

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC AND FOREIGN RELATIONS

of the

SYNOD OF BISHOPS

OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA

NEWSLETTER #27

November-December, 1979

FROM THE LIFE OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA

On the feast of the Protection of the All-holy Theotokos (the patronal feast of the parish in Nyack, N.Y.), His Eminence, Metropolitan Philaret, celebrated the liturgy there. After the liturgy he also served a moleben for the ground-breaking of the new parish school. Construction on the building has already commenced.

On Saturday, 14/27 October, His Eminence, the Metropolitan, accompanied by Bishop Gregory, arrived in Washington, D.C. During the all-night vigil at the Synod's parish there, he served the polyeleos, and on Sunday he concelebrated the divine liturgy with Bishop Gregory and the local clergy. During the liturgy, Fr. Dimitry Alexandrov was raised to the rank of archpriest, and Fr. Victor Potapov was awarded the purple skufia. In view of the approaching completion of the remodelling of the church, gramatas were presented to Archimandrite Nicholas, the rector of the parish, and to parishioners who were especially zealous in their labors for the parish. Metropolitan Philaret was very pleased with the beauty of the new building and the cupolas fashioned according to plans drawn up by Fr. Alexandrov and with his direct participation.

Following the liturgy, a banquet was held, during which reports were read by Mr. Pavlenko, the parish warden, and Y.K.Meyer. Bishop Gregory delivered an official greeting to the parish.

Metropolitan Philaret departed for New York while the banquet was still in progress, but Bishop Gregory remained a day longer to attend a meeting of the International Committee and to deliver a report to it on the religious reawakening currently developing in Russia.

On 22 October/4 November, the patronal feast of Our Lady of Kazan parish in Newark, N.J., Metropolitan Philaret served the divine liturgy, with Fr. Vladimir Shishkoff and area clergy concelebrating. Bishop Gregory arrived for the banquet later, having served the liturgy in the Synodal cathedral. The festivity was attended not only by members of the parish, but by many people from surrounding parishes as well.

THE CHURCH OF SERBIA AT THE CROSSROADS?

Not long ago, in our Newsletter #22 (May-June), we noted with sadness that Bishop Christopher of the Serbian Patriarchal Church in America had taken part in the festive celebration of the jubilee of Archbishop Iakovos, Exarch of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and prayed in his Greek church with all sorts of heterodox groups, including even a non-Christian--Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum. Now we have received another, no less sorrowful report.

The Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation, in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, a suburb of Milwaukee, decided to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the parish--an event held on Wednesday, October 27, of the current year. The pastor of the parish decided to celebrate the jubilee on a large scale and invited many guests and representatives of the press to a special service. Among those who actively participated in the prayer service were: the Rev.

Angelo Kasemetes, pastor of the parish, his assistant, Fr. Joseph Tsourgros, and his colleagues, Frs. Constantine Halldck and Nikiforos Tzendimos; the Serbian Patriarchal Church was represented by Fr. Milan Markovina of the staff of St. Savva's Serbian Orthodox Cathedral; also participating were Rabbi Francis B. Silberg, Catholic Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee, Episcopalian Bishop Charles T. Gaskell, Lutheran and Baptist pastors, and even a woman minister from the "United Church of Christ." The woman minister read Psalm 100, while the rabbi was permitted to read anything he pleased from the Scriptures--he selected the Genesis account of Jacob's dream of the ladder, reading it in both Hebrew and English. All participants in the scandalous assembly arrayed themselves in vestments peculiar to their own religions.

Photographs reproduced in the Milwaukee Sentinel and the Milwaukee Journal leave one quite depressed and, due to the presence at such a prayer service of a Serbian priest, cannot but raise sorrowful suspicions that the Serbian Patriarchate Exarchate in America, following the example of Archbishop Iakovos, is standing on the very slippery path of the betrayal of Orthodoxy.

At the same time, Glasnik, the official mouthpiece of the Serbian Patriarchate, in the "Throughout the Christian World" column of its July issue, printed a lengthy article on the pentecostal movement among the Orthodox. Unfortunately, based on the words "the Spirit bloweth where it wisheth" (Jn. 3: 8), the survey was written in a tone very sympathetic to this movement. While it mentions Archimandrite Eusebius Stephanou, the founder of "Orthodox Pentecostalism" in America, the Glasnik does not inform its readers that not very many years ago Stephanou himself printed in his own magazine, The Logos, a photostat of an official warning to his flock that he, Archimandrite Eusebius, is a heresiarch and that Orthodox should avoid all contact with him. Not one church in Greece is at his disposal to hold his services in, and the Church of Greece, receiving support from the Greek government, has successfully blocked the organization of his assemblies. Stephanou bitterly complains of all this to his followers.

The author of the survey also does not mention that the "spirit" is blowing on the heterodox to the same degree as on the Orthodox, and it often happens that the "spirit" unexpectedly "descends" upon a Protestant or a Catholic, and an Orthodox person who has become entangled in the movement, sometimes even a priest, will receive the blessing of a "reborn" sectarian.

It is quite incomprehensible how Bishop Danilo of Marchana, as the editor-in-chief of the Patriarchate's publication, could allow such an article to slip past him, failing to distinguish between this "spirit" of falsehood and the Holy Spirit who remains within the Church.

WILL THERE EVER BE A PAN-ORTHODOX COUNCIL?

In 1961, Orthodox ecumenists, striving to carry out an official modernization of the Church, announced the formation of a pre-conciliar commission which would be responsible for working out the agenda for the future "Ecumenical Council." Individual local Churches received topics on which to report, from which it immediately became clear that the council is being planned, not to denounce any heresy that is troubling the Church, but solely for the purpose of introducing a series of "reforms" which would help to eradicate the differences between the true Faith and falsehood. Churches which have joined the World Council of Churches, which includes as members a multitude of different religions, dutifully worked on the topics assigned them and very quickly concluded that their implementation, even at an "ecumenical council," would encounter many difficulties because their flocks were unprepared for them. Thus, the likelihood of the convo-

cation of the Council has become increasingly remote. However, this delay is quite incomprehensible to Western representatives of the W.C.C., and they have begun to exhibit quite openly their perturbation at the slowness of the Orthodox.

Ecumenical Trends, a publication of the Graymoor Ecumenical Institute, in its October, 1979 issue, contains an editorial entitled: "Will There Ever Be a Great & Holy Council of the Orthodox Church?" The author of the article takes no pains to hide his displeasure over the procrastination of the Orthodox and says that "a few ecumenical observers are beginning to click their tongues and wag their heads as a result of their shallow understanding of 'Orthodox impracticality and inaction.' Frequently, action-oriented Westerners resort to a kind of cynical humor about the Orthodox and wonder of Orthodox triumphalism will ever find ways to concretize even a small portion of its claims."

It is quite obvious that no one else is interested in the "Council" but the heterodox Westerners. There remains but to hope that the Orthodox Churches, which have hitherto not had the courage to stand up in defense of the truth and to refuse even to consider the demands of the false teachers, not participate in their own self-destruction through their inactivity."

ECUMENICAL PRAYER SERVICE OF THE POPE OF ROME IN AMERICA

During Pope John Paul II's stay in America, his every step was transmitted via tens of cameras for television, and all the services he celebrated outdoors and all his speeches were televised in full and in detail. However, there was one ecumenical prayer service in Washington, D.C., which remained almost unmentioned by the press. This prayer service, which the pope held with Orthodox and Protestants, was held in a comparatively small church on the grounds of a Catholic college, holding a capacity of six hundred people. This chapel was selected, reporters say, as especially conducive to prayer and meditation due to its appearance and proportions. Although mention was made in preliminary programs that Protestants and Orthodox would participate in a prayer service, their names were published only three weeks later, after the pope's departure. The publication of the texts of the prayers, be it only a portion thereof, which is usual in such cases, was also conspicuously lacking. It is known only that the Orthodox intoned ektenias (litanies) during the hour-long service, which, however, judging from the two available photographs, was conducted without the participants being vested. In both photographs, that taken during the service and that taken as the pope and participants were leaving the church, Archbishop Iakovos was in direct proximity to the pope. The Ecumenical Patriarchate's representative in America did not miss a single papal service or reception held in the distinguished guest's honor. He attended not only all three of his services in New York and two in Washington, but even accompanied the pope to Chicago. Among the Orthodox who participated in the ecumenical prayer service with the pope of Rome were: Metropolitan Philip (Saliba), head of the Antiochian Exarchate; the Greek Bishop Anthimos of Boston; Metropolitan Theodosius of the "Orthodox Church in America;" the Romanian Archbishop Victorin; the Albanian Bishop Mark (Lipa); Bishop Ireney, representative of the Moscow Patriarchate; Bishop John (Martin) of the Carpatho-Russian Church; the Bulgarian Metropolitan Joseph; and Bishop Christopher of the Serbian Patriarchal Church.

