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BISHOP BARNABAS DOES NOT CALM DOWN

An Internet site "Listok", in defending the positions of Metropolitan Vitaly, published on June 12th excerpts from the minutes of his "Synod" which met from May 3/16 to June 7/20, 2003.

According to these minutes, it was decided to create a "Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia" consisting of: President Metropolitan Vitaly, Vice President (by a personal decision of Metropolitan Vitaly promoted to rank of Archbishop) Barnabas, Bishop of Cannes; Sergius, Bishop of Mansonville; Vladimir, Bishop of Sacramento and Bartholomew, Bishop of Grenada.

The first of these was Sergius (Kindiakov), ordained in 2001 in Mansonville consecrated by only two bishops: Metropolitan Vitaly, who after his fall and breaking his collar-bone in the early 90's has not once served, and Bishop Barnabas.

While the center of the ROCOR (V) is located in Canada, the Secretary of the new "Synod", Archpriest Benjamin Joukoff, resides in France!

This Synod decreed to perform consecrations of the following new bishops: Archimandrite Anthony (Rouday), who was under Bishop Agathangel, as a vicar bishop of the European Diocese (read: Bishop Barnabas) with the title: of Belt and Moldova. 2) