ignored or falsified by official, state and even numerous Church figures in order to meet the accepted ideological stereotypes.”[[759]](#footnote-759)

The climax to this process was reached in June, when the polls revealed that the Church had now passed the Party, the Army and the KGB in popularity.[[760]](#footnote-760) Could this be the beginning of the end of sergianism? Was this the moment when the MP, freed at last from the yoke of communism, and under no obligation to pursue the communist-imposed policy of ecumenism, would finally repent of its past and return to the True Church?…

## 144. SERBIA TURNS NATIONALIST

The Yugoslav communist dictator Tito died in 1980. Dejan Djokic writes: “As Yugoslavia entered the post-Tito era, there were increasing calls for the pursuit of the… ideal of finding what really happened in Yugoslavia in the Second World War. The official history [which minimised the ethnic elements and called it a ‘national liberation war and a socialist revolution’] was bound to be challenged in the more relaxed political atmosphere which eventually emerged following the death of Tito in 1980, when the so-called ‘hidden’, unofficial, accounts of the war years began to appear. During what one Serbian weekly described as ‘the burst of history’, the official interpretation of Yugoslavia’s recent past was questioned by every engaged intellectual. To many observers in the late 1980s, it must have seemed that the Second World War had broken out for the second time in Yugoslavia – verbally, for the time being…

“The most controversial and most debated issue was that of Croatian genocide against Serbs during the Second World War. Both the Ustaša-directed project to rid the Independent State of Croatia of its almost two million Serbs (and also Jews and Roma) and the nature and scope of the genocide have been the subject of scholarly works. The issue remains a bone of contention between Serbs and Croats… Moreover, some Serbs argue that anti-Serbianism has always been present among Croats and that the Ustaša genocide was merely the last phase of a long process…

“The nationalist discourse in Yugoslavia, but especially in Serbia and Croatia in the late 1980s and early 1990s, sought a reconciliation between victors and losers of the Second World War who belonged to the same nation; between Partisans and Cetniks in the case of Serbs, and Partisans and Ustašas in the case of Croats. In Yugoslavia at the time ‘reconciliation’ meant a homogenisation of the nation by reconciling ideological differences within the nation…”[[761]](#footnote-761)

Reconciliation between communists and anti-communists also took place in the ecclesiastical sphere. In 1991, communion was restored between the Serbian Patriarchate and the Free Serbs.[[762]](#footnote-762) The great majority of the Serbs were now nationalists.

This process also affected the Communist Party, until then a bastion of (atheist) internationalism… From 1985, as perestroika began in Russia, the writing was on the wall for the old-style communists throughout Eastern Europe. They had a choice if they wanted to stay in power: either become European-style democrats, or take the nationalist road. In practice they adopted a mixture of both courses. However, in some countries, such as Russia, democracy was the preferred option, whereas in the Balkans it was nationalism.

At the same time, the democratization process that was affecting all the countries of Eastern Europe at this time stimulated nationalism. As Samuel P. Huntingdon writes, “The first fairly contested elections in almost every former Soviet and former Yugoslav republic were won by political leaders appealing to nationalist sentiments and promising vigorous action to defend their nationality against other ethnic groups. Electoral competition encourages nationalist appeals and thus promotes the intensification of fault line conflicts into fault line wars. When, in Bogan Denitch’s phrase, ‘ethnos becomes demos,’ the initial result is *polemos* or war” [[763]](#footnote-763)

“Balkan communist regimes,” writes Bernard Simms, “co-opted nationalism as a new legitimating ideology. In Romania, Nicolae Ceauşescu sought confrontation with the substantial Hungarian minority, whose Transylvanian and Banat villages were singled out for particular attention in the campaign of rural ‘systematization’. In Bulgaria, the regime turned on the local Turkish population in late 1984 and forced them to change their names, restricted their use of the Turkish language, and closed down mosques, all in the name of stamping out an alleged ‘fifth column’ of ‘terrorists’ and ‘separatists’. In Yugoslavia, the Serb leader, Slobodan Milošević, rose to power through the articulation of a Serb nationalist agenda.”[[764]](#footnote-764) “It is clear that Milošević’s principal motive in playing the Serbian nationalist card was to avoid the fate of Communist leaders in other East European countries. While they had been swept away by the post-1989 wave of nationalism. Milošević was able to ride it; indeed, to whip it up. And for ten years his strategy worked…”[[765]](#footnote-765)

As ever, the main focus of Serbian nationalism was the province of Kosovo, which had been part of Serbia in the late Middle Ages, but whose majority population since the Turkish conquest was Albanian. The aim of the nationalists was to destroy the Albanian majority, by violent means if necessary – expulsion and/or slaughter. With the rise of Milošević, this aim became a practical possibility…

Before Milošević, nationalism had been kept in check in Kosovo. As Misha Glenny writes, “The atmosphere in Kosovo in the early eighties was heavy with tension, secret policemen were ubiquitous. Nonetheless, the local state apparatus, including the police force, was staffed mainly by Albanians, and they had no interest in provoking the Kosovars. Life was not easy, but it was free from nationalist violence. A minority of communists in Serbia, aided at times by the Belgrade media, claimed that the Serb and Montenegrin minority in Kosovo (roughly 10 per cent of the population) were subjected to systematic terrorism at the hands of the Albanian ‘irredentists’. They based these claims on the number of Serbs moving from the province to Serbia proper. There was an indeed an exodus of Serbs in the early eighties, but they were economic migrants, not refugees. The stories of rape, murder and intimidation were without foundation.”[[766]](#footnote-766)

However, an economic crisis in the mid-1980s coincided with important political changes inside the country… In the autumn of 1985, writes Noel Malcolm, a local Kosovan activist, Kosta Bulatović, who was originally from Montenegro, organized a petition “which became known as ‘petition 2,016’, after the number of signatures it attracted: the text contained not only demands for protection, but also a gross historical claim about the presence of 300,000 Albanians who had crossed into Kosovo from Albania since 1941 (the implication being that they should all be sent back). In February 1986 a group of 160 Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo presented their complaints to the federal assembly in Belgrade…

“In April 1987 news came from Kosovo that the group of Serb and Montenegrin activists round Bulatović was intending to bring another large protest in Belgrade. They asked the Serbian Party president, Stambolić, to come and speak to them first in the town of Kosovo Polje; reluctant to enter such a hostile bear-pit (he had already made several speeches criticizing Serbian nationalism), he sent his deputy, Slobodan Milošević, instead. As Stambolić later recalled, Milošević had never shown any interest in Kosovo, and had even said to him on one occasion: ‘Forget about the provinces, let’s get back to Yugoslavia’. But the events in Kosovo Polje on 24 April 1987 were to change all that. While Milošević listened to angry speeches by local spokesmen in the ‘House of Culture’, fighting broke out between the large crowd of Serbs outside and the police, who responded with their batons. The fighting had been carefully planned by one of the local Serb leaders, Miroslav Šolević (local, at least, in the sense that he lived there: he had moved to Kosovo from the Serbian city of Niš): as he later admitted, he had arranged for a truck full of stones to be parked outside the building, to give the Serbs a copious supply of ammunition. Milošević broke off the meeting and came out to speak to the crowd, where he uttered – luckily for him, on camera – the words on which his entire political future would be built: ‘No one should dare to beat you!’ The crowd, enraptured by these words, began chanting ‘Slobo, Slobo!’ With a skill which he had never displayed before, Milošević made an eloquent speech in defence of the sacred rights of the Serbs. From that day, his nature as a politician changed; it was as if a powerful new drug had entered his veins.

“By exploiting the issue of Kosovo Milošević quickly turned himself into a ‘national’ leader, a role which enabled him to quell all opposition to his takeover of the Communist Party machine…”[[767]](#footnote-767)

“The situation in Kosovo… became the main focus for the revival of Serbian nationalism. As early as 1968, Serbian nationalist Communists such as Dobrica Ćosić were complaining about the reversal of policy in Kosovo after Ranković’s fall. ‘One could witness even among the Serbian people a re-ignition of the old historical goal and national idea – the unification of the Serbian people into a single state,’ he said. This statement, phrased as a warning but issued in the spirit of a threat, caused Ćosić to be expelled from the Central Committee… The Serbian Orthodox Church also saw its opportunity to revive the sense of religious identity in the literary and political culture of the country; and the Serbs’ obsessively possessive claims about Kosovo were indeed partly based on the fact that some of the Serbian Orthodox Church’s oldest monasteries and church buildings, including the patriarchate itself [at Peć], were located in the province.

“Together with a revival of [ecumenist] Orthodoxy, there was also a revival of interest in the forbidden topic of the Četniks during the second world war. And just as – indeed, because – the Communist policy had been to damn all the Četniks uncritically as fascist collaborators, so now the reaction of Serb nationalists was to praise them almost equally uncritically. The regime would have reason to regret its long-lasting suppression of objective historical studies of the war. Dobrica Ćosić published a novel in 1985 which featured a sympathetic portrait of the Četnik ideologist, Dragiša Vasić; and in the same year a book about the Četniks by the historian Veselin Djuretić was launched at a party hosted by the Serbian Academy of Sciences. This event was an important turning-point, a signal that Serbian nationalism could now be openly embraced by the intellectual establishment in Belgrade. In January of the following year two hundred prominent Belgrade academics and writers signed a petition which referred in hysterical terms to the ‘Albanian aggression’ and ‘genocide’ in Kosovo. All the old Serbian resentments now came to the surface: ‘a rigged political trial of the Serbian nation and its history has been going on for decades’, it complained.

“Later in 1986 a ‘Memorandum’ was drawn up by the Serbian Academy of Sciences (or at least, by a committee of it, whose membership is known to have included Ćosić), in which grievances about Kosovo were combined with the open accusation that Tito’s policies had aimed at the weakening of Serbia. ‘Nationalism’, it complained, had been ‘created from above’. This was a reference not to Serbian nationalism, of course, which these writers were busily helping to create from their own vantage-point, but to the national identities of Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, Montenegrins and Bosnian Muslims. The Memorandum claimed that a sinister programme of assimilation was under way in Croatia, designed to turn the Serbs there into Croats, and it also complained that ethnic Serb writers in places such as Montenegro and Bosnia were being described as writing not Serbian literature but ‘Montenegrin’ or ‘Bosnian’ literature instead. The fundamental argument of the Memorandum was that the ‘Serb people’ throughout Yugoslavia was a kind of primary entity, possessing a unitary set of rights and claims which transcended any mere political or geographical divisions: ‘The question of the integrity of the Serb people and its culture in the whole of Yugoslavia poses itself as a crucial question for that people’s survival and development.’ It was the pursuit of that ‘integrity’ which would eventually destroy Yugoslavia…”[[768]](#footnote-768)

Vasa Ćubrilović, a member of the Academy, had been acting and speaking in the cause of Serbian revolutionary nationalism since 1914. As Mark Almond writes, he “complained that the Serb authorities had been too weak and ‘Western’. Serbia ought to learn from her old enemy: ‘Turkey brought to the Balkans the customs of the Sheriat… Even the Balkan Christians learned from the Turks that not only state power and dominion, but also home and property are won and lost by the sword.’ He argued that since the Albanians still outbred the effects of Serbian recolonisation, ‘the only way and the only means to cope with them is the brute force of an organized state, in which we [Serbs] have always been superior to them.’ The necessary precondition for a mass expulsion of Albanians from their ancestral homes was ‘the creation of a suitable psychosis’.

“In order to create an atmosphere of fear and a willingness to leave, the Serbian state ought to use very un-Balkan tactics: ‘The law must be enforced to the letter… fines and imprisonments, the ruthless application of all police dispositions, such as the prohibition of smuggling, cutting forests, damaging farmland, leaving dogs unchained, compulsory labour and any other measures that an experienced police force can contrive.’ In addition, property titles should be questioned and business permits withdrawn. Islam should be harassed and the daughters of Muslims forced into school with boys. But all of these measures were only the background to state-sponsored terror: ‘We should distribute weapons to our colonists. The old forms of Chetnik action should be organized and secretly assisted.’ The Montenegrins should be unleashed on the Albanians – ‘This conflict should be prepared by… our trusted people’ – and then once the Albanians replied to force with force, ‘the whole affair should be presented as a conflict between clans.’ Ćubrilović recognized the need to pacify Western opinion with the argument that any violence was just an old-fashioned tribal war. He therefore preferred to keep the Serbian Army out of action except when it was ‘secretly burning down Albanian villages and city quarters’. Chetniks should be used to suppress the Albanians whenever the action was under scrutiny so that the tribal nature could be emphasized.”[[769]](#footnote-769)

Ćubrilović’s remarks about the need to copy the Turks were also both cynical and insightful. As Almond comments, “in order to rid oneself of the domination and even the legacy of the hated ‘Turk’, his worst features must be assimilated into the Serbian character. Ottoman brutality had to be matched or even surpassed in order to save Serbdom from the Turkish legacy of an Albanianised Kosovo.”[[770]](#footnote-770) Moreover, Ćubrilović was prescient in seeing how useful the argument that “any violence was just an old-fashioned tribal war” would be to Serbian politicians. It was used for years by western diplomats as an excuse for their inactivity in relation to what may have tribal in a sense, but was also ideological – the implementation of the ideology of Greater Serbia.

The Serbian nationalists gave wildly exaggerated figures for the supposed emigration or expulsion of Serbs from Kosovo. In this they were supported by the Serbian Church, notably the leading archimandrite (now metropolitan), Atanasije Jevtić. The nationalists claimed that the main reason for Serbian emigration from Kosovo was Albanian atrocities, particularly, according to Atanasije Jevtić, the rape of girls and old women in villages and convents… “As one Albanian writer later noted, the impression given by many Serbian publications was ‘that Albanians rape anyone they can get hold of, old women, children, married women, teenagers, and that they rape them in houses, in public places, in the street…’ The only serious study of this issue was carried out by an independent committee of Serbian lawyers and human rights experts in 1990. Analysing all the statistics on rape and attempted rape for the 1980s, they found first of all that the frequency of this crime was significantly lower in Kosovo than in other parts of Yugoslavia: while inner Serbia, on average, had 2.43 cases per year for every 10,000 men in the population, the figure in Kosovo was 0.96. They also found that in the great majority of cases in Kosovo (71 per cent) the assailant and the victim were of the same nationality. Altogether the number of cases where an Albanian committed or attempted the rape of a Serbian woman was just thirty-one in the whole period from 1982 to 1989; an average of fewer than five per year…”[[771]](#footnote-771)

In fact, the main cause of Serbian emigration was economic. “Official reports on the reasons given for emigration from Kosovo by the 14,921 Serbs who left in the period 1983-7 present a very different picture. In 95 per cent of all cases the emigrants cited either economic or family reasons; in only eleven individual cases (less than 0.1 per cent) were pressures from Albanians given as the main cause of emigration.”[[772]](#footnote-772)

By 1991 the Serb-Montenegrin element in the Kosovan population had dwindled to 11 per cent, while the Albanian proportion had risen to 82 per cent. But the main reason for this was neither Serbian emigration nor Albanian immigration, but “the very high rate of abortion among the Serbs. By 1994 it was reported that Serbia had the highest abortion rate in the whole of Europe. For every 100 live births in inner Serbia there were 214 abortions; the equivalent figure for the whole population of Kosovo… was just twenty. While Albanian women were hostile on religious and cultural grounds to abortion, it had become an accepted part of cultural normality among the Serbs. On this point, at least, it could be said that they had only themselves to blame…”[[773]](#footnote-773)

On June 28, 1989, the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo, Milošević organized a jamboree at the Gazimestan shrine near Pristina, at which he observed that “the current anniversary was being held at a time when Serbia had finally regained its ‘state, national, and spiritual integrity’, and that the Serbian defeat of the fourteenth century, as well as later Serbian failures including those during the Tito period, had occurred owing to discord within the ranks of the Serb elite and political compromises by Serbia’s leaders. ‘Six centuries ago,’ Milošević pointed out, Serbia had fought the Turks and served as a ‘bulwark defending European culture, civilization and religion.’ Alluding to a perennial theme of Serbian culture, Milošević observed that although some might claim the Serbian nation had been defeated at the Battle of Kosovo, the episode could also be regarded as ‘heroic’ because of the Serbs’ valiant performance, and the fact that the victorious Turkish Sultan had been stabbed to death – the first Ottoman ruler to be killed in war – by a Serbian commander. Milošević was well aware that, although the 1389 battle had been technically a military defeat, most Serbs regarded the event and its aftermath as emblematic of how such a defeat can engender a stubbornness and fortitude to struggle against non-Serb control. He left it to his audience to ponder over the clear implication that perhaps the very traits that had allowed Serbs to overcome the tribulations of Ottoman rule might also assist them in dealing with their current concerns regarding Kosovo. Tactfully in view of his position as a high official in a multinational federation, Milošević urged toleration among the various nations and nationalities of socialist Yugoslavia, and also carefully avoided referring by name to the Albanians of Kosovo (who had boycotted the ceremony) or any other specific ethnic group. But near the end of his speech he reminded the gathering that six centuries after the Battle of Kosovo Serbs were ‘again today engaged in battles and facing battles’. Indeed he observed ominously that although the struggles presently involving the Serbs were ‘not armed battles… such things cannot be excluded. But no matter what their character, battles can’t be won without decisiveness, bravery and a readiness to sacrifice.’ Milošević had put his fellow Serbs on notice regarding what measures he might take, and what might be expected of them. In the excitement of the historical celebration, his audience appeared wildly eager to follow their determined new leader…”[[774]](#footnote-774)

Two years later, Yugoslavia descended into a bloodbath, for which both Serbs and Croats were inclined to blame almost all foreigners, both Yugoslav “foreigners” and the West, but not their own adherence to communism. “It is a sad irony,” writes Tony Judt, “that Tito’s success in keeping Yugoslavia out of Stalin’s grasp after 1948 contributed indirectly to the present morass by deluding his country’s own intelligentsia – and their foreign admirers – into forgetting their own past. The intellectuals of Belgrade and Zagreb told themselves and their readers fond tales of historical conflicts resolved, of national and social divisions overcome, of successful experiments in workers’ control, and so on. Similar fables were being spouted, of course, in Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe, but there nobody believed in them. That is the difference. Vesna Goldsworthy’s post-Marxist lucubrations on the them of colonial appropriation would provoke dismissive hilarity in Warsaw or Budapest today; but the shell-shocked victims of Yugoslavia’s collapse had yet to come to terms with their own damaged condition…”[[775]](#footnote-775)

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Meanwhile, in December, 1989 Ceausescu’s regime collapsed in Romania, and the Old Calendarists under Metropolitan Silvestru, acquired freedom. Persecution had continued right up to the end of the communist period. Thus “on June 5/18, 1988, several officials from the Grumăzeşti City Hall, Grumăzeşti County, entered the convent [of Brădiţel] followed by workmen in overalls, whom they had brought along to demolish the edifice. A confrontation between the forces of light and darkness took place. All of the nuns – young and old, healthy and infirm – formed a living barrier by encircling the new Church. Lifting their hands up to Heaven and with tears in their eyes, they implored the officials and the workmen not to demolish the Church, reminding them of the dread judgement of God and the eternal life that follows. Blinded by Satan, the officials remained unmoved. With the bells tolling, the nuns steeled themselves, resolving to die beneath the bulldozers. But God softened the hearts of the workmen, who, spiritually shaken by the devotion of the nuns, refused to demolish the Church, preferring rather to lose their jobs or even to have their hands cut off, as they had been threatened. One representative among the authorities opted for a compromise solution: fining the convent 18,000 lei and halting any further construction. Legal proceedings were initiated against the Abbess, Schema-nun Teofana (Nistor) (1928-1990), but her trial was repeatedly postponed. Meanwhile, the work [on the convent] continued, and on August 4/17, 1988, the arches for the roof were in place. Then, through the will of God, the Communist dictatorship came to an end on December 9/22, 1989, and everything turned out well for these monastic laborers in the garden of the Mother of God…”[[776]](#footnote-776)

# PART 6. THE FALL OF COMMUNISM? (1990 – 2000)

## 145. LIBERATION OR DECEPTION?

The apparent fall of communism throughout most of the Soviet bloc in 1989-91 raised hopes of a restoration of True Orthodoxy in Russia, which, if they seem naïve in retrospect, were nevertheless very real at the time. In retrospect, we can see that the changes introduced by glasnost’ and perestroika were less fundamental than at first appeared, and that the spirit and power of communism was far from dead when the red flag was pulled down from over the Kremlin on December 25, 1991. If some of the economic ideas of the revolution were discredited, its fundamental concepts – the replacement of the Church by the State, God by the people, Tradition by science, Spirit by matter – remained as firmly entrenched as ever.

Nevertheless, the changes were significant enough to indicate the beginning of a new era. If we seek for historical parallels, then perhaps the closest is that presented by the Edict of Milan in 313, when the Emperor St. Constantine the Great came to an agreement with the pagan emperor Licinius whereby the persecution of the Christians in the Roman empire was brought to an end. The problem for the Christians of the 1990s was: no Constantine was in sight, and what leadership there was squandered the opportunities presented to it.

Russian Orthodox Christians reacted to these changes in three different ways. The True Orthodox Christians of the Catacomb Church were cautious, fearing a deception. They were not convinced that the leopard had not changed its spots (Jeremiah 13.23), believing that the communists had merely assumed the mask of “democrats”, the wolves had simply put on sheep’s clothing while remaining inwardly as ravenous as before (Matthew 7.15). In general, therefore, they remained in the underground, not seeking to register their communities or acquire above-ground churches in which to worship. Outside Russia, on the other hand, most believers were displaying signs of “war weariness”; they wanted to believe that the Soviet Union had miraculously changed into a normal State overnight, that the KGB had disappeared, that the communists had repented, that the Moscow Patriarchate had ben transformed from an adulteress into a pure virgin…

Meanwhile, the Moscow Patriarchate (MP) – or “Soviet church”, as it was known among True Orthodox Christians - was fearful that its monopoly position in church life under the Soviets would be lost in the new democracy. Nevertheless, it took the opportunity presented by the new legislation to receive all the money budgeted for church restoration by the Russian parliament and open many churches (1830 were opened in the first nine months of 1990 alone). The third force in Russian Orthodox life, ROCOR, which throughout the Soviet period had taken a public position against the MP and in support of the True Orthodox Church, decided to open parishes on Russian soil and thereby provide an alternative for believers who on the one hand did not want to join the MP, but on the other hand were not prepared for the rigours of catacomb life.

However, the first question that had to be answered by all sides was: how were the political changes to be evaluated? Was the collective Antichrist really dead? If so, then had the end times, paradoxically, come to an end? Or was this only a temporary “breathing space” in which the Antichrist was preparing a new, subtler, and more deadly onslaught?

There were certainly important benefits to be gained from democratization. Thus the fall of communism came not a moment too soon for the beleaguered Catacomb Church, which was scattered and divided and desperately short of bishops and priests of unquestioned Orthodoxy and apostolic succession. The fall of the iron curtain enabled ROCOR to enter Russia and regenerate the hierarchy of the True Church.

Again, the introduction of freedom of speech and the press enabled millions of Soviet citizens to learn the truth about their state and church for the first time. On the basis of this knowledge, they could now seek entrance into the True Church without the fear of being sent to prison or the camps. In the wave of disillusion with post-Soviet democracy that followed in the mid-1990s, it was pointed out – rightly – that freedom is a two-edged weapon, which can destroy as well as give life, and that “freedom” had brought Russia poverty and crime as well as interesting newspapers. However, for the soul thirsting for truth there is no more precious gift than the freedom to seek and find; and that opportunity was now, at last, presented to the masses.

On the other hand, only a minority of Russians used this freedom to seek the truth that makes one truly, spiritually free. And so if the fall of communism in 1989-91 was a liberation, it was a liberation strangely lacking in joy. Orthodoxy was restored neither to the state nor to the official church, and the masses of the people remained unconverted. Ten years later, a priest of the MP could claim that “the regeneration of ecclesiastical life has become a clear manifestation of the miraculous transfiguration of Russia”.[[777]](#footnote-777) But behind the newly gilded cupolas reigned heresy and corruption on a frightening scale.

Thus Fr. Paul Adelheim, an MP priest who was killed in mysterious circumstances in the early 2000s, wrote: “Spiritual life is being destroyed and annihilated – moreover, it is being annihilated deliberately, of course, by the Moscow Patriarchate itself. It is destroying what it is possible to destroy in the Church… Our faith in the Church has been substituted by ideology. The Church has taken the place of the former Politburo of the USSR. That is what they call it now. They say that Russia is headed by chekists [KGB agents] and churchmen. It turns out in fact that there is no place in this Church for Christ.”

Moreover, surveys showed that although the numbers of those confessing themselves to be Orthodox Christians had risen[[778]](#footnote-778), the correctness and depth of belief of these new Christians was open to question[[779]](#footnote-779)… More people called themselves “Orthodox” than confessed to believing in God! As time passed, the corrupting and divisive effects of Russian “democracy” became more and more evident. Pornography and crime of all kinds increased dramatically; and in the opinion of many it was now more difficult to bring up children in true Christian piety than it had been in the Soviet period. The general level of culture also declined; and the freedom given to religion turned out to be more to the advantage of all kinds of sects and false religions than to True Orthodoxy… In fact, it was not so much a real religious renaissance as what Bishop Theophan the Recluse had prophesied over a century before: “Although the Christian name will be heard everywhere, and everywhere will be visible churches and ecclesiastical ceremonies, all this will be just appearances, and within there will be true apostasy. On this soil the Antichrist will be born...”[[780]](#footnote-780)

Of course, “all things work together for good for those who love God” (Romans 8.28). And however dispiriting the 1990s were, they did enable important lessons to be learned for those who wanted to learn them. Among the most important of these was the realization that “communism” and “democracy” were not simple opposites, the one evil and the other good. As long as Russians denounced communism but praised democracy, without seeing the close historical and philosophical kinship between these two western heresies, it was impossible for them to understand the real roots of the revolution and therefore return to True Orthodoxy. But already early in the 1990s Orthodox Russians were beginning to see the evil and antichristian nature, not only of the October Bolshevik, but also of the February Democratic revolution…

A similar process was taking place in Romania. Thus Anca Stati writes that there was an attempt to repent of the sins of communism immediately after the so-called revolution of 1990. Students and many young people went on the streets and occupied the University Square in Bucharest, demanding a strong condemnation of communism and of all the communists. They wanted all communists to be banned from public office. They claimed that the revolution had been confiscated by neo-communists and they were right! They were saying prayers and singing Christian songs. The official Church did not support them at all. Nor did the government. They used the mass media to denigrate people participating to the event. In order to disperse them, President Iliescu, a former communist, called for the mineworkers of Jiu Valley to ”re-establish order and discipline''. Most of the participants in the movement were beaten and arrested. God knows what happened to many of them…[[781]](#footnote-781)

That the return of democracy would not bring with it a real cleansing of political life became evident when it none of the communist persecutors of the previous seventy years throughout Eastern Europe were brought to trial for their crimes. Consequently, one group of “repentant” communists, sensing the signs of the political times, seized power in 1991 in a “democratic” coup and immediately formed such close and dependent ties with its western allies that the formerly advanced (if inefficient) economy of Russia was transformed into a scrap-heap of obsolescent factories, on the one hand, and a source of cheap raw materials for the West, on the other.[[782]](#footnote-782) Another group, playing on the sense of betrayal felt by many, formed a nationalist opposition – but an opposition characterized by hatred, envy and negativism rather than a constructive understanding of the nation’s real spiritual needs and identity. Still others, using the contacts and dollars acquired in their communist days, went into “business” – that is, a mixture of crime, extortion and the worst practices of capitalism.

It is little wonder that in many churches the prayer to be delivered “from the bitter torment of atheist rule” continued to be chanted…

Meanwhile, Freemasonry, which had been banned at the Fourth Communist International in Moscow in 1922, made a comeback 70 years later. Thus the Masonic historian Richard Rhoda writes: “This writer has been advised in a letter of April 22, 1996 of the following by George Dergachev, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Russia. On January 14, 1992, the first regular Lodge ‘Harmony’ was constituted in Moscow by the Grand Lodge Nationale Française. This lodge now has 41 members.

“September 8, 1993 will be a memorable day in Russian Freemasonry, for three more lodges were constituted by the Grand Lodge Nationale Française: Lotus No. 2 in Moscow with 36 current members; New Astrea No. 3 in St. Petersburg with 19 current members; and Gamaioun No. 4 in Voronezh with 13 current members…

“M.W. Bro. Dergachev writes: ‘Most of the Brothers have graduated from the Universities. Among them there are scientists, journalists, businessmen, bankers, officers of the Army, Navy, policemen, engineers, writers, producers and lawyers.’

“These four Regular Daughter Lodges of the Grand Lodge Nationale Française formed the Grand Lodge of Russia on June 24, 1995. In addition to their Mother Grand Lodge, they have been recognized by the Grand Lodges of Poland, Hungary and New York. The Grand Master and Bro. Vladimir Djanguirian, his Grand Secretary, attended by invitation the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of New York this past May…”[[783]](#footnote-783)

In this way was fulfilled the prophecy of the Catacomb Church Confessor Archimandrite Theodore (Rafanovsky) (+1975): "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…” St. Theodore went on to say: “Priests will come from the West who will both go to hell themselves and will drag you down with them..." Here he was probably referring to the entrance of ROCOR into Russia in 1990, and the falling away of most of its leadership in 2007, when it entered into union with the MP…

In the midst of this anarchy filled with crime and false religion, many began to long nostalgically for the “order” of the Soviet period, considering that the cheapness of Soviet sausages outweighed the destruction of tens of millions of souls through Soviet violence and atheist propaganda. Like the children of Israel who became disillusioned with the rigorous freedom of the desert, they began to long once more for the fleshpots of Egypt, for the slavery which had nevertheless guaranteed them a certain standard of living and to which they had become accustomed. But unlike the Israelites, the wanderers in the desert of post-Soviet Russia had no Moses to urge them ever onwards to the Promised Land.

True, they felt the need for such a leader; and if many still longed for the return of a Stalin, there were others who preferred the image of Tsar Nicholas II, whose increasing veneration among the people (if not among the hierarchs) was one of the most encouraging phenomena of the 1990s. But veneration for the pre-revolutionary tsars was not going to bring about the appearance of a post-revolutionary tsar unless that veneration was combined with *repentance*. Few understood that the people had to become worthy of such a tsar by a return to the True Church and a life based on the commandments of God. Otherwise, if they continued to worship the golden calf, the new Moses, if such a one appeared, would break the tablets of the new law before their eyes. And if they continued to follow the new Dathans and Abirams of the heretical MP, then under their feet, too, the earth would open up – or they would be condemned to wander another forty years in the desert, dying before they reached the promised land of a cleansed and Holy Russia.

## 146. KGB AGENTS IN CASSOCKS

In June, 1990, the Hierarchical Council of the MP elected Metropolitan Alexis (Ridiger) as the new patriarch. This was the man whom the Furov report of 1970 had called the most pro-Soviet of all the bishops, a KGB agent since 1958 who had been prepared to spy to the KGB even on his own patriarch, and who, when he was Metropolitan of Tallinn, said: “In the Soviet Union, citizens are never arrested for their religious or ideological convictions”.[[784]](#footnote-784) On being elected, he immediately, on July 4/17, 1990, the day of the martyrdom of Tsar Nicholas II, announced that he was praying for the preservation of the communist party!

After that gaffe, being a clever man, Patriarch Alexis quickly recovered his balance, his sense of which way the wind was blowing; and there was no further overt support of the communists. True, he did attach his signature, in December, 1990, to a letter by 53 well-known political, academic and literary figures who urged Gorbachev to take urgent measures to deal with the state of crisis in the country, speaking of “… the destructive dictatorship of people who are shameless in their striving to take ownership of territory, resources, the intellectual wealth and labour forces of the country whose name is the USSR”.[[785]](#footnote-785) But the patriarch quickly disavowed his signature; and a few weeks later, after the deaths in Vilnius, he declared that the killings were “a great political mistake – in church language a sin”. Then, in May, he publicly disagreed with a prominent member of the hardline Soiuz bloc, who had said that the resources of the army and the clergy should be drawn on extensively to save the people and the homeland. In Alexis’ view, these words could be perceived as a statement of preparedness to use the Church for political purposes. The patriarch recalled his words of the previous autumn: the Church and the Faith should not be used as a truncheon.[[786]](#footnote-786) By June, the patriarch had completed his remarkable transformation from dyed-in-the-wool communist to enthusiastic democrat, saying to Yeltsin: “May God help you win the election”.

Still more striking was his apparent rejection of Sergianism. Thus in an interview granted to *Izvestia* on June 6 he said: “This year has freed us from the state’s supervision. Now we have the moral right to say that the Declaration of Metropolitan Sergius has disappeared into the past and no longer guides us… The metropolitan cooperated with criminal usurpers. This was his tragedy…. Today we can say that falsehood is interspersed in his Declaration, which stated as its goal ‘placing the Church in a proper relationship with the Soviet government’. But this relationship – and in the Declaration it is clearly defined as being the submission of the Church to the interests of governmental politics – is exactly that which is incorrect from the point of view of the Church… Of the people, then, to whom these compromises, silence, forced passivity or expressions of loyalty that were permitted by the Church leadership in those days, have caused pain – of these people, not only before God, but also before them, I ask forgiveness, understanding and prayers.”[[787]](#footnote-787)

And yet, in an interview given to *Komsomolskaia Pravda* only two months earlier, he had said: “The most important thing for the Church is to preserve itself for the people, so that they should be able to have access to the Chalice of Christ, to the Chalice of Communion… There is a rule when a Christian has to take on himself a sin in order to avoid a greater sin… There are situations in which a person, a Christian must sacrifice his personal purity, his personal perfection, so as to defend something greater… Thus in relation to Metropolitan Sergius and his successors in the leadership of the Church under Soviet power, they had to tell lies, they had to say that everything was normal with us. And yet the Church was being persecuted. Declarations of political loyalty were being made. The fullness of Christian life, charity, almsgiving, the Reigning icon of the Mother of God were also renounced. Compromises were made.”

In other words, Sergianism, though sinful, was justified. It may have “disappeared into the past”, but if similar circumstances arise again, the “sacrifice” of personal purity can and should be made again!…[[788]](#footnote-788)

The patriarch showed that the poison of Sergianism was in him still during the attempted coup of August, 1991. When the Russian vice-president, Alexander Rutskoy, approached him on the morning of the 19th, the patriarch pleaded “illness” and refused to see him. When he eventually did issue a declaration – on the evening of the 20th, and again in the early hours of the 21st – the impression made was, in Fr. Gleb Yakunin’s words, “rather weak”.[[789]](#footnote-789) He called on all sides to avoid bloodshed, but did not specifically condemn the plotters.

As Jane Ellis comments: “Though Patriarch Alexis II issued statements during the coup, they were bland and unspecific, and he was widely thought to have waited to see which way the wind was blowing before committing himself to issuing them. It was rather the priests in the White House – the Russian Parliament building – itself, such as the veteran campaigner for religious freedom, Fr. Gleb Yakunin, as well as the Christians among those manning the barricades outside, who helped to overthrow the Communist Party, the KGB and the Soviet system.”[[790]](#footnote-790)

It was not until Wednesday morning that the patriarch sent his representative, Deacon Andrew Kurayev, to the Russian parliament building, by which time several dissident priests were already established there. And it was two priests of the Russian Church Abroad, Fr. Nicholas Artemov from Munich and Fr. Victor Usachev from Moscow, who celebrated the first supplicatory service to the New Martyrs of Russia on the balcony of the White House. Not to be outdone, the patriarchate immediately responded with its own prayer service, and at some time during the same day the patriarch anathematized all those who had taken part in organizing the coup.

By these actions the patriarch appeared to have secured his position vis-à-vis Yeltsin’s government, and on August 27, Yeltsin attended a memorial service in the Dormition cathedral of the Kremlin, at which the patriarch hailed the failure of the coup, saying that “the wrath of God falls upon the children of disobedience”.[[791]](#footnote-791) So in the space of thirteen months, the patriarch had passed from a pro-communist, anti-democratic to an anti-communist, pro-democratic stance. This “flexibility” should have surprised nobody; for the essence of sergianism, the root heresy of the Moscow Patriarchate, is *adaptation to the world, and to whatever the world believes and praises.*

In September, 1991, the patriarch said: “A church that has millions of faithful cannot go into the catacombs. The hierarchy of the church has taken the sin on their souls: the sin of silence and of lying for the good of the people in order that they not be completely removed from real life. In the government of the diocese and as head of the negotiations for the patriarchate of Moscow, I also had to cede one point in order to defend another. I ask pardon of God, I ask pardon, understanding and prayers of all those whom I harmed through the concessions, the silence, the forced passivity or the expressions of loyalty that the hierarchy may have manifested during that period.”[[792]](#footnote-792)

This is closer to self-justification than repentance (and was in any case contradicted by later statements). It is similar to the statement of Metropolitan Nicholas (Corneanu) of Banat of the Romanian Patriarchate, who confessed that he had collaborated with the Securitate, the Romanian equivalent of the KGB, and had defrocked the priest Fr. Calciu for false political reasons, but nevertheless declared that if he had not made such compromises he would have been forced to abandon his post, “which in the conditions of the time would not have been good for the Church”. In other words, as Vladimir Kozyrev writes: “It means: ‘I dishonoured the Church and my Episcopal responsibility, I betrayed those whom I had to protect, I scandalized my flock. But all this I had to do for the good of the Church!’”[[793]](#footnote-793)

In another interview in 1997 Patriarch Alexis said, referring to the Church in the time of Patriarch Tikhon: “The Church could not, did not have the right, to go into the catacombs. She remained together with the people and drank to the dregs the cup of sufferings that fell to its lot.”[[794]](#footnote-794) Patriarch Alexis here forgot to mention that Patriarch Tikhon specifically blessed Michael Zhizhilenko, the future Hieromartyr Maximus of Serpukhov, to become a secret catacomb bishop if the pressure on the Church from the State became too great. As for his claim that the sergianists shared the cup of the people’s suffering, this must be counted as conscious hypocrisy. It is well known that the Soviet hierarchs lived a life of considerable luxury, while lifting not a finger for the Catacomb Christians and dissidents sent to torments and death in KGB prisons!

On November 9, 2001, the patriarch threw off the mask of repentance completely, stating in defence of the declaration: “This was a clever step by which Metropolitan Sergius tried to save the church and clergy. In declaring that the members of the Church want to see themselves as part of the motherland and want to share her joys and sorrows, he tried to show to those who were persecuting the church and who were destroying it that we, the children of the church, want to be loyal citizens so that the affiliation of people with the church would not place them outside the law.”[[795]](#footnote-795) So the greatest act of betrayal in Russian history was “a clever step”, which did not destroy the Judas and those who followed him but “saved the church and clergy”.!

After the failure of the putsch articles began to appear revealing the links of the Church hierarchy with the KGB. Rattled, the patriarch wrote to Frs. Gleb Yakunin and George Edelstein that their articles were “full of the spirit of unscrupulous blasphemy against the Church.”[[796]](#footnote-796)

One of the biggest fruits of glasnost’ – which did not, however, lead to a real ecclesiastical perestroika – was the confirmation in January, 1992, by a Commission of the Presidium of the Russian Supreme Soviet investigating the causes and circumstances of the 1991 putsch, that for several decades at least the leaders of the Moscow Patriarchate had been KGB agents. Members of the commission - L. Ponomarev, V. Polosin and Fr. Gleb Yakunin – obtained access to the records of the fourth, Church department of the KGB’s Fifth Directorate (in which the future president of Russia, Vladimir Putin, had worked), and revealed that Metropolitans Juvenal of Krutitsa, Pitirim of Volokolamsk, Philaret of Kiev and Philaret of Minsk were all KGB agents, with the codenames “Adamant”, “Abbat”, “Antonov” and “Ostrovsky”.

This “news” was hardly unexpected. In 1989 Kharchev, Chairman of the Council for Religious Affairs, confirmed that the Russian Orthodox Church was rigorously controlled by the Central Committee of the Communist Party, especially its Ideological Department, and by the KGB.[[797]](#footnote-797) Again, Victor Sheimov, a former KGB major with responsibilities for upgrading the KGB’s communications security system until his defection in 1980, described the Fifth Directorate as being “responsible for suppressing ideological dissent, running the Soviet Orthodox Church and laying the groundwork for the First Chief Directorate’s subversive promotion of favourable opinion about the country’s position and policy.”[[798]](#footnote-798) One of Sheimov’s jobs was to draft agents to infiltrate the “Soviet Orthodox Church”. Again, in 1992 a former KGB agent, A. Shushpanov, described his experiences working in the Moscow Patriarchate’s Department of External Ecclesiastical Relations. He said that most of the people working there were in fact KGB agents.[[799]](#footnote-799)

But it was the Commission’s report on March 6 that contained the most shocking revelations: “KGB agents, using such aliases as Sviatoslav, Adamant, Mikhailov, Nesterovich, Ognev and others, made trips abroad, organised by the Russian Orthodox Department of External Relations [which was headed by Metropolitan Cyril (Gundiaev), the future patriarch], performing missions assigned to them by the leadership of the KGB. The nature of their missions shows that this department was inseparably linked with the state and that it had emerged as a covert centre of KGB agents among the faithful.”

Again: “The Commission draws the attention of the Russian Orthodox Church leadership to the fact that the Central Committee of the CPSU and KGB agencies have used a number of church bodies for their purposes by recruiting and planting KGB agents. Such deep infiltration by intelligence service agents into religious associations poses a serious threat to society and the State. Agencies that are called upon to ensure State security can thus exert uncontrolled impact on religious associations numbering millions of members, and through them on the situation at home and abroad.”[[800]](#footnote-800)

The findings of the Commission included:- (i) the words of the head of the KGB Yury Andropov to the Central Committee sometime in the 1970s: “The organs of state security keep the contacts of the Vatican with the Russian Orthodox Church under control…”; (ii) “At the 6th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver, the religious delegation from the USSR contained 47 (!) agents of the KGB, including religious authorities, clergy and technical personnel” (July, 1983); (iii) “The most important were the journeys of agents ‘Antonov’, ‘Ostrovsky’ and ‘Adamant’ to Italy for conversations with the Pope of Rome on the question of further relations between the Vatican and the Russian Orthodox Church, and in particular regarding the problems of the uniates” (1989).[[801]](#footnote-801)

The Commission also discovered that the patriarch himself was an agent with the codename “Drozdov”. This was not made public because, writes Fen Montaigne, “members of the parliamentary commission had told the patriarch that they would not name him as an agent if he began cleaning house in the church and acknowledging the breadth of cooperation between the church and the KGB. ‘So far, we have kept silence because we wanted to give the patriarch a chance,’ said Alexander Nezhny, a journalist who said his comparison of the archives and church bulletins convinced him that Alexis II is indeed ‘Drozdov’.”[[802]](#footnote-802)

Later investigations confirmed the fact. Thus on March 18, 1996 the Estonian newspaper *Postimees* published the following KGB report from the Estonian SSR: “Agent ‘Drozdov’, born in 1929, a priest of the Orthodox Church, has a higher education, a degree in theology, speaks Russian and Estonian perfectly, and some limited German. He enlisted on February 28, 1958 out of patriotic feelings in order to expose and drive out the anti-Soviet elements among the Orthodox clergy, with whom he has connections, which represents an overriding interest to the KGB agencies. At the time of enlistment it was taken into consideration that in the future (after securing his practical work) he would be promoted through the available channels to Bishop of Tallinn and Estonia. In the period of his collaboration with the organs of the KGB, ‘Drozdov’ has proved himself in a positive manner, is accurate in his reports, energetic and sociable. He understands theological matters and international situations well, is eager to carry out tasks given him by us and has already presented a good quantity of worthy material… After securing the agent in practical jobs for the agencies of state security concretely worked out, we intend to use him to further our interests by sending him into the capitalist countries as a member of ecclesiastical organizations.”[[803]](#footnote-803)

Nevertheless, what had been revealed was so shocking that the parliamentary commission was closed down by Ruslan Khasbulatov, the President of the Supreme Soviet, at the insistence, according to Ponomarev, of Patriarch Alexis and the head of the KGB, Yevgeny Primakov.

One of the commission’s members, Fr. Gleb Yakunin, was accused of betraying state secrets to the United States and threatened with a private persecution. Fr. Gleb remained defiant. He wrote to the Patriarch in 1994: “If the Church is not cleansed of the taint of the spy and informer, it cannot be reborn. Unfortunately, only one archbishop – Archbishop Chrysostom of Lithuania – has had the courage publicly to acknowledge that in the past he worked as an agent, and has revealed his codename: RESTAVRATOR. No other Church hierarch has followed his example, however.

“The most prominent agents of the past include DROZDOV – the only one of the churchmen to be officially honoured with an award by the KGB of the USSR, in 1988, for outstanding intelligence services – ADAMANT, OSTROVSKY, MIKHAILOV, TOPAZ AND ABBAT. It is obvious that none of these or the less exalted agents is preparing to repent. On the contrary, they deliver themselves of pastoral maxims on the allegedly neutral character of informing on the Church, and articles have appeared in the Church press justifying the role of the informer as essential for the survival of the Church in an anti-religious state. The codenames I discovered in the archives of the KGB belong to the top hierarchs of the Moscow Patriarchate.”

After citing this letter, Vasily Mitrokhin, former chief archivist of the KGB, and Professor Christopher Andrew of Cambridge University comment: “The letter to Aleksi II was unprecedented in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church – for, as the Patriarch must surely have been aware, DROZDOV, the most important of the KGB agents discovered by Father Gleb in the KGB archives, was in fact himself…”[[804]](#footnote-804)

In April, 1992, Archbishop Chrysostom of Vilnius said in an interview: “I cooperated with the KGB… but I was not a stool-pigeon…. Yes, we – or, at any rate, I, and I am saying this in the first place about myself – cooperated with the KGB. I cooperated, I gave my signature, I had regular meetings, I gave reports. I have my pseudonym or nickname, as they say – ‘Restavrator’. I cooperated with them consciously so as insistently to pursue my own church line – a patriotic line, too, as I understood it, with the help of these organs. I was never a stool-pigeon, I was not an informer… But together with those among us hierarchs, there are still more among the priests, there is a mass of unworthy, immoral people. It was this immorality, in the absence of a church court among us, that the KGB used. They defended them from us, the ruling bishops, so that we could not punish them.”[[805]](#footnote-805)

In the same year he declared to the Council of Bishops of the MP: “In our Church there are genuine members of the KGB, who have made head-spinning careers; for example, Metropolitan Methodius of Voronezh. He is a KGB officer [code-name PAUL], an atheist, a liar, who is constantly advised by the KGB. The Synod was unanimously against such a bishop, but we had to take upon us such a sin. And then what a rise he had!” According to ex-KGB agent Konstantin Preobrazhensky, Methodius was in fact not only a KGB agent, but “a regular officer of the GRU, the Chief Intelligence Directorate of the Defence Ministry”. In the KGB they call such people ‘officers of deep cover’. There are quite a few of them in today’s Moscow Patriarchate.”[[806]](#footnote-806)

At the same Council, a commission of eight MP bishops headed by Bishop Alexander of Kostroma was formed to investigate the charges of collaboration with the KGB. This commission has up to now (twenty-two years later) produced absolutely nothing! In view of the lack of a clear-out of KGB hierarchs, it remains true that, as the saying went, “the MP is the last surviving department of the KGB” or “the second administration of the Soviet state”.

Writing in 1995, John Dunlop concluded that “the overwhelming majority of the current one hundred and nineteen bishops of the Moscow Patriarchate were ordained to the episcopacy prior to August of 1991. This suggests that each of these bishops was carefully screened and vetted by both the ideological apparatus of the Communist Party and by the KGB.”[[807]](#footnote-807) Keston College came to the same conclusion.[[808]](#footnote-808)

In fact, according to Preobrazhensky, “*Absolutely all* [my italics – V.M.] the bishops and the overwhelming majority of the priests worked with the KGB. After all, the Church was considered to be a hostile medium, and it had to be controlled through agents. Even the very mechanism of appointing bishops allowed only agents there.

“Bishops were put into the nomenklatura of the Central Committee of the CPSU, and so each one was confirmed by the Ideological department. And what department sent documents there for important personnel appointments? You’re right: the KGB. The certificate on the future bishop was prepared by the Fifth administration, which carried out a general watch over the Church, together with the spy service, if he had been even once abroad. Each of the certificates ended with the same phrase: ‘He has been cooperating since such-and-such a year’.

“This was precisely the most important thing for the Central Committee of the CPSU! This phrase witnessed to the fact that the future bishop was not only loyal to Soviet power, but was hanging from it by a hook: after all, there are unfailingly compromising materials on every agent! And this means that no dissident outbursts were to be expected from this bishop…”[[809]](#footnote-809)

Other leading hierarchs in the Soviet bloc were communist agents. We have already mentioned Patriarch Ilia of Georgia, an agent since 1962. Metropolitan Savva of Poland, the present head of the Polish Church, was recruited by the Polish communist security forces in 1966, with the codename “Yurek”. Another Polish Church leader, Metropolitan Basil, was also an agent.[[810]](#footnote-810)

## 147. THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE IN THE 1990s

With the KGB firmly back in the saddle, it is not surprising that the corruption in the Moscow Patriarchate continued unchecked. One anonymous member of the MP analyzed the situation as follows: “In spite of the liberation and a certain revival of Church life in recent years, her real situation has not really changed markedly for the better. What is the use of an increasing number of baptisms if out of a thousand baptized scarcely one or two can be found who want to become Christians in our sense of the word, but practically everyone considers themselves to be ‘believers’ (in whom?)? What is the use of a growing number of publications of spiritual literature when clearly anti-church and heretical literature is spread at a far faster rate? What is the use of mass weddings when the number of abortions and divorces grows much faster, not to speak of every other kind of sexual immorality? What is the use of transmitting Divine services on television when the great majority of observers of these programmes do not themselves want to pray in church, preferring to play the role of ‘fans’, while those who seriously live the life of the Church hardly watch television? What is the point of teaching the Law of God in schools when all the rest of the school programme remains atheist and a pupil of the sixth class ‘goes through’ the Bible stories in the section of the literature course entitled ‘fairytales’, and takes exams on the history of the ancient world and the sections on Christianity in accordance with exactly the same textbook as fifteen years ago? And even if there is a serious attitude towards the Law of God in the school, what is the point of it if the child’s atheist parents do not teach him Church life, confession and the sacraments, prayer and fasting? Will such learning profit him?

“We are not talking in detail here about the de facto fall of Orthodoxy in West Ukraine…, about the rapid growth and spread of Latinism, of Protestantism, of the special heresy that strives to unite Christianity with Judaism, of Krishnaism, ‘non-traditional medicine’, astrology, sorcery and the most various kinds of satanism. We are also not talking here about the open campaign of moral corruption through all the means of mass communication, which are almost exclusively in the hands of the enemies of the Church and the fatherland.

“The main thing is that our Church [the MP] has practically renounced the ideals of Holy Russia and Orthodox Statehood as moral-dogmatic standards, but has become entwined in the rabble of democratic politicians, and while breathing a sigh of nostalgia for the Bolsheviks has begun in the persons of her hierarchs to bless all the initiatives of the new power. This has led to our present position of being unable to resist this concentrated and deeply positioned attack of the enemy forces against the Church, which, moreover, has to a significant degree allowed the enemy to enter the Church and sow his tares in her midst. For example, how can we resist the widely disseminated teaching of Protopriest Alexander Men, who departed far from Orthodoxy, but which has been condemned as a heresy by nobody? Only one small, albeit very well written brochure has appeared in a very limited edition. In the conditions of democracy everyone receives blessings for everything, and in the first place those who do evil are blessed for their evil activities. And we have to look on with horror as the flock of Christ is scattered by wolves before our very eyes…”[[811]](#footnote-811)

Archpriest Lev Lebedev, a convert from the MP to ROCOR, was still more trenchant in his criticism: “Only after… 1990, in a situation and atmosphere of *relative* civil liberty, and especially after the staged supposed ‘putsch’ of the dissolution of the CPSU in 1991 and even of Soviet power in 1993 (!), did the following *become completely clear*. The ‘Patriarchate’ in the former Sovdepia was *not at all an unfree, enslaved ‘Church of silence’,* as it was sometimes called. Its hierarchy had already for a very long time, *not at all under coercion*, not under pressure, but completely voluntarily and from the soul, been attempting to please the Soviet regime. They were not the ‘new martyrs’ for the Church that they presented themselves as to their flock, and which is how some observers from outside were inclined to see them. The point is that the episcopate of the ‘patriarchate’ constructed by Sergius had more and more with every succeeding generation (replenishment) *truly fraternised and become friendly with* the partocrats, the nomenklatura of the CPSS, to the extent that the nomenklatura degenerated morally and ideologically! So that the bishops of the ‘patriarchate’, and especially the highest ones, that is, those who held *real power* in the Church, became one with the partocrats *in spirit*, in their manner of thinking, even, to a large extent, in their language (the use of stock phrases from the newspapers in their sermons and speeches had been noted long before). If there is anything more despicable in the world than the Soviet ‘cultural intelligentsia’, then it can only be the episcopate of the Moscow ‘patriarchate’! The princes (and ‘princelets’) of the church, exactly like the party boyars, began to be distinguished by an unbelievable haughtiness and arrogance towards those subject to them, and by the basest servility towards those above them, surrounding themselves with houses, dacha-palaces, crowds of toady-lackeys and every kind of luxury. Just like the partocrats, the bloated bishops of the ‘patriarchate’ became *thieves from the public purse* and swindlers, and acquired an amazing capacity to look with honest, clear eyes on an interlocutor or at their flock and deliberately deceive them in the most convincing manner. Their mendacity, their infinite mendacity almost in everything became a real second nature of the ‘patriarchal’ hierarchy. ‘Evil communications…’ If *ecumenism* made the Moscow ‘patriarchate’ *one* in spirit with all the heretics, and even with non-Christians, with whom it entered into spiritual communion through joint prayers, then *sergianism* made it *one* in spirit with the partocracy. Now, when the very *partocracy* has abandoned even the communist ideology that held it together, and even its own party, so as to become openly private owners of the huge resources stolen from the country and the people, and for that reason has ‘rebranded’ itself as *democracy*, while holding power in Russia as before, the ‘patriarchate’, being as before one with it, serves it on mutually beneficial terms. However, as we have seen, from now on the ‘patriarchate’ has started more and more openly to orient itself on the real masters of the situation – *the Jews.*

“Like all smart dealers ‘of this world’, the bishops of ‘the patriarchate’ are no longer able to maintain real ecclesiastical brotherhood and friendship in their relationships with each other. Jealousy, envy, enmity, intrigues and denunciations against each other have become *the norm* of their mutual relations. This has been transmitted to the clergy. If there are several priests in a parish, there can never be true friendship between them; jealousy and envy have become the norm. There is no point even speaking about *Christian love* among the clergy.

“’The fish begins to rot from the head.’ This condition and behaviour of the hierarchy of the Moscow ‘patriarchate’ has been transferred, not without opposition, to the lower levels – through the middle clergy to the people, the flock, where it received the most powerful and long-lasting resistance. But with time even the flock ‘gave in’. In the mass of the Christians of the churches of the ‘patriarchate’, mutual *love* has become extremely scarce; more and more its place has been taken by jealousy, envy and the most terrible bitterness against each other (especially on the kliroses and at the money ‘desks’), a bitterness such as you will not find in secular establishments! In the last 10 years this has reached the level of pathological fear of each other in connection with suspicions of *witchcraft*! Many in the churches now fear to receive a prosphora or boiled wheat or a candle from each other… There where faith has withered there have grown up, like poisonous mushrooms, the most varied superstitions! And, you know, they really do practise witchcraft! And not only in the villages, but also in the cities, moreover completely educated people! They learn from each other methods of ‘black’ and ‘white’ magic, spells, ‘charms’ and ‘anti-charms’. Sorcerers send their ‘patients’ to certain priests, and these in their turn – to sorcerers. Healer-sorcerers have appeared in the midst of the clergy… They go to him in droves, not only from the diocese, but also from other regions. The profit from it is very large. Batiushka generously shares it with the bishop, and *for that reason* the bishop does not touch him, in spite of the outrage of his brethren and some of the believers!… Suffering from spells and the evil eye have become very widespread illnesses amongst parishioners. Medicine in such cases is useless, it cannot even establish a diagnosis. And people suffer terribly! You should see (especially in the countryside) this bewitched, hunched-up, deformed humanity! And all this is *from their own* people, as a result of envy and revenge….

“There where hatred has taken the place of love, you can say what you like, only it is not *the Church of Christ*, and especially not the Russian Orthodox Church.

“The *quality* of faith has changed to an unrecognizable extent. To put it more bluntly, among people of that social milieu where to this day they sincerely suppose that an abandoned church is very suitable for a lavatory, among people of this milieu faith has long ago been turned into some church-like *paganism*, where everything comes down to ‘sacrifices’ to God, so that He may not punish them, or give them something they are asking for. Among people of a higher cultural level, alongside this a thirst for ‘spiritual experiences’ is also noticeable. But if there is no grace of the Holy Spirit and the lofty feelings produced by it, then they are trying to *imagine* them, that is, artificially create them. The result is ‘spiritual deception’ in the form of various levels of exaltation, leading right to psychological and mental illness of one or another level. So that now among believing intelligenty the most zealous are always – without fail and necessarily – psychologically *sick people.* On this soil especially luxuriant blooms that have flowered in the ‘patriarchate’ have been the manifestations of false ‘eldership’ and the ‘deification’ of young archimandrites by demonized hysterics. In contrast to St. John of Kronstadt, the archimandrites (igumens, hieromonks and other ‘grace-filled batiushkas’) do not drive such people away from themselves, but in every way encourage them, sometimes creating out of these female worshippers veritable bands that morally (and sometimes even physically!) terrorize the other believers. This terrible phenomenon already has a marked antichristian character. One of the female worshippers of one such archimandrite very precisely said: ‘Batiushka is our God!’ What stands behind this is the thirst to have a ‘living god’, a man-god, whom one can make an idol of in one’s life. The epoch of the ‘cult of personality’ did not pass in vain. How many hundred and thousands of souls throughout Russia have been hopelessly spoiled by this newly appeared ‘elders’, ‘grace-filled’ instructors and ‘wonder-workers’! True eldership ceased long ago. Some widely venerated monastics from the Trinity – St. Sergius Lavra, the Pskov Caves monastery, the Riga desert and other places, however one may respect them, cannot be called elders. If only because they *were silent* through all the years of Khruschev’s mockery of the Church, and are silent now, after the speech of the ‘patriarch’ before the rabbis. Moreover, they do not bless others to speak. Why? Because the ‘patriarchate’ has constantly instilled and instills in its flock that in the Church ‘*obedience is higher than fasting and prayer*’, having forgotten to explain that this refers to the *real* Church, and not to the false one! These are undoubtedly sincere and assiduous monastics; they also take the ‘patriarchate’ for the Russian Orthodox Church, that is, they also *believe in the lie*, encouraging those who trust them to believe in it, too…

“We must note that there were and still are completely honourable people in the bosom of the ‘patriarchate’, people who have sincerely converted to God. But they were always in the minority, and now all the more so, becoming all the time fewer, and they do not have the opportunity to *determine* Church life. Left only with their human strength, they can do little, although they present an at times exemplary model of asceticism and self-denial.

“The phenomena of spiritual deformity, canonical transgressions and moral sins are possible and, moreover, *natural* at any time of the existence of any local Church, insofar as it is a community not of ‘the pure and sinless’, but precisely of sinful, damaged people. The Church must therefore be a *spiritual hospital* for its members, for the flock. If the Church firmly holds to the Orthodox Faith and the holy canons ‘work’ in it in relation both to those above, and those below, to everyone (!), then it is a truly living organism of the Body of Christ, which is given life and raised up to God by the Holy Spirit. Then the excesses of various apostasies, crimes and transgressions of the canons in it are just that – *excesses*, *instances* on the background of what is *on the whole a normal and correct* life. But if the Church falls away both from the Faith and from the canonical order, it ceases to be the Body of Christ, that is, the Church, being turned into a community in which the virtues and correct conditions become occasional *exceptions*, while *the general background* and ‘norm of life’ turns out to be crime, apostasy and transgression… In such an inverted order of things the Church situation does not help, but *hinders* the salvation of those who trustingly enter it, it simply destroys them. Such, we see, is the situation in the Moscow ‘patriarchate’ to the highest degree. And so now it is extremely *unclear* what is served by the noisy opening of churches and monasteries, and the adornment of some of them in every way, and the building of Sunday schools and other institutions of the ‘patriarchate’. Does all this serve for the spiritual benefit or the further spiritual *corruption* of people? Most likely, it is the broadening and deepening of the sphere of evil and destruction, a trap for those who have sincerely been drawn to Christ. They will not be able to strike through to Him as long as they accept the ‘patriarchate’ as the Orthodox Church, as long as they believe in a lie that is incompatible with the Spirit of righteousness, the Holy Spirit.”[[812]](#footnote-812)

Special mention should be made of the role of the “startsy”, or elders, in the life of the MP. According to Igumen Gregory Lourié, the role of the MP elders, and especially Archimandrite Ioann (Krestiankin) of the Pskov Caves monastery, was critical in turning the masses of the people away from ROCOR at the beginning of the 1990s. “Archimandrite Ioann not only did not approve of the opening in Russia of parishes outside the jurisdiction of the ROC MP, but he also reproached ROCOR herself as a schism: ‘We have no canonical differences with the Russian Church Abroad, but we cannot now accept them on the Russian land, for they, by not recognizing our Mother Church, which lived through all the woes of Rus’ with her people, are becoming, not builders up, but schismatics and destroyers of that little which has remained with us. And if you pray in a church belonging to the [Church] Abroad, you become a schismatic.’ ” [[813]](#footnote-813)

Perhaps the aspect of patriarchal life that most clearly demonstrated its degradation was its attitude to the very heart of all church life – the sacraments. Ludmilla Perepiolkina writes: “[Baptism] as a rule is administered through ablution or even sprinkling[[814]](#footnote-814), although, as one knows, the threefold immersion of the baptized into the baptismal font [is the only correct form of baptism and] signifies Christ’s death and Resurrection on the third day. Therefore a negligent and needlessly hurried administration of this Mystery becomes an act of sacrilege.

“Both the baptized and their godparents are usually admitted to the Mystery without any preceding catechization and testing of faith. As a rule, godparents remain in absolute ignorance regarding their spiritual obligations and their responsibility before God for the upbringing of their godchildren. The godparents attending mass baptisms of the Moscow Patriarchate are mostly irreligious, often non-Orthodox, or atheists in general…

“Superstitious parents sometimes baptize their children several times (‘to keep them from becoming ill…’); religious illiteracy accompanies many other superstitions as well. Lately there have been increased instances of *baptizing and even giving Holy Communion (!) to the dead.* These awful phenomena are caused not only by the ignorance and covetousness of clergymen, but also by the fact that among the clerics of the Moscow Patriarchate there is an increase in the number of occultists, wizards, psychics. This is because there are not only neophytes among those ordained… but also converts from Eastern cults, Yoga, paganism, occultism and other demonic delusions. Having failed to renounce their former beliefs, the latter dissolve their ‘Christianity’ in this contamination. There are ‘priests’ who practise black magic and are a true horror to their ‘spiritual children’ whom they have enslaved and reduced to becoming zombies…

“In the city churches of the Moscow Patriarchate Chrismation, which is administered immediately after Baptism, resembles a production line in a factory, rather than a Church Mystery. Since at the time of their baptism people have merely their heads sprinkled with water over the baptismal font, they have their clothes on. A priest then hastily goes round the long rank of the newly baptised who stand there in ignorance. Then, at the sacred moment of Chrismation, requiring a special reverence, when the Holy Spirit is received, there is a general hurried discarding of superfluous clothing. Not infrequently a priest may even anoint parts of the body still covered by clothing.

“The following should be noted. Not so long ago a certain degree of confidence in the Patriarchate’s Chrism was based on the fact that every time it was sanctified, a part of the Chrism of the previous years had to be added. Thus, the chrism of the Soviet period must have contained a part of the Chrism sanctified by the Holy Patriarch Tikhon. However, in the most recent years many in the Moscow Patriarchate have been confused, and not only because the Chrism now in use was sanctified by the apostate Patriarch Alexis II (Ridiger). From many areas of Russia priest of the Moscow Patriarchate have reported that by its fragrance this Chrism is indistinguishable from ordinary oil although it should have a very complex fragrance due to the fact that it should consist of a multitude of fragrances symbolizing the manifold gifts of the Holy Spirit.

“The Mystery of Confession and the Mystery of Baptism elicit the most criticism. Practically everywhere the so-called ‘general confession’ is performed, which is not stipulated by the Church canons and which was not permitted even in the Moscow Patriarchate even in the first years after the Second World war, when there was an acute shortage of clergy. At the present time many young priests, accustomed to practice an insipid and formalized ‘general confession’, refuse to hear individual confession even if it is a question of only one or two people (who want to be confessed individually), not scores of them. A priest only covers the head of a penitent with his epitrachelion and recites the last short prayer of absolution, or simply makes the sign of the cross over him in silence. In 10 minutes time scores of people go through confession in this manner.

“The practice of such ‘remission of sins’ cannot be called anything but criminal! After all, many people, who for 70 years lived in the militantly atheist country where *sin had become the norm*, and who only recently learned to make the sign of the cross over themselves, often have no idea what sin is. Thus, the overwhelming majority of women who have undergone abortion do not know that they are murderers who have committed a mortal sin.[[815]](#footnote-815) The same happens to other people who seek healing of their soul in the Church, but do not find it. Is this not the reason why there is such an unprecedented number of all kinds of sects in post-Soviet Russia?

“Through the efforts of Renovationists of the Moscow Patriarchate, its theological academies and seminaries for years have been preparing a complete break between the Mysteries of Confession and Communion, and a rejection of the obligatory Confession before Communion resulting from such a break.

“The Moscow Patriarchate promotes the conviction that ‘obedience is more important than prayer and fasting’, than the Canons and Patristic teaching. This conviction has been turned into a means of the personal dependence and subjugation of church-going people to pseudo-clergy, pseudo-elders and pseudo-Patriarch…

“The most profound Mystery of the Church is that of Holy Communion… The gravest sin of the apostates is the profanation of this Mystery. They turn the Divine Liturgy, which only true believers are permitted to attend, into a show, a spectacle for the crowds of tourists and television viewers, and the Holy Gifts – Christ’s Body and Blood – are given to anybody and at random…

“Besides the corrupting influence which the distortion of the Mystery of Confession or its rejection has upon Orthodox Christians, this innovation is instrumental in achieving the ecumenical objective of allowing access to the Orthodox Mystery of Holy Communion to the non-Orthodox. The resolution of the Holy Synod of the Moscow Patriarchate concerning admission of Catholics to Communion in Orthodox Churches in Russia had been in force from 1969 to 1986. Subsequently this resolution has not been abolished, it has only been suspended (although on paper only)… At the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s one could regularly observe crowds of Western tourists being admitted to Communion (without prior Confession, of course) in the church of St. John the Theologian at the Theological Academy of St. Petersburg. A Jesuit hieromonk Michael Arranz, a Professor of the Eastern Institute in Rome, who in those years was lecturing on Liturgics at the ‘Orthodox’ Theological Academy in Leningrad, would partake of Communion in the Sanctuary of that church along with the clergy.

“When celebrating the Proskomedia and reciting litanies (ektenias), the ecumenists would commemorate heretics along with the Orthodox in accordance with their sermon on ‘the church without frontiers’, and during the Great Entrance of the Divine Liturgy they would replace the words ‘and may the Lord God remember you *all Orthodox Christians* in His Kingdom’ by ‘and all Christians’.

“In 1994 the Bishops’ Council of the MP left practically all matters concerning communication with the non-Orthodox to the personal discretion of its bishops and clergy, merely pointing out to them the undesirability of bewildering their flock.

“The instances of Protestants partaking of Holy Communion, unprecedented, in the MP, have now become a regular phenomenon, at least in the Novgorod diocese, where its ruling Archbishop Lev [Tserpitsky] openly admits Protestants and Catholics to Communion in the ancient Cathedral of St. Sophia in the city of Novgorod. In this and similar instances the obvious motivation is undoubtedly the material benefit gained as a result of attracting foreign tourists, along with their dollars, pounds and marks, into the Patriarchate’s churches…”[[816]](#footnote-816)

As we have seen, Metropolitan Nikodim of Leningrad was both a KGB agent and a secret Vatican bishop. In 1992 the Pope said that he had two cardinals among the bishops in Russia.[[817]](#footnote-817) Perhaps one of them was Archbishop Lev….

Another of them may have been Archbishop Theodosius (Protsyuk) of Omsk, who, according to Perepiolkina, “has not only received legates from the Vatican and openly concelebrated with them, even the Divine Liturgy, but presented the well-known Verenfried with an ‘episcopal cross…, thus becoming an inseparable friend’ of the wealthy Catholic sponsor.

“The practice of offering communion to the heterodox… is reaching epidemic proportions in the MP. This may be illustrated by the state of affairs in the Kaliningrad vicariate of the MP which is… ruled by Bishop Panteleimon (Kutov), a subordinate of Metropolitan Cyril (Gundyaev). In connection with the building project (still only a project, although some donations have already been collected a long time ago) for a Cathedral in the former Koenigsberg (now Kalinigrad), local parishioners hope that ‘this will be an Orthodox church not only by its name. Unfortunately, Bishop Panteleimon’s ecumenical views leave little hope that in the new Cathedral things will be any different from what they are now in the patriarchal churches of the Kaliningrad area, *where Orthodox people are offered communion from one chalice with heretics***.** Bishop Panteleimon himself felt no embarrassment when he declared that ‘Catholics… partook of communion in our churches, and the priests offered prayers for them’.

“The ecumenical epidemic has spread to even the remotest areas. In accordance with the Balamand Agreement [of 1994], the same church buildings are now being regularly used by representatives of different denominations (particularly in the Baltic States). In the village (!) Yegla of Borovichi region of the Novgorod district they are building a church which *right at the start*will be intended for ecumenical services. It will have *three altars: Catholic, Protestant and ‘Orthodox’.* The number of such ecumenical prayer houses in Russia is growing.”[[818]](#footnote-818)

“Ordination… It is generally known that anyone seeking after a high (or simply well-secured) position in the MP under the Communists had to win, in one way or another, the special favour of the God-defying regime.

“All this is entirely contrary to the 30th Apostolic Rule which reads: ‘If any bishop comes into possession of a church office by employing the secular rulers, let him be deposed from office, and let him be excommunicated. And all those who communicate with him too.’ (Compare Rule 3 of the 7th Ecumenical Council.) An unlawful tree cannot produce lawful fruit. Every year the ranks of the Patriarchate’s clergy have been supplemented by those ordained in violation of the Church canons: those tainted by simony, by second marriage, known homosexuals, obviously un-Orthodox and even those married to sectarians (the wife of a Moscow priest A. Borisov, one of the leaders of the late Archpriest Men’s group within the Moscow Patriarchate, is a Pentecostalist who organizes her sect’s meetings in his church.)

“Simony flourishes openly in some dioceses. Thus, it is well know that in Western Ukraine a prospective priest must remunerate his bishop with a sum of 10,000 roubles (the price of a ‘Volga’ car) for his ordination. Parishioners would collect the required sum and present it to their young priest on the day of his first church service. We have no reason to think that his ‘custom’ has in any way suffered from the anarchy which set in after the beginning of perestroika…

“The Sacrament of Marriage is almost always administered without any preparation and without prior Confession of the couple to be married. The determining factor is the payment of a certain sum of money (which in recent years has increased to two, three and more times the average monthly wage). Contrary to the rules, several couples are wed at the same time and often on unstated days and during fasts. Marriages with non-Orthodox and with people of other faiths are allowed. For instance, some of St. Petersburg’s clergy recall a case in the later 70s when one of the well-known Archpriests of that city married his own daughter to a Moslem. It should be added that the perpetration of these and other kinds of unlawful acts is often motivated by the financial and social status of the parties to the marriage…

“Church prayer is also being profaned by the Patriarchate’s clergy when they ‘sanctify’ banks, restaurants, casinos, communist banners of the Red Army and Fleet, as well as buildings used by psychics and ‘healers’. The apostate MP has entered into a special relationship with the ‘Orthodox’ magicians in white coats…

“We may also mention the widespread advertising and sale of ‘holy’ water on the planes of Aeroflot, in shops and restaurants.

“All this, together with ‘funeral services’ for atheists and non-baptised persons (which an Orthodox clergyman may bring himself to perform only as a result of losing the fear of God), and a scandalous acceptance by the hierarchy of the MP (in the person of Metropolitan Pitirim) of a ‘donation’ from the criminal sect ‘Aum Shinri Kyo’ has become the means of replenishing church funds with dirty money.

“Such actions as the luxurious church ceremonies at the funeral of journalist List’yev, notorious for his immoral television programs (in particular those promoting incest), the burial of one of the mafia leaders in the sacred caves of the Pskov Monastery of the Caves, have become a rather symptomatic phenomenon in the Moscow Patriarchate…

“Criminal power has come to replace party power in Russia. This power has immediately secured the support of the MP and has occupied an appropriate place in its life. The MP itself is acquiring a criminal character with its ‘church’ banks, multi-billion fraud and cooperation with the mafia…

“During the long decades of Communist dictatorship an indulgent attitude to all ‘weaknesses’ and deviations of hierarchs and clergy had become firmly ingrained in the consciousness of the members of the MP. This justification of shortcomings was motivated by the alleged ‘captivity’ of the clergy (which from year to year was becoming increasingly voluntary). At the same time the episcopate succeeded in enhancing among the laity and clergy a peculiar kind of Papism (‘The Patriarch is responsible for everything’) and the cult of ‘blessed ignorance’ which, allegedly, makes one’s salvation easier to achieve. All these phenomena flourished and became the very essence of the Moscow Patriarchate, as the years of ‘democratic’ rule have been demonstrating, when discussions about ‘forced’ acts of apostasy… have become meaningless…”[[819]](#footnote-819)

Many Russians, while not blind to the corruption in the patriarchate, supported it for the sake of the Fatherland; for Russia, they thought (correctly), could not be resurrected without a Church, and the MP was the only Church that they saw (incorrectly) as being able to become the religion of the State. However, as Protopriest Lev Lebedev wrote, “fatherland”, “Russia”, “the State” had become idols in post-Soviet Russia, more important than 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 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…”[[820]](#footnote-820)

## 148. ECUMANIA: FROM CHAMBĒSY TO BALAMAND

In September, 1990, ecumenism in the MP and World Orthodoxy in general took a major step forward at Chambésy, Switzerland, where a Declaration was agreed between a Joint Commission of Orthodox and Monophysites (called “Oriental Orthodox” in the documents), the Orthodox and Monophysites being called two “families of churches” (a phrase unknown to Orthodox ecclesiology). Paragraph Four of the Declaration said: “The two families accept that the two natures [of Christ] with their own energies and wills are united hypostatically and naturally without confusion, without change, without division and without separation and that they are distinguished only in thought (τη θεωρια μονη).”

This was already completely unacceptable from an Orthodox point of view, and represented a heretical, Monophysite formulation. The two natures and wills of Christ are not distinguishable “only in thought”, but also in reality***.*** Paragraph Seven also spoke of the two natures being distinguishable “only in thought”, which implied, as Ludmilla Perepiolkina points out “an *absence of this distinction in reality*”.[[821]](#footnote-821)

Paragraph Five stated: “The two families accept that the One Who wills and acts is always the single Hypostasis of the incarnate Logos”. However, as Perepiolkina again correctly points out, according to the teaching of St. Maximus the Confessor, “the concept of energy (activity) of nature is attributable only to nature as a whole, and not to the hypostasis. This teaching was affirmed at the Sixth Ecumenical Council. In the Chambésy Declaration, as it is evident from Paragraph Five, natural wills and energies in Jesus Christ are attributed to His Hypostasis. In other words, this Paragraph is a *purely Monothelite formula.*”[[822]](#footnote-822)

Paragraph Eight stated: “The two families accept the first three Ecumenical Councils which form our common heritage. With regard to the four later Councils of the Orthodox Church, the Orthodox affirm that, for them, points one through seven are also the teaching of these four later Councils, whereas the oriental Orthodox consider this affirmation of the Orthodox like their own interpretation. In this sense the oriental Orthodox respond positively to this affirmation.” An unclear statement, about which one thing, however, is clear: the Monophysites did *not* commit themselves to accepting the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils in the way the Orthodox did, but only “positively responded to their affirmation”, which means *nothing* in dogmatic terms.

Paragraph Nine stated: “In the light of our joint declaration on Christology and the joint affirmations mentioned above, we now clearly realize and understand that our two families have always loyally guarded the same and authentic Christological Orthodox Faith, and have maintained uninterrupted the apostolic tradition although they may have used the Christological terms in a different manner. It is that common faith and that continual loyalty to the apostolic tradition which must be the basis of our unity and communion.”

This was in flat contradiction to 1500 years of Orthodox Tradition. In this period all the Holy Fathers unambiguously affirmed that the Monophysites had *not* “loyally guarded the same and authentic Christological Orthodox Faith”, and were in fact heretics. But the modern ecumenists claimed that all the six hundred and thirty holy Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, as well as all the Fathers of all the succeeding Council that condemned Monophysitism, were wrong, and the whole controversy was simply based on some linguistic misunderstandings!

Paragraph Ten of the Declaration stated: “The two families accept that all the anathemas and the condemnations of the past which kept us divided must be lifted by the Churches so that the last obstacle to full unity and communion of our two families can be removed by the grace and power of God. The two families accept that the lifting of the anathemas and the condemnations will be based on the fact that the Councils and the father previously anathematised or condemned were not heretics.”

So the Seven Ecumenical Councils, according to these “theologians”, needed to be amended, and the anathemas against all the Monophysite councils and fathers, including the notorious heresiarchs Dioscurus, Timothy and Severus, lifted! This was a clear and explicit rejection of the Faith of the Seven Ecumenical Councils!

Of course, the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches (with the exception of Jerusalem) had already *implicitly* rejected the Councils and the Fathers by their communion in prayer and the sacraments with all sorts of heretics, and even pagans, of which the WCC General Assembly in Canberra in 1991 was perhaps the most extreme example. Nevertheless, it was a further and important stage to say *explicitly* that the Ecumenical Councils were *wrong*, that the Monophysites should not have been condemned, that they had been Orthodox all these centuries although the Holy Fathers and all the saints of the Orthodox Church considered them to be heretics. This was not simply a failure to come up to the standards of the Ecumenical Councils: *it was a renunciation of the standards themselves.*

Although the Chambesy unia was not formally ratified by the Moscow Patriarchate, this was for completely non-theological reasons,[[823]](#footnote-823) and the MP has continued to act as if the unia were valid and true.

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It was therefore with complete justification that the Holy Synod of the Truth Orthodox Church of Greece under Archbishop Chrysostom (Kiousis) issued the following statement in July, 1991:-

“At Chambésy the Orthodox and the Monophysites agreed that ‘now they have clearly understood that both families (i.e. the Orthodox and the Monophysites} have always loyally maintained the same authentic Orthodox Christological Faith and the unbroken continuity of the Apostolic tradition…’

“… How is it possible to accept as correct that which has now been understood by twenty-one representatives of the Patriarchates and Autocephalous Churches – that is, that for fifteen hundred years the Orthodox and Monophysites had the same Christological Faith – when it is a fact that *four* Ecumenical Councils condemned the latter as heretical? Is it possible that the Holy Fathers who took part in them were mistaken, and were unjust towards the Monophysites? Was there not to be found even one of the 630 Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, of the 165 Fathers of the Fifth, of the 227 of the Sixth, or of the 367 of the Seventh, to understand this which the ecumenist Orthodox of Chambésy have now understood – that is, that the Monophysites are not heretics? So it is that 1,389 Holy Fathers are in error, and the twenty-one representatives of the innovative Orthodox are right? Are we to believe that the Holy Spirit did not enlighten the Holy Fathers? Are we to deny the divine inspiration of the Holy Councils? Heretical and blasphemous! Even more boldly, are we to assert that St. Euphemia, who sealed with a miracle the Definition of Faith of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, misunderstood the ‘Orthodoxy’ of the Monophysites because she did not understand the language? A fearsome thing!

“The Orthodox and the Monophysites agree that ‘both families accept the first *three* Ecumenical Councils…’ [But] the Orthodox Church accepts *seven* Ecumenical Councils. At Chambésy, at the demand of the Monophysites, the Orthodox delegates accepted the recognition of the first three; the rest are *put aside* and are considered a matter *only* for the Chalcedonian Orthodox. For the Monophysites, who are condemned as heretics and anathematised by them, it *is* appropriate to oppose these four other Ecumenical Councils. But is it permissible for men, however modernist they might be, who would be called Orthodox, and who declare themselves hierarchs and theologians, to limit the Ecumenical Councils to three? How do they dare? How did they sign such a grossly treasonous agreement? At least those who signed the false union of Florence-Ferrara [with Rome], when they returned to the capital and repented, declared ‘Let our hands be cut off’ and abjured the false union…

“One can only be horrified at the betrayal of those who signed the agreement at Chambésy. Those who were deposed and anathematised as heretics by four Ecumenical Councils are now recognized as ‘saints’ and ‘Fathers’ of the innovating Church… Who are they? There is Dioscorus, whom the Fourth Ecumenical Council anathematised as being of one mind with the heretic Eutyches… and the rest against whom the Orthodox Church cries out the Anathema which is read in the hearing of all on the Sunday of Orthodoxy. Now the modernist Orthodox would honor them in their churches, make icons of them and light candles to them, asking forgiveness because our Holy Fathers unjustly condemned them as heretics…

“*Let all who signed the agreement at Chambésy know that they have ceased to be Orthodox,* since they are communicants of the heresy of the Monophysites.

“Those who signed the agreement at Chambésy did not sign as individuals. Chiefly, they signed as representatives of their Churches, and their Churches accepted the agreement at Chambésy…

“Therefore we denounce this new false union which was signed at Chambésy by the representatives of the Autocephalous Churches and Patriarchates, who, after 1,500 years, have fallen into the heresy of Monophysitism… and… the New Calendarist State Church for all that has been stated, and declare it to be heretical henceforth. We call upon every faithful Orthodox person, following upon the treasonous agreement at Chambésy, to choose between Orthodoxy and Monophysitism. Whoever wants to remain Orthodox, whoever wants to remain a member of the Body of the Church of Christ, must immediately cease all relationship and communion with the heretical and monophysitizing shepherds of the Churches which signed and accepted the agreement of Chambésy.

“All who remain disinterested or silent, and ally themselves with the supporters of the agreement of Chambésy, have simply embraced Monophysitism and its wrong-thinking ‘Fathers’ Dioscorus, Severus, Timothy, and the other heretics. Such people have upon their heads the anathemas of the Ecumenical Councils. They are outside the Church, outside of salvation, and their portion is with that of all the heretics.

“We have spoken. Let every… Orthodox faithful person take up his responsibilities before God and man. ‘Let us stand aright; let us stand with fear.’”[[824]](#footnote-824)

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Chambésy was followed by the Seventh General Assembly of the WCC in Canberra in 1991, in which the Orthodox delegates blasphemed against the Faith still more blatantly. Thus aboriginal pagans invited the participants to pass through a “cleansing cloud of smoke” uniting Aboriginal spirituality to Christian spirituality (!). In spite of this, Metropolitan Cyril (Gundiaev), head of the Department of External Relations of the MP and the present patriarch, said that the WCC was “our common home and we want it to be the cradle of the one church”.[[825]](#footnote-825)

Chambésy was soon producing concrete fruits. Thus on July 22, 1991, the Synod of the Antiochian Patriarchate (which included the notoriously pro-Islamic Metropolitan George Khodre) implemented a series of measures aimed at achieving full union with the Monophysite Syriac Church. These included a prohibition on the proselytism among the Monophysites and full eucharistic communion.[[826]](#footnote-826) Again, on November 12, 1991 Patriarch Ignatius IV of Antioch issued an “Official Statement of the Orthodox Church of Antioch on Relations between the Eastern Orthodox and Syrian Orthodox Churches of Antioch” in which the unia between his Church and the Syrian Monophysites (called here “the Syrian Orthodox Church”) was proclaimed as follows:

“1. We affirm the total and mutual respect of the spirituality, heritage and Holy Fathers of both Churches. The integrity of both the Byzantine and Syriac liturgies is to be preserved.

“2. The heritage of the Fathers in both Churches and their traditions as a whole should be integrated into Christian education curricula and theological studies. Exchanges of professors and students are to be enhanced.

“3. Both Churches shall refrain from accepting any faithful from one Church into the membership of the other, irrespective of all motivations or reasons.

“4. Meetings between the two Churches, at the level of their Synods, according to the will of the two Churches, will be held whenever the need arises.

“5. Every Church will remain the reference and authority for its faithful, pertaining to matters of personal status (marriage, divorce, adoption, etc.).

“6. If bishops of the two Churches participate at a holy baptism or funeral service, the one belonging to the Church of the baptized or deceased will preside. In case of a holy matrimony service, the bishop of the bridegroom's Church will preside.

“7. The above mentioned is not applicable to the concelebration in the Divine Liturgy.

“8. What applies to bishops equally applies to the priests of both Churches.

“9. In localities where there is only one priest, from either Church, he will celebrate services for the faithful of both Churches, including the Divine Liturgy, pastoral duties, and holy matrimony. He will keep an independent record for each Church and transmit that of the sister Church to its authorities.

“10. If two priests of the two Churches happen to be in a locality where there is only one Church, they take turns in making use of its facilities.

“11. If a bishop from one Church and a priest from the sister Church happen to concelebrate a service, the bishop will preside even when it is the priest's parish.

“12. Ordinations into holy orders are performed by the authorities of each Church for its own members. It would be advisable to invite the faithful of the sister Church to attend.

“13. Godfathers, godmothers (in baptism), and witnesses in holy matrimony, can be chosen from the members of the sister Church.

“14. Both Churches will exchange visits and will co-operate in the various areas of social, cultural, and educational work.

“We ask God's help to continue strengthening our relations with the sister Church, and with other Churches, so that we all become one community under one Shepherd.”[[827]](#footnote-827)

At the time of writing, the Orthodox and the Monophysites in Syria are indeed “one community” even if they do not yet have one shepherd…

As for Constantinople, in November, 2009 the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the honorary president of the Masonic “XAN” organization,[[828]](#footnote-828) said the following before the UN Diplomatic Corps: “The theological dialogue between our two Christian families – that is the Orthodox Church and the Ancient Oriental Churches, has formally ended the misunderstandings of the past. It is not theology that divides us…"

In March, 1992, the heads of the Local Orthodox Churches met in Constantinople and issued a communiqué that more or less renounced missionary work among the Western heretics. After condemning the work of Catholic Uniates and Protestant fundamentalists in Orthodox countries, they went on to “remind all that every form of proselytism – to be distinguished from evangelization and mission – is absolutely condemned by the Orthodox. Proselytism, practiced in nations already Christian, and in many cases even Orthodox, sometimes through material enticement and sometimes by various forms of violence, poisons the relations among Christians and destroys the road towards their unity. Mission, by contrast, carried out in non-Christian countries and among non-Christian peoples, constitutes a sacred duty of the Church, worthy of every assistance” (point 4).

Here a dishonourable deal was being proposed: if you refrain from proselytising in Orthodox countries, we will not receive converts in western countries. Of course, this renunciation of proselytism among western heretics had been implicit in the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s statements since the encyclical of 1920, and in all the Orthodox leaders’ actions in ecumenical forums since the 1960s. But it still came as a shock to see the “Orthodox Church” renouncing the hope of conversion and therefore salvation for hundreds of millions of westerners. Here the ecumenical “Orthodox” renounced the first commandment of the Lord to His Church after the Resurrection: “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you…” (Matthew 28.19-20).

The communiqué also made threats against “schismatic groups competing with the canonical structure of the Orthodox Church” (point 3). Presumably, the True Orthodox were meant. This threat was made clearer when, in May, a delegation from the Ecumenical Patriarchate together with a detachment of Athonite police expelled the Russian-American monks of the Skete of the Prophet Elijah, who did not commemorate the patriarch, from Mount Athos.[[829]](#footnote-829)

Union with the Monophysites at Chambésy proceeded in parallel with moves towards union with the Catholics. Thus Patriarch Alexis began to adopt a more conciliatory attitude towards the uniates of the West Ukraine. And although he and his senior hierarchs often protested against Catholic proselytism in Russia[[830]](#footnote-830), at the March, 1992 meeting he strongly resisted the call by Patriarch Diodorus of Jerusalem for a cessation of all dialogue between the Orthodox and the Vatican.

While these movements towards union with heretics were taking place, the Ecumenical Patriarch was acting with great tyranny towards his fellow patriarchs. Thus in July, 1993 a “great and super-perfect (παντελης) Synod” was called to judge Patriarch Diodorus and certain of his collaborators for their supposed interference in the Australian Archdiocese of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and certain other questions. The main problem was a very valuable property in Australia which the owner and founder, Archimandrite Hierotheus, refused to give to the Greek Archdiocese, but donated to the patriarchate, which accepted it and sent two bishops, Hesychius and Timothy, to arrange the transfer and establish an exarchate there. It was assumed, completely contrary to the canons, that Jerusalem was “interfering” in Australia on the grounds that the Ecumenical Patriarchate had sole jurisdiction in all lands not directly within the boundaries of any other patriarchate, and therefore in Australia also, in spite of the fact that the Jerusalem Patriarchate had had a mission in Australia since 1892, and the Ecumenical Patriarchate – only since 1924. Another accusation against Patriarch Diodorus was that he was regularly visited by the “pseudo-Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropus and Fili”. The Synod decided with “utmost economy” not to depose the patriarch, but only to expunge his name from the diptychs, and to depose Metropolitans Hesychius and Timothy. The patriarch was summoned to this farce by fax one day before it began, while the other two bishops were not even called to answer. So much for the canonical behaviour of the “canonical” bishops”!

The Patriarch of Jerusalem did not in any way agree to the “super-perfect” Synod’s decision, and was at first resolved to pay no attention to it. Sadly, however, other voices prevailed, the patriarchate succumbed, the patriarch relinquished (it is said, in return for a hefty payment) the property and the exarchate in Australia, and the two metropolitans went to Constantinople to ask forgiveness of Bartholomew; which was graciously granted. This was part of the Ecumenical Patriarch’s continuing campaign to become “the Pope of the East” to whom all the other patriarchs submitted (in preparation for his submitting to Rome). But his pretensions were rejected by the other Greek Patriarchates and Old Calendarists. Moscow, too, had no intention of allowing Constantinople to lord it over her…[[831]](#footnote-831)

In 1994 the delegates of all the Local Churches except Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece and Jerusalem signed the Balamand agreement with the Catholics, in which the Orthodox and the Catholics were declared to be “two lungs” of the same body (with the Monophysites as a “third lung”?). “On each side it is acknowledged that what Christ has entrusted to His Church – the profession of the apostolic faith, participation in the same sacraments, the apostolic succession of bishops, and, above all, the one priesthood celebrating the one Sacrifice of Christ – cannot be considered to be the exclusive property of one of our Churches.” “All rebaptism [of penitent Catholics in the Orthodox Church] is prohibited.” The Orthodox Church “recognizes the Catholic Church in her entirety as a sister Church, and indirectly recognizes also the Oriental Catholic Churches” (the Uniates). “Special attention should be given on both sides to the preparation and education of future priests with regard to the new ecclesiology, (that they may) be informed of the apostolic succession of the other Church and the authenticity of its sacramental life, (so that) the use of history in a polemical manner (may be avoided)”.

Although the delegates of the Orthodox Churches signed the Agreement, it still needed to be ratified by the Synods of each Local Church. None of them in fact did so, with the sole exception of the Romanian Patriarchate, which subsequently withdrew its ratification in reaction to the Romanian Uniates’ refusal to accept the document. Nevertheless, there was no official renunciation of the Agreement on the Orthodox side – which was necessary in that the Agreement constituted acceptance of the “branch theory”.

In 1997 Patriarch Bartholomew went even further, extolling the widest possible toleration: “Orthodox Christian and modernist, Protestant and modernist, Jew and modernist, Catholic and modernist: however we worship, as long as we abide in our faith and unite it to our works in the world, we bring the living and always timely message of Divine wisdom into the modern world.”[[832]](#footnote-832) In the same year he declared: “According to the long-held tradition, the Orthodox Church avoids dictating or making categorical decisions of a social or ethical nature.”[[833]](#footnote-833) This astonishing abdication from the responsibility of an Orthodox bishop “rightly to divide the word of truth” sits uneasily with his heavy-handed suppression of his Orthodox critics…

Patriarch Bartholomew confirmed his acceptance of the branch theory on November 30, 1998, when, referring to the representatives of the Pope, he said: “In view of the fact that one Church recognizes the other Church as a locus of grace, proselytization of members from one Church to the other is precluded.”[[834]](#footnote-834) This elicited protests in Greece and Mount Athos, but Patriarch Bartholomew forced the protestors to back down…

## 149. ORTHODOX-JEWISH ECUMENISM

Of particular significance is the ecumenism of Orthodox hierarchs in relation to Judaism. The leader in this was Patriarch Alexis of Moscow. On November 13, 1991 he addressed the Rabbis of New York as follows: “Dear brothers, shalom to you in the name of the God of love and peace!… We are all brothers, for we are all children of the Old Testament on Mount Sinai, which, as we Christians believe, was renewed by Christ… Your law is our law, your prophets are our prophets.”

This is a profound error, which was thoroughly exposed – and anathematized – by the holy Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Galatians.[[835]](#footnote-835) There is a sense in which the Old Testament law and prophets were not destroyed, but fulfilled by Christ (Matthew 5.17) – that is, in the sense that He revealed their inner meaning. But “the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ” (Galatians 3.24), and having found Christ, we follow, not the law of the Old Testament, but of the *New* Testament.

Some parts of the old law are still obligatory for Christians – the Ten Commandments, for example. But even there adjustments need to be made: the commandment to “keep the sabbath holy”, for example, applies now to Sundays and Church feast days, not to Saturdays. And the commandments against murder and adultery are now deepened to become commandments against anger and lust. As for circumcisions and animal sacrifices and the worship in the Temple on Mount Moriah, this is now definitely excluded, being replaced by the worship and sacraments of the Church. So the Jews’ law is *not* our law. Nor do they stand in a relationship of equality of honour to the Christians. As for the prophets, they prophesied about Christ; and it is the Christians, not the Jews, who have understood the prophecies and paid heed to them.

The patriarch continues: “Judaism and Christianity are united by a spiritual and natural affinity and positive religious interests. We are united with the Jews without renouncing Christianity. For this is not contrary to Christianity, but in the name and for the sake of Christianity. And the Jews are united with us also in the name and for the sake of genuine Judaism.”

Astonishing! Then why have the main persecutors of Orthodox Christianity for the last two thousand years been the Jews? And why does the Jews’ “holy” book, the Talmud, say such terrible things about Christ, the Mother of God and Christians in general? No: to be united with the Jews means precisely to renounce Christianity; it is to be united with Annas and Caiaphas and Judas and to be separated from Christ and the holy Apostles, Martyrs and Fathers of the Church.

“We are separated from the Jews because we are not wholly Christian, and the Jews are separated from us because they are not wholly Jewish. Because full Christianity embraces Judaism and full Judaism is Christianity.”

The patriarch speaks truly about himself when he says he is “not wholly Christian”. More precisely, he is not Christian at all. For no Christian, whether “full” or not, can possible embrace Judaism, which is the antithesis of Christianity. For the Jews reject every single article of the Nicene Creed with the possible exception of the first, about God the Father. And yet even here it cannot be said that the Jews know God the Father. For “who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, hath not the Father” (I John 2.22-23).

“The hierarchs, clergy and theologians of our Church resolutely and openly denounce all and sundry manifestations of anti-Semitism and enmity and pogroms against the Jews.”

The Orthodox Church rejects anti-Semitism, that is, a rejection of the Jews on the grounds of their race. She also rejects pogroms because pogroms are murder. But the Church is and will never cease to be anti-*Judaic*, because Judaism is a lie, the worst of all lies.

“During the notorious Beilis trial, Archpriest Alexander Glagolev, a professor at the Kiev Ecclesiastical Academy, and Ivan Troitsky, a professor at the St. Petersburg Ecclesiastical Academy, firmly defended Beilis and resolutely rejected the accusations of ritual killings allegedly practised by the Jews. The Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, Antony (Vadkovksky), did much to protect the Jews from the anti-Semitic attacks of the extreme right-wing radical organizations. There were also many other hierarchs and theologians of our Church who courageously defended the Jews from the enmity and slanderous accusations made by the anti-Semitic circles: Metropolitan Macarius (Bulgakov), Bishop Donatus (Babinsky) of Grodno, Bishop Vissarion (Nechaev), Archbishop Seraphim (Mescheryakov), Archbishop Macarius (Miroliubov).”

Much could be said about the Beilis trial, which was indeed “notorious” – mainly because of the extreme pressure brought to bear upon witnesses by the Jews and their supporters, and the extreme inefficiency of the police work. Beilis was indeed acquitted, but the court established that the victim, Andrew Yuschinsky, *had* been the victim of a ritual murder.

The patriarch also ignored the fact that the Orthodox Church has officially glorified at least one victim of Jewish ritual murder – the Child Martyr Gabriel, to whom Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky wrote a service.

“We should also mention that many of our theologians and outstanding religious thinker, such as Vladimir Soloviev, Nicholas Berdiaev, and Father Sergius Bulgakov, stood up for the Jews. Vladimir Soloviev regarded the defence of the Jews, from the Christian point of view, to be one of the major tasks of his life. For him the main question was not whether the Jews were good or bad, but whether we Christians were good or bad. Much had been done for establishing a Christian dialogue by our famous religious thinkers of Jewish origin, Semyon Frank and Lev Shestov.[[836]](#footnote-836)

“In this difficult but sacred cause for all of us we hope for understanding and help from our Jewish brothers and sisters. We shall build, by our joint efforts, a new society – one that is democratic, free, open and just. It will be a society which no one will want to leave, and in which the Jews will live confidently and calmly, in an atmosphere of friendship, creative cooperation and fraternity between the children of our common God – the Father of all, the God of your and our fathers…”[[837]](#footnote-837)

The rabbis did not forget the honour paid to them by the patriarch: during the visit of Alexis II to the U.S.A. in 1993 the chief rabbi of New York, Schneier, presented him with the prize “The Call of Conscience”. And both in 1991 and in 1993 the patriarch was a guest of a Zionist organization of the same name; he visited synagogues and met Jewish religious leaders…

In 1992, the president of the Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods, Sergius Poliakov, declared that the patriarch’s speech to the New York rabbis had been “clearly heretical”. And a representative of the Tver diocese declared that “almost 60% of the diocesan clergy” were refusing to commemorate the patriarch. [[838]](#footnote-838) Unfortunately, only one of those priests actually joined the True Church…[[839]](#footnote-839)

The MP was able to face down its dissidents. In its council in December, 1994, the patriarchate's participation in the WCC was unequivocally endorsed as having been inspired “primarily by considerations of the good it would do for the Church”. Then a purge of the anti-ecumenist brotherhoods began.[[840]](#footnote-840) The decision was made to permit common prayers with heretics with the blessing of the local bishop![[841]](#footnote-841) And with the death in 1995 of the only anti-ecumenist in the hierarchy, Metropolitan John (Snychev) of St. Petersburg, the victory of the ecumenists appeared to be sealed.

However, in December, 1995 a group of about fifty clergy of the diocese of Moscow addressed an open letter to the patriarch denouncing the "crypto-catholic" teaching and actions of several modernist priests and laity in the capital. They pointed to numerous instances of the MP offering direct assistance to Latin propaganda, listing ecumenical or purely Catholic radio stations (“Sophia”, “Blagovest”) and periodicals *(Simvol, Istina i Zhizn’, Novaia Evropa, Russkaia Mysl’*). Active contributors and sometimes even managers of these organs of Latin propaganda included Archpriest Ioann Sviridov (Department of the Religious Education and Catechization of the MP), Igumen Innokenty (Pavlov) (Secretary of the Russian Bible Society), Priest Alexander Borisov (President of the same Society), Igumen Ignaty (Krekshin) (Secretary of the Synodal Commission for the Canonization of Saints of the ROC), Igumen Ioann (Ekonomtsev) (Rector of the Orthodox University of St. John the Theologian), V. Nikitin (chief editor of the official journal of the Department of Religious Education and Catechization *Put’ Pravoslavia*), the “priest journalists” G. Chistiakov and V. Lapshin, Priest G. Ziablitsev (employee in the Department of External Church Relations of the MP), who was appointed by his superior, Metropolitan Cyril (Gundyaev), to the commission of the Catholic Church (!) for the canonization of one of their saints. “Such a scandalous fact,” wrote the fifty clergy, “i.e. participation in a heterodox enterprise of a canonical character, has not been heard of since the Latins fell away from the Church of Christ in 1054… One is left with the impression that the Vatican is attempting to create within the Church a layer of clergy loyal to the Catholic doctrine who serve the cause of union.”[[842]](#footnote-842)

The patriarch tried to deflect this protest by complaining once more about Catholic proselytism in Russia and the Catholics' use of humanitarian aid as a cover for their missionary purposes.[[843]](#footnote-843) It is not recorded, however, that he rejected the offer of one Catholic organization "Aid to the Suffering Church" to give every priest in the Russian Church an annual salary of $1000.[[844]](#footnote-844) Nor was he particularly disturbed when the Pope was declared an honorary member of the new parish of the MP in Ulyanovsk in gratitude for his sending $14,000 for the construction of the city’s cathedral. Nor when, in 1996, “Aid to the Suffering Church” gave $750,000 to Radio “Sophia”…[[845]](#footnote-845)

The patriarch’s right hand (his criticism of the Catholics) clearly did not know what his left hand (his reception of largesse from them) was doing…

In 2009 the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew made his own speech before the rabbis of East Park Synagogue. It was very similar in concept to Patriarch Alexis’, stressing unity rather than difference, and completely ignoring the blasphemous denial of Christ that is at the root of Judaism.

## 150. ROCOR’S MISSION INSIDE RUSSIA

In March, 1990 ROCOR issued the following guidelines for its Church in Russia, to be known as the “Free Russian Orthodox Church” (FROC): "I. The free Russian Orthodox parishes are neither an independent nor a new hierarchal structure; they are in eucharistic communion with and in the jurisdiction of and subject to the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, which is headed by its first hierarch, Metropolitan Vitaly, and is the preserver of unadulterated Orthodoxy and the traditions of the Russian Orthodox Church.

  ”II. The clergy are not to join in eucharistic communion with the Moscow Patriarchate until it renounces the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, until it repents of the errors which followed this uncanonical declaration, and removes those ruling bishops who have compromised themselves by uncanonical and immoral acts, who have been involved in corruption and the embezzlement of church funds, who have been placed in power through the interference of the secular authorities, and who have allowed distortions in the services of the Russian Orthodox Church.

  ”III. The parishes may not pray for the government as long as the controlling and guiding power remains the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which has a militantly atheistic and anti-Church program. In addition, prayer is allowed for apostates only during the prayer, ‘that Thou mightest appear to them who have fallen away,’ but not during the proskomedia.

”IV. The reasons for the establishment of free parishes: The free Russian Orthodox parishes have opened due to the absolutely paralyzed, unrepentant state of the hierarchy and clergy of the Moscow Patriarchate, who have fallen away from pure Orthodoxy through the acceptance of the declaration by Metropolitan Sergius (who usurped the power of the Church in Russia) in 1927 of loyalty to the militantly atheistic communist Soviet power.

”The main errors of the Moscow Patriarchate after the declaration of 1927 are as follows:

  ”1. The excommunication of those hierarchs, clergy, monastics and laymen who did not accept the declaration, which was followed by mass terror and murder of those who did not accept the atheistic government.

  ”2. The desecration of the memory of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors.

”3. The collaboration with the atheistic government even in the business of closing churches. Devoted service to the government and public prayer to strengthen its power, which in turn fights against faith and the Church.

”4. The distortion of the sacraments, rites, sermon, and carelessness in the spreading of the Word of God. Refusal to catechize, which has led masses of laypeople into ignorance and a superficial acceptance of Christianity.

”5. The participation and membership in the World Council of Churches and the ecumenical movement, for the creation of a worldwide "church", that would unite all heresies and religions.

”6. Submission to secular, atheistic authorities and allowing them to rule the inner life of the church even to the extent of direct control, with the ultimate goal of destroying faith.

”7. The alienation of the hierarchy and clergy from the flock, and a careless, proud relationship towards the laypeople in direct violation of the apostolic injunction to clergy to be an example and not exercise power over others.

”8. The wide-spread moral depravity and mercenariness among the uncanonical clergy.

”9. Uncanonical and capricious transferring of diocesan bishops."[[846]](#footnote-846)

This was a good manifesto. The problem was: it was not adhered to consistently. And this failure, together with personnel and administrative failures, constituted the main reason for the collapse of ROCOR’s mission in Russia. The momentous event of the return of the exiles to Russia was undertaken almost casually, without a clearly defined strategy. Hence difficult problems arose, problems that ROCOR in the end found insuperable…

The first problem was one of self-definition: how could the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad continue to call herself the Church *Abroad* if she now had parishes *inside* Russia? After all, her Founding Statute or Polozhenie stated that ROCOR was an autonomous part of the Autocephalous Russian Church, that part which existed (i) *outside* the bounds of Russia on the basis of Ukaz № 362 of November 7/20, 1920 of Patriarch Tikhon and the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, and (ii) *temporarily* until the fall of communism in Russia. With the fall of communism and the creation of ROCOR parishes inside Russia in 1990, it would seem that these limitations in space and time no longer applied, and that ROCOR had ceased to exist as a canonical organisation in accordance with her own definition of herself in the Polozhenie. The solution to this problem was obvious: change the Polozhenie! And this was in fact the solution put forward by Bishop Gregory (Grabbe), who had been Chancellor of the Synod from 1931 until his retirement by Metropolitan Vitaly in 1986.

However, the ROCOR episcopate declined his suggestion, probably because a change in the Polozhenie that removed the spatial and temporal limitations of ROCOR’s self-definition would have had the consequence of forcing the ROCOR episcopate to: (i) remove the centre of her Church administration from America to Russia, (ii) proclaim herself (alongside any Catacomb Church groups that she might recognise) as part of the Russian Orthodox Church *inside* Russia and distinguished from the other parts only by its possessing dioceses and parishes abroad, and (iii) enter into a life-and-death struggle with the MP for the minds and hearts of the Russian people.

However, the ROCOR bishops could not accept these consequences. After all, they were well-established abroad, increasingly dependent economically on money from foreign converts to Orthodoxy, and with few exceptions were not prepared to exchange the comforts and relative security of life in the West for the uncertainty and privations of life in Russia. Thus even after the fall of communism, ROCOR’s first-hierarch, Metropolitan Vitaly, never set foot on Russian soil, in spite of numerous invitations from believers.

Of course, the whole raison d’être of ROCOR was to return to her homeland in Russia (she was previously called the Russian Church *in Exile*, and exiles by definition want to return to their homeland); and it was in anticipation of such a return that she had steadfastly refused to endanger her Russian identity by merging with other Local Orthodox Churches or by forming local jurisdictions identified with specific western countries (like the formerly Russian schism from ROCOR calling itself the Orthodox Church of America). But generations had passed since the first emigration, the descendants of that first emigration had settled in western countries, learned their languages, adopted their ways, put down roots in foreign soil. The exiles were no longer exiles from, but strangers to, their native land…

A second problem concerned ROCOR’s relationship to the Catacomb Church. Since 1927, when ROCOR had broken communion with Metropolitan Sergius at the same time as the Catacomb Church, she had looked upon the Catacomb Church as the True Church inside Russia with which she remained in mystical communion, even if such communion could not be realised in face-to-face meeting and concelebration. Indeed, after the death, in 1937, of Metropolitan Peter, the last universally recognised leader of the Russian Church, ROCOR commemorated “the episcopate of the persecuted Russian Church” – that is, the episcopate of the Catacomb Church. After the war, however, a change began to creep in, at first almost imperceptibly, but then more and more noticeably. On the one hand, news of Catacomb bishops and communities became more and more scarce, and some even began to doubt that the Catacomb Church existed any longer. On the other hand, as we have seen, some Catacomb priests inside Russia, having lost contact with, and knowledge of, any canonical bishops there might still be inside Russia, began commemorating Metropolitan Anastasy, first-hierarch of ROCOR.

These tendencies gave rise to the perception that the leadership of True Orthodoxy had now passed from inside Russia to outside Russia. Moreover, the significance of the Catacomb Church began to be lost, as the struggle was increasingly seen to be between the “red church” inside Russia (the MP) and the “white church” outside Russia (ROCOR). This position was reinforced by the negative attitude taken towards most of the Catacomb clergy still alive in 1990 by Bishop Lazarus of Tambov, the bishop secretly consecrated by ROCOR in 1982 as her representative in Russia, who declared that the last canonical Catacomb bishop, Schema-Bishop Peter (Ladygin), died as long ago as 1957, and that he and his clergy were now the only group that could rightly be called “the Catacomb Church”.

A third, critical problem concerned the status of the Moscow Patriarchate. ROCOR’s position here was tragically double-minded: the bishops proved themselves incapable of making up their minds whether the MP was their bitterest enemy or their most beloved mother, whether it was necessary to fight her or unite with her![[847]](#footnote-847) This double-mindedness bore bitter fruit that was to lead to schism and the collapse of ROCOR’s mission inside Russia and the eventual fall of the main body of ROCOR herself.

The roots of this double-mindedness go back to the post-war period, when large numbers of Christians fleeing towards Western Europe from Soviet Russia were joined to ROCOR. In receiving these Christians, little difference was made between those who had belonged to the Catacomb Church, and those who had belonged to the MP. Some, even including bishops, turned out to be KGB agents, and either returned to the MP or remained as “moles” to undermine ROCOR. Others, while sincerely anti-Soviet, were not sufficiently “enchurched” to see the fundamental ecclesiological significance of the schism in the Russian Church.

Thus a certain “dilution” in the quality of those joining ROCOR in the second emigration by comparison with the first – and the problem was to get worse with the third and fourth emigrations of the 70s, 80s and 90s – which began to affect the confessing stance of the Church as a whole. Even members of the first emigration were proving susceptible to deception. Over half of the Church in America and all except one diocese in China (that of Shanghai, led by St. John Maximovich[[848]](#footnote-848)) were lured back into the arms of the Soviet “Fatherland” and its Soviet “Church”.

Another reason for this diminution in zeal was ROCOR’s continuing communion with the Local Orthodox Churches of “World Orthodoxy” even after all of these (except Jerusalem) sent representatives to the local Councils of the MP in 1945 and 1948. The reasons for this continuation of communion depended on the Church in question. Thus communion continued with the Serbian Church because of the debt of gratitude ROCOR owed to it because of the hospitality shown by the Serbian Church to ROCOR in the inter-war years. Communion continued with the Jerusalem Patriarchate because all churches in the Holy Land, including ROCOR monasteries, were required, under threat of closure, to commemorate the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Communion also continued, albeit intermittently, with the Greek new calendarist churches, because the Patriarchate of Constantinople was powerful in the United States, the country to which ROCOR moved its headquarters after the war.

This ambiguous relationship towards “World Orthodoxy” inevitably began to affect ROCOR’s zeal in relation to the MP in particular. For if the MP was recognised by Serbia and Jerusalem, and Serbia and Jerusalem were recognised by ROCOR, the conclusion was drawn that the MP, while bad, was still a Church. And this attitude in turn affected ROCOR’s attitude towards the Catacomb Church, which was no longer seen by many, including several of the bishops, as the only true Church in Russia, but rather as a brave, but not entirely canonical organisation or collection of groupings which needed to be “rescued” by ROCOR before it descended into a form of sectarianism similar to that of the Old Believers.

This pro-Muscovite tendency in ROCOR was led, by the powerful Archbishop Mark of Berlin, who argued that ROCOR should return into communion with the patriarchate now that communism had fallen.[[849]](#footnote-849)

As ROCOR began to lose confidence in herself and the Catacomb Church as the *only* bearers of true Russian Orthodoxy, the accent began to shift towards the preservation, not of Orthodoxy as such, but of *Russianness.* But for a foreign Church, however Russian in spirit, to claim to be more Russian than the Russians inside Russia was bound to be perceived as arrogant and humiliating (especially in the mouth of an ethnic German such as Archbishop Mark of Berlin!). And so, after the need to display a specifically Soviet patriotism fell away in the early 90s, the MP was able to mount a successful counter-attack, claiming for itself the mantle of “Russianness” as against the “American” church of ROCOR.

As a result, at the very moment that ROCOR was called to enter into an open war with the MP for the souls of the Russian people on Russian soil, she found herself unprepared, hesitant, unsure of her ability to fight this enemy, unsure even whether this enemy was in fact an enemy and not a potential friend, sister or even “mother”. In consequence, ROCOR found itself “moving in two directions”, as the brother-priests Dionysius and Timothy Alferov put it. “The first was that of establishing [ROCOR] parishes in Russia. The second was working to enlighten the clergy of the very MP itself, and had as its goal the passing on to the [Russian] Homeland of the riches of the [Russian] Abroad’s spiritual and ecclesio-social experience. The adherents and supporters of both these courses of action argued amongst themselves from the start, although it cannot be said that these two approaches would have been completely and mutually exclusive, the one of the other.”[[850]](#footnote-850)

This double-mindedness eventually led to the collapse of the mission. For “if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle?” (I Corinthians 14.8). Looking more at her enemies than at the Lord, ROCOR began, like the Apostle Peter, to sink beneath the waves. And the MP which, at the beginning of the 90s had been seriously rattled, recovered her confidence. By the middle of the 90s she had recovered her position in public opinion, while ROCOR lost ground.[[851]](#footnote-851)

This doublemindedness can be seen in ROCOR Synod’s statement of May 3/16, 1990, which was written by Archbishop Anthony of Geneva. In general it was strongly anti-MP, declaring that sergianism would not come to an end “until it renounces the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, repents of the errors that followed from it, removes from its administration the hierarchs that have compromised themselves by anticanonical and amoral acts, have been involved in corruption and theft from the state through the mediation of secular authorities, and have also permitted distortions in the Divine services of the Russian Orthodox Church.” But it contained the qualification that there *might* be true priests dispensing valid sacraments in the patriarchate.

The idea that there can be true priests in a heretical church is canonical nonsense (Apostolic Canon 46), and Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) immediately obtained the removal of the offending phrase. But the damage had been done.

In fact, ROCOR’s mission within Russia was also opposed by many within ROCOR herself... Thus Nun Cassia (Tatiana Senina) wrote: “Already at the beginning of the 1990s far from all the clergy of ROCOR supported the creation of canonical structures of our Church in Russia. This, for example, is what Fr. Alexander Mileant (now Bishop of Buenos-Aires and South America) wrote in 1991, officially addressing the believers of the MP in the name of his parish: ‘… Many write to us from Russia about the problems in the Russian Church (Moscow Patriarchate), about the presence in it of unworthy clergy who co-operated with the God-fighting power… Their presence in the Church is one more inherited illness which we must begin to cure with the help of God. However, we are disturbed by the move of some parishes dissatisfied with the Moscow Patriarchate into the spiritual care of the Russian Church Abroad, and also by the consecration of bishops for Russia. This can lead to a splintering of the Russian Church into a multitude of jurisdictions warring with each other and to the strengthening of sectarianism. Apparently the most appropriate thing to do now would be to convene an All-Russian Church Council as soon as possible with the participation of the bishops of the Moscow Patriarchate, the Russian Church Abroad and if possible of other Orthodox Churches in order to discuss the problems of the Orthodox Church in Russia and for the rapprochement or even merging of the Church Abroad with the mother Russian Church. I pray God to enlighten all the archpastors to find the way to correct the problems and instill peace in the Church. On my part I wish success to his Holiness Patriarch Alexis and all the clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church in the strengthening of faith in the Russian people!’”[[852]](#footnote-852)

## 151. THE FREE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

In May, 1990, Bishop Lazarus of Tambov, who, as we have seen, had been secretly consecrated by ROCOR Bishop Barnabas of Cannes in 1982, was able to obtain a passport in order to go to New York, where his consecration was confirmed by the ROCOR Sobor. An important decision now lay before the assembled bishops: was the ministry of their sole bishop in Russia to remain in the catacombs for Catacomb Christians, or were they to bless the creation of above-ground parishes in direct and open competition with the MP?[[853]](#footnote-853) This question was to divide members of the Catacomb Church from recent converts from the MP…

In fact, the decision to create above-ground parishes had been virtually taken already, because on April 7 Metropolitan Vitaly had received from the MP the parish of St. Constantine the Great in Suzdal under Archimandrite Valentine (Rusantsov), who, according to his own account, had left his ruling bishop after refusing to spy on foreign tourists.[[854]](#footnote-854) Valentine was received by the metropolitan through a simple phone call, in spite of the fact that he had a very tarnished past. Many believed he had been a KGB agent, arguing that he could not have attained such a “cushy” post in the MP without being one.

Whether or not he had been an agent[[855]](#footnote-855), and whether or not, if he had, he had repented of that, Valentine soon proved himself to be a good administrator, actively receiving priests and parishes, and providing legal registration for them within the Suzdal diocese. However, some parishes distrusted him precisely for his success in this respect. The parishes in Voronezh and Chernigov had the disconcerting experience of being told that they would be refused registration unless they passed under the omophorion either of the local MP hierarch or of Valentine of Suzdal.[[856]](#footnote-856) Was Valentine simply using his contacts in the MP with skill, or was there, as many suspected, a more sinister reason for his success? In spite of these doubts, Valentine, who was made Bishop of Suzdal in February, 1991, was able to gain the support of Bishop Gregory (Grabbe).[[857]](#footnote-857)

Bishop Lazarus’ attitude towards the creation of above-ground parishes, and to the whole idea of a ROCOR mission in Russia, was described by Vitaly Shumilo as follows: “Being placed before the alternative: to remain a secret catacomb hierarch or come out of hiding and lead Church construction in Russia, he chose the latter, although he did not agree to it immediately. Before taking this decision, Vladyka Lazarus in the same year of 1990 conducted a Conference of the catacomb clergy at which he took counsel with them on this question. And since almost everyone expressed their desire that he remain in a catacomb position, he agreed with their demand that he ordain a catacomb bishop for them. The candidate put forward in a conciliar manner was Hieromonk Benjamin (Rusalenko), who came from a family of born catacombniks and had been the spiritual son of the catacomb elder well-known in Belorussia, Hieromonk Theodore (Rafanovich (+1975). The catacombniks invited an official representative of ROCOR to the meeting and through him petitioned the Synod to ordain one more catacomb bishop for the TOC. The request was granted, and on November 28, 1990 Bishop Benjamin (Rusalenko) was ordained to look after the catacombniks by the ROCOR Synod. He was appointed Bishop of Gomel, a vicar of Archbishop Lazarus.

“And so by the end of 1990 two canonical hierarchs of the TOC were already operating in Russia.

“It seemed that all the conditions for the reestablishment in the Homeland of the TOC’s Church administration with the help of ROCOR had been fulfilled. However, at this point certain members of the ROCOR Synod began to act in a completely opposite direction, which led in the end to contradictions within the Russian dioceses and the disorganization of Church life. One of the serious mistakes of the ROCOR Synod was the decision to open on the territory of Russia, in parallel with the TOC, parishes of ROCOR consisting of clergy and laity who had come over from the Moscow Patriarchate.

“From the first day Vladyka Lazarus spoke against the creation in Russia of parallel parishes and dioceses of ROCOR, considering that in Russia there should be the TOC, and abroad – ROCOR. These two branches were united between themselves, but under different administrative centres. He was profoundly convinced that “the Church Abroad” within the bounds of the Fatherland was canonical nonsense. Vladyka Lazarus’ report to the ROCOR Synod in 1993 was devoted to this theme. In July, 1993 there was an expanded Conference of RTOC clergy under the presidency of Archbishop Lazarus in Odessa, which supported Archbishop Lazarus and addressed the ROCOR Synod explaining the necessity of re-establishing Church administration in the Homeland and the administrative self-administration of RTOC in accordance with the Holy Patriarch Tikhon’s decree no. 362, without breaking ecclesiastico-canonical unity with ROCOR.

“In the same year of 1993 the Odessa Diocesan Administration of the Russian True Orthodox Church was officially registered by Archbishop Lazarus. Later this was confirmed by the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR. In the Charter of the Odessa Diocese of RTOC it says: ‘The Russian True Orthodox Church is an independent part of the once united (before 1927) Local Russian Orthodox Church. The administrative-canonical separation of RTOC from other parts of the Russian Church is envisaged by decree no. 362 of the Holy Patriarch Tikhon dated November 7/20, 1920 and by the Epistle of the Locum Tenens of the Patriarchal Throne Metropolitan Agathangelus dated June 5/18, 1922 on the self-government of dioceses. If several dioceses of the RTOC jurisdiction are formed, then a Holy Synod will be formed consisting of Ruling Hierarchs, and a First Hierarch will be elected who will be the constant President of the Holy Synod.’

“Archbishop Lazarus consistently and in a principled manner defended the idea of the restoration of ecclesiastical administration in the Homeland and the preservation of the TOC from being engulfed by ROCOR. This elicited the displeasure of certain representatives of ROCOR such as Archbishop Mark and Bishop Barnabas, and there arose a conflict between a part of the bishops of ROCOR and the bishops inside Russia. The result of the conflict was that Archbishop Lazarus was for a certain time retired and banned from serving. Although the wrongness and uncanonicity of the ROCOR Synod’s act was evident, nevertheless, fearing a deepening of disagreements and not wishing to deepen the conflict, the bishops and clergy inside Russia humbly accepted this Synodal decision and submitted to it.”[[858]](#footnote-858)

Another question discussed at the May, 1990 Sobor in New York was: what was the canonical status of the catacomb jurisdictions not under the leadership of Bishop Lazarus and ROCOR? Not unnaturally, Bishop Lazarus had a decisive influence on the decisions taken in this sphere.

These included the decision of the ROCOR Sobor on May 18 to annul its previous decision of December, 1977 recognising Archbishop Anthony Galynsky-Mikhailovsky and his clergy. [[859]](#footnote-859) “It cannot be recognised as correct because, in connection with newly revealed circumstances, the Episcopal ordination of Anthony (Galynsky-Mikhailovsky) is very dubious, the more so in that there are no written date confirming the canonicity of the ordination.” The priests ordained by him were “to regulate their canonical position by turning towards his Grace Bishop Lazarus of Tambov and Morshansk”.

The Sobor also decided to reject the canonicity of the Catacomb hierarchy deriving its apostolic succession from Bishop Seraphim (Pozdeyev) and Schema-Metropolitan Gennady (Sekach).[[860]](#footnote-860)  In 2000, a book was published appearing to prove beyond doubt that Bishop Seraphim was no bishop, but an imposter…[[861]](#footnote-861) More recently, two “Sekachite” bishops were received by Metropolitan Agathangel of New York (ROCOR-A) by cheirothesia…

On August 2/15, 1990 another ukaz signed by Bishop Hilarion on behalf of ROCOR was distributed (but not published) which rejected the canonicity both of the “Seraphimo-Gennadiite” and of the “Galynskyite” branches of the Catacomb Church.[[862]](#footnote-862) The main accusation made by the ukaz against the two groups was their inability to prove their apostolic succession by producing ordination certificates, as required by the 33rd Apostolic Canon. This was, of course, a serious deficiency; and it was perfectly reasonable that ROCOR should first seek to check, and if necessary correct, their canonical status before entering into communion with them. But in view of both groups’ favourable attitude towards ROCOR, it would seem to have been more reasonable and charitable to have talked with them directly, learned their history and their point of view on the problem, and discussed with them some way of correcting this deficiency without dismissing them outright. Just such a charitable, unifying attitude to the various Catacomb groups had been urged by Bishop Gregory (Grabbe), but was rejected by ROCOR. And so the possibility of correcting the canonical anomalies of these hierarchs in a peaceful manner and with their complete cooperation (for most of them had a high regard for ROCOR) was lost.[[863]](#footnote-863)

The news that ROCOR had rejected them produced catastrophic effects in the lower clergy and laity of these Catacomb groups.[[864]](#footnote-864) The impression was created that ROCOR had come into Russia, not in order to work with the Catacomb Church for the triumph of True Orthodoxy, but in order to *replace* her, or at most to gather the remnants of the catacombs under her sole authority. Indeed, in one declaration explaining the reasons for the consecration of Bishop Lazarus, ROCOR stated that it was in order “to regulate the church life of the Catacomb Church”.[[865]](#footnote-865)

Moreover, in the years to come the ROCOR Synod sometimes describe itself as the *central authority* of the True Russian Church – in spite of the fact that this “central authority” was based, not in Russia, but thousands of miles away in New York!

One Catacomb group, the “Passportless”, so-called because of their refusal to bear Soviet passports as signifying the seal of the Antichrist[[866]](#footnote-866), was in a somewhat different category. Their leader, Hieromonk Gurias (Pavlov) had been, by common consent, canonically ordained in 1928 by Catacomb Hieromartyr Bishop Nectarius of Yaransk. About five thousand passportless in Eastern Russia and Siberia elected him as their candidate for the episcopate, and in the spring of 1990 he travelled for this purpose to the Synod of ROCOR in New York (for which, of course, he had to compromise and take a passport). However, when Fr. Gurias learned that Bishop Lazarus was to take part in his consecration, believing Lazarus to be a KGB agent, he refused the episcopate, broke with ROCOR and returned to Russia. After some negotiations with the Greek Old Calendarist Archbishop Chrysostom II of Athens, Fr. Gurias turned to the Auxentiites and received consecration as Bishop of Kazan in Boston in July, 1991.[[867]](#footnote-867)  He died in Kazan on Christmas Day, 1995/96.[[868]](#footnote-868)

ROCOR’s relationship with the passportless revealed an important theological difference between the True Churches inside and outside Russia in their attitude to the State in Russia. In view of their decades of geographical isolation such a difference was perhaps not surprising. But it turned out to be perhaps the most important single factor leading to the failure of ROCOR’s mission in Russia.

The Church inside Russia, living under the threat of complete annihilation, was inclined to describe her situation in apocalyptic terms, thus: since 1917 we have entered the last period of Church history, the period of the Apocalypse; the True Church, like the woman clothed in the sun, has fled into the wilderness, and the earth (the catacombs) has swallowed her up; while the false church, the Moscow Patriarchate, is the whore sitting on the red beast (communism) (Revelation chapters 12-13 and 17). ROCOR had used very similar language to describe the situation in her All-Emigration Council of Belgrade in 1938; but in the post-war years, as news of the Catacomb Church became scarcer, on the one hand, and the Soviet beast became, by the standards of the 1930s, relatively gentler, on the other, this eschatological emphasis became less pronounced. This difference became a clear theological divergence in, for example, the correspondence between Metropolitan Vitaly and representatives of the passportless in the early 1990s. The metropolitan compared the Soviet Union to the Roman empire. St Paul had been proud of his Roman citizenship, he wrote, so what was wrong with having a Soviet passport and being called a Soviet citizen?[[869]](#footnote-869)

The Passportless Christians were appalled by the comparison – as if Rome, the state in which Christ Himself was born and was registered in a census, and which later grew into the great Orthodox Christian empires of Byzantium, the New Rome, and Russia, the Third Rome, could be compared to the anti-state, the collective Antichrist established, not by God, but by satan (Revelation 13.2), which had destroyed the Russian empire![[870]](#footnote-870) Rome, even in its pagan phase, had protected the Christians from the fury of the Jews: the Soviet Union was, in its early phase, the instrument of the Jews *against* the Christians. Rome, even in its pagan phase, guaranteed a framework of law and order within which the apostles could rapidly spread the faith from one end of the world to the other: the Soviet Union forced a population that was already Orthodox in its great majority to renounce their faith or hide it “in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth” (Hebrews 11.38)… Here we see a falling away of ROCOR from her own earlier teaching in 1933, when she had explicitly rejected the comparison between Soviet and Roman power: “In the present case no historical parallels and analogies are applicable to the Soviet regime. It would be inappropriate to compare it with the Roman authority, submission to which the Apostles Peter and Paul demanded of the Christians of their time…”[[871]](#footnote-871)

Nevertheless, it is clear that God was with Bishop Lazarus and his embryonic church organization. An important witness to this was provided by the Chilean Martyr Jose Munoz and the Montreal Iveron Icon of the Mother of God, which was in his care. This icon appeared in 1982, and began streaming myrrh and working miracles in vast numbers. Until his martyric death in 1997 (when the icon also disappeared) Jose took the icon to almost all the parishes of the Russian diaspora, giving consolation to many. However, he did not go to Russia, and so he decided to make a copy of the icon which could then be sent to Russia. But, as Hieromonk Agathangel writes, he “had to decide who the recipient of the new Icon should be. On the night of August 30 / September 12, 1993, in a vision, he saw his spiritual father, Archbishop Leonty of Chile – in radiance, attired in Archbishop’s vestment and holding a cross-staff. The Archbishop told him that the icon should be entrusted to the pillar of our Church. When Brother Joseph asked who this pillar was, Archbishop Leonty named Archbishop Lazarus. He also added that the new icon would be glorified by many miracles and that the truth of his words would be confirmed by the cover falling off the miraculous Iveron Icon. Upon awakening, Brother Joseph immediately went to see the Iveron Icon and, there, he saw its cover lying on the floor...”[[872]](#footnote-872) The icon copy was given to Archbishop Lazarus, and is now in the possession of the Russian True Orthodox Church led by Lazarus’ successor, Archbishop Tikhon of Omsk and Siberia.

The official beginning of ROCOR’s mission in Russia was marked by the concelebration of three ROCOR hierarchs – Mark, Hilarion and Lazarus - in Fr. Valentine’s parish in Suzdal on June 8/21, 1990.[[873]](#footnote-873) Valentine soon began to attract priests and parishes from both the MP and the Catacomb Church. However, he also encountered opposition, not only from within Russia, but more unexpectedly, from the ROCOR bishops outside it.

Valentine’s main opponent was the German Archbishop Mark, who, in July, 1990, wrote a letter to Metropolitan Vitaly describing Valentine as “in everything – his behaviour, his mentality – a typical product of the Soviet Patriarchate.” While slamming Valentine, Mark began interfering in Russian life, and ordained a priest in St. Petersburg. Thus a schism between ROCOR and the leaders of its Russian mission threatened: as early as July 5, 1990 Bishop Lazarus told the present writer that if Mark continued to interfere with his work in Russia, he would form an autonomous church organization on the basis of Patriarch Tikhon’s ukaz № 362 – a threat he carried out three years later.

On October 3/16, 1990, Bishop Gregory wrote to Bishop Barnabas seeking his support for the consecration of Archimandrite Valentine to the episcopate. He was not very learned, he said, but he was “bold” and “right-thinking”. Then, on October 26, he sought the support of Archbishop Anthony of San Francisco. Finally, at the end of October, “the Metropolitan, urged by Grabbe, approved the consecration of Valentine [to the episcopate], against the opposition of Archbishops Mark of Germany and Anthony of Los Angeles, and directed Archbishop Anthony of Geneva and Bishop Barnabas to consecrate Valentine. This took place in Brussels in February, 1991.”[[874]](#footnote-874)

Later in 1991 a third bishop, Benjamin of the Kuban (a former disciple of the Catacomb Confessor Fr. Theodore Rafailovsky), was consecrated. The ROCOR’s mission inside the country was now called the “Free Russian Orthodox Church” (FROC), and its numbers had increased to some sixty parishes. Meanwhile the Moscow Patriarchate suffered a very sharp drop in popularity.[[875]](#footnote-875)

## 152. THE FOREIGN BISHOPS INTERVENE

The boundaries of the three FROC bishops’ dioceses were not clearly delineated at this stage. As Archbishop Lazarus explained: “The Hierarchical Synod decreed equal rights for us three Russian hierarchs. If someone from the patriarchate wants to join Vladyka Valentine – please. If he wants to join Vladyka Benjamin or me – please. So far the division [of dioceses] is only conditional – more exactly, Russia is in the position of a missionary region. Each of us can receive parishes in any part of the country. For the time being it is difficult to define the boundaries of dioceses.”[[876]](#footnote-876)

In November, 1991 Bishop Valentine was asked about Archbishop Mark’s role. The reply was carefully weighed: “When the situation in Russia was still in an embryonic stage, Archbishop Mark with the agreement of the first-hierarch of ROCOR made various attempts to build church life in Russia. One of Archbishop Mark’s experiments was the ‘special German deanery’ headed by Fr. Ambrose (Sievers). Now this is changing, insofar as the situation in the FROC has been sufficiently normalized. From now on not one hierarch will interfere in Russian affairs – except, it goes without saying, the three hierarchs of the FROC.”[[877]](#footnote-877)

But Mark had no intention of ceasing to interfere. The “Special German deanery” he placed under the Monk Ambrose (von Sievers), a Nazi sympathizer who later founded his own Synod, and in general acted as if Russia were an extension of the German diocese. Many suspected Mark’s protégé, if not Mark himself, of being the real Soviet mole within the FROC.

Mark, according to Bishop Valentine, was also stirring up divisions between the Russian bishops; and from the middle of 1991 this disunity was becoming a major problem.

“Lazarus,” according to Zalewski, “did not answer Valentine’s letters and even broke off contact with the Office of the Metropolitan in New York. While in August that year Valentine expanded the number of his parishes and obtained their official registration, Lazarus’ activities showed no tangible results. Lazarus refused to attend the Sobor in New York to settle his differences with Valentine. Grabbe (letter to Archbishop Anthony of Geneva 23 August / 5 September, 1991) indicates that by this refusal Lazarus breaks church laws which is an especially serious offence ‘in the conditions of our struggle for existence’.”[[878]](#footnote-878)

Still more serious was the anti-canonical interference of foreign clergy – not only Mark - inside Russia. Bishops and priests visiting Russia from abroad often showed an extraordinary inability to distinguish between the true Church and the false. Thus Archbishop Laurus, the future Metropolitan, on visiting Sanino, a village in Vladimir region in which there existed a ROCOR priest, chose instead to stay with the local MP priest! Another bishop shared some holy relics with – the MP Metropolitan Philaret of Minsk (KGB agent “Ostrovsky”)!

Again, at a time when the MP, with the help of the local authorities and OMON forces, was seizing back churches that had gone over to the FROC by force, Archbishop Mark was calling for official negotiations with the MP[[879]](#footnote-879), publicly calling Lazarus and Benjamin poor administrators, and urging believers in a publicly distributed letter “to distance yourselves from Bishop Valentine of the Suzdal and Vladimir diocese of the Free Russian Orthodox Church”, whom he described as “a wolf in sheep’s clothing”.Instead, he told them to turn to Fr. Sergius Perekrestov (a priest who was later defrocked for adultery before leaving the FROC). A priest of the Moscow Patriarchate interpreted this letter to mean that ROCOR had “turned its back on the Suzdal diocese of the FROC”.[[880]](#footnote-880)

On October 2, 1992, in a letter to Protopriest Michael Artsimovich, Archbishop Mark again demonstrated that he respected neither the Russian bishops nor their flock: “We are receiving by no means the best representatives of the Russian Church. Basically, these are people who know little or nothing about the Church Abroad. And in those cases in which someone possesses some information, it must be doubtful that he is in general in a condition to understand it in view of his own mendacity and the mendacity of his own situation. In receiving priests from the Patriarchate, we receive with them a whole series of inadequacies and vices of the MP itself… The real Catacomb Church no longer exists. It in fact disappeared in the 1940s or the beginning of the 1950s… Only individual people have been preserved from it, and in essence everything that has arisen since is only pitiful reflections, and people take their desires for reality. Those who poured into this stream in the 1950s and later were themselves infected with Soviet falsehood, and they partly – and involuntarily - participate in it themselves, that is, they enter the category of what we call ‘homo sovieticus’… In Russia, consequently, there cannot be a Russian Church because it is all based on Soviet man… I think it is more expedient to seek allies for ourselves among those elements that are pure or striving for canonical purity both in the depths of the Moscow Patriarchate and in the other Local Churches – especially in Serbia or even Greece…We will yet be able to deliver ourselves from that *impurity* which we have now received from the Moscow Patriarchate, and again start on the path of pure Orthodoxy… It is evident that we must… try and undertake the *russification* of Soviet man and the Soviet church…”[[881]](#footnote-881)

Archbishop Mark’s remarks about the russification of Soviet man did not go down well in Russia – especially coming from an ethnic German who was strongly suspected of having been a *Stasi* agent. And his rejection of the very existence of the Catacomb Church especially angered the catacombniks. In a letter to Metropolitan Vitaly dated December 25, 1992, Bishop Valentine complained that Archbishop Mark’s attacks against him had been distributed, not only to members of the Synod, but also to laypeople and even in churches of the Moscow Patriarchate.

And he went on: “On the basis of the above positions I have the right to confirm that after my consecration to the episcopate his Eminence Vladyka Mark did everything to cause a quarrel between me and their Eminences Archbishop Lazarus and Bishop Benjamin…

“It is interesting that when their Eminences Archbishop Lazarus and Bishop Benjamin, by virtue of the Apostolic canons and their pastoral conscience, adopted, with me, a principled position on the question of his Eminence Archbishop Mark’s claims to administer Russian parishes, the latter simply dismissed the two hierarchs as being incapable of administration… Then Archbishop Mark … chose a different tactic. He wrote a letter to Kaliningrad, calling me ‘a wolf in sheep’s clothing’, and this letter was read out from the ambon in the churches of the Moscow patriarchate.

“Yesterday I was told that his Eminence Archbishop Mark sent a fax to the Synod insistently recommending that his Eminence Barnabas not be recalled from Moscow until a church trial had been carried out on Valentine. What trial, for what? For everything that I have done, for all my labours? Does not putting me on trial mean they want to put you, too, on trial? Does this not mean that it striking me with their fist they get at you with their elbow?”[[882]](#footnote-882)

The reference to Bishop Barnabas is explained as follows. In February, 1992 he had been sent to Moscow as superior of the community of SS. Martha and Mary in Moscow, which was designated the Synodal podvorye.[[883]](#footnote-883) Bishop Barnabas immediately established contacts with the KGB-supported fascist organisation Pamiat’. Then, in May, Pamiat’ organized a “car race” in honour of the names-day of Tsar Nicholas II. Members of Pamiat’ and Cossacks in 20 cars went through the central streets of Moscow. Bishop Barnabas and the priests Alexis Averianov and Oleg Steniaev, together with the MP priest Victor, served moliebens along the way. “In the course of one of the moliebens Protopriest Alexis Averianov, the spiritual father of the SS. Martha and Mary community and of the National-Patriotic Front Pamiat’, called on those assembled ‘to take your place in the ranks of the national-patriotic and ecclesiastical movement’. The leader of Pamiat’, Demetrius Vasiliev, declared that ‘there was no schism in the Russian church’…”[[884]](#footnote-884) As a result of this, the owner of the Mary-Martha Convent, which had been Barnabas’ headquarters, took fright and removed it from ROCOR…

On August 3, Bishop Barnabas organized “a conference of the clergy with the aim of organizing the Moscow diocesan organization of our Church. The conference was attended by more than ten clergy from Moscow and other parts of Russia. In his speech before the participants Vladyka pointed out the necessity of creating a diocesan administration which would unite all the parishes of the FROC in Moscow and Moscow region, and also those parishes in other regions of Russia which wanted to unite with this diocesan administration.”[[885]](#footnote-885)

Barnabas went on to receive clerics who had been banned by the Russian bishops, especially Valentine (whom he accused of homosexuality), and ordained priests in their dioceses without asking them. The appointment of a foreign bishop with almost unlimited powers in Russia was a direct encroachment on the canonical rights of the Russian bishops was becoming increasingly scandalous. According to the holy canons (8th of the 3rd Ecumenical Council, 9th of Antioch, 64th and 67th of Carthage), no bishop can encroach on the territory of another bishop or perform any sacramental action in it without his permission. Also at the August conference, “a diocesan council was elected, containing three members of the National Patriotic Front, Pamyat’, as representatives of the laity.”[[886]](#footnote-886)

On November 7, 1992, Metropolitan Vitaly and the ROCOR acted to distance themselves from the activities of Bishop Barnabas, sending Bishop Hilarion and Fr. Victor Potapov to Moscow to express the official position of ROCOR at a press conference; which duly took place on November 13. However, in February, 1993, at a meeting of the Synod in New York, it was decided to reject this press-conference as “provocative” and to praise one of the pro-fascist priests, Fr. Alexis Averianov, for his “fruitful work with Pamiat*’*”, bestowing on him an award for his “stand for righteousness”. Moreover, no action was taken against Bishop Barnabas, while Fr. Victor was forbidden to undertake any ecclesiastical or public activity in Russia.[[887]](#footnote-887)

Bishop Gregory desperately tried to support the Russian bishops against Barnabas, but almost the entire foreign episcopate was now working to support Barnabas and undermine Valentine.

Thus on 29 December, 1992, Archbishop Anthony of Geneva wrote to Bishop Gregory: “There is no unity among the episcopate… You support Bishop Valentine, I – Bishop Barnabas… For the time being I am withdrawing from Russian affairs… The metropolitan contradicts himself and easily falls under others’ influence, as, for example, [Fr. Victor] Potapov and others. Thanks to him we are in a muddle… May God not allow the episcopate to be increased there [in Russia] in order that there should be more dirt and quarrels. There is no [good] man there, and none with us either… Act, holy Vladyko, but do not make mistakes.”

This from the man who in the 1970s and 80s had done more than any other to divide ROCOR and weaken its confessing stance against the MP and World Orthodoxy…

On January 12, 1993, Bishop Gregory replied that regardless of whether Valentine was nice or not, “he has 43 parishes and care for parishioners is crucial.” [[888]](#footnote-888)

In 1993 Archimandrite Adrian and a very large parish in Noginsk applied to come under the omophorion of Bishop Valentine, and was accepted by him on January 19. At the same time the MP circulated an accusation - signed by a woman but with no other indication of time, place or names of witnesses of the supposed crime - that Archimandrite Adrian had raped one altar boy and had had improper relations with another. This accusation turned out to be completely fabricated – the “raped” altar boy wrote a letter of apology to Fr. Adrian and the letter was accepted by the prosecutor in the criminal court. Both youngsters were then sued for stealing icons…

In spite of this, Bishop Barnabas convened a “Church Court of the Moscow Diocesan Administration”, and without any kind of investigation or trial, banned the archimandrite, although he belonged to a different diocese, on the grounds of immorality. (The two priests in this court, Protopriest Alexis Averianov and Archimandrite Ioasaph (Shibaev) had already been unlawfully received by Bishop Barnabas into his jurisdiction, although they had been banned (whether justly or not is not the question here) by Archbishop Lazarus.) Now Archimandrite Adrian, who later joined the Ukrainian church, did turn out to be a less than strictly moral priest. Nevertheless, this in no way justified Bishop Barnabas’ uncanonical actions. Moreover, as the Russian newspapers pointed out, Bishop Barnabas seemed to be partially supporting the patriarchate in the struggle for this parish – in which, as Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) pointed out, the KGB appeared also to be operating.[[889]](#footnote-889)

Incited by Barnabas, several ROCOR bishops wanted to proceed with defrocking Bishop Valentine; but instead he was retired on grounds of ill-health – an uncanonical decision since neither had Bishop Valentine petitioned for retirement nor had the ROCOR bishops investigated his state of health. Bishop Barnabas also attacked Archbishop Lazarus as an incompetent old man, and Bishop Benjamin as a collective farm worker in bast shoes!

Worse was to come. Bishop Barnabas wrote (on official Synod notepaper) to Metropolitan Vladimir (Romanyuk) of the uncanonical Ukrainian Autocephalous Church seeking to enter into communion with him, and followed this up by visiting him in Kiev. The whole affair was exposed when Metropolitan Vitaly received an invitation from the “Patriarch” to visit Kiev in order to make the inter-communion official.[[890]](#footnote-890) Of course, the MP seized on this to discredit the whole of ROCOR!

“In the shortest time [Barnabas] introduced the most complete chaos into the life of the Free Church[[891]](#footnote-891), which was beginning to be reborn. This representative of the Synod began, above the heads of the Diocesan Bishops of the Free Church in Russia, and in violation of the basic canonical rules, to receive into his jurisdiction clerics who had been banned from serving by them, to carry out ordinations in their dioceses without their knowledge, and finally was not ashamed to demand, at the Council in 1993, that he should be given rights to administer *all the parishes of the Free Church in Russia!*[[892]](#footnote-892) This request was not granted by the Council, the more so in that it learned that ‘the empowered representative of the Synod of the Russian Church Abroad in Moscow’, on writing-paper of the Hierarchical Synod, wrote a petition to ‘the Locum Tenens of the Kievan Patriarchal Throne’, Metropolitan Vladimir (Romanyuk), in which it said that ‘the treacherous Muscovite scribblers hired by the Moscow Patriarchate are trying to trample into the mud the authority of the Russian Church Abroad. In this connection: we beseech you, Your Eminence, through the Kievan Patriarchate headed by you, to give our ecclesiastical activity a juridical base and receive us into brotherly communion.’ Extraordinary as it may seem, the Council did not consider it necessary to defrock its representative, and it was put to him that he should set off for the Holy Land for a mere three months without right of serving – which, however, he did not carry out. This shameful letter was widely distributed by the Moscow Patriarchate, while the ‘Patriarchal Locum Tenens’, delighted by this prospect, invited the First-Hierarch of the Church Abroad to visit Kiev in written form. This letter was also widely distributed.”[[893]](#footnote-893)

## 153. THE FIRST SCHISM

On April 14/27, 1993 Archbishop Lazarus sent a report to the Synod detailing the many canonical violations committed against the Russian bishops, and in particular against himself, to which the leadership of ROCOR had not reacted in spite of many appeals. He then declared his “temporary administrative separation” from the Synod until the Synod restored canonical order. But, he insisted, he was not breaking communion with ROCOR.[[894]](#footnote-894) As a result of this, without consulting either him or his diocese, a session of the ROCOR Synod meeting in Cleveland, Ohio retired him, and transferred the administration of his parishes to Metropolitan Vitaly.

In May, during its Council in Lesna, the Synod effectively retired Bishop Valentine also – it goes without saying, against his will and without canonical justification. As Metropolitan Vitaly wrote to him: “The Hierarchical Council has become acquainted with your administrative successes. However, your health in such a difficult situation makes it necessary for us to retire you because of illness until your full recovery. This means that if you are physically able, you can serve, since you are in no way banned from church serving, but you are simply freed from administrative cares”.

During the Council a letter was read from a group of Catacomb Christians expressing disagreement with the actions of Archbishop Lazarus and asking that Bishop Barnabas be placed in charge of all the Russian parishes. Bishop Barnabas also received support from a parish in Voronezh, which asked that the Council confirm in its epistle the reasons not allowing ROCOR to enter into communion with the MP.

At the same time, however, Archbishop Mark told the bishops that in five years his German diocese would no longer exist, and that more and more people considered the confrontational approach to the MP wrong. He was opposed by Metropolitan Vitaly, Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles and Bishop Gregory. However, Archbishop Mark brought this issue up more than once (in Protocols 3 and 7), which shows where he himself was moving…[[895]](#footnote-895)

In a report to the Synod dated May 16/29, after sharply criticizing the Synod’s unjust and uncanonical actions against Bishop Valentine, Bishop Gregory said: “Our responsibility before God demands from us the annulment of this conciliar resolution, and if there are accusers who have material which has not yet been shown us in documentary form, then Bishop Valentine must be returned to his see and the affair must be either cut short or again reviewed by the Council, but now in agreement with the canons that we have in the Church. For this would clearly be necessary to convene a Council, and for a start a judgement must be made about it in the Synod…

“As a consequence of this Archbishop Lazarus has already left us. And Bishop Valentine’s patience is already being tried. If he, too, will not bear the temptation, what will we be left with? Will his flock in such a situation want to leave with him? Will not it also rebel?

“For clarity’s sake I must begin with an examination of certain matters brought up at the expanded session of the Synod which took place in Munich.

“A certain tension was noticeable there in spite of the external calmness. It turned out that behind the scenes a suspicious attitude towards Bishop Valentine had arisen. Already after the closing of the Synod I learned that several members of the Synod had been shown a document containing accusations of transgressions of the laws of morality against Bishop Valentine. The President of the Synod did not have this document during the sessions but only at the end. It was then that I, too, received a copy of the denunciation from Archbishop Mark, who was given it by Bishop Barnabas, who evidently did not know how to deal with such objects according to the Church canons. I involuntarily ascribed the unexpected appearance of such a document amidst the members of the Synod to the action of some communist secret agents and to the inexperience of Bishop Barnabas in such matters.

“The caution of the Church authorities in relation to similar accusations in the time of troubles after the persecutions was ascribed to the 74th Apostolic canon, the 2nd canon of the 1st Ecumenical Council and especially to the 6th canon of the 2nd Ecumenical Council. At that time the heretics were multiplying their intrigues against the Orthodox hierarchs. The above-mentioned canons indicate that accusations hurled by less than two or three witnesses – who were, besides, faithful children of the Church and accusers worthy of trust – were in no way to be accepted…

“Did they apply such justice and caution when they judged Bishop Valentine, and were ready without any investigation to ... defrock him for receiving Archimandrite Adrian? And were the accusations hurled at the latter really seriously examined?

“Beginning with the processing, contrary to the canons, of the accusations against Bishop Valentine on the basis of the single complaint of a person known to none of us[[896]](#footnote-896), the Sobor was already planning to defrock him without any kind of due process, until the argument of his illness turned up. But here, too, they failed to consider that this required his own petition and a check to ascertain the seriousness of his illness. The intention was very simple: just get rid of a too active Bishop. They didn’t think of the fate of his parishes, which exist on his registration. Without him they would lose it.

“While we, in the absence of the accused and, contrary to the canons, without his knowledge, were deciding the fate of the Suzdal diocese, Vladyka Valentine received three more parishes. Now he has 63. Taking into account Archimandrite Adrian with his almost 10,000 people, we are talking about approximately *twenty thousand souls.*

“The question arises: in whose interests is it to destroy what the papers there call the centre of the Church Abroad in Russia?

“The success of Bishop Valentine’s mission has brought thousands of those being saved into our Church, but now this flock is condemned to widowhood and the temptation of having no head only because he turned out not to be suitable to some of our Bishops…”[[897]](#footnote-897)

It was in this highly charged atmosphere, with their bishop forcibly and uncanonically retired and the registration of all their parishes hanging by a thread, that the annual diocesan conference of the Suzdal diocese took place from June 9/22 to 11/24. It was also attended by priests representing Archbishop Lazarus and Bishop Benjamin. Hieromonk Agathangel (Pashkovsky) read out a letter from Archbishop Lazarus in which he declared that although he had considered the actions of ROCOR in Russia to be uncanonical, he had tolerated them out of brotherly love, but was now forced to speak out against them, for they were inflicting harm on the Church. First, ROCOR did not have the right to form its own parishes in Russia insofar as the Catacomb Church, which had preserved the succession of grace of the Mother Church, continued to exist on her territory. Therefore it was necessary only to strengthen the catacomb communities and expand them through an influx of new believers. Secondly, the hierarchs of ROCOR had been acting in a spirit far from brotherly love, for they had been treating their brothers, the hierarchs of the FROC, as second-class Vladykas: they received clergy who had been banned by the Russian Vladykas, brought clergy of other dioceses to trial, removed bans placed by the Russian hierarchs without their knowledge or agreement, and annulled other decisions of theirs (for example, Metropolitan Vitaly forbade an inspection to be carried out in the parish of Fr. Sergius Perekrestov of St. Petersburg). Thirdly, the ROCOR hierarchs were far from Russia and did not understand the situation, so they could not rightly administer the Russian parishes. Thus the Synod removed the title ‘Administering the affairs of the FROC’ from all the hierarchs except Bishop Barnabas, which forced the dioceses to re-register with the authorities - although, while a new registration was being carried out, the parishes could lose their right to ownership of the churches and other property. Moreover re-registration was almost impossible, insofar as it required the agreement of an expert consultative committee attached to the Supreme Soviet, which contained hierarchs of the Moscow Patriarchate. Fourthly, the ROCOR hierarchs had been inconsistent in their actions, which aroused the suspicion that their actions were directed, not by the Holy Spirit, but by forces foreign to the Church.[[898]](#footnote-898) Archbishop Lazarus concluded by calling for the formation of a True Orthodox Catacomb Church that was administratively separate from, but in communion with, ROCOR, on the basis of Patriarch Tikhon’s ukaz № 362, which had never been annulled.

The Conference’s Address and Resolutions accused the Synod of inactivity and of not defending the parishes in Russia from persecution by the MP, and of “not hurrying to exchange their titles of bishops of distant regions and cities with non-Russian names for the names of Russian regions and cities…

“The Hierarchy Abroad remains unreachable. In this unreachableness, alas, many have begun to find a similarity with the unreachableness for believers of the hierarchy of the MP. The one certain factor influencing the majority of the hierarchs of ROCOR in their relationship to their suffering fellow-countrymen in Russia is intense distrust. Suspicion and mistrustfulness have become the spring that moves the hierarchs of ROCOR. We would like to know in accordance with what rules and canons the Hierarchical Council intended to deprive the Russian hierarchs, Archbishop Lazarus and Bishop Valentine, of their sees… Did the Hierarchical Council ask the much-suffering Russian people whether their conscience allows them to take upon themselves the sin of Judas and betray their spiritual Archpastor? We cannot keep silence, peacefully surveying the destructive activity of the hierarchs of the Church Abroad in Russia… and we are forced to govern ourselves in accordance with the Decree of the Holy Hierarch Tikhon, Patriarch and Confessor of All Russia, the Sacred Synod and the Higher Ecclesiastical Council on the independence of those parts of the Russian Church deprived for one reason or another of the possibility of communicating with her central authorities… If the Hierarchical Synod of ROCOR were to adopt new and uncanonical decisions that are incomprehensible for Russian [Rossijskikh] Orthodox Christians, we reserve for ourselves the right correspondingly to adopt decisions that will aid the regeneration of Russian Orthodoxy and its salvation…

“In view of the uncanonicity of certain resolutions of the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR that took place in the convent of Lesna in France, and the session of the Hierarchical Synod that preceded it in Cleveland (USA), in relation to the Russian parishes and events in Russia and the completely distorted presentation of them, we ask the First Hierarch of ROCOR to convene an emergency Council and rescind the resolutions that are contrary to the Canons and Decrees of the Holy Church. If our request is rejected, then the whole responsibility for the consequences lies upon those who have adopted anti-canonical bans that violate the Apostolic Rules and the Rules of the Holy Church… Desiring the speediest overcoming of the isolation of the hierarchs of ROCOR from the Russian [Rossijskoj] flock and their return to the Homeland…”

After quoting these words, Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles wrote, in a letter to Metropolitan Vitaly: “All the documents of the congress: the Agenda, the Resolutions, the Address to the Synod and the Protocols serve as vivid accusations first of all against Bishop Valentine, but also against all the participants in the congress who signed the Address and Resolutions…

“How is one to describe this, which is only a few extracts from the whole? This is uncommon ignorance, and madness, and untruth, and rebellion, and murmuring, and open threats of a schism, and an unjust comparison of the Church Abroad with the MP, and the taking on themselves of the role of a higher arbiter over the Hierarchical Council. In the unprecedented demand that the resolutions of the Council be rescinded it is not indicated precisely which resolutions are meant.

“Moreover, the threat of separation from the Church Abroad if the unnamed demands are not met, besides the mad demand that the dioceses abroad be liquidated, constitutes a real threat…”[[899]](#footnote-899)

The tone of the conference documents was indeed strong: but it could well be argued that the very serious situation warranted it, and that hierarchs such as Archbishop Anthony, instead of complaining about “rebellion” and “a real threat”, should have acted to avert the threat…

At the end of the conference it was decided that the Suzdal diocese would follow Archbishop Lazarus’ example in separating administratively from ROCOR while remaining in communion in prayer with it. Bishop Valentine expressed the hope that this would be only a temporary measure, and he called on Metropolitan Vitaly to convene an extraordinary Council to remove the anticanonical resolutions of the Council in Lesna and the Synod meeting in Cleveland…[[900]](#footnote-900)

Meanwhile, a meeting of the clergy Archbishop Lazarus’ diocese in Odessa on July 17 confirmed that they were “on the verge of a break” with ROCOR. They reiterated their belief that the bans on Archbishop Lazarus were uncanonical and called on the hierarchs of ROCOR to review them in a spirit of brotherly love and mutual understanding. However, the ROCOR Synod, at the initiative of Archbishops Mark, Lavr and Hilarion, proceeded to place bans on Archbishop Lazarus.

Meanwhile, the Chilean layman Jose Munos, who was the keeper of the famous myrrh-streaming Montreal Iveron icon of the Mother of God, was painting a copy of it. When the work was finished, he wondered to whom to give it. Then, in the night of September 30 / August 12, 1993, he saw in a vision his spiritual father, Archbishop Leonty of Chile, in bishop’s vestments and with a staff in his hand. Vladyka said that the new icon should be given to a pillar of the True Church. When Brother Jose asked who this was, the hierarch named Archbishop Lazarus (Zhurbenko). He also said that it would be glorified by many miracles; and as a sign of the truth of his words, he said that the cover on the icon would fall off. On awaking, Jose went to the icon and saw that the cover was on the floor… Six days later the icon was given to Archbishop Lazarus… The fragrant copy of the Montreal Iveron icon has indeed done many miracles in Russia…[[901]](#footnote-901)

On November 2, 1993 (i.e. over eighteen months since the scandals erupted), the Synod decided to withdraw Bishop Barnabas from Russia and to place all his parishes in the jurisdiction of Metropolitan Vitaly.[[902]](#footnote-902) Later, on July 8, 1994, Bishop Barnabas was forbidden from travelling to Russia for five years.[[903]](#footnote-903) All the parishes of ROCOR in Siberia, Ukraine and Belarus were entrusted to Bishop Benjamin.[[904]](#footnote-904)

By the beginning of 1994 the Russian bishops had received no reaction whatsoever from the Synod to any of their letters and requests. This was probably under the influence especially of Archbishop Mark, who told the Hierarchical Council that “Valentine is a tank that will crush us under its weight.”[[905]](#footnote-905)

On March 8/21, 1994, in a conference taking place in Suzdal, Bishop Valentine said: “On June 10/23, 1993 in Suzdal there took place a diocesan congress in which resolutions were taken and an Address was sent to the Synod indicating the transgressions, by the above-mentioned Hierarchs, of the Apostolic Canons and decrees of the Fathers of the Church, of the Ecumenical and Local Councils. At the same time they asked that his Grace Bishop Barnabas be recalled, and that Archbishop Mark should ask forgiveness of the clergy and the Russian people for his humiliation of their honour and dignity. If our request were ignored, the whole weight of responsibility would lie on the transgressors of the Church canons. But so far there has been no reply.

“We sent the Resolution of the clergy, monastics and laypeople warning that if there continued to be transgressions of the Apostolic Canons and Conciliar Resolutions on the part of the Hierarchs, with the connivance of the Hierarchical Synod, the whole responsibility would lie as a heavy burden on the transgressors. The Synod *did not reply.*

“Together with his Eminence Archbishop Lazarus and the members of the Diocesan Councils I sent an address to the Synod in which their attention was drawn to the wily intrigues on the part of those who wished us ill, and asked that the situation be somehow corrected, placing our hopes on Christian love and unity of mind, which help to overcome human infirmities. But in the same address we laid out in very clear fashion our determination that if the Hierarchical Synod did not put an end to the deliberate transgressions, we would be forced to exist independently, in accordance with the holy Patriarch Tikhon’s ukaz № 362 of November 7/20, 1920, in the interests of the purity of Orthodoxy and the salvation of our Russian flock. The reply consisted in Vladyka Metropolitan threatening a ban.

“I sent a letter to Metropolitan Vitaly in which I besought him earnestly to confirm my status before the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation, so that the Suzdal Diocesan Administration should not lose its registration. This time the reply was swift, only not to the Diocesan Administration, but to the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation under the signature of Bishop Barnabas, saying that the Russian Hierarchs were no longer Administering the affairs of the FROC, and that this duty was laid upon him. As a result I and the member of my Diocesan Council began visiting office after office, a process that lasted many months.

“It is difficult for you to imagine how much labour we had to expend, how many written bureaucratic demands we had to fulfill, in order to get our Regulations re-registered. If I had not undertaken this, all the churches would automatically have been taken out of registration and then, believe me, the Moscow Patriarchate would not have let go such a ‘juicy morsel’.”[[906]](#footnote-906)

After hearing more speeches in the same vein, including one from Archbishop Lazarus, the Congress made the following decisions: 1. To form a Temporary Higher Church Administration (THCA) of the Russian Orthodox Church, which, without claiming to be the highest Church authority in Russia, would have as its final aim the convening of a Free All-Russian Local Council that would have such authority. 2. To elect and consecrate new bishops. 3. To declare their gratitude to ROCOR and Metropolitan Vitaly, whose name would continue to be commemorated in Divine services, since they wished to remain in communion of prayer with him. 4. To express the hope that the Hierarchical Synod would recognize the THCA and the consecrations performed by it.

One of the members of the Congress, Elena Fadeyevna Shipunova declared: “It is now completely obvious that the subjection of the Russian dioceses to the Synod Abroad contradicts the second point of Ukaz № 362. The Russian Church is faced directly with the necessity of moving to independent administration in accordance with this Ukaz. After the sergianist schism Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan called for such a move, considering Ukaz № 362 as the only possible basis of Church organization. Incidentally, Metropolitan Cyril also indicated to Metropolitan Sergius Stragorodsky that he had to follow Ukaz № 362 instead of usurping ecclesiastical power. Metropolitan Cyril and the other bishop-confessors tried to organize the administration of the Russian Church on the basis of this Ukaz, but they couldn’t do this openly. Now for the first time the Russian Church has the opportunity to do this. We could say that this is an historical moment. The Temporary Higher Church Administration that has been created is the first legal one in Russia since the time of the sergianist schism. The Centre of Church power ceased its existence after the death of Metropolitan Peter more than half a century ago, but we have not yet arrived at the Second All-Russian Council which has the power to re-establish Central Church power.”[[907]](#footnote-907)

On March 9/22 the THCA, which now contained three new bishops: Theodore of Borisovsk, Seraphim of Sukhumi and Agathangel of Simferopol, together with many clergy, monastics and laity, informed Metropolitan Vitaly and the Synod of ROCOR of their decision. On March 23 / April 5 the Synod of ROCOR rejected this declaration and the new consecrations, and decided to break communion in prayer with the newly formed Autonomous Church, but without imposing any bans.[[908]](#footnote-908)

In this decision the ROCOR Synod called itself the “Central Church authority” of the Russian Church, which contradicted both its own Fundamental Statute and the simple historical fact that, as the FROC bishops pointed out, since the death of Metropolitan Peter in 1937 the Russian Church had had no “Central Church authority”.[[909]](#footnote-909)

Nor was this the only indication that ROCOR was beginning to change its perception of herself… In their May, 1993 Council in Lesna, the ROCOR hierarchs decided that the Church in Russia was now free and changed the commemoration “For the Orthodox episcopate of the persecuted Church of Russia” to “For the Orthodox episcopate of the Church of Russia”.[[910]](#footnote-910) It was strange that, at a moment when their own bishops inside Russia were being persecuted, the impression should be given that persecution had ceased – unless they considered that they had no persecuted bishops inside Russia and that the phrase referred to the MP…

As Protopriest Benjamin Zhukov wrote: “What Church were they talking about? A lack of precision was revealed, and confusion was created between ‘the persecuted Russian Church’ of the Tikhonites, Josephites and all the catacombniks, on the one hand, and the MP on the other. It was as if there few who understood what was going on. After all, the MP with the aid of OMON had already begun to take away the churches in Russia that had passed over to us, and our Church had begun to be persecuted by the MP. Therefore the Metropolitan and a series of church-servers never changed the former formula, witnessing to the fact that for them the Russian Church was not the MP.”[[911]](#footnote-911)

During the ROCOR Sobor, Bishop Barnabas criticised all the bishops in Russia and asked the Sobor to give him *alone* administration of *all* the parishes in Russia.[[912]](#footnote-912) Then, in order to strengthen ROCOR’s hand in the coming struggle with the FROC, Archimandrite Evtikhy (Kurochkin) was consecrated Bishop of Ishim and Siberia on July 11/24. [[913]](#footnote-913) He turned out to be a fierce enemy of the other Russian bishops…

Bishop Gregory, who had not been admitted to the sessions of the ROCOR Synod, fully approved of the actions of the Russian Hierarchs in a letter to Bishop Valentine dated March 24 / April 6. And on the same day he wrote the following to Metropolitan Vitaly: “We have brought the goal of the possible regeneration of the Church in Russia to the most undesirable possible end. Tormented by envy and malice, certain of our bishops have influenced the whole course of our church politics in Russia. As a consequence of this, our Synod has not understood the meaning of the mission of our existence abroad.

“As I warned the Synod in my last report, we have done absolutely everything possible to force the Russian bishops to separate from us administratively. They have had to proceed from Resolution № 362 of Patriarch Tikhon of November 7/20, 1920 in order to avoid the final destruction of the just-begun regeneration of our Church in our Fatherland. But our Synod, having nothing before its eyes except punitive tactics, proceeds only on the basis of a normalized church life. Whereas the Patriarch’s Resolution had in mind the preservation of the Church’s structure in completely unprecedented historical and ecclesiastical circumstances.

“The ukaz was composed for various cases, including means for the re-establishment of the Church’s Administration even in conditions of its abolition (see article 9) and ‘the extreme disorganization of Church life’. This task is placed before every surviving hierarch, on condition that he is truly Orthodox.

“The Russian Hierarchs felt themselves to be in this position when, for two years running, their inquiries and requests to provide support against the oppression of the Moscow Patriarchate were met with complete silence on the part of our Synod.

“Seeing the canonical chaos produced in their dioceses by Bishop Barnabas, and the Synod’s silent collusion with him, the Russian Hierarchs came to the conclusion that there was no other way of avoiding the complete destruction of the whole enterprise but their being led by the Patriarch’s Resolution № 362.

“Our Synod unlawfully retired Bishop Valentine for his reception of a huge parish in Noginsk,.. but did not react to the fact that Bishop Barnabas had in a treacherous manner disgraced the Synod, in whose name he petitioned to be received into communion with the Ukrainian self-consecrators!

“I don’t know whether the full text of Resolution № 362 has been read at the Synod. I myself formerly paid little attention to it, but now, having read it, I see that the Russian Hierarchs have every right to cite it, and this fact will come to the surface in the polemic that will inevitably take place now. I fear that by its decisions the Synod has already opened the path to this undesirable polemic, and it threatens to create a schism not only in Russia, but also with us here…

“There are things which it is impossible to stop, and it is also impossible to escape the accomplished fact. If our Synod does not now correctly evaluate the historical moment that has taken place, then its already profoundly undermined prestige (especially in Russia) will be finally and ingloriously destroyed.

“All the years of the existence of the Church Abroad we have enjoyed respect for nothing else than our uncompromising faithfulness to the canons. They hated us, but they did not dare not to respect us. But now we have shown the whole Orthodox world that the canons are for us an empty sound, and we have become a laughing-stock in the eyes of all those who have even the least relationship to Church affairs.

“You yourself, at the Synod in Lesna, allowed yourself to say that for us, the participants in it, it was now not the time to examine the canons, but we had to act quickly. You, who are at the helm of the ship of the Church, triumphantly, before the whole Sobor, declared to us that we should now hasten to sail without a rudder and without sails. At that time your words greatly disturbed me, but I, knowing your irritability with me for insisting on the necessity of living according to the canons, nevertheless hoped that all was not lost yet and that our Bishops would somehow shake off the whole of this nightmare of recent years.

“Think, Vladyko, of the tens of thousands of Orthodox people both abroad and in Russia who have been deceived by us. Do not calm yourself with the thought that if guilt lies somewhere, then it lies equally on all of our hierarchs. The main guilt will lie on you as the leader of our Sobor…”[[914]](#footnote-914)

Unfortunately, however, Metropolitan Vitaly was beginning to show the same kind of condescending and contemptuous attitude to the Russian flock as Archbishop Mark had been demonstrating for some time. Thus in one letter to Bishop Valentine, after rebuking him for receiving Archimandrite Adrian, he wrote: “We understand that, living in the Soviet Union for these 70 years of atheist rule, such a deep seal of Sovietism and of departure from right thinking has penetrated into the world-view of the Russian people that you, too, were involuntarily caught up by the spirit of this wave…”[[915]](#footnote-915)

Even such an attitude would have been tolerable if the metropolitan had decided to govern the Church in accordance with the holy canons. But at the Lesna Council in 1993 he had told a priest to tell Bishop Gregory not to keep referring to the canons![[916]](#footnote-916)

Some FROC priests – notably Protopriest Lev Lebedev of Kursk – while fully agreeing that the ROCOR bishops had committed uncanonical acts on Russian soil, nevertheless believed that the actions of the FROC bishops had been hasty and were justified only in the case that ROCOR had fallen away from Orthodoxy, which, as everyone agreed, had not yet taken place. In a letter to Bishop Gregory dated April 4, 1994, and approved by Metropolitan Vitaly, Fr. Lev maintained that no personal reasons could justify legal separation from the authority of the supervising Metropolitan. He claimed that the only legal church authority in Russia was now ROCOR, which, since it remained faithful to Orthodoxy, had the right to administer all groups that did not want to remain in the falsehood of the MP.

Fr. Lev attitude may have been influenced by his attitude towards Bishop Valentine. He was suspicious of him because he, unlike all others, had managed to obtain church buildings and registration from the authorities. And he hinted that since the authorities granted rights only to “their own”, Bishop Valentine was in fact one of “their own”.[[917]](#footnote-917)

In a letter dated April 26, Bishop Gregory accused Fr. Lev of allowing his personal dislike of Valentine to interfere with his judgement. Fr. Lev in his turn accused Bishop Gregory of allowing “personal offence and desire” to dictate his letter to the metropolitan of April 6, 1994. Bishop Gregory argued that ROCOR’s two founding documents, the ukaz № 362 and the Polozhenie of ROCOR, did not allow for the Church outside Russia to rule the Church inside Russia. ROCOR could *help* the Church inside Russia, but not *rule* it:-

“For decades we living abroad have commemorated ‘the Orthodox Episcopate of the Persecuted Church of Russia’. But in our last Sobor we removed from the litanies and the prayer for the salvation of Russia the word ‘persecuted’, witnessing thereby that we already officially consider that the persecutions on the Russian Church have ceased.

“And indeed, our parishes in Russia are now harried in places, but basically they have complete freedom of action, in particular if they lay no claim to any old church, which the Moscow Patriarchate then tries to snatch. However it does not always succeed in this. Thus the huge Theophany cathedral in Noginsk (with all the buildings attached to it) according to the court’s decision remained with our diocese…

“In other words, we can say that if there is willingness on our side we now have every opportunity of setting in order the complete regeneration of the Russian Orthodox Church in our Fatherland.

“The very first paragraph of the ‘Statute on the Russian Church Abroad’ says: ’The Russian Orthodox Church Abroad is an *indivisible part of the Russian Local Church* TEMPORARILY self-governing on conciliar principles UNTIL THE REMOVAL OF THE ATHEIST POWER in Russia in accordance with the resolution of the holy Patriarch Tikhon, the Holy Synod and the Higher Ecclesiastical Council of the Russian Church of November 7/20, 1920 № 362 (emphasis mine, B. G.).

“If we now lead the Russian Hierarch to want to break their administrative links with the Church Abroad, then will not our flock abroad finally ask us: what ‘Episcopate of the Russian Church’ are we still praying for in our churches? But if we took these words out of the litanies, then we would only be officially declaring that we are no longer a part of the Russian Church.

“Will we not then enter upon a very dubious canonical path of autonomous existence, but now without a Patriarchal blessing and outside the Russian Church, a part of which we have always confessed ourselves to be? Will not such a step lead us to a condition of schism in the Church Abroad itself, and, God forbid, to the danger of becoming a sect?…

“It is necessary for us to pay very careful attention to and get to know the mood revealed in our clergy in the Suzdal diocese, so as on our part to evaluate the mood in which our decisions about the Church in Russia could be received by them.

“But will we not see then that it is one thing when the Church Abroad *gives help* to the Russian Church through the restoration in it of a canonical hierarchy, but something else entirely *when we lay claims to rule the WHOLE of Russia from abroad, which was in no way envisaged by even one paragraph of the ‘Statute of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad’, nor by one of our later resolutions*?”[[918]](#footnote-918)

## 154. A THIRD WAY?

In July, 1994 ROCOR entered into communion with the Greek Old Calendarist Cyprianites and officially accepted their ecclesiology. This was not a unanimous decision. At the 1993 Council, when the subject was first discussed, Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles, Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) and Bishop Cyril of Seattle spoke against the union, which would contradict ROCOR’s decision of 1978 not to enter into union with any of the Greek Old Calendarist Synods until they had attained unity amongst themselves. However, Archbishops Laurus and Mark said that it was awkward to refuse communion with Cyprian when they were already in communion with the Romanian Old Calendarists, with whom Cyprian was in communion. In the summer of 1993 a commission was set up consisting of Archbishop Laurus, Bishop Metrophanes and Bishop Daniel which prepared the way for the eventual decision to unite with Cyprian at the 1994 Council.

However, at the Council Bishop Daniel continued to express doubts, and Bishop Benjamin of the Kuban refused to sign the union together with Bishop Ambrose of Vevey. And there were rumours that Metropolitan Vitaly and Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles had signed only under pressure. Archbishop Lazarus also had his doubts, especially after a concelebration between Metropolitan Vitaly and Cyprian in Slatioara, Romania, during which the chalice was knocked over.[[919]](#footnote-919)

After the decision Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) wrote that the Cyprianites “confess their own and by no means Orthodox teaching on the possibility of the grace-filled action of the Holy Spirit in churches that have clearly become heretical”. Moreover he declared: “In passing this Resolution on communion with the group of Metropolitan Cyprian, our Council has unfortunately also forgotten about the text of the Resolution accepted earlier under the presidency of Metropolitan Philaret, which anathematized the ecumenical heresy…

In fact, by not looking into the matter seriously and forgetting about the anathematizing of the new calendarist ecumenists that was confirmed earlier (and perhaps not having decided to rescind this resolution), our Council, however terrible it may be to admit it, has fallen under its own anathema… Do we have to think that our Hierarchical Council has entered on the path of betraying the patristic traditions, or only that out of a misunderstanding it has allowed a mistake which it is not yet too late to correct at the November session in France?”[[920]](#footnote-920)

However, the mistake was not corrected at the second session of the Hierarchical Council in November, 1994. Instead, the decision was made to initiate negotiations with the MP. Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles commented on this at the Council: “ROCOR is going to hell…”[[921]](#footnote-921)

Then, in his Nativity epistle for 1995/96 Metropolitan Vitaly contradicted the Cyprianite ecclesiology he had signed up to, saying that he personally believed that the Moscow Patriarchate did *not* have the grace of sacraments.[[922]](#footnote-922) And in December, 1996, he wrote flatly that the Moscow Patriarchate was "the Church of the evil-doers, the Church of the Antichrist", which "has completely sealed its irrevocable falling away from the body of the Church of Christ".[[923]](#footnote-923)

However, from the middle of the 1990s, some signs of a spiritual revival in World Orthodoxy were discerned in the emergence of anti-ecumenist movements in Russia, Serbia, Bulgaria and Georgia. Thus in November, 1994 the Serbian Bishop Artemije of Raska and Prizren, the leading anti-ecumenist in the Serbian Church, said to his fellow hierarchs with regard to their participation in the ecumenical movement: "We have lost the purity of the faith, the canonical inheritance of the Church and faithfulness to the holy Tradition of the Orthodox Church." [[924]](#footnote-924)

Those were honest and true words. But they were not followed up by appropriate action. Thus when 340 priests, monks and nuns of the Serbian Church protested against ecumenism and called on the patriarchate to leave the WCC in the summer of 1997, none of the Serbian bishops signed the document. Instead, in their council in June, they decided to leave the WCC – but with the following condition: “Taking into account, however, that this is a far-reaching decision that affects not only the life and mission of the Serbian Church but of Orthodoxy in general and its salvific mission in the world, the Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Church has decided that prior to its final resignation, it will first forward its position and rationale to the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople and to all heads of local Orthodox Churches with the proposal and request that a Pan-Orthodox Conference be convened as soon as possible with regard to further participation of Orthodox Churches in general in the WCC. Only after this consultation would our own local Church adopts its final position on the issue and share it with the public.”

“Unfortunately,” writes Bishop Artemije, “it soon became apparent that the concluding points of this decision of the Serbian Orthodox Church Assembly annulled all the aforementioned compelling reasons for a final and permanent withdrawal from membership and partnership with the WCC. The Thessalonica Summit of the representatives of all of the Orthodox Churches was soon held and its ‘conclusions’ prevented the Serbian Orthodox Church from carrying out its 1997 decision to withdraw from the WCC… The essence of the conclusions of the Thessalonica gathering was to seek a radical reorganization of the Council, which did not occur in the next seven years to the present day [September, 2004]. These ‘conclusions’, therefore, remained ‘a dead letter’. The WCC did not reorganize itself in any respect and become closer to the Orthodox Church of Christ, nor did any local Orthodox Church (including the Serbian Church) withdraw from membership in the WCC as a result of this. The reasons and justifications for withdrawing from membership from the WCC (as presented in the decision of the S.O.C, Assembly) are also still valid, as are, unfortunately, the harmful ecclesiological consequences that follow from that membership. Thus by its second response this Assembly of the Serbian Orthodox Church, abandoning its earlier decision (from 1997) and its justification, continued and extended its organic participation as an equal member of the WCC, guiding itself and its flock down the path of ruin…”[[925]](#footnote-925)

During the late 1990s, the Bulgarian and Georgian Churches left the WCC. It is particularly interesting to see how and why this took place in the two countries, which were still ruled by communist-appointed “patriarchs”. Patriarch Maximus of Bulgaria had been challenged by Metropolitan Pimen on the grounds of anti-communism (although Pimen was no less sergianist and even more ecumenist than Maximus). However, Pimen and his fellow hierarchs later repented, and were restored to their former positions on October 1, 1998.[[926]](#footnote-926) As we have seen, Patriarch Ilia of Georgia was recruited by the Georgian KGB in 1962.[[927]](#footnote-927) As metropolitan of Sukhumi in the late 1970s he betrayed the Catacomb Schema-Metropolitan Gennady (Sekach) to the Georgian KGB, as a result of which Gennady spent two-and-half years in prison in Kutaisi.[[928]](#footnote-928) So why should such a tried and tested “ecu-communist” leave the ecumenical movement now?

The Georgian decision was elicited by the separation of two groups from the official Church of Georgia because of the latter’s participation in the ecumenical movement. One priest with his flock joined the Cyprianites, and then a monastery, a convent and a secular parish joined the “Holy Orthodox Church of North America” (HOCNA) under Metropolitan Ephraim of Boston. Rattled by these events, and fearing a more general exodus, the patriarchate withdrew from the WCC in May, 1997 – but then promptly placed the leaders of the True Orthodox under ban! On August 21 the Betani monastery was stormed by the Georgian Patriarchate. At one point the patriarchal leader Archimandrite Joachim shouted at the “disobedient” True Orthodox that one should obey one’s spiritual superior unconditionally, even to the point of becoming a Muslim if so ordered![[929]](#footnote-929)

Having withdrawn from the WCC, the Georgian Patriarchate decided, in October, 1997, to denounce certain ecumenical agreements as “unacceptable”. These documents included: 1) the Chambésy documents of 1990 and 1993 (Union with Non-Chalcedonian (Oriental) Churches); 2) the Framework Agreement between the Orthodox Church of Antioch and the Oriental (Non-Chalcedonian) Church of Antioch; 3) the Balamand Union with the Latins (Roman-Catholic Church) of 1993; 4) Easter Celebration by the Autonomous Orthodox Church of Finland according to the Papal Paschalion; 5) the so-called ‘Branch Theory’ was also denounced; as well as 6) common prayers and intercommunion with non-Orthodox denominations.

However, the Georgians did not break communion with the Orthodox Churches that *do* accept these documents and remain in the ecumenical movement. This “Third Way”[[930]](#footnote-930) has the advantage of appearing to be “traditionalist” while avoiding the painful step that real traditionalism entails: breaking communion with all the transgressors. It was compared to the position of the Cyprianites, who condemned the ecumenical movement but did not declare the ecumenists to be graceless. But this is being unjust to the Cyprianites: they had at any rate officially broken communion with all the ecumenists. But the Georgians could with more justice be called “crypto-ecumenists” – ecumenists who wanted to give the impression of being against ecumenism. Moreover, the Cyprianites continued to receive people and parishes from the Georgian Church, thereby showing that the Georgians’ “Third Way” was not acceptable to them. ROCOR, on the other hand, gradually began to accept the “Third Way” as the right way. Thus “at the meeting of the [ROCOR] Synod of Bishops on 27 October 2000, it was resolved to send a letter of admonition to Metropolitan Cyprian of Fili, of the Greek Synod in Resistance, asking that he not open parishes on the territory of the Georgian Orthodox Church, especially because the latter had condemned ecumenism and left the World Council of Churches.”[[931]](#footnote-931)

The hollowness of the “Third Way” was demonstrated at the Eighth General Assembly of the WCC in Harare in December, 1998, when “the two Patriarchates of Georgia and Bulgaria were exposed, since, although they had withdrawn from the WCC for supposedly serious reasons, now – through their observers at Harare – they declared their loyalty, on the one hand, to the ecumenical ideal and, on the other hand, justified themselves on the grounds that their decisions to withdraw from the WCC were prompted by pressure from ‘conservative elements’!

“A Georgian clergyman, Father Vasili Kobakhidze, revealingly stated that ‘… the Georgian Orthodox were, are, and always will be your brothers and sisters in the Lord. Patriarch Ilia and the Orthodox Church of Georgia were forced to leave the ecumenical movement on account of fanatics and fundamentalists and in order to avoid an internal schism, but they always pray for Christian unity.’

“In one of his delegation’s documents, the Bulgarian theologian Ivan Dimitrov (one of seven Bulgarian observers), expressed ‘sorrow for their Church’s withdrawal from the WCC,’ saying that ‘the Bulgarian church’s decision to withdraw from the WCC had been taken, “not out of anti-ecumenical convictions, but under pressure from the Old Calendarist church.”’[[932]](#footnote-932)

This was an important admission, obliquely confirmed by the text of the Bulgarian Church’s official withdrawal from the WCC.[[933]](#footnote-933) It showed the fighters for Church truth that, appearances notwithstanding, their actions *were* having any influence on the world around them.

At this point some mention should be made of the position of the Jerusalem Patriarchate, which some said was anti-ecumenist. In fact, while more “conservative” than the other Churches of World Orthodoxy, the Jerusalem Patriarchate has never broken communion with World Orthodoxy, nor decisively broken with the major organizations of the ecumenical movement. It is relatively guarded in relation to other confessions only because it has to defend the Holy Places from the pretensions of Catholics, Armenians, Copts and others. In confirmation of this, we may cite the following joint statement of the Jerusalem Patriarchate, the Antiochian Patriarchate, and Monophysites, Papists, and Protestants at the Seventh Assembly of the Middle East Council of Churches in 1999: "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us... Oriental Orthodox *[Monophysite]*, Orthodox, Catholic, and Evangelical... We renew our commitment to strive to be *[the]* One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, according to the will of the Lord Jesus, 'so that they may be one' (John 17:11)... by opening our hearts and minds to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that we encounter each other cooperatively, with respect, and with kindness. In Him, we are one."[[934]](#footnote-934)

In 2013 Bishop Sergius of Portland wrote: “With two exceptions, all the historic Patriarchates, from Constantinople to Moscow, and all the newer jurisdictions, including the OCA, are fully embodied members of the WCC, whose Statements and Declarations are issued in the name of all of its member groups. Has anyone seen an authentically, that is, patristically-consistent, reply to the Baar Statement by any Hierarch or theologian from any of the historic Patriarchates or from the newer groups in full communion with those historic Patriarchates? Any reply at all? From anyone at all? The two exceptions, Bulgaria and Georgia, referred to above, made it clear as they withdrew that their withdrawal was (a) unwilling; and (b) temporary, since the officials of these groups were forced to leave the WCC by ignorant fundamentalists within their own bodies, fundamentalists who would have fomented schism within those bodies, something that—given the current political, social and other conditions in these emerging ex-communist nations—was believed to present unthinkable alternatives had they retained their seats in the WCC! The clear message, especially from the Bulgarian WCC delegates, was that as soon as the fundamentalists could be dealt with, “We’ll be back!” And of course, since these two temporarily absent members of the WCC remain in full communion with all the historic groups that remain full, embodied (and, evidently, uncomplaining) members

of the WCC, we understand what is actually going on beneath the rhetorical departures of the Bulgarians and of the Georgians!”[[935]](#footnote-935)

## 155. ORTHODOXY IN AFRICA AND ALBANIA

The Cyprianite “bloc” of Old Calendarist Churches continued to prosper into the new millennium. In 2003 the Bulgarian Church had one bishop, 18 priests, 6 deacons, 23 parishes, one convent with 45 nuns and one monastery with 16 monks. At the same time the Romanian Church had six bishops, 160 priests, 26 deacons, 290 monks, 510 nuns, 130 parishes and 49 monastic communities (42 were founded after the fall of communism in 1989).

Meanwhile, Metropolitan Cyprian himself was establishing Greek missions in several parts of the world. The most striking growth was in Central Africa, where the flock was served by Bishop Ambrose of Methone. The following is his brief account of Orthodoxy in Africa since the 1920s:

“While the existence of the vast majority of African Christians of various denominations is the result of missionary efforts on the part of Europeans and Americans starting from the late 19th Century, it is remarkable that Orthodoxy has largely been established there through the seeking and efforts of the Africans themselves, often aided in this pursuit by the Greek merchants who established themselves in sub-Saharan Africa starting in the 1920’s. It is three remarkable figures of Eastern Africa who in the late 1920’s placed the foundations for the establishment of the true Church in black Africa – and we say establishment, not re-establishment, as Ethiopia, until its fall into Monophysitism, had been for centuries the only Christian outpost south of what was once the completely Christianised North Africa; these were: Father Obadiah Bassajikatalo and Fr. Reuben (later bishop Christopher) Spartas in Uganda, and Father (later bishop) George Gathuna in Kenya. Through a process we can only regard as the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, these three friends, against all odds, and even against the active discouragement of the ecumenist Patriarch of Alexandria, Meletios Metaxakis, and in face of the persecution on the part of the British colonial authorities, came to understand that the Truth of Christ was only to be found in Orthodoxy, though it was only after the cessation of hostilities in 1945 that they, and the considerable communities they had already created, were finally able formally to be united with the Patriarchate of Alexandria, which had recently assumed – in transgression of the canonical tradition of centuries - the jurisdiction over all Africa. In describing the mission of Orthodoxy in Africa, it would be unjust not to mention the names of several Greek clergymen who devoted their lives, in conditions of great hardship, to bringing the word of truth to their African brethren; in particular, we should mention Archimandrite Chrysostomos Papasarantopoulos, who was active in Uganda and Kenya, and sowed the first seeds of Orthodoxy in Central Congo, where he died, Archimandrite Hariton Pnevmatikakis, who continued his work, and also left his bones in Congo, Archimandrite Athanasios Anthidis, who worked for many years in Kenya, and Father Kosmas Grigoriatis, the apostle of Katanga. In a brief overview of this sort, it is difficult to decide how much detail should be included in what is an extremely complex history; perhaps therefore, some general observations which apply to all areas of the African missions, would be more useful before coming to the role of the Traditionalist Orthodox Churches in Africa.

“Anyone who, like the present author, has worked for some time with the African missions, will have been constantly astonished by how naturally the African embraces Orthodoxy, and most particularly the Orthodox liturgical life; the dignity and majesty of the celebration of the Divine Liturgy by an African priest rivals any pious Russian Batiushka. The beauty of the chants in the churches (though they themselves may be little more than thatched mud-huts) is often very moving, as is the simplicity and attention of the faithful, who will listen with great interest to a sermon far beyond the attention-span of the European listener. Even more astonishing to us is the asceticism of those who will come often two or three days’ walk to be present in church, while in the ‘West’ a few miles’ drive is too much for many people on Sunday mornings. In particular I am often deeply moved by extraordinary self-denial of our clergy, to whom we are unable to pay any salary, and yet serve their area with great diligence, usually covering several hundred kilometers on foot several times each year in order to bring the word of the Gospel to [the] furthest part of their wide-spread ‘parishes’. In this work each priest is aided by a team of catechists, who both prepare his service beforehand and complete it afterwards.

“What are the impediments that our missionaries must face, apart from the obvious ones of absolute poverty and absence of transport? These are on the one hand social customs unacceptable to Christianity, particularly polygamy, and , amongst some tribes, the loose sexual mores which have led to the enormous spread of aids on the continent, and on the other an attachment to an ancestral mindset of superstition - and I advisedly use the word the superstition rather than traditional religion, both because it is not a regular system of belief, and because it often remains as a background fear despite the Christian faith which should have wholly taken its place. Here we have a matter of pastoral application: clearly it is simply not permissible for a Christian to possess idols, so we insist on the collection and destruction of the idols and fetishes of such families as are preparing for baptism. But a man who has taken several wives, with each of whom he has children, clearly has a responsibility for their welfare, and cannot simply abandon them. Here we must find a way of settling the question without compromising the Christian principle of monogamy nor shutting the door to those who desire to enter. There are a number of pastoral solutions [to] this quandary. Another impediment which perhaps may seem strange to a European is that bread and wine are both unknown, except as foreign products, in most countries of central Africa where neither wheat not grapes grow. Thus the very central act of our worship, the Eucharist, becomes hard to comprehend. Both bread and wine have to be imported at considerable expense, and taken, with no little difficulty, to where they are needed. As the official languages of most countries are not well understood outside the towns, another problem, probably more acute than that involved with most European tongues, is that of translating the theological and liturgical terms into local languages that lack the corresponding vocabulary. Here both imported words and neologisms are inevitable. In other areas, the missionary is more fortunate than in Europe; for instance, abortion is looked upon with horror everywhere in Africa, and homosexuality is something inconcievable. Also, poverty brings with it a greater generosity of spirit, a hospitality, and a joie-de-vivre that have largely evaporated from our selfish and self-sufficient life.

“The Patriarchate of Alexandria was slow, and even in some cases unwilling, to take up the burden of mission to the black African; and often the tacit acceptance of racist colonial principles have been apparent in their activities, for instance in South Africa, where, despite their pleas, no blacks were accepted into the Church until some while after the fall of apartheid – the result was that a large group there was accepted by the Coptic Church. This has led to great frustration and friction. But also a number of Africans have begun to comprehend the dangers of the [the] ecumenist heresy, seeing their pastors involved in all sorts of joint activities with the very heterodox groups they left in order to become Orthodox. Thus, starting in the 1980, a number of persons begun to approach the “Old Calendarists” of Greece, and ask their aid. It would be tedious to enumerate these various cases, and so I would like just to describe here what is the present state of the missions which I have to tend. Firstly in Kenya, we have ten parishes, with seven priests and three deacons, and also the first Orthodox Convent in black Africa, now numbering nine nuns. We hope that soon a men’s monastery will also be constructed – the land for it has already been purchased. In Uganda, we have a smaller mission with four priests and one deacon; the mission chief being also a doctor, a medical outreach (a nurses’ school and several clinics) form part of the church work. In Uganda too, the land has been purchased for the beginning of a convent, where the first nun is already in place. In Congo (the Democratic Republic) we have our largest mission, divided into three deaneries, and counting over forty thousand faithful; there are twenty-two priests and six deacons, and two primary schools function under our auspices. In Congo (Brazzaville) we have a small mission with two priests and one deacon, counting at present a large parish in the capital, and an orphanage-school nearby. In South Africa a men’s monastery functions, with a wide missionary outreach both in the neighbourhood, and elsewhere in Africa; indeed, we hope that soon a seminary will be functioning there. In all these missions, the following languages are used: English, French, Lingala, Tshiluba, Kikongo, Luganda, Teso, Kikuyu, Meru, Tsipedi, Tswana and Swahili. Just this fact is enough to give some idea of the complication, as we have printed a quantity of liturgical books in most of these languages. We hope in time to add more video-material to our Synodal website in order to give a fuller idea of our missions to those who are interested. I would also like to add that we are hoping to undertake a completely new organization of the African churches on a local basis; this plan is still being elaborated.

“We ask the prayers of all for the progress of the preaching of True Orthodoxy on the African Continent, and also for the finding of the materials means to meet the enormous needs the exist, even on the simplest level – bicycles for the priests, vestments, liturgical vessels, medical expenses, help for widows of clergy and so forth. May the Apostles of Africa Mark, Matthew and Simon strengthen all those who labour to continue their work in that much-suffering continent.”[[936]](#footnote-936)

While impressing by their missionary zeal, the Cyprianites showed no signs of correcting their ecclesiological errors. Thus in an "Informatory Epistle" published in 1998 Metropolitan Cyprian wrote in criticism of a resolution of the Florinite Synod: "3 (c) The right to issue an anathema does not belong to ecclesiastical administrative bodies which have a temporary synodal structure, but which do not possess all the canonical prerequisites to represent the Church fully, validly, and suitably for the proclamation of an anathema - a right and 'dignity' which is 'granted' only to the choir of the Apostles 'and those who have truly become their successors in the strictest sense, full of Grace and power...’ 5 (a) The extremely serious implication of an anathema*,* coupled, first, with the absence, in our day, of a synodal body endowed with all of the aforementioned canonical prerequisites or proclaiming an anathema and, secondly, with the immense confusion that prevails, on account of ecumenism, in the ranks of the local Orthodox Churches, constitute, today, a major restraint on, and an insurmountable impediment to, such a momentous and, at the same time, historic action."

     Since Metropolitan Cyprian considers that the right to anathematize belongs only to the Apostles "and those who have truly become their successors in the strictest sense", and there is ***no*** synodal body in the world today “endowed with all of the aforementioned canonical prerequisites or proclaiming an anathema”, it follows that for him there is ***no*** Churchin the world today competent to bind and to loose "in the strict sense"…

\*

A worker on the Central African mission-field has made a surprisingly successful contribution to Orthodox mission in a quite different part of the world – Albania. This is the present newcalendarist Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana and all Albania.

Philip Jenkins writes: “Albania… recovered only slowly from the horrendous communist tyranny of Enver Hoxha, a self-proclaimed Stalinist who had a deep animus against religion of all kinds. In 1967 he declared Albania the world’s first wholly atheist state, and persecutions were wide-ranging and ferocious. Catholics and Muslims were targeted for harsh treatment. In its way, then, postcommunist Albania needed a thoroughgoing spiritual reconstruction no less than Bosnia.

“The most impressive leader of this process has been Anastasios, the archbishop of Tirana and the primate of the Autocephalous Albanian Orthodox Church. (He is by origin an ethnic Greek.) When he took office in 1992 he faced a nightmare situation. His see had been vacant since 1973, and virtually all its institutions formally closed. Albanian Orthodoxy survived in a diasporic existence, with its overseas capital in Boston. The country’s Orthodox Church, claiming the loyalty of perhaps 15 percent of the population, faced extinction.

“First and foremost, Anastasios is a polymath scholar, with interests in history, linguistics, and comparative religion, but it is difficult to imagine any religious leader accomplishing so much practical real-world good in such a short time. In 20 years he reorganized several hundred parishes, a process that often demanded whole new buildings. Monasteries flourish once more. The archbishop restored the theological academy and seminary and ordained hundreds of new priests. A whole range of Orthodox media now operate, including newspapers and radio stations.

“The church’s social outreach and charitable works have been spectacular. The results include new schools and medical clinics, which serve people without regard to religious affiliation. When the wars in former Yugoslavia drove thousands of refugees into Albania, the Orthodox Church took the lead in humanitarian efforts, with Muslims the main beneficiaries…”[[937]](#footnote-937)

## 156. THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX AUTONOMOUS CHURCH

The FROC still sought reconciliation with ROCOR, and so the two senior bishops, Archbishop Lazarus and Bishop Valentine, went to the Lesna Sobor of ROCOR in November, 1994. There, according to Bishop Valentine, “there took place *mutual* repentance and forgiveness between ROCOR and FROC”.[[938]](#footnote-938) He may have been referring here to the first and second points of the "Act" that was presented to the two Russian bishops for their signatures, which certainly implied that blame was not to be attached to one side exclusively. Needless to say, ROCOR since then has always denied the mutual nature of this act…

The "Act" greatly troubled the two bishops, because they saw that it involved changes that were very detrimental for the life of the FROC. However, Archbishop Lazarus wanted to sign nevertheless, and Bishop Valentine, though unwilling to sign, did not want to create a schism among the Russian bishops by not following the lead of his senior, Archbishop Lazarus. But he did obtain from Bishop Hilarion an assurance that if he wanted to amend any points in the Act, he could do so and his amendments would be included in the final published document. However, he was urged to sign now "in the name of brotherly love". So he signed, after which he promptly had a heart attack, and was whisked away to a hospital in Paris, where he was in intensive care for a week.

According to Bishop Andrew (Maklakov), while Valentine was in hospital, he was visited by Bishop Hilarion, who persuaded him, ill and groggy though he still was, to sign a document transferring ownership of the Suzdal churches to the ROCOR Synod. Understanding the mistake he had made, Bishop Valentine rushed back to Suzdal, where it was agreed to rename the “Free Russian Orthodox Church” as “The Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church”, and re-register the property of the Church in this new name. In this way the plan to transfer the property of the Church inside Russia into the hands of the Church outside Russia was foiled…[[939]](#footnote-939)

On December 1, 1994 the Lesna Council confirmed Archbishop Lazarus and Bishop Valentine as the ruling bishops of their dioceses. An ukaz to this effect was sent by Metropolitan Vitaly to Bishop Valentine on December 8.

In January, 1995 there took place the fifth congress of the bishops, monastics and laity of the Suzdal Diocese to discuss the results of the Lesna Sobor. Opening the congress, Bishop Valentine said: “On returning home to the diocese, I have not begun to hide anything or to lay it on thick. Equally, I have not begun to soften those circumstances in which we found ourselves at the Hierarchical Council. I have expounded everything as in confession and offered everyone to make their judgement on the given question. My brothers and co-bishops, and also the members of the Diocesan council, on getting to know the state of affairs and having carefully read the Act, have unambiguously and categorically rejected it, which has served as the reason for convening the Congress of clergy, monastics and laity of the Suzdal Diocese and for reaching a decision on the future functioning of the THCA and of our Orthodox existence as a whole. The Church Administrative district (THCA) that has been created cannot pass under the jurisdiction of the Synod Abroad and cannot be dissolved by it. We are more than convinced that we no longer have to wait long for the time when the two parts, ROCOR and the FROC, will unite into one and will work together to prepare the All-Russian Council to re-establish the unity that has been lost and a worthy leadership of the Church of God”.

This message sent out mixed signals: on the one hand, that the Act in its existing form was unacceptable and that the Church inside Russia was no longer prepared to be administered from outside Russia, and on the other hand that the Church inside Russia did not want to break eucharistic communion with the Church outside Russia. When the discussion was passed to the hall, the Act was widely and strongly criticized by the parish clergy, as was the ROCOR Synod’s proposed redefining of diocesan boundaries. The latter was of particular concern to them because it would necessitate the re-registration of very many parishes. Since they had achieved registration only with the greatest difficulty in the first place, they did not of course welcome this prospect. But more importantly, it would very probably mean that they would be refused any registration, since the Moscow Patriarchate representatives in the ministry of Justice would insist that changing names and diocesan boundaries was unacceptable. This in turn would very likely mean that their churches would be handed over to the Moscow Patriarchate.

It was therefore proposed that ROCOR be respectfully asked to amend the Act in a number of points, and a corresponding epistle to the Hierarchical Synod of ROCOR was drawn up. Here is the original Act of November 29, 1994, together with the changes proposed by the FROC’s letter of January 27, 1995 (in italics):

“We, the Hierarchical Synod of ROCOR, under the presidency of the First-Hierarch, His Eminence Metropolitan Vitaly of Eastern America and New York, and the Most Reverend Hierarchs: Archbishop Lazarus of Odessa and Tambov and Bishop Valentine of Suzdal and Vladimir, taking upon ourselves full responsibility before God and the All-Russian flock, and following the commandments of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, in the name of peace and love, for the sake of the salvation of our souls and the souls of our flock, declare the following:

“1. We recognize our mutual responsibility for the disturbances that have arisen in the Russian [Rossijskoj] Church, but we consider that certain hasty actions of the Hierarchical Synod cannot serve as justification for a schism in the Russian Church and the establishment of the Temporary Higher Church Administration.” Comment by the FROC bishops: *We definitely do not agree with the definition of the actions of the Russian hierarchs as a schism, for these actions were a forced measure aimed at guarding the canonical rights of the Bishop in his diocese, and the created Temporary Higher Church Administration was formed, not in spite of, but in accordance with the will and ukaz no. 362 of the holy Patriarch Tikhon, at a time when the Hierarchical Synod of ROCOR left the Russian hierarchs without any communications, directives, holy Antimins or holy Chrismation. If we recognize our mutual responsibility for the disturbances that have arisen in the Russian Church, then it is our right to recognize certain hasty actions of the Hierarchical Sobor and Synod as uncanonical and as inflicting direct harm on the work of restoring true Orthodoxy in Russia, which has served as the terminus a quo for our conditional administrative separation and the formation of the Temporary Higher Church Administration. The concrete intra-ecclesiastical situation has dictated such a course of action on our part, but at the same time we have admitted that administrative independence must in no way automatically lead to canonical and eucharistic independence. Such communion has not been broken by us, in spite of the one-sided decision of the Hierarchical Synod of ROCOR.*

“2. We ask each other’s forgiveness, so that from now on we should not reproach anybody for the actions which lead to the division and the founding of the THCA.” Comment of the FROC bishops: *It is not a matter of reproaches but of the essence of the actions of both sides, which have led to administrative division and the founding of the THCA. By examining each concrete action, we would be able mutually to understand the depth of the causes, and proceeding from that, calmly and without detriment, remove their consequences in the present.*

“3. We consider the organization of the THCA to be an unlawful act and abolish it.” *Comment of the FROC bishops: The very formulation of this point seems to us to be faulty in view of the final aim of our joint efforts.*

“4. We consider the consecration of the three hierarchs: Theodore, Seraphim and Agathangel, which was carried out by their Graces Lazarus and Valentine, to be unlawful. Their candidacies should be presented in the order that is obligatory for all candidates for hierarchical rank accepted in ROCOR, and, if they turn out to be worthy, then, after their confession of faith and acceptance of the hierarchical oath, they will be confirmed in the hierarchical rank.” Comment of the FROC bishops: *We do not agree at all that the episcopal consecrations performed by us were not lawful. The obligatory order for all candidates for hierarchical rank accepted in ROCOR could not be a guide for us in our actions since at that time we were administratively independent of ROCOR. If we approach this demand from a strictly formal point of view, then the Hierarchical Synod should have asked us concerning our agreement or disagreement with the new consecrations, especially the consecration of his Grace Bishop Eutyches – which was not done. In spite of your limitation of our rights, we have recognized these consecrations and are far from the thought of demanding a confession of faith and acceptance of the hierarchical oath a second time, specially for us.*

“5. In the same way, all the other actions carried out by Archbishop Lazarus and Bishop Valentine and the THCA organized by them which exceeded the authority of the diocesan bishops, but belonged only to the province of the Hierarchical Sobor and Hierarchical Synod of ROCOR, are to be considered to be invalid.” Comment of the FROC bishops: *Until the moment that we ceased to be members of ROCOR, and the THCA was formed, all our actions and suggestions were presented for discussion and confirmation by these higher church instances. Having conditionally separated from ROCOR in administrative matters, we were entitled to carry out these actions.*

“6. Archbishop Lazarus is reinstated in the rights of a ruling hierarch with the title ‘Archbishop of Odessa and Tambov’”. Comment of the FROC bishops: *The formulation of this point admits of an ambiguous interpretation and is therefore on principle unacceptable for us. Judging objectively, his Grace Archbishop Lazarus did not lose his rights as a ruling bishop, in spite of the ukaz of the Hierarchical Synod concerning his retirement. The ukaz seems to us to be canonically ill-founded, and therefore lacking force and unrealized. We suggest the formulation: ‘In view of the erroneous actions of the Hierarchical Synod of ROCOR, Archbishop Lazarus is not to be considered as having been retired and is recognized as having the rights of the ruling hierarch of his diocese with the title (Archbishop of Tambov and Odessa).*

“7. Bishop Valentine will be restored to his rights as the ruling hierarch of Suzdal and Vladimir after the removal of the accusations against him on the basis of an investigation by a Spiritual Court appointed by the present Hierarchical Sobor.” Comment of the FROC bishops: *The given point is excluded, in agreement with the Ukaz of the Hierarchical Synod.* [This refers to the ukaz dated November 18 / December 1, 1994, quoted above, which reinstated Vladyka Valentine as Bishop of Suzdal and Vladimir.]

“8. To bring order into ecclesiastical matters on the territory of Russia a Hierarchical Conference of the Russian Hierarchs is to be organized which does not encroach on the fullness of ecclesiastical power, but which is in unquestioning submission to the Hierarchical Sobor and the Hierarchical Synod of ROCOR. One of the members of the Hierarchical Conference will be a member of the Synod, in accordance with the decision of the Hierarchical Sobor.” Comment of the FROC bishops: *It is suggested that this formulation be changed, and consequently also the meaning of the eighth point: ‘The THCA does not encroach on the fullness of ecclesiastical power. In certain exceptional situations it recognizes its spiritual and administrative submission to the Hierarchical Sobor of the ROCOR. One of the members of the Hierarchical Conference will be a temporary, regular member of the Synod, in accordance with the decision of the Hierarchical Sobor of ROCOR and the Hierarchical Conference of the Russian Bishops.*

“9. After the signing of the Act it will be published in all the organs of the church press, and in particular in those publications in which their Graces Lazarus and Valentine published material against the Hierarchical Sobor and Hierarchical Synod of the ROCOR.” Comment of the FROC bishops: *The formulation should be changed as follows: After the signing of the Act it will be published in all the organs of the church press, and in particular in those publications in which their Graces Lazarus and Valentine published material explaining certain hasty actions of the Hierarchical Synod and Sobor of ROCOR.*”[[940]](#footnote-940)

However, two hierarchs present at this meeting – Bishop Evtikhy and Bishop Benjamin - interpreted this proposal as a rebellion against the authority of ROCOR which the senior bishops Lazarus and Valentine had only recently reaffirmed. As Evtikhy put it several years later: “The unfortunate monk Valentine Rusantsov, in signing the Act of reconciliation with the Council of ROCOR, had, as time showed, something quite different in his thought and intentions: to hide this Act from his flock, never to carry it out, and then to overthrow it.”[[941]](#footnote-941)

But such an accusation is manifestly unjust. For: (i) Valentine did *not* hide the Act from his flock, but discussed it with them openly and extensively (in fact, it was the ROCOR flock that never got to saw the Act), and (ii) if he and his fellow-bishops had seemed to reject it before the beginning of the Congress, this was, nevertheless, not their final decision, which was not to reject it outright but to seek amendments. This was only reasonable considering that it was precisely the Russian flock that would suffer all the evil consequences of the Act’s ill-thought-out propositions.

Then a priest asked Bishop Evtikhy which had a higher authority for him: the Apostolic Canons and the decisions of the Russian Council of 1917-18 and of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon - or those of the ROCOR Synod? Bishop Evtikhy replied: “The resolutions of living hierarchs are preferable to those of dead ones. Even if the resolutions of the ROCOR Synod were uncanonical, for me this would have no significance, I would be bound to carry them out”. This reply elicited uproar in the hall, and Bishop Evtikhy left, taking with him a recording of the proceedings.

Shortly before this Congress, the ROCOR Synod had sent a respectfully worded invitation to Bishops Theodore, Agathangel and Seraphim to come to New York for the February 22 meeting of the Synod and “for the formalities of re-establishing concelebration”.[[942]](#footnote-942)

It is significant that the Synod had also invited Bishop Evtikhy, who was *not* a member of the Synod – but not Archbishop Lazarus, who *was* a member of the Synod, as agreed at the Lesna Sobor.

On the next day after the arrival of Bishops Theodore and Agathangel in New York, in Bishop Agathangel’s words, “we were handed a ‘Decree of the Hierarchical Synod of the Synod of ROCOR’, in which their Graces Lazarus and Valentine, and also Bishops Theodore, Seraphim and I, were declared to be banned from serving. For Vladyka Theodore and me this was like a bolt from the blue… We were told that the reason for this decision was our supposed non-fulfillment of the conciliar Act, which had been signed by, among the other Hierarchs, their Graces Lazarus and Valentine. The point was that the conference of Russian Bishops which had been formed in agreement with this same Act had asked for several formulations in the Act to be changed, so as not to introduce disturbance into the ranks of the believers by the categorical nature of certain points. This was a request, not a demand. But, however hard we tried, we could not convince the Synod that none of the Russian Bishops was insisting and that we were all ready to accept the Act in the form in which it had been composed. We met with no understanding on the part of the members of the Synod. Vladyka Theodore and I affirmed in writing that we accepted the text of the Act in the form in which it had been composed and asked for a postponement in the carrying out of the ‘Decree’ until the position of all the absent Russian Bishops on this question could be clarified. In general we agreed to make any compromises if only the ‘Decree’ were not put into effect, because in essence it meant only one thing – the final break between the Russian parishes and ROCOR.

“We gradually came to understand that it was not any canonical transgression of the Russian Bishops (there was none), nor any disagreement with the text of the conciliar Act, nor, still less, any mythical ‘avaricious aims’ that was the reason for the composition of this document, which, without any trial or investigation, banned the five Hierarchs from serving.[[943]](#footnote-943) It was the Hierarchical Conference of the Russian Bishops, which had been established by the Council that took place in Lesna monastery, that was the real reason giving birth to the ‘Decree’. The Sobor of Hierarchs, moved in those days by ‘Paschal joy’ (as Metropolitan Vitaly repeated several times), finally came to create an organ of administration in Russia which, if not independent, but subject to the Synod, was nevertheless an organ of administration. When the ‘Paschal joy’ had passed, the Synodal Bishops suddenly realized: they had themselves reduced their own power, insofar as, with their agreement, Hierarchs could meet in vast Russia and discuss vital problems. Before that, the Church Abroad had not allowed itself to behave like that. And it was this, unfortunately, that the foreign Archpastors could not bear. On receiving for confirmation the protocols of the first session of the Hierarchical Conference with concrete proposals to improve Church life in Russia, the foreign Bishops were completely nonplussed. Therefore a reason that did not in fact exist was thought up – the supposed non-fulfillment of the Act.

“The members of the Synod, exceeding their authority, since such decisions are in the competence of the Sobor, decided, by means of canonical bans, to confirm their sole authority over the whole of Russia – both historical Russia and Russia abroad. The very foundations of the Church Abroad as a part of the Russian Church living abroad were trampled on, and the Synod on its own initiative ascribed to itself the rights and prerogatives of the Local Russian Church.

“It did not even ponder the fact that, in banning at one time five Hierarchs, it was depriving more than 150 parishes – that is many thousands of Orthodox people – of archpastoral care. Cancelling the labour of many years of Hierarchs, priests and conscious, pious laymen in our Fatherland.

“In Russia a very real war is now being waged for human souls; every day is full of work. Depriving Orthodox Christians of their pastors without any objective reason witnesses to the haughtiness and lack of love towards our country and its people on the part of the members of the Synod Abroad. We, the Orthodox from Russia, are called ‘common people’ by Metropolitan Vitaly (thank you, Vladyko Metropolitan!).

“Vladyka Theodore and I were promised that, in exchange for our treachery, we would be confirmed in our hierarchical rank. And it was even proclaimed that we would be appointed to foreign sees. For us personally, who were born and brought up in Russia, this was very painful to hear…”[[944]](#footnote-944)

Bishop Gregory Grabbe wrote: “The very fact that Bishops Theodore and Agathangel were summoned without the slightest qualification to a session of the Synod witnesses to the recognition of their hierarchical consecrations. This is especially obvious if we remember the joyful declarations of the President of the Council [in Lesna in December, 1994] concerning the decrees that had previously been accepted opening the way to a peaceful resolution of all the problems of the Church Administration in Russia. Bishops Theodore and Agathangel came to the session of the Synod on the basis of precisely this understanding of their status. However, completely unexpected for us, the Synod raised the question, not even of whether their episcopate should be doubted, but of banning them from serving with the threat of defrocking five out of the seven Russian Bishops, which, if the Bishops from Russia had entered the ranks of the Church Abroad should have been carried out in the definite legal procedure laid out in the Statute of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. But we should not forget that one of the especially important legal principles of the above-mentioned Statute was that all its rules had in mind only the affairs of the Church Abroad, but by no means the affairs of the Church in Russia…”[[945]](#footnote-945)

On February 24 the ROCOR Synod issued an epistle which for the first time contained a semblance of canonical justification in the form of a list of canons supposedly transgressed by the five Russian bishops. Unfortunately, they clearly had no relevance to the matter in hand. Thus what relevance could the 57th Canon of the Council of Carthage – “On the Donatists and the children baptized by the Donatists” – have to the bishops of the Free Russian Orthodox Church?!

The Synodal Epistle said that “on returning to Russia, Archbishop Lazarus and Bishop Valentine committed an unheard-of oath-breaking: not carrying out individual points of the Act they had signed, they subjected all its points to criticism and began to spread lies concerning the circumstances of its signing”.

This was a lie, and on February 28, Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) wrote to Bishop Valentine: “I cannot fail to express my great sorrow with regard to the recent Church events. Moreover, I wish to say to you that I was glad to get to know Vladykas Theodore and Agathangel better. They think well and in an Orthodox manner. It is amazing that our foreign Bishops should not have valued them and should have treated them so crudely in spite of all the acts and the whole unifying tendency which was just expressed by Metropolitan Vitaly at the last Sobor. The whole tragedy lies in the fact that even the latter wanted to construct everything solely on foreign forces that do not have the information necessary to decide problems which are strange and unfamiliar to them. Therefore they do not want to offer this [task] to the new forces that have arisen in Russia.

“As a result, we are presented with the complete liquidation of these healthy forces. This is a great victory of the dark forces of our Soviet enemies of Orthodoxy in the persons of the Moscow Patriarchate.

“I am glad that you will not give in to them, and I pray God that He help you to carry on the Orthodox cause, apparently without the apostate forces of Orthodox Abroad…”[[946]](#footnote-946)

ROCOR’s action, which transgressed Canons 27, 28 and 96 of the Council of Carthage, was the last straw for the FROC bishops. In March, 1995 the THCA was rehabilitated under the leadership of Archbishop Valentine, and on March 14 the THCA resolved to denounce the Act signed by the Russian Bishops at the Hierarchical Council in France in November, 1994; to declare the bans on the Russian bishops as contrary to the holy canons and therefore not to be obeyed; to consider the actions of Bishop Eutyches and his report to the Synod of ROCOR of January 30 to be an intentional and slanderous provocation; to consider the ROCOR Synod’s attempt to declare the dioceses of the Russian bishops “widowed” as absurd, and their attempt to fill these sees while their bishops are still alive as a transgression of 16th Canon of the First-and-Second Council of Constantinople.[[947]](#footnote-947)

However, Archbishop Lazarus left the March session of the THCA in an unexpected way, saying: “My seedlings are dying” (rassada propadaiet)[[948]](#footnote-948) and then returned, “repenting”, to ROCOR with his vicar, Bishop Agathangel.[[949]](#footnote-949) ROCOR restored Lazarus to the status of a ruling bishop, not immediately, but only eighteen months later, in October, 1996. However, in accordance with a resolution of the Hierarchical Synod of ROCOR in 1996, the Hierarchical Conference of the Russian Bishops inside Russia was stripped of what little power it had. Its representation in ROCOR was annulled, and not one of the Russian bishops entered into the ROCOR Synod.

Lazarus’ controversial “repentance” split his flock in the Ukraine. Thus Hieromonk (later Bishop) Hilarion (Goncharenko), in a petition for transfer from ROCOR to the FROC, wrote: “Vladyka Lazarus together with the Synod Abroad has cunningly and finally destroyed the whole Church in the Ukraine. My former friends and brothers in the Lord have… turned to me with tearful sobs and the painful question: 'What are we to do now in the stormy and destructive situation that has been created?’”[[950]](#footnote-950)

The mission of ROCOR to Russia – that is, the mission as still administered from New York - was now effectively dead as a unified, large-scale operation. And opinion polls reflected this change: after the sharp rise in popularity of ROCOR at the beginning of the 1990s, and drop in the popularity of the MP[[951]](#footnote-951), by the middle of the 1990s the MP had recovered its position. Such a reversal cannot be attributed to any change for the better in the MP, which, as we have seen, continued to be as corrupt and heretical as ever, but rather to the suicidal civil war of the ROCOR hierarchs. As if to accentuate the failure of ROCOR, fires destroyed the cathedrals of Metropolitan Vitaly and Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles. And in October, 1997, one of her greatest holy objects, the myrrh-streaming “Montreal” Iveron icon went missing and its guardian, the highly respected Chilean Orthodox, Jose Munoz-Cortes was murdered…[[952]](#footnote-952)

The fall of the ROCOR mission to Russia was accompanied by some deviations in the faith. Thus Bishop Agathangel (Pashkovsky) wrote: “…the Grace of the Holy Spirit, the Grace of the Sacraments, resides also with the Catholics, Monophysites, and in part, with Old Believers and Protestants who have not violated the formula in performing the sacraments (baptism). The Orthodox Church does not re-baptize those who come from these heresies, but receives them through repentance. Catholics and Monophysites are not chrismated a second time. The Sacrament of Marriage is also accepted. In the Moscow Patriarchate, there are six Sacraments which have been preserved and are recognized as valid – baptism, chrismation, the priesthood, marriage, unction, repentance.”[[953]](#footnote-953)

In May, 1995, summoning his last strength, Bishop Gregory went to Suzdal, received communion from Bishop Valentine and publicly for the last time expressed his support for the FROC. In October, he died - no ROCOR bishop was present at his burial…

On September 10, 1996 the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR defrocked Bishop Valentine, citing his supposed violation of the “Act” on January 26 and a few irrelevant canons.[[954]](#footnote-954)

In 1999, the Synod of the FROC (now renamed the Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church (ROAC)) passed a resolution “concerning the hierarchs and representatives of the clergy of the Moscow Patriarchate who received their rank through the mediation of the authorities and organs of State Security. In relation to such it was decided that every year on the Sunday of Orthodoxy ANATHEMA should be proclaimed, using the following text: ‘If any bishops, making use of secular bosses, have seized power in the Church of God and enslaved Her, let those and those who aid them and those who communicate with them without paying heed to the reproaches of the Law of God, be ANATHEMA.”[[955]](#footnote-955)

## 157. THE FLORINITES DIVIDE AGAIN

The year 1995 was truly an annus horribilis for the True Church. Apart from the major schism between the followers of Vitaly and Valentine in the Russian Church, there were no less than three schisms in the Greek Church.

In 1995 five Matthewite bishops in Greece separated from the Matthewite Archbishop Andreas on the grounds of “iconoclasm”, that is, rejecting the icon of the Holy Trinity in which the Father is depicted as an old man. Soon these five bishops were reduced to two. Then these two – Gregory of Messenia and Chrysostom of Thessalonica - divided. Then Gregory consecrated four bishops on his own.

On January 7, 1995 following the death of the former Archbishop Auxentius in November, 1994, Metropolitan Maximus of Cephalonia (who had been defrocked in 1985 for participating in the consecration of Dorotheus Tsakos) was made archbishop of the “Auxentiite” faction of the True Orthodox Christians. He asked ROCOR for the same official documents that had been sent to Metropolitans Acacius and Gabriel in 1987 concerning the suspension of Fathers Panteleimon and Isaac of Holy Transfiguration, Monastery, Boston. As a result, becoming convinced of their guilt, he separated from them and the three bishops (Ephraim of Boston, Macarius of Toronto and Photius of Paris) whom Auxentius had consecrated for them.[[956]](#footnote-956)

In May, 1996, Maximus, without the knowledge of the other bishops, but with the collaboration of Demetrius Biffe, a clergyman of the new calendarists, who made his appearance as Bishop of Kandano, consecrated the following new hierarchs: 1) Auxentius Marines of Aegina, 2) Pancratius Xouloges of Nemea) and 3) Ephraim Papadopoulos of Serres. Also, Demetrius Biffe was named Archbishop of Crete, and together they formed a new Synod.

Meanwhile, the former colleagues of Maximus - Ephraim of Boston, Macarius of Toronto and Photius of France, together with Athanasius of Larissa, formed a separate Synod under the name of “The Holy Orthodox Church in North America” (HOCNA).[[957]](#footnote-957)

A third schism – this time among the Florinites - was prepared by a series of events…[[958]](#footnote-958)

First, in 1993 the two American Bishops Paisius and Vincent, having made an unsuccessful attempt to join the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, turned back to the Florinite Synod – but not “through the front door”, that is, the Archbishop, but “through the back door,” that is, the “Gerontian” fraction within the Synod.

Secondly, as a result of the confusion created by Paisius and Vincent, their fellow-hierarch in America, Peter of Astoria, concelebrated with ROCOR. This was followed by an interview given by his nephew and the Chancellor of the Astoria diocese, Archimandrite Paul (Stratigeas), to a New York newspaper, *Ethniko Kentro*, in which he praised the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. This ecumenist act gave further ammunition to the Gerontian faction, since Bishop Peter and his nephew Fr. Paul belonged to the supporters of Archbishop Chrysostom.

The Gerontian fraction was further strengthened at about this time by the support of Metropolitan Anthony of Megara, who had been given assistance when in America by Paisius and Vincent… This had the important result that when, in September, 1994, a scandal broke out in the newspapers relating to homosexual behaviour by Metropolitan Euthymius of Thessalonica, the Gerontians were able effectively to block the working of the Synodal Court appointed by Archbishop Chrysostom to try Euthymius.

At this point, however, the Gerontians suffered a major blow: their leader, Metropolitan Gerontius, died in November, 1994. Euthymius now lost his major supporter in the Synod. But in partial compensation, control of the powerful corporation ‘The General Fund of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece’ passed to Metropolitan Callinicus (Khaniotes) of Thaumakou, who was a supporter of Euthymius.

With the death of Gerontius, the election of a new bishop for his see of the Piraeus was required. Bishop Vincent was interested, but he had a rival in Archimandrite Niphon (Anastasopoulos) of the Monastery of the Protection in Keratea. At the beginning of 1995 the Synod appointed Vincent as the locum tenens of the diocese, but the election was put off for a time…

We come now to the last meeting of the Synod before the schism. Since the Gerontian faction had repeatedly prevented the working of the Synodal Court to try Euthymius, Archbishop Chrysostom decided that the trial would take place without fail during the coming session, with the participation of whatever bishops were present, even if there were fewer than twelve. This frightened Euthymius, who saw the sword of Damocles descending upon his head… As for the election of a new bishop for the Piraeus, this was postponed by the archbishop, although the correlation of forces at that time favoured Vincent. This displeased Paisius, who wanted Vincent, his favourite, to become Metropolitan of the Piraeus, and saw his hopes slipping away…

Having control of the General Fund, to which the offices of the Synod in Canningos 32 belonged, Euthymius and Paisius now led the Gerontian faction to “continue the cut-off session of the Holy Synod” under the presidency of Metropolitan Callinicus of Thaumakou and Phthiotis. To this end they – that is, the six bishops: Callinicus of Phthiotis, Euthymius of Thessalonica, Stephen of Chios, Justin of Euripus, Paisius of America and Vincent of Aulon - sent a telegram to Archbishop Chrysostom, calling him the leader of “Calliopian faction” and telling him that they were removing him from the presidency of the Holy Synod! The telegram, consisting of one enormous sentence, read as follows: “After your repeated anti-synodical actions, and your refusal to allow an expert canonist and professor of inter-Orthodox renown[[959]](#footnote-959) to take part in the hearing of the affair of Metropolitan Euthymius of Thessalonica in order to avoid excesses in attempts to slander honourable hierarchs and the promotion of the tactic of expelling hierarchs who are fighters [for the faith], like the blessed Bishop Callistus, and the seizure of the whole ecclesiastical administration by the three coup d’état hierarchs who are your closest collaborators and advisers [Calliopius of Pentapolis, Callinicus of Achaia and Matthew of Oinoe are meant], and to avoid the deliberate reintroduction of the matter of [Paisius’ and Vincent’s joining] Jerusalem, which has already been reviewed by the Synod, as well as the rehabilitation of the Bishop of Astoria, who has abandoned the confession of the synodical hierarchs[[960]](#footnote-960), we have decided, in accordance with the divine and sacred canons (those that have been so badly violated by you and your evilly-motivated collaborators), to break off communion with you and with them, not recognizing your right to preside over the remainder of your [sic] Holy Synod which sits at Canningos 32.”

It goes without saying that this telegram, as the “Callinicites” themselves later recognized, did not begin to be a canonical deposition of Archbishop Chrysostom. And it is clear, both from the text of the telegram and its timing, that its *real* motivation (their *supposed* motivation was the allegedly dictatorial behaviour of the archbishop, his convening synodal sessions and cancelling them at will, and not carrying out resolutions passed by the Synod as a whole but displeasing to the “Callistite” minority (i.e. Calliopius of Pentapolis, Callinicus of Achaia and Matthew of Oinoe)) – was the desire to protect Euthymius from a canonical trial. This action was very reminiscent of that of the leaders of HOCNA in 1986, when they left ROCOR just before the trial of Archimandrite Panteleimon.

(This similarity between the Callinicites and HOCNA is not coincidental. In 1999 the two Synods tried to unite. Naturally, the Callinicites overlooked the moral charges against HOCNA, while HOCNA agreed that Auxentius’ depositions of Callinicus and Euthymius were “an internal matter that should be dealt with by our Sacred Synod and need not appear on the common statement.” However, the proposed union broke down over the Callinicites’ insistence that they should have the right to examine the consecrations performed by Auxentius since 1985 “upon the petition of the ordinands”. HOCNA, believing itself to be the lawful successor of Auxentius’ Synod, could not accept to place themselves in the position of petitioners…[[961]](#footnote-961) However, the two Synods continued to gravitate towards each other, and in 2012 united.)

The Callinicites’ claim that Euthymius had been subjected to an unjust witch-hunt was not at all convincing. The present writer has seen a book composed of *seventy-five* signed testimonies against Euthmyius. Even if many or even most of these testimonies were forged or “bought”, as the Callinicites claimed, the very large number of testimonies surely constituted a powerful prima facie reason for convening a trial[[962]](#footnote-962) in which their validity or otherwise could be determined, and the question of Euthymius’s guilt or innocence could be finally resolved. Besides, a Synodical trial was the only way to resolve what had become a nation-wide scandal that was harming the Church terribly.

On July 18 the Holy Synod, meeting in the church of St. Demetrius in Aigaleo (since its offices had been stolen), invited the rebels to defend themselves (protocol № 435). Having received no reply, on July 25 six bishops: Archbishop Chrysostom and Metropolitans Maximus of Demetriades, Callinicus of Achaia, Matthew of Oinoe, Calliopius of Pentapolis and Callinicus of the Dodecanese defrocked the six rebel bishops. Two days later, Metropolitan Peter of Astoria arrived at the Synod and signed the decisions of July 25. Metropolitans Athanasius of Acharnae and Anthony of Megara did not take part in the trial, considering it uncanonical. Anthony remained neutral to the end of his life, while Athanasius, after many changes, returned to the Chrysostomite Synod in 2004. On the next day, the Chrysostomite Synod met again to pass judgement on the former Metropolitan Euthymius, excommunicating him for his moral transgressions.

On August 25, 1995 twenty-seven Athonite elders and hieromonks wrote to both sides: “… We have come to the firm conclusion that there is no difference here in questions of the Faith, and all this is an administrative disagreement… It is evident that both sides are equally responsible for the division that has taken place. Therefore we support neither of the two groups, but remain neutral… and humbly suggest the following to you in order to overcome this division:

”Rescind all resolutions on both sides that took place after the division,… in particular on the one side the resolution to remove the archiepiscopate of the Archbishop,… and on the other the clearly uncanonical defrockings and bans.

“After the rescinding of the above resolutions… [they should have] a general session of all the Synodal Bishops at which, after mutual repentance and forgiveness, they set about resolving the unresolved questions…

“In conclusion we should like to note that now whatever group does not offer a willing hand of unity to the other will in the final analysis bear responsibility for the strengthening of the division before God and history.”[[963]](#footnote-963)

On November 12, 1995, the Callinicites wrote to the Chrysostomites, suggesting reconciliation. Not receiving a reply within forty days, Metropolitan Callinicus wrote again in January, beginning with the words: “Your Beatitude, give that which cannot be given and forgive the unforgivable, and this for a full revelation of the truth: that we are completely responsible for the separation.”

This was a very promising start…

However, immediately after this confession of guilt, he began to accuse the Chrysostomites of not extending a helping hand to them, and said that if “we are to blame for the creation of the separation, the continuation of the break-up makes you infinitely more to blame, especially after our sincere public declaration of our feelings for conciliation and union.” Then he appeared to retract his confession of guilt, claiming that they, the Callinicites, were only “said” to be the cause of the problem: “Christ and His Church – clergy and laity – ask for justice, not only for us, who are said to be the ‘creators’ of the crisis, but more so for you, who formed the basic presuppositions of the separation and completely reject your brothers’ offering to cure this evil.” Then, having previously asserted that he and his fellows were “completely” responsible for the schism, Callinicus went on to claim that it was not only they, but also the Chrysostomites, who conspired: “Your Beatitude, let’s not deceive ourselves: you conspired, and we conspired, not yesterday or the day before, but for a long time.” Finally, he ended with the threat that if Archbishop Chrysostom rejected this offer of reconciliation, the responsibility for the schism would be on his Synod.

Metropolitan Callinicus here wrote as if the schism were merely a personal quarrel that had not resulted in an ecclesiastical schism and formal defrockings, but could be resolved by a mutual agreement to overlook everything that had happened! But the Chrysostomite Synod was by no means obliged to restore the defrocked bishops. Having confessed that they were guilty of schism, it was hardly fitting for the Callinicites to accuse the Chrysostomites of something even worse if they did not simply ignore it!

The Callinicite Archimandrite (now Bishop) Nectarius (Yashunsky) expressed moral outrage at the fact that the Chrysostomites expressed joy at the Church being cleansed of “unworthy brethren”, which allowed them “to open a new page” in the life of the Church. But the Chrysostomite Synod – and all True Orthodox Christians everywhere - had good reason to rejoice that the Church had been cleansed of a most serious moral offender, Euthymius, the cause of a major schism in the Church of Thessalonica and the reason why many had left the Church and others refrained from entering. Of course, they would have rejoiced even more if he had repented, or submitted to a canonical trial. But long experience had shown that he was not going to do neither of these.

The Chrysostomite bishops could also rejoice at the departure of Paisius and Vincent, whose ecumenist sympathies had been obvious for some time, and whose relations with their fellow-bishop in America, Peter had been poor.[[964]](#footnote-964) They did not rejoice about the fall of the other bishops, who were of better reputation, and with whom they would no doubt have been happy to be reunited on the basis of “forget and forgive” (as we shall see, they were in fact reunited with all except one of them). But what they – rightly – could never agree to was to accept *all* the Callinicite bishops en masse, which is what the Callinicite bishops insisted on.

A general reunion of “Chrysostomites” and “Callinicites” without preconditions or the attaching of any blame to anyone would have been as short-lived and hypocritical as the “Auxentiite-Gerontian-Callistite” union of 1985. One further misdemeanour of Euthymius would have destroyed it just as surely as one further misdemeanour of Auxentius (in relation to Tsakos) destroyed the union of 1995. Better a division, regrettable as it may be, than an attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable.This was essentially the reason why Acacius and Gabriel did not follow Chrysostom into the new Synod he led from 1986. They saw that the conditions for genuine synodal government of the Church simply did not exist while certain powerful but evil bishops remained within it. Gabriel died in isolation, but Acacius joined the Chrysostomites in 2003…

In May, 2003 almost the whole episcopate and clergy of the Callinicites officially withdrew their repentance for the creation of the schism of 1995, even declaring: “We are grateful [!!!] to those daring bishops who declared the ‘Archbishop’ and the unrepentant triad excommunicated, saving the Church from more adventures and humiliation.”[[965]](#footnote-965) This statement actually confirmed the wisdom of the Chrysostomites in not immediately giving in to the Callinicite offer of reconciliation in 1995. Clearly the Callinicites’ stated acceptance of “complete responsibility” for the schism had been insincere and a ploy, a means of extracting concessions which they could not obtain in any other way….

In any case, the “Callinicites” began to divide almost immediately. In the Piraeus Stephen, Paisius and Vincent formed one group, and in Thessalonica Callinicus, Euthymius, Athanasius and Justin formed another. On December 28, 1995 the latter group passed judgement on the ecumenist activities of Paisius and Vincent and declared them “fallen from the faith”, without, however, defrocking them. But then, at the beginning of 1996, Athanasius and Justin left Callinicus and Euthymius and joined Stephen, Anthony, Paisius and Vincent to form yet another Synod.

In April, 1996 Callinicus and Euthymius bought the fourth floor of Canningos 32, and consecrated new bishops: Macarius (Kavvakides), who was later elected archbishop of their new synod, Anthimus (Karamitros) and Christopher (Angelopoulos), who had been defrocked for immorality by the Patriarch of Jerusalem before being received into the Church by Auxentius. Meanwhile, the other bishops under the presidency of Athanasius occupied the third floor of the same building and in October consecrated two new bishops for America – the Russian Archimandrite Anthony (Grabbe), who had been defrocked for immorality by Metropolitan Vitaly, and Plotinus (Argitelis). This group proceeded to defrock Callinicus and Euthymius, but revoked their sentence the following day.

In January, 1997 Metropolitan Peter of Astoria died; and in February - Anthony of Megara. The latter was buried by Vincent, but the 40-day pannikhida was performed by the Chrysostomite Synod. In the same month, Archimandrite Niphon, who appeared to be a fervent supporter of Archbishop Chrysostom[[966]](#footnote-966), approached Metropolitan Callinicus of the Twelve Islands in Athens and asked him to join with Athanasius of Acharnae (who was not then a member of the Synod) to consecrate him to the episcopate. Callinicus refused. But Niphon would realise his ambition later…

In May, Vincent, “weeping and groaning”, handed over the seal of the Metropolia of Piraeus and Salamis to Archbishop Chrysostom and returned to America. Then Paisius, Vincent, Nectarius (formerly Plotinus) and Anthony separated from Athanasius, Stephen and Justin and formed their own synod. In September Stephen and Justin returned to the Holy Synod under Archbishop Chrysostom…

In January, 1998 Athanasius of Acharnae returned to the Chrysostomite Synod. In the same month Calliopius of Pentapolis died. In this period many priests were returning to the Chrysostomite Synod.

In February, 1998 Archimandrite Paul (Stratigeas), former Chancellor of the Astoria diocese, was elected and consecrated as the new Metropolitan of America. This elicited some protests and unease because of his ecumenist tendencies in the past - of which, however, he had repented publicly. In April Paisius and Vincent gave an interview in America eulogizing the Ecumenical Patriarch. When Callinicus and Euthymius, as was only to be expected, reacted negatively to this, Paisius and Vincent apostasised to the Ecumenical Patriarch, who rebaptised Paisius (as having been baptised in the Old Calendar Church), and chrismated Vincent! They were not joined by Nectarius and Anthony, who went their own separate ways.

In June, 1998 the “General Fund” returned into the hands of the Chrysostomite Synod, together with the offices of the Synod on the third floor of Canningos 32. Confusion was now created by the fact that the two rival Synods calling themselves “The Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece” occupied two floors of the same building. In the summer of 1996, the Chrysostomite Synod had obtained a decision in the Lower Court in Athens recognising the religious organization “The Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece” as a juridical person with the right to own property. And they had forbidden any other group to use that name under threat of court action. The reason for this, as Bishop Photius explains, was simply to avoid confusion. The Callinicites “use the same name, the same building on the same street and postmen, [so] the faithful and the authorities are confused. [Archbishop Macarius, the new leader of the Callinicites since 2003] wants that confusion. We [do] not. If he has the right to use the name, let him keep it and we shall find a similar name for the title of our Church. If we have that right, then the Macariites have to choose another name. And we believe that we *have* the right because we have [a] legal person with that title.”[[967]](#footnote-967)

However, the Callinicites saw a much more sinister motive in the Chrysostomite action. Thus Archimandrite Nectarius quoted the words of the Chrysostomite Synod in 1996 that “from now on nobody else has the right to use this name. Otherwise our Church will be forced to seek to defend itself in the courts”[[968]](#footnote-968), and chose to see hidden in the last words, “seek to defend itself in the courts” “a greater meaning than may appear at first sight, for the Chrysostomites were thinking of no more and no less than entering the Greek state on equal terms with the new calendarists and becoming, so to speak, ‘a second state church’. With this end, [writes Bishop Macarius of Petra,] ‘on June 4, 1998 a delegation of the above-mentioned Synod [consisting of Archbishop Chrysostom, Metropolitan Callinicus of Achaia and two archimandrites], inspired by a false Protestant theory of group freedom of conscience, according to which those having the same faith have the right, on uniting with each other, to express it in common services, employing the protection of the government, renounced the Orthodox world-view that the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece is a Local One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ, and proclaimed that the Church of the Old Calendarists is a religious community! And they asked for the State’s ‘lawful protection’ in liquidating all the True Orthodox Christians who do not belong to them!! (op. cit., p. 8). One involuntarily thinks of Sergius Stragorodsky and his legalization of his Synod with the consequent liquidation of those not belonging to him (however, one must give the Greeks their due – here they were not talking about physical ‘liquidation’).”

Both Bishop Macarius’ incoherent and incomprehensible reference to a “Protestant theory of group freedom” (what theory?!) and Fr. Nectarius’ reference to Sergius Stragorodsky are quite out of place here. The registration of a legal name with the authorities was not sinful in itself. The Greek State, though not truly Orthodox, cannot be compared to the Soviet Union; legalization with the Greek authorities is not ipso facto a sin against Orthodoxy in the way that legalization with the militant atheist Soviet authorities was because of the anathema lying on the Soviet state. Nor, as Archimandrite Nectarius (if not Bishop Macarius) graciously concedes, were the Chrysostomites aiming at the physical liquidation of the Callinicites! The Chrysostomites could justly be criticised only if *either* they used the legal status they acquired with the State to persecute the Callinicites in a real way (as opposed to simply protecting their property from them by legal means), *or* the constitution of the corporation was uncanonical….

Archimandrite Niphon declared that “the making of the True Orthodox Church of Greece into a corporation [sic!] generally overthrows the basic dogmas, abolishes the canons, violates Holy Tradition and, in a word, turns everything upside down for the sake of receiving [the status of] a juridical person”?[[969]](#footnote-969) But this was surely a wild exaggeration and distortion. Moreover, to call it a “Protestant heresy” was unjust even to the Protestants since, as far as the present writer knows, the Protestant doctrine of “the invisible Church of all believers” does not assert the identity of the Church with any visible organization or legal corporation! The very fact that the constitution of the corporation said that the Church of Christ was founded on the Day of Pentecost by the Lord Jesus Christ, whereas the corporation itself was founded on such-and-such a day and month and year by 20 people, and could be “liquidated” by a quorum of members, shows that no identification of the Church with the legal corporation was intended. Besides, in every jurisdiction of the True Orthodox Christians almost every church and monastery has some kind of legal corporation. Why should these be “lawful, canonical and allowed by the Church”, in Bishop Macarius’ words, while the Chrysostomite legal corporation constitutes “a Protestant ecclesiological heresy that appeared after the proclamation of liberty of conscience by the United States in 1787 and especially after the French revolution of 1789…”?![[970]](#footnote-970)

The Callinicites also saw a sinister Protestant heresy in the “Constitutional Charter” which the Chrysostomites, after prolonged consultation that produced few objections, established in September, 1998. The most important points in the Charter, a legal document registered with the civil authorities of Greece, were: (a) all property, monastic or parish, was concentrated in the hands of the Synod; (b) monasteries were denied the right to own property; (c) hieromonks were prohibited from serving in parishes without special permission from their ruling hierarchs, even when the parish was opened by the monastery; and (d) between Synodal sessions the Archbishop was given the right to make decisions on his own, although the Synod had the right to agree or disagree with his decisions at the next meeting.[[971]](#footnote-971)

Point (a) went against the prevailing tradition in Greece, where parishes and monasteries are allowed to own their property independent of their bishop. However, it is not contrary to the holy canons, which decree that “the Bishop have authority over the property of the Church” (Apostolic Canon 41).

The leader in the attack on the Charter was Archimandrite Niphon, who, as we have seen, was seeking a way to join the Callinicites and receive consecration there. He was supported in the background by the Callinicite Bishop Macarius and the Athonite Elder Augustine, a former lawyer.

Niphon had another motive: the Synod had refused him permission to found a metochion under his sole control in the Chicago area, and the Charter confirmed that the foundation of such monastic communities required the permission of the Synod and the local bishop.[[972]](#footnote-972) Niphon stormed against the Synod’s supposedly “tyrannical teachings” which had the result that “the ruling Holy Monastery could not found free metochia as before”. But as Archbishop Chrysostom justly wrote: “Where do you know that this is written in the Sacred Canons? On the contrary, do you not know that the Sacred Canons demand permission to be obtained for the establishment of a monastic institution? Are you in disagreement with the Sacred Canons?”[[973]](#footnote-973)

He was; and in November, 1998 Niphon left the Synod with Metropolitans Athanasius of Acharnae and Callinicus of the Twelve Islands and 23 parishes and monasteries.[[974]](#footnote-974) In January, 1999 the Holy Synod rescinded the “Constitutional Charter”, not because it considered it uncanonical, but in order to make it easier for Niphon to return to the Church. But he did not, and in July officially joined the Callinicites (Callinicus of the Twelve Islands remained on his own). In September, he was consecrated metropolitan of the Piraeus, and Arethas **-** metropolitan of Crete. At the present time the Callinicites (now renamed “Macariites” because of their new archbishop, Macarius) have about sixteen priests in Russia and one in Romania.

On September 25, 1998 the Holy Synod led by Archbishop Chrysostomos anathematized ecumenism: “To those who say, following what the new-fangled ecumenists teach, that the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, being the Church of the first-born and constituting the Body of Christ in accordance with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit on Holy Pentecost, has departed from the world insofar as it has been cut up into many branches, each of which contains a part of the revealed truth and the grace of the mysteries, because of which it has to be rebuilt by us men through the union of all the branches into one tree, that is to say, through the assimilation of all the heresies and schisms from the true Orthodox Church into one whole, and consequently of all of them with the other religions, to the formation of a single pan-religion, which will in this way constitute the ‘Church’ of the Antichrist, **ANATHEMA**.” Also anathematized were Patriarch Joachim III of Constantinople, Meletius Metaxakis and Chrysostomos Papadopoulos (all Freemasons), “the first workers of the cacodoxies of Ecumenism”.[[975]](#footnote-975)

In July, 1999 Metropolitan Matthew of Oinoe died suddenly. This persuaded Archbishop Chrysostom to proceed to the consecration of new bishops in August: Gerontius of Piraeus and Salamis, Chrysostom of Attica and Boeotia, Gregory of Christianoupolis, Photius of Marathon and Theodosius of Bresthena. The first four bishops were young (30-34 years), which fact was used as another stick to beat the Chrysostomites with.

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What was the relationship of the True Orthodox Church of Greece (the Chrysostomites) to ROCOR in this period?

The True Orthodox Church of Greece continued to recognize ROCOR, at any rate in its American diocese, and in spite of their union (since 1994) with the Cyprianites. In 1998 there was an agreement between the two Synods not to receive clergy from each other’s jurisdiction without certificates of release. In earlier years, Metropolitan Peter of Astoria had justified his occasional communion with the Russians on the grounds that he had been consecrated by them, so could not refuse. In 1999 Metropolitan Peter’s nephew and successor, Metropolitan Paul, criticised Archimandrite Nectarius (Yashunsky), then a Chrysostomite cleric, for receiving someone from ROCOR, although he had not even been chrismated. However, in 2001, when an unofficial Chrysostomite delegation visited Jordanville and raised the issue of Cyprian and Cyprianism, Archbishop Laurus promised that the matter would be discussed at the next ROCOR Council after the election of a new metropolitan. But then the schism between Laurus and Metropolitan Vitaly took place, and the Chrysostomite dialogue with Laurus ended…[[976]](#footnote-976)

On June 8, 1998 Archbishop Chrysostomos became the first GOC Archbishop to receive official recognition from the state, in the person of Greek President Konstantinos Stephanopoulos.[[977]](#footnote-977)

## 158. OTHER CATACOMB GROUPS

Apart from ROCOR and ROAC, there were at least several other Catacomb Church groups in existence in the 1990s.[[978]](#footnote-978) One of these was the “Seraphimo-Gennadiites” and their offshoot, the “Alpheites”.[[979]](#footnote-979) As we have seen, the canonicity of the Seraphimo-Gennadiites was rejected by ROCOR, following Bishop Lazarus’ advice, in 1990; and most other Catacomb groups also reject them. In the year 2000, conclusive documentary proof was published that “Bishop” Seraphim (Pozdeev) was indeed a fraud.[[980]](#footnote-980)

In 1998 the Seraphimo-Gennadiite hierarchy decided not to seek union with any other Church. In 1999 their leader Metropolitan Epiphany (Kaminsky), who had earlier written to Metropolitan Vitaly seeking to enter into communion with ROCOR, was defrocked for his communion with the notorious “healer”, “Metropolitan” Raphael. Later, communion was also broken also with Bishop Barsanuphius for his decision to register his Church with the authorities in Moldova.

By the later 1990s this Church had seven bishops: Schema-Metropolitan Theodosius (Gummenikov) in the North Caucasus region, Archbishop Basil (Bilyak) in Transcarpathia, Archbishop Adrian in the Ukraine, Archbishop John in the Central Volga region, and Bishops Vladimir, Lev and Nicetas. More recently, in 2004-2005, a schism developed over the question of I.N.N. tax forms and their possible defilement by the mark of the Antichrist – a question that troubles many other Orthodox Christians in many countries. Archbishop John and Bishop Athanasius then formed a separate group – they had no problem with the tax forms. In 2008 they joined the Synod of Metropolitan Agathangel (Pashkovsky), being received by kheirothesia.

The most controversial of these Catacomb groups is the “Andrewites”. A large question mark hangs over not only the canonicity, but even of the very existence of this branch[[981]](#footnote-981), so the following data must be considered extremely provisional and quite possibly incorrect, although some respectable church historians accept them…

So called from their founding father, Archbishop Andrew of Ufa, the Andrewites’ canonicity depends in part on the canonicity of Archbishop Andrew, considered by some to be one of the great martyrs of the Catacomb Church and by others – a schismatic who died under ban and formally an Old Ritualist. Archbishop Andrew is said to have consecrated about forty bishops before he was shot in 1937. In 1948, at a Council near Tashkent, one of these, Vladimir (Baron von Stronberg), was recognized as the senior of a group of eight Andrewite bishops who were in communion with each other. After the death of Bishop Vladimir on October 23, 1981, the only surviving bishop was Mercurius (Kotlov), who died on November 14, 1984. After that, the Andrewite communities existed autonomously.

In 1994, a half-paralyzed 96-year-old, supposedly the Andrewite Bishop Amphilochius (Shibanov, consecrated in 1928 and considered to have died in 1983) was found living in secret in the Trans-Baikal region. In June, 1994 he was brought to Moscow, where he consecrated (on his own) two bishops, and later two more, before dying shortly afterwards. The leader of this “neo-Andrewite” group became Bishop Ambrose (Count von Sivers), who was briefly a monk in ROCOR Archbishop Mark’s diocese. However, to this day, Bishop Ambrose has not produced convincing proof of his consecration, nor even of the existence of any other bishops of his group. Most Andrewite communities refused to recognize him.[[982]](#footnote-982)

In June, 1995, the neo-Andrewites held a Council at which they defined their (rather extreme) position on various questions. The acts of this Council were supposedly signed by: Bishops Ambrose (Count von Sievers) of the Goths, Evagrius (Baron Drenteln) of Ingermannland, Paisius (Rogozhin) of Satkinsk and Eustace (Amosov) of Chita. The Council confirmed an earlier decision, made at the Nikolsky Council of 1961, that sergianists were not to be raised to the priesthood except in exceptional circumstances; only those who had been subdeacons or lower in the patriarchate could be ordained.

In June, 1996 the neo-Andrewites held another Council near Moscow attended by eight bishops (Ambrose, Evagrius, Paisius, Eustathius, Pancratius, John, Babylas and Nectarius) - twenty-two clergy in all. At this Council the 29 canons of the “Nomadic” Council of 1928 (which most observors consider to be mythical) were confirmed, and measures against various sexual sins were adopted.[[983]](#footnote-983) The Andrewites claimed to be in communion with a “Clementite” Old Believer hierarchy, so called from their first bishop, Clement, who was consecrated by Archbishop Andrew of Ufa in 1925.[[984]](#footnote-984)

According to one MP source, the Andrewites had 11 bishops and 10,000 faithful, most of whom were scattered in Bashkiria, the Lower Volga region, Krasnodar region and the Urals.[[985]](#footnote-985)

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The two main branches of the Greek Old Calendarist Churches – the Matthewites and the Florinites – both had representatives in Russia in Russia in this period.

The Russian Matthewites were based mainly in the Kuban. Their founder was the Catacomb Schema-Monk Epiphany (Chernov) (+1994), a former spiritual son of the second hierarch of ROCOR, Archbishop Theophanes of Poltava (+1940), who came out to the West in 1978. At first he joined ROCOR in Switzerland, but then, convinced that ROCOR had fallen away from her former confession and had been infiltrated by renovationism, he moved to England, where he stayed in the house of the present writer, joining the local Orthodox community, which was at that time Matthewite. In May, 1980 he travelled to Athens and made an unsuccessful appeal to the Matthewite Synod to create a hierarchy for the Catacomb Church in Russia.[[986]](#footnote-986)

On returning to Russia in 1990, Fr. Epiphany assumed the leadership of a wide net of virtually priestless parishes, bringing them under the omophorion of the Matthewite Archbishop Andrew of Athens. In the 1990s they had five priests and two deacons and were served mainly by the Matthewite exarch in Russia, Metropolitan Cyricus of Mesogaia, who in July, 2005 broke away from the Matthewites to form his own jurisdiction. There were also two Moscow priests under the Matthewite Church of Cyprus.

“In 1993,” writes Anton Ter-Grigorian, “Chernov, undoubtedly a vivid and talented Church organizer, cut off all ecclesiastical relations with the Greek Matthewites.” It appears that this was because of the inactivity of the Matthewite exarch in Russia, Metropolitan Chrysostom (Metropoulos) of Thessalonica. “In the same year he widely distributed his ‘Letter to the Catacomb Christians’ in which he wrote that the Greeks understood nothing about the problems of Russia, were behaving in a provocatively high-handed manner and did not want to consecrate a Russian hierarch. Before his death, which took place a year later, he also distributed in the catacomb milieu his ‘Spiritual Testament’. In the Testament he wrote that they should no longer have any relations with the Greeks and added: ‘finally a true Russian hierarchy has been discovered’. What hierarchy precisely this was he did not specify. However, a part of the communities founded by Chernov declared after his death that this hierarchy had been founded in 1994 by a miraculously discovered Bishop Amphilochius and now consisted of the hierarchy of Archbishop Ambrose (Count von Sievers). The representatives of these hierarchies declared also that Chernov was planning to go to the Council of the miraculously discovered true Russian hierarchy, but was not able to because of illness and died a few weeks before the Council.

“In Chernov’s former (Matthewite) communities chaos broke out. Some were already commemorating Archbishop Ambrose, others commemorated the Greek Vladyka. However, communality of tradition (Chernov) was preserved in both parts of the ‘Greco-Russian Church’. And the representatives of the communities prayed together in their peregrinations round Russia.”[[987]](#footnote-987)

On June 12, 1995 the Andrewite hierarchy (Ambrose, Evagrius, Paisius and Eustathius) wrote a friendly letter to the Matthewite Archbishop Andrew, declaring that they considered the Matthewites to be the only True Orthodox in the world besides themselves, and seeking closer contacts. It appears that this letter was written in spite of Evagrius’ doubts about the Matthewites. According to Archbishop Ambrose, Evagrius had had contacts with the Matthewite Exarch, Metropolitan Chrysostom, in the early 1990s, and had not been impressed.

In 1996 the leaders of the two communities, Archbishop Ambrose and Metropolitan Cyricus, met in a flat in Moscow. The meeting lasted for two hours, and ended cordially. The two communities were now in effect one, having Fr. Epiphany Chernov as their common spiritual father. However, Fr. Andrew Sidniev succeeded in getting an encyclical (dated June 30, 1999) published in which Metropolitan Cyricus advised his spiritual children not to trust Archbishop Ambrose because of his Old Ritualist tendencies. Although the metropolitan denied that it was his encyclical, but ascribed it to Sidniev, he did not reject it openly either. As a result Archbishop Ambrose was forced in his own encyclical (dated April 15/28, 2000) to forbid his spiritual children to have communion with the Matthewites.[[988]](#footnote-988)

On September 9, 2003 “Archbishop” Ambrose admitted that he had no apostolic succession…

After this nothing more was heard from him for a year. Then he returned to his former activities. In 2006 a Demetrius Rutsky broke away from Ambrose, formed his own anti-trinitarian “Christian monotheist church” and, in spite of having been anathematized by Ambrose, was ordained Archbishop of Samara and Cheboksary by the Clementine (Old Ritualist) Bishop Eusebius. In 2011 another appointee of Ambrose’s, Bishop Teodorik of Gotland in Sweden, deposed him and exposed his links with the KGB…[[989]](#footnote-989)

The “neo-Andrewites” are characterised by an extreme ecclesiology, distinct Old Ritualist tendencies and an admiration for Adolf Hitler...

## 159. THE SERBIAN WARS: (1) CROATIA AND BOSNIA

We have seen that during the late 1980s, the Serbian Communist Party Leader, Slobodan Milošević, seeing that communism was doomed in Eastern Europe, had adopted the path of Great Serbian nationalism as a means of staying in power and retaining the allegiance of the electorate. Similar processes were taking place in other East European countries (for example, in Croatia with Tudjman). But there can be no doubt that the transition from communism to, in effect, *fascism* began earlier in Serbia and went deeper and broader – with tragic consequences both for Serbia and for the Orthodox commonwealth of nations.

There was little opposition to Milošević’s incitement of the Serbs to war with their fellow Yugoslavs in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and, in the end, Kosovo. Even the politicians who marched against him in the 1990s, such as Vuk Drašković, agreed with his plans for a Greater Serbia. That is why they were so easily outmanoeuvred by Milošević, who, unlike his much more strictly Marxist wife, was prepared to work with anybody to achieve his aims.

And yet there were dissenters against Milošević’s policies among the Serbs. One was the owner and editor of the Belgrade *Dnevni Telegraf*, Slavko Curuvija, who wrote an open letter to Milošević. The following is an extract from his letter: “Everything that the Serbs have created in this century has been thoughtlessly wasted… The nation has developed a complex as a vanquished, genocidal aggressor as well as being the last bastion of European communism. The merit and worth of Serbian institutions have been destroyed in a systematic manner. You have brought a university and a local farmers’ collective to the same level, equated the Academy of Arts and Sciences with a nursing home, you have degraded the church, the legislature, the media, parliament and the government… Nowhere in today’s Europe are criminals and the state wedded in such a harmonious marriage as here in Serbia. Organised gangs control the circulation of key goods and services. Paramilitary formations still operate. Street violence and murders are a daily occurrence and the state has in practice abandoned its responsibility for the safety of its citizens and their property… A psychosis of a permanent state of emergency has been imposed on society, in addition to the fear generated by omnipotent police and your henchmen, who boast that they can order executions of the people they dislike. Absolute obedience is demanded from the population. Hysterical, choreographed outpourings of support are set up after every victory that contributes to our decline. Your excellency, your country, your people and your compatriots have been living for years in a state of fear, of psychosis, with nothing but death, misery, terror and despair around them… Hungry and humiliated, your citizens have exhausted their spirits and have no strength to make even verbal protests. Our letter to you is our modest contribution to the struggle against fear...”

Curuvijas was first fined $100,000, and then two masked assassins fired eleven shots into him at close range, while his wife was clubbed with a gun…

The Serbian wars began in the spring of 1991, and ended, after a brief break in 1995-1998, in the summer of 1999. The result was defeat for the Serbs and the crushing of their dreams for a Greater Serbia. If it is asked what the Serbian Orthodox Church was doing in this period, then the answer is: certainly not guarding either the faith or the morals of the Serbian people, but rather stoking up the fires of hatred.

The sad fact is that by the time Tito died in 1980 communism had done its work: as in Russia, but more quickly and more completely, the people in Serbia had been corrupted and secularized. As the Orthodox writer Jim Forest pointed out in 1995, “Serbia is one of Europe's most secularised societies. Tito's anti-religious policies were more effective than those of Stalin, Khruschev or Brezhnev. Few Serbs are even baptized (the usual estimate is five per cent) and far fewer are active in church life.”[[990]](#footnote-990) As for marriages, in the diocese of Rashka and Prizren, “for 50 long years almost no one was married and all those families lived in a state of adultery”, until the appointment of Bishop Artemije, when “very slowly and with difficulty, people got used to this requirement of the Church and the amount of those who marry increases with each year.”[[991]](#footnote-991)

From a spiritual point of view the Serbs were no longer the same people as in the time of St. Savva, or even of their most recent saint, Bishop Nikolai Velimirović. Many might still describe themselves as Orthodox, but the reality was very different: whereas in 1931 barely 0.1% of the population of Yugoslavia declared itself to be without religious affiliation, and only about 12.5% in 1953, the figure was 31.6% in 1987. The phenomenon of religious non-affiliation was particularly striking precisely in the Serb territories. For example, 54% were non-affiliated in Montenegro.[[992]](#footnote-992) One 1985 survey put the proportion of believers in Bosnia at 17 per cent…[[993]](#footnote-993) But the war increased “religious” passion on all sides as each side sought the aid of co-religionists in other countries. According to Srdan Vrcan, the Bosnian war was a political conflict that had been given a religious colouring by the warring leaders in order to gain the support of their peoples.[[994]](#footnote-994)

As the Lord was being led away to His crucifixion, He turned to the weeping women who were following Him and said: “If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?” (Luke 23.31). According to the interpretation of Blessed Theophylact, Archbishop of Ohrid, these words mean: “If the Romans have done these things to Me, the green tree, ever-flourishing and ever-living on account of My divinity, laden with the fruits of My teachings which nourish all men, what will the Romans not do to you, the Jewish people, the dry tree, barren of all life-creating righteousness and bearing no fruit? Had there been any amount of living sap of goodness within you, you might have been found deserving of a little bit of mercy. But now you will be like dry wood that is cast into the furnace and destroyed.”[[995]](#footnote-995)

The Serbian people was now a dry tree, cut off from the True Vine and deprived of the life-giving sap of the Holy Spirit… Under Milošević, even the Church cooperated willingly in the betrayal of Serbia and Orthodoxy through spreading the Gospel of hate. “Thus many of Drašković’s most inflammatory articles,” writes Norman Cigar, “appeared first in *Glas Crkve,* an official Church journal. The Church subsequently also co-published his collected works, which were promoted in *Glas Crkve* with testimonials in the accompanying ads, proclaiming his books to be ‘literature which gives birth to the great spiritual movement of renewal and rebirth among the Serbs’.

“The Church, in its own way, also contributed to making force a morally acceptable means to use in Bosnia-Herzegovina in rejecting peaceful solutions. Shortly before the outbreak of violence there, for example, an article in *Pravoslavlje*, an official Church publication, seemed to encourage the Serbs to view conflict in positive terms and took a clear stand against what it condemned as pacifism and defeatism. Stressing that the Serbs were engaged in a veritable struggle between good and evil, the author of the article argued that ‘such [Serbian] partisans of peace help the evil forces that are opposed to God (and by the same token to humanity), and they are the champions of treason and defeat. In our present Armageddon, they are on the side of the destructive Gog and Magog… *The basis for such a practice and theory of peace most often is cowardly egoism’* [emphasis in the original]. Summing up his exhortations, he portrayed war as a religious experience for the Serbs, assuring his audience that ‘self-sacrificing struggle for the purpose of bringing about this [state of] righteousness is a highly creative impulse and a contribution to the fulfilment of God’s and mankind’s goals against evil and oppression as part of the universal plan of salvation.’”[[996]](#footnote-996)

Nor did the Church support the war-mongerers with words only. “In practical terms, for example, warlord Željko Ražnatović (Arkan), whose gunmen were later accused of some of the worst war crimes in Bosnia-Herzegovina, received initial help ‘above all’, as he acknowledged subsequently, from the Serbian Orthodox Church in organizing, financing, and arming his militia…

"Notwithstanding general condemnations of violence by Patriarch Pavle, the Serbian Orthodox Church continued to lend its mantle of respectability to even the most extreme nationalist elements. Arkan provided bodyguards for the Serbian Orthodox metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro, who has reportedly used them to intimidate dissidents. In July, 1993, on the occasion of the city of Belgrade's holy day, Arkan marched prominently beside Patriarch Pavle in solemn procession through the city streets. In that same month, Patriarch Pavle himself led an official delegation to Bosnia, where he presided over widely publicized religious ceremonies with the participation of the top Bosnian Serb government and military leaders."[[997]](#footnote-997)

The tragedy of the Serbian Church and people lies in the fact that their only real claim to lordship over the non-Orthodox peoples of Yugoslavia, their possession of the true, Orthodox faith, is fatally undermined by their anti-Orthodox and anti-Christian behaviour. Even if they were truly Orthodox from a dogmatic point of view – which, as we have seen, they are not – they have shown themselves to be very far from truly Orthodox from a moral point of view. For their hatred of their neighbours and fellow-citizens, their desire to wreak horrific vengeance on whole peoples, shows that they do not understand, and do not wish to understand, the central tenet of Christian morality: love for enemies. It is the Christian’s love of his enemies that places him immeasurably higher from a moral point of view than the Muslim, who does not have this conception. But a Christian who hates rather than loves his enemies becomes like his enemies – but with much less excuse, since he, unlike them, knows the Law of God, - and is no better than a pagan in the words of Christ Himself.

With regard to their war against the Croats, the general feeling among the Serbs was that what was taking place was a repeat of 1941, when hundreds of thousands of Orthodox Serbs were martyred by Catholic Croats for refusing to renounce Orthodoxy. And it cannot be denied that in that theatre of war similarities exist between the present and the past cannot be denied. Thus in 1991, as in 1941, the Vatican backed Croatia, being the first state to recognise its independence out of the wreckage of Yugoslavia. It was reported that the Catholic Church itself purchased weapons and ammunition that it sent to the Croats.[[998]](#footnote-998) And the Pope called the bloody murderer of Serbs in World War II, Cardinal Stepinac, "undoubtedly the most prominent martyr in Croatia's history".[[999]](#footnote-999) The destruction of Orthodox churches was a particularly eloquent proof that the forces ranged against the Serbs were indeed of the evil one.

But did the evil of their enemies make the Serbs innocent victims or “martyrs” for Christ, as even some Greek Old Calendarist publications incautiously declared? The historical evidence is overwhelmingly against such a conclusion. First, the wars were incited by the Serbs, not by their enemies. Atrocities were carried out on both sides, but far more on the Serb side, and the atrocities of the Croats and Muslims were largely retaliatory. Secondly, and most importantly, while the Serbs in 1941 were truly Orthodox, they were far from being so in 1991. They had not repented of communism, and enthusiastically followed their communist leadership. Moreover, they were ecumenists, and before 1996 there was no True Orthodox movement inside Serbia…

Gradually, as the war in Bosnia turned against the Serbs, the Church began to change its attitude towards the government from one of enthusiastic support to one of criticism. Rather late in the day, and somewhat hypocritically, the Church even began to criticise others for being “servants of the communist ideology”.

“Thus in 1993,” writes the Swiss Orthodox analyst Jean-François Meyer, “one could see the minister responsible for religious affairs in Belgrade accusing the Church of getting involved in political affairs and certain bishops of wanting to 'stir up the people against the government', while the patriarchate replied by describing the minister as a 'servant of the communist ideology'. At least one part of President Milošević's entourage continues to cultivate the anti-religious heritage of the communist regime, beginning with the president's wife herself, Mira Marković (ex-president of the 'Federation of communists - Movement for Yugoslavia', then founder in 1995 of a new party, the UYL, that is, the 'United Yugoslav Left'), who deplores the importance of religion in Serbia and considers that the country 'has already reverted spiritually to the Middle Ages'; the tendency of the regime to retrieve Serb nationalist symbols does not prevent the wife of the president from criticising the cult of Saint Sabbas, which is very important in the Serbian Orthodox tradition. Wishing to be a guarantor of the unity of all Serbs, the Serbian Church has again reasserted her opposition to the Belgrade regime when the latter tried to distance itself from the Bosnian Serbs so as to obtain a lifting of the embargo imposed by the international community. When the Serbs fled from Krajina in August, 1995, the leaders of the Serbian Church again published a solemn declaration sharply criticising the 'incapacity' of the 'neo-communist' Belgrade regime, which has led to 'a total impasse' and is preventing 'the spiritual, moral and political recovery' of the Serbian people."[[1000]](#footnote-1000)

This gesture of defiance towards the communist government was a welcome change from the Serbian Church's servility and “sergianism” in relation to the communists over the previous forty years - but, as we shall see, it did not last…

However, in relation to ecumenism there was no change. Thus in a letter to the Pope dated January 17, 1992 Patriarch Paul asked for "a true ecumenical dialogue between our two sister Churches".[[1001]](#footnote-1001) Again, a year later he wrote to the Pope: “We sincerely rejoice that this joint prayer… (with) representatives of other Christian churches and confessions in Europe, as well as representatives of Islam and other great religions,… will take place in Assisi, the homeland of that righteous one and true servant of God, whose spiritual legacy and teachings have made him an apostle of humility, repentance, peace and love. He has built a real bridge between Christians of the West and East. You may rest assured, Your Holiness, that on this day, as well as on every day given us by God, we are in communion with you in prayer for peace and the salvation of all. This is so, although the undersigned… is regretfully unable to be able personally and physically at the concelebration in Assisi. We ask you to do us a favour and receive our delegation as soon as possible in spite your enormous volume of work and all your great difficulties. This delegation will be instructed to cooperate with these organisations which you appoint for the preparation of our meeting with Your Holiness. If God is merciful, and the meeting takes place in the not so remote future, this will be the first meeting between the Pope of Rome and the Serbian Patriarch. We once more thank Your Holiness for the invitation, attention and love which you have shown us. We assure you that on the 9th and 10th of January, during the prayer in Assisi, we ‘with one mouth and one heart’ will offer up to the Throne of our Lord and Saviour, together with Your Holiness and all the Bishops and believers of your Holy Church, our sincere prayers for peace in the whole world and peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.”[[1002]](#footnote-1002)

Claims to be suffering martyrdom for the Orthodox faith at the hands of wicked Catholics and Muslims are hardly consistent with ecumenist betrayal of that same faith with those same enemies!...

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The Bosnian war was brought to an end – whether temporarily or permanently, time will tell – by the Dayton Accords of 1995. But it brought no real peace, no dissolving of hatred. And as ever in the post-communist East, the Americans were blamed for everything…

“I was in Zagreb,” writes Tony Judt, “with a group of liberal Croatian intellectuals when the Dayton Accords were signed. ‘There,’ one of them said, ‘the Americans have finally got what they want.’ ‘What do you mean?’ I asked. ‘Don’t you see?’ replied my friend. ‘The United States has managed to get a military foothold in the Balkans. It’s what they’ve been waiting for. They’ll never leave now.’ ‘But you told me,’ I replied, ‘that the problem was that the West didn’t care enough about the region.’ ‘That’s true,’ he said, ‘they don’t.’ The idea that the United States, or any other Western power, should have the remotest intention of ‘getting a foothold’ in the Balkans had never crossed my mind. I had supposed that the real problem was utter and allous Western indifference. For a Croatian intellectual, however, or a Serbian intellectual, the Balkans have been uppermost in English and American and Western thought for more than a century. Or they should have been. How else can you explain anything?..

“In truth, most Westerners knew little and cared less about the former Yugoslavia, and for this Yugoslav intellectuals must bear some of the responsibility. Between resentment at outsiders for interfering or supporting what are seen locally as partisan positions, and the fading illusions of the Belgrade-based Praxis school of Marxism, many Yugoslav writers, scholars, and artists could not think straight about their own country, and so they missed the chance to explain it to the world. This is one of the reasons why Yugoslav Communist apparatchiks-turned-nationalists have been able to sell themselves to the international community as domestic leaders and international interlocutors.

“After all, no Western leader in the decades before 1989 was seriously deluded into thinking he could ‘work’ with petty Communist dictators. And thanks in some measure to the earlier efforts of men such as Adam Michnuk and Vaclav Havel, no American or Western European diplomat would have asserted that Czechoslovakia’s Gustav Husak was a man ‘with whom one could do busness’, or that the erstwhile First Secretaries of the Communist Parties of Bulgaria or even Poland were ‘statesmen’. Yet that is precisely how Franjo Tudjman and Slobodan Milosevic have been various described by Richard Holbrooke and Bill Clinton…

“Let’s face it. The truly brutal European wars of our century have been confined to Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Nothing in modern American, British, French, Italian or even Spanish experience can match the traumatic dislocation, the murderous violence, and the sheer sustained sadism of the civil wars in and between Balkan states before 1914, between 1941 and 1948, or since 1991. Only the German war of extermination carried out in Poland, the Baltic lands, and Ukraine is comparable, and it has long since become our modern parable of absolute evil. To pretend that the history of Eastern or Southeastern Europe would look like that of Western Europe if only Western observers didn’t ‘orientalize’ the region is a grievous error. There are reasons for the sheer awfulness of Balkan conflicts, of course, but awful they are. There is nothing imagined, invented, represented, constructed, appropriated or Orientalized about such a claim. It is a fact…”[[1003]](#footnote-1003)

## 160. THE SERGIANIST CONQUEST OF JERUSALEM

Having effectively rejected most of the Catacomb Church, as well as most of her own organisation inside Russia, ROCOR began inexorably to fall towards the “black hole” of the Moscow Patriarchate. In December, 1996 Archbishop Mark had a meeting with Patriarch Alexis in Moscow which scandalized Russian Orthodox faithful in many countries. And shortly after he issued a joint declaration with Archbishop Theophan of the MP in Germany which effectively recognised the MP as a True Church with which ROCOR had to unite as soon as possible. Metropolitan Vitaly then said about Archbishop Mark that he had “lost the gift of discernment”…

In 1997 the MP took de facto control of ROCOR’s monasteries and properties in the Holy Land.

The story began when Patriarch Alexis declared his desire to visit ROCOR’s monasteries and to serve at the tomb of Archimandrite Antonin, the famous builder of the Russian Church’s churches in the Holy Land in the nineteenth century. To allow him to do this would have meant violating the ROCOR Synod’s ukaz of April 19, 1994, according to which “the clergy of the Moscow Patriarchate are not allowed to carry out any kind of Divine services (that is: put on an epitrachelion, perform a litiya or prayer service, etc.) on the territory of our monasteries.” Moreover, the patriarch’s intentions were clearly not peaceful or religious, for before his visit he announced that he was going to the Holy Land to take possession of the properties of ROCOR! In spite of that, the Synod of Bishops ordered, in its meeting in New York on May 13, that the chief heresiarch of modern times should be allowed into the holy places under ROCOR’s jurisdiction and treated “with honour and respect”.

However, ROCOR’s leaders in the Holy Land, Bishop Barnabas of Cannes, Archimandrite Bartholomew and Abbess Juliana of the Eleon monastery, decided to remain faithful to the still-unrepealed ukaz of April 19, 1994, and refused admittance to the KGB patriarch and his suite. The ROCOR Synod punished them for this, expelling them from the Holy Land. And then, on July 13, Metropolitan Vitaly, under heavy pressure from Archbishop Mark, apologised both to Patriarch Diodorus of Jerusalem, and to the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat (an MGB agent who trained in Moscow)[[1004]](#footnote-1004)! Patriarch Alexis then resorted to violence: with the aid of the Palestinians, he took the Hebron monastery by force in an operation that was reminiscent of the similar operations carried out by him with the aid of OMON troops against ROCOR parishes in Vladivostok, Ryazan and other places. (Abbess Juliana suffered concussion. This was in fact the second time that she had been violently expelled from a monastery in the Holy Land by the MP, the first time being in 1948.) Finally, on July 29, the 70th anniversary of Metropolitan Sergius’ declaration, the ROCOR Synod expelled Bishop Barnabas of Cannes, Archimandrite Bartholomew and Abbess Juliana from the Holy Land.[[1005]](#footnote-1005) Even mute nature was sorrowful: Abraham’s Oak at Hebron died one year after its seizure by the MP… Later it turned out that on February 5, 1997 the monastery had been secretly transferred to the MP through the head of the MP’s Russian ecclesiastical mission in Jerusalem, Vasily Vasnev …[[1006]](#footnote-1006)

The critics of Abbess Juliana pointed to the fact that access to the Holy Places was guaranteed by law for all pilgrims. Actually, while the Oak of Abraham, situated on the grounds of the Hebron monastery, was clearly a Holy Place, the Eleon and Gethsemane monasteries were situated close to, but not precisely on, the sites of the Lord’s Ascension, Agony in the Garden and Betrayal by Judas. However, assuming that the monasteries were situated on a Holy Place, let us consider the force of this argument.

Protopriest Benjamin Zhukov wrote: “Such a law exists in Israel. But nobody can say with certainty that such a law is also in force on the territory of the Palestinian Autonomy. And even if it is, in view of the special military situation there (as far as Hebron is concerned, the conflicts between the Palestinians and the Jews have led, in the last two months, to tens of deaths and hundreds of people wounded), one can say that the functioning of the law is not the norm in the Palestinian Autonomy. The best proof of this is the fact that there are differences between the various Palestinian levels of authority in evaluating the lawless actions of the Palestinian police in Hebron...

“If such a law exists in the Palestinian Autonomy, then in Hebron, in the given instance, it became quite inapplicable for us. Arafat considers that we occupy the territory unlawfully. How can we act in accordance with the law concerning the reception of visitors if we are not considered to be the owners of this place? Thus Arafat himself removes from us the basis for fulfilling the law. But we become still less responsible before this law (I repeat, if this law is in force) if the visitor who is planning to come is in the eyes of the authorities the lawful owner. Consequently, the first violators of the law are the authorities themselves, who are placing us in a position outside the law. But what fulfillment of the law is required of us here? The concept of hospitality has very little to do with this...

“As regards the attitude of the Jews to this law in the given case, it is known that, not long before the projected visit to the Holy Land of Alexis II, one of the important officials of the Israeli Ministry of Religious Affairs, Uri Mor, visited our monastery on Eleon with the aim of finding out what the attitude to the visit of the Moscow Patriarch was there. Our nuns replied that the arrival of the Patriarch, supposedly for the 150th anniversary of the Mission, was nothing other than a Soviet show; the 150th anniversary was an excuse, since the 100th anniversary of the Mission was celebrated triumphantly in Jerusalem in 1958 under the leadership of Archbishop Alexander of Berlin, in the presence of officials of the Jordanian state and, of course, of representatives of the Greek Patriarchate (officially the Mission goes back to its establishment by the Turkish government in 1858). To this Uri Mor replied: ‘You can protest as you like.’ And then he said: ‘I see that your approach is different from that in Gethsemane... *If you don’t want to receive him, that is your business!*’ And he added: ‘Israel will never change the status quo on its territories.’

“Patriarch Diodorus’ attitude to this question is also characteristic. When his emissary accompanying Alexis II was rejected, Patriarch Diodorus received the nuns of the Eleon monastery and expressed to them his principled censure. And, demonstrating his power, he said that he could enter Eleon, if he wanted, with the help of the Jewish police, but he would not do this. And he dismissed them in peace, after asking: ‘Whose side is Hebron on?’[[1007]](#footnote-1007)

“Let us add that the Catholic monastery of the Carmelites admits nobody, and nobody has laid claims against it. As S. Chertok, a journalist living in Jerusalem, has clearly written (*Russkaia Mysl’*, № 4179, 19-25 June, 1997): ‘In Israel access to the holy places is truly free. However, in closed institutions this is done at established or agreed hours, and, of course, without resorting to force. This rule particularly applies to monasteries where order is defined by a strict rule.’”[[1008]](#footnote-1008)

Even if the law concerning the free access of pilgrims to the holy places were clearer and more strictly applied, it could still not have applied to Patriarch Alexis for the simple reason that *he was not a pilgrim.* Having announced publicly before his visit that he was going to the Holy Land to take possession of the properties of ROCOR, he took the Hebron monastery by force. In other words, he acted like a thief - and no law, secular or sacred, can compel one to accept a self-declared thief onto one’s property… But even if such an impious law existed, it would be necessary to ignore it for the sake of piety, of the Law of God. Would the great confessors of the faith in the Holy Land - Saints Theodosius the Great, Euthymius the Great and Sabbas the Sanctified - have allowed the heresiarchs of their time to carry out services in their monasteries? It is inconceivable.

What at first sight appeared to be the strongest argument advanced by the critics of Abbess Juliana was the fact that ROCOR in the Holy Land commemorated Patriarch Diodorus of Jerusalem, and was therefore bound to receive his friends and guests. Thus according to Protopriest George Larin, who later became Archbishop Mark’s deputy in the Holy Land, “we do not even have the right to perform Divine services in our churches in the Holy Land without the blessing of his Beatitude Diodorus, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and… we perform the Divine Liturgy on antimins sanctified by his Beatitude, … we pray for him and commemorate him in the litanies before our First-Hierarch... When hierarchs and priests and deacons arrive on pilgrimage in the Holy Land, they do not have the right (according to the canons of the Orthodox Church) to perform Divine services even in our churches without the Patriarch of Jerusalem’s special permission, which is why we go from the airport first to his Beatitude for a blessing!”[[1009]](#footnote-1009)

At the same time Fr. George admitted that Patriarch Diodorus “concelebrates with the Patriarch of Moscow and does not wish to concelebrate with our hierarchs”. A strange and clearly uncanonical situation, in which the ROCOR monastics in the Holy Land already had their own first-hierarch, but were forced to have another one - who served with their chief enemy but not with them! Who was it Who said that one cannot serve two masters?...

At this point, some words should be said about the very particular position of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Though a part of World Orthodoxy, as we have seen, Jerusalem, together with its satellite Church of Mount Sinai, has always been on its conservative “wing”, is lukewarm about ecumenism, and is the only Greek-speaking Church not to have accepted the new calendar. The reason for this is obvious. The church of the Holy Sepulchre is divided between the Orthodox and several heterodox Christian churches, and there is rivalry also at several other holy sites. The Orthodox patriarchate has long stood on guard for the status quo (it will be recalled that a dispute over the Holy Places was the spark that led to the Crimean War), and therefore fears any disruption in the status quo that ecumenism might bring. Thus Patriarch Diodorus of Jerusalem criticized the ecumenical movement, and in 1989 left the World Council of Churches, although it appears that he did not break off all contact with the ecumenical organizations.

However, there are strong forces working in favour of ecumenism. The Jerusalem Patriarchate is financially dependent on the Ecumenical Patriarchate. And this dependence becomes stronger as its Palestinian flock, wearied by the constant pressure of the supposedly secular and democratic Israeli authorities on Christians in the Holy Land[[1010]](#footnote-1010), chooses to emigrate in ever-increasing numbers. This same pressure on the Church hierarchy compels it to seek out friends among the heterodox both within and outside Israel. And so the friendship of the patriarchate for ROCOR makes less sense from a political point of view and is increasingly seen as dispensable by its hierarchs. Thus Metropolitan Timothy of Lydda declared: “The Russian monastery of Hebron has been returned to its legal owner [i.e. Alexis of Moscow]”, emphasizing that “the time has come to overcome the divisions now that the Church in Russia is free. There is only one Russian Orthodox Church and one cannot recognize as such the tiny grouping which separated from it a long time ago for whatever reasons.”[[1011]](#footnote-1011)

The question for ROCOR, meanwhile, was: what was the purpose of her presence in Jerusalem? To have a quiet life undisturbed by any conflicts with her neighbours? In that case, she would have done best to give up her ineffectual pose of pseudo-independence and join either the Patriarchate of Jerusalem or the MP’s Mission in Jerusalem. Or was it to inherit the Kingdom of heaven through a good confession of faith, even to the shedding of blood if necessary? In that case, she should have broken communion with the Patriarch of Jerusalem (for, as St. John Chrysostom says, “he who is in communion with an excommunicate is himself excommunicated”) and firmly resist all attempts of KGB agents in cassocks to “have cups of tea” and “serve Divine services” in her monasteries.

To take the latter, zealot course would undoubtedly have led to confrontation, and possibly to expulsion from the Holy Land itself (which is what Abbess Juliana in fact suffered). But it would have attracted the Grace of God and encouraged many other covert opponents of ecumenism in the Holy Land and elsewhere. After all, as the Apostle Paul put it: “If God is with us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8.31).

One bishop critical of Abbess Juliana wrote: “Obviously, it was a question of drawing a line at some point: Alexey evidently could not be received as though he were a patriarch, but the other extreme, closing the gates in the face of the delegation is another extreme, which, elsewhere might indeed be appropriate, but in the context was provocative to the local authorities, both civil and ecclesiastical. Diplomacy has little place in matters of principle, but neither, I feel, does provocation...”

These comments betray a lack of understanding of the situation in which Abbess Juliana and her fellow zealots were placed.

First, she had been ordered to receive him “with honour and respect”, which precluded treating him as though he were not a patriarch. True, the Synod had given her a speech to the patriarch in which it was written: “We welcome you not as the Patriarch of all Russia, but as a guest of Patriarch Diodorus of Jerusalem”. But, as Abbess Juliana wrote, “standing in front of the television cameras I would have been shamed in front of the whole world!!!... This seemed to me absurd. Every welcome is already a welcome, and holding in my hands the paper, the reporters could have put into my mouth completely different words. And in essence I would have had to go up to receive his blessing.”[[1012]](#footnote-1012)

Again, a highly respected protopriest from Russia, while criticizing the Synod for going too far in one direction, criticized Abbess Juliana for going too far in the other, saying that she should have let Alexis in, but “drily, officially”.

However, even if she had received him “drily” and “officially”, could she, a frail woman who did not have the support even of all her nuns, have prevented him from serving at the tomb of Archimandrite Antonin once he and his vast entourage had crossed the threshold of the convent?

If she had tried to do so, the scandal may have been even greater, and she might well have been simply pushed aside, just as she was pushed aside at Hebron a little later.

In any case, if the KGB Agent “Patriarch” had been allowed into the citadel of ROCOR in Jerusalem, the real relationship of ROCOR to him and his patriarchate would have been completely misrepresented and the whole world would have known who the real master was, not only on Eleon, but in the Russian Church as a whole.

The most shocking aspect of the whole affair was the letter of apology to the Muslims. Protopriest Benjamin Zhukov made some illuminating comments on the diplomatic significance of the metropolitan’s letter to Arafat: “*In the letter to Arafat there is not a word about the unlawful seizure of property, about the inhumane beating of the monastics, about**the crying violation of international law,* as was expressed by Archbishop Laurus in his protest. Nothing of the kind! In this address, eight days after the lawless actions of the Moscow Patriarchate with the help of the Palestinian OMON, under the guise of a ‘diplomatic note’ with the aim of receiving Hebron back again, *there took place a complete ‘whitewash’ and ‘justification’ of all the criminals in the affair of the seizure of Hebron.* Perhaps, in fact, in such circumstances Hebron will be returned to our Church: the Moscow Patriarchate would make off, as Khrushchev once made off in Cuba, having got a long way in! Perhaps... but would it not be better to sacrifice Hebron (we may even say that we do not have the strength to keep it), rather than *to sacrifice our faithful monks, whose exploit we did not defend in this lamentable letter*. We have similarly failed to value the exploit of those who trusted us and who have been beaten up by the OMON in our homeland... *This was a diplomatic failure for the whole world to see!***”**

There can be no doubt that Metropolitan Vitaly was forced to make this apology by Archbishop Mark, who was not sent to the Holy Land in July at the bidding of the Synod, but came of his own will, having supposedly heard about the events “from the newspapers”. Many suspect - and there is certainly much evidence pointing in that direction - that the events in Hebron and Jerusalem were actually planned by the Moscow Patriarch with Archbishop Mark at their secret meeting in December, 1996.

Archbishop Mark’s position in relation to Moscow was set out in an article in which he began by affirming that the events in the Holy Land should not stop attempts to overcome the schism with the Moscow Patriarchate - which, however, was a “division”, not a “schism”. Then he reviewed the main obstacles to union in a perfunctory and misleading way. Finally, he called for an All-Emigration Council to review relations with the patriarchate and to consider the question: “Is eucharistic communion possible with complete autonomy?”[[1013]](#footnote-1013) This showed where his thought is moving - towards making ROCOR a “completely autonomous” Church in communion with the patriarchate, like the Orthodox Church of America!

It also became clear that Archbishop Mark was planning to hand over the remaining ROCOR properties to the MP. For his close assistant in this affair, Protopriest Victor Potapov, said in an interview: “We declare outright that we consider the Church Abroad to be an inalienable part of Russian Orthodoxy and that *we would like to give over to Russia everything that we have available, and in particular also here in the Holy Land.”*[[1014]](#footnote-1014)

In 2000, Patriarch Alexis, during a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, presented documents laying claim to the Hebron monastery to the Palestinian authorities, who accepted them. In 2005, he awarded Ambassador Hairi al Oridi with “The Order of the Holy and Right-Believing Prince Daniel” for his contribution to the development of relations between Russian and Palestine.” Bishop Mark of Yegorievsk, who presented the award along with the Patriarch, noted that the Ambassador took an active role in preparing for the two visits of Patriarch Alexis to the Holy Land…”[[1015]](#footnote-1015)

As for the Jerusalem Patriarchate, by the end of the millennium there was no question that it had thrown its lot in completely with the ecumenists. Thus in a Joint Statement with the Antiochian Patriarchate, the Monophysites, the Papists and the Protestants in the summer of 1999 it declared: “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us… Oriental Orthodox [Monophysites], Orthodox, Catholic and Evangelical… We renew our commitment to strive to be [the] One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, according to the will of the Lord Jesus, ‘so that they may be one’ (John 17.11)… by opening our hearts and minds to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that we encounter each other cooperatively, with respect, and with kindness. In Him, we are one…”[[1016]](#footnote-1016)

## 161. THE WITNESS OF ST. PHILARET

In June, 1998, under pressure from believers inside Russia, Metropolitan Vitaly recovered somewhat, and in defiance of his liberal bishops outside Russia declared that the MP was “a pseudo-patriarchate with a pseudo-patriarch at its head… The Moscow Patriarchate has lost Apostolic Succession, which is to say, it has lost the Grace of Christ. We have not the slightest intention of taking part in a Bishops’ council, or Sobor, jointly with the Moscow Patriarchate.”[[1017]](#footnote-1017)

One of those who supported the metropolitan here was Archpriest Lev Lebedev of Kursk: “How right was Archbishop Seraphim of Brussels when he wrote with regards to the MP in 1994: ‘It is by our existence independently of the MP that we will benefit Orthodoxy, as well as the MP. As long as we exist, no matter how small a lot we are, the MP will always have to be mindful of us. We serve as the *saving* deterrent for its blunders. If we disappear and merge with them, the hands of the MP will be completely untied.’”

While considering that the MP was graceless, Fr. Lev was not in favour of the metropolitan’s making a public declaration to that effect, nor was he in favour of breaking relations with the Cyprianites, with whom, as we have seen, he retained friendly relations.

In 1998 Fr. Lev was due to address the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR in New York. However, he was mysteriously taken ill and died in his hotel room before he could deliver his report, which contained a scathing exposé of Archbishop Mark of Germany. He also wrote: “One cannot but admit that the apostate, heretical and criminal majority of the MP hierarchy corresponds entirely to the state of society as a whole; it is one of the ‘moles’ or ‘worms’ greedily devouring whatever it can still find to devour in the rotting corpse. Under these circumstances what can the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad have in common with the Moscow ‘Patriarchate’? Nothing! Hence it follows that any kind of ‘dialogue’ or ‘conference’ with the MP with the aim of clarifying ‘what divides us and what unites us’ is either an abysmal failure to understand the essence of things or a betrayal of God’s truth and the Cchurch. What divides us is everything! And what unites us is nothing, except perhaps the outward forms of church buildings, clerical vestments and the order of services (but in all respects even here). Therefore it is necessary to realize clearly and confirm officially that now the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia is not a part of the Church of Russia, but the only lawful Russian Church in all its fullness! ‘Recognition’ of the MP by ROCOR would provide the MP with the appearance of legitimacy in the eyes of the entire world. But this cannot be allowed to happen… And if one’s soul suffers pain for the Russian-speaking population of Russia, then it is only through constant and firm reproof of the MP, and not through making advances towards it, that it is possible to save those in Russia who still seek salvation and are capable of accepting it. It is therefore essential to return to the uncompromising attitude towards the MP that was taken by ROCOR from the beginning. And it is quite wrong, under the pretext of ‘the good of the Church’ and ‘operational efficiency’, to undermine the authority of the Primate of ROCOR, who is capable of distinguishing truth from falsehood and of ‘discerning the spirits’. Recently ROCOR has been afflicted by a whole series of disasters one after the other. The murder of the guardian of the miraculous myrrh-streaming Iveron icon was especially terrible. But it is after the very indecisive resolutions of the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR in 1993 and 1994 and the subsequent steps taken by some of our hierarchs towards rapprochement with the MP that these disasters began, one after the other – disasters which bear witness to the withdrawal of God’s beneficence towards our Church, because of its deviation from the truth. How many more disasters do the supporters of fraternization with the criminal and heretical MP wish to bring down upon us?”

That Archbishop – the future Metropolitan – Laurus was a leader in the movement of ROCOR away from True Orthodoxy and towards “World Orthodoxy” was revealed in the disrespectful way he treated the incorrupt relics of his predecessor, Metropolitan Philaret.

Metropolitan Philaret reposed on the feast of the Archangel Michael, 1985. Nearly thirteen years passed, and it was arranged that his remains should be transferred from the burial-vault under the altar of the cemetery Dormition church of the Holy Trinity monastery in Jordanville into a new burial-vault behind the monastery’s main church. In connection with this, it was decided, in preparation for the transfer, to carry out an opening of the tomb.

On November 10, 1998 Archbishop Lavr of Syracuse and Holy Trinity, together with the clergy of the community, served a pannikhida in the burial vault; the coffin of Metropolitan Philaret was placed in the middle of the room and opened. The relics of the metropolitan were found to be completely incorrupt, they were of a light colour; the skin, beard and hair were completely preserved. His vestments, Gospel, and the paper with the prayer of absolution were in a state of complete preservation. Even the white cloth that covered his body from above had preserved its blinding whiteness, which greatly amazed the undertaker who was present at the opening of the coffin – he said that this cloth should have become completely black after three years in the coffin… It is noteworthy that the metal buckles of the Gospel in the coffin fell into dust on being touched – they had rusted completely; this witnessed to the fact that it was very damp in the tomb; and in such dampness nothing except these buckles suffered any damage! In truth this was a manifest miracle of God. However, the reaction of Archbishop Lavr to this manifest miracle was unexpected: he ordered that the coffin with the relics be again closed…

On the eve of the reburial of the relics, November 20, at the beginning of the fourth hour of the day, the coffin of the holy hierarch was taken from the Dormition church to the monastery church of the Holy Trinity in a car. The serving of the pannikhida was led by Archbishop Laurus, with whom there concelebrated 20 clergy. None of the other hierarchs of ROCOR came to the translation of the relics of the holy hierarch Philaret (only Bishop Gabriel of Manhattan wanted to come, but he was hindered by a sudden illness). After the pannikhida the coffin with the body of the holy hierarch was placed in the side wall of the church, and at 19.00 the All-Night Vigil began. The next day, November 21, Archbishop Laurus headed the celebration of the Divine Liturgy in the church. With him concelebrated 18 priests and 11 deacons, several more clergy who had arrived prayed with the laypeople in the church itself. About 400 people gathered in the over-crowded church. All those present were greatly upset and grieved by the fact that during the pannikhida, as during the All-Night Vigil and the Liturgy, the coffin with the relics of the holy hierarch Philaret remained sealed. In spite of the numerous requests of clergy and laity, who had specially come to Jordanville so as to kiss the relics of the holy hierarch, Archbishop Laurus refused to open the coffin. He also very strictly forbade making photocopies from the shots that had already been taken of the incorrupt relics of the saint or even to show them to anyone. Archbishop Laurus called on those assembled to pray for the peace of the soul of the reposed First Hierarch until the will of God should be revealed concerning his veneration among the ranks of the saints… After the Liturgy a pannikhida was served, and then the coffin with the relics of the holy hierarch Philaret were taken in a cross procession around the Holy Trinity cathedral and then to the prepared place in the burial vault, where Archbishop Laurus consigned the relics of the holy hierarch to the earth.[[1018]](#footnote-1018)

There have been other witnesses to the holiness of Metropolitan Philaret. The following took place on the feast of St. Stephen, January 9, 2006 in the True Orthodox women's monastery of Novy Stjenik, which has just been built in a very remote part of Serbia in spite of threats to destroy it coming from the false patriarchate of Serbia.[[1019]](#footnote-1019) The nuns were expelled from Old Stjenik a few years ago because of their opposition to the heresy of ecumenism, and were under the omophorion of a hierarch of the “Florinite” branch of the True Orthodox Church of Greece.

Nun Ipomoni (which means “patience” in Greek) suffered from very severe asthma attacks. On this day, she had the most severe attack yet and suffocated. For 20 minutes she did not breathe and her body was without any sign of life. Now it should be noted that a few days before this, the 10 nuns in this monastery led by Schema-Abbess Euphrosyne had earnestly prayed to the Lord to give them the fear of God.

During the 20 minutes that she was clinically dead Nun Ipomoni met several demons in a dark tunnel; they got hold of her and were trying to drag her to hell. It was a most terrifying experience. After 20 minutes, Matushka Euphrosyne anointed her dead body with oil from the lampada in front of the icon of St. Philaret of New York. At the moment when the oil touched her head, which felt like an electric shock, she revived and began to move. For some afterwards, she was still very weak and wept all the time. But the next day Fr. Akakie arrived at the monastery, served the liturgy for three days in a row, communed her and gave her the sacrament of Holy Unction. Now she has fully recovered. She feels well, walks and even prepares food. This whole incident has had a very beneficial effect on all of the nuns. Their prayer to receive the fear of God was answered. And they ardently thanked God and his great hierarch, St. Philaret of New York.

## 162. THE SERBIAN WARS: (2) KOSOVO

The 1990s were characterized by great unrest among the Albanian population, and the beginning of an underground movement for an independent Kosovo.

“On 24 May 1992,” writes Noel Malcolm, “Kosovo-wide elections were held, using private houses as polling-stations under the noses of the Serbian authorities, to create a new republican assembly and government.” The majority of elected members in this underground assembly came from the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), whose leader, Dr. Ibrahim Rugova, a specialist in literary history, became elected president of the Kosovan “republic”.[[1020]](#footnote-1020)

The Serbs treated all Albanian activism as “terrorism”. But in truth the situation of the Albanians in the 1990s was wretched, and it is more accurate to say that they rather than the Serbs were the victims. And even though, towards the end of the 1990s, some real Albanian terrorism in the form of KLA activity did emerge some years later, what state (unless it is a communist one) deals with terrorists on its own territory by persecuting the whole population, the innocent with the guilty, women with men, children with adults?

For “every aspect of life in Kosovo has been affected,” wrote Malcolm in 1998. “Using a combination of emergency measures, administrative fiats and laws authorizing the dismissal of anyone who had taken part in a one-day protest strike, the Serb authorities have sacked the overwhelming majority of those Albanians who had any form of state employment in 1990. Most Albanian doctors and health workers were also dismissed from the hospitals; deaths from diseases such as measles and polio have increased, with the decline in the numbers of Albanians receiving vaccinations. Approximately 6,000 school-teachers were sacked in 1990 for having taken part in protests, and the rest were dismissed when they refused to comply with a new Serbian curriculum which largely eliminated the teaching of Albanian literature and history. In some places the Albanian teachers were allowed to continue to take classes (without state pay) in the school buildings, but strict physical segregation was introduced – with, for example, separate lavatories for Albanian and Serb children – and equipment or materials, including in one case the window-glass, was removed from the areas they used. For both health-care and education the Albanians have organized their own ‘parallel’ system of clinics and schools, mainly in private premises; the doctors and teachers are paid by the ‘Republic’ (in practice, by the LDK) out of an income tax of three per cent levied, on a voluntary basis, in the diaspora. In this way teaching is arranged for more than 400,000 children; the teachers and organizers are, however, frequently subjected to arrest, intimidation and beatings by the Serb police.

“Arbitrary arrest and police violence have become routine. Serbian law allows the arrest and summary imprisonment for up to two months of anyone who has committed a ‘verbal crime’ such as insulting the ‘patriotic feelings’ of Serbian citizens. It also permits a procedure known as ‘informative talks’, under which a person can be summoned to a police station and questioned for up to three days: in 1994 15,000 people in Kosovo were questioned in this way, usually without being told the reason for the summons. Serbian law does not, of course, permit the beating up of people in police custody; but many graphic testimonies exist of severe beatings with truncheons, the application of electric shocks to the genitals, and so on. Also widely violated in Kosovo are the official rules for the lawful search of people’s houses: homes are frequently raided without explanation, and goods and money confiscated (i.e. stolen) by the police. In 1994 alone the Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms in Kosovo recorded 2, 157 physical assaults by the police, 3,553 raids on private dwellings and 2,963 arbitrary arrests.

“Such methods were already being applied before the outbreak of the war in the former Yugoslavia in the summer of 1991. At first the war had little direct effect on conditions in Kosovo apart from increasing the reluctance of young Albanians to do their military service in the Yugoslav – now, in practice, Serbian – army. The most important effect of the outbreak of the war was on the thinking of Albanian political circles in Kosovo: it was the declarations of independence of Slovenia and Croatia in June 1991 that led the LDK to change its aims from republican status within Yugoslavia to full sovereignty and independence. But in terms of practical life, the only group that felt immediately affected by the Serbian-Croatian war was the small population of so-called ‘Kosovo Croats’, the Catholic Slavs who lived in Janjevo and a small group of villages to the south of that town. More than half of the Janjevo Catholics fled to Croatia (mainly to Zagreb) by the end of 1991, and the inhabitants of villages such as Letnica followed in 1992…”[[1021]](#footnote-1021)

After the end of the war in Bosnia in 1995, there was only one direction in which the still-unspent energy of Serbian revanchism could turn – southwards, to Kosovo... But the Serbs needed an excuse in order to unleash the full weight of their army on the province. Such an excuse was armed resistance by the Albanians. But the peaceful policy of their unofficial leader Rugova restrained the Albanians from taking that fatal step. And yet, as Norman Cigar wrote in 1995, “many Serbian hard-liners no doubt seek to spark just such a reaction so that the state will have a rationale to launch full-scale repression. As the leader of one of the most extreme parties, Jović – whose militia had been marauding in Kosovo – admitted, his objective was specifically to provoke such an Albanian reaction. He stated: ‘The issue of the occupation of Kosovo and Metohija cannot be solved except by inducing the Shiptars [a pejorative Serbian term for the Albanians] to start an uprising.’”[[1022]](#footnote-1022)

The rationale the Serbs were looking for appeared in the next year with the first news of a shadowy Albanian guerrilla force, the KLA. “At this early stage, however, Rugova’s own attitude to the KLA was quite uncomprehending: when the first KLA attacks on Serb policemen had taken place in 1996 and 1997 he had become convinced that the whole thing was a chimera, invented by Serb *agents provocateurs.* It would be well into 1998 before he changed his mind.”[[1023]](#footnote-1023) Meanwhile, his popularity slipped. “Among the general Albanian population Rugova’s personal standing remained high; at unofficial elections for the self-styled Kosovo government on 22 March, 1998, he was returned unopposed as President. But among the political class the growing dissatisfaction with his policy was evident, with several prominent defections from his party; and the reason why he was elected unopposed was that opposition parties boycotted the election, arguing that it was inappropriate at such a time of political crisis.

“What had caused that crisis was a huge escalation in the use of military force by the Serbian authorities. Attacks by the KLA on the Serbian police and other targets had continued during the winter of 1997-8, but on a very limited scale: in the two years up to mid-January 1998, the KLA claimed to have killed five policemen, five other Serbian officials and eleven Albanian ‘collaborators’ with the Serbian regime. Other European countries had experienced similar small-scale campaigns of politically motivated violence, and had dealt with them using normal police methods. But the response of the Serbian authorities in this case was hugely disproportionate; and it was the nature of this response which, more than anything else, pushed Kosovo into war…

“By means of random shootings and artillery bombardments the Serb forces emptied village after village of their inhabitants; the houses were then looted and burnt, and in many cases livestock were killed and crops destroyed in the fields. Over a period of six months, from April to September 1998, more than 300 Albanian villages were devastated in this way; aid agencies estimated that between 250,000 and 300,000 people were driven from their homes. The majority moved to the major towns, while some left Kosovo altogether and others (up to 50,000) sought refuge on hillsides. From the nature of the systematic destruction of houses and livelihoods, it was clear that the main purpose of this entire campaign was not military but demographic: nothing less than the permanent uprooting of a significant proportion of the rural population of Kosovo…”[[1024]](#footnote-1024)

In October, there was an agreement between the US and Milošević, and “the next two months did see a major reduction in the fighting. Many Serb units were withdrawn at the end of October, and thousands of Albanians were able to return to the burnt-out shells of their homes (which, in some cases, were found to have been booby-trapped with grenades by the Serb forces as they left). The Verification Mission began to operate, though the number of ‘Verifiers’ fell far below the total of 1,800 agreed in October: there were only 600 of them in Kosovo by the end of the year. During the last week of December, however, the Serb military forces launched a new offensive against KLA positions near the north-eastern town of Podujevo; the battle group used in this attack then remained in place, in further breach of the October agreement, and during the next few weeks an additional force of 15,000 Serbian troops assembled at staging-posts just outside the Kosovan border. Western monitors concluded that the Serbs were preparing for a new spring offensive against the KLA – which, for its part, had also been re-arming and training since October. However, other evidence suggested that the Serbian authorities were preparing a campaign of destruction and expulsion against the local Albanian population that would be even more far-reaching than the scorched earth policy of the previous summer: in January and February, for example, it was reported that they were seizing official documents and land-ownership registers from Albanian villages, and removing Serbian Orthodox icons and artefacts from museums in Kosovo for ‘sake keeping’ in Belgrade…”[[1025]](#footnote-1025)

A last attempt by the West to negotiate a peace deal between the two sides at Rambouillet failed, and “on 24 March 1999, after the failure of one more attempt at negotiation by Holbrooke and a final rejection of the Rambouillet proposals by the Serbian parliament, NATO forces began their campaign of air strikes against strategic targets inside Yugoslavia…

“During the first few days of the air-strike campaign, while NATO confined itself to the use of cruise missiles and high-altitude bombing, the Serbian forces inside Kosovo embarked on a massive campaign of destruction, burning down houses and using tanks and artillery to reduce entire villages to rubble. At first their actions were concentrated in three areas: in the north-eastern corner of Kosovo (securing a wide corridor for the introduction of more forces into the province), in the Drenica region (where the KLA had its main strongholds), and in a broad stretch of south-western Kosovo, near the Albanian border. The significance of this third target soon became obvious: the strategy was to clear a path for the mass expulsion of the Kosovo Albanian population. Two days after the air strikes began, the first waves of deported people began flooding over the southern borders of Kosovo, into Albania and Macedonia. Most had similar stories to tell, of a coordinated operation of ‘ethnic cleansing’ on a hitherto unprecedented scale. Armed men had arrive at their houses – sometimes special police, sometimes paramilitary gangsters, in many cases accompanied by local Serbs – and had ordered them to leave within minutes. An atmosphere of terror was created by random killings of civilians in the streets; some houses were set on fire as the population was leaving, and the rest would be first looted and then demolished when they had gone. As they left the village they would be funnelled through a cordon of troops, who would rob them of their money and possessions. Finally they would be told which route to take to the border. In many cases, however, not all the inhabitants were allowed to leave: in a development chillingly reminiscent of the seizure of Srebrenica in 1995, men were separated from their families and taken away by Serb forces. By the third week of April the US government was reporting that it had satellite images of many newly dug mass graves; the American diplomat with special responsibility for war crimes issues, David Scheffer, calculated that up to 100,000 men were unaccounted for. Some of these, no doubt, had managed to flee to the hills, where pockets of heavily outgunned KLA fighters were putting up a limited resistance.

“The scale of this cleansing operation, and the coordination it displayed between Serbian military and police forces, indicated a high degree of planning, This was clearly not a spontaneous response to the NATO bombardment – though the air strikes may well have given Milošević a welcome opportunity to accelerate and extend the actions he had already planned. The main way in which this campaign of expulsion went beyond the ethnic cleansing of the previous year was in its application to the major towns: the inhabitants of cities such as Prishtina and Mitrovica, whose lives had been largely untouched by the 1998 campaign, were now subjected to the same methods of intimidation and deportation. Thousands of people were forced to board trains at Prishtina, which then took them to the Macedonian border; they were packed so tightly into the waggons that several elderly people died during the journey. By 20 April 1999 it was calculated that nearly 600,000 refugees had left Kosovo in the previous four weeks: 355,000 were in Albania, 127,500 in Macedonia, 72,500 in Montenegro and 32,000 in Bosnia. This was in addition to an estimated 100,000 who had left during 1998. And inside Kosovo, according to NATO spokesmen, there were five large pockets of ‘displaced’ Albanians, representing a total of 850,000 people.”[[1026]](#footnote-1026)

On March 23, one day before NATO intervened, the Synod of the Serbian Church declared: “In the name of God, we demand and beseech that all conflict in Kosovo and Metohija immediately cease, and that the problems there be resolved exclusively by peaceful and political means. The way of non-violence and co-operation is the only way blessed by God in agreement with human and Divine moral law and experience. Deeply concerned about the threatened Serbian cradle of Kosovo and Metohija and for all those who live there, and especially by the terrible threats of the world’s armed forces to bomb our Homeland, we would remind the responsible leaders of the international organisations that evil in Kosovo or anywhere else cannot be uprooted by even greater and more immoral evil: the bombing of one small but honourable European people. We cannot believe that the international organisations have become so incapable of devising ways for negotiation and human agreement that they must resort to ways which are dark and demeaning to human and national honour, ways which employ great violence in order to prevent a lesser evil and violence…”[[1027]](#footnote-1027)

Leaving aside the hypocrisy involved in the Synod’s calling for peace when, as we have seen, it had for so long been calling for war, the statement must be commended at least for calling the actions of the Serbs in Kosovo “evil”. But in its main import it was both factually and morally wrong. According to NATO figures, “by the end of May, 1.5 million people, i.e. *90%* of the population of Kosovo, had been expelled from their homes. Some 225,000 Kosovar men were believed to be missing. At least 5000 Kosovars had been executed.”[[1028]](#footnote-1028) Can such barbarism be considered a “lesser evil” than a war undertaken to defend the victims and restrain the aggressors? Whatever one’s judgement on NATO’s actions from a political point of view, from a *moral* point of view, its aims were surely better than those of the Serbs.[[1029]](#footnote-1029)

The war ended on June 10, 1999 after the victory of NATO over the Serbian forces. On the same day, “the UN Security Council passed a resolution ([UNSCR 1244](http://www.nato.int/kosovo/docu/u990610a.htm)) welcoming the acceptance by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia of the principles on a political solution to the Kosovo crisis, including an immediate end to violence and a rapid withdrawal of its military, police and paramilitary forces. The Resolution, adopted by a vote of 14 in favour and none against, with one abstention (China), announced the Security Council's decision to deploy international civil and security presences in Kosovo, under United Nations auspices.

“Acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the Security Council also decided that the political solution to the crisis would be based on the [general principles](http://www.nato.int/kosovo/docu/u990610a.htm%22%20%5Cl%20%22A1) adopted on 6 May by the Foreign Ministers of the Group of Seven industrialised countries and the Russian Federation - the Group of 8 - and the principles contained in the [paper](http://www.nato.int/kosovo/docu/u990610a.htm%22%20%5Cl%20%22A2) presented in Belgrade by the President of Finland and the Special Representative of the Russian Federation which was accepted by the Government of the Federal Republic on 3 June. Both documents were included as annexes to the Resolution.

“The principles included, among others, an immediate and verifiable end to violence and repression in Kosovo; the withdrawal of the military, police and paramilitary forces of the Federal Republic; deployment of effective international and security presences, with substantial NATO participation in the security presence and unified command and control; establishment of an interim administration; the safe and free return of all refugees; a political process providing for substantial self-government, as well as the demilitarisation of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA); and a comprehensive approach to the economic development of the crisis region…”[[1030]](#footnote-1030)

Kosovo is now, in 2014, an independent country in the eyes of most other countries – but not in the eyes of Serbia, Russia and some others. Everything is possible, and it is not excluded that Kosovo will again become part of Serbia one day. However, for the Serbs to continue with their revanchist dreams even now, after the crushing and completely decisive defeat of 1999, must be considered not only politically and militarily foolish, but also, from a religious point of view, *evident refusal to accept the judgement of God and to repent in the face of His manifest wrath.*

The judgement of God is against all evildoers, and only the blindest refusal to accept the principles of Christian morality can fail to see God’s judgement on Serbia in their loss of Kosovo. St. Savva prophesied that the Serbs would lose territory if they betrayed the faith, and so it has turned out. If we look over the last 150 years of Serbian policy in Kosovo, and in particular the cruel policy of ethnic cleansing of Albanians, then we must conclude not only that the policy has been a massive failure (the population of Kosovo is now *over 98%* Albanian), but also that it has been immoral.[[1031]](#footnote-1031) The Serbs have failed heed the warning of their most recent saint, Bishop Nikolai Velimirović, against perpetuating racial hatred: “We sin if we see it as an obligation to hate those whom our relatives hate. This hatred passes into us like a family disease.”[[1032]](#footnote-1032) Nor have they heeded the implicit warning of the Serbian lay prophet of the nineteenth century, Mitar Tabarić: "On our borders and over them a new nation will appear. They will grow like grass after a deluge, they will be good and honest, and they will answer our hatred with reason. They will take care of each other like brothers. And we, because of our madness we shall think that we know everything and that we can do anything, and we shall baptize them with some new fate of ours, but all that will be in vain. Because they will believe only in themselves and in nobody else. Big trouble will come of it, because this nation will be brave. Many summers this trouble will last, and nobody will be able to stop it, because that nation will grow like grass…”

This is not to say, of course, that all the evil has been on one side, nor that the Serbs do not have legitimate grievances. Since 1999 Orthodox churches have been destroyed by Albanians in Kosovo, and grievous crimes have been committed against local Serbs. And it is legitimate to wonder whether the part played by the West in Kosovo has been entirely even-handed or disinterested… However, if we weigh these considerations against 150 years of Serbian persecution of Albanians there can be no question: the balance of evil is overwhelmingly on the Serbian side…

Some Serbs (and other Orthodox) appear to think that since Orthodoxy is the true faith, and since Kosovo once belonged to Serbia, the Serbs have an inalienable right to possess it to all eternity, and to employ whatever methods are necessary in order to keep it in their possession, including mass murder and ethnic cleansing. But this attitude is materialist, and closer to Judaism or Islam than to true Christianity. Money, goods, lands – these are all material things that will perish with the rest of the material world, when “both the earth and the works that are in it shall be burnt up” (II Peter 3.10). Christians look for “new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells” (II Peter 3.13). Until then, they try not to amass material possessions, but try and emulate the early Christians, who “joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven” (Hebrews 10.34).

Of course, there are holy objects which the Orthodox will seek to preserve and defend from desecration. Serbs regard the whole of Kosovo as one such holy object, since it has been sanctified by the blood of the martyrs of Kosovo. But is the land of Kosovo preserved from desecration by acts of murder, pillage and rape such as the Serbs have committed against the Albanians? Is it not the case rather that what the martyrs of Kosovo sanctified by their blood, more recent generations of Serbs have defiled and desecrated?

The possession of the true faith imposes obligations, not privileges, in relation to unbelievers.This was the case even in the Old Testament. For example: “Ye shall neither mistreat a stranger nor oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Exodus 22.21). And again: "Would you kill those you have taken captive? Set bread and water before them they may eat and drink and return." (II Kings 6:22) God rewarded such generosity: as a result of Israel's kindness to a captured invading foe, "marauding bands of Arameans did not come again into the land of Israel."

In the New Testament our obligations are much greater. They are summed up in the Lord’s words: “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify Your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5.16). But if the unbelievers see, not light but darkness, not love but hatred, not the freedom of the Spirit but satanic oppression and violence, how can they come to the true faith and glorify God? Is it not the case here that “the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you?” (Ezekiel 16.27)?

Have the Serbs learned from their defeat in 1999? The evidence is ambiguous. On the one hand, since the war an increase in religiosity has been discernible in the Serbian nation: a poll carried out in 2002 by the Ministry for religious affairs of the republic of Serbia indicated that 95% of the population (excluding Kosovo) considered itself to be believing and only 0.5% - atheist. Out of a population of 7,498,001, 6,371,548, or 85%, called themselves Orthodox.

On the other hand, the official church appears to have learned nothing. Thus on November 29, 1999 Patriarch Paul took part in a festival organised by the communists celebrating the day of the foundation of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1945. He was strongly criticised for this by Bishop Artemije, who called this day “the feast of the annihilation of the monarchy of the Serbian people”, and called for “the reestablishment of the monarchy in Serbia and the return of its lawful rights to the House of the Karageorgieviches, of which they were deprived by the decision of the godless communist authorities.”[[1033]](#footnote-1033)

As the Milošević regime began to fall apart, the patriarch again returned to an anticommunist position. But by this time it was clear that he was no different from his ally, the Moscow patriarch, in always following the dominant political currents, which is the essence of sergianism. And also in relation to ecumenism, the patriarch could only be described as the opposite of a confessor, declaring that the Christians and the Muslims had the same God, while allowing his bishops, especially Laurence of Sabać, to take prominent roles in the World Council of Churches. And yet, now that True Orthodoxy has a foothold in Serbia, we must hope, the Serbs will at last see their error, and begin to fight the heretical West and Islam, not physically but spiritually, not by returning evil for evil, but by confessing both the truth and the love of Orthodox Christianity in word and deed. For, as Tim Judah writes, “Milošević had spun the Serbs’ dreams of the Empire of Heaven and clothed himself in the glory of the Kosovo myth. Unlike Lazarus, however, he chose a kingdom on earth, which is not the kingdom of Lazarus’s truth and justice.”[[1034]](#footnote-1034)

Bishop Artemije also took the initiative (at least for a time) in denouncing the patriarchate’s ecumenism. Thus he was the leader of a group of about three hundred clergy and monastics from the official church wrote to the Synod: “We ask ourselves: how long will our Holy Synod of Bishops be silent while facing the fact that one Bishop of the SOC (Bishop Irenaeus Bulović of Bačka) organized a reception of the Cardinal of Vienna in 1996 in his cathedral church as if someone more important than the Serbian Patriarch was coming. He took the Cardinal to the Holy Sanctuary and allowed him to kiss the Holy Table. During the liturgy he also exchanged the kiss of peace with the same Cardinal. One other Bishop (Laurence of Sabać) has often taken part in common prayers with ecumenists, pseudo-Christians, pagans and sectarians.

“Do we, Orthodox monks, not have the right to ask a question and require an explanation, which is the last degree of tolerance for our eternal salvation because we do not want to lose our soul by being led by such bishops?

“That is why we require an official explanation about the validity of attitudes which we have hitherto expressed.

“Another question is: Was it necessary to receive the money from the WCC for the new Theology School building in Belgrade so that heretics might teach their heresy to our students of Theology, while our professors of the School force the students to take the blessings from the Protestants and take part in their lectures.”

But Patriarch Paul remained unmoved, the movement produced no concrete results, and Serbian hierarchs have continued to the present day to pray with heretics, especially with Catholics and even with Jews...

However, towards the end of the century there was the beginning of a return to True Orthodoxy in Serbia. In 1995, three Serbian monks from the zealot monastery of Esphigmenou on Mount Athos returned to their native land and started a small True Orthodox Church in communion with the True Orthodox Church of Greece.[[1035]](#footnote-1035) This Church now (in 2014) has two bishops and several priests and two monastic communities, and is in communion with the True Orthodox Church of Russia under Archbishop Tikhon of Omsk and Siberia.

## 163. ROCOR AND THE SERBS

In 1999, the ROCOR Synod issued the following appeal: “The present condition of our Sister Church of Serbia and the much suffering Serbian people is becoming ever more difficult. Employing the evil of slander and violence, NATO is attempting to excise Kosovo, the very heart of Serbia. And bombs are exploding near Belgrade itself. This appeal directs the Archpastors to call the clergy and flock to pray, not only in church but also at home for the salvation of the land of Serbia and its faithful people, to whom we are bound by bonds of consanguinity.” The Appeal then instructed ROCOR priests to pray at the Liturgy “for the suffering Orthodox people of Serbia”, and in molebens - “for His Holiness Paul, Patriarch of Serbia, for the Archpastors, clergy and flock of Serbia”.[[1036]](#footnote-1036)

What was striking about this appeal was the fullness of the recognition of “our Sister Church of Serbia” – at a time when the Serbian Church was increasing its ecumenical activity. Logically, of course, this implied that not only the Serbian Church, but all the Local Churches of World Orthodoxy, with whom the Serbs were in full communion, were “Sister Churches” of ROCOR – together, perhaps, with those non-Orthodox churches, such as the Catholic, with whom the Serbs declared themselves to have “brotherly” relations. And yet all these Churches had been anathematised by ROCOR in 1983 for their participation in the pan-heresy of ecumenism – which anathema had been reaffirmed as recently as May, 1998.[[1037]](#footnote-1037)

What did this mean? That the ROCOR Synod was simply *stupid* in not realising the incompatibility of its “Appeal” with its own recent condemnation of ecumenism? Or that it was *deliberately deceiving* the faithful by *pretending* to condemn and separate itself from heresy, while actually entering secretly – or now, perhaps, not so secretly - into communion with it?

Secondly, ROCOR was accusing NATO of “slander and violence”. What slander? Surely ROCOR did not believe the communist propaganda machine? Surely it did not deny the ever-mounting evidence of atrocities and “ethnic cleansing” on the part of the Serbs?! As for violence, the violence of NATO was, of course, regrettable, but much less than the violence of the Serbs against their own citizens. Why did ROCOR – unlike Patriarch Paul – not say a word about that evil? Why was ROCOR reversing the political as well as the ecclesiastical position it had maintained for most of this century – that is, of support for NATO against the communist regimes of Eastern Europe and Asia? The clue here appeared to be a word that figures prominently in the “Appeal”: “consanguinity”. Everything, it appears, was forgiven to the Serbs because they had Slavic blood in common with the Russians.

Another reason was indicated in ROCOR’s epistle of July 13, 2001: “Concerning our relationship to the Serbian Orthodox Church, we declare that the relationship of our Church with her is special, being conditioned by our historical closeness to the Serbian Church, which accepted the Russian Church Abroad and a multitude of Russian refugees under her loving roof and cared for us as our own Mother. Now the Serbian Church herself is suffering a heavy trial from the attack of global forces on Kosovo and other parts of Serbia. We, at such a difficult time, cannot turn our backs to Her.”[[1038]](#footnote-1038)

And yet, only two weeks before, on July 31, 1999 Metropolitan Vitaly had issued an ukaz directing ROCOR clergy not to concelebrate with the Serbs because of their participation in the WCC. So on the one hand, the Serbs were ROCOR’s “sister church”, and on the other, they were in communion with heretics and not in communion with the True Church. Which version of history was true?

Archbishop Mark was so perturbed by this ukaz that he wrote to Archbishop Anthony of San Francisco on August 7 saying that “we are now in danger of completely losing our connection with universal Orthodoxy… I cannot take part in this according to my conscience. Should I retire?”[[1039]](#footnote-1039) ROCOR might have been spared many troubles if he had…

Then, in 2000, the Serbian Patriarch broke all links with ROCOR… The official reason for this was reported by a MP publication: “By a decision of the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church of December 28, 1998, a podvorye of the Moscow Patriarchate was formed in the city of Bari, Italy, for the spiritual nourishment of the local Russian-speaking community and the numerous pilgrims who visit this city to venerate the honourable relics of the holy hierarch and wonderworker Nicholas, as well as for the support of working contacts with religious, state and social circles in Italy. The co-worker of the Department of external ecclesiastical relations, the priest Vladimir Kuchumov, was appointed as superior.

“From the beginning of the activity of the podvorye, it became known that in the lower church of the former Russian home for receiving pilgrims, which is partly used, in accordance with an agreement, by the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCOR), there was serving a clergyman of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

“His Holiness Patriarch Alexis II of Moscow and All Russia wrote to His Holiness Patriarch Paul of Serbia, asking him to clarify the situation that had been created, which violated the canonical structure of the Orthodox Church, insofar as the pastoral service of a clergyman of the Serbian Patriarchate was taking place in a schismatic ecclesiastical structure having no communion with any Local Orthodox Church.

“His Holiness Patriarch Pavle of Serbia sent a return letter to His Holiness Patriarch Alexis II of Moscow and All Russia, in which he expressed the position of the Sacred Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church in relation to the schismatics. In particular he declared the following:

“’… The Sacred Hierarchical Synod of our Holy Church has forbidden their Graces, the Diocesan Bishops, to give any kind of canonical permission to priests to depart for the jurisdiction of the above-mentioned ‘church’. We hope that they will stick to this.

“’We are sorry that such a thing could have taken place, and we hope that this incident will in no way spoil the age-old good brotherly relations that have existed throughout the course of our united history.

“’In this hope, we beseech Your Holiness and the Most Holy Russian Orthodox Church, which is so dear to us, [to forgive] our oversight, which took place in the city of Bari, and not to consider it to be a sin. We assure you that such an unpleasant incident will not be repeated.

“’Your Holiness knows the brotherly and Christian relations that the Serbian Orthodox Church and people had towards Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev and the bishops, monks and Russian people who came to us in flight from the violence of the communists in 1918. This brotherly relationship continued only until, after the fall of the communists, the representatives of the Russian Church Abroad started to spread their priesthood onto the territory of Russia, thereby violating the canonical authority of the Russian patriarchate. The Sacred Synod has more than once directed its protests to the leadership of the Russian Church Abroad in America and demanded that it cease from such actions since they are anticanonical and worthy of every condemnation.’”[[1040]](#footnote-1040)

The communion of certain ROCOR hierarchs with the Serbs had always been presented as proof that ROCOR was still in communion with World Orthodoxy. Now, however, a choice had to be made: either full integration into World Orthodoxy through submission to the MP, or a complete breaking of all ties with it and a return to the confessing stance of Metropolitan Philaret.

## 164. ROCOR’S LAST STAND

On February 18 / March 2, 2000, the ROCOR Synod issued one of its last passably Orthodox statements, but one already lacking the punch that one would expect from a truly Orthodox, confessing Synod:-

**“**The leadership of the Moscow Patriarchate has now officially declared that it looks upon the property of the Russian Church Abroad as its own, for only it, and no other, is the “sole legal heir to the property of the pre- Revolutionary Church,” which, consequently, “is being held by the schismatics abroad -illegally,” and that such a decision “is accepted by the Orthodox believing people of Russia with joy and profound gratitude.”

“This statement compels us, the hierarchs abroad, to address the Russian Orthodox people directly. It is essential that we clarify the essential question which has emerged over the last decade-the question of succession with regard to the Russian Orthodox Church and historical Russia.

“On the eve of the fall of the Communist regime it seemed possible that the previous cause of the ecclesiastical division-the atheistic government-was already falling away, and that the rest of our problems would be resolved in a fraternal dialogue. The Council of Bishops repeatedly referred to this idea in its epistles, and in actual fact strove to open paths to this fellowship. In this, however, great difficulties were encountered, and later-as far as we are able to judge, due to the active interference of the authorities in Russia early in 1997 - our attempts at clarification were broken off (the seizure of the monastery in Hebron). Difficulties manifested themselves, firstly, in a totally different attitude toward questions essential to the Church, and our differences in this regard have not been resolved to the present day.

“A) The question of the sainthood of the new martyrs and the Tsar-Martyr, the anointed of God, who were slain by the atheistic authorities. From our point of view, they fulfilled the principal mission of the Church of Russia in the 20th century.

“B) The policy of collaboration with the atheistic authorities begun by Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) against that part of the Church “disloyal” to the Communist overlords, which brought about the destruction of the former. From our point of view, to defend this policy is to demean the struggle of the New Martyrs.

“C) The ecumenical activity of the Orthodox in the World Council of Churches. From our point of view, this crosses the boundaries set by the holy canons and the Tradition of the holy fathers, infringing upon the very truth of Orthodoxy.

“Relations toward the post-Communist leadership of the Russian Federation. From our point of view, they are introducing a non-Christian policy designed to break down the Russian people and destroy Russia. And this false spirit is in nowise offset by the gilding of domes and the restoration of church buildings in which these very leaders are praised Attempts at “dialogue” on these differences on various levels did not lead to the hoped-for results. We acknowledge that in this certain of our representatives are partly to blame, for in their haste to make the Truth clear they insufficiently understood the complex conditions of the turmoil in Russia. In the tumultuous sea of the last decade in Russia it was incredibly difficult to make our Russian brethren hear the Truth of the Russian Church by which we live-in unbroken succession and without the intrusion of malicious powers into our ecclesiastical life. We were mistaken in our response to the situation in Russia and in our search for reliable allies, being somewhat lacking in patience and love for those opposed to us - which soon even became viewed as arrogance in the eyes of the Russian people. Yet what we wished for was something quite different.

“Over all the preceding decades, we had preserved spiritual fellowship with those who did not submit to militant atheism, preserving Orthodoxy; and our hearts were open to them, in whatever part of the Church of Russia they were to he found. This fellowship was in part also in accordance with the canons of the Church, so that when times of greater liberty came, these ties, this presence in Russia, were also revealed. This happened because there was preserved, and continued secretly to live, that part of the Church of Russia which did not .accept the “Declaration of Loyalty” (1927) imposed by the militant atheists, wherewith Metropolitan Sergius tried to bind both the conscience of all Orthodox people in Russia as well as our conscience (demanding that each clergyman abroad personally sign an oath of “loyalty to the Soviet authorities”).

“As the years passed, the word “schism” began to be applied to us and others who were viewed as “disloyal”; this term continues to distort the eccelesial crux of the question to this day. We have never accepted this term, and we do not wish to apply it to others. This question is extremely painful, and must, from our point of view, be resolved in some other way.

“As early as 1923, the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad resolved: “Having as our immediate objective the nurturing of the Russian Orthodox flock abroad, the Council of Bishops, the Synod, the hierarchs and priests, within the limitations of their powers, must show all possible cooperation in meeting various spiritual needs when asked to do so by the ecclesiastical organizations which remain in Russia or by individual Christians.” In particular, it was stipulated: “Representatives of the dioceses located outside the boundaries of Russia, acting together, express the voice of the free Russian Church abroad; but no individual person, nor even the Council of the bishops of these dioceses, represents itself as an authority which has the rights which the whole Church of Russia possesses in all its fullness, in the person of its lawful hierarchy.”

“The concept of the whole Church of Russia and a lawful hierarchy, according to canon law, does not exclude the diaspora, but naturally embraces the totality of the Church of Russia in the light of the Pan-Russia Council of i917-1918. It is impossible to restore this integrity by a process of rejection and exclusion which have their origin with the militant atheists, who tried to set the Orthodox people against one another, and for this purpose concocted the “Living Church” and other obstacles. We consider that the interpretation of historical and ecclesiastical judgment must be a joint task over which the Russian people-all of us-must labor with great patience, first of all with love for the Truth. Otherwise, there is the danger that we will fall to disentangle ourselves from the snares, or may fall into them again.

“We reject the word “schism,” not only as one which distorts the crux of the problem, but also, as a lie against the whole Church of Russia concocted by the enemies of Christ during the most terrible period of persecutions. We have never accepted this lie concerning the Church just as we have not accepted the lie concerning the Church contained in the “Declaration,” in which, to please the regime of that time, patristic doctrine and interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures were trampled underfoot. For this reason, our fathers declared in 1927: “The portion of the Church of Russia abroad considers itself an inseparable, spiritually united branch of the great Church of Russia. It does not separate itself from its Mother Church, and does not consider itself autocephalous. As before, it considers its head to be the patriarchal locum tenens Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa, and  commemorates him [as such] during the divine services.” At that time, we discovered that the lawful first hierarch of the Church of Russia had rebuked his deputy, Metropolitan Sergius, from exile, for “exceeding his authority”, and commanded him to “return” to the correct ecclesiastical path; but he was not obeyed. In fact, even while Metropolitan Peter was alive, Metropolitan Sergius usurped, first his diocese (which, according to the canons, is strictly forbidden), and later his very position as locum tenens. These actions constituted not only a personal catastrophe, but also a universal catastrophe for our Church.

“We never left the Church, even though there have been those who began to separate and drive us out with the word “schism” from those most terrible of days even to the present-failing to grasp the main point, and still not being aware of it. It is impossible to resolve contemporary ecclesiastical questions by simply usurping the title “sole lawful ecclesiastical leadership,” trampling the tragic truth of the Church in Russia underfoot. Our readiness, even over the last decades, to help the believing people in Russia (as far as our weak powers permitted) in various ways (literature, bearing witness concerning the persecution of the Church, protests) has not changed. It has led to our receiving believers under our omophorion, and, for various reasons, a small number of clergymen in addition to those who already had had a secret existence for some time. In addition to the above- mentioned reasons, others were added which entailed at the time intolerable violations of the canons of the Church, and these were still uncorrected **in**1989-1991. Then a tempest arose over the “opening” of parishes of the Church Abroad in Russia. We did not try actively to open parishes and foist ourselves on them from abroad, but merely “accepted” those Russian people who had learned more about the history of the Church and its life and yearned for ecclesial communion with us, despite the barriers of a propaganda inherited from past times. This little portion, for which our shortcomings did not overshadow the Truth and which, for this reason, decided to unite themselves in Russia to our prayers, has been subjected to persecutions, while our Church is slandered in all the official church publications.

“Yet the same leadership: of the Moscow Patriarchate, which on the new stage of gradual liberation has exacerbated the situation by its own interpretation of events and has so bitterly fought against the “parallel structure,” has itself, since the end of World War II, continuing to carry out the demands of the authorities then in power, created its own structures where its was only possible in the diaspora, and in Israel, in 1948, totally drove away our monastics when establishing itself. At that time this was, for us, although grievous, at least understandable-we saw the Church’s lack of freedom and the enslavement of officially sanctioned ecclesiastical structures in Russia, which were fettered by the authorities and chained to the authorities. These latter years have witnessed a new wave of forcible seizures by the Moscow Patriarchate of churches and monasteries from the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad in various countries, or attempts to seize them- with the help of the secular authorities (foreign and Russian), wherever such is possible-in Italy, Israel, Germany, Denmark, Canada. Now it is finally confirmed, even by the mouth of the primate of the Moscow Patriarchate, Alexis II, and representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate’s Department of External Affairs, that they have no desire for unification with us on the proposed position of Truth. They prefer to resolve the indicated points of disagreement and the question of the history of the Church of Russia simply by eliminating the Church Abroad, by crushing it. In other words, the present leadership of the Moscow Patriarchate prefers to continue the policies of Metropolitan Sergius – only in a new form, at a new level.

“Thus, when we pose the question of succession, we have in mind not only property title to the churches abroad. Regarding this question, it is well known that the Soviet regime refused them, as it did “ecclesial obscurantism” in general, when in the 1930’s it announced its “five-year plan for atheism.” It is precisely the Russian emigration which was able to save these churches from confiscation by foreign states and from destruction, carefully restoring them with its own means as Russia Abroad, which is open with all its heart both to the Russian past (tsarist Russia) and a Russia of the future. Therefore, this is in actuality our joint heritage-the heritage of the whole Russian people, and without fail it will be such as a result of the restoration of the one Church of Russia, which stands in the Truth. However, to our distress, the past decade has shown that the leaders of the Moscow Patriarchate are avoiding true union, are not ready for it, for this would mean that they would have to give an honest account to the people and listen to its voice. This is also the reason why they are violently seizing churches which have not been preserved by their efforts, taking no account of the outlay of expenses, even though in Russia itself thousands of desolate churches need to be saved.

“It is obvious that the principal objective of this is the smothering of our Church, and not the nurturing of the flock abroad, for here they do not in the least fear the terrible scandalizing of that flock. Who among the emigrants will enter those churches which have been wrested away by violence and wickedness? One cannot fail to see that they are attempting to eliminate us as a vexing and incorruptible witness to the loth century history of Russia. The main succession which we preserve and which our “opponents” in the Moscow Patriarchate are trying to uproot in our person, is historical and spiritual. After the militantly atheist Revolution, it was our Russian Church Abroad which became the linchpin of that small portion  of the Russian nation which did not recognize the Revolution and chose as its path the preservation of loyalty to our Orthodox state. This stubborn stand for the Truth, despite its apparent “unreality,” pressure from the Bolsheviks, from pro-Soviet hierarchs, and the surrounding democratic world, was realized among us as a “struggle for Russianism in the midst of universal apostasy”-in the hope that for this God would have mercy on Russia and give our people a last chance to restore its historic aspect. This was the primary purpose of the Russian diaspora. It is for this that we have been praying in our churches for eighty years: “For the suffering land of Russia” and “That He may deliver its people from the bitter tyranny of the atheist authorities. “This refers also to the post-Communist regime of the Russian Federation, which considers itself the successor not so much of historical Russia (this is declared only rarely, and in words only) as the successor of the Bolshevik regime. The entire legal system of the Russian Federation is founded on the Soviet legal system, and not on the pre- Revolutionary laws.\* The present democratically elected officials in Russia have preserved the majority of Bolshevism’s atheistic symbols (the five- pointed star, etc..), monuments, street and city names, ignoring the people’s original intent: that the Communist heritage be overturned, that the national tragedy of Russia in the loth century be reassessed, that there be repentance. At the same time, a new, anti-Christian ideology has taken root in the Russian land. And so as to weaken the people’s opposition to this, there is being waged an intentional, conscious, calculated demoralization of the people themselves by cutting them off from their true, historic and spiritual roots. And all of this is going on with the permission, consent and even blessing of the leadership of the Moscow Patriarchate which, in order to preserve its own power structures, is prepared to collaborate with any regime whatever, and to participate actively in ecumenism, not only with non-Orthodox Christians, but even with non-Christian political powers. “By our joint efforts we will build a new, democratic society,” declared the head of the Moscow Patriarchate, Alexis II, in 1991, in an address made to rabbis in New York, where he preached peace for all “in an atmosphere of friendship, creative cooperation and the brotherhood of the children of the One God, the Father of all, the God of your fathers and ours.” How a similar irenic activity answers to our fate is evident in the fact that not long ago, while in Israel for the feast of the Nativity of Christ, the primate of the Moscow Patriarchate performed three morally incompatible activities: he prayed to the God we have in common, Christ the incarnate Son of God, then reached an agreement with the Moslems concerning the seizure of one of our monasteries, and finally praised the destroyer Yeltsin for “laboring for the good of Russia” and for his “efforts in restoring the morality of our people.”

“We are convinced that the intensifying persecution against the Russian Church Abroad throughout the world is one of the steps being taken toward the establishment of a new world order. Furthermore, peoples deprived of them own spiritual and cultural originality, and Christian principles are being perverted and undermined. Anti-Christian powers are achieving their objectives by employing various methods, among which is the inciting of certain nations and confessions against others, and often of a certain part of a nation against another, always encouraging within the local Orthodox Churches those groups which are deemed useful at a given moment, and denigrating those who oppose them. Is this not what is taking place right now in the midst of Russian Orthodoxy? Is it not obvious that there are powers which are striving to reduce the Church of Russia to an ideological instrument-both the authorities of the Russian Confederation and the “mighty of this world” who Stand behind them-for the control of the Russian people’? How can we fail to remember the image of the harlot church seated upon the beast, which is described in the Book of Revelation? And if the Book of Revelation tells us: “Power was given him over all kindred, and tongues, and nations. And all who dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear” (Rev. 13: 7-9), then it would seem that over the past decade it has been entirely possible to discuss and clarify in a “dialogue” in what way one ought to understand, following a true, patristic interpretation of the Sacred Scripture (which every consecrated bishop is obligated by oath to keep holy), that “there is no power but of God” (Rom. 13:1-5). By this it may be possible to set aright the perversion of the Orthodox Faith, terrible in its consequences, which is to be found in documents being published in the name of the Moscow Patriarchate as in the name of the Church of Russia itself. Encroachment upon the sense of Holy Tradition hinders spiritual healing. Our appeal continues to be ignored… the Truth of the Church is not being proclaimed; false teaching is not being condemned.

“We know that a significant part of the people and clergy of Russia are aware of the danger of the situation, which is being manifested in many different forms. Still, the neo-Renovationists, the ecumenists, and their opponents within the “right-leaning” circles of the Moscow Patriarchate, who call themselves “true catacomb Christians” despite all their irreconcilable differences, not to mention the very leadership of the Moscow Patriarchate, are united in spreading the selfsame slander against our Church. We know that our being situated outside Russia can seem “unpatriotic” to some-as is proclaimed in the publications of the Moscow Patriarchate. Yet those who attack us for this should read St. Athanasius the Great’s “Apology for My Flight,” and the canons of St. Peter of Alexandria, to avoid unchurchly, secular reasoning and to understand how the Holy Church has actually treated similar questions. We see in this fate of part of the Russian people, sent into the West by the Providence of God, a call to understand the universal scale of the impending apocalyptic period. We do not place our hope in foreign authorities when we appeal to them, pointing out the principles of Justice (as the holy Apostle Paul once appealed to his Roman citizenship so as to avoid violence united with iniquity) when we demand  the cessation of the iniquity inflicted upon the “little flock” of Christ, our little Church. Justice is appealed to - as we avail ourselves of a traffic light on a road - so as to insure elementary order for all, among whom one may also consider the émigrés who once saved themselves from annihilation. We place our trust in the One Holy Trinity, Whom we confess, and on the wisdom of our people, who for a thousand years have confessed the unity of the Trinity amid all the vicissitudes of history. We hope that, taught by its new bitter experience, it will have learned a lesson from the 20th century through which it ha just lived. The fate of Russia is in the hands of God and the hands of the Russian people, if they desire to remain the people of God.

“We, descendants of the various generations of émigrés, who find ourselves exiles in a foreign land by dint of the bitter dregs which our people drained in the beginning, as well as many of the other peoples of the world (whose children have since come to us for the salvation of Christ), hope to hold out until that day when, through the supplications of our holy new-martyrs, Russia will be moved by prayer to carry out its final mission-to bear witness before the world concerning the Truth of ‘Orthodoxy and the Orthodox form of government. As far as our scant powers permit, we will always bear witness to this for those who have ears to hear and eyes to see. Our goal, however modest, is not to allow anyone to drown this Truth in the ocean of impending apostasy.

“Forgive us, compatriots who are dear to us in Christ, for our mistakes. And do not discard the Truth itself with our shortcomings and weaknesses. We call upon you to be aware of the universal scale of the present Church problems, to reunite with us in common prayer, and to deepen in our native land the struggle of being Russian amid the conditions of apostasy-despite the policies of those worldly and ecclesiastical authorities who do not value Russia’s universal spiritual vocation. Why is our existence disturbing to those who call us ‘a tiny handful of schismatics?’ Saint Mark  of Ephesus demonstrated that the Truth is not measured by the number of ruling hierarchs. All of Orthodoxy can be defended by a single, solitary ‘schismatic’. The holy apostles, the holy fathers and teachers of the Church, the holy martyrs, call upon us, for the sake of Truth, to withdraw from falsehood, from the imminent kingdom of the Antichrist, and to struggle in love for Christ, that we may be written ‘in the Book of Life of the Lamb, Who was slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear.’”

