

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC & FOREIGN RELATIONS  
of the  
SYNOD OF BISHOPS  
OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA  
NEWSLETTER #30

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FROM THE LIFE OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA  
THE RETURN OF THE METROPOLITAN

His Eminence, Metropolitan Philaret, First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, has returned to New York after an extended stay in Australia, where he participated in diocesan solemnities marking various anniversaries. His Eminence's return flight was without incident and he was greeted at the airport by His Grace, Bishop Gregory, and member of the clergy and laity of the area.

A GRIEVOUS LOSS FOR THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA

On April 24 of the current year, Serge Yakovlevich Semenenko, the most outstanding of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia's benefactors, reposed in New York of a disease of the liver.

Mr. Semenenko was born in Odessa in 1903, and there became acquainted with the late Metropolitan Anastassy, who was a close friend of his parents and often visited them. On completing his education in 1924, Mr. Semenenko received a position in a bank, for which he received a salary of \$25.00 per week but his brilliant financial abilities very quickly earned him promotions. In its April 28 issue, the New York Times newspaper printed a lengthy obituary on him, in which it is stated that, in financial circles, Serge Semenenko enjoyed the reputation of being a "doctor" for ailing corporations, skillfully placing them on a firm footing again.

When the Synod of Bishops arrived in America in 1950 and established itself in a temporary residence in the country resort of Mahopak, N.Y., on a piece of property donated to our Church by the late Prince S. Belosselsky, Metropolitan Anastassy found the site to be too far removed from the center of the emigration, and thus it became necessary to transfer ourselves to New York City. With the assistance of Prince Belosselsky and a number of kind people, we managed to purchase a small residence on the city's "West Side." But the church there was too small, even though the two largest rooms had been set aside for it; there was also insufficient space for the clergy's living quarters and for the chancery.

On learning that Metropolitan Anastassy had arrived in New York, Mr. Semenenko visited him several times; one day he said that he considered the building unsuitable as a center for the Church Outside of Russia and that it was essential to acquire a more suitable site. He then offered financial assistance in procuring the necessary building.

After a long search, a beautiful mansion was found in one of the best neighborhoods of the city, at the corner of Park Avenue and 93rd St. This Mr. Semenenko not only purchased with his own money, but also provided with the alterations needed to convert the ballroom into a church, the construction of a stairway leading to the church from the courtyard, as well as many other internal alterations needed to trans-

form what had been a one-family mansion into a center which would serve the needs of the Russian Church.

The funeral service for the late Serge Semenenko was celebrated by His Eminence, Archbishop Vitaly, His Grace, Bishop Laurus and His Grace, Bishop Gregory, with six priests concelebrating. A considerable portion of the service was conducted in English, for the benefit of Mr. Semenenko's widow's non-Russian relatives. Unfortunately, His Eminence, the Metropolitan, was unable to arrive in time. The funeral sermon was delivered by Bishop Gregory.

In accordance with the family's wishes, the time of the funeral was not announced in the Russian-language newspapers, and thus only a handful of people who found out the time of the service by accident came to pray for their benefactor.

The late Serge Yakovlevich was distinguished by an extraordinary personal modesty, and in no way did he call attention to the tremendous support he had given the Church.

Thanks to Serge Semenenko, our Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia is in possession of a building the like of which not one of the other Orthodox Churches in New York, including the wealthy Greek Exarchate, can boast. The Synodal Residence, on the initiative of the city authorities, has become a registered landmark, i.e. a notable sight in the city, and throughout the year, at the request of a number of museums and individual groups of those interested in art, the cathedral and at times the lower church are viewed by hundreds of tourists who are given explanations and an account of the history of our Church detailing the relations between it and the other "jurisdictions." Students from educational institutions who are taking courses in architecture also inspect the residence.

Yet to preserve in proper condition this gift of Serge Semenenko can be accomplished only through the efforts of the members of our Church, of course, principally by way of moneys bequeathed it in the wills of various pious people.

#### AN IMPORTANT ADMISSION BY THE ATHEISTS

The Herald of the Russian Christian Movement (Vyestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia) in its issue #130, published a document of exceptional importance on the state of the Russian Church at present—a document which had been received by the editors.

The report of the Council for Religious Affairs of the Orthodox Church to members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, over the signature of V. Furov, deputy chairman of the Council, presents an extraordinarily dark picture of the life of the Russian Church. It is apparent therefrom that the enslavement of the entire Russian Church by the godless has reached a degree so intensive as to be unimagined in even the most pessimistic prognoses.

The godless now admit that now "the Synod is controlled by the Council (for Religious Affairs of the Orthodox Church—hereafter simply referred to as "the Council"). The Council alone is responsible for the selection and appointment of its permanent members, and the candidacies of the interim members are also subject to the approval of the Council officials. The agenda of each Council session is discussed beforehand by Patriarch Pimen and by the permanent Council members with the Council leadership in the Council discussions. The same applies to the conclusive "Resolutions of the Sacred Synod."

"A sustained and inexorable control over the activity of the Synod is exerted by the Council officials who carry out systematic educational work with the members of the Synod, concluding confidential agreements with them and shaping their patriotic attitude and views, thereby, in turn, the Council officials exercise a necessary influence over the entire episcopate."

In the '60s there were seventy-three dioceses in the Russian Church; but by 1974, only sixty-seven of them remained, i.e. six less. In this same period of time, the number of priests and deacons diminished by 2,473, i.e., by nearly 30%. Everywhere an acute lack of clergy is felt which is not compensated by new appointments of the few seminarians who graduate. There are now 5,994.

As the godless themselves bear witness, prior to 1975 all of 7,062 churches were registered (as compared to the 64,000 in existence before the Revolution). Their actual number now, after another five years of the persecution of religion, alas, it is impossible to say, but it is beyond doubt that even this wretched total of churches for all of Russia could only decrease.

The persecutors of the Church have divided the entire episcopate into three qualitative groups:

1.) Ruling hierarchs who, with complete loyalty to the godless regime, "are fully aware of the state's policy of not expanding religion and the role of the Church in society and, thus, they are not very anxious to expand the influence of Orthodoxy among the populace."

The following bishops are listed by the godless as belonging to this category: Patriarch Pimen; Metropolitans: Alexis of Tallin, Juvenaly of Tula, Sergy of Odessa, Joseph of Alma-Ata; Archbishops: Nikodim of Kharkov, Pitirim of Volokolamsk, Meliton of Tikhvin, Jonathan of Kishinev, Gregory of Mukachevo, Leonty of Simferpol; and Bishop Nicholas of Perm, as well as Metropolitan Seraphim of Krutitsa.

2.) "Leading church officials who, being loyal to the state, observe the laws concerning religious rites," but sometimes strive to find young men as candidates for the priesthood and support those who are zealous.

3.) "A segment of the higher clergy attempt to by-pass the laws..." Apparently, the figure of Bishop Chrysostom of Kursk looms large in this group.

Thus, for a more successful control over the Church, "the Council and its local representatives give constant and unrelenting attention to the study of the composition and the activity of the members of the Synod in particular and the broad circles of the clergy in general. No bishop is ordained and no appointment is carried out without a thorough check of the candidates by the responsible officials of the Council, which is done in close collaboration with its representatives, local organs and the relevant organizations.

"It should be remembered that, in recent years, bishops are ordained for work abroad and, eventually, for work in the country. This requires special qualifications, and relevant proposals are made to the Patriarch and the members of the Synod. They, in turn, make certain suggestions concerning these tasks to the newly-ordained bishops."

Two pages of the "Report" are dedicated to indignation over the preaching activities of Fr. Dimitry Dudko who, when arrested in 1948, received a 10-year sentence of hard labor for his "anti-Soviet inclinations,...called for a struggle against atheism, which to him is tantamount to the Soviet regime... Local authorities have repeatedly warned Fr. Dudko, emphasizing the antisocial nature of his ac-

tivity. He surrounds himself with young people, brainwashing them ideologically and distributing politically harmful literature. However, the priest Dudko did not draw the necessary conclusions for himself, and his sermons at the Church of St. Nicholas continued to be of a highly subversive nature...