Side by side with these Orthodox bishops, Armenians, Episcopalians, United Methodists, Reformed Protestants, Disciples of Christ and Southern Baptists also took part in the service.

The Orthodox Observer, official mouthpiece of the Greek Archdiocese, noted

in its October 24 issue that Archbishop Iakovos was assigned a place next to the pope as a symbolic gesture of the Vatican's aspiration towards union.

THE FUTURE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

Britain's Crown Appointment Commission, the first specifically organized for the selection of a new Archbishop of Canterbury, has submitted to the queen its recommendation--Robert Runcie, Bishop of St. Albans.

The London-based newspaper Church Times reacted warmly to this nomination, but did not hide the fact that, despite the very careful selection made from a number of possible candidates, there are those who are less than pleased with the nomination.

Protestants are afraid of his close friendship with Catholics and fear that this may serve to weaken their position. A member of the General Synod of the Anglican Church, Miss Christian Howard, an advocate of ordaining women, "took a cool but not unhopeful look at Bishop Runcie as an opponent of her cause," for although he stands with church conservatives in opposing women in the priesthood, he has stated publically that he feels women should be admitted as priests "at some stage." Mr. Gordon Landreth, General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, complains that the archbishop-elect has "not declared himself very specifically about his attitude towards evangelism in Britain, which is (for his group) a main concern at the moment."

Describing several of his views to the press, Bishop Runcie referred to himself as a "radical Catholic" who wishes to stress his conservatism, which, probably, was the main reason for his election to the post of archbishop by the representatives of the conservative government of England. However, here it should be made clear that the views of the future archbishop of England are far from conservative, as those who elected him had apparently hoped.

On the question of the admissibility of ordaining women to the priesthood, he preferred to state that, although he sees no grounds for rejecting it totally, at present he finds its introduction into church life in England inopportune.

Questioned as to his views on abortion, he refused to make a definite statement, averring that he needs more information, as well as help, to understand that complex question.

Likewise, Bishop Runcie found himself unable to say anything definite on the question of sodomy, until he receives a special report currently in preparation.

In its October 5 issue, the Protestant magazine Christianity Today printed an extensive article devoted to the selection of the new archbishop of Canterbury. From a short biography of that personage, it is apparent that he comes from a completely non-religious family. His father was a baptized Presbyterian, but never attended church. His mother had young Robert baptized in the Anglican Church because she thought "she ought to have him done." His early religious upbringing consisted of all of two Sunday school lessons at a local Methodist church; even his confirmation when attending a secondary school in Liverpool was received principally to please a fellow pupil. As a captain during World War II, he exhibited great personal courage, and in 1945 received a medal for his heroism in saving a soldier from a burning tank. At the end of the war he returned to Oxford University, at which he continued his education in the field of literature and the humanities, and only decided to enter the ministry when he was in his final year.

It appears as though there may be some basis to Christianity Today's title

for their article on Bishop Runcie--"Anglican Choice: An 'Essentially Nonreligious' Archbishop."

AN UNFORTUNATE STATEMENT BY THE POPE OF ROME

The September 15 issue of Episcepsis, an official bulletin of the Ecumenical Patriarchate published in Geneva, calls attention to an article in the French newspaper Le Monde (Aug. 11), written by Olivier Clement, a well-known Orthodox theologian with ecumenical tendencies. In it he inserts several corrections to a letter of Pope John Paul II to the Ukrainian uniat Joseph Cardinal Slipyj, whom the pope refers to as "Major Archbishop of Lvov of the Ukrainians." In this letter, the full text of which appears in the July 23 issue of the English edition of L'Osservatore Romano, the official mouthpiece of the Vatican, the pope connects the Baptism of Rus' with Rome and tries to portray contemporary uniats as heirs to the work of St. Vladimir. Olivier Clement sees in the pope's letter a possible complication in the labor of unification with the Orthodox. The pope wrote: "The Christian faith came to Rus' of Kiev from the city of Rome through the city of Constantinople. It was from there that Catholic missionaries set out and were the first to bring the Gospel with them to your ancestors, whom they washed with the saving water of Baptism." With an amazing lack of logic, the pope also said that the Baptism of Rus' had been performed by Greek clergy in the presence of the Great Prince. It remains unclear to the reader who in fact did baptize Rus'--the Greeks or the Latins, who, it is true, were then still in communion with the Orthodox Church.

