

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC & FOREIGN RELATIONS
of the
SYNOD OF BISHOPS
RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA
NEWSLETTER #39

January-March, 1982

FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC & FOREIGN RELATIONS

After a considerable lapse in the publication of our Newsletter, occasioned by a number of practical problems, we are now resuming its publication and hope that it will be issued regularly as before.

We consider certain pieces of information of sufficient importance to include them despite their being somewhat dated. From time to time we will include this unavoidably detained material.

At the same time we remind our readers that over that period of time when we could not mail out our Newsletters, costs for paper and postal rates rose considerably, and during the summer of this year a new rise in postal costs is expected; consequently, subscription prices for newspapers and magazines essential to our work have risen also. Hence, we are asking our interested readers to help us financially, not only to maintain our standards, but to ensure the continued publication of our Newsletter.

With a limitation of expenses in mind, we ask all of our readers who are no longer interested in receiving the Newsletter to inform us of their desire by way of the enclosed envelope.

EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA

The most important event, not only of the whole year but of the entire history of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, must be considered to be the solemn glorification of the New Martyrs and Confessors of the Church of Russia, which took place in the Synod's cathedral amid an unprecedented concourse of people, in an atmosphere of exceptional enthusiasm and solemnity. This event was given a thorough coverage by the press, which, however, responded in various ways. A portion of the reports (notably those in the New York Times and the Chicago Tribune) were written in a mocking tone excoriating the "schismatic group" which has canonized the Tsar "who did nothing for the people, but permitted pogroms of the Jews and Armenians (?)... and 30,000 'martyrs' with him."

Several magazines and newspapers, on the other hand, wrote of our Church's solemnity with great insight and sympathy. A number of prominent European magazines also described the glorification to a certain degree and featured many photographs. All of them without exception centered their treatment around the Tsar-martyr and his family.

The wide reportage given by the foreign press made it impossible for the Soviet Union to remain silent concerning the fact of the canonization of the new martyrs. The newspapers Soviet Russia, Izvestia and Literary Gazette all ran their own articles, which were couched, of course, in the most insolent fashion possible; but nevertheless, the faithful Russian people were thus more widely informed of this event of exceptional importance.

The magazine Possev sent to the chancery of the Synod of Bishops an extract from a letter sent to the editorial offices of that periodical from Moscow: "News of the glorification of the New martyrs of Russia has brought us very great joy. The people wept for joy and greeted one another. This is especially important just now, after last year's renunciations [i.e., those of Fr. Dimitri Dudko, Lev Regelson, et al.]. Priests are serving molebens to the New Martyrs; we are praying to them, and they are answering [us]. This bond gives us strength", writes an unknown Russian man from "the other side."

The chancery of the Synod of Bishops has also received a great many letters from non-Orthodox persons, the vast majority of whom express their joy on the occasion of the glorification of the New Martyrs, and especially of the Imperial Family. Among the letters received, one, written by an orthodox rabbi resident in England, is especially worthy of attention. In it he expresses his joy and sets down, in a separate enclosure, an article detailing a number of very interesting and valuable thoughts on the divine institution of the monarchical form of government.

RADIO TRANSMISSIONS TO THE U.S.S.R.

The ecclesiastical organization "Orthodox Action" has signed a contract to broadcast fifteen-minute religious radio programs into the Soviet Union. Each fifteen minutes costs \$50.00; transmission will have commenced on January 2, over short-wave radio, at 16 m or 17895 khz, Saturdays, at 9 p.m. Moscow time. Archbishop Anthony appeals to the entire flock of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia for material assistance, that we may help to alleviate the spiritual thirst of the faithful in the Russian land, that we need depend on no one else and that these broadcasts might be the free voice of our Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

The representative of "Orthodox Action" for the radio transmissions is:

Diacre N. Semenoff
1, rue Delaporte
94700 Maisons-Alfort
France

Donations to defray the cost of the transmissions should be sent to:

Suisse, Geneve. Union de Banques Suisses.
Action Orthodox 133. 374 L H K
with the notation: "For the faithful".

AT THE TOMB OF THE EMPRESS

February 4th was an important and solemn day for the parish of St. Alexander Nevsky in Copenhagen. Queen Margaret II of Denmark and many prominent Danes met with parishioners of the parish, headed by two of our bishops, at the tomb of the late Empress Maria Feodorovna in the royal mausoleum in Roskilde; also present was the Lutheran bishop of Roskilde. The occasion marked the installation of a icon of the Imperial Martyrs and a large and beautiful lampada at the tomb of the late Dowager Empress. The solemnity was presided over by Bishops Gregory of Washington and Mark of Munich. They arrived in Copenhagen two days prior to the event.