"With the cooperation of the organs, we carried out relevant work with Patriarch Pimen and Metropolitan Seraphim of Krutitsa and Kolomensk, who have initiated the transfer of the priest Dudko from Moscow to the Orekhovo-Zuyevo region. In the light of two lengthy talks with Metropolitan Seraphim, Dudko wrote: 'I promise to avoid all political topics in my sermons: I shall preach the Gospel and comment on the essence of the truths of Christianity.'" However, as the author of the report complains, quoting a lengthy segment of an article from the New York-based Russian-language newspaper Novoye Russkoye Slovo (New Russian Word), Fr. Dimitry resumed his "provocatory" preaching.

The Moscow Patriarchate's publishing operations are also in very lamentable condition. Of the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate, all of 15,000 copies are printed and, simultaneously, 3,000 copies of a somewhat condensed English-language edition bearing the same title are printed and issued from a Soviet government press after much delay. The magazine arrives in America nearly half a year after the date on its cover. 3,000 copies of the anthology Theological Works, a totally lifeless periodical, are issued. Apart from this, 40,000 copies of the Patriarch's epistles for Christmas and Pascha are printed. Copies of the Prayer of Remission and paper head bands for the bodies of the deceased are produced at the rate of a million per year.

The godless testify that the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate is the transmitter of all the Church's politics in the Soviet Union, "the most important tribune, by which the ideologues of Russian Orthodoxy try to preserve and strengthen the position of religion in the Church, to hide from the reader the really secret, critical manifestations that take place in the Russian Orthodox Church." They also note that "as is well known, the modernism of Russian Orthodoxy has led its ideologues to the necessity of assisting as much as possible in the defense of peace and the strengthening of friendship between nations..." "Modernistic tendencies in contemporary Orthodoxy are characteristic both in the teaching of the Faith and in the performance of the rites," we read further on in a discussion of the various sections of the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate. "Life is forcing the churchmen to put into practice changes in the church services and rituals, to abbreviate and simplify them, to abandon many ritual activities. The theologians are trying to hide from believers the true reasons for these changes, citing the fact that 'the Russian Orthodox Church has never considered liturgical rites unalterable and inviolable.'"

One would suppose that monasticism in the Russian Church may now be considered completely moribund. The godless mention not a word about it as a power inimicable to them. They touch upon this question only in passing, in connection with a discussion of a certain article in the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate, in which the tendency to appeal not to monasticism, but only to keeping oneself from carnal sins is illustrated with excerpts from the preaching of certain bishops. No information on the number of monasteries or monastics in the Soviet Union is supplied.

May God alone judge those Orthodox hierarchs of all nationalities who, by their close relations with Moscow, despite the fact that they themselves are quite safe and secure in freedom, help smother the remnants of the Russian Orthodox Church and, in consonance with the executioners, testify to its alleged freedom.

### THE VILLAGE OF ZANOSY TODAY

One of the new publications of England's Keston College, "The Right to Believe," reports in its issue #1 an interesting sequence of events which took place in the village of Zanosy somewhere in Little Russia.

The Soviet regime had demanded that the village church be closed and converted into a grain storage building. This demand unexpectedly provoked an unprecedented revolt in the village. The entire collective farm—everyone, regardless of age, including even school children—refused to work or attend school. Believers and non-believers both demonstrated complete solidarity, refusing to go to work; they even refused to feed or water the cattle. The hungry animals' lowing reached as far away as the district center, and the authorities, chagrined, announced their intention to accede to the people's demand that the church not be touched.

However, using deceit and subterfuge, the godless did manage to demolish the church. They convinced the inhabitants of the village to help in some work in a neighboring village. They loaded them all onto lorries and drove them a considerable distance away. At the same time, bulldozers were driven up and the demolition of the church was begun. The schoolchildren had been prudently locked up in the school. When they managed to return in the evening, the villagers found that their church had already been practically reduced to rubble. With cries of despair they demanded that the diabolical activity cease, but the militia began to beat off the peasants cruelly. The whole settlement rang with lamentation. In the morning the remains of the church were burnt.

The case received wide publicity, and the inhabitants of other villages began to stream to Zanosy. The grieving villagers hung icons on the pine trees which grew near the smouldering ruins and began to hold prayer services under the open sky. The godless then decided to have the pines cut down. At first they approached the men of Zanosy and the surrounding villages, but even among the non-believers they could not find anyone who would consent to fell the church's pines. Finally, they located a criminal who had been condemned to a 15-year prison term. They offered him his freedom in exchange for felling the trees, but even he refused, stating: "My conscience will not allow it. There are so many believers here, and I would offend them!" Unfortunately, it is not said that this supposed criminal, judging from his conscientiousness, is hardly criminal at all.

Finally, the authorities managed to find a drunkard who, under military guard, chopped down the cherished pine trees. But the sorry history did not end with this. "The scoundrel who cut down the pines, which had become sacred, has, before the eyes of the whole village, gone out of his mind...The procurator also has not gone unpunished. Though healthy and strong, he died the same year."

## THE HOLY PLACES OF JERUSALEM THREATENED

Beginning with the current year, newspapers have repeatedly reported that sites venerated by Christians have been periodically subject to acts of vandalism, which the Israeli authorities are trying to control with limited success. Even the Jerusalem Post dedicated space for an article on this problem in its January 23 issue.

A group of Christian representatives in Jerusalem drafted a joint statement for the press in which it said that "this most recent resurgence of a pattern of anti-Christian fanaticism, which was not unknown in the past, is causing considerable anxiety to the Christian community in the Holy City."

Speaking of the intensification in the past of the activity of a group of irresponsible fanatics, the statement alludes to the bestial murder of the Greek Archimandrite Philoumenos who was the guardian of Jacob's Well. "It has been pointed out—with deep regret—that the lack of substantive official information concerning the results of the police investigation into this almost unprecedented crime, as well as the inexplicable failure to publish suitable interim reports could not but lead to the proliferation of extremely distressing rumors and speculations, which can only serve to undermine confidence and damage inter-community relations."

An especially decisive protest against these ugly incidents was made by Teddy Kollak, the mayor of the city, who even appealed to the prime minister for support.

The authorities, however, continue to requisition parcels of land. Only two months ago, a large plot of land near the hostel of the Good Samaritan was expropriated from our Mission in Jerusalem. The military authorities who requisitioned our land did not even deem it necessary to inform the head of our Mission of it, and he learned of its seizure from other sources. Through our lawyer he immediately sent a protest to the authorities, but has yet to receive a reply from them.

## THE MONASTERY OF NEW VALAAM TODAY

The famous Monastery of Valaam, one of the places most beloved of Russian pilgrims, was, before the Revolution, an inseparable part of the Russian Orthodox Church. The first moments of the Civil War little affected the tranquil monastic haven, but soon an independent Finnish government was formed which, itself purely Protestant, began to exert pressure on the Orthodox minority, demanding the introduction of the New Calendar, the New Paschalion and other innovations. The brethren of the monastery were split: one part, the large of the two, agreed to accept the innovations; the other, rejecting them, was forced to seek refuge in other places. Several journeyed to Athos, others settled in Orthodox Serbia... Archbishop Seraphim, the head of the Finnish diocese, was expelled by the authorities in the '20s and later headed the Western European diocese within the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. The newly-formed Finnish Church was headed by German Aav, who obtained the recognition of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and unconditionally agreed to all the innovations introduced into the Church at the insistence of the Protestant government.

With the advent of World War II and the cession of that portion of Finland where Valaam was situated to the Soviet Union, many of the monks retreated deeper into Finland and established another monastery

which they named New Valaam, hoping thereby to perpetuate the monastic traditions embodied in pre-Revolutionary Valaam. The magazine One World, the official mouthpiece of the World Council of Churches, printed an article in its April issue on New Valaam Monastery. Contrary to all historical truth, the eight hundred years of Valaam's existence have, by a stroke of the pen of the author of the article, been transferred to the "Finnish Orthodox Church," an establishment whose history dates back all of sixty years, if that. As is apparent from the article, which is signed by a "Fr Ambrosius," the introduction of innovations in the province of ecclesiastical life did not cease with the '20s when the crushing blow was inflicted upon one of the most renowned monasteries of Russia. New Valaam, following the lead of the Finnish Church, has become a hotbed of renovationism, turning its back on the ancient heritage of its illustrious parent community which was from of old a bulwark of Orthodoxy.

The author of the article reports that "in the 1970s, the Orthodox Church of Finland has gone through more changes than in the whole of the previous two hundred years. And the country's new interest in Orthodoxy coincides with an exciting renaissance in the life-style and liturgy of the Church itself.

"In the liturgy, unnecessary mystery has been stripped away. So-called secret prayers are read aloud. The Holy Doors are kept open during services. The congregation sings and participates much more in Holy Communion. The old obligation of confession before every communion service has been abolished and baptism holds a more significant place in worship."

Fr. Ambrosius also reports that even the monastic understanding of rejection of the world, which was inherited by the monks of Karelia from their Russia instructors, is also changing rapidly and significantly. "Now the atmosphere is more open, the monastic communities more accessible, and pilgrims find the kind of lucid and natural asceticism associated with St. Seraphim of Sarov and St. (sic) Francis of Assisi."

Yes, poor Valaam has indeed changed if its monks cannot even discern the difference between a great Orthodox saint and a man utterly deluded by the pernicious heresy of the Latin West.

#### A PAPAL STATEMENT & THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE

In mid-March of 1979, the Pope of Rome wrote a lengthy letter to the uniate Cardinal Slipyi, who has long and unsuccessfully striven to receive official Vatican sanction for the title of Patriarch which he has appropriated for himself, hoping to become the first patriarch of the "Ukraine." Even the Moscow Patriarchate considered itself taunted by the sensational letter in which the Vatican displayed complete ignorance of Russian history.

The Pope, for example, stated that "the Christian Faith came to Kievan Rus' from Rome through Constantinople," spoke of the "Happy, but partial" result of the infamous Union of Brest-Litovsk in 1596, and referred to St. Vladimir as the nephew of St. Olga.

The letter troubled the Moscow Patriarchate. The Orthodox Church, official mouthpiece of the "Orthodox Church in America," reports in its February issue that Metropolitan Juvenaly, head of the Patriarchate's Department of External Affairs, in a letter dated September 4, 1979, demanded a formal explanation from the Vatican on this question and that they state whether or not "a change had taken

place in the ecumenical policies of the Holy See towards the Orthodox Churches."

Moscow has now received an official reply from the Vatican, signed by Cardinal Willebrands, in which it is stated that the pope's letter to Cardinal Slipyi did not intend "to define the relations between the Church of Rome and the Orthodox," or "to present the Union of Brest as a model for our relations with the Orthodox Churches today." Willebrands further endeavors to explain that the union was "inspired by a theology which is not relevant today."

### THE RABBIS' PROPHETIC DREAM

The April issue of the magazine Midnight Call contains sensational news:

"In the extremely Orthodox community of Israel, the rumor is currently circulating: the Messiah is coming. As was recently announced in the Israeli press, three leading rabbis who command respect because of their knowledge of Jewish mysticism dreamed during the same night that the last great battle on earth which will lead to Christ's thousand-year kingdom (sic) will begin in April of this year.

"Several reporters stated the rabbis had dreamed that the battle between the mystical monsters 'Gog' and 'Magog' would just barely prevent a nuclear war between the two superpowers, the USA and the Soviet Union... 'All my friends are talking about it,' reported the fifteen-year old Llana Goldberg of Jerusalem, 'it is a common topic at school.'

"The three rabbis who had the unique dream are Israel Abu Chatzira, Jekutiel Juda Halberstamm and Mordecai Sharabi."

### A UNIATE SYNOD AT THE VATICAN

On March 24, at the Pope's request, uniate bishops converged on the Vatican for a synod which was personally opened by John Paul II.

A mass was concelebrated in the Sistine Chapel by all the members of the synod, and after the reading of the Gospel the Pope addressed the uniate episcopate with a speech in the Little Russian dialect. In his sermon, the significance for Rome of the "rich liturgical tradition of the East" was emphasized in every way possible, as was the Pope's love and respect for the Ukrainians. He also stressed the "centuries of history of struggle and martyrdom of the Ukrainian Church" and did not fail to remember the "confessors and martyrs of the faith, the most illustrious of whom is St. Josaphat"—one of the most savage persecutors of the Orthodox Church in the western hinterlands of Russia.

The purpose of the synod was the selection of an assistant to the aged Cardinal Slipyi. The newspaper L'Osservatore Romano (official mouthpiece of the Vatican), as well as the Catholic News, refer to this uniate synod as very exceptional, not only because it was convened in the Vatican, but also because almost all the Ukrainian bishops outside the U.S.S.R. attended. The Pope's presiding at the sessions was also extraordinary.

After three days of sessions, an assistant for Cardinal Slipyi was elected (not appointed by the Pope?)—Bishop Lobachiwsky. During his own visit to America, the Pope, quite unexpectedly for the uniates, had selected the priest Lobachiwsky to be a bishop. His appointment was then the cause of dissatisfaction and perplexity, for

no one who was close to him knew or understood the reasons for such an unexpected elevation. Now he has been appointed assistant and heir-apparent to Cardinal Slipyi, who for many years headed the uniate church, first in Lvov, later abroad. The Pope of Rome has given a very high estimation of the capabilities of his choice.

#### AND COMPROMISE DOESN'T HELP

As we reported in our last newsletter, representatives of a number of Jewish organizations, actors from the village of Oberammergau and Cardinal Ratzinger had, to all appearances, reached an agreement regarding the final text of the script for this year's staging of the Passion Play. Even the Anti-Defamation of B'nai B'rith announced that it had received the satisfaction of its demands; however, the American Jewish Committee remained dissatisfied. Its representative, Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum, stated that: "We regret to find that the basic result is still a deeply troubling one, mainly because the Daisenberger text is inherently anti-Jewish."

The magazine Newsweek, in its April 21 issue, quotes a member of the Passion Play's cast as retorting: "To take all hints of anti-Semitism out of the Christ story would be as impossible as taking all anti-German passages from the history of World War II."

#### A DISCUSSION OF THE CONCEPT OF "GOD THE MOTHER"

As the New York Times reports in its April 26 issue, a symposium dedicated to discussing the female principle in the godhead was held in Santa Barbara, California.

Gerald Larson, director of the symposium and himself a university professor, said that "this symposium is not just an ideological approach to the role of women in theology."

At the conference there was set up an exhibit of depictions of "the Great Goddess in Indian Asia & the Madonna in Christian Culture." In the evening there was a program of "Marian music" which alternated with Old English poems which had been composed in her honor. There was also a purely Hindu film festival presenting movies incorporating the notion of God the Mother.

Ninian Smart, professor of religious studies, delivered a report on the theme: "The Divine: Female, Male, Both of Neither?" His views on the dogma of the Holy Trinity are simply too blasphemous to print in an Orthodox periodical.

Another lecturer, Walter Capps, also a professor of religion, developed the theory that it is entirely possible that woman may not only be central to Christian thought, but may be responsible for its origin.

"The Feminine deity, meaning theotokos or Mother of God, need not be identified simply as the mother of Christ, but perhaps also as mother of the Trinity... I know that this is a wild, perhaps scandalous thought (here one cannot but agree with the author—Ed.) and no theologian that I know of has proposed that the Trinity could have a mother. But this is an example of the great quest for harmony between the feminine and masculine worlds of theology."

Fr. Andrew Greeley, a Catholic priest and professor of sociology who teaches at Arizona University, also took part in this disturbing symposium. He lectured on the theme: "The Madonna in North America," and maintains that, on the basis of his research and questions put to 2,500 young Americans, "25% of American young people think of God at least some of the time as a mother... For a little

kid, it's perfectly logical to think that God has a mommy. But an adult has to reflect on the implications of God as both male and female."