At the same time, the pope has shown that he has incompetent counsellors when it comes to ecclesiastical history: he calls St. Vladimir the nephew of St. Olga. In the learned Vatican there was evidently not one scholar to be found who would know that he was her grandson, not her nephew! Apparently the pope has no trustworthy advisors on the subject of the Russian Church and its history.

One should also point out that throughout the document, the Russian nation is referred to as "Rus" (in quotation marks). Of course, even given the low standard of their knowledge of Russian history, the pope's advisors could not refer to the Kievan Rus' of St. Vladimir as the Ukraine. Evidently it did not occur to anyone how ridiculous this "Rus" looks to an educated person. Furthermore, the pope's attempt to present the Union of Brest-Litovsk of 1596 as a continuation of the Church founded by St. Vladimir is also historically absurd.

Of course, Olivier Clement is correct: the pope's letter can only foster division. It can hardly please the Ukrainian uniats, and it is repugnant to the Orthodox, who scarcely feel inclined to revere the memory of Josaphat kuntsevich, a persecutor of Orthodoxy whom the pope extolls in his letter.

THE W.C.C. CONTINUES ITS SUPPORT OF PRO-COMMUNIST PARTISANS

Emotions had barely subsided after the outburst of indignation provoked by the fact that the World Council of Churches had donated \$85,000 to pro-communist African guerillas, when the press reported a new donation by the same "church" organization, this time to the "Patriotic Front" in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia). This new donation has provoked the indignation of the Presbyterian Church of Australia to vote to withdraw from the W.C.C. because of it.

Hitherto, the Presbyterian Church of Ireland and the Salvation Army have

have withdrawn from the W.C.C. in protest over the first such donation. Representatives of the Orthodox Churches, unfortunately, have not seen what is sufficiently clear to several Protestant groups.

THE POPE OF ROME & THE UKRAINIAN UNIATS

Despite the passage of centuries since Rome managed to introduce the unia among the Orthodox in the western provinces of the Russian nation by means of deception and force, it continues as before to treat the people it has deceived as second-class believers.

For many years, Joseph Cardinal Slipyj, spiritual leader of the Ukrainian uniats, has been striving to acquire the title of patriarch for himself; but the popes have categorically refused, giving no reason for this, but letting it be known through persons close to them that such a move would create difficulties in view of the close relations between the Vatican and Moscow.

This policy of the popes (of the late Pope Paul VI and the present Pope John Paul II) was rebutted in recent articles printed in the Ukrainian Orthodox newspaper Visnyk, published in Winnipeg, Canada. In their September issue, the Ukrainians write that in August the pope appointed as archbishop for the Ukrainian uniats in America a little-known priest, Miroslav Lubachivsky. This appointment was made with complete disregard for the nominations submitted by the Ukrainians bishops who were then in Rome for a jubilee. The pope did not even consider it necessary to ask their opinions regarding his candidate. Furthermore, Joseph Cardinal Slipyj had personally presented three names of persons he was recommending for the post, a list that did not include Fr. Lubachivsky's. His appointment as archbishop for America came as a complete surprize and was very offensive to the Ukrainian episcopate.

Something suspicious also took place in connection with an audience John Paul II granted to V. Moroz, a Ukrainian dissident recently arrived from the Soviet Union. As the Visnyk reports in its September 15 issue, Moroz arrived at the Vatican in late July to present himself to the pope. The audience lasted thirty-five minutes; but when a reporter from the London-based newspaper The Daily Telegraph turned to the Vatican chancery for information, he was told that "the audience couldn't have taken place, because Moroz arrived too late," and Moroz's name had been crossed off the list of those who had been present. The reporter, probably not without logical foundation, concluded that this had been done so as to "avoid diplomatic confrontation with the Soviet Union." An offended Moroz called a press conference in Rome the following day and showed the reporters a photograph of himself with the pope which had been taken during the audience, but refused to reply to the journalists' questions as to reasons why Vatican circles were denying the fact that the audience had taken place. However, Moroz has transmitted the papal blessing to the entire Ukraine. Apparently, the pope managed to convince Moroz not to be too upset.