The Dowager Empress's tomb is located in the crypt beneath the chapel of King Christian IX. At the appointed time, 2:15 p.m., the clergy assembled and awaited the arrival of the Queen. As soon as she arrived at the cathedral, the local Danish cathedral clergy went to the crypt, led by the Lutheran bishop Bertil Viberg, who had come early in order to acquaint himself with the Russian bishops. No sooner had the Danish clergy reached the crypt, when the Queen also arrived. Then, with the chanting of "Holy God" echoing throughout the vast cathedral, the Russian clergy followed, accompanied by a choir under the direction of Vasily Kalinovsky, one of whose members was Nikolai Gedda, the famous opera singer, who happened to be in Copenhagen at the time. The panikhida began immediately. Due to the limited space, newspaper reporters were not permitted in the crypt; nonetheless, a videotape was made in a very modest manner for broadcasting over Danish television.

The serving of the panikhida, with the harmonious chanting of the male choir, made a deep impression upon the Queen and all present (about 100 persons, which is as many as could fit in the small crypt). Mr. Bibikov and Baron Bilderling, representatives of the horse-guards of which the late Empress was patron, held the standard of the horse-guards by the tomb.

After the conclusion of the panikhida, Bishops Gregory and Mark and the clergy passed to the apartment assigned to them, where they were soon joined

by the Queen. She greeted the bishops and, after conversing with them for a short time, was introduced to the other participants in the panikhida. The choir sang a piece for her, and concluded with "Many Years". Thereafter, she went to another building near the cathedral, where hors d'oeuvres were served. There the Queen was introduced to other participants and several parishioners of the Copenhagen church. Prior to the Queen's departure, the choir sang "Many Years" for her again. She left accompanied by Bishop Gregory. The entire panikhida was broadcast over the Danish television networks.

IN WASHINGTON

On March 9, Bishop Gregory took part in a symposium of the American Family Institute as an honored guest. The symposium was held in one of the halls of the Senate. It was to a considerable extent devoted to a review of the encyclical of Pope John Paul II "Familiaris consortio". This institute, a well-known and long-established organization is dedicated to the strengthening of the traditional principles of a strong family. At the request of the presidium, Bishop Gregory blessed the meal which was provided in one of the other halls of the Senate.

After the symposium, Bishop Gregory visited the church of St. John the Forerunner and inspected the recent renovation. He found that they had progressed considerably since his last visit, and was pleased with the rapid pace of the labor, which gives promise that it will be possible to move into the new church in time for Paschal services. At present, services are conducted in the parish hall, which has been temporarily appointed as a church.

PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH

Fr. Joseph Mikhailov

In its January 16, 1982 issue, the Russian-language newspaper Russian Thought printed a letter which it has received from Moscow. The letter, signed "Marina", provided information on the fate of the priest Joseph Mikhailov. He is forty-eight years old, served in the city of Ufa, and was arrested because he wrote a letter to the United Nations reporting details of the persecutions to which the Church is being subjected in the U.S.S.R.

Ever since, i.e. these past ten years, he has been incarcerated in the Kazan' psychiatric "hospital", where he is tortured by means of all sorts of drugs. Unfortunately, very little is known in the West of this courageous man, and it is possible that this in part explains the utter impunity of the "hospital" personnel.

"Marina", the author of the letter, asks that "a person be found who would begin to help with mailings, printed matter, and letters to Fr. Joseph, and perhaps with inquiries concerning him addressed to the 'hospital' administration; it is precisely persistence and importunity which are essential; if a package is returned, mail it again, demand explanations, send it 'return receipt requested', etc."

The head of the Kazan' psychiatric hospital is Colonel Konstantine Leonidovich Cveshnikov, and the name of one particularly zealous physician (torturer) is Maria Nikolaevna Reus.

THE CASE OF ABBOT AMBROSE

Abbot Ambrose (born 1937; secular name: Alexander Ignatievich Yurasov), who in the past worked as a miner, completed studies at the Moscow Theological Academy and served in the Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra, where he heard the confessions of pilgrims. For his "excessive zeal", he was removed from the rolls of the monastery's brethren under pressure from the Soviet regime (at that time he moved around on crutches, for he suffered from polyarthrititis). In 1976 he was transferred to the Pochaev Lavra. There he also acquired rapid fame, but also attracted the attention of the K.G.B. The persecution of Fr. Ambrose began in March of 1981 with the help of Archimandrite James (Panchiuk), the Lavra's superior. Fr. Ambrose was driven from this lavra, too. After Fr. Ambrose had left, one of the novices passed on to the superior lit-

erature which belonged to Fr. Ambrose, among which were books published in the West and photostatically duplicated. The superior transmitted all of this to the district attorney, and criminal proceedings were initiated against Fr. Ambrose. At present he is somewhere in hiding. (News from the U.S.S.R., #23-24, 1981).

The bulletin Religion & Atheism in the U.S.S.R., on the basis of information in the 1982 #1 issue of News from the U.S.S.R., reports that in March of 1981 Vladimir Poresh, a prisoner in camp #35, began a hunger strike to force the return of his Bible. Beginning in November of 1981 he was deprived of the right to meet with his friends. According to the same information, Fr. Gleb Yakunin wrote from the camp hospital that he is in good health and has returned to camp #37. He (i.e. Poresh) has terminated his hunger strike, but it is not known if they have returned his Bible.

The same periodical reports that the oppression of pilgrims visiting holy places is being intensified. Thus, on June 21, 1981, the feast of the Kazan' icon of the Mother of God, the militia dispersed the faithful who had gathered in Diveyevo at the miraculous spring which had sprung forth through the power of the wonder-working icon. On August 1, the authorities again drove away the faithful who had come to pray at the site of the long-destroyed church of Diveyevo, which is associated with the memory of St. Seraphim of Sarov and the uncovering of his relics. The militia dispersed the faithful, demanded to see their passports, and threatened them. The nuns there suffer especially from the iniquitous actions of the militia.

On June 3, in accordance with immemorial tradition, many of the faithful gather on the banks of the river Velikaya (in the village of Velikorechskoe, Kirovsk district), to celebrate the manifestation of the miraculous icon of St. Nicholas (1388). Last June the militia closed off all roads into the village, detained pilgrims, etc.; in the village itself militiamen, KGB agents and plain soldiers stood guard. The holy places were cordoned off with barbed wire and "no trespassing" zones were established, as though maneuvers were being conducted. Residents of the village on the other side of the river were forbidden, under threat of a substantial fine, to ferry across pilgrims who wished to pray in the village church; the local store was forbidden to sell them bread.

IN PRAISE OF THE GODLESS

In its May 1981 issue, the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate reports that in March of that year Patriarch Pimen organized a great reception to mark the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Department of External Affairs of the Moscow Patriarchate. Invited to the reception were hierarchs and clergymen of the Moscow Patriarchate who quite frequently appear outside the U.S.S.R., as well as representatives of the Council of Evangelical Christian Baptists and Moslem and Buddhist groups.

At the reception, V. Kuroedov, president of the Council for Religious Affairs, delivered a speech of welcome, in which he said that he "placed great value upon the activity of the Moscow Patriarchate accomplished through the Department of External Affairs, and particularly upon the pacifying and patriotic service of the Russian Orthodox Church."

Many telegrams bearing messages of congratulations from hierarchs under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate arrived addressed to Metropolitan Juvenaly, president of the Department of External Affairs. Only two telegrams were indicated as having been received from abroad: one from Metropolitan Theodosius, primate of the "Orthodox Church in America", and another from Archpriest Iohn Meyendorff, head of that church's department of external affairs.

THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE & BILLY GRAHAM

In its March 22 issue, the magazine Newsweek has reported that Billy Graham, the evangelical preacher, has received an invitation from Patriarch Pimen

to travel to Moscow and preach on Sunday, May 9, in the Patriarch's Yelokhovskiy Cathedral. This is the day appointed for the opening of a conference on the theme "the preservation of life from nuclear destruction." It is also the day on which the communists celebrate their victory in World War II. The conference will open with a moleben, and it will proceed with the close cooperation of the Patriarchate and the Soviet government.

Cognizant of how such conferences are conducted, and fearing that the widely known Graham might be used for communist propaganda purposes, Vice President Bush, at the behest of William Clark, White House national security advisor, personally telephoned Graham with the request that he decline the invitation. Some in Graham's inner circle say, however, that the famous evangelist has long dreamed of trying out his strength in the U.S.S.R., and he has no intention of refusing such an offer. He has even managed to set down a first draft of his sermon. Some efficient journalists have even managed to ascertain that in Moscow the text of the conference's resolution has already been prepared, and in it the Soviet Union strivings for peace are praised.

It is to be feared that the disquiet of the American government's leaders is not without foundation, for over the last fifteen years the famous preacher has significantly altered his former views; for this he has achieved world-wide renown.

It is interesting that the newspaper Jewish Press has devoted considerable space to Graham in its March 26 issue, in which a speech by the famous ecumenist Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum is quoted, referring to him as "one of the greatest friends of the Jewish people and Israel in the entire Christian world of the twentieth century." The rabbi also said that "It is not generally known among either Jews or Christians that Dr. Graham has been present to the Jewish people in virtually every moment of trial, threat and testing, as well as in celebration....Dr. Graham came time and again to the aid of the embattled people of Israel, when his voice and influence in high places made a crucial and, at times, a decisive difference." There was a time, however, when Billy Graham had a reputation for antisemitism!

Newsweek stresses the fact that the Patriarch's invitation to Graham is totally without precedent. Indeed, we have yet to observe a more striking example of the depths to which modern "Orthodox" hierarchs in the mire of ecumenism than this invitation extended to a heretic to preach to the flock of the Moscow Patriarchate, a function rightly reserved to one of its clergymen.

However, as one very well-informed correspondent from Moscow, whom we shall not identify (for obvious reasons), reports: "The Moscow Patriarchate is 'fighting for peace', and with this aim in mind is convening in Moscow, in 1982, a 'conference' of Zoroastrians, Buddhists, Moslems, Jews, idolators, Protestants, Catholics and Orthodox for JOINT prayer for peace and activities designed to foster 'peace.' All archpastors and pastors of the Moscow Patriarchate have been ordered to urge believers to donate funds for the organization and maintenance of this 'conference.' A paradox exists in the fact that if God is still being patient with Russia despite all of its iniquities, He is so because of the prayers of the righteous people that live therein. The Moscow Patriarchate, however, is doing everything possible to bring down the ultimate wrath of God through these impious gatherings. It is thus not rendering the nation a good service. For by striving to please the atheistic government by, as it were, 'struggling for peace', it is, in actual fact, bringing war closer."

THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE & THE "ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA"

The "Orthodox Church in America," which ten years ago received its "autophaly" from the Moscow Patriarchate, which, however, by agreement retained some fifty parishes on the territory of the newly independent Church, at that time allayed the fears of its disquieted members by stating that the situation was purely formal in nature, a necessity for the reception of independence, and that thereafter mutual relations with Moscow would never become too dangerously close.

As is apparent from the recently received issue (#9) of the Journal of the

Moscow Patriarchate, relations between the "Orthodox Church in America" and Moscow have, however, become closer and closer. Thus, "on August 30, 1981, Bishop Irenei of Serpukhov (administrator of the Patriarchal parishes in America and Canada) arrived in Hollywood, Florida, as an honored guest of the Federation of Russian Orthodox Clubs in the U.S.A. At this meeting of the Federation, Bishop Irenei and the organizers of the conference exchanged official greetings. On the same day he attended the evening divine services and prayed in the chapel in the hotel with Metropolitan Theodosius, primate of the O.C.A. and Bishop Dimitri of Dallas, who were also guests of the Federation.

"On August 31, Bishop Irenei concelebrated at the liturgy with Metropolitan Theodosius. The liturgy was performed in a large and spacious hall of the hotel 'Diplomat.' Also concelebrating were Bishop Dimitri and clergymen of the Orthodox Church in America....After the conclusion of the liturgy, a festive banquet was served, at which Bishop Irenei read a speech of greeting.

"On October 29, the Patriarchal representative in New York visited Bishop Pierre (L'Huiller) of Brooklyn, of the Orthodox Church in America. A dinner was served in honor of the guest.

"On November 11, Bishop Irenei flew to Detroit, Michigan, where, at the invitation of the primate of the Orthodox Church in America, His Beatitude Metropolitan Theodosius, he took part in a reception marking the anniversary of the Sixth All-American Sobor and the tenth anniversary of the Orthodox Church in America's autocephaly. Bishop Irenei attended the evening divine services, which was celebrated in a temporary church set up in the 'Cadillac Book Hotel', where the Sobor had taken place.... After the evening divine services, a grand reception was organized by the hierarchy of the Orthodox Church in America. Among the honored guests was Bishop Irenei.

"On November 17, Archbishop Chrysostom of Kursk and Archpriest Nikolai Gundyayev visited the Patriarchal representation in New York and the Cathedral St. Nicholas. A brunch was arranged for the guests. Afterwards, accompanied by Bishop Irenei, the guests paid a visit to His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius of the Orthodox Church in America, at his residence. In honor of the guests, His Beatitude Metropolitan Theodosius had a dinner served. The guests visited St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary, where they were greeted by the dean, Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann. The guests inspected the library and classes of the seminary, and met with the professors and instructors. In the evening, the guests prayed at the divine services in the seminary.

"On the evening of November 19, in the church center of the parish in Garfield [N.J.—a parish of the Moscow Patriarchate], a banquet was prepared in honor of the representatives of His Holiness the Patriarch and all participants in a conference. Honored guests at the banquet were His Beatitude Theodosius, Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America & Canada," as well as a number of other guests and the president of the Federation of Russian Orthodox Clubs, Maurice Harman."

In January of the current year, at the initiative of the Moscow Patriarchate, a conference was held in Odessa to review the labors of the Commission of the World Council of Churches which had just concluded its sessions in Lima, Peru. Eighteen theologians from various countries participated in the conference, among whom were Nikolai Lossky of the St. Sergius Institute in Paris and Thomas Hopko of St. Vladimir's Seminary in America.

THE "REVISED CALEDNAR" IN THE "O.C.A."

A decision of the synod of the "Orthodox Church in America" (formerly the Metropolia) has been the cause of great disturbance among a portion of its parishes. The critical attitude of the more conservative portion of its flock toward the decision has doubtless been the cause of the defensive tone of the synod's official statements.

No effort has been spared in attempting to convince the flock that they are not accepting the "Gregorian Calendar", but rather a "revised Julian Calendar." It is well known to all that the derivation of the Gregorian Calendar is not Orthodox, even though the Julian Calendar lies at the basis of

it. In 1582, Pope Gregory decided to correct the Julian Calendar, moving all feasts back ten days. This act confirmed the division of the West from Orthodoxy all the more, for the common celebration of all the feasts, beginning with the Nativity of Christ, was lost, and the new reform became known as the Gregorian Calendar. No one at any time has called it Julian. Some have only now begun to refer to it as such, clearly with the intention of confusing the issue. To this end it is even stated that the first reform of the "fundamental" Julian calendar was made by none other than the First Ecumenical Council, which, as everyone who has studied the history of the Church knows, only reworked the Paschalion in connection with the fixing of the date for the vernal equinox.

In the official statement of the Metropolia, an attempt is made, in vain, to prove that what it is accepting is not the Roman Catholic Gregorian Calendar, but something else, a "revised Julian" Calendar.

"The change of the calendar," we read in Bishop Basil's epistle On the Revised Julian Calendar (Light of Life, Feb., 1982, p. 6), "does not mean that the Orthodox Church in America has accepted the Roman Catholic Gregorian Calendar. The Revised Julian Calendar differs from the Gregorian Calendar, although their dates coincide [emphasis ours]."

The readers are thus confronted with the problem of understanding what this means. It has always seemed to us that the difference between the church calendars lies precisely in the dates which determine the feasts. But it would seem that there is another logic: the feasts in the revised, Gregorian calendar are designated by the same dates as in ours, but are merely celebrated thirteen days earlier and coincide completely with the Gregorian. By what manner of logic can one consider them as belonging to the Julian calendar which has been merely revised?

In essence, then, what which is "Julian" remains in the "revised" calendar? Only the Great Fast and Pascha, with the feasts of the Ascension and Pentecost which depend upon it, whereas all the other feasts, as well as the commemorations of the saints, remain celebrated according to the Gregorian calendar, thirteen days earlier than celebrated by the Church of Russia. In other words, the entire year, with the exception of six weeks, will be lived by the "Orthodox Church in America" according to the Gregorian Calendar, and not in any way according to the Julian Calendar. It is quite naive to expect that the discontent will be appeased by the fact that the day of a feast will be designated by the same date, just thirteen days earlier. The feasts, and Christmas in particular, will be celebrated according to the Gregorian Calendar dates; in the case of Christmas this will mean that the "O.C.A." will be celebrating Christmas on December 12, a fast day for the Russian Church.

The "Orthodox Church in America" is only seeking to confuse the issue; from the celebration of the moveable feasts in common with the Russian Orthodox Church, it has chosen to celebrate them at the same time as Catholics and Protestants.

RUSSIAN JEWS IN AMERICA

In its March 14 issue, the Jerusalem Post complains that the "Church [is] seeking Russian Jews." As Leon Hadar, its correspondent, reports, many of the Jews who have emigrated to Israel from the U.S.S.R. are trying to emigrate to America, where a Russo-Judaic community of substantial size is already established. As the report states, many of these Jews are falling under the influence of a priest of the "Orthodox Church in America" and are being baptized by him. With considerable irony the newspaper stresses that Fr. Meerson uses a hyphenated surname: when writing for or speaking with Russians, he uses the name Aksionov-Meerson; and when dealing with Jews, he refers to himself as Meerson-Aksionov. Fr. Meerson is a Jew by nationality, was baptized several years ago, prior to his emigration to Israel, and is inspired with missionary spirit. This, however, does not hinder his collaborating with the major Jewish magazine Midstream.

The Jerusalem Post also complains about Russian scout camps in which the children of Jews enroll and which prove to be centers for conversions. The

newspaper also mentions that the St. Sergius School (which it erroneously refers to as the St. George School) is another important conversion center. Of the seventy students of that school, about fifty are emigrants from the U.S.S.R., and several of them have been baptized. All of this distresses the Jews considerably.