## 165. ON THE EVE OF THE MILLENIUM

In 1999, ten years since perestroika began to expose the secret corruption of the MP, the situation was back to “normal” – that is, homosexuality among the leading metropolitans[[1041]](#footnote-1041) and drunkenness among the priests[[1042]](#footnote-1042), combined with tight cooperation with the leading elites in government and the mafia.[[1043]](#footnote-1043)

The MP was also completely dependent on the State financially. “*Pravoslavnaia Gazeta* [The Orthodox Newspaper], the official publication of the Yekaterinburg diocese of the Moscow Patriarchate, characterizes this situation as follows: ‘In 1917 all the property of the Orthodox Church was nationalized and de facto passed into the ownership of the state. In the last decade previously nationalized things have begun to be handed over to believers. But, as it turns out, not a single church is today owned by the Russian Orthodox Church. The churches are handed over only for use…”[[1044]](#footnote-1044)

Homosexuality, “the sin of Metropolitan Nicodemus”, as it is known in the MP, is very useful to the KGB. Preobrazhensky writes that for the last 70 years the KGB has been actively promoting homosexuals to the episcopate. “Even Patriarch Sergius is said to have been one of them. The homosexual bishops were in constant fear of being unmasked, and it made them easily managed by the KGB.” Before he died in 2015 Fr. Gleb Yakunin calculated that about 250 out of the 300 bishops of the Moscow Patriarchate were homosexual.[[1045]](#footnote-1045)

In 1999, after persistent complaints by his clergy, the homosexual Bishop Nicon of Yekaterinburg was forced to retire to the Pskov Caves monastery. However, within three years he was back in Moscow as dean of one of the richest parishes. “The influential homosexual lobby of the Moscow Patriarchate saved Bishop Nicon.”[[1046]](#footnote-1046)

In 1998 the MP blessed a book compiled by Metropolitan Juvenal of Krutitsa and Kolomna, entitled *A Man of the Church*, consisting of fulsome tributes to the notorious Metropolitan Nicodemus of Leningrad by several of his fellow-hierarchs. The Archbishop of Tver even wrote: “At present many are capable of accusing the former [clergy] of supposed collaboration with the KGB, including Vladyka Nicodemus. But there was no other way out: the Church had to live somehow. Therefore there came into being a special mode of acting in order not to permit a total destruction of the Church…”[[1047]](#footnote-1047)

In view of this failure to repent, it is not surprising that the MP’s position in the Ukraine continued to deteriorate. As the new millennium dawned, Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, supported by the secular authorities and Ukrainian nationalists, declared that the Ukraine was his canonical territory, and that the unification of the Kievan metropolia to the MP in 1686 had been uncanonical. In August, 2000, under strong pressure from the MP, he renounced this position.[[1048]](#footnote-1048) But then in November he reached an agreement with the UOAC and the UOAC-KP, but excluding the UOC-MP, on the formation of a united local church that would provide for “a cessation of mutual accusations” and a halt to the process of transfer of parishes from one jurisdiction to the other. A commission would oversee the organisational work, and this Commission would then present its conclusions to himself, after which he would determine “the canonical questions and the status of bishops and clergy” of both churches. This united church was approved of by the Ukrainian authorities, and deputies calculated that if such a church came into being and was recognized by Constantinople, a majority of believers in the UOC would join it.[[1049]](#footnote-1049) The invasion of the Patriarchate of Constantinople into the canonical territory of the Russian Church exacerbated their already strained relations (because of the quarrel over Estonia, in particular). The already tense situation was exacerbated by the Uniate Cardinal Husar calling on all the Ukrainian Orthodox to unite in “One Orthodox Ukrainian National Church” with the Byzantine rite but in submission to the Pope. In June, 2001 the Pope met leaders of all the Ukrainian churches in Kiev with the exception of the UOC-MP.[[1050]](#footnote-1050) By the latest count the UOC-MP had 9047 communities in the Ukraine (an increase of 557 on the previous year), the UOAC-CP had 2781 (an increase of 290), the UAOC had 1015, the Uniates had 3317 and the Latin-rite Catholics – 807.[[1051]](#footnote-1051)

In this period an extraordinary increase in highly dubious miracles took place. For example, “as described in the newspaper *Radonezh* № 4 for 1999, in the Holy Entrance of the Mother of God monastery in Ivanovo diocese, in one of the cells myrrh-gushing takes place from any icons that are brought into it. By February more than 1000 such cases had been registered, and by April – more than 1600! That is, hundreds of times more that the number of myrrh-gushing, glorified icons that have appeared in the whole history of Christianity!”[[1052]](#footnote-1052)

While such occult manifestations multiplied, the grossest ecumenism continued to be practised – almost certainly because the FSB (KGB) still needed MP clergy to penetrate foreign confessions for espionage purposes.[[1053]](#footnote-1053) As we have seen, the anti-ecumenical protests of the early and mid-1990s were suppressed, the challenge of ROCOR was rebuffed, and the “Third Way” practised by the Bulgarian and Georgian Churches ignored. While anti-ecumenical elements still existed in the MP (as when *Russkij Vestnik* published a protest against the MP’s participation in the WCC by the Abbot and 150 monks of Valaam in 1998), along with renovationist, occultist, nationalist and communist elements, all were held together by the culture of obedience to the patriarch: all was permitted so long as no “schism” was created…

Some were impressed by the apparent hostility of the MP to the Roman Catholics’ proselytism of Russia. However, from the remarks of the leading hierarchs it became clear that the argument was simply over the Catholics’ supposed violation of a “mutual non-aggression pact”. Russia was the “canonical territory” of the MP, so the Catholics had no right there (as the patriarch put it: “Russia has historically been Orthodox for a thousand years, and therefore the Roman papacy has no right to make a conquest of it”): they should stick to their own “canonical territory”, the West. That meant that the MP renounced any right to convert western heretics to Orthodoxy. As Metropolitan Cyril (Gundiaev), the future patriarch, put it: “In practice we forbid our priests to seek to convert people. Of course it happens that people arrive and say: ‘You know, I would like, simply out of my own convictions, to become Orthodox.’ ‘Well, please do.’ But there is no strategy to convert people.”[[1054]](#footnote-1054)

As the liberal era of the 1990s came to an end, the resurrection of the spirit of Soviet patriotism became more and more evident. This spirit, which seeks to justify the Soviet past and rejects repentance for its sins, was illustrated most vividly in an article entitled “The Religion of Victory” in which a new Russian religio-political bloc, “For Victory!” presented its programme. The victory in question was the victory of the Soviet forces over Nazi Germany in 1945, whose blood was considered by the bloc to have “a mystical, sacred meaning”, being “the main emblem of the Russian historical consciousness”.

Similarly, 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…”[[1055]](#footnote-1055)

The political and economic aspects of the bloc’s programme were communistic; but its nationalist and religious aspects were still more alarming. Yeltsin and his colleagues were accused of having betrayed ’45 and the “truly genius-quality” achievements of post-war Sovietism.

“However”, wrote Valentine Chikin, “the enemy [which is clearly the West] has not succeeded in destroying our Victory. Victory is that spiritual force which will help us to be regenerated. From Victory, as from a fruitful tree, will arise new technologies, will grow new schools, defence will be strengthened, a world-view will be worked out. A new communality embracing the whole nation will confirm the Victory of ’45 in the 21st century, too.

“Let us not forget: in the 40s a wonderful fusing together of Russian epochs took place. Of the pagan, with Prince Sviatoslav [‘the accursed’, as the Orthodox Church calls him], who defeated the Khazars. Of the Orthodox, in which the great Russian commanders and saints Alexander Nevsky and Dimitri Donskoj acted. Of the monarchist, with Peter, Suvorov and Kutuzov. In the smoke of the battles of the Fatherland war they combined with the brilliant ‘reds’ Zhukov, Vasilevsky and Rokossovsky, which Joseph Stalin so clearly and loudly proclaimed from the Mausoleum…

“Only the bloc ‘For Victory’ has the right to claim the breadth of the whole nation. The ideology of the bloc ‘For Victory!’ is the long awaited national idea… Victory is also that sacred word which overflows the Russian heart with pride and freedom.”

Alexander Prokhanov continued the theme: “Victory is not simply the national idea. Victory is a faith, the particular religious cast of mind of the Russians. Under the cupola of Victory both the Orthodox and the Muslim and the atheist and the passionately believing person will find himself a place. Of course, in order to reveal this faith, it needs its evangelists, such as John the Theologian. It needs its builders and organizers. In the consciousness of this religious philosophy there is a place for artists and sculptors, sociologists and political scientists, historians and politicians.

“We still have to finish building this great Russian faith – Victory! In it the miracle expected for centuries, which was handed down from the sorcerers from mouth to mouth, from Kievan Rus’ to the Moscow princedom, from the empire of the tsars to the red empire of the leaders (vozhdej). This is the hope of universal good, of universal love. The understanding that the world is ruled, not by the blind forces of matter, but by Justice and Divine righteousness….”[[1056]](#footnote-1056)

This Soviet patriotism 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!”[[1057]](#footnote-1057)

“Ecclesiastical Stalinism” was the most horrific sign of the lack of repentance of the MP even now that it was free from Soviet oppression. That lack of repentance has continued and intensified in the first decade of the twenty-first century…

## 166. THE EVIL EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

Phenomena such as “ecclesiastical Stalinism” and “neo-Soviet patriotism” were the result, largely, of the return to power of the KGB, now renamed the FSB. For, as Preobrazhensky writes, “After the democratic reforms of the 1990s the KGB officers managed to get everything back. All the Directorates of the Soviet KGB are reunited now in today’s FSB, except two of them: the First, which managed intelligence, and the Ninth, which guarded the highest Communist bureaucrats. Both are formally independent, but keep close connections with the FSB… The former First Chief Directorate of the KGB is now called the Foreign Intelligence Service. It is successfully managing the operation ’ROCOR’”[[1058]](#footnote-1058) – that is, the absorption of ROCOR into the MP.[[1059]](#footnote-1059)

The intelligence experts Christopher Andrew and Vasily Mitrokhin confirm this assessment: “Ridiculed and reviled at the end of the Soviet era, the Russian intelligence community has since been remarkably successful at reinventing itself and recovering its political influence. The last three prime ministers of the Russian Federation during Boris Yeltsin’s presidency – Yevgeni Primakov, Sergei Stepashin and Vladimir Putin – were all former intelligence chiefs. Putin, who succeeded Yeltsin as President in 2000, is the only FCD [First Chief Directorate] officer ever to become Russian leader. According to the head of the SVR [Foreign Intelligence Service], Sergei Nikolayevich Lebedev, ‘The president’s understanding of intelligence activity and the opportunity to speak the same language to him makes our work considerably easier.’ No previous head of state in Russia, or perhaps anywhere else in the world, has ever surrounded himself with so many former intelligence officers. Putin also has more direct control of intelligence that any Russian leader since Stalin. According to Kirpichenko, ‘We are under the control of the President and his administration, because intelligence is directly subordinated to the President and only the President.’ But whereas Stalin’s intelligence chiefs usually told him simply what he wanted to hear, Kirpichenko claims that, ‘Now, we tell it like it is’.

“The mission statement of today’s FSB and SVR is markedly different from that of the KGB. At the beginning of the 1980s Andropov proudly declared that the KGB was playing its part in the onward march of world revolution. By contrast, the current ‘National Security Concept’ of the Russian Federation, adopted at the beginning of the new millennium, puts the emphasis instead on the defence of traditional Russian values: ‘Guaranteeing the Russian Federation’s national security also includes defence of the cultural and spiritual-moral inheritance, historical traditions and norms of social life, preservation of the cultural property of all the peoples of Russia, formation of state policy in the sphere of the spiritual and moral education of the population…’ One of the distinguishing characteristics of the Soviet intelligence system from Cheka to KGB was its militant atheism. In March 2002, however, the FSB at last found God. A restored Russian Orthodox church in central Moscow was consecrated by Patriarch Aleksi II as the FSB’s parish church in order to minister to the previously neglected spiritual needs of its staff. The FSB Director, Nikolai Patrushev, and the Patriarch celebrated the mystical marriage of the Orthodox Church and the state security apparatus by a solemn exchange of gifts. Patrushev presented a symbolic golden key of the church and an icon of St. Aleksei, Moscow Metropolitan, to the Patriarch, who responded by giving the FSB Director the Mother God ‘Umilenie’ icon and an icon representing Patrushev’s own patron saint, St. Nikolai – the possession of which would formerly have been a sufficiently grave offence to cost any KGB officer his job. Though the FSB has not, of course, become the world’s first intelligence agency staffed only or mainly by Christian true believers, there have been a number of conversions to the Orthodox Church by Russian intelligence officers past and present – among them Nikolai Leonov, who half a century ago was the first to alert the Centre to the revolutionary potential of Fidel Castro. ‘Spirituality’ has become a common theme in FSB public relations materials. While head of FSB public relations in 1999-2001, Vasili Stavitsky published several volumes of poetry with a strong ‘spiritual’ content, among them *Secrets of the Soul* (1999); a book of ‘spiritual-patriotic’ poems for children entitled *Light a Candle, Mamma* (1999); and *Constellation of Love: Selected Verse* (2000). Many of Stavitsky’s poems have been set to music and recorded on CDs, which are reported to be popular at FSB functions.

“Despite their unprecedented emphasis on ‘spiritual security’, however, the FSB and SVR are politicized intelligence agencies which keep track of President Putin’s critics and opponents among the growing Russian diaspora abroad, as well as in Russia itself. During his first term in office, while affirming his commitment to democracy and human rights, Putin gradually succeeded in marginalizing most opposition and winning control over television channels and the main news media. The vigorous public debate of policy issues during the Yeltsin years has largely disappeared. What has gradually emerged is a new system of social control in which those who step too far out of line face intimidation by the FSB and the courts. The 2003 State Department annual report on human rights warned that a series of alleged espionage cases involving scientists, journalists and environmentalists ‘caused continuing concerns regarding the lack of due process and the influence of the FSB in court cases’. According to Lyudmilla Alekseyeva, the current head of the Moscow Helsinki Group, which has been campaigning for human rights in Russia since 1976, ‘The only thing these scientists, journalists and environmentalists are guilty of is talking to foreigners, which in the Soviet Union was an unpardonable offence.’ Though all this remains a far cry from the KGB’s obsession with even the most trivial forms of ideological subversion, the FSB has once again defined a role for itself as an instrument of social control…”[[1060]](#footnote-1060)

Let us turn now to the central figure in this “spiritualization” but at the same time “re-sovietization” of Russia – Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin. Coming to power on January 1, 2000, he presented himself as “all things to all men”: a democrat to the democrats, a nationalist to the nationalist, and an Orthodox to the Orthodox. It was he who personally promoted the union of the MP and ROCOR, an idea first mooted by Archbishop Mark in 1997 and by Archbishop Laurus on July 17, 1999… [[1061]](#footnote-1061)

And yet Putin is no believer. On September 8, 2000, when asked by the American television journalist Larry King whether he believed in God, he replied: “I believe in people…” This refusal to confess a faith in God is not surprising. After all, early in his career, Putin worked in the Fifth administration of the KGB – precisely the department that dealt with Church dissidents. That experience gave him training in how to *pretend* to be a believer, but excludes the possibility that he was one in fact.[[1062]](#footnote-1062)

Thus while claiming to be a member of the MP, as George Sprukts writes,

“1) he lights menorahs when he worships at his local synagogue;

“2) he has worshipped the mortal remains of Kin Il Sung in North Korea;

“3) he has worshipped the mortal remains of Mahatma Gandhi;

“4) he ‘believes not in God, but in Man’ (as he himself has stated);

“5) he was initiated into an especially occult form of ‘knighthood’ (read: freemasonry) in Germany;

“6) he has restored the communist anthem;

“7) he has restored the bloody red rag as the RF’s military banner;

“8) he has not removed the satanic pentagram from public buildings (including cathedrals);

“9) he has plans of restoring the monument to ‘Butcher’ Dzerzhinsky [now fulfilled];

“10) he has not removed the satanic mausoleum in Red Square nor its filthy contents.”[[1063]](#footnote-1063)

In 2013 Putin went to Israel, put on a Jewish skull-cap and prayed at the Wailing Wall. Apparently, he approved of the idea of rebuilding the Jewish Temple…

Putin’s propagandist Yegor Kholmogorov wrote: “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... As a politician, Putin has already for a long time been above politics…”[[1064]](#footnote-1064)

Putin was indeed resembling a Chinese emperor more than a democratic politician. More recently Kholmogorov has written: “We as a people must be ashamed only about one thing, of our poor fulfilment of the task placed on us by God, of ‘ruling the peoples autocratically’. And any ‘national repentance’ which people like to talk endlessly about must begin with our tanks on the streets of Eastern Europe."

It should also be remembered, as Preobrazhensky points out, that Putin “began his career not in the intelligence ranks but in the ‘Fifth Branch’ of the Leningrad Regional KGB, which also fought religion and the Church. Putin carefully hides this fact from foreign church leaders, and you will not find it in any of his official biographies… The myth of Putin’s religiosity is important for proponents of ‘the union’. It allows Putin to be characterized as some Orthodox Emperor Constantine, accepting the perishing Church Abroad under his regal wing. For his kindness we should be stretching out our arms to him with tears of gratitude…”[[1065]](#footnote-1065)

“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.”[[1066]](#footnote-1066)

Since then Putin has moved to muzzle press and TV freedom, to restore the red flag and hammer and sickle to the armed services and the melody of the Soviet national anthem. Organized crime has flourished under his patronage (as it did while he was in St. Petersburg). In general his regime may be described as neo-Soviet without Marxism-Leninism but with a superficial democratic and, especially, nationalist tinge. The MP has shown complete loyalty to this regime, and has not criticised it at all, supporting it both in its neo-Sovietism and in its criminal economy, in which it has itself taken an enthusiastic part. This is illustrated by the activities of “the tobacco metropolitan”, now Patriarch Cyril Gundiaev, who imports tobacco and alcohol duty-free and is now one of the richest men in Russia.[[1067]](#footnote-1067)

“It seems,” continues Ackerly, “that in the CIS, whatever the state cannot accomplish, the church will, and although church and state have been known to work together before in history, in this case we are not speaking about any religious, canonical or national deeds, but about *maintaining a grip* to *reassemble the Soviet Union,* or the pursuit of internationalism rather than what is good for one particular nation…. 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.”[[1068]](#footnote-1068)

This is a heady cocktail, and shows that while the Putin-Gundiaev “symphony of powers” is aiming for the resurrection of the Soviet Union, it will be in a different, more “exciting” form that will appeal to a far wider clientèle than old-style communists. Nationalists and democrats, monarchists and atheists, westerners and Slavophiles – all will be found a place in the new Russia. Only one condition is attached: that Putin’s regime is accepted as the lawful successor both of the Soviet and of the tsarist regimes…

## 167. THE MP’S “JUBILEE” COUNCIL

In August, 2000 the MP held a “Jubilee” Hierarchical Council which seemed at least partly aimed at removing some of the last obstacles towards ROCOR’s unification with it. These obstacles, as formulated by ROCOR during the decade 1990-2000 were: 1. Ecumenism, 2. Sergianism, and 3. The Glorification of the New Martyrs, especially the Royal New Martyrs.

***1. Ecumenism***

In the document on relations with the heterodox, which was composed by a small group of bishops and presented to the Council for approval on the first day, few concessions were made to the opponents of ecumenism, apart from the ritual declarations that “the Orthodox Church is the true Church of Christ, created by our Lord and Saviour Himself; it is the Church established by, and filled with, the Holy Spirit…” “The Church of Christ is one and unique…” “The so-called ‘branch theory’, which affirms the normality and even the providentiality of the existence of Christianity in the form of separate ‘branches’… is completely unacceptable.”

But, wrote Protopriest Michael Ardov (ROAC, Moscow), “the ‘patriarchal liberals’ will also not be upset, insofar as the heretics in the cited document are called ‘heterodox’, while the Monophysite communities are called the ‘Eastern Orthodox Churches’. And the ‘dialogues with the heterodox’ will be continued, and it is suggested that the World Council of Churches be not abandoned, but reformed…”[[1069]](#footnote-1069)

Although there has been much talk about anti-ecumenism in the MP, as in the Serbian Church, it is significant that only one bishop, Barsanuphius of Vladivostok, voted against the document on relations with the heterodox (six Ukrainian bishops abstained).

The MP’s Fr. (now Metropolitan) Hilarion (Alfeyev) explained the origins of the document on ecumenism: “The subject of inter-Christian relations has been used by various groups (within the Church) as a bogey in partisan wars. In particular, it has been used to criticise Church leaders who, as is well known, have taken part in ecumenical activities over many years.” In Alfeyev’s opinion, “ecumenism has also been used by breakaway groups, such as the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad and the Old Calendarists, to undermine people’s trust in the Church.” Therefore there was a need “for a clear document outlining the theological basis of the Russian Orthodox Church’s attitude towards heterodoxy, i.e. the question of why we need and whether we need dialogue with the non-Orthodox confessions, and if so which form this dialogue should take.” Alfeyev refused to answer the question whether the Council would discuss the matter of the participation of the MP in the WCC, but said that the patriarchate felt obliged to continue negotiations with Protestant and Catholic representatives in the WCC and to be a part of the ecumenical committee.[[1070]](#footnote-1070)

After the Council, there was no let-up in the MP’s ecumenical activities. Thus on August 18, “Patriarch” Alexis prayed together with the Armenian “Patriarch”. And on April 21, 2005, he congratulated the new Pope Benedict XVI on his accession, and expressed the hope that he would strive to develop relations between the two churches. When asked how he evaluated Pope John Paul II’s ministry, he replied: “His Holiness’ teachings have not only strengthened Catholics throughout the world in their faith, but also borne witness to Christianity in the complex world of today.”[[1071]](#footnote-1071) After ROCOR joined the MP in 2007, the MP noticeably increased its ecumenical activities and its relationship with the Vatican continued to improve…

Deacon Nicholas Savchenko summed the MP’s degree of immersion in ecumenism as follows: “In an inter-confessional undertaking there are two degrees of participation. One case is participation with the authority of a simple observer, that is, of one who does not enter into the composition, but is only an observer from the side. It is another case when we are talking about fully-entitled membership in an ecumenical organization.

“Unfortunately, at the present time the ROC MP takes part in the activity of the WCC precisely as a fully-entitled member of the Council. It is precisely on this problem that I consider it important to concentrate attention. After all, it is the membership of the ROC MP in the WCC which most of all, willingly or unwillingly, encroaches upon the teaching of the faith itself and therefore continues to remain an obstacle to our [ROCOR’s] communion [with the MP]. It is possible to list a series of reasons why membership in the WCC is becoming such an obstacle.

“1. The first important reason consists in the fact that the ROC MP today remains in the composition of the highest leadership of the WCC and takes part in the leadership, planning and financing of the whole of the work of the WCC.

“Official representatives of the ROC MP enter into the Central Committee of the WCC. The Central Committee is the organ of the Council’s administration. It defines the politics of the WCC, make official declarations relating to the teaching of the faith and gives moral evaluations of various phenomena of contemporary life within those limites given to it by the church-members. The composition of the last CC of the WCC was elected at the WCC assembly in Harare in 1998. As is witnessed by the official list of the members of the CC of the WCC, five members of the Central Committee come from the MP, headed by Bishop Hilarion (Alfeyev). In all there are about 150 people in the CC, including 9 women priests, which we can see from the list of the members of the CC. The last session of the CC of the WCC with the participation of the representatives of the ROC MP took place at the end of August, 2003.

“Besides participating in the CC, the representatives of the MP go into the make-up of the Executive Committee of the WCC, one of whose tasks is the direct leadership of the whole apparatus of the Council and the organization of all its undertakings. There are 24 people in the official list of the members of the Executive Committee of the WCC, including the MP’s representative Bishop Hilarion (Alfeev). Besides him, there are representatives of the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate, the Romanian Patriarchate and the American Autocephaly in the Executive Committee of the WCC. The last session of the Executive Committee with the participation of representatives of the MP took place at the end of August, 2003. At this last session a new ‘Committee for Prayer’ was formed. It was to occupy itself with the preparation of the text and rite of ecumenical prayers. There are 10 people in all in this committee, including a representative of the MP, Fr. Andrew Eliseev. Besides, the deputy president of the ‘Committee for Prayer’ is a Protestant woman priest. Because of this participation the ROC MP is inevitably responsible for all the decisions of the WCC that contradict the dogmatic and moral teaching of the Orthodox Church.

“2. The second reason for the incompatibility of membership of the WCC with the canons of the Church consists in the fact that the regulations of the Council presuppose the membership in it not of individual person-representatives, but precisely of the whole Local Church in all its fullness. Each Local Church in the WCC is considered in its complete fullness to be a member or a part of the heterodox community.

“In correspondence with the Basis of the WCC, it is a ‘commonwealth of Churches’. In this definition there is a significant difference from the original formulation offered by the commission on ‘Faith and Order’ in 1937, when the future WCC was offered as a ‘community of representatives of the Churches’. The difference is substantial. A community of the Churches themselves is not the same as a community of representatives of the Churches, as we said earlier. In the present case it turns out that the Orthodox Church is considered to be a part of a certain broader commonwealth under the name of the WCC. The legislative documents of the WCC even directly reject any other understanding of membership – after all, if it were not so, the Council would no longer be a Council of churches. And the declaration on entrance into the WCC is given in the name of a church, and not in the name of representatives. In the declaration the church asks that it itself be received into the composition of the WCC. The Council is not a simple association of churches. In the regulatory documents it is asserted that it is a ‘body’ having its own ‘ecclesiological meaning’, as is said about it directly in the heading of the Toronto declaration. The regulatory documents reject only the understanding of the Council as a ‘body’ in separation from the church-members. But in union with the church-members the Council is precisely a ‘body’ with its own ‘ecclesiological meaning’. And this ‘ecclesiological meaning’ of the WCC, by definition ‘cannot be based on any one conception of the Church’, as it says in point 3.3 of the Toronto declaration. That is, the Orthodox Church is considered in its fullness to belong to the ‘body’ with this ‘ecclesiological meaning’, which in accordance with the constitution cannot be Orthodox.

“Such an understanding of membership in the WCC as the membership of the whole Orthodox Church is contained in the documents on the part of the Local Churches. For example, we can cite the following quotation from the document ‘The Orthodox Church and the World Council of Churches’. This document was accepted at the session of the inter-Orthodoxy Consultation in 1991 in Chambésy. It says in point 4: ‘The Orthodox Churches participate in the life and activity of the WCC only on condition that the WCC is understood as a ‘Council of Churches’, and not as a council of separate people, groups, movements or religious organizations drawn into the aims and tasks of the WCC…’ (*Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, 1992, № 1, p. 62).

“Such an understanding of the membership of the whole of the Orthodox Church in the WCC was earlier officially confirmed by the Pan-Orthodox Conferences. Thus the Pan-Orthodox Conference of 1968 formulated its relationship with the WCC in the following words: ‘To express the common consciousness of the Orthodox Church that it is an organic member of the WCC and her firm decision to bring her contribution to the progress of the whole work of the WCC through all the means at her disposal, theological and other.’ (*Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, 1968, № 7, p. 51). The following, Third Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference confirmed this formulation in the same sense in the Russian translation. ‘The Orthodox Church is a complete and fully-entitled member of the WCC and by all the means at her disposal will aid the development and success of the whole work of the WCC’ (*Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, 1987, № 7, p. 53). Although these formulations elicited disturbances at the time, nevertheless they have not been changed to the present day, insofar as only the Local Church herself can be a member of the WCC. Any other interpretation of membership is excluded. Either a Local Church is a member or part of the WCC, or it is not.

“From what has been said it turns out that membership in the WCC is not simply observation of the activity of the Council. Membership is precisely becoming a part of the ecumenical commonwealth. The ROC MP must not be a member of the WCC since this signifies becoming a member of the ecumenical movement.

“3. The third reason why membership in the WCC contradicts Orthodoxy is that membership inevitably signifies agreement with the constitutional principles of the WCC and its rules. For example, it says in the Constitution of the WCC (chapter 3) that the Council is created by the church-members to serve the ecumenical movement. Does this mean that the church-members must, or obliged in their fullness, to serve the ecumenical movement? It appears so. Further the Constitution of the WCC (chapter 3) describes the obligations of those entering the Council of churches in the following words: ‘In the search for communion in faith and life, preaching and service, the churches through the Council will… facilitate common service in every place and everywhere and… cultivate ecumenical consciousness’. From these words it follows directly that common preaching with the Protestants is becoming a constitutional obligation of the Orthodox Church. Obligations still more foreign to Orthodoxy are contained in the Rules of the WCC – a separate document that directly regulates the obligations of those entering into the Council of churches. Chapter 2 of the Rules of the WCC is called ‘Responsibilities of membership’. The following lines are found in it. ‘Membership in the WCC means… devotion to the ecumenical movement as a constitutive element of the mission of the Church. It is presupposed that the church-members of the WCC… encourage ecumenical links and actions at all levels of their ecclesiastical life’. These words of the Rules of the WCC oblige the Orthodox Church to perceive the contemporary ecumenical movement with all its gross heresies and moral vices as a part of the life of the Orthodox Church.

“One more important constitutional document is the declaration ‘Towards a common understanding and vision of the WCC’. This document was accepted by the Central Committee of the WCC in 1997 with the participation of representatives of the Local Churches. It also contains views which are incompatible with the Orthodox teaching on the Church. In the first place this concerns how we are to understanding the term that is the cornerstone of the Basis of the WCC, that the Council is a ‘commonwealth of Churches’. In paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 the meaning of the term ‘commonwealth’ is described in the following words: ‘The use of the term ‘commonwealth’ in the Basis really convinces that the Council is more than a simple functional association of churches… We can even say (using the words of the Resolution on ecumenism of the Second Vatican Council) that ‘real, albeit incomplete communion (koinonia) exists between them [the churches] already now’. From this quotation it follows directly that the church-members of the WCC are considered as entering into limited ecclesiastical communion with other members of the WCC with all their plagues and heresies. The document ‘Towards a common understanding and vision of the WCC’ in point 3.5.3 even directly extends this ecclesiastical communion to the whole Orthodox Church with all her people. The document says that this ecclesiastical communion in the Council ‘is not something abstract and immobile, it is also not limited by the official links between the leadership of the churches and their leaders or representatives. It is rather a dynamic, mutually acting reality which embraces the whole fullness of the church as the expression of the people of God’.

“The most important document of the WCC having a constitutional significance continues to remain the Toronto declaration – ‘The Church, the churches and the WCC’. On the basis of this document the Local Churches in the 1960s entered into the WCC. In it we also clearly see the principles that radically contradict Orthodoxy. Thus point 4.8 of the Toronto declaration declares: ‘The church-members enter into spiritual mutual relationships through which they strive to learn from each other and help each other, so that the Body of Christ may be built and the life of the Church renewed.’ Evidently, this principle of the ‘building of the Church of Christ’ contradicts the Orthodox teaching on the Church. However, it is precisely this, as we see here, that is inscribed in the foundation document of the WCC and can in no way be changed. Besides, the document in its conclusion says the following about the principles of the Toronto declaration, including the principle of the ‘building of the Body of Christ’: ‘Not one of these positive presuppositions which contain in themselves the basis of the World council are in conflict with the teachings of the church-members’.

“From what has been said we can draw the conclusion that membership in the WCC presupposes agreement with its constitutional principles, which contradict Orthodoxy. The ROC MP should not be a member of an organization whose constitutional principles contradict Orthodoxy… “[[1072]](#footnote-1072)

***2. Sergianism***

The MP approved a “social document” which, among other things, recognized that “the Church must refuse to obey the State” “if the authorities force the Orthodox believers to renounce Christ and His Church”.[[1073]](#footnote-1073) As we shall see, enormous significance was attached to this phrase by ROCOR. However, on the very same page we find: “But even the persecuted Church is called to bear the persecutions patiently, not refusing loyalty to the State that persecutes it”. We may infer from this that the MP still considers that its loyalty to the Soviet State was right and the resistance to it shown by the Catacomb Church was wrong. So, contrary to first appearances, the MP remained mired in sergianism. Sergianism as such was not mentioned in the document, much less repented of. This is consistent with the fact that the MP has never in its entire history since 1943 shown anything other than a determination to serve whatever appears to be the strongest forces in the contemporary world. Until the fall of communism, that meant the communists. With the fall of communism, the MP was not at first sure whom she had to obey, but gradually assumed the character of a “populist” church, trying to satisfy the various factions within it (including nominally Orthodox political leaders) while preserving an appearance of unity.

In this connection Frs. Vladimir Savitsky, Valentine (Salomakh) and Nicholas Savchenko write: “The politics of ‘populism’ which the MP is conducting today is a new distortion of true Christianity. Today this politics (and the ideology standing behind it) is a continuation and development of ‘sergianism’, a metamorphosis of the very same disease. Today it seems to us that we have to speak about this at the top of our voices. Other problems, such as the heresy of ecumenism and ‘sergianism’ in the strict sense, while undoubtedly important, are of secondary importance by comparison with the main aim of the MP, which is to be an ‘all-people’ Church, In fact, in the ‘people’ (understood in a broad sense, including unbelievers and ‘eclectics’) there always have been those who are for ecumenism and those who are against. Therefore we see that the MP is ready at the same time to participate in the disgusting sin of ecumenism and to renounce it and even condemn it. It is exactly the same with ‘sergianism’ (understood as the dependence of the Church on the secular authorities). The MP will at the same time in words affirm its independence (insofar as there are those who are for this independence) and listen to every word of the authorities and go behind them (not only because that is convenient, but also because it thus accepted in the ‘people’, and the authorities are ‘elected by the people’). In a word, it is necessary to condemn the very practice and ideology of the transformation of the MP into a Church ‘of all the people’.”[[1074]](#footnote-1074)

This analysis has been confirmed by events since the former KGB Colonel Putin came to power in January, 2000. The MP has appeared to be reverting to its submissive role in relation to an ever more Soviet-looking government, not protesting against the restoration of the red flag to the armed forces and approving the retention of the music of the Soviet national anthem.

There followed an official justification of Sergianism. Thus on July 18, 2002, the Moscow Synod ratified a document entitled “The relationships between the Russian Orthodox Church and the authorities in the 20s and 30s”, which declared: “The aim of normalising the relationship with the authorities cannot be interpreted as a betrayal of Church interests. It was adopted by the holy Patriarch Tikhon, and was also expressed in the so-called ‘Epistle of the Solovki Bishops’ in 1926, that is, one year before the publication of ‘The Epistle of the deputy patriarchal locum tenens and temporary patriarchal Synod’. The essence of the changes in the position of the hierarchy consisted in the fact that the Church, having refused to recognise the legitimacy of the new power established after the October revolution in 1917, as the power became stronger later, had to recognise it as a state power and establish bilateral relations with it. This position is not blameworthy; historically, the Church has more than once found herself in a situation in which it has had to cooperate with non-orthodox rulers (for instance, in the period of the Golden Horde or the Muslim Ottoman Empire).”[[1075]](#footnote-1075)

However, Soviet power was very different from that of the Tatars or Ottomans, and “bilateral relations” with it, unlike with those powers, involved falling under the anathema of the Church. Moreover, if the Church at first refused to recognise Soviet power, but then (in 1927) began to recognise it, the question arises: which position was the correct one? There can be no question but that the position endorsed by the Russian Council of 1917-18 was the correct one, and that the sergianist Moscow Patriarchate, by renouncing that position, betrayed the truth – and continues to betray it to the present day through its symbiotic relationship with a government that openly declares itself the heir of the Soviet State.

As late as January 24, 2005 Metropolitan Cyril (Gundiaev) of Smolensk, head of the MP’s Department of Foreign Relations, confirmed that the MP does not condemn sergianism: “We recognize that the model of Church-State relations [in the Soviet period] did not correspond to tradition. But we are not condemning those who realized this model, because there was no other way of preserving the Church. The Church behaved in the only way she could at that time. There was another path into the catacombs, but there could be no catacombs in the Soviet space…”[[1076]](#footnote-1076) And yet the catacombs did exist “in the Soviet space” and produced a rich crop of sanctity…[[1077]](#footnote-1077)

When Gundiaev became patriarch, his place as head of the Department for External Relations was taken by Metropolitan Hilarion (Alfeyev), who made this startling revelation to the American ambassador in Russia, as revealed by Wikileaks: “A (or the) main role of the Russian Orthodox Church is in providing propaganda for the official politics of the government.”[[1078]](#footnote-1078)

A clear example of how Sergianism continues to exist in practice is provided by the fact that the president of North Korea, Kim Chen Ir, though no friend of religion - in fact, religion is banned in North Korea – has nevertheless allow the MP to build a church to the Life-Giving Trinity in Pyonyang! Moreover, the beloved leader is devoting about $1,000,000.00 to its building! This is a country where millions of people are starving...

     The question is: why should this avowed enemy of God be helping to build a church to the Life-Giving Trinity? Could it be that the black ryassas of Korean clergy could provide a good cover for exchanges between the beloved leader of the Korean masses and the beloved leader of the Russian masses?

     A clue is provided by the interesting fact that four students from North Korea have been studying in the Moscow theological seminary, and are now deacons in the MP, serving in the St. Nicholas cathedral in Vladivostok. And why have they come to Russia to study Orthodoxy? It seems they are quite frank in their reply to this question: they are in Russia at the command of their secular masters. "Orthodoxy comes to us with difficulty, but our great leader comrade Kim Chen Ir has taken the decision to build an Orthodox church in Pyonyang," declared Deacon Fyodor to journalists.

     ROAC priest Fr. Michael Ardov has commented well on this: "This is the sin of dual faith, for which the Lord punishes more severely than for lack of faith. A Christian cannot at the same time bow down to the Lord and to the powers of darkness. In North Korea there reigns the cult of the family of the Kims, which is accompanied by barbaric rites. The bishop of Vladivostok Benjamin should not allow the North Korean double-faithers over the threshold of the church even under threat of his being banned from serving. It is in this that his episcopal duty lies, and not in fulfilling the commands of the bosses like a soldier. But he has prepared the latter, demonstrating sergianism in action. It is noteworthy that this same Bishop Benjamin, being a professor of the Moscow theological academy, is glorified as a strict zealot of Orthodoxy. His example shows why in principle there can be no good bishops in the Moscow Patriarchate..."[[1079]](#footnote-1079)

***3. The New Martyrs***

The major problems here from the patriarchate's point of view were the questions of the Royal Martyrs, on the one hand, and of the martyrs of the Catacomb Church who rejected Metropolitan Sergius, on the other. Non-royal martyrs killed before the schism with the Catacomb Church could be "safely" canonized. Thus in 1989, the MP canonized Patriarch Tikhon, and in 1992 it canonized three more martyrs and set up a commission to inquire into the martyrdom of the Royal Family, about which an MP publication wrote in 1998: “No less if not more dangerous as an ecclesiastical falsification is the MP’s Canonization Commission, headed by Metropolitan Juvenal (Poiarkov), which has suggested a compromise glorification of Tsar Nicholas Alexandrovich: ‘Yes, he was guilty of the tragedy on Khodynka field, he hobnobbed with Rasputin, he offended the workers, the country became backward. In general as a ruler of a state he was completely useless. Most important, he brought the country to revolution. But he suffered for Christ…’ Such a falsification will only continue that dirty stream of slander which the Christ-fighters began to pour out already long before 1917…”[[1080]](#footnote-1080)

After nearly a decade of temporising, the MP finally, under pressure from its flock, glorified the Royal New Martyrs and many other martyrs of the Soviet yoke. Having unanimously *rejected* this canonization at their council in 1998, two years later they unanimously a*ccepted* it.The glorification of the Royal New Martyrs was a compromise decision, reflecting the very different attitudes towards them in the patriarchate. The Royal Martyrs were called “passion-bearers” rather than “martyrs”, and it was made clear that they were being glorified, not for the way in which they lived their lives, but for the meekness with which they faced their deaths. This allowed the anti-monarchists to feel that Nicholas was still the “bloody Nicholas” of Soviet mythology, and that it was “Citizen Romanov” rather than “Tsar Nicholas” who had been glorified - the man rather than the monarchical principle for which he stood.

As regards the other martyrs, Sergius Kanaev writes: “In the report of the President of the Synodal Commission for the canonisation of the saints, Metropolitan Juvenal (Poiarkov), the criterion of holiness adopted… for Orthodox Christians who had suffered during the savage persecutions was clearly and unambiguously declared to be submission ‘to the lawful leadership of the Church’, which was Metropolitan Sergius and his hierarchy. With such an approach, the holiness of the ‘sergianist martyrs’ was incontestable. The others were glorified or not glorified depending on the degree to which they ‘were in separation from the lawful leadership of the Church’. Concerning those who were not in agreement with the politics of Metropolitan Sergius, the following was said in the report: ‘In the actions of the “right” oppositionists, who are often called the “non-commemorators”, one cannot find evil-intentioned, exclusively personal motives. Their actions were conditioned by their understanding of what was for the good of the Church’. In my view, this is nothing other than blasphemy against the New Martyrs and a straight apology for sergianism. With such an approach the consciously sergianist Metropolitan Seraphim (Chichagov), for example, becomes a ‘saint’, while his ideological opponent Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd, who was canonized by our Church, is not glorified. For us another fact is also important, that Metropolitan Seraphim was appointed by Sergius (Stragorodsky) in the place of Metropolitan Joseph, who had been ‘banned’ by him.”[[1081]](#footnote-1081)

Other Catacomb martyrs were “glorified” by the MP because their holiness was impossible to hide. Thus the relics of Archbishop Victor of Vyatka were found to be incorrupt and now lie in a patriarchal cathedral – although he was the very first bishop officially to break with Sergius and called him and his church organization graceless! Again, the reputation of Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan was too great to be ignored, in spite of the fact that by the end of his life his position differed in no way from that of St. Victor or St. Joseph.

Some, seeing the glorification of the Catacomb martyrs by their opponents, remembered the Lord’s words: “Ye build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, ‘If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets’. Therefore ye bear witness against yourselves that ye are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up the measure of your fathers!” (Matthew 23.29-32).

This blasphemous canonisation of *both* the true *and* the false martyrs, thereby downgrading the exploit of the true martyrs, had been predicted by the ROCOR priest Fr. Oleg Oreshkin: "I think that some of those glorified will be from the sergianists so as to deceive the believers. 'Look,' they will say, 'he is a saint, a martyr, in the Heavenly Kingdom, and he recognized the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, so you must be reconciled with it and its fruits.' This will be done not in order to glorify martyrdom for Christ's sake, but in order to confirm the sergianist politics."[[1082]](#footnote-1082)

The main thing from the MP’s point of view was that their founder, Metropolitan Sergius, should be given equal status with the catacomb martyrs whom he persecuted. Thus in 1997 the patriarch said: “Through the host of martyrs the Church of Russia bore witness to her faith and sowed the seed of her future rebirth. Among the confessors of Christ we can in full measure name… his Holiness Patriarch Sergius.”[[1083]](#footnote-1083)

By the time of the council of 2000, the MP still did not feel able to canonise Sergius – probably because it fears that it would prevent a union with ROCOR. But neither did it canonise the leader of the Catacomb Church, Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd. This suggested that a canonisation of the two leaders was in the offing, but depended on the success of the negotiations between the MP and ROCOR.

The patriarch's lack of ecclesiastical principle and ecclesiological consistency in this question was pointed out by Fr. Peter Perekrestov: "In the introduction to one article ("In the Catacombs", *Sovershenno Sekretno*, № 7, 1991) Patriarch Alexis wrote the following: 'I believe that our martyrs and righteous ones, regardless of whether they followed Metropolitan Sergius or did not agree with his position, pray together for us.' At the same time, in the weekly, *Nedelya*, № 2, 1/92, the same Patriarch Alexis states that the Russian Church Abroad is a schismatic church, and adds: 'Equally uncanonical is the so-called "Catacomb" Church.' In other words, he recognizes the martyrs of the Catacomb Church, many of whom were betrayed to the godless authorities by Metropolitan Sergius's church organization…, and at the same time declares that these martyrs are schismatic and uncanonical!"[[1084]](#footnote-1084)

For in the last resort, as Fr. Peter pointed out, for the MP this whole matter was not one of truth or falsehood, but of *power*: "It is not important to them whether a priest is involved in shady business dealings or purely church activities; whether he is a democrat or a monarchist; whether an ecumenist or a zealot; whether he wants to serve Vigil for six hours or one; whether the priest serves a panikhida for the victims who defended the White House or a moleben for those who sided with Yeltsin; whether the priest wants to baptize by immersion or by sprinkling; whether he serves in the catacombs or openly; whether he venerates the Royal Martyrs or not; whether he serves according to the New or Orthodox Calendar - *it really doesn't matter.* The main thing is to commemorate Patriarch Alexis. Let the Church Abroad have its autonomy, let it even speak out, express itself as in the past, but only under one condition: *commemorate Patriarch Alexis.* This is a form of **Papism** - let the priests be married, let them serve according to the Eastern rite - it makes no difference, what is important is that they commemorate the Pope of Rome."[[1085]](#footnote-1085)

It is open to question whether the patriarchate's canonisation of even the true martyrs is pleasing to God. Thus when 50 patriarchal bishops uncovered the relics of Patriarch Tikhon in the Donskoj cemetery on April 5, 1992, witnesses reported that "it was even possible to recognise the face of the Patriarch from his incorrupt visage, and his mantia and mitre were also preserved in complete incorruption. Witnesses also speak about a beautiful fragrance and an unusual feeling of reverential peace at that moment. But then, as some patriarchal clerics confirm, on contact with the air the relics crumbled, or - as the Catacomb Christians remark - the relics were not given into the hands of the Moscow Patriarchate. Then they buried them in plaster - a blasphemous act from an Orthodox point of view..."[[1086]](#footnote-1086)

The MP council’s documents were well characterised by the ROCOR clergy of Kursk as follows: “Everywhere there is the same well-known style: pleasing the ‘right’ and the ‘left’, the Orthodox and the ecumenists, ‘yours’ and ‘ours’, without the slightest attempt at definiteness, but with, on the other hand, a careful preservation of the whole weight of the sins of the past and present.”[[1087]](#footnote-1087)

The “Jubilee Sobor” was final proof, if proof were needed, that the MP had not repented and could not repent unless its higher echelons were removed and the whole church apparatus was thoroughly purged.

To this day there is no sign of that happening…

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##### The Jubilee Council is just one example of the decpetions practiced by the MP in this period. Gregory Bysttita writes: “3 examples of why I avoid reading material from most popular Orthodox websites and why I trust almost nothing coming from the leaders of the MP:

1) From a ROCOR page (shortly before union with Moscow):

"For in August 2000, not only did the Patriarchal Church begin canonizing the New Martyrs and Confessors, but also it condemned yet again the excesses of the Sergianist period of its history, its compromises with the atheist State and also its compromises with the ill-absorbed Renovationism of the ‘Living Church’ schism and the Ecumenist heresy."

So we are led to believe the MP turned against ecumenism?! But their "synodally" accepted document from August 2000 states:

"During Orthodox participation of many decades in the ecumenical movement, Orthodoxy has NEVER been betrayed by any representative of a Local Orthodox Church. On the contrary, these representatives have always been completely faithful and obedient to their respective Church authorities, and acted in complete agreement with the canonical rules, the Teaching of the Ecumenical Councils, the Church Fathers and the Holy Tradition of the Orthodox Church".

How could Moscow condemn the Ecumenist heresy - if they do not even believe it exists?!

And we are led to believe the MP turned against Sergianism in August of 2000?!

But Patriarch Alexy II stated in 2001: "As regards the accusations of the so-called Sergianism, I would like to say that one has to live here, in the homeland, to understand that it is an artificial accusation and an artificial pretext whipped up only to prevent reunification ... (the 1927 declaration) was a courageous step by which Metropolitan Sergiy tried to save the Church and the clergy."

Note: Patriarch Kirill, in 2017 also offered praises to Patriarch Sergius on multiple occasions - and he even blessed a statue of him (with the participation of multiple metropolitans).

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2) Another example:

Metropolitan and (now Patriarch Kirill) stated (in 2007) concerning the "Department for External Church Relations":

"The basis of the modern full-scale and multi-sided activity was laid by the founder of the Department Metropolitan Nikolai (Yarushevich) and his successor Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov). They created the Department which subsequently faced a hard task of developing relations between the Church and the State, the Church and the Society, interfaith and inter-confessional ties during the collapse of the Soviet Union, destruction of stable social connections, during the period of breaks and divisions.

The main task of the Department has always been to provide adequate participation of the Church in public life, to keep the voice of Orthodoxy heard in Russia and the whole world, so that the Russian Orthodox Church, no matter what the historical circumstances are, accomplishes her main mission – saving people."

While conversely, a priest of the MP who worked in the department stated:

"Without exception we are all to blame - some were informers, some pretended not to see, hear or understand. We priests were ordained by officers of the KGB. This we all knew. So, am I not to blame for being silent about it all these years? Can anyone really say they did not know that from top to bottom the Department of External Affairs was a branch of the KGB?"

And another clergyman who had worked in the department further related:

"During my 6 years of employment I reached certain heights in the Department (of External Affairs) and made a career for myself in the Church... It is known that the Department of External Affairs was formed in 1946 by Beria (Minister of State to Stalin). From the very beginning the work of the Department has been conducted under strict supervision of the KGB...

Nearly all the employees of my Department were agents of the KGB, including myself. I was recruited while I was still a seminarian. It was impossible to land a job in this department in any other way. They did not just take people off the street; this is especially true of the clergy selected to work in our far-reaching network abroad. One can see what sort of mission they carry out. This is also true concerning all the other Departments: the Department of Publications, the newly created Department of charity, and the KGB formed All-Orthodox Youth movement."

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3) The Moscow synod of Nov.-Dec- 2017 offered some moderate criticisms of the Cretan synod of 2016. This gave the impression to many that they are traditional and even perhaps oppose ecumenism. The hypocrisy however, is that, this same synod offered praises to the Havana declaration and ordered the publication of their version of the "Relation" document which is entitled "Basic Principles of the Attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church Toward the Other Christian Confessions" - this document of Moscow is, in many ways worse than the heretical "Relation" text of Crete...

I offer these as examples of what I have gradually realized through the years - namely, that if you read the official or popular versions: then all seems well. But if you dig a little deeper (and you don't have to dig that far!) - it becomes evident that we are being fed lies upon lies...

The above examples are but a few of many...”[[1088]](#footnote-1088)

## 168. “THE SECOND OCTOBER REVOLUTION”

In October, 2000, the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR took place in New York. In almost all its acts it represented a reaction to, and to a very large extent an approval of, the acts of the Moscow council. Its most important acts were three conciliar epistles addressed: the first to the Serbian Patriarch Paul, the second “To the Beloved Children of the Church in the Homeland and in the Diaspora” and the third “To the Supporters of the Old Rites”.

The first of these epistles, dated October 26, declared that ROCOR and the Serbs were “brothers by blood and by faith” and that “we have always valued the eucharistic communion between our sister-Churches and the desire to preserve the consolation of this communion to the end of time”. And towards the end of the Epistle we read: “We beseech your Holiness not to estrange us from liturgical communion with you”.

It should be remembered that this was written only two years after ROCOR had officially reissued its anathema on ecumenism, and only a few months after the Serbian Patriarch himself had said that there was *no* communion between his Church and ROCOR, calling ROCOR a “church” only in inverted commas! Moreover, as recently as September, 2000, the official publication of the Serbian Church, *Pravoslav’e*, had reported that, at the invitation of the patriarchate there had arrived in Belgrade a Catholic delegation, which had made a joint declaration witnessing to the fact that Serbian hierarchs had been praying together with the Catholics for the last three weeks![[1089]](#footnote-1089) So, having justly anathematised the Serbs as heretics, and having witnessed the continuation of their heretical activity, ROCOR was now *begging* to be brought back into communion with the heretics!

Why? The reason became clear later in the Epistle: “A miracle has taken place, the prayers of the host of Russian New Martyrs have been heard: the atheist power that threatened the whole world has unexpectedly, before our eyes, fallen! Now we observe with joy and hope how the process of spiritual regeneration foretold by our saints has begun, and in parallel with it *the gradual return to health of the Church administration in Russia.* This process is difficult and is not being carried forward without opposition. Nevertheless, a radiant indicator of it is the recent glorification of the New Martyrs of Russia headed by the slaughtered Royal Family and the condemnation of the politics of cooperation with the godless authorities which took place at the last Council of the Russian Church in Moscow.

“There still remain other serious wounds in the leadership of the Russian Church which hinder our spiritual rapprochement. Nevertheless, we pray God that He may heal them, too, by the all-powerful grace of the Holy Spirit. Then there must take place the longed-for rapprochement and, God willing, the spiritual union between the two torn-apart parts of the Russian Church – that which is in the Homeland, and that which has gone abroad. *We pray your Holiness to grant your assistance in this.*”

So the ROCOR bishops – this letter was signed by all of them - were asking a heretic anathematised for ecumenism to help them to enter into communion with other anathematised ecumenists – their old enemies in Moscow, whom they now characterised in glowing and completely false terms as if they had already returned to Orthodoxy! Why, then, should the ROCOR bishops continue to speak of ecumenism as an obstacle to union with the MP? As the Kursk clergy pointed out: “It is not clear how long, in view of the declared unity with the Serbian patriarchate, this last obstacle [ecumenism] to union with the MP will be seen as vital.”[[1090]](#footnote-1090)

The second of the epistles, dated October 27, made several very surprising statements. First, it again spoke of “the beginning of a real spiritual awakening” in Russia. Considering that less than 1% of the Russian population went to the MP, then, even if the spiritual state of the MP were brilliant, this would hardly constitute “awakening” on any significant scale. Moreover, as Demetrius Kapustin pointed out, the supposed signs of this awakening – the greater reading of spiritual books, the greater discussion of canonical and historical questions in the MP – are not good indicators of real spiritual progress: “It is evident that the reading of Church books can bring a person great benefit. However, a necessary condition for this is love for the truth. The Jews also saw Christ, and spoke with Him, but they did not want humbly to receive the true teaching, and not only were they not saved, but also took part in the persecutions and destroyed their own souls. It is the same with many parishioners of the MP. On reading books on the contemporary Church situation, many of them come to the conclusion that sergianism and ecumenism are soul-destroying. However, these doubts of theirs are often drowned out by the affirmations of their false teachers, who dare to place themselves above the patristic tradition. Satisfying themselves with a false understanding of love (substituting adultery with heretics and law-breakers for love for God, which requires chastity and keeping the truth) and obedience (substituting following the teaching of false elders for obedience to God and the humble acceptance of the patristic teaching, and not recognizing their personal responsibility for their own Church state), they often take part in the persecutions and slander against the True Orthodox. In a word, even such good works as the veneration of the Royal Martyrs are often expressed in a distorted form (by, for example, mixing it with Stalinism, as with the ‘*fighter from within*’ Dushenov)”.

Kapustin then makes the important point that “an enormous number of people… have not come to Orthodoxy precisely because they have not seen true Christianity in the MP (alas, in the consciousness of many people in Russia the Orthodox Church is associated with the MP). In my opinion, the MP rather hinders than assists the spiritual awakening of the Russian people (if we can talk at all about any awakening in the present exceptionally wretched spiritual condition of Russia).”[[1091]](#footnote-1091)

Secondly, ROCOR’s epistle welcomed the MP’s glorification of the New Martyrs, since “the turning of the whole Russian people in prayer to all the holy New Martyrs of Russia and especially the Royal new martyrs… had become possible now thanks to the recognition of their holiness by the Hierarchical Council of the Moscow Patriarchate”. As if the Russian people had not already been praying to the Holy New Martyrs in front of icons made in ROCOR for the past twenty years!

Moreover, as Protopriests Constantine Fyodorov and Benjamin Zhukov wrote, “the possibility of turning in prayer to the Russian New Martyrs was opened to the people *not by the Moscow Patriarchate (as is written in our Hierarchical Council’s Epistle), but by the martyric exploit of these saints themselves, who were glorified by our Church in 1981*. The prayer of the Russian people to these saints never ceased from the very first day of their martyric exploit, but *was strengthened and spread precisely by the canonization of the Church Abroad****.***”[[1092]](#footnote-1092)

Thirdly: “We are encouraged by the acceptance of the new social conception by this council, which in essence *blots out* the ‘Declaration’ of Metropolitan Sergius in 1927”.[[1093]](#footnote-1093) And yet in the MP’s “social conception” Sergius’ declaration was not even mentioned, let alone repented of. In any case, how could one vague phrase about the necessity of the Church disobeying the State in certain exceptional cases (which was contradicted on the same page, as we have seen) *blot out* a Declaration that caused the greatest schism in Orthodox Church history since 1054 and incalculable sufferings and death?! Two years later, as we have seen, in July, 2002, the Synod of the MP, far from “blotting out” the declaration, said that Sergius’ relationship to the Soviet authorities was “not blameworthy”, so not only has the MP *not* repented for sergianism, but it has continued to *justify* it, contradicting the position of the Catacomb new martyrs whom it has just glorified and who gave their lives because of their opposition to sergianism.

As Metropolitan Vitaly wrote: "The so-called 'Social Doctrine' of the Moscow Patriarchate is a purely Roman Catholic concept which is foreign to the Orthodox Church and which, regardless of its possibly well-meaning intentions, holds nothing profitable for the Orthodox Christian. This Doctrine does not reflect any repentance for the past mistakes and in no manner can it cross out the treacherous Declaration of 1927."

The epistle, which was signed by all the bishops except Barnabas, obliquely recognised this fact when it later declared: “We have not seen a just evaluation by the Moscow Patriarchate of the anti-ecclesiastical actions of Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) and his Synod and their successors”. If so, then how can we talk about Sergius’ Declaration being *blotted out*?!

The third epistle, addressed to the Old Ritualists without distinguishing between the Popovtsi and Bespopovtsi, was similarly ecumenist in tone, beginning with the words: “To the Believing children of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Homeland and in the diaspora, who hold to the old rite, the Council of bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad sends greetings! Beloved brothers and sisters in our holy Orthodox faith: may the grace and peace of the Man-loving Saviour be with you to the ages!”

It was one thing to remove the bans on the old rites, as ROCOR had done in its Council in 1974: it was quite another to recognise the schismatics as Orthodox. And in such terms! For later in the epistle ROCOR compares the persecutions of the Old Ritualists to the persecutions of St. John Chrysostom, and begs forgiveness of the Old Ritualists as the Emperor Theodosius the Younger had begged it of the holy hierarch! But, as Bishop Gregory Grabbe pointed out after the 1974 Council, the sins of the Russian State in persecuting the Old Ritualists in the 17th century should not all be laid on the Church of the time, which primarily condemned the Old Ritualists not for their adherence to the old rites (which even Patriarch Nicon recognised to be salvific), but for their disobedience to the Church. To lay all the blame for the schism, not on the Old Ritualists but on the Orthodox, even after the Old Ritualists had proudly refused to take advantage of the many major concessions made by the Orthodox (for example, the edinoverie) while stubbornly continuing to call the Orthodox themselves schismatics, was to invert the truth and logically led to the conclusion that the Orthodox Church was not the True Church!

As clergy of the Kursk diocese pointed out: “The conciliar epistle to the Old Ritualists, in our opinion, is not only an extremely humiliating document for the Orthodox Church, but also contains signs of a heterodox ecclesiology. Effectively equating the Old Ritualists with the confessors of Orthodoxy, the Hierarchical Council, first, leaves them with their convictions, thereby blocking the path to repentance, and secondly, either teaches that outside the Orthodox Church there can exist true confession, or considers that the Church can be divided into parts which for centuries have not had any eucharistic communion between themselves. Both in form and in spirit the epistle in question represents a complete break with the patristic tradition of the Orthodox Church…. It seems that all that remains to be added is the request: ‘We humbly beseech you to receive us into your communion and be united to the Holy Church.”[[1094]](#footnote-1094)

The feelings of the protestors were summed up by Fr. Stefan Krasovitsky and Roman Vershillo, who said that a “revolution” had taken place, and that “if we are to express the meaning of the coup shortly, then there took place, first, a moral disarmament, and secondly, the self-abolition of ROCOR as a separate part of the Russian Local Church… Alas, [it] is composed in such a way that it is not actually clear who has really fallen into schism from the Church: we or our errant Old Ritualist brothers!”[[1095]](#footnote-1095)

For ROCOR the writing was now on the wall. The October, 2000 Council constituted a clear break with the traditional attitude towards the MP and World Orthodoxy adopted by Metropolitans Anthony, Anastasy and Philaret, as well as Vitaly in his last years. Only a clear renunciation of that clear break could keep the children of ROCOR within the Church and Faith of their fathers…

# CONCLUSION

*We would have healed Babylon, but her wound is not healed.*

Jeremiah 51.9.

The twentieth century was a period of almost unmitigated disaster for the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church… It ended with the destruction of the Twin Trade Towers in New York on September 11, 2001 – the feast/fast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist, the prophet of repentance. That portended still more terrible things to come.

The century began promisingly with the martyrdom of 222 Chinese Orthodox Christians from the Russian Spiritual Mission in Peking, the capital of the world’s last pagan empire. But by century’s end, in the wake of the Russian revolution, the greatest spiritual and geopolitical tragedy of the last one thousand years, not only this Mission, but all the Missions of the Russian Church, and even the heartland of Russia herself had been laid waste and defiled. Nor had any other Local Church prospered. Without the protection of the Russian empire, the Local Orthodox Churches all fell into the pan-heresy of Ecumenism and became slaves of the rulers of this world: New Zion had all but been turned into Babylon…

A faithful remnant has survived, but such a small, pitiful, divided remnant that it truly requires faith to see in it the Ark of Salvation, the Israel of God, “the pillar and ground of the truth” (I Timothy 3.15). And yet in this very pitifulness of God’s Church is contained perhaps the most important lesson that we can derive from this story: that we must not put our trust in appearances and in the strength of man. For “cursed is the man who trusts in man, and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord” (Jeremiah 17.5). We must not be deceived by beautiful churches and overflowing congregations, nor even by ascetic feats and miracles. For where the faith is defiled, everything is defiled and the Church is not…

Instead, we must search with the eyes of faith sharpened by love to find David and all his meekness amidst the phoney majesty of his taller and more handsome brothers. However weak and small the external appearance of the True Church, it is in her alone that the True Faith abides; in her alone is the Power and the Wisdom of God. “Fear not, *little* flock,” said the Lord, “for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the Kingdom” (Luke 12.32)… Which brings us to the second lesson we can derive from this history of twentieth-century Orthodoxy: that God’s power is made perfect in weakness (II Corinthians 12.9). That is why the greatest saints and wonderworkers of the twentieth century, such as St. John Maximovich, have been found precisely in the small, weak flock of the True Orthodox Church that has cut itself off from the apostasy of the far larger flock of World Orthodoxy…

A third lesson is that sooner or later, God’s justice will descend upon His Church for the sins of many generations. On the world, too, of course; but first of all on the Church, which is that salt that keeps the world from total corruption (Matthew 5.13). For judgement begins “at the house of God, and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the Gospel of God?” (I Peter 4.17).

The twentieth century has been the era of God’s judgement on His Church for all the accumulated historical sins of the earlier “Sardian” period of Church history that began with the Fall of Constantinople, the New Rome, in 1453, and ended with the Fall of Moscow, the Third Rome, in 1917. At the beginning of the century a truly righteous man, Tsar Nicholas II, ruled the Orthodox commonwealth of nations. But neither he nor the whole panoply of holiness that was concealed within the Church at that time – a holiness that was to be revealed especially in the great choir of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia – could prevent the just execution of God’s sentence on the His inheritance. For as the Prophetess Hulda said to the emissaries of the righteous King Josiah of Judah, who had already initiated a programme of religious restoration: “Thus says the Lord: ‘Behold, I will bring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants, all the curses that are written in the book they have read before the king of Judah, because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands. Therefore My wrath will be poured out in this place, and not be quenched…” (II Chronicles 34.24-25). King Josiah was granted to die before the execution of God’s judgement on ancient Israel. Tsar Nicholas, being a still greater man, was granted to share in the sufferings of his people, in order to expiate both his sins and theirs by sharing in the sufferings of Christ. By century’s end, after decades in which even church leaders called him “bloody Nicholas”, the Tsar-Martyr has finally been generally recognized for who he was and is, at any rate in the Slavic Churches; and it is this veneration, together with that of all the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia, the great glory of the twentieth century, that gives hope of a resurrection of True Orthodoxy in the twenty-first century…

The axe of retribution fell first in the inter-war years, when the greatest persecution in the history of Christianity fell upon Russia – the holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia constitute the great pride of the century, and the main basis for hope in the future. Nor did it end there: the communist scourge spread after the Second World War to all the Orthodox countries of Eastern Europe except Greece. And even after the end of the Cold War and the apparent fall of communism, heresy has continued to ravage the already severely weakened organism of the Orthodox Church. Ecumenism, Sergianism, Darwinism, Nationalism, Democratism and other new heresies such as Romanideanism and Name-Worshipping have swept through the Local Orthodox Churches, cutting down their numbers even as the external appearance of Orthodoxy has become familiar throughout the world.

It is as if the Heavenly Vinedresser, determined to eliminate the last trace of disease, has been pruning the Vine to such an extent that there are no branches left, only a tiny root half hidden in the earth. But to the eye of faith that root is indestructible: “On this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against Her” (Matthew 16.18). And from that root, as from the rod of Jesse, a flower will yet spring forth that will fill the whole world with its fragrance…

*Glory to God for all things!*

1. Molotov, in Fomin, S., *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem (Russia before the Second Coming)*, Sergiev Posad, 1993, p. 237. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Chernov, *Tserkov' Katakombnaia na Zemle Rossijskoj* (*The Catacomb Church in the Russian Land),* MS, Woking, 1980. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Oliver Figes, *Natasha’s Dance*, London: Penguin, 2002, p. 489. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Overy, *Russia’s War*, London: Penguin Books, 1999, pp. 161-162. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Kuznetsov, “O Sovietsko-Germanskoj Vojne” (On the Soviet-German War), <http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print> page&pid=570, pp. 3-4, 7-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Chernov, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Solzhenitsyn, *The Mortal Danger*, London: The Bodley Head, 1980, pp. 39-40. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Krasikov, “’Tretij Rim’ i Bol’sheviki” (The Third Rome and the Bolsheviks), in L.M. Vorontsova, A.V. Pchelintsev and S.B. Filatov (eds.), *Religia i Prava Cheloveka (Religion and Human Rights)*, Moscow: “Nauka”, 1996, p. 203. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Monk Benjamin (Gomareteli), *Letopis’ tserkovnykh sobytij Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi nachinaia s 1917 goda* (Chronicle of Church Events, beginning from 1917), www.zlatoust.ws/letopis.htm, part 3, pp. 31-32. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. 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… [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. O. Vasilieva, "Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov' v 1927-1943 godakh" (The Russian Orthodox Church from 1927 to 1943), *Voprosy Istorii (Questions of History)*, 1994, N 4, p. 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. According to another source, the mission had 221 churches and 84 priests to serve in them. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Chernov, op. cit.; A. Smirnov, “Ugasshie nepominaiushchie v bege vremeni” (Extinguished Non-Commemorators in the Flow of Time), *Simvol (Symbol)*, N 40, 1998, pp. 250-267. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. M.V. Shkvarovsky, “Iosiflyane v Severo-Zapade Rossii v period nemetskoj okkupatsii” (The Josephites in North-West Russia during the German Occupation), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia)*, N 14 (1755), July 15/28, 2004, pp. 12-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Shkvarovsky, *Iosiflianstvo: techenie v Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi (Josephitism: a tendency in the Russian Orthodox Church)*, St. Petersburg: Memorial, 1999, pp. 187-188; Archbishop Ambrose (von Sievers), "Istoki i sviazi Katakombnoj Tserkvi v Leningrade i obl. (1922-1992)" (Sources and Links of the Catacomb Church in Leningrad and district (1922-1992), report read at the conference "The Historical Path of Orthodoxy in Russia after 1917", Saint Petersburg, 1-3 June, 1993; “Episkopat Istinno-Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi 1922-1997gg.” (The Episcopate of the True Orthodox Church, 1922-1997), *Russkoe Pravoslavie (Russian Orthodoxy)*, N 4 (8), 1997, pp. 12-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. I.F. Bugayem, "Varvarskaia aktsia" (A Barbaric Action), *Otechestvo (Fatherland)*, N 3, 1992, pp. 53-73; text in Shkvarovsky*, Iosiflyanstvo*, pp. 262-263. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. “Interviu s episkopom Irinarkhom Tul’skim i Brianskim (RPATs)” (Interview with Bishop Irinarch of Tula and Briansk (ROAC), *Vertograd*, N 440, 10 March, 2004. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. I.I. Ospova, *O Premiloserdij… Budi s nami neotstupno…*Vospominania veruiuschikh Istinno-Pravoslavnoj (Katakombnoj) Tserkvi. Konets 1920-kh – nachalo 1970-kh godov. (*O Most Merciful One… Remain with us without fail.* Reminiscences of believers of the True-Orthodox (Catacomb) Church. End of the 1920s – beginning of the 1970s), Moscow, 2008. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Shkarovsky, *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ pri Staline i Khruscheve (The Russian Orthodox Church under Stalin and Khruschev),* Moscow, 2005, pp. 250-251. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Archbishop Athanasius (Martos); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. See Mikhail Woerl, “Dobrij Pastyr’” (A Good Pastor), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia)*, N 24 (1597), December 15/28, 1997, p. 7; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Archbishop Ambrose (von Sievers), “Bezobrazniki: K sobytiam v RPTsZ 1945-55gg.” (Hooligans: on the events in ROCOR, 1945-55), *Russkoe Pravoslavie (Russian Orthodoxy)*, N 2 (16), 1999, p. 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Nevertheless, they did call the Church “autocephalous”: “The first All-Belorussian Orthodox Church Council in history meeting in Minsk in the name of the Orthodox Belorussians sends you, Mr. Reich-Chancellor, heartfelt gratitude for the liberation of Belorussia from the Muscovite-Bolshevik yoke, for giving us the opportunity freely to organize our religious life in the form of the Holy Belorussian Orthodox Autocephalous Church, and desires the speediest and complete victory to your unconquerable arms.” (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Woerl, “A Brief Biography of Archbishop Filofei (Narko)”, *Orthodox Life*, vol. 50, N 6, November-December, 2000, pp. 25-26. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Woerl, “Dobrij Pastyr’”, op. cit., p. 8. George later became bishop of Chicago and Detroit. See “Episkop Vasilij Venskij – 1880-1945gg.” (Bishop Basil of Vienna – 1880-1945), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia)*, N 18 (1663), September 14/27, 2000, p. 5.

    According to Reader Gregory Mukhortov (personal communication, 1990), the Belorussian synod consecrated another bishop, Theodosius (Bakhmetev), just before the arrival of the Soviets late in 1944. However, according to the anonymous author of *Kto est’ kto v rossijskikh katakombakh* (Who’s Who in the Russian Catacombs), (St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 36-37), Theodosius was consecrated in 1942 or 1943 as vicar-bishop of Pinsk, which at that time entered the jurisdiction of the Ukrainian Autonomous Church, in the Kiev Caves Lavra by Schema-Archbishop Anthony (Abashidze), Archbishop Panteleimon (Rudyk) and the Catacomb Bishops Elias and Macarius. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. “Good, albeit also not unambiguous relations were established between the True Orthodox Christians and the Belorussian Church. In particular, thanks precisely to the catacombniki 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 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 Khristiane i Vojna 1941-1945gg.” (True Orthodox Christians and the War, 1941-1945), *Russkoe Pravoslavie* (Russian Orthodoxy), N 1 (15), 1999, pp. 23-24). According to Stavros Markou (“Concerning the Legacy of ROCOR and Her Successors”), Bishop Stefan was persecuted in Poland for his refusal to abandon the Orthodox calendar. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. W. Alexeyev and T. Stavrou, *The Great Revival*, Minneapolis: Burgess Publishing Co., 1979, 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, N 4 (99), pp. 148-154; Andrei Psarev, "Zhizneopisanie Arkhiepiskopa Leontia Chilijskij (1901-1971 gg.)" (A Life of Archbishop Leontius of Chile (1901-1971)), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn'* (Orthodox Life), N 4 (556), April, 1996, pp. 9-14.

    With the blessing of Schema-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>. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. 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.). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Raevsky, *Ukrainskaia Avtokephalnaia Tserkov’* (The Ukrainian Autocephalous Church*)*, Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1948, p. 15; M.E. Gubonin, *Akty Sviateishego Patriarkha Tikhona* (The Acts of His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon), Moscow, 1994, pp. 960, 979; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. See *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), N 20 (1545), October 15/28, 1995, p. 4; Alexeyev and Stavrou, op. cit., chapter 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Archbishop Athanasius, *Na Nive Khristovoj* (On Christ’s Field). [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. On the day the Germans invaded the Soviet Union, writes M.V. Shkarovsky, “a search was carried out in the residence of Metropolitan Anastasy [in Belgrade]… [and] searches in the chancellery of the Hierarchical Synod and in the flat of the director of the synodal chancellery G. Grabbe… During the search the clerical work of the Synod and many other documents were taken away to Germany for study. In 1945 they were acquired by the Soviet armies and are now in Moscow, in the State archive of the Russian federation…” (*Natsistskaia Germania i Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’* (Nazi Germany and the Orthodox Church), Moscow, 2002, p. 193; in Soldatov, op. cit., p. 12). (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Averky, *Zhizneopisanie Blazhennejshago Mitropolita Anastasia* (A Life of his Beatitude Metropolitan Anastasy), in *Troitskij Pravoslavnij Russkij Kalendar’ na 1998 g.* (Trinity Orthodox Russian Calendar for 1998), Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, pp. x-xi. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Monk Benjamin, *Letopis’ Tserkovnykh Sobytij (1939-1949)* (Chronicle of Church Events (1939-1949)), part 3, <http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis3.htm>, 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.” [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Andrew Shestakov, *Serbskaia Tserkov’: kratkij istoricheskij ekskurs* (The Serbian Church: a short digression); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 21-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Stella Alexander, *Church and State in Yugoslavia since 1945*, Cambridge University Press, 1979, chapter 1, 3; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Monk Gorazd, "Sviashchenomuchenik Gorazd" (Hieromartyr Gorazd), *Pravoslavnaia Rus' (Orthodox Russia)*, N 12 (1465), June 15/28, 1992. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Shkarovsky; in Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Wertz, "On the Serbian Orthodox Martyrs of the Second World War", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 33, N 1, January-February, 1983, pp. 15-26. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. 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). [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. 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 Jogoslaviji*, London: Libra Books, 1985, pp. 102, 174, 182; Zerjavic, *Gubici stanovnistva Jogoslavije u drugom svjetskom ratu*, Zagreb: Jugoslavensko Viktimolosko Drustvo, 1989, pp. 61, 82). [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. "Holy New Martyr Vukashin", *Orthodoxy Canada*, N 114, May-June, 1986, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Quoted from Liudmilla Perepiolkina, *Ecumenism – A Path to Perdition,* St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 230-233, and "Stepinac's Hat is Blood-Red", *The Christian Century*, January 14, 1953, pp. 42-43. See also the article by the Catholic writer Richard West, "The War in Bosnia", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, September 11/24, 1995, and Marko Markovich, “La Responsabilité de l’Eglise Catholique dans le Genocide des Serbes par les Oustachis au cours de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale”, in G. Ivanoff-Trinadtsaty, *Regards sur l’Orthodoxie* (Points of View on Orthodoxy), Lausanne: “L’Age d’Homme, 1997, pp. 173-190. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 43-44, 44-45; Bishop Gregory Grabbe, *Zavet Sviatogo Patriarkha* (The Testament of the Holy Patriarch), Moscow, 1996, p. 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. However, according to another version, he was arrested and condemned together with the Catholic Cardinal Stepinać. But while Stepinać received sixteen years in prison, being released after only two years, Metropolitan Germogen was executed (Ilya Goriachev, in Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 89-90). Several other ROCOR priests were killed by the partisans during the war, such as Fr. Yakovlevsky, who was killed in one of the villages of Pozhevachky region in 1941-42, Fr. D.N. Novoseltsev, who with his wife, daughter and a Cossack worker was killed in the village of Milichintsy, near Valievsk Kamenitsa in 1942-43, Fr. Gregory Volkov, who served in the village of Klenie and was killed in 1944, and Fr. John Voskoboynikov, who was captured on April 5, 1945 near Zagreb in Croatia and disappeared without trace (*Holy Trinity Calendar for 1999).* [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 13-14, 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 67-69. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Protopriest Alexis Mikrikov, “Unia s MP privedet k dukhovnoj katastrofe” (The Unia with the MP will lead to a spiritual catastrophe), <http://metanthonymemorial.org/VernostNo34.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’* (Church Life), 1942, N 4; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Synodal Archive of ROCOR, d. 15/41, l.27-30; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Overy, op. cit., p. 162. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Cited in Alan Bullock, *Hitler and Stalin*, London: Harper Collins, 1991, p. 801. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Cited by Alexeyev and Stavrou, op. cit., pp. 60-61. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. I. Altman, *Kholokost i evrejskoe soprotivlenie na okkupirovannoj territorii SSSR* (The Holocaust and Jewish resistance in the occupied territories of the USSR); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Shkarovsky, *Pravoslavie i Rossia* (Orthodoxy and Russia); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 41-42. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Archbishop Athanasius (Martos); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Synodal Archive of ROCOR, d. 15/41, l.27-30; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 45-46. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 63-64. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 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]. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. *Poslanie k russkim pravoslavnym liudiam po povodu ‘Obraschenia patriarkha Aleksia k arkipastyriam i kliru tak nazyvaemoj Karlovatskoj orientatsii’* (Epistle to the Russian Orthodox people on the ‘Address of Patriarch Alexis to the archpastors and clergy of the so-called Karlovtsy orientation), in G.M. Soldatov, *Arkhierejskij Sobor Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi Zagranitsej, Miunkhen (Germania) 1946 g.* (The Hierarchical Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad at Munich in 1946), Minneapolis, 2003, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Soldatov, op. cit., pp. 12, 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. M.V. Shkarovsky, *Pravoslavie i Rossia* (Orthodoxy and Russia); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Metropolitan 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.” [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Shumilo, “Sovietskij Rezhim i ‘Sovietskaia Tserkov’’ v 40-e-50-e gody XX stoletia” (The Soviet Regime and the ‘Soviet Church’ in the 40s and 50s of the 20th Century), <http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=page&pid=678>. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. “Iosiflianskie obschiny v blokadnom Leningrade” (Josephite Communities in Blockaded Leningrad), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia),* N 14 (1731), July 15/28, 2003, pp. 12-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. See also Fomin, op. cit., p. 125; Wassilij Alexeev and Keith Armes, "German Intelligence: Religious Revival in Soviet Territory", *Religion in Communist Lands*, vol. 5, N 1, Spring, 1977, pp. 27-30 (V.M.). [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. See D. Volkogonov, *Triumf i Tragedia* (Triumph and Tragedy*)*, Moscow: Novosti, 1989, book II, part 1, pp. 382-83; Shkvarovsky, *Iosiflianstvo*, 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.) [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. 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, op. cit., part 3, p. 53). This report was published in full in Russian in Monk Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 53-60, and in English in Felix Corbey (ed.), *Religion in the Soviet Union: an archival reader,* New York: New York University Press, 1996. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Shumilo, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Razumov, 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. See also Alexei Verkhoiantsev, “Sviaschennik Dmitri Dudko: ‘Ia nizko klaniaius’ Stalinu”, *Svobodnaia Pressa,* 16 April, 2012, <http://svpressa.ru/society/article/54473/>. 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) [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Levitin-Krasnov, *Likhie Gody, 1925-1941 (The Savage Years, 1925-1941)*, Paris: YMCA Press, 1977. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Rayfield, op. cit., p. 405. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Blum, LaSalle University Thesis, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Rayfield, op. cit., p. 405. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Rayfield, op. cit., p. 405. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Vasilieva, O., Kniashevsky, P. "Tainaia Vecheria" (The Last Supper), *Liternaturnaia Rossia (Literary Russia)*, N 39, September 27, 1991. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Shumilo, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Shumilo, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Shumilo, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. According to Monk Benjamin (op. cit., p. 60): head of the third department of the Fifth Administration. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Radzinsky, *Stalin*, p. 508. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. <http://p-alexey.livejournal.com/340513.html>, March 11, 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Babkin, “K 130-letiu ‘Bogodannogo Vozhdia’; tri dokumenta epokhi”, [www.portal-credo.ru/site/print.php?act=lib&id=2633](http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/print.php?act=lib&id=2633). [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Shumilo, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Vasilieva, op. cit.; Bishop Tikhon of San Francisco (OCA), “Truth/Consequences”, [ORTHODOX@LISTSERV.INDIANA.EDU](mailto:ORTHODOX@LISTSERV.INDIANA.EDU), archives for September 21, 1999. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. GARF, f. 6991, op. 1, d. 5, l. 1; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 66. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 61-63. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. “Direktivy NKGB SSSR o sozdanii RPTs MP in po obnovlentsam iz Arkhiva SBU” (Directives of the NKGB USSR on the Creation of the ROP-MP and on the Renovationists from the Archives of the SBU”, *Russkaia Pravoslavnia Tserkov’ Zagranitsej* (Church of the Holy New Martyrs, Moscow), December 8, 2017,

    http://rpczmoskva.org.ru/oficialnye-dokumenty/direktivy-nkgb-sssr-o-sozdanii-rpc-mp-i-po-obnovlencam-iz-arxiva-sbu.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. "Pis'mo 2-oe Katakombnogo Episkopa A. k F.M." (The Second Letter of Catacomb Bishop A. to F.M.), *Russkij* Pastyr' (Russian Pastor), N 14, III-1992; *Russkoe Pravoslavie (Russian Orthodoxy)*, 1996, N 2 (2), pp. 10, 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Karpov, in Edward E. Roslof, *Red Priests: Renovationism, Russian Orthodoxy, and Revolution, 1905-1946*, Indiana University Press, 2002, pp. 194-195. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Roslof, op. cit., p. 195. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. See Metropolitan John (Snychev) of St. Petersburg, *Mitropolit Manuil (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”. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Roslof, op. cit., p. 196. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Hierodeacon Jonah (now Bishop Nectarius) (Yashunsky), "Sergianstvo: Politika ili Dogmatika?" (Sergianism: Politics or Dogmatics?), 29 April / May 12, 1993, pp. 2-3, 5 (MS). Since, for Sergius, salvation was not the Truth of Holy Orthodoxy, it is not surprising to find the seeds of ecumenism in him. Thus in his article, “The Relationship of an Orthodox Person to his Church and to the Heterodox” (*Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*)*, 1993, N 3) he wrote: “Outside the Church one does *not* find an immediate darkness between the Church and the heretical communities. Rather, there is found a partial shadow, which in its own way falls upon the schismatics and the self-willed (heretics). These two groups cannot be in the strict sense considered strangers to the Church nor completely torn away from Her.” [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Polosin (Sergius Ventsel), "Razmyshlenia o Teokratii v Rossii" (Thoughts on Theocracy in Russia), *Vestnik Khristianskogo Informatsionnogo Tsentra* (Herald of the Christian Information Centre), N 48, November 24, 1989. Fr. Michael Ardov has argued that the Soviets would not have been able to exert such pressure on the Church if it had been ruled by a Synod, as before the revolution, rather than by a Patriarch, as after the 1917-18 Council. (“Takticheskaia pobeda obernulas’ strategicheskoj oshibkoj” (A Tactical Victory Turned out to be a Strategic Error), <http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/print.php?act=kolokol_texts&id=70>) [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. “They say that not long before his death Sergius had a vision of Christ, after which he sobbed for a long time over the crimes he had committed.” (Shumilo, op. cit.) [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Regelson, http://www.regels.org/1944.htm8/18 мая. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Shumilo, op. cit. Documents recently published by the SBU, the Ukrainian equivalent of the KGB, have demonstrated that all the candidates approved for participation in the 1945 council were vetted for their loyalty by the NKGB. (“SBU rassekretila arkhivy: moskovskogo patriarkha v 1945 godu izbrali agenty NKGB” (The SBU has unlocked the archives: the Moscow Patriarch was elected in 1945 by agents of the NKGB), *Znak,* Deember 10, 2017, https://www.znak.com/2017-12-10/sbu\_rassekretila\_arhivy\_moskovskogo\_patriarha\_v\_1945\_godu\_izbirali\_agenty\_nkgb). [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. 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), *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia* (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), vol. 158, I-1990, p. 92. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Archdeacon Vasily Marushak, *Sviatitel’-khirurg: zhitie arkhiepiskopa Luki (Vojno-Iasnetsogo) Святитель-хирург* (Holy Hierarch Surgeon: the Life of Archbishop Luke (Voyno-Yasenetskogo)), Moscow, 2006, p. 225. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), N 2, 1944, pp. 26-28; N 4, 1943, p. 25; cited in Pospielovsky, *The Russian Church under the Soviet Regime*, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 208-209. In 1941 Metropolitan Sergius said something similar: “The heart of the Christian is closed for the fascist beasts; it oozes out only an annihilating deadly hatred for the enemy…” (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 34). [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Protopriest Valerius Lapkovsky, “Kto Vozdvigal Pamiatnik Arkhiepiskopu Luke?” (Who Raised the Monument to Archbishop Luke?), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia)*, N 17 (1566), September 1/14, 1996, p. 10; I.I. Voloshin, “Kanonizatsia Moskovskoj patriarkhiej arkhiepiskopa Luka (Vojno-Yasenetskogo) kak znamenie vremeni (“The Canonization by the Moscow Patriarchate of Archbishop Luke (Vojno-Yasenetsky) as a sign of the times), *Vertograd-Inform*, N 6 (63), 2000, pp. 8-17. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Shumilo, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Gordun, op. cit., p. 94. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Jane Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, London: Croom Helm, 1986, p. 215. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. Alexeev, "Marshal Stalin doveriaet Tserkvi" (Marshal Stalin trusts the Church), *Agitator*, N 10, 1989, pp. 27-28. In view of the fact that Patriarch Christopher is often touted as an example of a good, conservative new calendarist, it should be noted that he was always something of a sergianist. In a paper entitled “The Recognition of the Patriarchs by the State”, written in 1937 when he was Metropolitan of Leontopolis, he stated, falsely, that “from the beginning, according to the custom prevailing in the Church, which was so continuously maintained, so that the law or canon was rendered inviolable, there is no Archbishop or Patriarch in the Church who was not recognized by the State after his ecclesiastical election. If someone was elected and not recognized by the State, he hastened to or was compelled to abdicate, in order for someone to be elected in his place. Such great importance was given in the Church to the confirmation of the election of the Patriarchs by the State that the ecclesiastical election ended up by being regarded as wholly non-existent if the recognition of the State did not follow, and after this, the enthronement…” [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Shumilo, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. RTsKhIDNI.F.17.Op.132.D.111.L.27; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 81. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. Stavros Markou, personal communication, June 14, 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. 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” (in B. Boyd, *Nabokov: The American Years,* London, 1992, p. 85). [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Eulogius, *Puti moej zhizni* (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. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Soldatov, op. cit., p. 11, footnote 6. However, Shumilo (op. cit.) says: “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.” [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Ardov, “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 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.). Alexander Yakovlev writes that during the war the authorities executed 157,000 Red Army soldiers (the equivalent of fifteen divisions) and almost a million were arrested (*A Century of Russian Violence in Soviet Russia,* Yale University Press, 2003).