AN UNEXPECTED SESSION OF THE COLLEGE OF CARDINALS

After his return from America, the pope of Rome quite unexpectedly convoked a session of the College of Cardinals. A number of newspapers have noted that there has not been such a session in more than one hundred years, and a few even declared that the last such convocation took place in the Middle Ages. This session of the College of Cardinals stimulated a lively interest among the press. It was originally supposed, on the basis of a statement by the pope, that the theme of the assembly would be kept quite secret. However, at the last minute the pope changed his mind and it was explained that the cardinals had been summoned by him for a meeting at which the finances of the Vatican were to be discussed. Aside from the two short reports intended, the cardinals heard three detailed reports, and were even

given certain documented facts, although they were not for publication. Why was it suddenly deemed necessary to inform the cardinals, albeit in a restricted manner, of the state of the Vatican's finances? In an article which appeared in the New York Times' November 9 issue, the reporter Henry Tanner explained that the pope is confronted with the fact that the current annual deficit of the Vatican is \$15,000,000, and the projected deficit for 1980 is \$19,000,000, with every possibility that that figure will grow. Cardinal Vagnozzi, head of the Vatican's Council for Economic Affairs, has warned that the deficit will grow rapidly unless drastic economy measures are taken to reduce expenditures in various areas of the Vatican economy. The difficulty lies principally in the fact that the Vatican possesses incalculable wealth, which, however, is basically invested in real estate and objets d'art, which are not easily converted to cash in case of need. In view of this, the pope has considered it necessary to rely on the assistance of the cardinals in the implementation of a self-imposed tax that dioceses around the world would agree to pay to ease the Vatican's financial burdens. To insist upon such a self-imposed tax without having informed the cardinals as to the magnitude of the Vatican's economic woes would have given rise to discontent.

The cardinals were quite active in taking part in the debates on questions of budget cuts, and one result of this was the proposal that a newspaper published in Milan and subsidized by the Vatican either stand on its own feet within three years or close down. Also called into question were the finances of L'Osservatore Romano and the multi-lingual Vatican radio station, which together consume more than \$5,500,000 per year.

Despite the pope's unexpected "openness" in respect to the cardinals, nothing was said by him of the financial activity of the Administration for the Patrimony of the Holy See, which is responsible for the Curia's operating costs. Also hidden from the cardinals were the financials books of other Vatican organizations, as, for example, the Institute for the Works of Religion (i.e., the "Vatican Bank"), which handles investments and cash transactions throughout the world; the agency responsible for the budget of the State of Vatican City; and the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, which finances missionary activities around the world. Evidently there is much of which the cardinals remain in complete ignorance.

Rome is also alarmed by the sharp drop in the donations known as "Peter's Pence," while the new church organizations created by the Second Vatican Council have caused the Vatican's day-to-day expenses to skyrocket.

It has been suggested, too, that "conservative" groups are using the financial difficulties of the church as a pretext to get rid of agencies serving the cause of ecumenism.

It is estimated that the value of the Vatican's holdings in real estate and art works may be as high as \$38,000,000.

IS CIRCUMCISION NECESSARY?

In its October 1 issue, Newsweek magazine printed an article in its medical section dealing with current attitudes towards circumcision.

Many Russian Orthodox people who arrived in America in the early '50s well remember the disturbances that resulted in hospitals when they insisted that their new-born male children not be circumcised, an operation which quite often was done automatically, even without asking the parents' consent. Frightened by many such cases, young mothers hastened to inform hospital administrations when checking in that, in the event of the birth of a male child, he was under no circumstances to be subjected to the operation of circumcision. It is well known that even such statements did not

always help. The administration quite often simply "forgot" to inform the physician of the parents' desire, and the immigrants, who had only just arrived in a country new to them, and who frequently knew neither the language nor the conditions of life here, did not even suspect that they could sue the physician and the hospital for such "carelessness." The doctors subjected their young patients to such great pressure during their pregnancy that many women were under the impression that circumcision was almost a requirement of the government in America which one could only avoid with good luck. One should note that Newsweek's discussion of the issue centered around the medical, not the ritual aspects of the operation.