THE NEW-CALENDARIST (STATE) CHURCH OF GREECE

In its January 23 issue, the New York Times reports that in late January there took place a council of the Greek new-calendarist bishops which was attended by some seventy-eight hierarchs, who gathered in an extraordinary session under the presidency of Archbishop Seraphim of Athens.

The council was convened in connection with the fact that the left-leaning socialist Greek government has introduced a number of proposals to the Chamber of Jurisprudence. The government proposes complete separation of Church from state, the confiscation of most of the estates belonging to monastic institutions, the abolition of the law that adultery and homosexuality are crimes punishable by law, the introduction of mandatory civil marriages (but no mandatory ecclesiastical weddings), and also the permitting of abortion up until the sixth month of pregnancy.

The session of the council turned out to be quite stormy. Bishop Ambrose of Eleutheroupolis began to state his objections to Archbishop Seraphim, who supports the government's proposals. At this, Archbishop Seraphim, in the words of Bishop Ambrose, "leaped out of his seat like a stag, swept on me like a falcon, pulled my beard, screamed and threatened to strangle me....His anger was such that the other bishops were unable to restrain him. I crossed my hands and began to pray in a loud voice, 'Father, save me from this hour,' which seemed to calm him down, and he let me go."

Bishop Kantiotis, who also participated in this extraordinary session of the council, told the press that the disturbance began when Bishop Ambrose began to criticize Archbishop Seraphim and a number of other prominent hierarchs because they were succumbing to "government pressure, papist and Freemasonic influences", which in the end would result in criminal acts against the Tradition of the Church. He also accused Archbishop Seraphim of close collaboration with the various Greek governments, so that the latter did not have to submit his resignation after any of the political changes which have marked that country's recent political history, as has been customary in the past with primates who were political appointees. Defending his right to speak out at the council, Bishop Ambrose told Archbishop Seraphim: "You have no right to stop me from speaking, especially you who are a traitor, a collaborator." He also stated: "We cannot keep changing Christian laws and traditions according to the times."

Efstathios Alexandris, the Minister of Justice maintained that the government was under no obligation to submit its plans for the Church's approval, and that the government would in the future act as it sees fit.

THE "WOMEN'S QUESTION" & THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Demands for women to have "equal rights" with men in church life have arisen in the West at a comparatively recent date. First to make concessions were the Episcopalians, who initially assented to ordain women only to the diaconate. At the same time, in the '60s, the Presbyterians also accepted female presbyters. Yet the new female clerics were not satisfied with this and began to plan for ordination to the priesthood. They were successful in this endeavor in the late '60s. Now the Episcopalians are speaking quite openly about female bishops, for on the basis of the resolutions of various Episcopalian assemblies, there are no longer any legal obstacles to such ordinations, apart from the still uncustomary sight of a woman bishop.

Following this logical plan, there have now arisen movements which urge the establishment of a female priesthood among the Catholics. The reason for this is the shortage of priests and the possibility of this lack being at least partially filled by nuns, a solution which has for all intents and

purposes been adopted in several places, where nuns (with the assent of the episcopal authority) carry out the duties of parish rectors, preach and distribute communion to their faithful which has been previously consecrated by a Catholic priest at a mass.

Over the past several years, such a tendency has also become noticeable in various Orthodox ecclesiastical periodicals. In Greek, Serbian, Roumanian and American magazines there have suddenly appeared articles concerning the position of men and women in the Church, their role in parish life, the significance of woman in the human race, etc. Ten years ago these questions simply would not have been raised in the Orthodox press.

As is now becoming clear, their appearance is being accelerated by the World Council of Churches, of which nearly all of the Orthodox Churches are now members.

In mid-July of last year, an Anglican conference was held in Sheffield, England, in which Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant representatives took part. A number of resolutions were adopted, on racism, class equality and "sexism." The latter question, which has been the object of the W.C.C.'s study over the past four years, has been formulated in a bulky report entitled "On the Unity of Men & Women in the Church." Despite the fact that the liberal press has greeted the "Sheffield Document" with enthusiasm, its implementation through the W.C.C. has nonetheless encountered significant obstacles.

In August of 1981, a conference of the W.C.C.'s central committee in Dresden, Germany, turned its attention to the "Sheffield Document" on women. After a heated debate which lasted two hours, that document, albeit in a somewhat watered-down form, was nonetheless accepted by the conference.

As the newspaper Orthodox Observer reports, such "official documents" are usually accepted by the Commission with the recommendation that its member churches accept them "for serious and prayerful study." This time, however, the Commission resolved only "to take note" of the document and to send with it a letter from Dr. Philip Potter, the W.C.C.'s general secretary, explaining the controversy it aroused and especially the objections of the Orthodox.