     Soldatov 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.”

     Schema-Monk Epiphany (Chernov) writes of several Catacomb Church martyrs who were shot for refusing to fight in the Soviet army (*Tserkov’ Katakombnaia na Zemle Rossijskoj (The Catacomb Church on the Russian Land)*, Woking, 1980 (MS)). [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Soldatov, op. cit.; Archbishop Savva (Raevsky), “Lienz”, *Orthodox Life*, vol. 56, N 4, 2005, pp. 2-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. Prot. A. Kiselev, *Oblik gen. A.A. Vlasova* (The Face of General A.A. Vlasov), appendix VI; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 90-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. 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” (“Radosti Paskhi i Skorb’ Pobedy” (The Joys of Pascha and the Sorrow of Victory)), *Moskovskie Novosti (Moscow News)* and *Vertograd,* N 520, May 14, 2005. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Savvin, “Kollaboratsionizm kak Fundament Svyatoj Rusi” (Collaborationism as the Foundation of Holy Rus’), <http://www.portal-cred.ru/site/print.php?act=fresh&id=1284>, June 9, 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. These bishops were: Metropolitan Panteleimon (Rozhnovsky), who immediately left ROCOR and remained out of communion with any Church until his death in 1950; Archbishop Benedict (Bobkovsky), formerly of Grodno and Belostok, who received an appointment in Germany until his death in 1951; Archbishop Philotheus (Harko), formerly of Mogilev and Mstislav, who became Archbishop of Hamburg until his death in 1986; Bishop Athanasius (Martos), formerly of Vitebsk and Podolsk, who was appointed as Archbishop in Australia until his death in 1985; Bishop Stefan (Sevbo), formerly of Smolensk, who was appointed Bishop of Vienna until his death in 1965; Bishop Paul (Melentiev), formerly of Briansk, who fell away into Catholicism in 1948; Bishop Gregory (Boriskevich), formerly of Gomel, who became a bishop in Canada and then the USA, dying in 1957; Bishop Theodore (Rafalsky), formerly of Brest, who received an appointment in Australia until his death in 1955; Archbishop Panteleimon (Rudyk), formerly of Kiev, who was appointed to Argentina, but in 1957 was expelled from ROCOR for homosexuality and in 1959 joined the MP, dying in 1968; Bishop Leonty (Filippovich), formerly of Zhitomir and Volhynia, was appointed to Paraguay and then Chile, dying in 1971 (he had joined ROCOR on May 17, 1944); Bishop Eulogius (Markovsky), formerly of Vinnitsa, who received an appointment in North America and died in 1951; and Archbishop Demetrius (Magan), formerly of Ekaterinoslav, who in 1948 joined the American Metropolia schism and died in 1968 (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 108-109, 75). For more details of this Council, see G.M. Soldatov, op. cit. and http://metanthonymemorial.org/sobor1946.pdf (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. Averky, op. cit., pp. xiv-xvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. Andrei Psarev, “The Development of Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia’s Attitude Towards Other Local Orthodox Churches”, <http://www.sobor2006.com/printerfriendly2.php?id=119_0_3_0>, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Protopriest Alexander Lebedev, *Pora uzhe nam znat’ svoiu istoriu* (It’s time we knew our history); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 116-117. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Archbishop Vitaly (Maximenko), *Motivy moej zhizni* (Motifs of my Life), 1955; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 117-118. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. I.M. Andreyev, *History of the Russian Church from the Revolution to our Days*, Jordanville, 1952; quoted in *Is the Grace of God present in the Soviet Church?,* Wildwood, Alberta, 2000, p. 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Bogolepov, *Towards An Americah Orthodox Church: The Establishment of an Autocephalous Orthodox Church,* Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1963, 2001, pp. 96-97. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. Maximenko, sppech at the Fifth Diocesan Congress, 3/16 March, 1952; in *Motivy moej zhizni* (Motives of my Life*),* Jordanville, 1955; reprinted in *Troitskij Pravoslavnij Kalendar’ na 2006 g.* (Trinity Orthodox Calendar for 2006),p. 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 142-143. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. Lardas, “The Old Calendar Movement in the Greek Church”, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jurdanville, 1983 (unpublished thesis). [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. Bishop Ambrose of Methone, personal communication, November 5, 2005. For example, on April 20, 1943 Fr. Constantine Angelakis was shot for taking part in a Greek national liberation movement (*Ekklesiastiki Aletheia* (Church Truth), December 16, 1977; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 49). [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. George Margaritis, *The Greek Church and the Holocaust,* p. 13; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. Churchill, *Road to Victory*; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. Bishop Callistus (Ware); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. The above account is taken from Metropolitan Calliopius of Pentapolis, *Saint Joseph de Desphina (St. Joseph of Desphina)*, Lavardac: Orthodox Monastery of St. Michael, 1988. In 2014 Joseph was canonized by the True Orthodox Church of Greece under Archbishop Kallinikos. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. Fr. Andrew Sidniev, *Florinskij raskol i Tserkov’ IPKh Gretsii* (The Florinite Schism and the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 35-36. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. His spiritual son Archimandrite Cyprian (Theodosios). However, although he died as an Old Calendarist, he was buried by local new calendarists. See *Ekklesia G.O.X. Imerologion 2008,* p. 43 and Monk Antonios, op. cit., p. 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. The mutual accusations are summarized in Metropolitan Calliopius, *Nobles et Saints Combats*, op. cit., p. 150, note 8: “a) Bishop Matthew accused Bishop Germanos of celebrating the mysteries for the new calendarists, of recruiting priests who were strangers to the struggle, of changing the typicon, of behaving in an inconceivable manner towards his priests, of speaking against the Mother of God….

     “b) Bishop Germanos accused Bishop Matthew of having published books on impious subjects and from apocryphal sources, like *On the subject of the descent of the gifts of the Lord,* and *The Lord did some miracles by prayer*. He reproached him for attaching a certain credence to the demons who made him publish ‘The Ecstasies of Vasiliki Kyriazis’, who was possessed by the devil. He could not accept that he proclaimed himself to be a saint, that he called himself ‘the only Orthodox and saved bishop’, that he would ascend onto the patriarchal throne of Constantinople, that he no longer used the prayer, ‘Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers…’ and that he deviated from the typicon, that he ordained ‘deaconesses’, that he permitted monks to take confession (see the letter signed by the monks of the Monastery of the Archangels, Athikia, Corinth: Gideon, Akakios, Gerasimos, Hilarion, Cosmas, Artemios, Hierotheos, Jeremiah, Callistus, Nicodemus and Joseph).”

     For more on the works of dubious Orthodoxy published by Bishop Matthew, see Monk Antonios, op. cit., pp. 27-34. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. I.M. Andreev (Andreevsky), "The Catacomb Church in the Russian Land", op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. Shkarovsky, *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ pri Staline i Khrushcheve* (The Russian Orthodox Church under Stalin and Khruschev)*,* Moscow, 2005, p. 205. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. Shumilo, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. Shumilo, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. TsKhSD, f. 5, op. 16, d. 650, l. 18; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, p. 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. Shumilo, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. Osipova, *O Premiloserdij…*, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. Protodeacon Vasily Maruschak, *Sviatitel’-Khirurg*, p. 225. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. According to figures of the Council for the Affairs of the ROC, on June 1, 1945, there were 10342 functioning churches in the MP, including 6072 in Ukraine and 2297 in Russia. In the same year 104 monasteries were functioning, including 22 in Transcarpathia, in which there lived 4632 monastics (M. Shkarovsky, in Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 87-88). [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. 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, N 10 (100), June, 1990, pp. 5-6) [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. Shkvarovsky, *Iosiflianstvo*, op. cit., pp. 192-197. Thus in November, 1948 the head of the MGB in Tula district noted that 30 Orthodox priests who did not recognize the Moscow Patriarchate were operating in the district. In 1949 the head of the Council for the affairs of the Orthodoxy Church, G. Karpov, noted that in 1948 there were 175 illegal prayer houses in Ryazan province, which number had risen to 190 in 1949. These were served by about 200 clergy (Shkarovsky, *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ pri Staline i Khruscheve,* Moscow, 2005, pp. 255-256). [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=page&pid=1048. [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. 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)*, NN 7-8, July-August, 1985. On Bishop Michael, see I.V. Il’ichev, *Voin Khristov Vernij i Istinnij: Tainij Episkop IPTs Mikhail (Yershov) (*A True and Faithful Warrior of Christ: The Secret Bishop of the TOC Michael (Yershov), Moscow: Bratonezh, 2011. On Bishop Barnabas, see V. Moss "Holy Hieroconfessor Barnabas of Pechersk", *Orthodox Life*, January-February, 1995. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. Osipova, *O Premiloserdij…*, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. “I vrata adovy ne odoleiut ee…” (And the Gates of Hell will not Prevail against her), *Suzdal’skie Eparkhial’nie Vedomosti* (Suzdal Diocesan News*)*, N 4, June-July, 1998, pp. 32-40. [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. Bishop Ambrose (von Sievers), "Gosudarstvo i 'katakomby'" (The State and the ‘Catacombs’), in Filatov, op. cit., pp. 105, 111 [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. Shumilo, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. N. Talberg, “Sviataia Rus’ na Sviatoj Zemle” (Holy Rus’ on the Holy Land), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), N 16, 1958, p. 8; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. Protopriest Victor Potapov; “RPZTs i sud’by russkoj Palestiny” (ROCOR and the Destinies of Russian Palestine); “How ROCOR lost Jerusalem”, *Vertograd-Inform*, N 20, October, 2000, pp. 23-36. However, the Soviets retained the main mission building, and after the Arab-Israeli war of 1967, and the breaking of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Israel, this mission became the location of KGB residency in Israel (Christopher Andrew, Vasili Mitrokhin, *The KGB and the World: The Mitrokhin Archive II,* London: Penguin, 2006, p. 230. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. Shumilo, op. cit [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. 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 n 1966 – Metropolitan.

     “Archimandrite Nicholas (Gibbes), former teacher of English to the children of the Tsar-Martyr, who followed the Royal family to Tobolsk and Ekaterinburg, moved from ROCOR to the Moscow Patriarchate. This move was aided by conversations with Metropolitan Nicholas (Yarushevich), who was then visiting England. Archbishop Basil (Krivoshein) recalls: ‘Metropolitan Nicholas produced the most powerful impression on Archimandrite Nicholas (Gibbes); he healed his mind and was under the influence of his attractive personality, although because of his extremely suspicious character and as an ‘inveterate Englishman’ he was somewhat cautious in relating to him. He was disturbed by the ‘peace’ speeches of Metropolitan Nicholas and their extremely sharp attacks on the western world. I objected to him (and this was my sincere conviction) that it was not necessary to attach any significance to these ‘peace’ speeches, since they were said under duress, and he was doing this for the good of the Church and as it were in exchange for these privileges and relaxations which Stalin would undoubtedly provide the Church in the post-war years. I have to admit that I hardly read Metropolitan Nicholas’ political speeches on the pages of the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, since I found them of little interest. But I was sorry because of the harm they brought to the good name of the Russian Orthodox church in the West and among our ecclesiastical schismatics’” (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 98). [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. Soldatov, op. cit., p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
169. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 94. [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
170. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 114-115. [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
171. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 94-95. [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
172. Shumilo, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
173. M.V. Shkarovsky; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 95. [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
174. Siukonen, “Moscow Patriarchate pressured Finnish Orthodox Church after war”, *Helsingin Sanomat*, September 28, 2007. [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
175. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 102-103. [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
176. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 106-107. [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
177. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
178. “Declaration”, sworn under oath on the Cross and the Holy Gospel by members of the Russian Emigration Association of Shanghai: G.K. Bolotov, P.I. Alexeenko, V.V. Krasovsky, N.N. Pleshanov, B.M. Krain, B.L. Kuper, M.A. Moshkin, 9 May, 1963, San Francisco. See also Monk Benjamin, “Arkhiepiskop Ioann (Maksimovich) kak okhranitel’ tserkovnago imushchestva v Shankhae” (Archbishop John (Maximovich) as the Preserver of Church Property in Shanghai), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’ (Orthodox Russia)*, N 23, December 1/14, 1999, pp. 5- 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
179. Archive of the Department of External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, d. № 24; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 88-89; Archbishop Ambrose (von Sievers), “Proslavlen li u Boga Arkhiepiskop Ioann (Maksimovich)?” (Has Archbishop John (Maximovich) been Glorified by God?), *Russkoe Pravoslavie (*Russian Orthodoxy*),* N 2 (16), 1999, p. 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
180. “Declaration”, op. cit. According to the oral tradition of the brotherhood of the community of St. Job, the telegram was sent by the superior of the community, Archimandrite Seraphim (Ivanov) in the name of the metropolitan, since contact with the latter had been lost because of the movement of the front line and the moving of the Synod from Belgrade to Munich and then to Geneva. They say that on hearing of this ‘arbitrariness’, the metropolitan thanked Fr. Seraphim, but told him not to use his name again (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 95). [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
181. Fr. Andrew Kencis, [monpress@telusplanet.net](mailto:monpress@telusplanet.net), December 3, 1998; Protopriests Valery Lukianov, *Man of God: Saint John of San Francisco*, Redding, Ca: Nikodemos Orthodox Publication Society, 1991, p. 46. Matushka Anastasia Shatilova writes that she saw St. John’s letter of repentance to the Synod in the Synod archives (*Church News,* April, 1998, vol. 10*,* N 4 (71), p. 6). [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
182. “Declaration”, op. cit. As an American publication put it: “By ukaz of Patriarch Alexis of Moscow, dated 27 December, 1945, the Mission in China was re-united to the Russian Mother Church and the break caused by the schismatic activities of the Karlovitz Synod was healed. But the perspectives for church work were somewhat clouded by the schism in 1946 of the vicar bishop of Shanghai, John Maximovitch, who took the lead in an opposition movement against the Patriarch and his ruling bishop at Peking” (*One Church*, vol. 12, NN 9-10, September-October, 1958, p. 228). [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
183. “Declaration”, op. cit. Protopresbyter Elias Wen writes: “After World War II, many Russian émigrés in Shanghai, including some clergy, took Soviet passports. The head of the mission, Archbishop Victor, was among those who did so, as was the senior rector of our cathedral, Protopresbyter Michael Rogozhin. We, together with Vladyka John, did not follow this example. I remember that Vladyka John received an announcement from the Soviet consulate that Archbishop Victor was coming to Shanghai. Vladyka John gathered together all of the clergy and announced that he would not meet with Vladyka Victor. We supported him in this.

     “When Archbishop Victor arrived in Shanghai from Peking, eight Komsomol youths accompanied him as he walked towards the cathedral, where Father Michael had just finished a moleben. We watched these events from the church house. The next day, it happened I had to meet with Archbishop Victor. He called us ‘Johnnites’. ‘Yes, and do you know why we favor Vladyka John?’ I asked him. ‘If you want to know, I will tell you. Who brought Vladyka John here? You brought him to us. After Vladyka John’s arrival you yourself came here many times and said to him: ‘Vladyka John, I respect you, I recognize your high standards in life, and you are a good leader. Continue in this way. And if the clergy don’t listen to you, don’t hesitate to chastise them. Vladyka, didn’t you say these things?’ ‘Yes, I did,’ admitted Vladyka Victor. ‘That’s why we listen to him. And now you are against Vladyka John. You are now a Soviet citizen, and it is impossible to have any interaction with you. I am Chinese; our clergy remained White, but you are Soviet ‘Red’. Do as you like…’” (Archpriest Peter Perekrestov, *Man of God – Archbishop John of Shanghai and San Francisco*, Redding, Ca.: Nikodemos Orthodox Publication Society, 1994, pp. 64-65) [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
184. “Declaration”, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
185. *Russkij Palomnik* (The Russian Pilgrim), N 9, 1994, p. 16; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
186. “Declaration”, op. cit. Jonah Seraphimovich Ma, a close disciple of Archbishop John who worked for the Chinese Nationalist government, testifies: “I advised Archbishop John to apply for Chinese citizenship; finally he agreed. After processing all of the necessary documents for the Archbishop, I personally delivered to Archbishop John the government’s approval. Only after the Archbishop acquired Chinese citizenship did the Soviets abandon their plans to capture Archbishop John and take over the cathedral in Shanghai. Our beloved Archbishop John and the cathedral were saved.” (in Protopresbyter Valery Lukianov, “The Truth concerning Vladyka John of Shanghai, the Wonderworker: An Historical Inquirty”). [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
187. Cited by Bishop Job (Konovaliuk), “’Sviatoj Raskol’nik’, Kak sv. Ioann Shanhaijski s kitajskimi natsionalistami zakhvatyval kharmy MP” (“The Holy Schismatic’, <https://credo.press/221001>, November 22, 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
188. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 116. “Only in 2003, in a book devoted to the niece of Vladyka Victor (Sviatin), Xenia Keping, were we given quite definitely to understand that Archbishop Victor was killed in the Soviet ‘fatherland’. The reason for this was said to his unwillingness to be reconciled with the pilfering of Russian Church property in China by Soviet officials, both state and patriarchal” (T.A. Bogdanova, A.K. Klementiev, “Put’ Khailarskago Sviatitelia” (The Path of the Bishop of Hailar), *Pravoslavnij Put’* (The Orthodox Way), 2005, p. 62).

     Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 116. [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
189. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 116. Metropolitan Valentine of Suzdal writes: “I remember the year 1956, the Dormition men’s monastery in Odessa, where I was an unwilling witness as there returned from the camps and prisons, having served their terms, those hierarchs who returned to Russia after the war so as to unite with the ‘Mother Church’ at the call of Stalin’s government and the Moscow patriarchate: ‘the Homeland has forgiven 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). [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
190. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 1245-125. See also ”Tserkovnie Iudy” (Church Judases), *Slovo (The Word)*, N 26, December 25, 1949; in von Sievers, “Bezobrazniki”, op. cit., p. 20; N. Larnikov, “I poshel Vladyka Nestor tem zhe putem…” (And Vladyka Nestor went along the same path), <http://listok.com/article54.htm>. [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
191. Nun Cassia (Senina), *Stolp Ognennij: Mitropolit N’iu-Iorkskiji Vostochno-Amerikanskij Filaret (Voznesensky)* (A Fiery Pillar: Metropolitan Philaret of New York and Eastern America), St. Petersburg, 2007, p. 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
192. Draza Mikhailović was executed by the communists on July 4/17, 1946. Some doubt whether Mikhailović was a true martyr, accusing him of practising "ethnic cleansing" against Muslims during World War II. See Norman Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia*, Texas A&M University Press, 1995, pp. 18-19. However, Norman Malcolm argues (op. cit., p. 179) that there is no definite evidence for this. Tim Judah agrees (*The Serbs*, London: Yale University Press, 1997, pp. 120-121). See also K. Glazkov, "K 50-letiu raspravy nad Dragoliubom-Drazhej Mikhailovichem" (To the 50th Anniversary of the Execution of Draza-Dragoliuboj Mikhailovich), *Pravoslavnaia Rus' (Orthodox Russia)*, N 17 (1566), 1/14 September, 1996, p. 5. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
193. After being released from Dachau, Bishop Nikolai chose not to return to communist Yugoslavia, but emigrated to the United States. In 1951 he settled in the American Metropolia’s St. Tikhon monastery, eventually becoming rector. He reposed in 1956 in very suspicious circumstances – he may well have been murdered. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
194. Things got worse in 1947 when Tito placed a Catholic at the head of the Commission for Religious Confessions (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 122-123). (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
195. 70 of Metropolitan Joanikije’s priests died with him (The Diocesan Council of the Free Serbian Orthodox Diocese of the U.S.A. and Canada, *A Time to Choose,* Third Lake, Ill.: Monastery of the Most Holy Mother of God, 1981, p. 10). According to Norman Malcolm (*Bosnia. A Short History*, London: Papermac, 1996, p.193), up to 250,000 people [of all the nations of Yugoslavia] were killed by Tito’s mass shootings, forced death marches and concentration camps in the period 1945-6. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
196. Archbishop Averky of Jordanville recounts the same anecdote in *Sovremennost’ v svete Slova Bozhia* (The Contemporary World in the Light of the Word of God), Sermons and Speeches, vol. I (1951-1960), Jordanville, 1975, St. Petersburg, 1995, p. 255. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
197. Moreover, on May 19-20, 1946 a Hierarchical Council of the Serbian Orthodox Church allowed the Church in Czechoslovakia to enter the MP. This decision was confirmed on May 15, 1948 (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 110). (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
198. He had been waiting for the return to the country of King Peter. However, in the autumn of 1946 Archbishop Eleutherius (Vorontsov) of the MP persuaded Patriarch Gabriel to change his mind. In a report to the Central Committee on February 14, 1947, G. Karpov remarked that Archbishop Eleutherius ‘at the command of Patriarch Alexis has conducted a series of conversations with Gabriel and persuaded him of the necessity of returning to Yugoslavia and working with the democratic government of Tito, abandoning hopes of the restoration of the monarchy. In December, 1946 the Serbian patriarch declared that he remains faithful to the traditional friendship with Russia and categorically rejects an orientation towards the West. Patriarch Gabriel also expressed the thought of the necessity of the gathering in Moscow of representatives of all the Orthodox Churches. At the Pan-Slavic Congress in Belgrade in December, 1946, Patriarch Gabriel expressed that which we in Moscow have been impatiently waiting for him to say: ‘… he considers that the seniority in the Orthodox world should belong to the Moscow Patriarchate, and the Russian Church should become the Mother for the Slavic churches.’ Developing this thought and noting the anti-Slavic and anti-Soviet ‘undermining’ work of the Vatican, Patriarch Gabriel said: ‘That is why we need to be together with the Russian people and the Russian Church, in order to oppose all the snares and enemy intrigues of the whole of the West headed by the Pope of Rome and his supporters.” (RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 125, d. 407, l. 27; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 114). (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
199. Bishop Akakije, in V. Moss, *Letopis Velike Bitke (The Chronicle of a Great Battle),* Belgrade, 2008, pp. 339-345. [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
200. Bishop Akakije, op. cit., p. 395. According to a report dated October 18, 1961 and prepared by the United States Senate’s Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary, in 1950, on the death of Patriarch Gabriel, the communists “made certain that the new patriarch would be a ‘cooperative’ one, and forced the election of a weak man, Bishop Vikentije Prodanov, who became a manageable tool of communist propaganda.” (*A Time to Choose,* op. cit., p. 10). (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
201. *A Time to Choose,* op. cit., p. 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
202. M. Atavina, personal communication. [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
203. June 13, 2015. http://www.telegraf.rs/vesti/1111926-dobrica-cosic-krcun-i-udba-izabrali-su-germana-za-patrijarha-foto. [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
204. Popovich, "The Truth about the Serbian Orthodox Church in communist Yugoslavia", translated into Russian in *Vestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi za Granitsei* (Herald of the German Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad), NN. 2 and 3, 1992. [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
205. Bishop Akakije, op. cit., pp. 345-350. [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
206. Spector, *Facebook,* December 17, 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
207. Calciu, *Christ is Calling You!,* Forestville, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1997, pp. 95-96. [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
208. Calciu, op. cit., p. 96. [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
209. Monk Moise, *The Saint of the Prisons,* Sibiu: Agnos, 2009, pp. 107-113. [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
210. Etinger, *Spasennie v Kholokoste* (The Saved in the Holocaust); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 52-53. [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
211. Tsankov, Protopriest S. "Pokojnij Tsar Boris, kak religiozno-nravstvennaia lichnost'" (The Reposed Tsar Boris as a Religio-Moral Personality), *Pravoslavnaia Rus' (Orthodox Russia)*, N 18 (1495), 15/28 September, 1993; David Horbury, "Prince Kyril - Time to Restore History's Victim", *Royalty*, 1996, vol. 14, N 5, pp. 64-71. [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
212. Marchevsky, in *Pravoslavnaia Rus' (Orthodox Russia)*, N 1 (1454), January 1/14, 1992, p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
213. Shkvarovsky, *Istoria Russkoj Tserkovnoj Emigratsii* (A History of the Russian Church Emigration), St. Petersburg: Aleteia, 2009, p. 81. [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
214. Sobolev, in Shkvarovsky, op. cit., p. 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
215. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 128-131. [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
216. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 81. [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
217. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 105-106. [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
218. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 137-138. [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
219. K.E. Skurat, *Istoria Pomestnykh Pravoslavnykh Tserkvej* (A History of the Local Orthodox Churches); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
220. Archbishop Tikhon, “Tiazhkij Iudin grekh pered vsem Russkim narodom” (The terrible sin of Judas before the whole Russian people), <http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=page&pid=779>. [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
221. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 138-139. [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
222. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, pp. 1-2, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
223. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, pp. 11-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
224. Montefiore, *Titans of History*, London: Quercus, 2012, pp. 564-565. [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
225. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
226. Skurat, op. cit., in Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
227. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), N 8, 1951; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
228. RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 132, d. 8, l. 30; Monk Benjamin, *Letopis’ Tserkovnykh Sobytij* (Chronicle of Church Events), http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis3.htm, vol. 3, p. 128. [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
229. Maximus was removed because he was an opponent of ecumenism. When they asked him in 1965 what had been the reason for his deposition, he replied: “It’s not worth commenting on how they deposed me.” (*Agios Agathangelos Esphigmenites* (St. Agathangelos of Esphigmenou),№ 138, July-August, 1993). [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
230. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 128-131. [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
231. M.V. Shkarovsky; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 81. [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
232. M.V. Shkarovsky; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 105-106. [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
233. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 137-138. [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
234. K.E. Skurat, *Istoria Pomestnykh Pravoslavnykh Tserkvej* (A History of the Local Orthodox Churches); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
235. Metropolitan Tikhon, “Tiazhkij Iudin grekh pered vsem Russkim narodom” (The terrible sin of Judas before the whole Russian people), <http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=page&pid=779>. [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
236. Documents in M. Shkarovskij, *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ i Sovietskoe Gosudarstvo s 1943 po 1964 gg*. (The Russian Orthodox Church and the Soviet State from 1943 to 1964). [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
237. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1948, N 12, p. 6; cited in Yakunin, “V sluzhenii k kul’tu (Moskovskaia Patriarkhia i kul’t lichnosti Stalina)” (In the Service of the Cult (the Moscow Patriarchate and Stalin’s Cult of Personality), in Furman, D.E., Fr. Mark Smirnov (eds.), *Na puti k svobode* sovesti (On the Path to Freedom of Conscience), Moscow: Progress, 1989, p. 197. [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
238. Archimandrite Charalampus Vasilopoulos, *Oikoumenismos khoris maska* (Ecumenism Unmasked*)*, Athens: Orthodoxos Typos, 1988, p. 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
239. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 133. [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
240. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), N 8, 1951; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, pp. 12-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
241. Fr. George Macris, *The Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Movement*, Seattle: St. Nectarios Press, 1986, pp. 12-14. [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
242. “The Moscow Patriarchate and the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches”, *The Ecumenical Review*, 12, Winter, 1949, pp. 188-189; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 133-134. [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
243. Archive of the Hierarchical Synod, delo 5-48; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 133. This remark was made by the Synod of Bishops on February 21, 1948 in response to a request from Professor M.V. Zyzykin that they participate in the Amsterdam Congress (Andrew Psarev, “The Development of Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia’s Attitude Toward Other Local Orthodox Churches”, <http://www.sobor2006.com/printerfriendly2.php?id=119_0_3_0>, p. 6). [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
244. Quoted in Ludmilla Perepiolkina, *Ecumenism – A Path to Perdition,* St. Petersburg, 1999, p. 13. Cf. Archimandrite Kiprian (Kern) in 1947: "The state of ‘ecumenical’ meetings today is deplorable, noisy gathering of all manner of activists lacking in theological authority, who meet without any common language of tradition or criteria, or any single plan or program. Attendees are people who are totally diverse in every way, placed on the same level—a Greek metropolitan, a liberalizing professor with a priestly title or simply a layman, an amateur church publicist lacking any claim to theological training, young students from Anglican colleges, young girls from nameless and mysterious world organizations, and official reviewers from the Intelligence Service. And all of them traveling at someone’s expense in sleeping cars and airplanes, staying in the best hotels, and announced by posters, brochures, speeches, meetings, etc. These meetings conclude with resolutions of some sort, premature recognitions of hierarchy and ordinations on the part of the Romanian Church or a liberalizing theologian from the Balkans—and all this in an atmosphere of international tension, a desire to guarantee one’s own boundaries and hastily acquired territories, a lust for oil and markets, and so on and so on." [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
245. Soldatov, "Pravoslavie i Ekumenizm" (Orthodoxy and Ecumenism), *Mirianin (Layman)*, July-August, 1992, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
246. Metropolitan Nicholas of Piraeus, *Apantesis eis ton Theologon k. N. Kharisen* (Reply to the Theologian Mr. N. Kharisen), Athens, February, 1974, pp. 6-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-246)
247. Metropolitan Calliopius, *Nobles et Saints Combats des Vrais Chrétiens Orthodoxes de Grèce* (Noble and Holy Struggles of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece), vol. I, Lavardac, p. 151, note 11. According to another, Matthewite source, on November 28, 1945, four senior priests of the Matthewite Church, including Archimandrite Acacius (Papas) and Archpriest Eugene Tombros, implored Bishop Matthew to ordain bishops on his own, but he refused. [↑](#footnote-ref-247)
248. Petrovic, Re: [True-Faith] HOCNA—2, 29/11/00, [True-Faith@egroups.com](mailto:True-Faith@egroups.com). On December 7, 1947 Patriarch Alexis of Moscow wrote to Patriarch Christopher of Alexandria complaining that in the official organ of the State Church of Greece, *Ekklesia* (The Church) (№ 29-31, August 1, 1947), Metropolitan Chrysostom of Zacynthus had written that the Slavic Churches were as dangerous enemies of the Greek Churches as Papism, and that not one Orthodox Church should cooperate with the Moscow Patriarchate (GARF, f. 6991, op. 2, d. 65, l. 79-85; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, pp. 120-121. [↑](#footnote-ref-248)
249. Monk Antonios (Georgantas), *Ekklesia G.O.Kh. Ellados, 1924-2004: 80 eti fotos kai skotous* (The Church of the G.O.C. of Greece, 1924-2004: 80 years of light and darkness),Gortynia, Peloponnese: Monastery of St. Nicodemus, 2004, pp. 54-55. [↑](#footnote-ref-249)
250. Bishop Andrew, *Matthaios,* p. 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-250)
251. Monk Antonios, op. cit., pp. 34-51. [↑](#footnote-ref-251)
252. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 139-140. [↑](#footnote-ref-252)
253. St. Nicodemus, in *The Rudder*, Chicago: Orthodox Christian Educational Society, 1957, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-253)
254. See St. Nicephorus, “Answer to Question 1 of Monk Methodius”. [↑](#footnote-ref-254)
255. V.K. *Russkaia Zarubezhnaia Tserkov’ na Steziakh* Otsupnichestva (The Russian Church Abroad on the Path of Apostasy), St. Petersburg, 1999, p. 31. “’If three bishops cannot be obtained, it is fitting for the election to the episcopate to be made with two and *with one*’. *Kormchaia Kniga* (Rudder) of Patriarch Joseph [of Moscow]. Chapter 42 of Justinian the Emperor, folio 302 on the obverse. In the Ancient Church the sacrament of consecration to the episcopate was always accomplished *by only one bishop*, as follows from the rite of hierarchical consecration of the *Apostolic Tradition* of St. Hippolytus of Rome (II) and the *Apostolic Decrees* of St. Clement of Rome (VIII.4, 5), while the remaining bishops and members of the clergy stand near the altar *as witness to* the reality of the consecration. Cf. Protopresbyter N. Afanasiev, *Ekklesiologia vstuplenia v klir* (The Ecclesiology of Entering the Clergy), Kiev, 1997, pp. 38-42” (op. cit., p. 96, note 10).

     “The following were consecrated to the episcopate by one bishop: Monk-Martyr Nicon (*Prologue*, 23 March); Priest Disan by Bishop Heliodorus (*Prologue*, 9 April); St. Stephen of Sourozh consecrated one of his clergy to the episcopate (*Prologue*, 15 December); St. John Chrysostom consecrated bishops on his own in the place of his exile, Kuksa (*Margarit. Zhitie (Life)*, folio 158 on the obverse); St. Siderius of Palebistina was consecrated by one bishop, while St. Athanasius the Great not only confirmed this ordination, but also raised him to the rank of metropolitan of Ptolemais (*Pamyatniki drevnej Khristianskoj Istorii* (Monuments of Ancient History), vol. I, p. 88); Meletius, Patriarch of Alexandria blessed Bishop Gideon of Lvov to consecrated metropolitans and bishops for Little Russia on his own (*Kniga Kirillova* (Cyril’s Book*)*, fol. 487)… Besides these examples, there are the following: Bishop Gabriel of Zarna consecrated three bishops for the Church of Greece on his own in 1825, which was then confirmed by the Council of 1834; Bishop Joasaph of Kodiak was consecrated by one bishop since the second was not able to come. *Opredelenia Arkh. Sobora RPZTs* ot 15(28).9.1971 (Decrees of the Hierarchical Council of the ROCOR of September 15/28, 1971)” (op. cit., p. 96, note 11). Concerning the consecration of Bishop Joasaph of Kokiak, the Russian Holy Synod wrote to Empress Catherine about this: “Although according to the rules of the Holy Fathers this consecration must be performed by no less than two or three bishops, this canon refers more to his election to the episcopal rank, which has already been accomplished by the Synod, hence by the power and operation of this election his consecration to the episcopacy due to necessity may be celebrated solely by the Bishop of Irkutsk” (*The Orthodox Word*, vol. 35, NN. 206-7, May-August, 1999, p. 128; cf. Holy Transfiguration Monastery, *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, Boston, 1998, p. 91).

     It may be noted that St. Augustine, first archbishop of Canterbury, also consecrated bishops on his own with the blessing of St. Gregory the Great, Pope of Rome, and that St. Gregory the Wonderworker was consecrated “at a distance” by one hierarch (November 17). [↑](#footnote-ref-255)
256. Metropolitan Calliopius, *Nobles et Saints Combats*, pp. 67-68. [↑](#footnote-ref-256)
257. See Hieromonk Theodoretus, *To Imerologiakon Skhisma* (The Calendar Schism), pp. 8-9, and Lardas, op. cit., p. 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-257)
258. Metropolitan Calliopius, *Nobles et Saints Combats*, p. 144. [↑](#footnote-ref-258)
259. *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, Boston, 1998, pp. 64-66. [↑](#footnote-ref-259)
260. Hieromonk Amphilochius, *Gnosesthe tin Alitheian* (Know the Truth), Athens, 1984, p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-260)
261. Bishop Kallistos (Ware) of Diokleia, letter to the author, February 5, 1991. [↑](#footnote-ref-261)
262. Cited by Bishop Arsenius (Zhadanovsky), *Vospominania* (Reminiscences), Moscow: St. Tikhon's Theological Institute, 1995, p. 210. [↑](#footnote-ref-262)
263. Quoted in Michael Podgornov, “Otpal li Arkhiepiskop Andrej (Ukhtomskij) v staroobriadcheskij raskol?” (Did Archbishop Andrew (Ukhtomsky) Fall Away into the Old Ritualist Schism?), *Russkoe Pravoslavie* (Russian Orthodoxy), N 2 (11), 1998, p. 20, footnote 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-263)
264. Pomazansky, *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology,* Platina: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1997, p. 235. [↑](#footnote-ref-264)
265. Peter Botsis, *Gerontas Ieronymos o Isykhastis tis Aiginas* (Elder Jerome the Hesychast of Aegina), Athens, 1991. [↑](#footnote-ref-265)
266. According to other sources, he was in hospital. “Spyridon Vlachos forbade his ecclesiastic burial and, deeming himself a worthy successor of Caiaphas, he ordered that the body of the deceased be guarded by gendarmes at the Clinic of Saint Helen in the Athenian suburb of Sepolia (where he was transferred from jail while breathing his last) in order to prevent the reading of a burial service by a Genuine Orthodox priest. God, however, arranged otherwise. During the same period, the Archimandrite Chrysostomos Kioussis [the future archbishop] was secretly in hiding to avoid capture and stripping by the police, and celebrated the Divine Liturgy in country chapels and in the houses of faithful Christians that had been transformed into catacombs, moving about only at night with great caution. In March of 1951, in one of those catacombs, he celebrated the Vigil of the Annunciation of the Theotokos along with the ever-memorable Archmandrite Petros Astyfides (later, Bishop of Astoria), deeply grieved by the news of the passing of the ever-memorable Bishop Germanos. A white cloth with paper icons pinned to it separated the Holy Altar from the rest of the room. Two tables assumed the role of the Altar and the Table of Oblation. They celebrated the liturgy in this manner when suddenly at two o’clock in the morning there was a knocking on the door! Fortunately, it was not the police but rather members of N.E.O.S., the youth organization of the Genuine Orthodox Church, who were seeking a priest to secretly conduct a burial service, having convinced the gendarme guarding the body of Bishop Germanos to “look the other way.” While Fr. Petros continued the Vigil, Fr. Chrysostomos went to read the funeral of the reposed hierarch. As the funeral approached its end the gendarme, who was following the service piously, warned that the time had come for him to be relieved. As Fr. Chrysostomos and his entourage were heading for their car, the oncoming gendarmes spotted him. A chase ensued. However, Pericles, the priest’s experienced driver, drove through the maze of Athenian streets and managed to escape, thus keeping Fr. Chrysostomos from being captured and stripped.

     The new calendarists placed guards over the dying confessor to see that no Old Calendarist priest was able to chant the funeral service over him. However, with the aid of a sympathetic guard, Hieromonk Chrysostom (Kiousis), later archbishop of the True Orthodox Church of Greece, was able to do just that. When a new shift of guards arrived, Fr. Chrysostom was forced to flee, and a car chase ensued through the streets of Athens…(<http://www.ekklisiastikos.co>; <http://www.ecclesiagoc.gr/pegeng/h005/pegint.dll?faq0011.peg|14>). [↑](#footnote-ref-266)
267. During this period of exile, Metropolitan Chrysostom’s former deacon, now Patriarch Athenagoras, proposed that he return to the new calendarists and be “reinstated”. The metropolitan refused (*Agios Kyprianos* (St. Cyprian), N 298, September-October, 2000, pp. 350-351, 354. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-267)
268. Archimandrite (now Archbishop) Chrysostomos, Hieromonk (now Bishop) Ambrose and others, *The Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece*, Etna, Ca.: Center for Traditionalist Studies, 1986, pp. 15-18. The new calendarists did not allow any True Orthodox priests to bury Bishop Germanus. [↑](#footnote-ref-268)
269. Metropolitan Calliopius, *Saint Joseph de Desphina* (St. Joseph of Desphina), p. 70, footnote 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-269)
270. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-270)
271. *Ethnikos Kirikas* (National Herald), March 9, 1951; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-271)
272. *Ethnikos Kirikas* (National Herald), March 9, 1951; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 4, pp. 10-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-272)
273. Hieromonk Amphilochius, *Gnosesthe Aletheian* (Know the Truth), Athens, 1984, pp. 33-36; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 4, pp. 17-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-273)
274. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 4, pp. 19-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-274)
275. Lardas, op. cit., p. 16. In the opinion of Joachim Wertz (personal communication), it is very unlikely that Bishop Nikolai actually offered his help in this matter. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-275)
276. Holy Transfiguration Monastery, *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, pp. 73-74. [↑](#footnote-ref-276)
277. Archimandrite Chrysostomos, Hieromonk Ambrose, op. cit., pp. 19-20. According to Holy Transfiguration Monastery, the grave was opened in 1958, when the remains were found to be fragrant. “In fact, the fragrance was so strong that lay workers came to ask what the source was of this sweet aroma that had filled the entire surrounding area” (op. cit., p. 74). [↑](#footnote-ref-277)
278. Karamitsos*,* op. cit., pp. 73-74. [↑](#footnote-ref-278)
279. "Peri sykophantias" (On Slander), *Agios Agathangelos o Esphigmenites* (St. Agathangelos of Esphigmenou), July-August, 1982, pp. 12-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-279)
280. However, the leading innovator, Archbishop Cyril, had a vision of angels on his deathbed which convinced him that he had committed a fatal error (Abbot Chrysostom of Galactotrophousa monastery, Cyprus, personal communication, January, 1981). [↑](#footnote-ref-280)
281. "Historie de l'Eglise des Vrais Chrétiens Orthodoxes de Chypre" (A History of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Cyprus), *Foi Transmise et Sainte Tradition* (Transmitted Faith and Holy Tradition), Lavardac, N 21/23, numéro special. [↑](#footnote-ref-281)
282. Monk Paul, "I Panagia eis tin Kypron" (The All-Holy on Cyprus), *Agios Agathangelos Esphigmenites* (St. Agathangelos of Esphigmenou), N 125, May-June, 1991, p. 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-282)
283. Abbot Chrysostom, personal communication, January, 1981. [↑](#footnote-ref-283)
284. On being exhumed, Abbot Chrysostom’s body was found to be partially incorrupt (Fr. Sotirios Hadjimichael, personal communication). [↑](#footnote-ref-284)
285. Maximus was removed because he was an opponent of ecumenism. When they asked him in 1965 what had been the reason for his deposition, he replied: “It’s not worth commenting on how they deposed me.” (*Agios Agathangelos Esphigmenites* (St. Agathangelos of Esphigmenou),№ 138, July-August, 1993). [↑](#footnote-ref-285)
286. *Pravoslavie ili Smert'*(Orthodoxy or Death), N 1, 1997, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-286)
287. Hieromonk Theodoretus, *Palaion kai Neon* (The Old and the New), Athens, 1991, p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-287)
288. Archbishop Iakovos Koukoujis, “The Contribution of Eastern Orthodoxy to the Ecumenical Movement”, *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement: Documents and Statements, 1902-1975*, Geneva: The World Council of Churches, 1978, p. 216; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-288)
289. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-289)
290. Macris, op. cit., p. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-290)
291. Macris, op. cit., pp. 8-9; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-291)
292. Macris, op. cit., p. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-292)
293. Macris, op. cit., p. 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-293)
294. The ground for this was being prepared already in 1952, when Pope Pius XII issued an Apostolic Epistle declaring that before the council of Florence in 1439 there had been no break between the Russian Church and the Papacy (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, p. 15). [↑](#footnote-ref-294)
295. *Information*, N 1, 1994 (Vatican); Monk Benjamin, <http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis4.htm>, part 4, p. 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-295)
296. "The Unity of Christian Churches", cited in Macris, op. cit., p. 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-296)
297. Macris, op. cit., pp. 43-44. [↑](#footnote-ref-297)
298. Hieromonk Damascene, op. cit., p. 395. [↑](#footnote-ref-298)
299. Ulrich Duckrow, *Conflict over the Ecumenical Movement*, Geneva: The World Council of Churches, 1981, pp. 31, 310. [↑](#footnote-ref-299)
300. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-300)
301. Blane, op. cit., pp. 124-125. [↑](#footnote-ref-301)
302. Calciu, *Christ is Calling You!,* Forestville, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1997, pp. 95-96. [↑](#footnote-ref-302)
303. Calciu, op. cit., p. 96. [↑](#footnote-ref-303)
304. Monk Moise, *The Saint of the Prisons,* Sibiu: Agnos, 2009, pp. 107-113. [↑](#footnote-ref-304)
305. Nikolai Savchenko, in *Vertograd-Inform*, September, 1998, Bibliography, pp. 1, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-305)
306. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), N 1, 1946; quoted in *Obnovlentsy i Moskovskaia Patriarkhia: preemstvo ili evoliutisia?* (The Renovationists and the Moscow Patriarchate: Succession or Evolution?)*,* Suzdal, 1997, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-306)
307. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), N 12, 1949. [↑](#footnote-ref-307)
308. Cited in Potapov*, What is False is also Corrupt*, p. 223. Texts in Russian in *JMP,* 1949, N 12, pp. 5-11; Babkin, op. cit., pp. 3-5; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 144-145. No less odious was the letter of congratulation sent by Catholicos Kallistrat of Georgia to Stalin: “On the day of your seventieth birthday, we, the believers and clergy of the Georgian Catholicosate, send you, our near and dear Joseph Vissarionovich, our ardent and heart-felt congratulations and wishes that your health remain unbroken and that you have a long life for the good of the whole of humanity. In the course of the first seventy years of your life, through unceasing activity and that immortal creation, your Constitution, you have strengthened in the hearts of the workers of the whole world the evangelical behests of brotherhood, unity and freedom, which elicits disagreement in those who consider themselves guides of the blind, light for those in darkness and instructors of the ignorant, and who try to suppress the consciousness that has awakened in men of their lofty human dignity.

     “Knowing firmly that it is difficult to kick against the pricks, we hope that in the first years of your second seventy years, the opponents of truth and justice will recover their sight and say: you are right, Joseph Vissarionovich most wise, and righteous are your judgements…” (*Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate),N 1, 1950. [↑](#footnote-ref-308)
309. The text of the patriarch’s speech at the burial of Stalin the previous day can be found here: http://leontjev-danila.livejournal.com/10723.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-309)
310. Quoted in Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive*, London: Allen Lane the Penguin Press, 1999, p. 635. [↑](#footnote-ref-310)
311. Bishop Ambrose (von Sievers), “Katakombnaia Tserkov’: Tainij Sobor 1948g.” (The Catacomb Church: The Secret Council of 1948), *Russkoe Pravoslavie*, N 5 (9), 1997, pp. 12-27. In response to the increase in the infiltration of spies and provocateurs into the ranks of the True Church, the Chirchik Council passed the following canon: “We used to accept sergianist ‘priests’ and on the basis of the 19th canon of the Council of Nicaea we even ordained some of them with the true ordination. But now we see that they all turned out to be agents of the antichristian power or traitors who destroyed a multitude of Christians. From now on we forbid this; whoever dares to violate our decision – let him be anathema.” (ibid., pp. 17-18). This decision was confirmed by a larger Catacomb Council at the Nikolsky Council in Bashkiria in 1961 (Bishop Ambrose (von Sievers), “Katakombnaia Tserkov’: Tainie Sobory 1961-81gg.” (The Catacomb Church: Secret Councils, 1961-81), *Russkoe Pravoslavie*, 1998, N 1 (10), pp. 25-26) [↑](#footnote-ref-311)
312. I.M Andreyev, *Is the Grace of God present in the Soviet Church?* op. cit., pp. 32-33 (with some changes in the translation). [↑](#footnote-ref-312)
313. Archbishop Luke (Voino-Yasenetsky), *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii,* №12, 1952. [↑](#footnote-ref-313)
314. *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’*, N 6, 1976; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-314)
315. The 1946 Council declared that the election of Patriarch Alexis was uncanonical, and on May 10, it decreed: “The Higher Church Administration in Russia in the person of the current Head of the Russian Church Patriarch Alexius has more than once already addressed the bishops abroad with an exhortation to enter into canonical submission to the patriarchate, but, listening to the directions of our pastoral conscience, we do not find it morally possible to acquiesce to these appeals as long as the Higher Church Administration in Russia is found in an unnatural union with the atheistic power and as long as the whole Russian Church is deprived of true freedom, which is inherent in it by its Divine nature.”

     The November, 1950 Council, after profusely thanking the Americans for the protection they afforded to refugees from religious persecution, and lambasting the “red dragon” of communism, continued: “Insofar as the present Moscow Patriarch, and the other senior hierarchs of the Church in Russia remain closely bound with the atheist Soviet power and are its helpers in its criminal activity, which is directed to the destruction of the Kingdom of God on earth, our Church Abroad remains as before out of all communion with them, praying the Lord only that He enlighten their spiritual eyes and turn them from that disastrous path on which they themselves have started and on which they are dragging their flock.

     “At the same time we, her humble servants, kiss the confessing exploit of the Secret or so-called Catacomb Church, whether she is in the dens of the earth or conceals herself in the depths of the Russian people itself, preserving the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience and struggling with the lies spread by the Bolshevik authorities and by the Russian bishops and clergy who have betrayed her.

     “The Russian Church Abroad is in unity, love and prayer with all the other Orthodox Churches which have preserved fidelity to the apostolic tradition, to whatever people their members may belong. Still more would she want to preserve unity of spirit in the bond of peace with the children of our one mother, the Russian Church Abroad, trying to overcome the temporary jurisdictional divisions that exist between them.”

     The 1956 Council declared that “the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad is an unsevered part of the Local Russian Orthodox Church, being temporarily self-governing on synodal bases, until the abolition of atheist rule in Russia, in accordance with the resolution of the Holy Patriarch, the Holy Synod and the Higher Russian Church Council of November 7/20, 1920, N 362”. [↑](#footnote-ref-315)
316. Andreyev, in *Russia’s Catacomb Saints*, Platina, CA: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 1982, p. 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-316)
317. As late as October 25, 1952, Patriarchs Christopher of Alexandria and Alexander of Antioch made a point of telling ROCOR’s Bishop Seraphim (Ivanov) of Chicago that they recognized both the MP and ROCOR, since, as Patriarch Alexander said, “we do not consider ourselves to have the right to be judges in your Russian ecclesiastical quarrel. We have both been in Russia and have seen that Patriarch Alexis has a flock, and quite a numerous one. But we love all the Russians, and for that reason relate with equal benevolence to you, too. A proof of this is the permission [I have given] for the existence in Beirut of two parishes: yours and Moscow’s. If you want, serve anywhere you like with us in the confines of my patriarchate.” Patriarch Christopher said approximately the same, only asking Seraphim to convey to Metropolitan Anastasy his desire that when appointing hierarchs for Africa, he confer with him about it and saw to it that his name was commemorated in the Russian churches in Africa (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, p. 16). [↑](#footnote-ref-317)
318. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 121-122. However, ROCOR’s Archbishop Nathanael of Western Europe concelebrated with Archbishop Tikhon in May, 1947 (Archbishop Seraphim of Brussels, “Vospominania” (Reminiscences), *Russkij Pastyr* (Russian Pastor), N 36, 2000; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 3, p. 122). [↑](#footnote-ref-318)
319. Archimandrite Anthony later became Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, and the main supporter of the supposedly grace-filled nature of the MP in the 70s and 80s. This is likely to have had something to do with his own career. In 1945, when the ROCOR Synod and chancellery fled from Yugoslavia to Germany, he remained behind and joined the MP. Then, in 1949, having failed to obtain a visa to the USSR he went to Switzerland and was received back into the True Church by his brother, Bishop Leonius of Geneva. [↑](#footnote-ref-319)
320. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, p. 21. Archbishop John continued to retain this “liberal” attitude toward the MP to the end of his life. Thus in a letter dated September 13, 1963 he wrote: “… When under Metropolitan Anastasy they began to speak about ‘the incorrect actions of the Church’, he used to stop them, pointing out that one must not ascribe the actions of the hierarchy to the Church, since the hierarchy is not the whole Church, even if it speaks in her name. On the see of Constantinople there were Paul the Confessor, Macedonius, Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, Nestorius, Proclus, Flavian and Germanus. Some of them shone in sanctity and Orthodoxy, but others were the leaders of heresies. But the Church remained Orthodox. During iconoclasm after the expulsion of Severnin, Nicephorus and other, not only their sees, but also the majority of Episcopal sees were occupied by Arians. The other Churches did not even have communion with it [the see of Constantinople], according to the witness of St. Paul, who abandoned the heresy and his see, since they did not wish to have communion via the iconoclasts. Nevertheless, the Church of Constantinople remained Orthodox, although part of the people, and especially the guards and the bureaucrats, were drawn into iconoclasm. So now it is understandable when people who are not familiar with the language of the Church use the expression ‘Soviet church’, but it is not fitting for responsible and theological discussions. When the whole hierarchy of South-Western Rus’ passed into uniatism, the Church continued to exist in the person of the believing Orthodox people, which after many sufferings restored its hierarchy. For that reason it is more correct to speak, not of the ‘Soviet church’, which is impossible in the correct understanding of the word ‘Church’, but of the hierarchy, which serves Soviet power. Our relationship to it can be the same as to other representatives of this power. Their rank gives them the opportunity to act with great authority and to substitute the voice of the suffering Russian Church, and it is leading into error those who think to learn from them the true position of the Church in Russia. Of course, among them there are both conscious traitors, and those who simply do not find in themselves the strength to fight with their environment and who go with the current – that is a question of their personal responsibility. But as a whole it is the apparatus of Soviet power, the God-fighting power. Being on the one hand a hierarchy in the sphere of Divine services, for grace works independently of personal worthiness, in the social-political sphere it is a cover for the Soviet God-fighting activity. For that reason those who are abroad and have entered its ranks have become conscious helpers of this power…” (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 13) [↑](#footnote-ref-320)
321. See Chernov, "Proniknovenie Obnovlenchestva v Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi" (The Penetration of Renovationism into the Russian Orthodox Church) (MS); letter of Archbishop Averky to Metropolitan Philaret, September 14/27, 1966. [↑](#footnote-ref-321)
322. Chernov, “Proniknovenie Obnovlenchestva…” (The Penetration of Renovationism), op. cit., p. 3. However, Archbishop Ambrose (von Sievers), following Chernov, asserts that in July-August, 1950 Metropolitan Seraphim was *secretly* received into the MP. This was followed by his mysterious death at the hands of bandits on August 15, 1950. Archbishop Ambrose explains this by the fact that ROCOR, being a “public-legal corporation” in German law, was the only organization that guaranteed Russian emigrants freedom from deportation back to the USSR. The news that Metropolitan Seraphim had secretly defected to the MP threatened all these emigrants (Bezobrazniki: K sobytiam v RPTsZ 1945-55gg.” (Hooligans: On Events in ROCOR from 1945 to 1955), *Russkoe Pravoslavie* (Russian Orthodoxy), N 2 (16), 1999, p. 17). [↑](#footnote-ref-322)
323. Letter of Protopresbyter George Grabbe to Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, May 6/19, 1969, in Bishop Gregory Grabbe, *Pis’ma* (Letters), Moscow, 1998, pp. 14-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-323)
324. *Pravoslavnaia Rus’,* N 10, 1954, pp. 5-6; <http://rocormoscow.livejournal.com/3507.html>, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-324)
325. Quoted in Nun Vassa (Larin), “The Ecclesiastical Principle of oikonomia and ROCOR under Metropolitan Anastasy”, a report to the Conference on the History of the Russian Church in November, 2002. [↑](#footnote-ref-325)
326. Fr. Alexander Lebedev, “1956 ROCOR Sobor on Eulogian Jurisdiction”, [orthodox-synod@yahoogroups.com](mailto:orthodox-synod@yahoogroups.com). November 30, 2002. [↑](#footnote-ref-326)
327. True the Eulogian jurisdiction had obtained a retraction of his views from the leading Sophianist, Fr. Sergei Bulgakov. However, the Eulogians did not clearly condemn the heresy, and their jurisdiction continued to be a hothouse of heresy for decades. See Andrew Blane (ed.), *Georges Florovsky,* op. cit., p. 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-327)
328. Nun Vassa, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-328)
329. Quoted by Deacon Nicholas Savchenko, “Pis’mo otkolovshikhsia” (A Letter of Those Who Have Fallen Away), *Otkliki na deiania Arkhierejskogo Sobora RPTsZ 2000 goda i na prochie posleduiuschie za nim sobytia* (Reactions to the Acts of the Hierarchical Council of the ROCOR in 2000 and to Other Events that Followed it), Paris, 2001, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-329)
330. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, p. 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-330)
331. Andrei Psarev, “The Development of Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia’s Attitude Towards Other Local Orthodox Churches”, <http://www.sobor2006.com/printerfriendly2.php?id=119_0_3_0>, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-331)
332. See the letter of Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, in Senina, op. cit., pp. 442-443 [↑](#footnote-ref-332)
333. “After the death of Vladyka John, in September, 1966 the ROCOR Hierarchical Synod entrusted the leadership of the affairs of the French Orthodox Catholic Church to Archbishop Vitaly (Ustinov). On October 9 Archbishop Vitaly was present at a General Assembly of the FOCC, where he declared that it was necessary to stop celebrating the liturgy according to the western rite and insisted on the complete acceptance of the Byzantine rite. As a mark of protest, on October 19 Bishop John (Kovalevsky) declared that the FOCC was leaving ROCOR. Part of the communities of the FOCC refused to leave ROCOR, but the Gallican rite was preserved among them on condition that the Byzantine rite was used as the main rite (later most of these parishes left ROCOR and joined one of the Greek Old Calendarist Churches). At the end of the same year Bishop John (Kovalevsky) addressed the heads of the Local Orthodox Churches with a request that they receive the FOCC with the keeping of the Gallican rite” (lesolub, <http://www.livejournal.com/users/dodododo/601987.html>, December 12, 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-333)
334. Metropolitan Anastasy, in Fr. Alexis Young, *The Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia*, San Bernardino, CA: the Borgo Press, 1993, p. 47. [↑](#footnote-ref-334)
335. Metropolitan Anastasy, in Young, op. cit., pp. 55-56. [↑](#footnote-ref-335)
336. Quoted by Irina Pahlen, “Metropolite Anastasy” (Metropolitan Anastasy), [orthodox-synod@yahoogroups.com](mailto:orthodox-synod@yahoogroups.com). December 3, 2002. [↑](#footnote-ref-336)
337. Metropolitan Anastasy, in *Nashi Vesti (Our News)*, 1991, no. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-337)
338. A.A. Sollogub (ed.), *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ za granitsej* (The Russian Orthodox Church Abroad), vol. I, 1958, pp. 306-307; quoted in Protopresbyter Victor Melehov, “O Polozhenii Russkoj Zarubezhnoj Tserkvi v Sovremennom Mire” (On the Position of the Russian Church Abroad in the Contemporary World), 2002, MS. [↑](#footnote-ref-338)
339. Maximenko, *Motivy moej zhizni* (Motifs of my life), Jordanville, 1955, p. 77. [↑](#footnote-ref-339)
340. Maximenko, op. cit., p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-340)
341. Maximenko, op. cit., p. 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-341)
342. V.K. *Russkaia Zarubezhnaia Tserkov’ na Steziakh Otstupnichestva* (The Russian Church Abroad on the Path of Apostasy), St. Petersburg, 1999, p. 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-342)
343. Andrew Blane (ed.), *Georges Florovsky,* Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1993, p. 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-343)
344. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1958, N 6; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, p. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-344)
345. "Nekotorie Stranitsy Biografii Mitropolita Nikolaia (Yarushevicha)" (Some Pages from the Biography of Metropolitan Nicholas (Yarushevich), *Vertograd-Inform*, NN 7-9 (16-18), 1996, pp. 16-17; Andrew and Mitrokhin, op. cit., p. 636. [↑](#footnote-ref-345)
346. Deriabin, who served in the Kremlin Guard Directorate and then as Rezident in charge of espionage in Vienna, testified that “every priest is an agent of the secret police. Even the second ranking official in the Russian Orthodox Church of Moscow [Metropolitan Nicholas] is an agent” (*Chronicle-Telegraph* of Elyria, Ohio, July 20, 1961; in Vladimir Kozyreff, “Re: [paradosis] Happiness and successes – and Bishop Meletieff”, [orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com](mailto:orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com), January 19, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-346)
347. Gordun, "Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov' pri Sviateishikh Patriarkhakh Sergii i Aleksii" (The Russian Orthodox Church under their Holinesses Patriarchs Sergius and Alexis), *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia* (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), vol. 158, I-1990, pp. 120, 133, 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-347)
348. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, p. 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-348)
349. Monk Benjamin, “Letopis’ Tserkovnoj Istorii (1961-1971)” (A Chronicle of Church History (1961-1971), <http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis5.htm>, p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-349)
350. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-350)
351. "The Russian Orthodox Church in the System of Contemporary Christianity", in A. Preobrazhensky (ed.), *The Russian Orthodox Church*, Moscow: Progress, 1988, p. 387. [↑](#footnote-ref-351)
352. See William C. Fletcher, *Religion and Soviet Foreign Policy, 1945-1970*, London: Oxford University Press, 1973, chapter 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-352)
353. Archbishop Basil of Brussels, *Vospominania* (Reminiscences); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, pp. 3-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-353)
354. *The Daily Telegraph* (London), November 22, 1961. [↑](#footnote-ref-354)
355. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-355)
356. V. Moss, "Ecucommunism", *Living Orthodoxy*, September-October, 1989, vol. XI, N 5, pp. 13-18. [↑](#footnote-ref-356)
357. Kuraiev, "Vo dni pechal'nie Velikago posta" (During the Sad Days of the Great Fast), *Den*' (Day), N 13, March 29 / April 4, 1992. [↑](#footnote-ref-357)
358. Martin, *The Keys of this Blood*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990, pp. 258-59. [↑](#footnote-ref-358)
359. Thus in September, 1962 Patriarch Alexis in an interview with a French journalist said the following on the participation of MP representatives at the Second Vatican Council: “The Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches are close to each other in the spheres of faith and liturgics, and we believe that those differences that divide them can, with the help of God and mutual good-will, can be overcome in time. In respect of dogmatics, the main points dividing us are the infallibility of the pope and his headship in the Church, some questions of Mariology, the question of the Filioque and some other particularities.” (*Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1962, N 9, pp. 14-16; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 6). [↑](#footnote-ref-359)
360. Protopresbyter Vitaly Borovoj, “I on byl veren do smerti” (He, too, was faithful unto death); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, pp. 6-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-360)
361. *France Nouvelle* (New France)*,* January 16-22, 1963, p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-361)
362. Serge Keleher, *Passion and Resurrection – the Greek Catholic Church in Soviet Ukraine, 1939-1989*, Stauropegion, L’viv, 1993, pp. 101-102. Cf. *The Tablet*, March 20, 1993. Recently, writes Ludmilla Perepiolkina, “the Catholic Journal *Truth and Life* published the memoirs of Miguel Arranz, in which this Jesuit, who in Nikodem’s time taught at the Leningrad Theological Academy, told, among other things, that with Nikodem’s blessing he celebrated ‘the Eastern Rite Liturgy’ in Nikodem’s house church at the Leningrad Theological Academy.” (*Ecumenism – A Path to Perdition,* St. Petersburg, 1999, p. 276, note). Again, Hieromonk Tikhon (Kazushin) writes: “In 1989 dsuring a reception at the French embassy an elderly man, Czech by nationality, came up to me and introduced himself as head of the Jesuit pension for Russian youth in Medon near Parish and as a high-ranking officer of the [Jesuit] order. Thus he said that Nikodem was their man and also a high-ranking officer in the Order close to the General. It is know that in his cell Nikodem almost everyday performed a so-called ‘spoken mass’” (communication on Facebook, 24 January, 2015, https://www.facebook.com/lregelson/posts/981429488551934?comment\_id=983137605047789&offset=0&total\_comments=96&notif\_t=feed\_comment\_reply). [↑](#footnote-ref-362)
363. Psarev, op. cit., pp. 6-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-363)
364. Pospielovsky, *Russkaia Mysl'* (Russian Thought), N 3698, 5 November, 1987. [↑](#footnote-ref-364)
365. A.B. Vinnikov, *Ottepel’ 1943-1960* (The Thaw of 1943-1960); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, pp. 22-23, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-365)
366. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, p. 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-366)
367. Vinnikov, op. cit.; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, pp. 30-31. [↑](#footnote-ref-367)
368. Vinnikov, op. cit.; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, pp. 32-33. [↑](#footnote-ref-368)
369. Vinnikov, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-369)
370. Golitsyn, *The Perestroika Deception*, London and New York: Edward Harle, 1998, p. 116. [↑](#footnote-ref-370)
371. Krasikov, op. cit., p. 204. [↑](#footnote-ref-371)
372. Chernov, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-372)
373. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, p. 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-373)
374. Aksyuchits, "70 let Vavilonskogo plenenia" (70 Years of Babylonian Captivity), *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia* (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), 1988, N 152. [↑](#footnote-ref-374)
375. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, pp. 1-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-375)
376. G. Pankov, "O politike Sovetskogo gosudarstva v otnoshenii Russkoj pravoslavnoj tserkvi na rubezhe 50-60-x godov" (On the Politics of the Soviet State in relation to the Russian Orthodox Church on the border of the 50s and 60s), in Bessmertny, A.R. & Filatov, S.B., *Religia i Demokratia* (Religion and Democracy), Moscow: Progress, 1993, pp. 217-31. [↑](#footnote-ref-376)
377. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, pp. 15-16. [↑](#footnote-ref-377)
378. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-378)
379. Ivan Marchevsky, personal communication. [↑](#footnote-ref-379)
380. "Out of the Catacombs", op. cit., p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-380)
381. See Danilushkin, op. cit., chapter 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-381)
382. Mervyn Matthews, *The Passport Society*, Oxford: Westview Press, 1993, chapter 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-382)
383. Shkarovsky, *Iosiflyanstvo* (Josephitism), op. cit., p. 171. Cf. Edward Roslof: “Passport offices were prohibited from issuing documents to clergy; that duty belonged to a troika from the regional soviet. Passports would not be issued to men with degrees from theological seminaries or academies, to priests associated with the Josephite schism, or to conductors of church choirs (even if they were amateurs)” (*Red Priests: Renovationism, Russian Orthodoxy, and Revolution, 1905-1946*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002, p. 182). [↑](#footnote-ref-383)
384. Danilushkin, op. cit., p. 535; M.V. Shkarovsky, *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ pri Staline i Khruscheve* (The Russian Orthodox Church under Stalin and Khruschev),Moscow, 2005, p. 246. [↑](#footnote-ref-384)
385. A. Smirnov, “Ugasshie nepominaiuschie v bege vremeni” (Extinguished Non-Commemorators in the Flow of Time), *Simvol* (Symbol),N 40, 1998, p. 254. [↑](#footnote-ref-385)
386. Petrova, "Perestroika Vavilonskoj Bashni" (The Reconstruction of the Tower of Babel), Moscow, 1991, pp. 5-6 (MS). [↑](#footnote-ref-386)
387. Priest Alexis, “Sv. Otsy-Ispovedniki ob otnoshenii k vlastiam”, <http://priestalexei.livejournal.com/2197.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-387)
388. Bishop Ambrose, "Gosudarstvo i 'katakomby'", op. cit., p. 104. [↑](#footnote-ref-388)
389. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-389)
390. Ilichev, op. cit., p. 506. [↑](#footnote-ref-390)
391. Ilichev, op. cit., p. 410. [↑](#footnote-ref-391)
392. Ilichev, op. cit., p. 459. [↑](#footnote-ref-392)
393. Ilichev, op. cit., p. 433. [↑](#footnote-ref-393)
394. *I Phoni tis Orthodoxias* (The Voice of Orthodoxy),N 272, October, 1957, reprinted in N 928, May-June, 2004, pp. 8-9; Monk Anthony Georgantas, *Opheilomene Apantesis se Kakoetheis kai anistoretes Epikriseis* (A Necessary Reply to Malicious and Unhistorical Criticisms), Gortyna: Monastery of St. Nicodemus, 1992, p. 8; *Khristianike Poreia (*The Christian Way), March, 1992, p. 5. See also Irenée Doens, "Les Palaioimérologites: Alerte pour leurs Monastères" (The Old Calendarists: An Alert for their Monasteries), *Irénikon*, 1973, N 1, pp. 48-49. [↑](#footnote-ref-394)
395. Nun Vassa (Larin), “The Ecclesiastical Principle of oikonomia and the ROCOR under Metropolitan Anastasy”, Report at the Conference on the History of the Russian Church, November, 2002. [↑](#footnote-ref-395)
396. Lardas, op. cit., p. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-396)
397. Hudson, *Metropolitan Petros of Astoria,* USA, 2014, pp. 20-21. There was some controversy over Bishop Peter’s consecration. See *Tserkovnie Novosti* (Church News), February, 1995, N 43, p. 1; 1996, N 2, pp. 2-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-397)
398. Metropolitan Acacius, personal communication, May, 1985. [↑](#footnote-ref-398)
399. See Archbishop Seraphim's letter of October 26, 1971 to Archbishop Auxentius: “Because recently, discussions are again arising concerning the ordination of the late Akakios Papas and as there is mention of my name, I would like to make the following points.

     “Bishop Akakios was ordained bishop by my unworthiness and the Rumanian bishop Theophilus. I did not ordain bishop Akakios alone. The ordination took place in Detroit, Michigan and in the Cathedral Church of bishop Theophilus. There are eyewitnesses who are still alive, who were present during the ordination, that is, the then Archimandrites now Bishops Akakios and Peter. Therefore the ordination certificate which bears my signature is accurate as far as it mentions that my unworthiness and another bishop performed the ordination. The second bishop is not mentioned and did not sign the ordination certificate because both bishop Theophilus and bishop Akakios for personal reasons did not publicly make known the incident.

     “ As far as my participation is concerned: I explained to the then candidate Archimandrite Akakios that owing to the prohibition of his being ordained by my Synod, (that) bishop Theophilus would assist so that there be a second bishop present for the ordination. I explained to all who were interested, that bishop Theophilus followed the New Calendar, even though there existed a few communities adhering to the Old Calendar under his jurisdiction. The cathedral church in Detroit celebrates with the New Calendar. I did not hide this fact from bishop Akakios. His reply was that there was an extremely urgent need for a bishop for Greece and that he had to return as bishop, thus consenting to bishop Theophilus participation in the ordination he would overlook the fact that he celebrated with the New Calendar.   
      “If Bishop Theophilus now denies his participation in the ordination, he himself bears the responsibility. I cannot place his signature in the Ordination Certificate. Bishop Akakios accepted the ordination knowing well back then that bishop Theophilus was not going to sign any certificate whatsoever. The responsibility therefore for the present confusion rests with the late bishop Akakios and those with him.

     “Now, with the written denial of bishop Theophilus that he did not take part in the ordination, the situation becomes complicated and a canonical issue concerning the ordination is created. I'm truly sorry for this, but who would have foreseen or imagined the present development of the whole matter?” (Hieromonk Amphilochius, *Gnosesthe ten Aletheian* (Know the Truth), pp. 43-48)

     According to Seraphim, Theophilus had personal reasons for keeping the whole matter secret. Bishop Theophilus had been the leader of the Romanian new calendarist church in Paris during the war, and had refused to return to Romania after the war because of the communism ruling there. In 1953 he was consecrated to the episcopate, with the blessing of Metropolitan Anastasy, by ROCOR’s Archbishop John Maximovich, Bishop Nathaniel of Vienna and Metropolitan Visarion Puiu, another Romanian anti-communist who had been received into ROCOR in 1953. In 1972 Bishop Theophilus returned to the Romanian patriarchate (they recognized his consecration). However, the people and clergy remained in ROCOR until 1998, when Metropolitan Vitaly expelled them because they were still on the new calendar. A few years later, Archbishop Barnabas of Western Europe reversed Metropolitan Vitaly’s decision, and received two Romanian priests back again. See Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 4, p. 21; Fr. Anthimus Bichar, personal communication. [↑](#footnote-ref-399)
400. Lardas, op. cit., p. 17. Hudson (op. cit., p. 23) cites a Protocol from the ROCOR Synod archives dated August 25 / September 7, 1972 declaring this ordination invalid. [↑](#footnote-ref-400)
401. Andrei Psarev, "Vospominania Arkhiepiskopa Leontia Chilijskago" (Reminiscences of Archbishop Leontius of Chile), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn' (Orthodox Life)*, N 5 (557), May, 1996, pp. 11-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-401)
402. Psarev, op. cit., p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-402)
403. Metropolitan Cyprian, "The True Orthodox Christians of Romania", *The Orthodox Word*, January-February, 1982, vol. 18, N 1 (102). [↑](#footnote-ref-403)
404. Metropolitan Blaise, *Pravoslavnaia Rus'(*Orthodox Russia), N 2 (1479), 15/28 January, 1993, pp. 8-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-404)
405. Bishop Ambrose of Methone writes: “[Galaction] was Bishop of Silistre, which after the war was, with Southern Dobrodgea, ceded to Bulgaria. He was thus left without a diocese, and having been the confessor of the royal family, was a persona non grata who could not possibly be appointed to another see. He was thus a bishop in retirement, who continued to serve as invited (he in fact consecrated Teoctist, the present Patriarch, bishop) until 1955” (personal communication, 28 August, 2005). (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-405)
406. 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. 113-114, 115-116. [↑](#footnote-ref-406)
407. Metropolitan Blaise, *The Life of the Holy Hierarch and Confessor Glycherie of Romania*, Etna, Ca.: Center for Traditionalist Studies, 1999, p. 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-407)
408. Bishop Evloghie was consecrated in 1955 and died in 1978. He had previously spent seven years in prison after declaring his adherence to the True Orthodox Church, and spent 14 years in prison in all. Bishop Meftodie was consecrated in 1956 and died in 1977. Metropolitan Galaction himself died in 1959. See *Foi Transmise et Sainte Tradition* (Transmitted Faith and Holy Tradition), N 79, November, 1994, p. 15 (F) ; Bujor, op. cit., pp. 133-145.. [↑](#footnote-ref-408)
409. Metropolitan Blaise, *Pravoslavnaia Rus’,* op. cit. ; Bujor, op. cit., pp. 126-127; Metropolitan Cyprian, op. cit., pp. 8-9; Stefan and Girgiu Hîncu, personal communication, September, 1994; Bishop Ambrose, personal communication, May, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-409)
410. Metropolitan Blaise, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-410)
411. Bujor, op. cit., pp. 148-149. [↑](#footnote-ref-411)
412. “Saint Glicherie the Confessor, Metropolitan of Romania, 1881-1985”, typescript of the Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, Fili, Attica, Greece, July, 1999. Bishop Ambrose of Methone writes: “Metropolitan Vlasie, who looked after [Galaction] remembers that he had a stroke six days before his death and was unconscious during that time; only his right hand moved, constantly passing the knots of his prayer-rope… He was buried secretly at night, and a load of concrete poured into the grave, for fear lest the new calendarists should take his body” (private communications, August 28, 2005, May 3, 2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-412)
413. “Saint Glicherie”, op. cit. About 4000 monastics were expelled from their communities. [↑](#footnote-ref-413)
414. Victor Boldewskul, "The Old Calendar Church of Romania", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 42, N 5, October-November, 1992, pp. 13-15. Bishop Demosthenes spent seven years in prion. [↑](#footnote-ref-414)
415. Archbishop Tikhon had recovered from his illness by this time, but according to Archbishop Averky the ROCOR Synod “laid a ban on his return to the flock that loved him and was devoted to him… This is very dangerous precedent, which must be subjected to unreserved condemnation, so that it should not be repeated in the future” (Report on the Affair of the Church Disturbance in San Francisco, in Monk Benjamin, *Letopis’ Tserkovnykh Sobytij* (Chronicle of Church Events), part 5, <http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis5.htm>, p. 9). [↑](#footnote-ref-415)
416. Fr. George Grabbe, letter to Archbishop Theodosius (Samoilovich) of Brazil, 12/25 June, 1963. See also the letter of Protoprebyter George Grabbe to Bishop Anthony of Melbourne, June 7/20, 1963, in *Tserkovnie Novosti* (Church News),July, 2002, № 8 (109), pp. 7-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-416)
417. Senina, *Stolp Ognennij,* op. cit., p. 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-417)
418. Grabbe, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-418)
419. Senina, op. cit., p. 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-419)
420. Senina, op. cit., p. 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-420)
421. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, pp. 11-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-421)
422. Senina, op. cit., p. 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-422)
423. Archbishop Averky, letter of September 14/27, 1966. See also Sergius Nosov, "Drugaia Pravda" (Another Truth), *Moskva* (Moscow), February, 1993. On April 21, 1967, Averky again wrote to the metropolitan: “I am inexpressibly sorry for you, Holy Vladyko, that you are being so skilfully and cunningly cajoled by dishonourable people who have clearly lost their conscience, if they are able *so disgustingly and horribly to slander others who see them and know them and whom they for that reason fear.* After all, besides a small bunch of personal friends and relatives, who are also bound to each other *by a commonality of interests of the same base character,* absolutely nobody supports them. *The true Church people is not with them, for it sees and knows them thoroughly and does not believe them. By slandering others, they think they can in this way whitewash themselves…* Everything would be peaceful, quiet and friendly with us in the Church if it were not for the striving of this bunch to seize dictatorial power into their own hands” (Personal Archive of Archbishop Averky; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 33). [↑](#footnote-ref-423)
424. Senina, op. cit., p. 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-424)
425. Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles objected to the glorificationn of St. John in San Francisco in July, 1994. As he declared to the Sobor of ROCOR in 1993: “I am convinced that Vladyka John was not a saint. From a purely theological point of view, miracle-working is not a sign of sanctity. There is no doubt that Vladyka John worked miracles, I even experienced his wonderworking on myself. But together with that, we have to remember the words of Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) at the consecration of Vladyka John: ‘God has given you many gifts, see that you do not become proud…’ In San-Francisco his fall took place, because Vladyka John supported that group of people which did not deserve to be trusted…”Protocols of the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR, 22 April / 5 May, 1993, p. 3; in von Sievers, “Proslavlen li u Boga Arkhiepiskop Ioann (Maksimovich)?” (Was Archbishop John (Maximovich) Glorified by God?), op. cit., p. 37. Archbishop Anthony confirmed this opinion of his to the present writer at Lesna in November, 1994, saying that he thought Archbishop John had been wrong in insisting on the innocence of those accused of financial corruption on the grounds of a personal revelation. He told Elena Alexandrovna Petrova something similar, that Archbishop John had defended his opinion on the basis of a personal revelation from God, which was incorrect (personal communication, November, 1994). [↑](#footnote-ref-425)
426. For an account of the controversy from an anti-Synodal point of view, see Hieromonk Damascene (Christensen), *Father Seraphim Rose: His Life and Works,* Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood Press, 2003, chapters 41 and 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-426)
427. Fr. Alexey Young has a slightly different version of events: “I have learned that at the time time Met. Anastasy retire, Vladika John was about to be elected Metropolitan, when Vladika Vitaly threatened the Synod that he would ‘make a schism’ if John was elected (apparently coveting the office himself). Rather than risk schism in such a small jurisdiction, Vladika John bowed out in favor of Philaret, whom Vitaly also found acceptable. It was a measure of the kind of man Bl. John was” (private communication to writer, May 16, 1983). [↑](#footnote-ref-427)
428. Birchall, *Embassy, Emigrants, and Englishmen. The Three-Hundred Year History of a Russian Orthodox Church in London,* Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Publications, 2014, p. 425.

     According to one source, Archbishop John’s candidature was especially opposed by Archbishop Anthony of Geneva. The two men had never been friends… For the life of Metropolitan Philaret, see Nun Cassia (Tatiana Senina, “’And his lot is among the saints…’”, *Vertograd-Inform* (English edition), № 15, January, 2000, pp. 6-24; *Fiery Pillar. Metropolitan Philaret (Voznesensky) of New York and Eastern America and the Russian Church Abroad (1964-1985);* Monk Vsevolod (Filipiev), “Mitropolit Filaret: k dvadtsatiletiu co dnia konchiny, 1985-2005”, *Pravoslavnaia Rus’*, № 22 (1786), November 15/28, 2005, pp. 1-3; *Pravoslavnaia Rus’,* June 14, 1981; Bishop Gregory Grabbe, *Pis’ma (Letters)*, Moscow, 1998, pp. 14-15; *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’,* №1, 1962; Protopriest Alexis Mikrikov, “Unia s MP privedet k dukhovnoj karastrofe” (The Unia with the MP will lead to a spiritual catastrophe), <http://metanthonymemorial.org/VernostNo34.html>; Monk Benjamin (Gomarteli), “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>; Metropolitan Valentine of Suzdal, Nativity Epistle, 2000/2001; Ivan Ostroumoff, *The History of the Council of Florence*, pp. 193-199; Archbishop Averky, *Sovremennost’ v svete Slova Bozhia. Slova i Rechi (1969-1973)* (Contemporary Life in the Light of the Word of God: Sermons and Speeches), Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1975, vol. III, p. 216 ; Archbishop Vitaly, in *Orthodox Life,* vol. 34, no. 4, July-August, 1984 ; Fr. Alexey Young, *The Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia: A History and Chronology*, San Bernardino: The Borgo Press, 1993, pp. 117-118; Nun Vassa (Larin) “’Glory be to God, Who did not Abandon His Church’, The Self-Awareness of ROCOR at the 1974 Third All-Diaspora Council”, [http://www.russianorthodoxchurch.ws/01newstructure/pagesen/articles/svassasobor.htm](http://www.russianorthodoxchurch.ws/01newstructure); A. Golitsyn, *The Perestroika Deception*, London and New York: Edward Harle, 1995, p. 175; Protodeacon Basil Yakimov, “Re: Fundamental Question”, [orthodox-synod@yahoo.groups.com](mailto:orthodox-synod@yahoo.groups.com), 4 June, 2003; *Vertograd-Inform*, № 11 (68), November, 2000, pp. 52-53; *Vertograd-Inform*, № 11 (44), November, 1998, pp. 24-27, 28-32; “A Letter from Metropolitan Philaret (Voznesensky) to a Priest of the Church Abroad concerning Father Dimitry Dudko and the Moscow Patriarchate”, *Vertograd-Inform*, № 4, February, 1999, pp. 16-20; *Vestnik Zapadno-Evropejskoj Eparkhii (Herald of the Western European Diocese)*, 1979, № 14; *Tserkovnie Novosti (Church News),* № 4 (95), June-July, 2001, p. 9; "A Contemporary Patristic Document", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, November 14/27, 1983, p. 3; "Encyclical Letter of the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 33, № 6, November-December, 1983, p. 13; Protopresbyter Valery Lukianov, “The Transfer of the Blessed Remains of Metropolitan Philaret”, *Orthodox Life,* vol. 48, no. 6, November-December, 1998, pp. 33-36; “Miraculous Occurrences Associated with Metropolitan Philaret”, *Orthodox Life,* November-December, 1998, pp. 37-38; “An Important Anniversary”, *Orthodox Life,* July-December, 2010, pp. 60-65; Hieroschemamonk Akakije, personal communication, March, 2006; Matushka Tatiana Fyodorov, personal communication, April, 2006; Nun Xenia (Mitrenina), personal communication, April, 2006; K. Preobrazhensky, “Otravlenia v Zarubezhnoj Tserkvi”, *Nasha Strana,* № 2816, March 23, 2007, p. 8; Bishop Agathangelus of Odessa, August 21, 2007, <http://guest-2.livejournal.com/294723.html>; *Vernost*, no. 104, March, 2008, <http://metanthonymemorial.org/VernostNo104a.html>; Nun Euphrosyne (Molchanova), “Doklad Osviaschennomu Soboru RIPTs o podvige sviatitel’skogo sluzhenia Mitropolita Philareta (Voznesenskogo), [http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print\_pageIpid=1441](%22); Milivoje Miljkovic, personal communication; “An Important Anniversary”, *Orthodox Life*, July-December, 2010, pp. 60-65; Nikolai Smolentsev-Sobol’, “K Biografiu Sviatitelia Filareta (Voznesenskogo)”, [http://m-Idelamballe.livejournal.com/28963.html](http://m); [www.monasterypress.com/mphilaret.html](http://www.monasterypress.com/mphilaret.html); <http://www.homb.org/calendar-and-daily-readings/docs/28-st-philaret-feast-day.pdf?PHPSESSID=b6bedde089e1addfb19c855658265a03>) [↑](#footnote-ref-428)
429. Victor Gaetan, “The Church Undivided”, *Foreign Affairs*, May-June, 2013, p. 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-429)
430. Chetverikova, *Izmena v Vatikane ili Zagovor Pap protiv Khristianstva* (Betrayal in the Vatican, or the Conspiracy of the Popes against Christianity), Moscow, 2011, p. 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-430)
431. Ulrich Duckrow, *Conflict over the Ecumenical Movement*, Geneva: The World Council of Churches, 1981, p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-431)
432. Proclamation of the Holy Mountain, in Alexander Kalomiros, *Against False Union*, Seattle: St. Nectarios Press, 2000, p. 101. [↑](#footnote-ref-432)
433. Monk (now Metropolitan) Ephraim, *Letter on the Calendar Issue*, Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston. The present writer remembers meeting the head of an Athonite monastery in a convent of which he was the spiritual father in the north of Greece. He admitted that he celebrated Christmas twice – first on the Greek mainland according to the new calendar, and then on Mount Athos according to the Julian calendar. [↑](#footnote-ref-433)
434. Monk Ephraim, op. cit., p. 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-434)
435. Monk Ephraim, op. cit., pp. 72-73. [↑](#footnote-ref-435)
436. Full text in *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. I, № 1, Spring, 1966, pp. 49-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-436)
437. Hebblethwaite, *Paul VI: The First Modern Pope*, 1993; in Fr. Alexey Young, *The Rush to Embrace*, Richfield Springs: Nikodemos Orthodox Publication Society, 1996, p. 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-437)
438. *Ekklesia*, quoted in *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. I, № 1, Spring, 1966, p. 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-438)
439. Monk Benjamin, *Letopis’ Tserkovnykh Sobytij* (Chronicle of Church Events), part 5, <http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis5.htm>, p. 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-439)
440. Pogodin, “O Chine Priniatia v Pravoslavnuiu Tserkov’” (On the Rite of Reception into the Orthodox Church); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, pp. 24-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-440)
441. It was claimed by Matushka Anastasia Shatilova that the Sorrowful Epistles were in fact written by her father, Protopresbyter George (later Bishop Gregory) Grabbe. See Andrei Psarev, “The Development of Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia’s Attitude Toward Other Local Orthodox Churches”, http://www.sobor2006.com/printerfriendly2.php?id=119\_0\_3\_0 , p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-441)
442. Full text in Ivan Ostroumoff, *The History of the Council of Florence*, Boston, pp. 193-199. [↑](#footnote-ref-442)
443. Senina, “And his lot is among the saints…”, *Vertograd-Inform*, № 15, January, 2000, pp. 15-17. [↑](#footnote-ref-443)
444. Lourié, “The Ecclesiology of a Retreating Army”, *Vertograd-Inform*, № 3, January, 1999, pp. 24-25 (English edition). [↑](#footnote-ref-444)
445. Fr. Seraphim Rose, in Hieromonk Damascene (Christensen), *Father Seraphim Rose: His Life and Works,* Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 2003, p. 397. [↑](#footnote-ref-445)
446. Most of the following information comes from an English summary, by Fr. Anthimus Bichar, of a book written in Romanian by Corneliu Leu and entitled *The Life and Sufferings of the First Bishop of the Exile: Victor Leu* (Bucharest: Bishop Grigorie Leu Foundation). [↑](#footnote-ref-446)
447. Andrew Psarev, “The Development of Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia’s Attitude Toward Other Local Orthodox Churches”, http://www.sobor2006.com/printerfriendly2.php?id=119\_0\_3\_0, p. 2; Kovalevsky, “Tragicheskaia smert’ mitr. Serafima (Lyade)” (The Tragic Death of Metropolitan Seraphim (Lyade), *Russkaia Mysl’* (Russian Thought), October 4, 1950; quoted by Archbishop Ambrose (von Sievers), “Bezobrazniki: K sobtytiam v RPZTs 1945-55gg.” (Hooligans: Towards Events in the ROCOR from 1945 to 1955), *Russkoe Pravoslavie* (Russian Orthodoxy), № 2 (16), 1999, p. 17; Fr. Anthimus (Bichir), “Re: [True-Faith] New Romanian OC Synod?”, True-Faith@yahoogroups.com, February 3, 2002. [↑](#footnote-ref-447)
448. According to Bishop Ambrose of Methone, when Fr. Glycerius approached Metropolitan Seraphim with regard to consecration in 1943, the metropolitan asked for money. So this aspect of the story seems plausible. On the other hand, Bishop Philip of Potsdam had renounced his episcopate and monasticism by this time. Also an attempt was made to verify the fact of the consecration through Archimandrite Anthony (Grabbe) of Jerusalem. He contacted his father, Protopresbyter George Grabbe, who said that he had never heard of it (personal communication).