The situation has now changed drastically. The American Academy of Pediatrics, basing itself on long-term investigations, has arrived at the conclusion that one can easily get by without circumcision. However, in America more than 80% of all male babies are still subjected to this operation, which adds another \$50 to \$100 to the average hospital bill. The reasons cited in the past by the medical profession in favor of circumcision have now been found by recent studies to be insufficient grounds to justify continuing the practice: circumcision is not only unnecessary, but in a ten-year study at the University of Washington Hospital in Seattle, researchers found that one in five hundred circumcisions endangered the baby's life by exposing it to hemorrhage, infection, or electrical burns from the cauterizing needle often used in the operation. This can be explained by the fact that, since the operation is considered a matter of no great concern, it is, in the majority of cases, assigned to be performed by relatively inexperienced doctors or interns who are attached to the hospital for the purpose of completing their medical training, and hence carelessness is often a factor to be reckoned with.

The magazine also calls attention to the fact that of all "the developed countries today, except for Israel, only the United States continues to circumcise the vast majority of its male infants."

Thus, the question of circumcision has returned to its original rationale: the fact that it was instituted by God for the chosen people Israel, which was to be different from all the other, pagan nations of that time. In fact, circumcision had the same significance for Jews then that Baptism has had for Christians since Christ founded His Church.

THE "JEWS FOR JESUS" MOVEMENT EXTENDS ITS ACTIVITY

The "Jews for Jesus" organization, which was founded six years ago and is based in San Francisco, is, in accordance with a directive issued by Moishe Røsen, its founder, conducting a complete re-orientation of its methods of work, in several cases, is uprooting its mission teams to concentrate them in other areas, and is beginning to utilize new methods of converting Jews to Christianity, though the latter are encouraged to keep the basic tenets of Judaism as well as its practices.

Apparently, this organization is of a non-aligned character, and its founder enjoys considerable authority in it. This is evident from the fact that all sixty-five workers were given orders to return immediately to San Francisco from other states to undergo a special, nine-month, intensive course in evangelisation. As the October 5 issue of the magazine Christianity Today reports, the members of the organization "Jews for Jesus" are attending courses conducted by Baptist and Methodist evangelists, and also by Rachmiel Frydland, a Jewish-Christian scholar in rabbinics and apologetics. On completing this regimen, they are to begin concentrated evangelism on the campuses of northern California's universities. Sue Perlman, the organization's information officer, told a reporter that the agency has asked the uprooted staff members to find San Francisco apartments with

a spare bedroom, for the expected influx of converts will create a need for places to stay, to allow them to escape unsettled home situations caused by their conversions. The organization's members must be able to work as a team. Rosen has determined that in his renewed organization no position will be inviolable. Much will be made clear during the training sessions, and it is possible that some present subordinates may end up replacing their superiors. After its nine-month California campaign, "Jews for Jesus" will begin a similar concentrated outreach in the New York City area, where the Jewish population numbers nearly three million.

RETURN OF INDIAN CHRISTIANS TO HINDUISM

The September, 1979 report of the American Bible Society's International Division quotes The Guardian, a weekly magazine published in Madras, India, as stating that Swami Wammanmurti Maharaj of the Ashram reconverted to Hinduism 2,356 Christians, "purifying" them with Vedic rites. Residents of thirty-two villages, whose inhabitants had converted to Christianity eighty years before, submitted to this ritual.

The Swami who performed this "purification" of former Christians on the banks of a canal of the River Mahisagar, explained that the ceremony was not directed against Christians or Moslems. On the contrary, "in olden times Moslems and Christians were considered so unholy that one who went into their fold was most unfit to come back into the Hindu fold, the Hindu community. This same community now has begun to feel that those people who had gone out of the fold and joined an alien religion are now eligible or fit to come back to Hinduism...And society is now thinking of bringing back into its fold through purification all those originally lost." Christians who renounce their faith in such a manner also profit materially, regaining all their original rights, privileges, and benefits, of which the Indian government has deprived them because of their conversion to Christianity. At present, about 20 million Christians are debarred from any benefits and are considered second-class citizens in their own country. Yet should they but submit to the ceremony of "purification" and return to the paganism of their forefathers, they immediately qualify for the rights accorded first-class citizens and the privileges pertaining thereto.

It is thought that the majority of the "purified," i.e. those who have rejected Christianity in favor of Hinduism, did not originally espouse any particular religion. There were in India a considerable number of Catholic and Protestant missionary institutions, but as is now evident, Western religious philosophy has been unable to overcome oriental mysticism which is so deeply rooted in the people. The temporary success of Western missionaries was based principally on material support and the schools of high quality which they were able to offer the families of those they converted.

DONATIONS RECEIVED & GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED: Mr. Sivanich, G. Deen, S. Liebel, T. Ericson, and Archpriest Martynenko.

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