Archbishop Anthony, a representative of the Church of Roumania, stated during the debate that the Eastern Church is not opposed to the equality of men and women. "It's the methodology that's wrong," he said; "There's been no dialogue...This is a doctrinal matter and not just a matter of issuing statements and resolutions....If this report is approved, what will the Orthodox think of us here? That we have lost the Faith? We can't change tradition as easily as we change shirts. The reinterpretation of Scripture is not the same as rewriting a document."

The National Catholic Register (Sept. 20, 1981) states that "the seven Orthodox participants were generally opposed by the other 132 delegates. Of the eleven Roman Catholics present (including two priests), not one spoke against women's ordination. The only American Catholic present was Dr. Madelaine Boucher of Fordham University, who told the Register that 'it is a sin not to ordain women.'"

The Orthodox minority, alas, chose not to follow the example of the "Salvation Army", which withdrew from the membership of the W.C.C. because of its support for communist partisan movements, but stated through the Greek Bishop Maximos that the Orthodox might "have no choice but to make a separate statement and issue a minority report offering our reservations [with regard to the women's questions]".

Orthodox delegates have begun to abstain from voting on questions which they feel involve doctrine. Study of the question of the position of women in the Church has been delegated to this category at the insistence of the Orthodox minority.

It is quite certain that, subjected to tremendous pressure on the part of the Protestants, the Orthodox have to a certain extent consented to the introduction of dialogue on this question. The sad examples of the Episcopalians and Catholics is definitely cause for alarm that the contagion of "feminism" is beginning to take hold even in Orthodox circles.

The Orthodox Church, official publication of the "Orthodox Church in Amer-

ica", published a lengthy article in its March issue in connection with the fact that its Department of Religious Education is recommending to its parishes seriously study the booklet "Women & Men in the Church", which was published originally "because of the O.C.A.'s involvement in the World Council of Churches." It is considered that this question is now one of paramount importance.

The booklet deals with such questions as family unity, modern society and the changing roles of women and men, vocations of celibacy and marriage, liturgical rites involving women, birth control and sexual union in marriage.

The list of questions discussed in the booklet for Orthodox already indicates that the "O.C.A." is being influenced by the concerns and attitudes of heterodox "Christians."

COMPETITION FOR OBERAMMERGAU

The chancery of the Synod of Bishops has been notified that the Elna M. Smith Foundation is arranging a scenic portrayal of the sufferings of Christ along the lines of that produced in the famous German village of Oberammergau. It is to be produced, however, on a truly theatrical scale in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. The organizers have spared no expense in copying the stone walls and arches of ancient Jerusalem. Many donations from various individuals have been received, which are employed in establishing a "Holy Land" on the North American continent. An amphitheater with a seating capacity of 4,400 has been constructed, equipped with all the latest audio-visual effects. The lighting equipment is a marvel of modern technology. In the spring of this year, when the first performance of the season is scheduled, the organizers promise that visitors will be able to view flocks of camels, donkeys, Arabian stallions, sheep, etc., which are characteristic to the environs of Jerusalem. Mindful that such a remote state will doubtless have difficulty in attracting a sufficient number of tourists to view a spectacle of the Oberammergau type, the Fund also recommends the beauties of the Arkansas mountains, the good fishing and swimming spots, and a huge, but rather crudely carved, statue in granite of the Savior.

Costs for the stage production are quite reasonable: from \$4.50 to \$7.50! Nothing is said of the text which the play will follow. As is well known, the Oberammergau play has occasioned, and continues to occasion, harsh criticism on the part of various Jewish organizations. The scale on which the Arkansas production of the passion play is being advertized gives one reason to think that its text is so innocuous that such organizations will not trouble to complain of it.

SENSITIVITY IN THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

In the January 28 issue of the Jewish Press there is a report that Brooklyn District Attorney Elizabeth Holtzman has issued a directive to the effect that in the offices of her department, "effective immediately, you are instructed to remove all wall hangings, door signs or desk top decorations which reflect any religious statements or negative allegations to either job title or environment."

The directive was occasioned by the fact that the members of her personnel occasionally hung posters of a religious character in their offices. As the Jewish Press reports, "all the posters concerned the Christian faith."

The newspaper maintains that several of the department's employes were offended by such posters. Now they have all been removed. Ms. Holtzman, a Jewess, assumed office in January of this year and has been very zealous in insuring that no one's racial sensibilities [the newspaper's term] are offended. She does not pause, however, to consider Christians' religious "sensibilities."