     A recent ROCOR-MP source appears to accept that Fr. Vasile was consecrated by Metropolitan Seraphim and Archbishop Stefan, but not by Bishop Philip (*Voprosy Istorii Russkoj Zarubezhnoj Tserkvi* (Questions on the History of the Russian Church Abroad), December, 2009,

     http://rocorstudies.org/index.php?part=publications&aid=10865 (in English)). [↑](#footnote-ref-448)
449. Kovalevsky, op. cit.; Bishop Ambrose of Methone, private communications, August 23, 2005 and December 22, 2009.

     Stavros Markou writes: “As for Bishop Victor Leu's consecration, there actually is documentary evidence. In a biography of Fr. Constantin Moraitakis (the author of the biography is Fr. Constantin's son), it is mentioned quite clearly that Fr. Constantine met an old friend of his in Istanbul, namely, Bishop Victor Leu. Among the documents in Fr. Constantin's archive was a letter written by Bishop Victor Leu to Fr. Constantin Moraitakis in which Bishop Victor Leu writes: "Please find my attached consecration certificate" and "Please translate it into Greek for me." In the writings of Fr. Constantine Moraitakis it is also related that Bishop Victor Leu was consecrated by "two White Russian Bishops" to serve as "Exarch of the Bessarabians in Exile" and Fr. Constantin criticizes this consecration as "uncanonical" and calls Bishop Victor Leu a "pseudo-bishop." Of course, Fr. Constantin held these opinions because he was a member of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, whereas Bishop Victor Leu was consecrated by Metropolitan Seraphim Lade and Archbishop Stephan Sevbo, who were not recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

     “This evidence provided in the biography and personal archive of Fr. Constantine Moraitakis (including the letter of Bishop Victor Leu to Fr. Constantine, and the written accounts of Fr. Constantine himself about Bishop Victor Leu and the consecration certificate he had been presented with to translate) clears up all of the speculations about the consecration. For instance, now we know the consecration DID actually take place. Now we know that the consecration took place by TWO bishops (Seraphim and Stephan) and that there was not a third bishop. This makes perfect sense now, since the third bishop that the Communist archives cited as having taken part (Bishop Philip von Gardner) had already been defrocked from the episcopate three years prior to Bishop Victor's consecration date. Now we know that a consecration certificate WAS actually issued, and that it was printed in three languages (Russian, Romanian and German) and that Bishop Victor Leu was seeking for Fr. Constantine to also make a Greek translation. Now we know that consecration date is also true too, because it is in December 1949, and Fr. Constantine Moraitakis's diary claims that he met with Bishop Victor Leu in Constantinople in 1950. So everything falls in place, there are no discrepancies. The fact the original consecration certificate was lost is because it was confiscated and burned by the Communists when Bishop Victor Leu was arrested.” (personal communication, June 17, 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-449)
450. http://genuineorthodoxchurch.com/apologia\_Met\_Kirikos.htm l. The Greek text of this “apologia”, as reproduced here: http://www.churchgoc.org/pnoi/181/1.html does not contain the phrase from the prayer of ordination. [↑](#footnote-ref-450)
451. *A Time to Choose,* Libertyville, Ind.: Free Serbian Orthodox Diocese, 1981, p. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-451)
452. Hieroschemamonk Akakije, in V. Moss, *Letopis’ Velike Bitke* (Chronicle of a Great Struggle), Belgrade, 2007, p. 395. [↑](#footnote-ref-452)
453. *A Time to Choose,* op. cit., p. 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-453)
454. M. Atavina, personal communication. [↑](#footnote-ref-454)
455. June 13, 2015. <http://www.telegraf.rs/vesti/1111926-dobrica-cosic-krcun-i-udba-izabrali-su-germana-za-patrijarha-foto>. See also Dr. Milosh Sekulich, *The Free Serbian Orthodox St. Sava Church,* London: The Voice of the Serbian Community, 1979, pp. 6-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-455)
456. Popovich, "The Truth about the Serbian Orthodox Church in communist Yugoslavia", translated into Russian in *Vestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi za Granitsei* (Herald of the German Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad), NN 2 and 3, 1992. [↑](#footnote-ref-456)
457. Hieroschemamonk Akakije, op. cit., pp. 345-350. [↑](#footnote-ref-457)
458. Popovich, in *Vestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii Russkoj Tserkvi za Granitsei* (Herald of the German Diocese of the Russian Church Abroad), № 3, 1992, pp. 15, 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-458)
459. *A Time to Choose*, 1981, p. 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-459)
460. Joachim Wertz has provided another possible motive for the Serbian Church’s entry into the WCC. He considers that “the main ‘practical’ reason why the Serbian Orthodox Church joined the WCC was that that body would provide the Serbian Church with visibility in the West and thus forestall any liquidation of the Church by Tito. Also the WCC would contribute to the rebuilding of many of the churches destroyed by the Croatian Ustasha in WWII. The rebuilding of these Churches was very high on the agenda of the Serbian Church. The Croatians wanted to erase the presence of Orthodoxy. The Serbian Church felt it imperative to bring back that presence and VISIBILITY. Similarly the WCC, and individual Western protestant Churches contributed to the building of the new Theological Faculty in the Karaburma section of Belgrade. This can be viewed as a posthumous slap in the face of Tito, who forbade the construction of any church in that neighborhood. He wanted it to be an ideal progressive, socialist community of ugly high rise apartments with no trace of the Church.” (“Re: [orthodox-synod] Strange letter”, orthodox-synod@yahoogroups.com , 26 February, 2003). [↑](#footnote-ref-460)
461. John Chaplain, “[paradosis] Re: Serbian Church – another item”, orthodoxtradition@ yahoogroups.com , 26 May, 2004. [↑](#footnote-ref-461)
462. *A Time to Choose*, op. cit., p. 47. [↑](#footnote-ref-462)
463. *A Time to Choose*, op. cit., p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-463)
464. Psarev, op. cit., p. 4 [↑](#footnote-ref-464)
465. Pashkovsky, August 21, 2007, http://guest-2.livejournal.com/294723.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-465)
466. Psarev, op. cit., p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-466)
467. *Orthodoxos Typos* (Orthodox Press), № 144, June 15, 1971, page 4; Hieromonk Sabbas of Dečani, personal communication. When Fr. Justin died on March 25, 1979, the patriarch did not attend his

     funeral… [↑](#footnote-ref-467)
468. Hieromonk Arsenije, “Slobodnim Srbima – slobodna i normalizovana Tsrkva”, *Srpski misionar*, N 19, 1964. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-468)
469. *The New Chrysostom, Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović,* St. Tikhon’s Seminary Press, 2011, pp. 106-117.(V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-469)
470. Slijepčevič, “Ogreshena vladike Dionisija”, *Iskra*, Munich, 1963, pp. 13-14 (V.M.). [↑](#footnote-ref-470)
471. Draškovič, “Kojim putem? Poruka mladom srpskom narashtaju koji Broz nije uspeo da prevaspita”, Chicago, 1967, p. 60 (V.M.). [↑](#footnote-ref-471)
472. *Srpski misionar*, NN 9-10, 1959 (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-472)
473. *Srpski Misionar*, N 19, 1964, pp. 3-9 (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-473)
474. Monk Joseph of Avila, Serbia, in Moss, *Letopis Velike Bitke*, pp. 399-404. Joachim Wertz (private e-mail communication, February 4, 2001) writes: “You ask me about my attitude toward the ‘Free Serbs’, by which I understand what has become the New Gracanica Metropolia. The schism has been overcome, but the healing continues. Therefore I am reluctant to speak on this matter (and also because I do not have first-hand experience of that tragic time). Nevertheless it is something that needs to be discussed, especially for the benefit of non-Serbian Orthodox. I have read on the matter, but much of what I know comes from others who were either involved in the issue or who were witnesses. Most of these people were very close to Vladika Nikolai [Velimirovich]. And I personally trust them. Complaints were made against Bishop Dionisije to the mother Church in Belgrade long before the events of 1963. He was accused of conduct unbecoming of a Bishop. People are willing to suggest financial misconduct, but certainly moral misconduct is implied (one of these areas where Serbs are not too open). Dionisije had successfully established for himself his own domain in North America ‘from the Atlantic to the Pacific’ that was untouchable. Perhaps much like Archbishop Iakovos did. No one doubts the sincerity of his anti-fascism or his anti-communism. During WWII he did much to publicize the plight of the Serbs. But he had his ‘own little thing going’ and no one could intrude. Problems began happening after the war when the Serbian émigrés, including Bishop Nikolai, started to arrive. Many of these émigrés, several of whom I know or knew personally, had various levels of theological education. Their services were not welcomed by Dionisije. Neither was Vladika Nikolai. He was treated rudely and often ignored. Dionisije perceived him as a threat, though Nikolai always deferred to him as the ruling Bishop. Eventually Vladika Nikolai accepted the offer of the rectorship of St. Tikhon's Seminary and virtually ‘retired’ from American Serbian Church life. In short, Dionisije was threatened by the potential for spiritual and ecclesiastical ‘revival’ that came with the émigrés. (Please bear in mind that Vladika Nikolai, while in exile, was still the ruling bishop of the diocese of Zhicha. He remained such until his repose. He could not have been a canonical threat to the bishop of another diocese). In a remarkable example of bad timing, the complaints to the Patriarchate against Bishop Dionisije reached a crescendo at the very time Dionisije was most vocally anti-communist. Pressure on the Patriarchate to remove him came from two sources: his own flock and the Tito regime. Several bishops were sent to investigate him and they were treated not in a dignified manner. Dionisije refused to cooperate. There was no choice but to remove him. (Note this happened in 1963, Bishop Nikolai having died in 1956). Dionisije wrapped himself in anticommunism to conceal other matters. This is my understanding and opinion. Left on his own, at one point he even applied to be accepted by the Moscow Patriarchate! He was refused, as he was by the Synod Abroad. To create a hierarchy, he resorted to uncanonical Ukrainian bishops. Fortunately his successor, Bishop Irinej (Kovachevich), later Metropolitan of the New Gračanica Metropolia, was a much more Church centered man. Later when the diocese became ‘the Free Serbian Church’ and he had contacts with the Greek Old Calendarists (at that time it was with Paisios of Astoria and whatever Synod he was part of), and also with the anti-ecumenist Patriarch of Alexandria Nicholas VI (under whose jurisdiction he was for a brief time), he and some of the clergy became more traditionalist (although I can't say how well this trickled down). It does seem that Metropolitan Irinej did leave a traditionalist legacy. As I said above, the schism is over, but is still healing. All of the antagonism now revolves around property claims and money. I should point out that I believe it is true that Fr. Justin Popovich truly believed that Bishop Dionisije was being persecuted because of his anti-communism. I feel he only knew, or was willing to believe, only one aspect of the story.” [↑](#footnote-ref-474)
475. Joseph Legrande, “Re: [paradosis] July 2001 Sobor”, [orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com](mailto:orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com), September 16, 2002. [↑](#footnote-ref-475)
476. “The arrangements were made by Bp. Paisius of Astoria acting as Auxentius’ representative… The decision is signed by Abp. Auxentius, Metr. Paisius of North and South America and Metr. Euthymius of Thessalonica” (George Lardas, “The Old Calendar Movement in the Greek Church”, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jurdanville, 1983 (unpublished thesis), p. 22). [↑](#footnote-ref-476)
477. Bishop Artemije, Statement to the Thessalonica Theological Conference, September, 2004. [↑](#footnote-ref-477)
478. *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. II, № 3, Spring, 1969, p. 335. [↑](#footnote-ref-478)
479. *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 21 (1522), November 1/14, 1994, pp. 8, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-479)
480. Archimandrite Porphyrius of Sofia, personal communication, February, 1981. [↑](#footnote-ref-480)
481. Bishop Sergius, personal communication. [↑](#footnote-ref-481)
482. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1967, № 8, p. 1; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-482)
483. *Pravoslavnaia Rus’*, № 16 (1829), August 15/28, 2007, pp. 14-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-483)
484. Hieromonk Cassian, *A Scientific Examination of the Orthodox Church Calendar*, edited by Archbishop Chrysostomos and Hieromonk Gregory (Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 1998), Ch. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-484)
485. *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. I, № 3, Spring, 1967, p. 291. [↑](#footnote-ref-485)
486. *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. I, № 4, Winter, 1967-68, p. 419. [↑](#footnote-ref-486)
487. *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. I, № 4, Winter, 1967-68, p. 425. [↑](#footnote-ref-487)
488. As St. Anatolius the Younger of Optina (+1922) said: “My child, if you see some people of another faith quarrelling with an Orthodox and wanting by flattery to tear him away from the Orthodox Church, help the Orthodox. In this way you will deliver a sheep from the jaws of a lion. But if you are silent and leave him without help, this is the same as if you took a redeemed soul from Christ and sold him to Satan.” “If somebody tells you: ‘Both your and our faith is from God,’ you, child, reply as follows: ‘Corrupter of the faith! Or do you consider God also to be of two faiths! Haven’t you heard what Scripture says: “There is one God, one Faith, one Baptism” (Ephesians 4.5).’… Amen.” [↑](#footnote-ref-488)
489. Archimandrite John Lewis of Holy Theotokos Monastery, North Fort Myers, Florida related to the present author how he had once visited Patriarch Athenagoras in August, 1967, when he was a subdeacon in the Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Church but was seeking to convert to Holy Orthodoxy. Athenagoras discouraged him, saying that he had to stay in the Uniate church and act as a "bridge" between Catholics and Orthodox! [↑](#footnote-ref-489)
490. Sakkas, *The Calendar Question*, Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1972, pp. 43-44. [↑](#footnote-ref-490)
491. Fr. George Macris, *The Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Movement*, Seattle: St. Nectarios Press, 1986, pp. 101-105. [↑](#footnote-ref-491)
492. Vitaly, "Ekumenizm" (Ecumenism), *Pravoslavnij Vestnik* (Orthodox Herald), June, 1969, pp. 14-30; *Moskva* (Moscow), 1991, № 9, p. 149. [↑](#footnote-ref-492)
493. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1970, № 1, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-493)
494. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-494)
495. Averky, *Contemporary Life in the Light of the Word of God: Sermons and Speeches (1969-1973),* volume III, Jordanville, p. 216. [↑](#footnote-ref-495)
496. http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print\_page&pid=1775. [↑](#footnote-ref-496)
497. Maslova, “Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ i KGB (1960-1980-e gody)” (The Russian Orthodox Church and the KGB (1960s-1980s), in http://elmager.livejournal.com/217784.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-497)
498. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-498)
499. K.E. Skurat; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-499)
500. Fr. Seraphim, in Hieromonk Damascene, op. cit., pp. 400-401. [↑](#footnote-ref-500)
501. *The Orthodox Church*, May, 1969; *Eastern Churches Review*, Autumn, 1969, pp. 425-26. “It is natural to surmise,” writes Andrew Psarev, “that this epistle, to a certain degree, appeared as a result of the private meetings held at the time between Metropolitans Philaret and Irinei, first hierarch of the North American Metropolia” (op. cit., p. 7) [↑](#footnote-ref-501)
502. P.K. Kurochkin, *Evoliutsia sovremennogo russkogo pravoslavia* (The Evolution of Contemporary Russian Orthodoxy), Moscow, 1971, pp. 81, 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-502)
503. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1967; translated in *Orthodox Life*, № 110, March-April, 1968, p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-503)
504. Grabbe, *Dogmat o Tserkvi v sovremennom mire* (The Dogma of the Church in the Contemporary World), report to the Third All-Diaspora Council, 1974. [↑](#footnote-ref-504)
505. Preobrazhensky, “Putin’s Espionage Church”, <http://portal-credo.ru/site/print.php?act=english&id=281>. In the same article Preobrazhensky points out not only that all MP bishops were KGB agents, but also that they engaged in espionage. Thus in 1969 Metropolitan Irenaeus of Vienna and Austria recruited the American military intelligence officer George Trofimov, who served a sentence in the United States. [↑](#footnote-ref-505)
506. In his *Memoirs* Archbishop Basil of Brussels recalls asking the formerly Catacomb Archbishop Benjamin (Novitsky) of Irkutsk why he had not spoken against this measure. Benjamin replied: “You know, I did 12 years forced labour in Kolyma. I don’t have the strength at my age to start that again. Forgive me!” (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 47). [↑](#footnote-ref-506)
507. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1971, № 7, p. 31, № 8, pp. 23-24; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, pp. 47-49. [↑](#footnote-ref-507)
508. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-508)
509. Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, pp. 49-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-509)
510. *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’* (Church Life), July-December, 1971, pp. 52-54; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, pp. 52-53. [↑](#footnote-ref-510)
511. Psarev, op. cit., pp. 7-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-511)
512. In 1964, after the death of Archbishop Acacius (the elder), Bishops Gerontius and Acacius (the younger) elected Auxentius as archbishop – but without the agreement of Bishop Chrysostom (Naslimes), whose fears about the fitness of Auxentius were soon to prove tragically justified… Bishop Acacius the Younger also came bitterly to regret his putting forward the name of the relatively unknown Auxentius (Bishop Photius of Marathon, personal communication, July 11/24, 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-512)
513. Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, 1998, pp. 82-83. [↑](#footnote-ref-513)
514. Metropolitans Callistus and Epiphanius had already visited the ROCOR in America in 1969, as guests of Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston. [↑](#footnote-ref-514)
515. Letter of February 20, 1976 from the Matthewite Synod to the Russian Synod, *Kyrix Gnision Orthodoxon* (Herald of the True Orthodox Christians), February, 1976, pp. 5-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-515)
516. Letter of Pascha, 1979 from Metropolitan Epiphanius to Metropolitan Philaret (in French). [↑](#footnote-ref-516)
517. *Vozdvizhenie* (Exaltation), 1999, № 8 (28), pp. 10-15; *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, pp. 95, 97. [↑](#footnote-ref-517)
518. This is according to Anastasios Hudson, *Metropolitan Petros of Astoria,* USA, 2014, p. 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-518)
519. Irenée Doens, "Les Palaioimérologites: Alerte pour leurs Monastères" (The Old Calendarists: Alarm for their Monasteries), *Irénikon*, 1973, p. 48 [↑](#footnote-ref-519)
520. "Anegnoristhi i kanonikotis ton kheirotonion tis paratakseos imon" (The Canonicity of the Ordinations of our Faction has been Recognised), *Kyrix Gnision Orthodoxon* (Herald of the True Orthodox Christians), № 17, November, 1971, pp. 3-14. The Russian text of the official Act reproduced in the same Matthewite organ declares that the Russians "read prayers with the laying on of hands [Russian: prochitali molitvy s vozlozheniem ruk]" on the two hierarchs. [↑](#footnote-ref-520)
521. Letter of Metropolitan Philaret to Archbishop Andrew, 21 October / 3 November, 1972. Bishop Laurus also signed as Secretary of the Synod. [↑](#footnote-ref-521)
522. *Protocol № 146*, Holy Diocese of Kition, G.O.C. [↑](#footnote-ref-522)
523. *Encyclical № 534*, dated 18 September, 1971. See Eleutherios Goutzides, in *Kirix Gnision Orthodoxon* (Herald of the True Orthodox Christians), 42, № 237, October, 1997, pp. 262-263. [↑](#footnote-ref-523)
524. Grabbe, letter to Mr. Shallcross, October 25, 1973. [↑](#footnote-ref-524)
525. *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, pp. 97-98. [↑](#footnote-ref-525)
526. Full text in *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, pp. 99-100. A footnote to the encyclical declared: “The present encyclical was ready to be issued on April 4, 1973. It has been postponed until now awaiting his Eminence, Bishop Peter of Astoria, who, though invited repeatedly to endorse the encyclical, refused to do so. On this account, in its meeting of June 5, 1974, the Holy Synod struck him from its membership and removed him from the exarchate of the True Orthodox Christians of America.” (p. 100). According to Lardas (op. cit., p. 21), Bishop Peter refused to sign the encyclical “on advice from the Synod of the ROCA”. [↑](#footnote-ref-526)
527. *Kirix Gnision Orthodoxon* (Herald of the True Orthodox Christians), March, 1984, pp. 102-103, Epistle № 1897 of March 1; *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, pp. 87-100. [↑](#footnote-ref-527)
528. See also its Epistle of February, 2008 (http://www.orthodoxchristianity. net/cheirothesia\_of\_1971.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-528)
529. Antonios Markou, *I Osia Eleni tou Kavkasou* (St. Helena of the Caucasus), Koropi, Attica, 2001. [↑](#footnote-ref-529)
530. Professor Demetrius Pospielovsky, "Russian persecution ignored by the West", *The Globe and Mail*, Toronto, October 1, 1983. [↑](#footnote-ref-530)
531. *The Old Calendarist*, N 11, November 1/14, 1971. [↑](#footnote-ref-531)
532. Lardas, op. cit., p. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-532)
533. *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. VII, № 1, Spring, 1975, p. 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-533)
534. *Greece: A Portrait, Research and Publicity Center*, Athens, 1979, p. 159; Bishop Callistus of Diokleia, “Wolves and monks: life on the Holy Mountain today”, *Sobornost*, vol. 5, № 2, 1983, p. 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-534)
535. “The Present State of the Church of the Old Calendar in Romania”, *Orthodox Christian Witness*, September 25 / October 8, 1978. [↑](#footnote-ref-535)
536. *Orthodoxos Typos*, 13 July, 1979. [↑](#footnote-ref-536)
537. “A Rejoinder to a Challenge of the Legitimacy of the Orthodox Monastic Brotherhood of the Holy Monastery of Esphigmenou”, orthodox-synod@yahoogroups.com , January 29, 2003. [↑](#footnote-ref-537)
538. *Episkepsis*, № 59, July 25, 1972, p. 6; *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. IV, № 2, Autumn, 1972, p. 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-538)
539. The Zealot Monks of Mount Athos, *Phoni ex Agiou Orous* (Voice from the Holy Mountain), 1988, p. 73; *Ekklesiastiki Alitheia* (Ecclesiastical Truth), № 70, 1972. [↑](#footnote-ref-539)
540. *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. IV, № 1, Spring, 1973, pp. 72-73. [↑](#footnote-ref-540)
541. *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. IV, № 1, Spring, 1974, pp. 109-110. [↑](#footnote-ref-541)
542. Athenagoras (Kokkinakis), *The Thyateira Confession*, London, 1975, p. 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-542)
543. A parish of the Moscow Patriarchate in England protested about this to Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) of Sourozh. He said he could do nothing about the *Confession;* he had orders to work with Athenagoras. The parish then joined the Russian Church Abroad… [↑](#footnote-ref-543)
544. Metropolitan Philaret of New York, “An Epistle to the Primates of the Holy Churches of God and the Most Reverend Orthodox Bishops on the ‘Thyateira Confession’”, *Orthodox Christian Witness*, May 17/30, 1976; “The Thyateira Confession”, *Orthodox Christian Witness*, February 23 / March 7, 1976. See also Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, *A Reply to Archbishop Athenagoras*. [↑](#footnote-ref-544)
545. Athenagoras (Kokkinakis), Ecclesiological Problems: “Church Beyond Boundaries”. [↑](#footnote-ref-545)
546. “Orthodoxy and the Ecumenical Movement”, *Orthodox Christian Witness*, October 27 / November 9, 1997, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-546)
547. Ware, “Orthodoxy and the World Council of Churches”, *Sobornost*, vol. 1, № 1, 1979, pp. 78-80. However, when Fr. Callistus himself, a cleric of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, served at ROCOR’s Annunciation Convent in London, the Old Calendarist Archimandrite Cyprian of Fili sent a letter of protest to the ROCOR Synod (June 17, 1975) (Psarev, op. cit., p. 4) [↑](#footnote-ref-547)
548. *Newsletter*, Department of Public and Foreign Relations of the Synod of Bishops of ROCOR, January-March, 1981, pp. 2-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-548)
549. Third All-Diaspora Council, 1974, Protocol 1, August 26 / September 8, Synodal Archives, p. 2; quoted in Nun Vassa (Larin) “’Glory be to God, Who did not Abandon His Church’, The Self- Awareness of ROCOR at the Third All-Diaspora Council of 1974”,

     http://www.russianorthodoxchurch.ws/01newstructure/pagesen/articles/svassasobor.htm, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-549)
550. For example, in 1971 Archbishop Nikodem wrote to the Bishops’ Council: “The clergy under my jurisdiction are fully aware that the ecumenical movement constitutes a violation (narushenie) of the Dogma of the Church” (in Protodeacon Christopher Birchall, *Embassy, Emigrants, and Englishmen: The Three Hundred Year History of a Russian Orthodox Church in London,* Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Publications, 2014, p. 469). [↑](#footnote-ref-550)
551. “In his report to Metropolitan Philaret on 7 December of 1972, Archpriest George Grabbe, who then headed the Synod’s External Affairs Department, protested against Bishops Nikon and Laurus having united in prayer with Archbishop Iakovos during the visit of the relics of St. Nicholas to the Greek Church in Flushing, NY. His protest was motivated on the basis of determinations of the ROCOR Councils of Bishops of 1967 and 1971 that its clergy must by all means avoid prayerful communion with hierarchs who were ecumenists, and even more so because ROCOR had accepted clerics who had left these other churches for ‘dogmatic reasons’.” (Psarev, op. cit., p. 4). [↑](#footnote-ref-551)
552. Nun Vassa, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-552)
553. Fr. Basil Yakimov, “Re: Fundamental Question”, orthodox-synod@yahoo.groups.com, 4 June, 2003. [↑](#footnote-ref-553)
554. “In 1945, being in Serbia, he went over to the MP and waited for a Soviet passport so as to go to the USSR, but the Soviet authorities took their time with the passport, bestowing on him in the meantime the rank of archimandrite [through Patriarch Alexis I]. But, fed up with waiting for permission to return, [in 1949] the future bishop left for Switzerland to his brother Bishop Leontius, where he was reunited with ROCOR, having received a penance for his joining the MP.” (Vladimir Kirillov, May 15, 2006 http://elmager.livejournal.com/66190.html?thread=283278; Bernard le Caro, “A Short Biography of Archbishop Antony (Bartoshevich) of Geneva and Western Europe (+1993)”, http://www.orthodoxengland.org.uk/vl\_antony\_b.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-554)
555. Psarev, op. cit., p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-555)
556. *Protocol № 4 of the All-Diaspora Council*, August 29 / September 11, 1974; *Synodal Archives*, p. 4; Nun Vassa, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-556)
557. Allen, “The Demise of ROCOR, the Synod of Metropolitan Agathangel, and the Ecclesiology of the Cyprianite ‘Synod in Resistance’” (2010), www.roacusa.org. [↑](#footnote-ref-557)
558. From the archives of the True Orthodox Church of Greece. [↑](#footnote-ref-558)
559. See Roman Redlikh, "Rossia, Evropa i Real'nij Sotsializm" (Russia, Europe and Real Socialism), *Grani* (Edges), 1986, pp. 265-289; Alexander Yanov, *The Russian Challenge*, Oxford: Blackwells, 1987, chs. 2-4; Victor Aksiuchits, "Zapadniki i Pochvenniki Segodnia" (Westernisers and Traditionalists Today), *Vestnik Khristianskogo Informatsionnogo Tsentra* (Herald of the Christian Information Centre), № 30, September 22, 1989. [↑](#footnote-ref-559)
560. Talantov, in “Tserkov’ Katakombnaia na zemle Rossijskoj (III)” (The Catacomb Church in the Russian Land (III), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’* (Orthodox Life), № 12 (635), December, 2002, pp. 10-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-560)
561. Jane Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, London: Allen Croom, 1986, p. 304. [↑](#footnote-ref-561)
562. Ellis, op. cit., p. 305. [↑](#footnote-ref-562)
563. Many West European members of ROCOR belonged to the NTS, a secret anti-communist political party which was infiltrated by both the KGB and the CIA. [↑](#footnote-ref-563)
564. *Posev*, July, 197; translated in *The Orthodox Word*, September-October, 1979. [↑](#footnote-ref-564)
565. Personal communication from Monks of Monastery Press, Montreal, January, 1977. [↑](#footnote-ref-565)
566. *Poslanie Tret’ego Vsezarubezhnogo Sobora Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi Zagranitsei Pravoslavnomy russkomu narodu na rodine* (Epistle of the Third All-Emigration Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad to the Russian People in the Homeland), September 8/21, 1974. [↑](#footnote-ref-566)
567. In fact, before his death in 2004 Dudko became an open advocate of Stalinism and Putin’s neo- Stalinism: “I hope so much for Vladimir Putin now. It seems to me that he is like Joseph Stalin. I treat Stalin with respect, and I think that he was a very wise leader. It is Stalin who established such a powerful country. Russia has never been that powerful since, and there was no tsar in Russia who was able to accomplish the things that Stalin did. He managed to overcome and sacrifice so much for the sake of the country’s greatness. I hope that Putin will follow in Stalin’s path…” (http://english.pravda.ru/politics/2002/11/13/39433; quoted by Nicholas Candela, “[paradosis] the wisdom of an MP priest”, orthodox-tradition@yahoo.com , January 22, 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-567)
568. Rose, "The Catacomb Tikhonite Church 1974", *The Orthodox Word*, 1974, pp. 241-242. [↑](#footnote-ref-568)
569. Golitsyn, *The Perestroika Deception*, London and New York: Edward Harle, 1995, p. 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-569)
570. See his letter to Fr. Victor Potapov published in Vertograd-Inform, № 11 (44), November, 1998, pp. 28-32. He might have quoted St. Maximus the Confessor in this connection: “I want and pray you to be wholly harsh and implacable with the heretics only in regard to cooperating with them or in any way whatever supporting their deranged belief. For I reckon it misanthropy and a departure from Divine love to lend support to error, that those previously seized by it might be even more greatly corrupted.” (*P.G. 91*: 465C). [↑](#footnote-ref-570)
571. Metropolitan Philaret to Fr. George Grabbe, July 12/25, 1975, *Vertograd-Inform*, № 11 (68), November, 2000, pp. 52-53. [↑](#footnote-ref-571)
572. Rose, Letter 167, to Brother Alexey Young, January 4/17, 1975. [↑](#footnote-ref-572)
573. *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), 1976, № 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-573)
574. *Kyrix Gnision Orthodoxon* (Herald of the True Orthodox Christians), February, 1976, pp. 5-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-574)
575. Psarev, op. cit., p. 4. The official statements of the ROCOR Synod were indeed weak from the Matthewite point of view, who regarded the matter as already decided long ago. Thus on September 12/25, 1974 the Synod declared: “Concerning the question of the presence or absence of grace among the new calendarists the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad does not consider herself or any other Local Church to have the right to make a conclusive decision, since a categorical evaluation in this question can be undertaken only by a properly convened, competent Ecumenical Council, with the obligatory participation of the free Church of Russia.” (This was quoted by Metropolitan Philaret in his letter to Archbishop Andreas dated October 5, 1974 (ref. no. 3/50/760)). Again on September 18 / October 1, 1974 the ROCOR Council of Bishops declared: “Manifesting good will [towards the Orthodox Greeks], the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad has called and addressed separate groups of the Church of the Old Calendarists to find the path to make peace and attain fraternal unity. However, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad has no canonical power over the Church jurisdictions in Greece and therefore cannot interfere in their life with decisions that would be obligatory in questions of their disagreements.”

     Although ROCOR officially refused to call the new calendarists graceless, there is evidence that Metropolitan Philaret’s personal views were stricter and closer to those of the Greeks. Thus on September 20, 1975, he wrote to Metropolitan Epiphanius of Kition, the leader of the Old Calendarist Church of Cyprus, with whom he continued to have friendly relations even after the Matthewite Synod to which Epiphanius belonged had broken communion with ROCOR: “From the beginning our Russian Church has known that the calendar innovation was unacceptable, and has not dared to move this boundary set by patristic tradition, for the Ecclesiastical Calendar is a support of the life of the Church and as such is fortified by decrees of Holy Tradition.

     “However, it is obvious to all that the calendar innovation caused a schism in the Greek Church in 1924, and the responsibility for the schism weighs exclusively on the innovators. This is the conclusion that will be reached by anyone studying the Patriarchal *Tomoi* (as that of 1583) and taking into account the wretched and self-evident fact of the schism and the frightful punishments, persecutions and blasphemies which those who have cleaved to the patristic piety of Holy Tradition have undergone.

     “Thinking in this way, our Holy Synod has decreed that we ‘flee’ concelebrations with the new

     calendarist modernists. We do not concelebrate with them, nor do we give permission or a blessing to our clergy for such a concelebration. In order to assure you of the truth of what we say, we inform you that whenever a community in the diaspora is received into our Church, they are required to follow the patristic Calendar of the Orthodox Church…” (from the archives of the True Orthodox Church of Greece) [↑](#footnote-ref-575)
576. As he told the present writer in January, 1977, he had a gun at his head. However, he was able to remove Britain, where Archbishop Anthony’s ecumenism had elicited protests from the English Orthodox Parish of St. Michael, Guildford, to his own jurisdiction later that year. [↑](#footnote-ref-576)
577. See especially Fr. Seraphim Rose’s article, “The Royal Path” (*The Orthodox Word*, № 70, 1976), in which he wrote: “The Russian Church Outside of Russia has been placed, by God’s Providence, in a very favourable position for preserving the ‘royal path’ amidst the confusion of so much of 20th century Orthodoxy. Living in exile and poverty in a world that has not understood the suffering of her people, she has focused her attention on preserving unchanged the faith which unites her people, she has focused her attention on preserving unchanged the faith which unites her people, and so quite naturally she finds herself a stranger to the whole ecumenical mentality, which is based on religious indifference and self-satisfaction, material affluence, and soulless internationalism. On the other hand, she has been preserved from falling into extremism on the ’right side’ (such as might be a declaration that the Mysteries of the Moscow Patriarchate are without grace)… If there seems to be a ‘logical contradiction’ here… it is a problem only for rationalists; those who approach church questions with the heart as well as the head have no trouble accepting this position…” [↑](#footnote-ref-577)
578. Thus George Deretich writes: “In Waukegan, Illinois (Feb. 7, 1980),… the pro-Belgrade Bishop Firmilian stated openly in court under oath that Episcopalian clergy are canonical priests recognized by his Orthodox Church” (*Treacherous Unity*, Acel Officeworks, 1998, p. 68). [↑](#footnote-ref-578)
579. Letter of Metropolitan Philaret to Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, November 16/29, 1977. [↑](#footnote-ref-579)
580. *Vestnik Zapadno-Evropejskoj Eparkhii* (Herald of the Western European Diocese), 1979, № 14; *Posev* (Sowing), 1979, № 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-580)
581. “A Letter from Metropolitan Philaret (Voznesensky) to a Priest of the Church Abroad concerning Father Dimitry Dudko and the Moscow Patriarchate”, *Vertograd-Inform*, № 4, February, 1999, pp. 16-20. A few years earlier, on August 14/27, 1977, Metropolitan Philaret had told the present writer: “I advise you always to remain faithful to the anathema of the Catacomb Church against the Moscow Patriarchate.” And the following is an extract from Protocol № 3 of the ROCOR Sobor, dated October 8/21, 1974: “Bishop Gregory says that to the question of the existence (of grace) it is not always possible to give a final reply immediately. The loss of grace is the consequence of spiritual death, which sometimes does not come immediately. Thus plants sometimes die gradually. In relation to the loss of grace in the Moscow Patriarchate, it would be interesting to make the comparison with the position of the iconoclasts, although the sin of the Patriarchate is deeper. The President [Metropolitan Philaret] says that we cannot now issue a resolution on grace in the Moscow Patriarchate, but we can be certain that grace lives only in the true Church, but the Moscow hierarchs have gone directly against Christ and His work. How can there be grace among them? The metropolitan personally considers that the Moscow Patriarchate is graceless.” (*Tserkovnie Novosti* (Church News), № 4 (95), June-July, 2001, p. 9). [↑](#footnote-ref-581)
582. *Archives* 12/92, № 892б March 29, 1972, in *Orthodox Life*, September-October, 1974. [↑](#footnote-ref-582)
583. The following account relies heavily on Steven Jones' article, "Soviet Religious Policy and the Georgian Orthodox Apostolic Church: from Khrushchev to Gorbachev", *Religion in Communist Lands,* vol. 17, № 4, Winter, 1989, pp. 292-312. [↑](#footnote-ref-583)
584. *Vestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi za Granitsei* (Herald of the German Diocese of the Russian Church Abroad), № 1, 1992, p. 20 [↑](#footnote-ref-584)
585. “Dr. Gamsakhurdia writes to RCL”, *Religion in Communist Lands*, vol. 4, № 4, Winter, 1976, pp. 48, 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-585)
586. *Orthodox Tradition*, vol. XV, № 1, p. 34. According to Alexander Soldatov (“Cherez revoliutsii – k tsarstvu”, *Ogonek*, http://www.ogoniok.com/5023/16/, p. 2), his recruitment took place in 1968. [↑](#footnote-ref-586)
587. Nun E., a disciple of Gennadius, personal communication, 1990. [↑](#footnote-ref-587)
588. “Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee”, *Orthodox Christian Witness*, August 3/16, 1998 and August 17/30, 1998; http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Thebes/1865/ili.htm?200522. [↑](#footnote-ref-588)
589. Dr. Olga Ackerly, “High Treason in ROCOR: The Rapprochement with Moscow”, http://stnicholascandles.com/High\_Treason.htm, p. 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-589)
590. Soldatov, “Sviateishij Posol” (His All-Holiness the Envoy), *Novaia Gazeta*, February 9, 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-590)
591. Hierodeacon Theophan, “The Head of the Moscow Patriarchate”, *Vertograd-Inform*, № 20, October, 2000, pp. 18-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-591)
592. Kozushin, Facebook, February 12, 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-592)
593. S. Keleher, *Passion and resurrection — the Greek Catholic Church in Soviet Ukra*ine *1939—1989*, L’viv: Stauropegion, 1993, pp. 101–102. [↑](#footnote-ref-593)
594. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1978, № 11; *The Boston Globe,* September 6, 1978, p. 65; "On the Death of a Soviet Bishop", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, October 23 / November 5, 1978; Piers Compton, *The Broken Cross: The Hidden Hand in the Vatican*, Sudbury: Neville Spearman, 1983, pp. 158-159. [↑](#footnote-ref-594)
595. Regelson, personal communication on his Facebook page, January 24, 2015, https://www.facebook.com/lregelson/posts/981429488551934?comment\_id=983137605047789&offset=0&total\_comments=96&notif\_t=feed\_comment\_reply. [↑](#footnote-ref-595)
596. L. Perepiolkina, *Ecumenism – A Path to Perdition*, St. Petersburg, 1999, p. 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-596)
597. Christopher Andrew and Vasily Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin File*, London: Allen Lane the Penguin Press, 1999, pp. 639-640. [↑](#footnote-ref-597)
598. Andrew and Mitrokhin, op. cit., p. 650. [↑](#footnote-ref-598)
599. Hierodeacon Theophan, op. cit., pp. 15-18. [↑](#footnote-ref-599)
600. Preobrazhensky, “Dve Tajny Arkhiepiskopa Marka” (Two Mysteries of Archbishop Mark), Portal-credo.ru, 12 May, 2004, http://cherksoft.narod.ru/mut59.htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-600)
601. Preobrazhensky, “Sviaschenniki i Razvedchiki”, http:/elmager.livejournal.com/222404.html?=reply. [↑](#footnote-ref-601)
602. This was on April 9, 1906. “The leader of the group,” writes Karen Armstrong, “was William Joseph Seymour (1870-1915), the son of slaves who had been freed after the Civil War, who had long been searching for a more immediate and uninhibited type of religion than was possible in the more formal white Protestant denominations. By 1900, he had been converted to Holiness spirituality, which believed that, as the prophet Joel had foretold, the gifts of healing, ecstasy, tongues, and prophecy enjoyed by the Primitive Church would be restored to the people of God immediately before the Last Days. When Seymour and his friends experienced the Spirit, the news spread like wildfire. Crowds of African Americans and disadvantaged whites poured into his next service in such huge numbers that they had to move to an old warehouse in Azusa street” (*The Battle for God*, New York: Ballantine, 1001, p. 179). (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-602)
603. Rose, *Orthodoxy and the Religion of the Future*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Monastery, 1983, pp. 148-149. [↑](#footnote-ref-603)
604. Averky, *Rukovodstvo k izucheniu Sviaschennago Pisania Novago Zaveta* (Guide to the Study of the Sacred Scriptures of the New Testament), Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1987, p. 225. In illustration of this point, we may cite the anecdote told in the 1970s by the MP’s Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) of Sourozh. He was once invited to a Protestant prayer meeting. During the prayer, one of the participants stood up and started speaking in a foreign tongue with great ardour. Metropolitan Anthony was impressed… However, at this point someone who was passing outside the room stopped at the door, listened for a while and then said: “Stop him! I happen to know the language he is speaking in. It is Basque. And he is worshipping Satan!” [↑](#footnote-ref-604)
605. *La Croix*, August 11, 1970. [↑](#footnote-ref-605)
606. Olivier Clément, *Conversations with Patriarch Athenagoras*, in V.M. Lourié, “The Ecclesiology of a Retreating Army”, *Vertograd-Inform*, January, 1999, p. 25, note. [↑](#footnote-ref-606)
607. *Irénikon*, 1993, vol. 66, p. 526; in Lourié, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-607)
608. Rose, op. cit., pp. 15-16. [↑](#footnote-ref-608)
609. *Newsletter*, Department of Public and Foreign Relations of the Synod of Bishops of ROCOR, op. cit., pp. 2, 6-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-609)
610. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1981, № 12; 1982, № 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-610)
611. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1982, № 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-611)
612. Hackel, Editorial, *Sobornost*, vol. 5, № 1, 1983, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-612)
613. “The Slaying of Archimandrite Philoumenos”, *Orthodox Life*, vol. 30, № 5, November-December, 1980. Ilija Karavliakh writes that while the defence at the trial tried to prove that the murderer was mentally ill, there was a lot of evidence that it was a well-executed ritual murder (Facebook, May 3, 2017). [↑](#footnote-ref-613)
614. See Archbishop Vitaly, "The 1983 Sobor of Bishops", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, August 20 / September 2, 1984, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-614)
615. Metropolitan Gabriel, “Orthodox Reactions to the Aims of the World Council of Churches”, *The New York Times*, August 16, 1983. Minor changes have been made in the wording of the article, which was obviously translated from the Greek by a non-native English speaker. [↑](#footnote-ref-615)
616. See "A Contemporary Patristic Document", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, November 14/27, 1983, p. 3; "Encyclical Letter of the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 33, № 6, November-December, 1983, p. 13; Bishop Hilarion of Manhattan, "Answers to Questions Posed by the Faithful of the Orthodox Parish in Somerville, South Carolina", Sunday of the Myrrhbearers, 1992. [↑](#footnote-ref-616)
617. See “Epi Enos Anathematos” (On An Anathema), *Kirix Gnision Orthodoxon* (Herald of the True Orthodox Christians), February, 1984, pp. 47-56. [↑](#footnote-ref-617)
618. “Iskazhenie dogmata 'O edinstve Tserkvi' v ispovedaniakh very Sinodom i Soborom Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi Zagranitsej “ (Distortion of the Dogma ‘On the Unity of the Church’ in the Confessions of Faith of the Synod and Sobor of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad) (MS). [↑](#footnote-ref-618)
619. V. Moss, “Re: [paradosis} The Heresy of Universal Jurisdiction”, orthodox tradition@egroups.com , October 12, 2000. [↑](#footnote-ref-619)
620. Thus Matushka Susanna Maklakov writes: “Although the majority of bishops in the Russian Synod in the 80s were not in favor of ecumenism and ecumenistic policies (such as giving communion to RCs), Vladyka Anthony of Geneva persisted in this practice and practically ordered his priests to do so also. Fr. Andrew Maklakov was one of them. He of course got on the phone with Metropolitan Philaret and Bishop Gregory Grabbe, who assured him that this position was not correct and that he did not have to obey Archbishop Anthony. So Fr. Andrew defied AB Anthony of Geneva and refused to communicate RCs who asked for Holy Communion in the parishes that Fr. Andrew served in (which were Rome, Baden-Baden, Munich and Copenhagen). We were in Europe from April 1984 until June 1986. During that time, Fr. Andrew never communicated RCs and I am proud of him for his traditionalist Orthodox stance on that issue. Vladyka Anthony of Geneva is an ecumenist. Period. During that time, he was known to concelebrate with certain uniate groups in Rome, allowing seminarians and monastics on the kliros and into the altar freely. I know this firsthand and no one can convince me otherwise…” (personal communication to Fr. Daniel, November 9, 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-620)
621. Thus on April 10, 1987 he wrote: “The Hierarchical Synod [of ROCOR] is obliged with sorrow to warn its flock and those pastors who make themselves out to be the only True Orthodox Christians that the path of arbitrary self-rule that they have embarked upon will lead them out of the Church and into a sect.

     “…. Alas, critics have also appeared in our diocese… They have demanded from us a reply to the question: do the clergy of the ‘Synodal’ Church concelebrate…with new calendarists and ecumenists? The aim of this question is to accuse us of the ‘sin’ of concelebration.

     “…They were given the clear and definite reply that our Church has always had relations with, and continues to have relations with, the canonical Churches that have accepted the new calendar in the practice of the Divine services.

     “Already in 1925, soon after the acceptance of the new calendar into ecclesiastical practice by five Orthodox Churches at the congress of 1925, the Romanian Church (one of the five) invited Metropolitan Anthony, the founder of our Church Abroad, to take part in the festivities of the enthronement of the Romanian Patriarch Miron [one of the main persecutors of True Orthodoxy in the 20th century!]

     “…. On September 27, 1961 our Hierarchical Synod addressed the Greek Old Calendarists in a letter... 'Our Church keeps to the old calendar and considers the introduction of the new calendar to have been a great mistake. Nevertheless, her tactic was always to preserve spiritual communion with the Orthodox Churches who accepted the new calendar, insofar as they celebrate Pascha in agreement with the decision of the First Ecumenical Council.… We have never broken spiritual communion with the canonical Churches in which the new calendar was introduced.’…

     “Our Hierarchical Councils and individual hierarchs have often repeated: the new calendar is not a heresy, but a great and crude mistake. On this basis, Metropolitan Philaret, on his frequent visits to France, has served Sunday Liturgies in the Romanian Church in Paris, praying with his new calendarist flock.

     “Metropolitan Vitaly, faithful to his predecessors, writes in this year’s Christmas epistle [1986/87]: ‘At the given time the majority of local Churches have been shaken… by a double blow: the new calendar and ecumenism. However, even in their present wretched state, we do not dare, and God forbid that we should do this, to say that they have lost the Grace of God.’

     “We permit clerics of the Orthodox Serbian Church to serve with us. Our metropolitans and bishops have done the same since they knew for certain that the Serbian Church, in the difficult conditions of the communist regime, has been able to preserve its inner freedom and, while being

     included officially in the ecumenical movement, has remained in essence outside it.

     “… Archimandrite Justin [Popovich] often said with great firmness and wrote against ecumenism without separating from his patriarch [this is not true - Fr. Justin broke with the Serbian patriarch because of his ecumenism]. He had a huge influence on his flock, creating a whole movement of young monks who, in continuing his work, bring up young people in the spirit of Orthodoxy. It has been our lot to concelebrate with clergy of the Serbian Church very rarely, but each time we have done this with the joyful consciousness of our All-Orthodox unity…” [↑](#footnote-ref-621)
622. Quoted by Fr. Roman Pavlov. [↑](#footnote-ref-622)
623. Lardas, op. cit., p. 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-623)
624. Bishop Photius of Marathon, personal communication, June 28, 2003. After failing to receive ordination from Auxentius, Marcian left him and joined the Synod of Maximus Valianatos. [↑](#footnote-ref-624)
625. In June, 1974, Bishop Petros was removed from being exarch of America for the Auxentiite Synod by a majority vote “without any decision being made that would forbid us serving with him.” (Letter of Metropolitans Chrysostom and Gabriel in *I Phoni tis Orthodoxias* (The Voice of Orthodoxy)). He then joined the three independent bishops, an act that was contested by Fr. Simon of Simonopetra monastery, Mount Athos, in view of Peter’s refusal to sign the encyclical of 1974. All this time Bishop Peter claimed to be still in communion with ROCOR. However, in 1976 ROCOR decided to cease communion with Bishop Peter “because of Bishop Petros’ questionable canonical position with Archbishop Auxenios” (*Bulletin of the Foreign Relations Department,* 4, 1976). Bishop Petros protested that he had rejected the Auxentiite Encyclical of 1974 precisely in order to remain loyal to ROCOR’s position on the question of grace in the new calendarist churches. Finally, in 1995, the ROCOR Synod re-entered communion with Bishop Petros (Anastasios Hudson, *Metropolitan Petros of Astoria*, USA, 2014, chapter 5). [↑](#footnote-ref-625)
626. Hudson, op. cit., p. 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-626)
627. According to Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, he acted thus “in protest over what he considered the Matthewite Synod’s lack of good faith in the effort at reconciliation with the Holy Synod of Archbishop Auxentius” (*The Struggle against Ecumenism*, p. 103). [↑](#footnote-ref-627)
628. According to Lardas (op. cit., p. 20), he had received chrismation in ROCOR. [↑](#footnote-ref-628)
629. According to Bishop Macarius of Petra (*1973-2003: Thirty Years of Ecclesiastical Developments: Trials-Captivity-Deliverance*, an unpublished report given to a clergy conference on May 8, 2000, Metropolitan Anthony first travelled to Cyprus to ask the Matthewite Metropolitan Epiphanius to participate in the ordinations. He refused. [↑](#footnote-ref-629)
630. For two antithetical accounts of this Synod, see *Phylakes Orthodoxias* (Guardians of Orthodoxy), vol. 1, March, 1979, pp. 1-2 and *Agios Kyprianos* (St. Cyprian), № 122, February, 1979, p. 240, on the one hand, and "Latest developments in the Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians of Greece", special supplement to *Orthodox Christian Witness*, November, 1984, vol. XVIII, № 12 (St. Nectarios Educational Series № 93), Priest-Monk Haralampus (Book Review in *The True Vine*, № 21, vol. 6, № 1, 1994, pp. 56-63), and Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, pp. 102-112, on the other. [↑](#footnote-ref-630)
631. "Panigyrikon Sulleitourgon Ellinon kai Roumanon G.O.X." (Festive Concelebration of Greek and Romanians of the True Orthodox Christians), *Phylakes Orthodoxias (*Guardians of Orthodoxy), N 9, November, 1979, pp. 72-74; Bishop Ambrose of Methone, personal communication, December 24, 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-631)
632. <http://mitropoliaslatioara.ro/stire.php?id=91> [↑](#footnote-ref-632)
633. There is some confusion about the exact dates here. In *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, it is said that this meeting took place on February 14, and that the Callistites informed Auxentius of the ordinations in a letter also dated February 14 (but received on March 3. However, according to other sources, the Callistite ordinations took place between February 20 and 23, and that Auxentius was informed on February 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-633)
634. *I Phoni tis Orthodoxias* (The Voice of Orthodoxy), № 759, March 2, 1979. [↑](#footnote-ref-634)
635. *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, pp. 105-109. [↑](#footnote-ref-635)
636. Bishop Photios of Marathon, *Chronicle of the Schism of 1995* (Woking, 2005, unpublished MS). [↑](#footnote-ref-636)
637. Bishop Macarius, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-637)
638. Bishop Photius, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-638)
639. Metropolitan Callinicus of the Twelve Islands, in Bishop Macarius, op. cit. The Cyprianites continued to maintain that Archbishop Auxentius knew of and blessed the ordinations. [↑](#footnote-ref-639)
640. Bishop Gregory of Denver, Re: Re[2]: [paradosis] Kallistos Metropolitan of Korinthos, orthodoxtradition@yahoogroups.com, 31/07/02. [↑](#footnote-ref-640)
641. Bishop Ambrose, personal communication, November 10, 2005. [↑](#footnote-ref-641)
642. Metropolitans Acacius and Chrysostom, in Bishop Macarius, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-642)
643. Bishop Macarius, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-643)
644. Bishop Photius, personal communication, October 20, 2005. [↑](#footnote-ref-644)
645. In 1961, according to Bishop Macarius, op. cit. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-645)
646. This I heard from the two hierarchs Maximus and Callinicus themselves (Bishop Photius). [↑](#footnote-ref-646)
647. Bishop Photius, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-647)
648. The evidence is in *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, pp. 111-112. [↑](#footnote-ref-648)
649. *Agios Kiprianos*, July, 1983, p. 210. [↑](#footnote-ref-649)
650. However, the Cyprianite Bishop Ambrose of Methone writes: “The retirement of Metropolitan Callistus had nothing to do with our position on the admission of new calendarists to the Mysteries (in a much less liberal way than that of many others, e.g. Metropolitan Anthony). It was in fact occasioned by (a) the behaviour of Metropolitan Callinicus of Achaia, who refused to leave the convent in Athikia and go to his own diocese, despite repeated promises, and finally more or less expelled Metropolitan Callistus from the Convent he had himself founded, and (b) the unanimous outrage of all the members of the Synod over a pamphlet expressing the most extreme ‘Matthaist’ positions, which Callistus published and distributed without their knowledge. Having been expelled from his own home, he was taken in by his brother, Archimandrite Nicodemus, and lived the rest of his days as a guest at the convent of Agia Marini, Sofikon” (personal communication, November 10, 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-650)
651. *Orthodoxos Khristianikos Agon* (Orthodox Christian Struggle), № 3, November, 1985, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-651)
652. *Orthodoxos Khristianikos Agon* (Orthodox Christian Struggle), № 3, November, 1985, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-652)
653. “A few months ago, moreover, a Greek student from Rome sent us a letter… containing eight pages from the distinguished Italian periodical Oggi of January 9, 1985, which refers to one of the two Italian bishops, Gregory [Baccolini] of Aquileia, who was ordained by the oath-breaking ‘Bishop’ Gabriel of Lisbon. It is worthy of note that Auxentius did not forget to weave an encomium for the Portuguese and Italian bishops so as to pacify his devoted clerics, who had themselves been troubled by the startling ‘ordinations’ of the European ‘bishops’ of the True Orthodox Christians.

     “In the interview which Gregory gave to the Italian periodical he says that at the age of 14 he left Catholicism so as to become a member of the Methodist Church in Bologna.

     “He became a Protestant after having converted his parents, and then a little later he returned to the Papists.

     “In 1933 he joined the monastic order of Galucco and then became a Benedictine monk in Valombrosa in Florence. In 1940 he became a ‘priest’ of the Papists and in 1944 joined the Fascists. He met Mussolini and became one of his closest co-workers. A terrible impression was created by

     Gregory’s confession that he worships Mussolini as God and that Mussolini is now his spiritual leader!!

     “After the death of Mussolini Gregory joined the Russian Church and on September 22, 1984, was ‘ordained’ ‘Bishop’ of Aquileia by Gabriel.”(*Orthodoxos Khristianikos Agon*, No. 3, November, 1985, p. 4).

     The Cyprianite Bishop Ambrose of Methone (personal communication) defended Bishop Gregory, saying that he never “worshipped Mussolini as God”, but was devoted to the memory of the Duce. [↑](#footnote-ref-653)
654. *Orthodoxos Khristianikos Agon* (Orthodox Christian Struggle), № 3, November, 1985, p. 3; February, 1987, p. 8. It appears that the “Tome of Autonomy” was signed by Auxentius alone, who wrote: “I, Auxentius, by God’s grace Archbishop of Athens and all Greece, acting within the boundaries of our territory of Western Europe (which I created on June 7, 1978) have decided to give permission to the Metropolis of Portugal, Spain and Western Europe to govern itself, having as their principal headquarters the God-protected metropolitan city of Lisbon… This metropolis will be under the direction of the GOC of Greece… P.S. The above Metropolitan with his vicar bishops is obliged to present himself to the Hierarchical Synod each October.” [↑](#footnote-ref-654)
655. Eulogius is considered to be a Freemason by Stavros Markou ([paradosis] Milan Freemasons”,

     [orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com](mailto:orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com), September 5, 2001; http://www.geocities.com/Paris/8919/html/ortho/parasyn.htm) However, Bishop Ambrose of Methone writes that he always denied this (personal communication, November 10, 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-655)
656. Ivan Moody (“Scandal for Orthodoxy in Portugal”, [ORTHODOX@LISTSERV.INDIANA.EDU](mailto:ORTHODOX@LISTSERV.INDIANA.EDU) (Orthodox Christianity) (01.02.2000)) tells us to what depths this new Portuguese Church has fallen: “Tomorrow, Wednesday 2nd January 2000, there will be inaugurated a new basilica in Torres Novas, north of Lisbon. In attendance will be, according the information we have received, bishops from the Churches of Russia, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland and from OCA…. The true leader of this sect is a lady known as "A Santa da Ladeira", who was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church many years ago and subjected in the early 1970s to psychological examination which found her to be profoundly schizophrenic. Charges of fraud were also to be brought against her but this did not happen with the chaos of the 1974 Revolution. She was subsequently adopted by Joao Gabriel and later elevated to be an "abbess", though she is married, with results that may be seen in a series of photographs I have in my possession and which have been forwarded to various competent authorities. They show: 1. This lady seated on a special throne in the church; 2. An "Orthodox" bishop holding up a RC host in a monstrance, this being adored by the "Santa" and the other clergy; 3. The "Santa", in the regalia of an abbess, with her husband and an "Orthodox" bishop in the church; 4. An earlier photograph showing her as the "reincarnation" of the Mother of God; 5. The "Santa" kissing a RC host, behind which appears a strange stain on the photograph, apparently not present on the film, which is claimed to be the bread of the Orthodox Eucharist and therefore to represent the union of the Roman and Orthodox Churches, of which the new basilica is symbolic; 6. Earlier photographs of her with stigmata - this was the time at which she was held for fraud and psychological examination. On the front of the basilica is an engraved colour picture of the "Santa" and her husband. There can be no doubt as to the link between these "Orthodox" and this offensive phenomenon. All this will be widely covered in the newspapers and on the television. Whatever political or other factors have prevented the hierarchies of the various churches from realizing the gravity of this situation, it seems to us, the Greek Orthodox here, that we have been abandoned. My priest, having spent the whole of yesterday telephoning to the Embassies of the various countries, is exhausted and depressed. Is this, he is asking, the Orthodoxy I have spent my life here trying to protect and promote?” [↑](#footnote-ref-656)
657. Bishop Ambrose of Methone (personal communication, November 10, 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-657)
658. See *Kirix Gnision Orthodoxon* (Herald of the True Orthodox), 42, № 236, September, 1997, p. 228. [↑](#footnote-ref-658)
659. “Enkyklios” (Encyclical), *Ekklesiastiki Paradosis* (Ecclesiastical Tradition), January-February, 1985, № 20, pp. 262-263. [↑](#footnote-ref-659)
660. “Excerpts from a Response by Fr. Basil of Holy Transfiguration Monastery to a Bishop of the Kiousis group, Kallinikos of the Dodecanese, concerning the ‘ordination’ of Dorotheos Tsakos” (MS), pp. 1, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-660)
661. *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, p. 121, footnote. [↑](#footnote-ref-661)
662. *Ekklesiastiki Paradosis* (Ecclesiastical Tradition), 20, January-February, 1985, pp. 261-263; "Eis tas Epalxeis!" (To the Ramparts!), *I Phoni tis Orthodoxias* (The Voice of Orthodoxy), №№ 802-803, November-December, 1985, pp. 1-33; *Orthodoxos Khristianikos Agon* (Orthodox Christian Struggle),

     November, 1985, p. 3, February, 1987, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-662)
663. Bishop Macarius, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-663)
664. *I Phoni tis Orthodoxias* (The Voice of Orthodoxy), № 921, March-April, 2003, p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-664)
665. Protocol № 73, decision of April 1/14, 1997, in *Orthodoxon Paterikon Salpisma* (Orthodox Patristic Trumpet Call), March-April, 1997). [↑](#footnote-ref-665)
666. Bishop Photius of Marathon, private communication, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-666)
667. In the spring of 1985, in his monastery in Paiania, Metropolitan Acacius told the present writer that he was deeply unhappy that Metropolitan Peter gave communion to new calendarists in his Astoria diocese. [↑](#footnote-ref-667)
668. *Khristianiki Poreia* (The Christian Way), March, 1992, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-668)
669. Bishop Macarius, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-669)
670. It is sometimes asserted that the Italian parishes under Giovanni voluntarily left the Moscow Patriarchate and joined the Nestorians before returning to the Old Calendarists. In 1975 the present writer heard a different story from the Italians’ bishop when they were in the MP, Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) of Sourozh, who said that he had been forced to expel the Italians following a phone call from Metropolitan Juvenal of Tula. Juvenal said that the MP was having negotiations with the Vatican over the uniate question in the Ukraine, and the Pope had laid it down as a condition for the success of the negotiations that there should be no MP parishes in Italy. So the Italians were in fact *expelled* from the MP. [↑](#footnote-ref-670)
671. Markou, in http://iasidnev.livejournal.com/145089.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-671)
672. Metropolitan Cyprian, “Ai Ekklesiologikai Theseis Mas” (Our Ecclesiological Theses), *Agios Kyprianos* (St. Cyprian), November, 1984, 191; translated in Patrick G. Barker, *A Study of the Ecclesiology of Resistance*, Etna, Ca.: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 1994, pp. 57-58. [↑](#footnote-ref-672)
673. Barker, op. cit., p. 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-673)
674. Barker, op. cit., pp. 60-61. [↑](#footnote-ref-674)
675. Barker, op. cit., pp. 61, 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-675)
676. Calliopius, op. cit., pp. 277-278. [↑](#footnote-ref-676)
677. Letter of Reader Polychronios, April 29 / May 12, 1987. [↑](#footnote-ref-677)
678. Hieromonk (now Bishop) Nectarius Yashunsky, *Ekklesiologicheskie Antitezisy* (Ecclesiological Antitheses) (MS). [↑](#footnote-ref-678)
679. Fr. Christopher Birchall, *The Life of our Holy Father Maximus the Confessor*, Boston: Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 1982, p. 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-679)
680. Bishop Theophan, “Chto takoe ‘anafema’?” (What is ‘anathema’?), quoted by Vladislav Dmitriev, *Neopravdannoe Edinstvo* (Unjustified Unity) (MS, 1996, p. 19). [↑](#footnote-ref-680)
681. For the Cyprianite position, see Patrick Barker, op. cit. For criticism of the Cyprianite ecclesiology, see Holy Transfiguration Monastery, *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, pp. 112-120; V. Moss, “Can Heretics have the Grace of Sacraments?”, *Tserkovnost’* (Churchness), № 1, 2000 (in Russian); I.I. Voloshin, “Vozmozhen li ‘Istinno-Pravoslavnij Ekumenizm’?” (Is ‘True Orthodox Ecumenism’ Possible?), *Vertograd-Inform*, №№ 7-8 (64-65), July-August, 2000, pp. 45-59. [↑](#footnote-ref-681)
682. *I Phoni tis Orthodoxias* (The Voice of Orthodoxy), № 811, January-February, 1987, pp. 22-32. See also *Orthodoxos Khristianikos Agon* (Orthodox Christian Struggle), № 8, February, 1987, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-682)
683. Bishop Ambrose wrote: “You also mention the fact that Archbishop Chrysostomos' Synod apparently deposed our Metropolitan in 1986. As now, almost twenty years later, no such document has ever been communicated to us, we are still in the dark. All we have seen is a text printed in their periodical, but the four then members of their Synod whom we asked (Petros of Astoria, Gerontios of Piraeus, Antonios of Attika, and Euthymios of Thessaloniki) all said that no such text had ever been shown to them, nor had they signed it; they regarded the whole affair as an invention of the personal animosity of Kalliopios.” (personal communication, August 12, 2005) [↑](#footnote-ref-683)
684. Bishop Ambrose of Methone wrote: “The accusation of ‘praying with the ecumenist Patriarch Nicholas’ is delightfully absurd. As I was present, I can witness what happened: One Sunday, when the Liturgy had already begun, the door of the altar opened and in tottered, totally unexpected, Patriarch Nicholas of Alexandria. He sat there until the end (he was by then almost blind) and in the sermon the Metropolitan mentioned his presence and expressed a prayer that God would enlighten him to condemn the ecumenist heresy – otherwise no-one outside would have known he was there. Afterwards he tottered off again. Should we have thrown the old man down the steps? When one reaches such a level of silliness, how can one take anything seriously? As to the 40 days’ suspension, we knew nothing of such a decision until afterwards, when I was given a copy of the document in Kenya, of all places, by a priest of Paisios, the rev. David Palchikoff, who had been given it by Bishop Vikentios during his visit to Africa a few weeks before.” (personal communication, November 10, 2005) [↑](#footnote-ref-684)
685. Lebedev, letter of June 16, 1997, in Protodeacon German Ivanov-Trinadtsaty, “Svetloj pamiati Otsa Protoierea L’va Lebedeva” (To the Radiant Memory of Protopriest Lev Lebedev), http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print\_page&pid=189, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-685)
686. Markou, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-686)
687. Grabbe, *Works*, vol. 4, p. 225. [↑](#footnote-ref-687)
688. Bishop Photius of Marathon, personal communication, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-688)
689. *Orthodox Tradition*, vol. XV, № 1, 1998, p. 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-689)
690. Archimandrite Cyprian, Secretary of the Romanian Synod, personal communication, August, 1994. [↑](#footnote-ref-690)
691. Fr. Alexey Young, *The Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia*, San Bernardino, CA: the Borgo Press, 1993, pp. 75-76. [↑](#footnote-ref-691)
692. Archbishop Anthony wrote: “Fr. Panteleimon mentions the accusation that their monastery was in a demonic cult and that the investigation by the Synod was not finished. In fact, a thorough investigation was carried out by two hierarchs and both Fr. Panteleimon himself and ten witnesses were interrogated. When the former monks who had suffered were presenting their evidence, Fr. Panteleimon was completely besides himself and, losing his self-possession, shouted to the witnesses: ‘Stop, don’t speak!’ There were 35 monastics in the monastery, and its external appearance was attractive: services every night, Greek chanting, everyone in monastic clothes and everyone receiving communion every night. However, something terrible was revealed. In the whole monastery only eight were Greeks, the rest were mainly Americans, converts from Protestantism, with an unknown or dubious past; among them were young ones and ones who had absolutely no knowledge of the spiritual life, nor of the Orthodox faith. Fr. Panteleimon had seduced them, and some sincerely believed his words that the sin of homosexuality is approved in Orthodoxy. After unnatural orgies everyone received communion. Fr. Panteleimon very quickly tonsured those entering the monastery, and therefore the external appearance of the monastery was deceptive. When the investigation was undertaken, Fr. Panteleimon gave us to understand that Greek Old Calendarist hierarchs had invited him to come over to them and that for that reason we could ‘lose’ the whole monastery. In violation of the rules of the Church Abroad, Fr. Panteleimon had not registered the monastery as being in the

     jurisdiction of our Synod, and for that reason, understanding that our Synod would not approve of what was happening, he left the Church Abroad together with all its property.” (Letter to V.R., March 25 / April 7, 1995). (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-692)
693. The suspensions were in accordance with rule 159 of Peter the Great’s Regulations of the Spiritual Consistories: “A clergyman who has been accused of a crime is to be suspended from serving… The order for this to be done is entrusted to the local Bishop, who is obligated to take care that those who are accused of grave violation of good conduct according to God’s laws not approach to serve before the Altar of the Lord.” Also, a commission was appointed to investigate the charges of immorality against Fr. Isaac, and Hieromonk Justin was appointed as temporary administrator of the monastery. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-693)
694. The letter was dated November 25 / December 7. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-694)
695. Young, op. cit., pp. 77-78. [↑](#footnote-ref-695)
696. “Incorrupt Relics Recovered”, *Vertograd-Inform*, № 4, February, 1999, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-696)
697. “Metropolitan Philaret’s Two Letters to Archbishop Averky”, *Vertograd-Inform*, № 4, February, 1999, pp. 11-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-697)
698. Archimandrite Ambroise, Priest Patric and Hieromonk Joseph, letter to Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, May 14/27, 1986. [↑](#footnote-ref-698)
699. Fr. Alexey Young, “A Tireless Pilgrim”, *Orthodox America*, vol. 7, № 4, October, 1986. [↑](#footnote-ref-699)
700. See “Reflections on Metropolitan Vitaly's Nativity Epistle", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, February 16 / March 1, 1987; "An Annulment of the Anathema of 1983", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, May 4/17, 1987. [↑](#footnote-ref-700)
701. Gavalas, letter of June 20 / July 3, 1987 to Fr. Neketas Palassis. [↑](#footnote-ref-701)
702. The reason, according to Bishop Gregory, was his opposition to Vitaly’s plans to sell the Synod building in New York (Letter to Abbess Magdalina, May 11/24, 1986; *Church News*, June, 2003, vol. 14, № 65 (#119), pp. 10-11). Bishop Gregory’s daughter and Archimandrite Anthony’s sister, Mrs. Anastasia Shatilova, writes: “The necessity to dismiss by any means possible the Head of the Jerusalem Ecclesiastical Mission [Archimandrite Anthony] of 17 years – is explained rather simply. Archimandrite Anthony, shortly before the repose of Metropolitan Philaret won a court case against the state of Israel over property belonging to the Mission, confiscated by the former in 1948, and Israel was to pay back 7 million dollars. This sum is laughably small, considering the true value of the confiscated property, but the Mission’s lawyer believed that the material, about to be filed against the USSR, using the precedent of the case against Israel, had all the chances of winning. The case against the USSR, over the seized Gorny Convent and Holy Trinity Church with numerous buildings, also belonged to the Mission – was to start within a couple of weeks. This is the main reason why intrigues were absolutely necessary to remove this Chief of the Mission” (*Church News*, July, 2003, vol. 14, № 66 (#120), pp. 10-11). [↑](#footnote-ref-702)
703. See his letter of April 27 / May 10, 1986 to Archbishop Seraphim of Chicago, in *Church News*, July, 2003, vol. 14, #6 (120), p. 11, and to Metropolitan Vitaly of May 17/30, 1994 (*Church News*, July, 2003, vol. 13, #6 (107), pp. 3-4. Both of the deputy-presidents of the Synod, Archbishops Anthony of Geneva and Seraphim of Chicago, disagreed with the decision. [↑](#footnote-ref-703)
704. Barrett, “[paradosis] ROCOR’s biggest error”, orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com , 21 July, 2004. [↑](#footnote-ref-704)
705. Palassis, letter of June 15/28, 1987. [↑](#footnote-ref-705)
706. Letter of Fr. Christos Constantinou, July 2/15, 1987. [↑](#footnote-ref-706)
707. Letter of Metropolitan Acacius to Protopresbyter Panagiotes Carras and the most venerable presbyters and hieromonks with him, February 17, 1987, Protocol № 282. [↑](#footnote-ref-707)
708. Metropolitan Acacius, letter of July 1, 1987, Protocol № 287. For other criticism of the Bostonite

     position, see Letter of Reader Polychronius to Monk Pachomius, October 12/25, 1989; “Pis’mo Arkhiep. Antonia Los-Anzhelosskogo V. Redechkinu” (A Letter of Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles to V. Redechkin), *Russkoe Pravoslavie* (Russian Orthodoxy), № 4 (8), 1997, pp. 26-28. For the Bostonites’ account of these events, see *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, op. cit., pp. 125-160. [↑](#footnote-ref-708)
709. The present writer’s parish in England was being served by the French mission at this time. When he protested to Fr. Ambroise that he felt he had no good canonical reason for following Ambroise out of the Chrysostomite Synod, Fr. Ambroise said to him: “Yes, you have no good reason; you should stay.” [↑](#footnote-ref-709)
710. But Fr. Anthony Gavalas wrote: “Given Archbishop Auxentius’ toleration, at least, of homosexuals in his own jurisdiction, of what use will be an exoneration signed by him? Will it not allow our enemies to say that the monastery is guilty and so placed itself in a jurisdiction tolerant of such violations?” (quoted by Archpriest Alexander Lebedev, “Re: [paradosis] Re: Re 1986-1987”, orthodoxtradition@yahoogroups.com, January 12, 2002). [↑](#footnote-ref-710)
711. Bishop Gregory (Grabbe), “Partnership – the Pope and an Atheist”, *Orthodox Life*, vol. 42, № 3, May-June, 1992, p. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-711)
712. *Obnovlentsy i Moskovskaia Patriarkhia: preemstvo ili evoliutsia?* (The Renovationists and the Moscow Patriarchate: succession or evolution?), Suzdal, 1997, p. 15. In September, 1998 the Pope said: “Through the practice of what is good in their own religious traditions, and following the dictates of their consciences, members of other religions positively respond to God’s invitation, even though they may not recognize Him as their Saviour” (*Vertograd* (English edition), December, 1998, p. 11) [↑](#footnote-ref-712)
713. See also Leslie Childe in *The Daily Telegraph*, October 28, 1986, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-713)
714. “The Pope and his Critics”, *The Economist*, December 9, 1989. [↑](#footnote-ref-714)
715. “Vatikan i Evrei” (The Vatican and the Jews), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 8 (1340), April 15/28, 1987, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-715)
716. Martin, *The Keys of This Blood*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990, p. 676. [↑](#footnote-ref-716)
717. “O ‘Patriarkhis’ Dimitrios symprosevkhetai kai sylleitourgei me tous airetikous” (Patriarch Demetrios prays together and liturgises with heretics), *Agios Agathangelos Esphigmenitis* (St. Agathangelos of Esphigmenou), № 104, November-December, 1988, pp. 10-44. [↑](#footnote-ref-717)
718. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), № 10, 1986. [↑](#footnote-ref-718)
719. *Epignosis* (Knowledge), December, 1989, 20. See “Vremia Dejstvovat'" (It is Time to Act), *Moskovskij Tserkovnij Vestnik* (Moscow Ecclesiastical Herald), № 17, December, 1989, p. 3; *Orthodoxos* *Typos* (Orthodox Press) (Athens), № 854, October 6, 1989; *La Lumière Du Thabor* (The Light of Tabor) (Paris), № 24, 1990, pp. 121-23. [↑](#footnote-ref-719)
720. *Neoi Anthropoi* (New Men), February 24, 1989. [↑](#footnote-ref-720)
721. Delimbasis, *Rebuttal of an Anticanonical “Verdict”*, Athens, 1993, p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-721)
722. *Agiotafitis* (Holy Sepulchre), translated in *The Canadian Orthodox Missionary Journal*, year 16, issue 5, № 134, September-October, 1989, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-722)
723. Metropolitan Epiphany (Kaminsky), personal communication, May, 1995. The text of the resolution of the ROCOR Synod was as follows: “There were discussions on the question of the fourteen clerics accepted into communion of prayer from the Catacomb Church who submitted their petitions to the Hierarchical Synod through Archimandrite Misael of the monastery of St. Panteleimon on the Holy Mountain, which were received on November 26 / December 7, 1977. At that time the Hierarchical Synod of the ROCOR in its session of November 26 / December 7, 1977 accepted the following resolution:

     “’Trusting the witness of the fourteen priests that their reposed leader, Archbishop Anthony (Galynsky) was correctly ordained to the episcopate, and carried out his service secretly from the civil authorities, it has been decided to accept them into communion of prayer, having informed them that they can carry out all those sacred actions which priests can carry out according to the Church canons, and also giving the monastic clerics the right to carry out monastic tonsures. They are to be informed of this in the same way as their address was received.’” [↑](#footnote-ref-723)
724. Shumilo, “Kratkaia Spravka o Istorii RIPTs” (A Short Note on the History of the Russian True Orthodox Church), 2008.“Godovschina vosstanovlenia apostol’skoj preemstvennosti v Russkoj Katakombnoj Istinno-Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi” (The Anniversary of the Restoration of Apostolic Succession in the Russian Catacomb True Orthodox Church),

     http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print\_page&pid=677. [↑](#footnote-ref-724)
725. Shatilova, as quoted by Fr. Roman Pavlov. [↑](#footnote-ref-725)
726. The official ROCOR account was published on August 1/14, 1990: “In 1982 his Eminence Anthony, Archbishop of Geneva and Western Europe, together with his Eminence Mark, Bishop of Berlin and Germany, on the orders of the Hierarchical Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, secretly performed an Episcopal ordination on Hieromonk Barnabas (Prokofiev), so that through the cooperation of these archpastors the Church life of the Catacomb Orthodox Church in Russia might be regulated. Since external circumstances no longer compel either his Eminence Bishop Lazarus in Russia, or his Eminence Bishop Barnabas in France to remain as secret Hierarchs of our Russian Church Abroad, the Hierarchical Synod is now officially declaring this fact.” (“Zaiavlenie Arkhierejskago Sinoda Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi Zagranitsej” (Declaration of the Hierarchical Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 18 (1423), September 15/28, 1990, p. 16.

     The ordination papers were signed by Metropolitan Philaret, Archbishop Vitaly, Archbishop Anthony of Geneva and Bishop Gregory Grabbe (letter to the present writer from Matushka Anastasia Shatilova, October 3, 2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-726)
727. “In a Gramota of the ROCOR Synod dated May 3/16, 1990 the following was said about this: ‘Archimandrite Lazarus (Zhurbenko) is elected by the Russian Orthodox Church that is in the Catacombs and is confirmed and established as bishop of the God-saved city of Tambov by the Sacred Hierarchical Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad in accordance with the rite of the Holy Apostolic Eastern Church, with the aid of the all-accomplishing and all-holy Spirit, in the year of the incarnation of God the Word 1982, on the 27th day of April, in the city of Moscow, being ordained by hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad by order of the Hierarchical Council of 1981. The ordination of his Grace Lazarus took place in the special circumstances elicited by the difficulties of the present time, which is why the ordination was carried out in secret.’

     “In another Synodal document, no. II/35/R, it was confirmed: ‘Bishop Lazarus (Zhurbenko) has been ordained by order of the Hierarchical Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad as BISHOP for the regeneration and leadership of the Church in Russia.’ (Shumilo, op. cit.)

     “Also, in the witness dated September 22 / October 5, 1989 signed by the First Deputy of the First-Hierarch of ROCOR it says: ‘His Grace Bishop Lazarus has been canonically ordained by the

     episcopate of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad and is appointed to serve the Orthodox Christians of the Russian Church Catacombs.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-727)
728. Thus “on the recommendation of Archbishop Leontius,” writes Shumilo (op. cit.), Theodosius “was sent by the catacomb clergy to negotiate with the disgraced MP hierarch Hermogen (Golubev), who had been ‘retired’ by order of the Moscow Patriarch to the Zhirovitsky monastery in Belorussia. However, although Archbishop Hermogen respected the Catacomb Church, he refused to join Her out of fear that because of him it would be easier for the KGB to purge and finally annihilate the TOC.” (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-728)
729. Shumilo, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-729)
730. Metropolitan Epiphany (Kaminsky), personal communication, May, 1995. See also http://apologetika.com/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&sid=34&file=article&pagei=. [↑](#footnote-ref-730)
731. See *Kto est’ kto v rossijskikh katakombakh*, pp. 66-69, and E.A. Petrova, “Perestroika Vavilonskoj Bashni – poslednij shans vselukavogo antikhrista” (The Reconstruction of the Tower of Babel – a Last Chance for the All-Cunning Antichrist), Moscow, 1991, pp. 5-6 (MS). [↑](#footnote-ref-731)
732. Shatilova, “Kritika zhurnala ‘Vozvraschenie’” (A Criticism of the Journal ‘Return’), *Tserkovnie Novosti* (Church News), № 11 (67), November-December, 1997, p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-732)
733. According to Vladimir Kirillov (personal communication, May, 2006), in one letter Archbishop Anthony writes that he had been corresponding with Lazarus for 15 (!) years before his ordination. [↑](#footnote-ref-733)
734. Kirillov, personal communication, May, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-734)
735. Shatilova, as quoted by Fr. Roman Pavlov. [↑](#footnote-ref-735)
736. Kirillov, http://elmager.livejournal.com/66190.html?thread=283278 . [↑](#footnote-ref-736)
737. Kirillov, personal communication, May, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-737)
738. Kirillov, personal communication, May, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-738)
739. Shatilova, “Kritika zhurnala ‘Vozvraschenie’” (A Criticism of the Journal ‘Return’), *Tserkovnie Novosti* (Church News), № 11 (67), November-December, 1997, p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-739)
740. Shumilo, “Kratkaia Spravka”, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-740)
741. George Soldatov, “Razboijnichij Sobor RPZTs” (ROCOR’s Robber Council), *Vernost’*-*Fidelity,* N 178, September 8, 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-741)
742. Grabbe, *Pis’ma* (Letters), Moscow. [↑](#footnote-ref-742)
743. Fr. Alexander Pavpertov writes: “Soon after his enthronement, having summond Fr. Vladimir Shishkov on a certain matter, when the conversation touched his father-in-law [Bishop Gregory], [Metropolitan Vitaly] became enraged and said the following: ‘Your Philarets and Gregorys have destroyed the Church Abroad! But the Lord has brought me in to save it!’” (Facebook, March 20, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/groups/portalcredo/permalink/929194507196718) [↑](#footnote-ref-743)
744. Revel, *How Democracies Perish,* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1985, p. 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-744)
745. Simms, *Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy*, London: Allen Lane, 2013, pp. 479-480. [↑](#footnote-ref-745)
746. Golitsyn, op. cit., p. 116, who gives the date: 15 December, 1987. [↑](#footnote-ref-746)
747. Gorbachev, in Dr. Olga Ackerly, “High Treason in ROCOR: The Rapprochment with Moscow”, http://stnicholascandles.com/High\_Treason.htm , pp. 13, 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-747)
748. Bukovsky and Stroilov, *EUSSR: The Soviet Roots of European Integration*, Worcester Park: Sovereignty Publications, 2004, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-748)
749. Yakovlev, *Vestnik Akademii Nauk SSSR* (Herald of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR), 1987, № 6, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-749)
750. Hosking, *The Awakening of the Soviet Union*, London: Mandarin Paperbacks, 1991, p. 120. [↑](#footnote-ref-750)
751. Kharchev, *Russkaia Mysl’* (Russian Thought), May 20, 1988, № 3725. See also Bishop Valentine of Suzdal, “Put’ nechestivykh pogibnet” (The Way of the Impious Will Perish), *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (Suzdal Pilgrim), №№ 18-20, 1994, pp. 96-97. [↑](#footnote-ref-751)
752. Mendeleev, in I.F. Okhotin, “Velichie i blagodenstvie Rossii v Tsarstvovanie Imperatora Nikolaia II podtverzhdennoe v tsifrakh i faktakh” (The Greatness and Prosperity of Russia in the Reign of Emperor Nicholas II Confirmed in Figures and Facts), *Imperskij Vestnik* (Imperial Herald), October, 1989, № 8, p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-752)
753. Gleb Anishchenko, "Vrata ada" (The Gates of Hell), *Posev* (Sowing), № 3 (1395), May-June, 1990, p. 135. [↑](#footnote-ref-753)
754. Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles, "Velikij Knyaz' Vladimir Kirillovich i ego poseschenie SSSR" (Great Prince Vladimir Kirillovich and his Visit to the USSR), *Pravoslavnij Vestnik* (Orthodox Herald), №№ 60-61, January-February, 1993.