### A SATANIC GAME FOR CHILDREN

As the New York Times reports in its May 3 issue, in the small city of Heber City, Utah, five thousand residents, primarily members of the Mormon sect, have become seriously disturbed over an educational program introduced by the local school administration.

The school had selected especially talented and apt children and assigned them to participate, during after-school hours, in a game entitled "Dungeons & Dragons," a game which achieved great popularity on college campuses in the '70s. Rule books and a plan of a "dungeons" are provided to govern the play. The plan is to be seen only by the player who is called the "dragon keeper." The players journey around the "dungeon," assuming various characters: elves, dwarves, etc., seeking to recover hidden treasure. Strengths and weaknesses are determined in part by casting specially shaped dice. The game is popular among both parents and children.

The introduction of this game in Heber City took place in January and immediately raised objections. A group of parents organized and protested to the school administration, but at a joint meeting of parents and teachers on the continuation of the program, a large majority came out in favor of the game. Yet as early as March opposition was mounting. Parents who had been protesting against the game from the onset issued a statement suggesting that the playing of the game be terminated.

The statement of Norman Springer, a non-denominational Christian minister or pastor, is interesting in this regard. He explained that the game is "very definitely anti-religious. I have studied witchcraft and demonology for some years and taught against witchcraft. The books themselves (the rule books for the game) have been taken from mythology and from witchcraft, and they are filled with demonology, filled with pictures and symbols that you could find in any basic witchcraft book and use the same terminology." He said, in particular, that the game's rule books included incubuses and succubuses, male and female demons having to do with lust, and the terminology of magic, including a magic circle.

"These books are filled with things that are not fantasy but are actual in the real demon world," Mr. Springer says.

The "game" is manufactured by T.S.R. Hobbies, Inc., of Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Brian Blume, the vice president of the company, responded to the protests which have taken place, saying that the game "is a game of heroic fantasy, and in order for the players to be able to perform heroic deeds they have to have things to overcome. The things most fun(sic) to overcome are things that are evil, foul, rotten and nasty, so we also included some things that were evil, foul, rotten and nasty for that reason."

Douglas Merkley, Superintendent of the Wasatch District Schools, said: "The program polarized our community, so the program is finished as of this year and will not be used next year. It has taken hours of my time, and I hope we are all to the point where we've spent enough time on it... From an administrative point of view, we need the support of all the people in the community. This has been a divisive thing and it will take a long time to mend the fences."

### DONATIONS ACKNOWLEDGED

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### THE SYNOD BOOKSTORE

New books now available through the Synod Bookstore:

- 1.) Parables of the Gospel, by St. Gregory the Great, translated by Nora Burke, 169 pp. hardcover. \$3.50
- 2.) Religious Minorities in the Soviet Union, by Michael Bourdeaux, 28 pp. \$2.50 softcover.
- 3.) Heritage of the Slavs, by Thomas J. Droben & Wilma S. Kucharek, 168 pp. softcover. (Deals principally with the life of SS. Cyril and Methodius, enlighteners of the Slavs.)
- 4.) Seraphim's Seraphim: The Life of Pelagia Ivanovna Serebrenikova, Fool for Christ's Sake of the Seraphim-Diveyevo Convent, translated from the Russian by Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 159 pp., softcover. \$5.00
- 5.) Russian Folk Tales, translated by Natalie Duddington, 144 pp., hardcover. \$4.95.

The Synod Bookstore has reached an agreement with a local professional ecclesiastical tailor and now is able to offer the full line of clerical vestments to those who are in need of such. A sample of items available and typical prices follows directly:

cassock — \$145.00 (\$85.00 if material is supplied by the purchaser).

purple kamilavka — \$35.00.

klobuk (kamilavka and veil) — \$50.00

skufia — \$20.00

Deacon's stikharion — \$250.00

Priest's vestments — \$450.00

The prices cited above presuppose material of an ordinary quality. Increases in the price of material may raise the price of the overall item. The prices of galloon are now rising at a steady rate.

Questions may be addressed to the Synod Bookstore at its telephone number: (212)-369-0288.