TWO MESSAGES OF GREETING FROM THE LUBAVICHER REB

On Tuesday, October 6, 1981, the New York-based Russian-language newspaper New Russian Word published a message of greeting from the Lubavicher Reb, one of the most revered of Hasidic Orthodox rabbis, to his coreligionists, on the

occasion of the Jewish New Year. Among other desires, he expressed the hope: "I wish also to express the desire that this year will become the year of our liberation from persecution, that in the near future we may all go forth to meet the just Messiah, and that with him, all men, women, children and babes may enter into our sacred land, the country which is protected by the Most High every day of the year, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. And that all men, women, children and babes may enter and visit the temple, Beit Amikdash, which will be erected by the just Messiah—visit it in good disposition of soul and with fervor.

"And to those who ask: 'How can one think and expect that such a thing will take place and if it is not extremely unlikely, as it is unknown when it will take place,' I wish to call to mind the answer given long ago...in the words of the hymn: 'nay, there is no one save God alone.'"

In December of 1981, the same newspaper printed a second message of greeting from the Lubavicher Reb, in which, among other things, he says: "All of us together are preparing ourselves for the complete, real and everlasting deliverance and liberation from persecution with the coming of the Messiah. In the near future, in our days, when 'with our young and with our elders, with our sons and with our daughters,' each of us, and also those who find themselves in those lands, together with all Jewish children shall go forth to meet the just Messiah. And with him they shall enter into Jerusalem, shall enter into Beit Amikdash, where the sacred menorah will be lighted by Aaron. Our kokhanim (priests) will again light the menorah as God has ordained, and a Khanukah (sanctification) shall be performed in an especially solemn fashion. And in the near future."

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear...

JEWS AND MISSIONARIES IN ISRAEL

The newspaper Jewish Press, published in America, reported in its January 2 issue that in Jerusalem, during the Christmas season, a meeting was held, the subject of which was the defense of the rights of Soviet Jews. The meeting was disrupted by the Kach Movement-Jewish Defense League of Israel.

At the invitation of the Israel Public Council for Soviet Jewry, the organizers of the meeting, Willem Van der Hoeven, head of the International Christian Embassy, attended. Members of the violently anti-Christian Jewish Defense League greeted his presence with shouts of "Missionary, get out!" and "Soul-snatcher!"

The startled Van der Hoeven demanded that the hecklers be arrested. Skuffles and shouting matches erupted between the hecklers and Van der Hoeven's entourage.

A spokesman for the Jewish Defense League later sharply criticized the Israeli Public Council for Soviet Jewry for inviting the Christian to the rally: "Allowing van der Hoeven to participate in a Jewish event helps to give him the respectability that he so desperately desires in order to further his missionary work," he said.

This incident, which took place on the eve of Western Christmas, was the latest in a series of clashes which have been taking place between Kach's Jewish Defense League and the Christian missionary community in Israel. Kach has vowed that he will "make life miserable for all Christians here, until the missionaries are halted."

A NECESSARY CLARIFICATION

A number of the faithful of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia have brought to our attention several inaccuracies in the brief typed survey of the history of our Church entitled: "Background: The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia", which was distributed at the press conference prior to the glorification of the New Martyrs and Confessors of the Church of Russia, and which has more recently been reprinted in one of the issues of The Orthodox Monitor. Due to the tremendous work load imposed upon the Synod's limited staff by the coincidence of the Council of Bishops meeting and the preparations

for the canonization, a situation which necessitated our reliance upon volunteers who were apparently not well acquainted with our history, insufficient care was exercised in the review of the materials prepared for the press, and certain inaccurate statements passed uncorrected. The Department of Public & Foreign Relations wishes it known that the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia does not, nor has it ever, considered itself a "breakaway from the Russian Church" or a "new body" of any sort. It has been organized as an independently administered portion of the Russian Orthodox Church not, as the "Background" would have it, in response to "some problems [which] developed in the dioceses of Western Europe and the United States," but because of the ever-worsening situation in the homeland and the increasing and malign influence and control exercised by militant atheists over the Church, and in accordance with decree #362 of St. Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow and his Holy Synod (dated 7/20 November 1920). The formation of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia involved not only "many churches in the States," but, initially, all of the dioceses, missions, bishops and laity of the Church of Russia who found themselves beyond the boundaries of Russia. The Department of Public & Foreign Relations regrets its oversight in not exercising sufficient care in editing the survey, which was not prepared by any of its staff members, and hopes that this clarification will allay the concern of the faithful who have been puzzled or offended by it. We lament the fact that the "Background" information has been given wider circulation in The Orthodox Monitor, but wish it known that the Synod of Bishops has no official authority to edit or censor that periodical.

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