     There are sharp differences of opinion on whether Grand Duke Vladimir Kirillovich was the true heir to the Russian throne. For the argument in favour, see Archpriest Lev Lebedev, “Kogo i chego nam nuzhno berech’sa?”, *Dal’nevostochnij Monarkhicheskij Vestnik*, № 18, 2006, pp. 1-3. And for the argument against, see Mikhail Nazarov, *Kto Naslednik Rossijskogo Prestola?* (Who is the Heir of the Russian Throne?), Moscow, 1996. [↑](#footnote-ref-754)
755. *Ogonek* (Little Fire), № 44, October, 1989. Cf. *Keston News Service*, № 339, 30 November, 1989, pp. 16-18; № 341, 11 January, 1990, pp. 13-14. [↑](#footnote-ref-755)
756. One reason was that for years the MP had been teaching its seminarians, many of whom came from the Western Ukraine, that the Orthodox and the Catholics were “sister churches”. 60% of those who joined the uniates graduated from Leningrad theological schools. [↑](#footnote-ref-756)
757. “The Exarch vs. the Patriarch", Novoe Vremia (New Times), № 26, July, 1992, p. 13; in Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott, *Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 96. [↑](#footnote-ref-757)
758. *Moskovskij Tserkovnij Vestnik* (Moscow Ecclesiastical Herald), № 9 (27), April, 1990, pp. 1, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-758)
759. Oxana Antic, "The Russian Orthodox Church moves towards coming to terms with its past", *Report on the USSR*, March 8, 1991. [↑](#footnote-ref-759)
760. *Moscow News*, June 3-10, 10-17, 1990. [↑](#footnote-ref-760)
761. Djokic, “Coming to Terms with the Past: Former Yugoslavia”, *History Today*, vol. 54 (6), June, 2004, pp. 18-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-761)
762. *Pravoslavije*, June 1, 1991; *Keston News Service*, № 379, 11 July, 1991, p. 4; *Anglican and Eastern Churches Association*, December, 1991, pp. 29-31. [↑](#footnote-ref-762)
763. Huntingdon, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, London: Touchstone Books, 1998, p. 262. [↑](#footnote-ref-763)
764. Simms, *Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy*, London: Allen Lane, 2013, pp. 481-482. [↑](#footnote-ref-764)
765. Ferguson, *The War of the World*, London: Penguin, 2007, pp. 630-631. [↑](#footnote-ref-765)
766. Glenny, *The Balkans 1804-1999,* London: Granta Books, 2000, pp. 624-625. [↑](#footnote-ref-766)
767. Malcolm, *Kosovo*, London: Papermac, 1998, pp. 339, 341-342. [↑](#footnote-ref-767)
768. Malcolm, *Bosnia*, pp. 205-207. [↑](#footnote-ref-768)
769. Almond, *Europe’s Backyard War*, London: Mandarin, 1994, pp. 195-196. [↑](#footnote-ref-769)
770. Almond, op. cit., p. 196. [↑](#footnote-ref-770)
771. Malcolm, *Kosovo*, p. 339. [↑](#footnote-ref-771)
772. Malcolm, *Kosovo*, p. 331. [↑](#footnote-ref-772)
773. Malcolm, *Kosovo*, p. 333. [↑](#footnote-ref-773)
774. Leonard J. Cohen, “The Milošević Dictatorship: Institutionalizing Power and Ethno-Populism in Serbia”, in Bernd J. Fischer, *Balkan Strongmen*, London: Hurst, 2006, pp. 429-430. [↑](#footnote-ref-774)
775. Judt, “Freedom and Freedonia”, in *When the Facts Change,* London: Vintage, 2015, p. 102. [↑](#footnote-ref-775)
776. 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, pp. 157-158. [↑](#footnote-ref-776)
777. Fr. Andrej Rumyantsev, “Kesariu – Kesarevo” (To Caesar what is Caesar’s), *Vecherniaia Moskva* (Evening Moscow), 21 September, 2000, p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-777)
778. However, according to Vladimir Rozanskij (“Rome and Moscow: a willing separation?” *Asia News,* 3 June, 2004), the “Moscow’ authorities confirmed that ‘for Easter [2004] less than 1% of the population attended any kind of religious service’. In the last ten years, there are twenty times more churches than there were under communism, with buildings being built or reopened. Yet in relation to the immediate post-communism years, only one third of people now attend the services”. [↑](#footnote-ref-778)
779. Kimmo Kaariainen, *Religion in Russia after the Collapse of Communism*, Lewiston-Queenston-Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 1998; Tatiana Senina, “Ty nosish’ imia, budto zhiv, no ty mertv” (You have the name of being alive, but you are dead), *Vertograd-Inform*, September-October, 2000, pp. 46-72. [↑](#footnote-ref-779)
780. Bishop Theophan, *Tolkovanie na Vtoroe Poslanie sv. Apostola Pavla k Soluniam* (Interpretation of the Second Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians), 2.3-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-780)
781. Stati, personal communication, November 14, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-781)
782. Mikhail Nazarov, *Tajna Rossii* (The Mystery of Russia), Moscow: “Russkaia Idea”, 1999. [↑](#footnote-ref-782)
783. Rhoda, “Russian Freemasonry: A New Dawn”, paper read at Orient Lodge № 15 on June 29, 1996, http://members.aol.com/houltonme/rus.htm. It is known that Boris Yeltsin became a Freemason in 1992 (as announced in *Pravda*), and KGB Colonel Vladimir Putin became one in Germany. [↑](#footnote-ref-783)
784. *Keston News Service*, № 94, March 21, 1980 p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-784)
785. *Keston News Service*, № 369, February 21, 1991, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-785)
786. Letter in *Literaturnaia Rossia* (Literary Russia), June 14, 1991; Oxana Antic, "Patriarch Aleksii II: A Political Portrait", *Report on the USSR*, vol. 3, № 45, November 8, 1991, p. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-786)
787. “Patriarch Alexis II: I take on myself responsibility for all that happened”, *Izvestia*, № 137, June 10, 1991; Bishop Gregory Grabbe, "Dogmatizatsia Sergianstva" (The Dogmatization of Sergianism), *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 17 (1446), September 1/14, 1991, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-787)
788. Grabbe, "Dogmatizatsia Sergianstva", op. cit., p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-788)
789. Hieromonk Tikhon (Kozushin), personal communication; Natalia Babisyan, "Sviashchenniki na barrikadakh" (Priests on the Barricades), *Khristianskie Novosti* (Christian News), № 38, August 22, 1991, p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-789)
790. Ellis, "The Russian Church: hopes and fears", *Church Times*, September 13, 1991. During the 1993 attack on parliament he showed a similar indecisiveness. “He promised to excommunicate the first person to fire a shot, but when shooting… thundered around the ‘White House’, he forgot about his promise.” (Eugene Sokolov, “Tovarisch Drozdov – Vor Hevronskij” (Comrade Drozdov – the Thief of Hebron), *Russkoe Novoe Slovo* (New Russian Word), 18 July, 1997) [↑](#footnote-ref-790)
791. He said that the Church had not supported the coup (although there is clear evidence that Metropolitans Philaret of Kiev and Pitirim of Volokolamsk supported it), but had "taken the side of law and liberty" (*Report on the USSR*, vol. 3, № 36, September 6, 1991, p. 82). [↑](#footnote-ref-791)
792. *30 Dias* (Thirty Days), Rome/Sao Paolo, August-September, 1991, p. 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-792)
793. Kozyrev, “[orthodox-synod] Re: The Orthodox Episcopate of the Russian persecuted Church”, orthodox-synod@yahoogroups.com. 28 November, 2002. [↑](#footnote-ref-793)
794. Quoted by Anatoly Krasikov, "'Tretij Rim' i bolsheviki (bez grifa 'sovershenno sekretno')" (The Third Rome and the Bolsheviks), in Filatov, S.B. (ed.), *Religia i prava cheloveka* (Religion and Human Rights), Moscow: Nauka, 1996, p. 198. [↑](#footnote-ref-794)
795. http://www.ripnet.org/besieged/rparocora.htm? [↑](#footnote-ref-795)
796. *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1991, № 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-796)
797. Kharchev, *Argumenty i Fakty* (Arguments and Facts), 1992, № 8, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-797)
798. Sheimov, *Tower of Secrets*, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1993, p. 418, in “The New Soviet Man”, *Orthodox Christian Witness*, June 3/16, 1996. [↑](#footnote-ref-798)
799. Shushpanov, *Moskovskie Novosti* (Moscow News), 12 July, 1992, p. 20, in “The New Soviet Man”, *Orthodox Christian Witness*, June 3/16, 1996. [↑](#footnote-ref-799)
800. Fr. George Edelshtein, “Double Agents in the Church”, *Moscow News*, August 26, 2005. [↑](#footnote-ref-800)
801. For more details of the parliamentary commission's revelations, see *Priamoj Put'* (The Straight Path), №№ 1-2, January, 1992, p. 1; № 3, February, 1992, p. 1; February, 1992; Alexander Nezhny, "Tret’e Imia" (The Third Name), *Ogonek* (Little Fire), № 4 (3366), January 25 - February 1, 1992; Iain Walker and Chester Stern, "Holy Agents of the KGB", *The Mail on Sunday*, March 29, 1992; John Dunlop, "KGB Subversion of Russian Orthodox Church", *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 1, № 12, March 20, 1992, pp. 51-53; “Three Leading Moscow Hierarchs Unveiled as KGB Operatives”, *Orthodox Life*, vol. 42, № 3, May-June, 1992, pp. 25-29; Protodeacon Herman Ivanov-Trinadtsaty, "A ne nachalo li eto kontsa?" (Is this not the Beginning of the End?), *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 9 (1462), May 1/14, 1992, pp. 609; "Ne bo vragom Tvoim povem..." (I will not give Thy secret to Thine enemy…), *Vestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tservki za Granitsei* (Herald of the German Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad), № 1, 1992, pp. 16-22; Fr. Victor Potapov, *"Molchaniem predaеtsa Bog"* (“God is Betrayed by Silence”), Moscow:Isikhia, 1992, pp. 36-39; Joseph Harriss, "The Gospel according to Marx", *Reader's Digest*, February, 1993, pp. 59-63. See also I.I. Maslova, “Russkaia pravoslavnaia tserkov’ i KGB (1960-1980-e gody)” (The Russian Orthodox Church and the KGB (1960s to 1980s), *Voprosy Istorii* (Questions of History), December, 2005, pp. 86-87. [↑](#footnote-ref-801)
802. Montaigne, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* on May 3, 1992; quoted in "The Church of the KGB", *Living Orthodoxy*, vol. XIV, № 2, March-April, 1992, pp. 22-23. [↑](#footnote-ref-802)
803. *Estonian State Archive*, record group 131, file 393, pp. 125-126; James Meek, “File links church leader to KGB”, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, February 13, 1999; Seamus Martin, “Russian Patriarch was (is?) a KGB agent, files say Patriarch Alexeij II received KGB ‘Certificate of Honour’”, *Irish Times*, September 23, 2000; Arnold Beichman, “Patriarch with a KGB Past”, *The Washington Times*, September 29, 2000. [↑](#footnote-ref-803)
804. Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive*, London and New York: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1999, p. 661. [↑](#footnote-ref-804)
805. *Rossijskaia Gazeta*, 1992, № 52, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-805)
806. Preobrazhensky, “Ecumenism and Intelligence”. [↑](#footnote-ref-806)
807. Dunlop, “The Moscow Patriarchate as an Empire-Saving Institution”, in Michael Bourdeaux, M.E. Sharp (eds.), *The Politics of Religion in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, 1995, Armonk, NY, p. 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-807)
808. Felix Corbey, “The Patriarch and the KGB”, *Keston News Service*, September 21, 2000. [↑](#footnote-ref-808)
809. Preobrazhensky, *KGB v russkoj emigratsii* (The KGB in the Russian emigration), New York: Liberty Publishing House, 2006, p. 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-809)
810. “World Orthodoxy: Savva of Poland admits collaboration with Secret Police”, http://newsnftu.blogspot.com./2009/05/world-orthodoxy-sava-of-poland-admits.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-810)
811. Anonymous, “O Pravoslavnom Tsarstve i Poslednem Vremeni” (On the Orthodox Kingdom and the Last Times), no date or place of publication. [↑](#footnote-ref-811)
812. Lebedev, *Velikorossia* (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 644-647. [↑](#footnote-ref-812)
813. Lourié, “Dve Tserkvi, dve very i raznie novomucheniki. Razmyshlenia po sluchaiu konchiny arkhimandrita Ioanna (Krestiankina)” (Two Churches, two faiths and different new martyrs. Thoughts on the occasion of the death of Archimandrite Ioann (Krestiankin)”, <http://portalcredo.ru/site/print.php?act=comment&id=915>. [↑](#footnote-ref-813)
814. In 2014 a photograph appeared on Facebook of Patriarch Cyril “baptizing” by sprinkling. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-814)
815. In an article published in *Pravoslavnoe Slovo* (The Orthodox Word), № 12 (49), 1995), priest Timothy Selsky writes that in the MP cathedral of a small town he noticed… a price-list displayed at the candle counter. “The column reading ‘Prayer after Abortion – 8000 Roubles’ caught my eye. What sort of a new rite was this? As I learned later, a woman who would pay the required sum at the candle counter would have a certain prayer read over her, a prayer which allegedly should be read after having killed one’s own child in the womb. Whence all this? What is the mystery of such an easy remission of a mortal sin unknown to any of the Holy Church Fathers? Have we lived to see the day when the forgiveness of the sin of infanticide is bought just like that for a mere 8000 roubles and without any confession at all?” (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-815)
816. Perepiolkina, *Ecumenism – A Path to Perdition*, St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 116-117, 118-120, 121, 122. An earlier, Russian-language edition of this important book is entitled *Ekumenizm - put' vedushchej k pogibeli* (Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1992). [↑](#footnote-ref-816)
817. Perepiolkina, op. cit., p. 204. [↑](#footnote-ref-817)
818. Perepiolkina, op. cit., pp. 213-214. [↑](#footnote-ref-818)
819. Perepiolkina, op. cit., pp. 125, 127, 129, 130. [↑](#footnote-ref-819)
820. Lebedev, op. cit., p. 655. [↑](#footnote-ref-820)
821. Perepiolkina, op. cit., p. 251. [↑](#footnote-ref-821)
822. Perepiolkina, op. cit., p. 252. [↑](#footnote-ref-822)
823. See “Lurye o Shambezijskoj Unii” in Fr. Andrei Kuraiev’s blog, <http://diak-kuraev.livejournal.com/988242.html>, November 10, 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-823)
824. From the translation in *Living Orthodoxy*, vol. XIII, № 1, January-February, 1991, pp. 29-30. See also Metropolitan Calliopius of Pentapolis, *Prodosia tis Orthodoxias* (A Betrayal of Orthodoxy), Piraeus, 1991; *O Pharos tis Orthodoxias* (The Lighthouse of Orthodoxy), October, 1991, № 66, p. 120; Monk Isaac, "Commentary on the latest recommendations of the Joint Commission for theological dialogue between the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches", Orthodox Life, vol. 42, № 3, May-June, 1991; "Dossier sur les Accords de Chambésy entre Monophysites et Orthodoxes" (Dossier on the Chambésy Agreements between the Monophysites and the Orthodox), *La Lumière du Thabor* (The Light of Tabor), № 31, 1991. [↑](#footnote-ref-824)
825. *Christian News*, April 1 and 8, 1991; in "Ecumenism down under", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, vol. XXIV, № 45 (1149), August 5/18, 1991, p. 3; *Keston News Service*, № 370, March 7, 1991, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-825)
826. *The Word*, April, 1992. [↑](#footnote-ref-826)
827. http://www.antiochian.org.au/content/view/143/21. [↑](#footnote-ref-827)
828. *Kathimerini,* October 16, 1992. [↑](#footnote-ref-828)
829. Damian Thompson, “Holy Sanctuary in turmoil over monks’ eviction”, *The Daily Telegraph*, June 4, 1992; “Ecumenists seize Skete of the Prophet Elias”, *Living Orthodoxy*, vol. XIII, № 4, July-August, 1991, pp. 1, 9. For other harassment of non-commemorators on Mount Athos, see Monk Maximus of the Great Lavra, *Human Rights on Mount Athos*, Welshpool: Stylite Publishing, 1990; “Of Truth and Falsehood: Allegations of the ‘O.C.A.’ and Response from the Holy Mountain”, *Living Orthodoxy*, vol. XIII, № 3, May-June, 1991. [↑](#footnote-ref-829)
830. Thus in November, 1991, as Roman Catholic bishoprics in the former Soviet Union multiplied, the patriarch said in London that the Vatican had broken certain non-proselytism agreements, and that a flock of no more than 300 Catholics in Novosibirsk did not justify the creation of a bishopric there (Oxana Antic, "New Structures for the Catholic Church in the USSR", *Report on the USSR*, vol. 3, № 21, May 24, 1991). [↑](#footnote-ref-830)
831. Bishop Ambrose of Methone, personal communication, November 17, 2005; A.D. Delimbasis, *Rebuttal of an Anticanonical “Verdict”,* Athens, 1993. [↑](#footnote-ref-831)
832. Patriarch Bartholomew, Address at Emory University at the Presidential Medal award ceremony, October 31, 1997. [↑](#footnote-ref-832)
833. *Time*, May 5, 1997. [↑](#footnote-ref-833)
834. *Ekklesiastiki Alitheia* (Ecclesiastical Truth), December 12, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-834)
835. And also in the holy canons: "But if any shall be found to be Judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ” (*Canon XXIX, Synod of Laodicea,* c. 365 A.D). [↑](#footnote-ref-835)
836. The first four thinkers he mentions here are all notorious heretics! (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-836)
837. *Rech’ Patriarkha Alekseia II k rabbinam g. Nyu Yorka (S.Sh.A.) i Eres’ Zhidovstvuyushchikh*, (The Speech of Patriarch Alexis II to the Rabbis of New York (U.S.A.) and the Heresy of the Judaisers) U.S.A., 1993 (MS), Moscow, 1992, pp. 8-10; Valery Kadzhaya, “Ask Peace for Jerusalem”, http://www.newtimes.ru/eng/detail.asp?art\_id=778. [↑](#footnote-ref-837)
838. *Priamoj Put'* (The Straight Path), February, 1992, p. 5; E. Polyakov, "Khronika Tserkovnoj Zhizni v Yanvare-Fevrale 1992 g." (A Chronicle of Church Life in January-February, 1992) (MS), p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-838)
839. *Russkii Pastyr’*, № 30, I-1998, p. 86. Cf. Fr. Timothy Alferov, "Nekotorie uroki dvizhenia 'nepominaiushchikh' (Some Lessons of the Movement of the Non-Commemorators), *Russkii Pastyr'* (Russian Pastor), № 19, II-1994, pp. 102-104. [↑](#footnote-ref-839)
840. See A. Soldatov, "Obnovlenie ili obnovlenchestvo?" (Renovation or Renovationism?), *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 20 (1521), October 15/28, 1994, pp. 6-9; *Service Orthodoxe de Presse* (Orthodox Press Service), № 194, January, 1995, pp. 7-10 (F); V.N. Osipov, "Pravoslavnoe serdtse na vetru", *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 2 (1527), January 15/28, 1995, pp. 14-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-840)
841. Perepiolkina, op. cit., p. 205; from the Documents and Reports of the Council published by the MP in 1995, p. 191. [↑](#footnote-ref-841)
842. Perepiolkina, op. cit., pp. 215-216. [↑](#footnote-ref-842)
843. *Service Orthodoxe de Presse* (Orthodox Press Service), № 204, January, 1996, p. 13 [↑](#footnote-ref-843)
844. "Wages for Popes", *30 Days*, № 6б, 1994; reprinted in "Vatican Diary", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, January 2/15, 1995, pp. 7-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-844)
845. Perepiolkina, op. cit., pp. 205, 217-219. [↑](#footnote-ref-845)
846. ”The Position of ROCOR on the Free Russian Orthodox Church”, adopted by the Council of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad, 2/15 March 1990. [↑](#footnote-ref-846)
847. Fr. Timothy Alferov, “О polozhenii rossijskikh prikhodov RPTsZ v svete itogov patriarkhijnogo sobora” (On the Position of the Russian Parishes of the ROCOR in the Light of the Results of the Patriarchal Council), *Uspenskij Listok* (Dormition Leaflet), № 34, 2000. [↑](#footnote-ref-847)
848. St. John briefly commemorated the patriarch of Moscow in 1945, but quickly repented when he learned the true state of affairs. [↑](#footnote-ref-848)
849. See, for example, his article “Sila Tserkvi v edinenii very i liubvi” (The Strength of the Church is in Unity of Faith and Love), *Vestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii Russkoj Tserkvi za Granitsej* (Herald of the German Diocese of the Russian Church Abroad), № 4, 1997. [↑](#footnote-ref-849)
850. Alferov, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-850)
851. See table 10.7 in Kaariainen, op. cit., p. 153. [↑](#footnote-ref-851)
852. Senina, “The Angel of the Philadelphian Church”, *Vertograd-Inform* (English edition), № 15, January, 2000, pp. 6-24. [↑](#footnote-ref-852)
853. At the end of 1988, the layman Boris Kazushin (now Hieromonk Tikhon) went to New York, handed Metropolitan Vitaly a mass of documents and asked him to open parishes of ROCOR inside Russia and accept his own parish under his omophorion (Open Letter to Bishop Victor of Western Europe, November 2/15, 2009, <http://frtikhon.livejournal.com>).

     According to another source, however, this idea goes back to a correspondence initiated during the perestroika period between the dissident Russian layman (and later priest) Stefan Krasovitsky and Bishop Gregory (Grabbe). Wojciech Zalewski writes: “In April 1989 Krassovitsky in a letter to Grabbe indicated that Alexis Aver’ianov, Zoia Krakhmal’nikova and he himself were thinking about ‘the necessity of trying to organize a podvorie of the Church Abroad in Russia’. In September (14/27 September, 1989) he is more specific. Although he did not foresee a possibility that even a single already-established parish would come under ROCA [ROCOR], i.e., under Lazarus’ jurisdiction, he suggests forming and registering an informal society (union, that is, brotherhood) in secret unity with ROCA. Its members would not attend the MP churches. Krassovitsky even sent Grabbe a proposal for such a society. When the membership grows, he writes, then a request for a church building for our own could be submitted or even a church of our own could be built. Furthermore, it would be useful to take over from the government some schools and ‘educate in these schools a hostile attitude to society in its present moral-ideological condition’. Finally, it will be necessary to find an official name for Lazarus’s jurisdiction. At the beginning of October (30 September / 13 October, 1989) Krassovitsky writes ‘[it would be good to get a church for Vladyka Lazarus’ and suggests that priests George Edel’shtein, Oleg Steniaev, Aleksei Aver’ianov and possibly Father Gleb Yakunin all could be helpful in this matter. In turn Grabbe answers by stressing a need for candidates for new bishops without whom ‘the matter could die. Vl. Lazarus must have this in view’ and suggests pulling other members of the Catacomb Church into ROCA’s orbit. To that Krassovitsky replies: ‘According to Vl. Lazar, the canonicity of the church-servers of these groups is very doubtful. Besides, in my experience with them they are either infected with a spirit of narrow sectarianism bordering on unhealthy mysticism, or with heresies like sophianism’ (23 November / 6 December, 1989).” (“Vozvraschenie Russkoj Zarubezhnoi Tserkvi na Rodinu. Vzgliad Episkopa Grigoria (Grabbe). Iurii Pavlovich Grabbe’s (Bishop Grigorii) Vision of the Return of the Orthodox Church to the Homeland in the Post- Soviet Era” (MS, in English mainly)) [↑](#footnote-ref-853)
854. As Fr. Valentine told the story: “In the Vladimir diocese I served as dean. I was a member of the diocesan administration, was for a time diocesan secretary and had responsibility for receiving guests in this diocese. And then I began to notice that I was being gradually, quietly removed. Perhaps this happened because I very much disliked prayers with people of other faiths. It’s one thing to drink tea with guests, and quite another… to pray together with them, while the guests, it has to be said, were of all kinds: both Buddhists, and Muslims, and Satanists. I did not like these ecumenical prayers, and I did not hide this dislike of mine.

     “And so at first they removed me from working with the guests, and then deprived me of the post of secretary, and then excluded me from the diocesan council. Once after my return from a trip abroad, the local hierarch Valentine (Mishchuk) summoned me and said: ‘Sit down and write a report for the whole year about what foreigners were with you, what you talked about with them, what questions they asked you and what answers you gave them.’ ‘Why is this necessary?’ ‘It’s just necessary,’ replied the bishop. ‘I don’t understand where I am, Vladyko – in the study of a hierarch or in the study of a KGB operative? No, I’ve never done this and never will do it. And remember that I am a priest and not a “stooge”.’ ‘Well if you’re not going to do it, I will transfer you to another parish.’

     “And so the next day came the ukaz concerning my transfer to the out-of-the-way place Pokrov. I was upset, but after all I had to obey, it was a hierarch’s ukaz. But suddenly something unexpected happened – my parishioners rebelled against this decision, people began to send letters to the representatives of the authorities expressing their dissatisfaction with my transfer: our parishioners even hired buses to go to the capital and protest.

     “The patriarchate began to admonish them, suggested ‘a good batyushka’, Demetrius Netsvetaiev, who was constantly on trips abroad, in exchange. ‘We don’t need your batyushka,’ said the parishioners, ‘we know this kind, today he’ll spy on foreigners, tomorrow on the unbelievers of Suzdal, and then he’ll begin to reveal the secret of parishioners’ confessions.’ In general, our parishioners just didn’t accept Netsvetaiev. They didn’t even let him into the church. The whole town was aroused, and the parishioners came to me: ‘Fr. Valentine, what shall we do?’ At that point I told them that I had passed my childhood among the ‘Tikhonites’ [Catacomb Christians], and that there is a ‘Tikhonite Church’ existing in exile. If we write to their first-hierarch, Metropolitan Vitaly, and he accepts us – will you agree to be under his omophorion? The church people declared their agreement. However, this attempt to remove me did not pass without a trace, I was in hospital as a result of an attack of nerves. And so, at the Annunciation, I receive the news that our parish had been received into ROCA.” (“Vladyka Valentin raskazyvaiet” (Vladyka Valentine tells his story), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 17 (1446), September 1/14, 1991, pp. 9-10). [↑](#footnote-ref-854)
855. The present writer put that question directly to Valentine in a Moscow flat in 1998. The answer was: “A monk does not justify himself…” [↑](#footnote-ref-855)
856. “Chernigovskomu prikhodu RIPTs-RPTsZ – 15 let” (15 Years of the Chernigov Parish of RTOC-ROCOR), http://karlovtchanin.com/inex.php?module=pages&act=print\_page&pid=109&SSID. [↑](#footnote-ref-856)
857. Thus on September 17/30 he wrote to the Synod that Suzdal was “a base sent from God”. And he continued: “S.K. [probably Stefan Krasovitsky] writes to me on the question of the development of our mission in Russia: ‘A very great brake is the fact that Vladyka Lazarus has not the right, as he claims, to receive clergy from all round the country into our Church, but only in Tambov province. It would be necessary for him to have such a right. It is also necessary that Archimandrite Valentine should have such a right, and I hope he will return to us in the rank of a bishop. The point is that at present many priests are going both to Vladyka Lazarus and to Fr. Valentine. All the papers, as Vl. Lazarus says, he sends to America. While things are going from here to there, parishes can disperse, be closed in cooperation with the authorities, etc.

     “Fr. Germanus Ivanov-Trinadtsaty, after staying in Russia and getting to know the situation on the spot, writes that keeping Fr. Valentine in the rank of archimandrite without consecrating him while there were three of our bishops in Russia has elicited perplexity: ‘I see,’ he writes, ‘all the “faults” (in inverted commas) of Fr. Valentine, everything that makes him not the typical abroad cleric, but I can WITNESS that he himself sees this and is trying to change. He is precisely that person who has fallen on our heads from the sky, who can get things moving. He is capable of changing the situation in Russia radically in our favour. For this he needs a hierarchical mitre.

     “I personally have talked for quite a long time with Fr. Valentine and did not notice in him any of those faults about which Vl. Mark writes. Evidently, life and work in our Church in the course of the past months has not passed in vain for him.

     “Fr. Germanus also talked with great veneration about Vladyka Lazarus… but thinks that he is not capable of being a leader. He does not have that firm juridical position which, but a miracle of God, Fr. Valentine has and which we could use. If we want to carry out missionary work in Russia, there is simply no other way out for us.” (*Tserkovnie Novosti* (Church News), № 4 (105), May, 2002, p. 7).

     On October 13/26, 1990, Bishop Gregory wrote to Archbishop Anthony of San Francisco: “Vladyka Lazarus is a fine person, but too accustomed to the catacombs, while he does not have the right to live in Moscow. He is not capable of heading open work. I hope that you, Vladyko, as a member of the Synod will help poor Valentine” (Zalewski, op. cit., p. 4). [↑](#footnote-ref-857)
858. Shumilo, “Kratkaia Istoricheskaia Spravka on RIPTs” (A Short Historical Note on the RTOC), 2008. [↑](#footnote-ref-858)
859. On Archbishop Anthony, see “I Vrata Adovy ne Odoleiut Eia’ (materialy k istorii Rossijskoj Istinno-Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi)” (And the Gates of Hell shall not Prevail against Her) (Materials towards the History of the True Orthodox Church), *Suzdal’skie Eparkhial’nie Vedomosti* (Suzdal Diocesan News), № 7, March-May, 1999, pp. 35-40; Kto est’ kto v rossijskikh katakombakh (Who’s Who in the Russian Catacombs), St. Petersburg, 1999. [↑](#footnote-ref-859)
860. See Andreyev, *Russia’s Catacomb Saints*, Platina: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1982, chapter 40; V. Moss, "The True Orthodox Church of Russia", *Religion in Communist Lands*, Winter, 1991; Hierodeacon Jonah (Yashunsky), “Nashi Katakomby” (Our Catacombs), *Vestnik RKhD* (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), 1992, № 166; Bishop John and Igumen Elijah, *Tainij Skhimitropolit* (A Secret Schema-Metropolitan), Moscow: "Bogorodichnij Tsentr", 1991; *Kto est’ kto v rossijskikh katakombakh,* pp. 53-60. [↑](#footnote-ref-860)
861. V.V. Alekseev, M.Yu. Nechaeva, *Voskreschie Romanovy?* (Resurrected Romanovs?), Yekaterinburg, 2000. [↑](#footnote-ref-861)
862. “Spravka iz Kantseliarii Arkhierejskago Sinoda” (Document from the Chancellery of the Hierarchical Synod), № 4/77/133, 2/15 August, 1990. See also Priest Oleg, "O mir vsego mira, blagosostoianii svyatykh Bozhiikh tserkvej i soedinenii vsekh, Gospodu pomolimsa" (For the peace of the whole world and the good estate of the holy Churches of God and the union of all, let us pray to the Lord), *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 24 (1453), December 15/28, 1991, pp. 11-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-862)
863. ROCOR later came to believe that they had made a mistake in this matter. Thus Archbishop Hilarion, the sole signatory of the ukaz of August 2/15, 1990 wrote to the present writer: “The statement which I signed as Deputy Secretary of the Synod was based entirely on the information given to us by Archbishop Lazarus. He reported to the Synod on the different groups of the Catacombs and convinced the members of the Synod (or the Council – I don’t recall offhand which) that their canonicity was questionable and in some instances – their purity of doctrine as well (e.g. imyabozhniki [name-worshippers]). The Synod members hoped (naively) that this would convince the catacomb groups to rethink their position and seek from the Russian Church Abroad correction of their orders toguarantee apostolic succession. We now see that it was a mistake to issue the statement and to have based our understanding of the catacomb situation wholly on the information provided by Vl. Lazarus. I personally regret this whole matter very much and seek to have a better understanding of and a sincere openness towards the long-suffering confessors of the Russian Catacombs.” (Private email communication, July 15, 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-863)
864. Thus the present writer remembers coming to a catacomb gathering in Moscow on the eve of the Feast of the Dormition, 1990. The priest entered, and instead of vesting himself for the vigil service, took off his cross in the presence of all the people, declaring: “According to ROCOR I am not a priest.” Then he went to Bishop Lazarus and was re-ordained. Meanwhile, his flock, abandoned by their shepherd and deprived of any pastoral guidance, scattered in different directions… [↑](#footnote-ref-864)
865. “Zaiavlenie Arkhierejskago Sinoda Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi Zagranitsej” (Declaration of the Hierarchical Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 18 (1423), 15/28 September, 1990, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-865)
866. See V. Moss, “Pechat’ Antikhrista v Sovietskoj i Post-Sovietskoj Rossii” (The Seal of the Antichrist in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia), *Suzdal’skie Eparkhial’nie Vedomosti* (Suzdal Diocesan News), № 10, April-November, 2000, pp. 22-30. [↑](#footnote-ref-866)
867. In November, 1990 the present writer took a petition from Fr. Gurias and representatives of the five thousand passportless to the Chrysostomite Synod in Athens, petitioning that he be made a bishop. Since the Synod was slow in replying, the passportless became impatient and turn to the Auxentiites. [↑](#footnote-ref-867)
868. See "A Biography of Archimandrite Gury", *The True Vine*, vol. 3, № 3 (1992); *Vozdvizhenie* (Exaltation), № 2 (15), February, 1996; *Kto est’ kto v rossijskikh katakombakh*, pp. 44-46; E.A. Petrova, "Perestroika Vavilonskoj Bashni – poslednij shans vselukavogo antikhrista" (The Reconstruction of the Tower of Babel – the last Chance of the All-Cunning Antichrist), Moscow, 1991, pp. 5-6 (MS); L. Sikorskaia, *Tajnoj Tserkvi revnitel’. Episkop Gurij Kazanskij i ego somolitvenniki* (Zealot for the Secret Church. Bishop Gurias of Kasan and his fellow worshippers), Moscow: Bratonezh, 2008, pp. 102-105. [↑](#footnote-ref-868)
869. Metropolitan Vitaly, “Otvet bespasportnomu” (Reply to a Passportless), *Pravoslavnij Vestnik* (Orthodox Herald), February-March, 1990; Petrova, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-869)
870. Petrova, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-870)
871. Encyclical Letter of the Council of Russian Bishops Abroad to the Russian Orthodox Flock, 23 March, 1933; translated in *Living Orthodoxy*, #131, September-October, 2001, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-871)
872. *The Montreal Myrrh-Streaming Icon and Brother Joseph*, Montreal, Sofia: Brother Joseph Memorial Fund, 2008, p. 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-872)
873. Fr. Stefan Krasovitsky, “Torzhestva v Suzdale” (Triumphs in Suzdal), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox

     Russia), № 15 (1420), August 1/14, 1990, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-873)
874. Zalewski, op. cit., p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-874)
875. V. Moss, "The Free Russian Orthodox Church", *Report on the USSR*, № 44, November 1, 1991; L. Byzov, S. Filatov, “Religia i politika v obshchestvennom soznanii sovetskogo naroda” (Religion and Politics in the Social Consciousness of the Soviet People), in Bessmertnij, A.R. & Filatov, S.B., *Religia i Demokratia* (Religion and Democracy), Moscow: Progress, 1993, p. 41, note 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-875)
876. “Vladyka Lazar otvechaiet na voprosy redaktsii” (Vladyka Lazarus replies to the questions of the editors), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 22 (1451), November 15/28, 1991, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-876)
877. “Vladyka Valentin vernulsa iz Ameriki” (Vladyka Valentine has returned from America), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 3 (1456), February 1/14, 1992, p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-877)
878. Zalewski, op. cit., p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-878)
879. *Priamoj Put’* (The Straight Path), January, 1992, p. 5; *Nezavisimaia gazeta* (The Independent Newspaper), January 18, 1992. [↑](#footnote-ref-879)
880. *Priamoj Put’* (The Straight Path), January, 1992, pp. 3-4; March, 1992, pp. 3-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-880)
881. Archbishop Mark, in *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (The Suzdal Pilgrim), №№ 18-20, pp. 108, 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-881)
882. *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (The Suzdal Pilgrim), №№ 18-20, pp. 63-64. [↑](#footnote-ref-882)
883. According to Mrs. Anastasia Shatilova, it was Barnabas himself who asked for this jurisdiction (*Church News*, July, 2003, vol. 14, № 66 (#120), p. 4). [↑](#footnote-ref-883)
884. *Priamoj Put’* (The Straight Path), May, 1992. [↑](#footnote-ref-884)
885. *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 17 (1470), September 1/14, 1992, p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-885)
886. Sergius Bychkov, “Voskresenie mifa” (The Resurrection of a Myth), *Moskovskie Novosti* (Moscow News), March 7, 1993; “Ukazanie Protoiereiu Viktoru Potapovu” (Instruction to Protopriest Victor Potapov), February 4/17, 1993 (no. 11/35/39). The official publications of ROCOR shed little light on this about-turn, saying only that the Synod “reviewed and changed certain of its decisions of December 12, 1992” (*Tserkovnaia Zhizn’* (Church Life), №№ 1-2, January-February, 1993, p. 3). [↑](#footnote-ref-886)
887. *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 18 (1471), September 15/28, 1992, p. 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-887)
888. Zalewski, op. cit., p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-888)
889. Emergency report to the ROCOR Synod, May 16/29, 1993, *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (The Suzdal Pilgrim), 18-20, 1994, p. 92. In a later report to the Synod (June 9/22, 1993, *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (The Suzdal Pilgrim), №№ 18-10, 1994, pp. 94-95), Bishop Gregory, after enumerating Bishop Barnabas’ transgressions, appealed that he be brought to trial. He wrote that according to Protocol № 5 of the Sobor, “’Bishop Barnabas spoke about disturbances in his relationships with Archbishop Lazarus and [Bishop] Benjamin’… He complained to the Sobor about a priest of Archbishop Lazarus because he did not allow him to serve in his church without the permission of the Archbishop. The President of ROCOR then explained to Bishop Barnabas that insofar as the given parish was in the jurisdiction of Archbishop Lazarus, the priest had been completely right. I personally possess an inquiry from the priest of Archbishop Lazarus which confirms his reply to Bishop Barnabas. On meeting the priest in the Mary-Martha convent, Bishop Barnabas ‘demanded that I go under his omophorion. I refrained from going over, at which Bishop Barnabas said: ‘You are a rebellious batiushka’. Having spoken about ‘disturbances in his relationships with Archbishop Lazarus and Bishop Benjamin’, Bishop Barnabas goes on to criticize Archbishop Lazarus. He recognized that he has ‘too hastily’ banned Archimandrite Adrian, the unlawfulness of which the President had immediately pointed out. To the question of Archbishop Mark concerning the reception by Bishop Barnabas of the priest Peter Astakhov, who had been banned by Bishop Valentine for living with a woman, Bishop Barnabas, as is recorded in the protocol, replied that he ‘had to receive Fr. Peter, since the authorities wanted to seize his church’. Then Bishop Barnabas proclaimed a list of parishes of Archbishop Lazarus which, as he said, wanted to go over to him. The unlawful actions of Bishop Barnabas in relation to other dioceses are listed further on in the same protocol. There it says: “Another written report of Bishop Valentine was read, which expressed a complaint against Bishop Barnabas for his links with Pamyat’ and for his receiving clergy without release documents. The actions of Bishop Barnabas introduce disturbance into the parishes of the Russian Church and place its existence under threat.” (in *Tserkovnie Novosti* (Church News), № 8 (100), November, 2001, pp. 3-4). [↑](#footnote-ref-889)
890. According to the Ukrainian publication *Ohliadach* (Observer), even after Bishop Barnabas was banned from Russia by the ROCOR Synod, he continued his links with the Ukrainians. “On an unofficial level, relations have continued to the present. With the secret blessing of Archbishop Barnabas, Archimandrite Joasaph (Shibaiev), dean of the Russian parishes of ROCOR, went under the jurisdiction of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kievan Patriarchate” (quoted in *Church News*, July, 2003, vol. 14, № 66 (#120), p. 3). [↑](#footnote-ref-890)
891. “Such disturbance and division of the flock as the atheists and the MP could only dream about” (Bishop Valentine in *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (The Suzdal Pilgrim), №№ 18-20, 1994, p. 5). (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-891)
892. *Protocol no. 8*, April 30 / May 13, 1993. [↑](#footnote-ref-892)
893. *Istoki Rossijskoj Pravoslavnoj Svobodnoj Tserkvi* (The Sources of the Free Russian Orthodox Church),

     Suzdal, 1997, pp. 19-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-893)
894. “Dukhovnie dokumenty po istorii Katakombnoj Tserkvi. Doklad Arkhiepiskopa Lazaria Tambovskogo Arkhierejskomu Soboru RPTsZ, 14/27 aprelia, 1993 g.” (Spiritual documents on the history of the Catacomb Church. The Report of Archbishop Lazarus of Tambov to the Hierarchcial Council of ROCOR, April 14/27, 1993”, http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print\_page&pid=919. [↑](#footnote-ref-894)
895. http://www/russia-talk.com/otkliki/ot-117.htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-895)
896. Bishop Valentine’s accuser turned out to be Alexander R. Shtilmark, an assistant of the Pamyat’ leader, Demetrius Vasiliev. His motivation was clear. Later, several of Shtilmark’s relatives witnessed to his mental unbalance. And his sister, Maria Stilmark asserted (personal communication, March, 2006) that her brother denies ever having sent a complaint to the Synod! In spite of this, and Bishop Valentine’s repeated protestations of his innocence (which appear not to have reached Metropolitan Vitaly) ROCOR, in the persons of Archbishop Mark and Bishop Hilarion continued to drag this matter out for another two years (Reports of Bishop Gregory (Grabbe), *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (The Suzdal Pilgrim), №№ 18-20, 1994, pp. 123, 126). (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-896)
897. *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (The Suzdal Pilgrim), №№ 18-20, 1994, pp. 89-90. [↑](#footnote-ref-897)
898. There were objective grounds for such a suspicion. Thus the protocols of this Council for June 9/22 record: “Hieromonk Vladimir, superior of the Borisovsk church, says that three months before the Session of the Hierarchical Council, his relative said that he should abandon the Suzdal Diocese since they were going to retire Bishop Valentine at the Session of the Sobor in France. She knew this from a party worker linked with the KGB. And three years later he learned that this question had indeed been discussed. He is interested to know how it happened that the KGB realized its intention in real life?” (*Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (The Suzdal Pilgrim), № 23, 1995, p. 54; letter to the author by Hieromonk Vladimir (Ovchinnikov), June 23 / July 6, 1993). [↑](#footnote-ref-898)
899. Letter of Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles, no heading, no date; original in the archive of Archbishop Anthony (Orlov) of San Francisco. [↑](#footnote-ref-899)
900. *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (The Suzdal Pilgrim), №№ 18-20, 1994, p. 121; letter to the author by Hieromonk Vladimir, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-900)
901. “Odigitria Russkoj Istinno-Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi: Chudotvornij obraz Iverskoj Ikony Bozhiej Materi Blagoukhaiuschej” (The Hodigitria of the Russian True Orthodox Church: The Wonderworking Image of the Fragrant Iveron Icon of the Mother of God), http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=page&pid=24. [↑](#footnote-ref-901)
902. However, the metropolitan did not intend to visit his Russian dioceses. Indeed, as Metropolitan Valentine told the present writer, he refused many such requests on the grounds that he might be killed. Valentine saw in this refusal of the metropolitan to visit his Russian flock one of the main reasons for the collapse of the ROCOR mission. [↑](#footnote-ref-902)
903. *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’* (Church Life), №№ 3-4, May-August, 1994, p. 5). [↑](#footnote-ref-903)
904. *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’* (Church Life), № 5-6, September-December, 1993, pp. 7, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-904)
905. *Church News*, vol. 12, № 1 (83), January-February, 2000, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-905)
906. *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (The Suzdal Pilgrim), №№ 18-20, 1994, pp. 159-160. [↑](#footnote-ref-906)
907. *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (The Suzdal Pilgrim), №№ 18-20, pp. 168-169. [↑](#footnote-ref-907)
908. *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’* (Church Life), №№ 1-2, January-April, 1994, pp. 14-16; *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (The Suzdal Pilgrim), №№ 18-20, 1994, pp. 196-198. [↑](#footnote-ref-908)
909. *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (The Suzdal Pilgrim), №№ 18-20, 1994, pp. 198, 200-201. [↑](#footnote-ref-909)
910. http://www.russia-talk.com/otkliki/ot-117.htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-910)
911. Zhukov, “Poslanie nastoiatelia khrama RPZTs v Parizhe” (Epistle of the Rector of the ROCOR Church in Paris), in Otkliki na deiania Arkhierejskogo Sobor RPTsZ 2000 goda i na prochie posleduischie za nim sobytia (Reactions to the Acts of the Hierarchical Council of the ROCOR in 2000 and to other events that followed it), part 2, Paris, 2001, p. 85). Of course, the FROC bishops also retained the old formula… [↑](#footnote-ref-911)
912. Protocol 5; *Tserkovnie Novosti* (Church News), № 4 (105), May, 2002, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-912)
913. *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’* (Church News), №№ 3-4, May-August, 1994, pp. 60-65. Bishop Evtikhy had left the MP in the early 1990s for four reasons: (i) the sexual demands made by the MP’s Metropolitan Theodosius of Omsk to the wives of clergy and parishioners, (ii) his refusal to demand the return of church buildings from the authorities, (iii) his refusal to give catechism lessons before baptism, and (iv) his ban on baptising by full immersion (Roman Lunkin, “Rossijskie zarubezhniki mezhdu dvukh ognej” (The Russians Abroad between two fires), http://www.starlightsite.co.uk/keston/russia/articles/nov2005/01Kurochkin.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-913)
914. Bishop Gregory, *Pis’ma* (Letters), Moscow, 1998, pp. 123-125. [↑](#footnote-ref-914)
915. *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (The Suzdal Pilgrim), №№ 18-20, 1994, p. 149. [↑](#footnote-ref-915)
916. Bishop Gregory, *Doklady* (Reports), Moscow, 1999, p. 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-916)
917. Zalewski, op. cit., p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-917)
918. *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (The Suzdal Pilgrim), №№ 18-20, 1994, pp. 128-129, 130. [↑](#footnote-ref-918)
919. Fr. Alexander Pavpertov and Alexander Tarakhanov, Facebook conversation, March 23, 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-919)
920. Bishop Gregory, “The Dubious Ecclesiology of Metropolitan Cyprian’s Group”, *Church News*, no. 5, September-October, 1994, pp. 2-4; “Arkhierejskij Sobor RPTsZ 1994 goda: Istoria Priniatia Russkoj Zarubezhnoj Tserkoviu Yereticheskoj Ekkleziologii Mitropolita Kipriana”, *Sviataia Rus’* (Holy Russia), 2003; *Vernost’* (Faithfulness), 98, December, 2007. [↑](#footnote-ref-920)
921. Personal communication with the present writer, Lesna, November/December, 1994. [↑](#footnote-ref-921)
922. *Pravoslavnij Vestnik* (The Orthodox Herald), January-February, 1996. [↑](#footnote-ref-922)
923. Letter to Archbishop Mark of Germany and Great Britain, November 29 / December 12, 1996. [↑](#footnote-ref-923)
924. *Tserkovnie Novosti* (Church News), June, 1997, № 6 (62), p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-924)
925. Bishop Artemije, Statement to the Thessalonica Theological Conference, September, 2004; in *The Shepherd*, June, 2005, pp. 15-16. [↑](#footnote-ref-925)
926. *Church News*, October-November, 1998, vol. 10, № 8 (75), p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-926)
927. *Orthodox Tradition*, vol. XV, № 1, p. 34. This information has recently been confirmed: “DOKUMENT: Kartochki ‘psevdonim’ (forma № 3a) KGB SSSR na agentov, zaverbovannykh iz chisla ierarkhov i dukhovenstva Gruzinskoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi. 1970-80e gg.”, http://portalcredo.ru/site/?act=news&id=56312&cf=, August 14, 2007. [↑](#footnote-ref-927)
928. Nun E., a disciple of Metropolitan Gennady, personal communication, September, 1990. [↑](#footnote-ref-928)
929. *Vertograd-Inform*, № 2, December, 1998, p. 25; *Church News*, September, 1997, pp. 8-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-929)
930. Fr. Basil Lourié, “The Synodal Decision of the Official Georgian Church and ‘the Third Way’ between Ecumenism and Orthodoxy”, *Vertograd-Inform*, № 10 (43), October, 1998, pp. 7-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-930)
931. Andrei Psarev, “The Development of Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia’s Attitude Toward Other Local Orthodox Churches”, http://www.sobor2006.com/printerfriendly2.php?id=119\_0\_3\_0 , p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-931)
932. “Looking Back on Harare”, *Orthodox Tradition*, vol. XVII, № 4, 2000, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-932)
933. Patriarch Maximus wrote to the General Secretary of the WCC on November 27, 1998 as follows: “The Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church at their session on the 9th of April 1998, Protocol No. 9, having taken into consideration that the hopes from its membership in the World Council of Churches have not been fully justified, as well as from the confusion of the Orthodox Christians in this country with that membership (of our Church in the WCC), with a view to safeguard the fullness of our Holy Church, have decided to discontinue its membership in it” (http://www.wcccoe.org/wcc/assembly/pre-47.html ). (My italics (V.M)). [↑](#footnote-ref-933)
934. Dr. Fred Strickert, *The Washington Report: On Middle East Affairs: Christianity and the Middle East,* July/August 1999, pp. 84-85. [↑](#footnote-ref-934)
935. Bishop Sergius, *The Good Word,* vol. 1, no. 1, July/August, 2013, p. 4. http://www.gocportland.org/The\_Good\_Word\_Jul-Aug\_2013.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-935)
936. Bishop Ambrose of Methone, personal communication, June 19, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-936)
937. Jenkins, “Revival in the Balkans”, *The Christian Century,* June 27, 2014, http://www.christiancentury.org/article/2014-06/revival-balkans. [↑](#footnote-ref-937)
938. Valentine, Nativity Epistle, 1994/1995. [↑](#footnote-ref-938)
939. Maklakov, “Tserkovnij Pogrom XXI Veka” (Church Coup of the 21st Century, part 2, *Vernost’*, April, 2012, no. 171. http://metanthonymemorial.org/VernostNo171.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-939)
940. *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (Suzdal Pilgrim), № 22, 1995, pp. 26-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-940)
941. “Obraschenie Episkopa Evtikhia Ishimskogo i Sibirskogo” (Address of Bishop Eutyches of Ishim and Siberia), *Otkliki*, op. cit., part 3, p. 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-941)
942. *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (Suzdal Pilgrim), № 23, 1995, pp. 32-33. [↑](#footnote-ref-942)
943. This Decree, dated February 22, also stated that the Odessa-Tambov and Suzdal-Vladimir dioceses were declared “widowed” (a term used only if the ruling bishop has died) and were to be submitted temporarily to Metropolitan Vitaly. See *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (The Suzdal Pilgrim), № 23, 1995, p. 31; *Tserkovnie Novosti* (Church News), № 1A (43), February, 1995, p. 3. (V.M). [↑](#footnote-ref-943)
944. “Witness” of February 28, 1995, *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (Suzdal Pilgrim), № 23, 1995, pp. 35-36. [↑](#footnote-ref-944)
945. Grabbe, “On Recent Events in Church Life in Russia and Abroad”. [↑](#footnote-ref-945)
946. *Tserkovnie Novosti* (Church News), № 1A (43), February, 1995, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-946)
947. *Suzdal’skij Palomnik* (Suzdal Pilgrim), № 23, 1995, p. 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-947)
948. Igumen Theophan (Areskin), http://suzdalite.livejournal.com/35173.html . [↑](#footnote-ref-948)
949. *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'* (Church News), №№ 3-4, May-August, 1995, pp. 3-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-949)
950. *Suzdal’skij Blagovest’* (Suzdal Bell-Ringing), № 3, January-February, 1997, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-950)
951. V. Moss, "The Free Russian Orthodox Church", *Report on the USSR*, № 44, November 1, 1991; L. Byzov, S. Filatov, op. cit., p. 41, note 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-951)
952. Bishop Ambrose of Methone reported that a few days before his death Jose told him that he had left the icon in Canada (personal communication, November 17, 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-952)
953. *Vestnik IPTs* (Messenger of the True Orthodox Church), No. 2, 1994, pg. 30. In 2014 Agathangel signed a much stricter confession of faith when he entered into communion with the True Orthodox Church under Archbishop Kallinikos. There is no record of his having repented of his former views… [↑](#footnote-ref-953)
954. *Orthodox Life*, vol. 47, № 3, May-June, 1997, pp. 42-43; *Suzdal’skij Blagovest’* (Suzdal Good News), № 3, January-February, 1997, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-954)
955. *Suzdal’skie Eparkhial’nie Vedomosti* (Suzdal Diocesan News ), № 7, March-May, 1999, p. 7. Cf. “Rossijskaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’, 1990-2000” (The Russian Orthodox Church, 1990-2000), *Vertograd-Inform*, №№ 7-8 (64-65), July-August, 2000, pp. 22-39. [↑](#footnote-ref-955)
956. http://www.hocna.info/ChronologyEvents.shtml. [↑](#footnote-ref-956)
957. http://www.hocna.info/ChronologyEvents.shtml. [↑](#footnote-ref-957)
958. The major sources used in this account of the schism are all unpublished: Bishop Photius of Marathon, *Chronicle of the Schism of 1995*; Bishop Macarius of Petra, 1973-2003: *Thirty Years of Ecclesiastical Developments: Trials-Captivity-Deliverance* (in Greek); and Hieromonk Nectarius (Yashunsky), Kratkaia istoria svyaschennoj bor’by starostil’nikov Gretsii, 1986-1995 gg. (A Short History of the Sacred Struggle of the Old Calendarists of Greece, 1986-1995 (in Russian). [↑](#footnote-ref-958)
959. Mr. Christakis, Professor of Canon Law at the University of Athens. The Callinicites, while avoiding a church trial, liked to quote the opinions of new calendarist lawyers from outside the Church who expressed themselves in support of Euthymius. Another was Mr. Nicholas Athanasopoulos. However, the latter, according to *Eleutherotypia* for May 13, 2005, had been expelled from the Areopagus for “serious sins”. [↑](#footnote-ref-959)
960. No decision had yet been made about Peter of Astoria. He had been invited to the last session of the Synod, but did not come. The Synod then decided to send two bishops to visit him and ask him why he had not come to the last session (Bishop Photius of Marathon, personal communication). [↑](#footnote-ref-960)
961. Letter of Metropolitan Ephraim of Boston, Metropolitan Macarius of Toronto and Bishop Moses of Roslindale to the Callinicites, December 1/14, 1999, protocol number 1704. [↑](#footnote-ref-961)
962. The sixth canon of the Second Ecumenical Council declares: “But if any brings against a bishop his own, that is, a private complaint, whether in a claim on some property or in some injustice that he has suffered from him; in such accusations neither the person of the accuser, not his faith, should be taken into account. It is fitting that the conscience of a bishop be free in every way, and that he who has declared himself offended [by the bishop] should receive justice, of whatever faith he might be.” [↑](#footnote-ref-962)
963. *Phoni ex Agiou Orous* (Voice from the Holy Mountain), p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-963)
964. In 1995, in his monastery in Anthousa, Petros turned to Euthymius and said about Paisius and Vincent: “I know so many things about them! You, Euthymius, are a saint by comparison with them!” Euthymius, trying to hide his embarrassment with a joke, said: “Then you will have to make an icon of me.” It goes without saying that Peter was in no way praising Euthymius, but only saying that Paisius and Vincent were even worse than he. (Bishop Photius, *Chronicle*). [↑](#footnote-ref-964)
965. Point 9, “Decree of the Panhellenic Clergy Meeting of the GOC of Greece”, 2003. [↑](#footnote-ref-965)
966. In the Lamia region, where he had some spiritual children, he used to preach faithfulness to the Chrysostomite Synod because “the sin of Callinicus Khaniotes and Euthymius Orphanos cannot be washed out even by the blood of martyrdom”, and “if his Beatitude [Archbishop Chrysostom] were to receive Euthymius and Callinicus back, I would cease to commemorate the Archbishop and would commemorate every Orthodox episcopate” (Bishop Photius, *Chronicle*). [↑](#footnote-ref-966)
967. Bishop Photius, private communication, September 28, 2004. [↑](#footnote-ref-967)
968. *Ekklesia G.O.X. Ellados* (Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece), № 8, p. 56; Bishop Macarius of Petra, *To Katantima tis ipo ton Khrysostomon Kiousin proderevomenis Synodou* (The Plight of the Synod under Chrysostom Kiousis), Thessalonica, 1999, p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-968)
969. Bishop Macarius, *To Katantima*, op. cit., pp. 30-31. [↑](#footnote-ref-969)
970. Bishop Macarius, *To Katantima*, op. cit., p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-970)
971. Basil Lourie, “The Split in the Genuine Orthodox Church”, *Vertograd*, March, 1999, p. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-971)
972. *Katastatikon “Ekklesias Gnision Orthodoxon Khristianon Ellados”* (Constitution of the “Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece”), Article 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-972)
973. *Encyclical* of Archbishop Chrysostom, December 22, 1998, Athens, 1999. [↑](#footnote-ref-973)
974. Callinicus had been propounding heretical Apollinarian views on the Incarnation. When caught out by one of his own priests, and beginning to realise his mistake, he said that he would repent of his error if the other bishops repented of certain supposedly heretical things that they had said. But the Synod refused to accept this “deal” (Bishop Photius of Marathon, personal communication, July 22, 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-974)
975. *Ekklesia ton GOX Ellados*, November-December, 1998, p. 451. [↑](#footnote-ref-975)
976. Bishop Photius, private communication, June 28, 2003. [↑](#footnote-ref-976)
977. [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chrysostomos\_II\_Kioussis](https://www.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fen.m.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FChrysostomos_II_Kioussis&h=KAQGEi9nbAQHwFBqL46dke-_FOYynDKFtv8Gxzi1pqIC6mg&enc=AZM5EDHE1YlNukn7-hW78l4i-zLAfOHkoBYwQrrwJwxK1_-vMW_ZgZch4qsiEzi0dShBn8R0P3JoT_kc3z_6m45r7dxnNoO6ILOhDyRodA1wVMLotdziwni176pHFcvorSPKWzy2XmvmCPFsJQOebrJ520CG4APhYf3bmkxY6XgCsh3PWwsmiVww_V8zNA5AuHcM2PFbTlwyDz8ZVLVp6hZS&s=1" \t "_blank) [↑](#footnote-ref-977)
978. For a thorough review of all Orthodox church groups except the MP from the point of view of a MP priest, see Priest Pavel Bochkov, *Yurisdiktsionno-politicheskie tserkovnie raskoly postsovietskogo perioda* (Jurisdictional-Political Church Schisms of the Post-Soviet Period), Moscow, 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-978)
979. [http://www.romanitas.ru/Actual/serafimogen4.htm](http://www.romanitas.ru/Actual/serafimogen4.htm" \t "_blank) 19.01.2004 г.  [↑](#footnote-ref-979)
980. V.V. Alexeev, M.Yu. Nechaeva, *Voskresshie Romanovy* (Resurrected Romanovs), Yekaterinburg, 2000. [↑](#footnote-ref-980)
981. http://www.hierarchy.religare.ru/h-orthod-rkciph.html; Bishop Ambrose (von Sievers), "Ispytatel'nie Voprosy zadannie smnievaiushchim Preosviashchennomu Amvrosiu Episkopu Gotfskomu" (Testing questions given to Bishop Ambrose of the Goths) (MS, 7/20 June, 1994), personal communication, and “Episkopat Istinno-Pravoslavnoj Katakombnoj Tserkvi” (The Episcopate of the True Orthodox Catacomb Church), Russkoe Pravoslavie (Russian Orthodoxy), № 4 (8), 1997, 1-20. See also I.I. Osipova, “Skvoz’ Ogn’ Muchenij i Vody Slyoz…” (Through the Fire of Torments and the Water of Tears), Moscow: Serebryanniye Niti, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-981)
982. In August, 2003 Bishop Ambrose showed the present writer what purported to be his certificate of ordination to the episcopate, signed by Bishop Amphilochius. However, experts in handwriting affirm that all the signatures of bishops shown by Bishop Ambrose are in fact of one and the same hand – Bishop Ambrose’s. [↑](#footnote-ref-982)
983. For more on Bishop Ambrose, see his autobiographical article, “Endurance: Reminiscences of the True Orthodox Church”, *Religion, State and Society*, vol. 25, № 3, 1997, pp. 220-234; “’Arkhiepiskop Amvrosij (‘Sivers’)” (Archbishop Ambrose (Sivers), *Vertograd-Inform*, № 2 (59), 2000, pp. 46-49. See also *Kto yest’ kto v Rossijskikh Katakombakh* (Who’s Who in the Russian Catacombs), op. cit., pp. 10-24. [↑](#footnote-ref-983)
984. Bishop Ambrose (von Sievers), “’Klimentovskaia’ Ierarkhia I.P.Ts.” (The Clementine Hierarchy of the True Orthodox Church), *Russkoe Pravoslavie* (Russian Orthodoxy), № 5 (9), 1997, pp. 1-11. See also *Kto est’ kto v Rossijskikh Katakombakh* (Who’s Who in the Russian Catacombs), op. cit., pp. 24-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-984)
985. Priest Daniel Sysoev, “Katakombnij Raskol” (The Catacomb Schism), http://www.antirascol.nm.ru/katraskol.htm , p. 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-985)
986. Later he wrote: “In our time we appealed for fraternal help to the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Hellas (Greece). [The present writer translated Fr. Epiphany’s Russian original petition into English. It was then translated into Greek.]… The Synod of the Greek Church displayed a lively willingness, but came upon a natural obstacle – the almost 80-year inheritance of atheist and antichristian working over and reworking of the whole population. Apparently, it retreated from its original task, frightened by the difficulty of re-establishing a true Church hierarchy, and chose a roundabout way suggested to it by other jurisdictions – that is, the creation of Exarchates of the Greek Church.

     “But this is an extremely mistaken and corrupt way!

     “Besides the Russian Catacomb Church, there is not one Church of any kind that has that experience of Catacomb life that it has, while every attempt of foreign Exarchates to imitate it – to fabricate the experience of the catacombs – is doomed to failure.” (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-986)
987. Ter-Grigorian, “Mitr. Kirik Mesogejskij i Arkhiepiskop Amvrosij Gotfskij – vstrecha na Elbe“ (Metropolitan Cyricus of Mesogaia and Archbishop Ambrose of the Goths – a meeting on the Elbe), www.romanitas.ru , September, 2004. [↑](#footnote-ref-987)
988. http://www.katakomb.ru/2/starostil.html ; Ter-Grigorian, op. cit. The Kyrikite priest Fr. Andrew Sidniev has disputed many points in Ter-Grigorian’s account. See http://www.livejournal.com/users/iasidnev/30314.html and http://www.livejournal.com/users/iasidnev/67764.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-988)
989. <http://anstallningar.livejournal.com>. A few years later, Ambrose contacted the present writer from Sweden. He claimed he was fleeing from the KGB, and asked him to help him obtain political asylum in England! [↑](#footnote-ref-989)
990. Forest, "An Orthodox Response to the War in Former Yugoslavia", *Orthodox Outlook*, vol. VIII, № 6, 1995, p. 32. Baptisms in the Serbian Church are now very often only pourings, not full immersions. [↑](#footnote-ref-990)
991. *Church News* (the English translation of *Tserkovnie Novosti*), vol. 9, № 8 (64), August, 1997, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-991)
992. Sergej Flere, "Denominational Affiliation in Yugoslavia, 1937-1987", *East European Quarterly*, XXV, № 2, June, 1991, pp. 145-165. [↑](#footnote-ref-992)
993. Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia. A Short History*, London: Papermac, 1996, p. 222. [↑](#footnote-ref-993)
994. Vrcan, "The War in Former Yugoslavia and Religion", *Religion, State and Society*, 22/4, 1994, pp. 374-75. This is also the opinion of Samuel Huntingdon, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, London: Touchstone Books, 1998, pp. 268-269. [↑](#footnote-ref-994)
995. Bl. Theophylact, *The Explanation by Blessed Theophylact of the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke,* House Springs, Mo.: Chrysostom Press, 1997, p. 308. [↑](#footnote-ref-995)
996. Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia,* Texas A & M University Press, 1995, pp. 31-32. [↑](#footnote-ref-996)
997. Cigar, op. cit., pp. 36, 67-68. Daniel Jonah Goldhagen writes: “Orthodox leaders supported the Serbs’ eliminationist assaults against Muslims during the 1990s, even opening their churches to the perpetrators for planning and organizing local eliminationist campaigns. The Orthodox Bishop Vasilije of Tuzla-Zvornik in Bosnia, an area of intensive killings and other brutalities, was one of Arkan’s more impassioned supporters. Several Orthodox bishops from Croatia and Bosnia presided over Arkan’s wedding in 1994, two years after he initiated the eliminiationist assaults in Bosnia” (*Worse than War,* London: Abacus, 2012, p. 140). [↑](#footnote-ref-997)
998. Antonios Markou, "On the Serbian Question", *Orthodox Tradition*, vol. XI, № 4, 1994, p. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-998)
999. "'World Orthodoxy's' Sister Church to canonize murderer of the Serbian Orthodox people", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, September 12/25, 1994, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-999)
1000. Jean-François Meyer, Religions et Sécurité Internationale (Religions and International Security), Berne, Switzerland: Office Central de la Defense, 1995, pp. 24-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-1000)
1001. Florence Hamlish Levinsohn, *Belgrade: Among the Serbs*, Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1994, p. 238. [↑](#footnote-ref-1001)
1002. *Russkaia Mysl’* (Russian Thought), January 22, 1993. [↑](#footnote-ref-1002)
1003. Judt, “Freedom and Freedonia”, in *When the Facts Change,* London: Vintage, 2015, pp. 102-104. [↑](#footnote-ref-1003)
1004. See materials in *Russkoe Pravoslavie* (Russian Orthodoxy), № 3 (7), 1997. [↑](#footnote-ref-1004)
1005. *Pravoslavnaia Rus’*, № 16 (1589), August 15/28, 1997. [↑](#footnote-ref-1005)
1006. *El Mascobbiyeh* (Hebron); Abbess Juliana, in “Paroles d’un detraque et reponse de Mere Juliana” (A Deranged Person’s Words and Mother Juliana’s Reply), orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com, June 22, 2004. [↑](#footnote-ref-1006)
1007. It should be pointed out that Patriarch Diodorus’ twenty-year reign as patriarch (he died in 2000) was characterized by extreme corruption, both financial and sexual. See Grigorios Skalokairinos, “On the Sidelines at the Jerusalem Patriarchate”, *Kathimerini*, July 23, 2001. (V.M.) [↑](#footnote-ref-1007)
1008. Zhukov, Letter of July 19, 1997 to Alexander Ivanovich Musatov. [↑](#footnote-ref-1008)
1009. Larin, Letter of August 18/31, 1997 to Fr. Stefan Krasovitsky. [↑](#footnote-ref-1009)
1010. See William Dalrymple, *From the Holy Mountain*, London: HarperCollins, 2005, part V. [↑](#footnote-ref-1010)
1011. *Service Orthodoxe de Presse*, 221, September-October, 1997, p. 16. Patriarch Diodorus was reported to

      have distanced himself from that remark. [↑](#footnote-ref-1011)
1012. Letter of Abbess Juliana to Metropolitan Vitaly, July 4/17, 1997. [↑](#footnote-ref-1012)
1013. *Vestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii*, № 4, 1997. See also his letter to the Synod of January 30 / February 12, 1998, http://www.stetson.edu/~psteeves/relnews/archbishopmark1202.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-1013)
1014. *Nezavisimaia Gazeta - Religii*, July 24, 1997. [↑](#footnote-ref-1014)
1015. www.mospat.ru , October 31, 2005. [↑](#footnote-ref-1015)
1016. “Final Statement of the Seventh Assembly of the Middle East Council of Churches, in Dr. Fred Strickert, *The Washington Report*: On Middle East Affairs: Christianity and the Middle East, July/August, 1999, pp. 84-85. [↑](#footnote-ref-1016)
1017. Vitaly, “Letter to a Priest”, *Vertograd-Inform*, № 1, November, 1998, #2, p. 17 (English edition). [↑](#footnote-ref-1017)
1018. Senina, op. cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-1018)
1019. This miracle was recounted by the spiritual father of the monastery, Hieroschemamonk Akakije, personal communication, March, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-1019)
1020. Malcolm, *Kosovo*, London: Papermac, 1998, pp. 347, 348. [↑](#footnote-ref-1020)
1021. Malcolm, *Kosovo*, pp. 349-350. [↑](#footnote-ref-1021)
1022. Cigar, op. cit., p. 195. [↑](#footnote-ref-1022)
1023. Malcolm, *Kosovo*, p. xxix. [↑](#footnote-ref-1023)
1024. Malcolm, *Kosovo*, pp. xxix-xxx, xxxii. [↑](#footnote-ref-1024)
1025. Malcolm, *Kosovo*, p. xxxiv. [↑](#footnote-ref-1025)
1026. Malcolm, *Kosovo*, pp. xxxviii-xxxix. [↑](#footnote-ref-1026)
1027. Translated in *The Shepherd* (Brookwood, Surrey), vol. XIX, № 8, April, 1999, pp. 18-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-1027)
1028. “NATO’s role in relation to the conflict in Kosovo”, <http://www.nato.int/kosovo/history.htm>. Daniel Jonah Goldhagen writes: “The Serbs forcibly expelled 1.5 million people, almost all Kosovars, from the country. The Serbs also selectively slaughtered approximately 10,000 mainly military-age men, which diminished the Kosovars’ capacity to resist [the] Serbian onslaught. Serbs burned and destroyed at least 1,200 Kosovar residential areas, including 500 villages, and tens of thousands of homses, in the ultimately failed attempt to obliterate the Kosovar presence” (*Worse than War: Genocide, Eliminationism, and the Ongoing Onslaught on Humanity,* London: Abacus, 2012, p. 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-1028)
1029. Pro-Serbian commentators argued that the West was the victim of anti-Serb propaganda. The present writer watched many programmes on the Serbian wars on British television in the course of the war. No anti-Serb bias was evident in them. Detailed and generally accurate documentaries were shown on the sufferings of the Serbs at the hands of the Croats in 1941 and on the significance of Kosovo for the Serbs. Serb representatives were invited to express their point of view in all debates on

      the Serbian wars. On the other hand, Russia’s NTV station seemed to be the only media outlet in Serbia or Russia which reported “ethnic cleansing” in Kosovo (Anna Blundy, “Russian Viewers finally see case for Nato”, *The Times* (London), April 7, 1999, p. 2). [↑](#footnote-ref-1029)
1030. “NATO’s role in relation to the conflict in Kosovo”, http://www.nato.int/kosovo/history.htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-1030)
1031. The continuing strength of the Albanians reminds us of the words of the Serbian lay prophet, Mitar Tabarich (1829-1899): [↑](#footnote-ref-1031)
1032. Velimirović, *Okhridski Prolog*, Shabats-Valjevo, 2009, June 9, p. 476. [↑](#footnote-ref-1032)
1033. “Episkop ofitsial’noj serbskoj tserkvi oblichaet svoego patriarkha” (Bishop of the Official Serbian Church Reproaches His Patriarch), *Vertograd-Inform*, № 1 (58), January, 2000, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-1033)
1034. Judah, *The Serbs*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997, p. 309. [↑](#footnote-ref-1034)
1035. “The True Orthodox Church of Serbia”, *Vertograd* (English edition), № 9, July, 1999, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-1035)
1036. Translated in *The Shepherd*, vol. XIX, № 8, April, 1999, pp. 20, 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-1036)
1037. *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 9, 1998. See “ROCOR changes text which anathematized ecumenism”, *Church News*, vol. 12, № 4 (86), April, 2000, pp. 3-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-1037)
1038. *Tserkovnie Novosti* (Church News), № 4 (95), June-July, 2001, p. 5. In answer to this argument we may quote the words of the ROCOR Hieromonk Joseph of Moscow in a letter to Metropolitan Vitaly about the Serbian Patriarchate: “Now I would like to return to the last telephone conversation I had with you. This concerns Vladyka Mark's serving with the Serbs. At that time you said that some hierarchs of ROCOR, such as Archbishop John (Maximovich) and Archbishop Nicon (Rklitsky) allowed this. That is understandable. You know, they were raised and looked after by pastors of the Serbian Church. We, too, love the Serbian Church and the Serbian people - the Serbian Church in the person of Patriarch Barnabas once sheltered the persecuted Russian émigré hierarchs. But times change and life does not stand still. It is already 30 years since Vladyka John died, and almost 20 since Vladyka Nicon. The Serbian Patriarch Barnabas and those Serbian hierarchs who feared nobody and offered hospitality to the persecuted Russian Church died a long time ago. The contemporary Serbian episcopate is very far from what it was in the 1930s. You know, almost the same thing has happened with the Serbian Church as happened with the Russian Church. Their episcopate has also been appointed by communist authorities, and they have also gradually departed from the purity of Orthodoxy. This is what the well-known Serbian theologian, Archimandrite Justin (Popovich), who could in no way be accused of not loving his own Serbian Church or of not being Orthodox, wrote about this: ‘... The atheist dictatorship has so far elected two patriarchs... And in this way it has cynically trampled on the holy rights of the Church, and thereby also on the holy dogmas.’ I think that Fr. Justin had a better view of the negative processes taking place in the Serbian Church than Vladyka Mark. The first-hierarchs of the Serbian Church take an active part in the WCC; they pray with all kinds of heretics and people of other religions; they support the anti-Orthodox initiatives of the Patriarch of Constantinople. And must we close our eyes to all this just because in the 1930s Patriarch Barnabas helped our Russian hierarchs - or because Vladyka Mark studied in the Serbian Theological University? This is simply not serious. If we're going to reason like that, and take our memories of the past as our guiding principle in our present actions, without taking into account present realities, then we can come to sheer absurdity and will not avoid serious mistakes. In that case we must have eucharistic communion with the Patriarch of Constantinople because ten centuries ago Rus' received Orthodoxy from Byzantium.

      “If our relationship to the Serbian Church and people is one of unhypocritical love and gratitude, then especially now, in this difficult time for Serbia, we must help them to come to understand and see those departures from Orthodoxy which are being carried out by the Serbian hierarchy, and for which, perhaps, the Right Hand of God is sending them these horrific military trials which are taking place there. This will be the gratitude of the Russian Church to the Serbian people for the hospitality they received from it in the 1930s.” [↑](#footnote-ref-1038)
1039. Archbishop Mark, http://www.listok.com/sobor72.htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-1039)
1040. *Information Bulletin* of the Department of External Ecclesiastical Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, № 3, 2000, pp. 51-52. [↑](#footnote-ref-1040)
1041. Bychkov, “The Synod against a Council”, *Moskovskii komsomolets*, August 20, 1999, quoted by Joseph Legrande, “Re: [paradosis] Re: Solovki (WAS: Dealing with Heresy)”, orthodoxtradition@yahoogroups.com , 31 August, 2002. [↑](#footnote-ref-1041)
1042. “Dukhoventstvo stradaIet alkogolizmom chasche, chem drugie gruppy naselenia, utverzhdaiut psikhiatry” (The clergy suffer from alcoholism more than other groups of the population, say psychiatrists), portal-credo.ru, news, December 8, 2005. [↑](#footnote-ref-1042)
1043. This continues to the present day, with tragic consequences. Thus Archimandrite German (Khapugin) of Davydova Pustyn, near Moscow, “a very active businessman and quite rich”, was murdered in 2005 (Jeremy Page, “Mafia secret of murdered abbot”, *The Times*, July 29, 2005, p. 35). [↑](#footnote-ref-1043)
1044. Preobrazhensky, *KGB v russkoj emigratsii*, op. cit., p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-1044)
1045. The MP’s Deacon Andrei Kuraiev had a lower estimate: 50 bishops. [↑](#footnote-ref-1045)
1046. Preobrazhensky, “Ecumenism and Intellignce”. [↑](#footnote-ref-1046)
1047. Protopriest Michael Ardov, “A ‘Man of the Church in a Blue Cover”, *Church News*, August-September, 1998, vol. 10, № 7 (14), pp. 7-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-1047)
1048. Church News, October, 2000, vol. 12, № 7 (89), pp. 10-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-1048)
1049. http:// [www.pravoslavie.ru/news/001113/glav.htm](http://www.pravoslavie.ru/news/001113/glav.htm); *Vertograd-Inform*, № 12 (69), 2000, pp. 25-26. [↑](#footnote-ref-1049)
1050. *Sobornost’*, June, 2001; in *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 12 (1681), June 15/28, 2001, p. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-1050)
1051. *NG-Religia*, № 7, 2001; in *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 11 (1680), June 1/14, 2001, p. 16. In Russia at the same time there were four bishops, 220 parishes, 215 priests, 230 nuns, a seminary and a college (*Russkaia Mysl’* (Russian Thought), 31 May – 6 June, 2001). [↑](#footnote-ref-1051)
1052. *Vertograd-Inform*, № 4 (49), 1999. [↑](#footnote-ref-1052)
1053. Preobrazhensky, “Ecumenism and Intelligence”. [↑](#footnote-ref-1053)
1054. Gundiaev, interview conducted by Alexis Venediktov, March 22, 2001. [↑](#footnote-ref-1054)
1055. Yuri Krupnov, “The Victory is Pascha”, http://pravaya.ru/look/7580?print=1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1055)
1056. V. Chikin, A. Prokhanov, “Religia Pobedy: Beseda” (The Religion of Victory: A Conversation), *Zavtra* (Tomorrow), № 32 (297), 1999, p. 2. Cf. Egor Kholmogorov, “Dve Pobedy” (Two Victories), *Spetznaz Rossii* (Russia’s Special Forces), № 5 (44), May, 2000, and my reply: V. Moss, “Imperia ili Anti-Imperia” (Empire or Anti-Empire), http://www.romanitas.ru/Actual/Impire.htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-1056)
1057. Dudko, “Mysli sviaschennika” (The Thoughts of a Priest), http://patriotica.narod.ru/history/dudko. [↑](#footnote-ref-1057)
1058. Preobrazhensky, “Ecumenism and Intelligence”. [↑](#footnote-ref-1058)
1059. Preobrazhensky, “Hostile Absorption of ROCOR”. [↑](#footnote-ref-1059)
1060. Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The KGB and the World. The Mitrokhin Archive II*, London: Penguin, 2006, pp. 490-492. [↑](#footnote-ref-1060)
1061. Fr. Benjamin Zhukov, Appeal to the West European Clergy, December 15, 2000; *Church News*, vol. 12, № 9 (91), p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-1061)
1062. Preobrazhensky, *KGB v russkoj emigratsii*, op. cit., p. 102. [↑](#footnote-ref-1062)
1063. Sprukts, “Re: [paradosis] A Russian Conversation in English”, orthodoxtradition@yahoogroups.com , 24 June, 2004. [↑](#footnote-ref-1063)
1064. Kholmogorov, “Kremlevskij Mechtatel’” (Kremlin Dreamer), *Spetnaz Rossii* (Russia’s Special Forces), 2000/2. [↑](#footnote-ref-1064)
1065. Preobrazhensky, *KGB/FSB’s New Trojan Horse: Americans of Russian Descent*, North Billerica, Ma.: Gerard Group Publishing, 2008, p. 97. [↑](#footnote-ref-1065)
1066. Ackerly, “High Treason in ROCOR: The Rapprochement with Moscow”, http://stnicholascandles.com/High\_Treason.htm, p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-1066)
1067. 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 Cyril ran, earned $75 million from the sale of tobacco. But the patriarchate reported an annual budget in 1995-1996 of only $2 million. Cyril's personal wealth was estimated by *the Moscow News* in 2006 to be $4 billion." (http://news-nftu.blogspot.com, February, 2009) [↑](#footnote-ref-1067)
1068. Ackerly, op. cit., p. 25. For more on Dugin, “Putin’s Rasputin”, see V. Moss, “Alexander Dugin and the Meaning of Russian History”, http://www.orthodoxchristianbooks.com/articles/517/alexander-dugin-meaning-russian-history. [↑](#footnote-ref-1068)
1069. Ardov, “The ‘Jubilee Council’ has confirmed it: the Moscow Patriarchate has finally fallen away from Orthodoxy” (Report read at the 8th Congress of the clergy, monastics and laity of the Suzdal diocese of the Russian Orthodox [Autonomous] Church, November, 2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-1069)
1070. *Church News*, vol. 12, № 6 (88), July-August, 2000, p. 8. Alfeyev had already shown his ecumenist colours in his book, *The Mystery of Faith* (first published in Moscow in Russian in 1996, in English by Darton, Longman and Todd in 2002), which was strongly criticised from within the MP by Fr. Valentine Asmus. [↑](#footnote-ref-1070)
1071. *Associated Press*, April 21, 2005; *Corriere della Sera*, April 24, 2005. [↑](#footnote-ref-1071)
1072. Savchenko, “Tserkov’ v Rossii i ‘Vsemirnij Soviet Tserkvej” (The Church in Russia and the World Council of Churches), *Pravoslavnaia Rus’* (Orthodox Russia), № 2 (1743), January 15/28, 2004, pp. 10-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-1072)
1073. *Iubilejnij Arkhierejskij Sobor Russkoj pravoslavnoj tserkvi. Moskva 13-16 avgusta 2000 goda* (The Jubilee Hierarchical Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, Moscow, 13-16 August, 2000), St. Petersburg, 2000, p. 159. [↑](#footnote-ref-1073)
1074. Protopriest Vladimir Savitsky, Hieromonk Valentine (Salomakh) and Deacon Nicholas Savchenko,

      “Pis’mo iz Sankt-Peterburga” (Letter from St. Petersburg), *Otklik*i, op. cit., part 1, Paris, 2001, p. 92. [↑](#footnote-ref-1074)
1075. *Moskovskij Tserkovnij Vestnik* (Moscow Church Herald), №№ 14-15, pp. 243-244; quoted by Fr. Michael Ardov, http://portal-credo.ru/site/?act=english&id=13. [↑](#footnote-ref-1075)
1076. Gundiaev, in *Vertograd-Inform*, № 504, February 2, 2005. [↑](#footnote-ref-1076)
1077. See V. Moss, *The Russian Golgotha*, Wildwood, Alberta: Monastery Press, 2006, volume 1: North-West Russia. [↑](#footnote-ref-1077)
1078. “Otkrovenie Tovarischa Alfeyeva” (A Revelation of Comrade Alfeyev), *Nasha Strana* (Buenos Aires), N 2907, January, 2010, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-1078)
1079. Ardov, http://rocornews.livejournal.com/197515.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-1079)
1080. *Pravoslavie ili Smert’* (Orthodoxy or Death), № 8, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-1080)
1081. Kanaev, “Obraschenie k pervoierarkhu RPTsZ” (Address to the First Hierarch of the ROCOR), in *Otkliki*, op. cit., part 2, Paris, 2001, pp. 3-4 ; *Iubilejnij Arkhierejskij Sobor* (Jubilee Hierarchical Council), op. cit., pp. 43, 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-1081)
1082. "Ierei o. Oleg otvechaet na voprosy redaktsiii" (The Priest Fr. Oleg Replies to the Questions of the Editors), *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 23 (1452), December 1/14, 1991, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-1082)
1083. Ridiger, in Fr. Peter Perekrestov, “The Schism in the Heart of Russia (Concerning Sergianism)”, *Canadian Orthodox Herald*, 1999, № 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-1083)
1084. Perekrestov, "Why Now?" *Orthodox Life*, vol. 44, № 6, November-December, 1994, p. 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-1084)
1085. Perekrestov, “Why Now?” op. cit., p. 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-1085)
1086. Eugene Polyakov, personal communication, April 5, 1992. [↑](#footnote-ref-1086)
1087. “Obraschenie kurskogo dukhovenstva k mitropolitu Vitaliu” (Address of the Kursk Clergy to

      Metropolitan Vitaly), *Otkliki*, op. cit., part 3, p. 80. [↑](#footnote-ref-1087)
1088. Bystritsa, Facebook, September 3, 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-1088)
1089. The Serbian bishops declared that “during these three days our sense of brotherhood in Christ was deepened through our [joint] prayer and work.”

      Also in 2000 the Catholic Archbishop of Zagreb celebrated a mass in a suburb of Novi Sad in northern Serbia which was attended by the local Orthodox bishop. [↑](#footnote-ref-1089)
1090. “Obraschenie kurskogo dukhovenstva k mitropolitu Vitaliu” (Address of the Kursk Clergy to Metropolitan Vitaly), *Otkliki*, op. cit., part 3, p. 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-1090)
1091. Kapustin, “Raz’iasnenia Episkopa usilili somnenia” (The Explanations of the Bishop have Increased Doubts), *Otkliki*, op. cit., part 3, p. 66. Kapustin was actually commenting on Bishop Evtikhy’s report to the Council. However, since the Council in its epistle accepted Evtikhy’s report almost in toto, and repeated many of his points, the remarks on the bishop’s report apply equally to the conciliar epistle. [↑](#footnote-ref-1091)
1092. Fyodorov, Zhukov, “Ispovedanie iskonnoj pozitsii RPTsZ” (The Confession of the Age-Old Position of the ROCOR), *Otkliki*, op. cit., part 3, p. 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-1092)
1093. Again, it was Bishop Evtikhy’s report that played the vital role here: “We simply no longer notice it, one phrase from the Social Doctrine is sufficient for us” (A. Soldatov, “Sergij premudrij nam put’ ozaril” (Sergius the Wise has Illumined our Path), *Vertograd*, № 461, 21 May, 2004, p. 4). [↑](#footnote-ref-1093)
1094. “Obraschenie kurskogo dukhovenstva k mitropolitu Vitaliu” (Address of the Kursk Clergy to Metropolitan Vitaly), *Otklik*i, op. cit., part 3. pp. 81-82, 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-1094)
1095. Krasovitsky, Vershillo, “Esche raz o sergianstve” (Once More about Sergianism), *Otklik*i, op. cit., part 2, p. 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-1095)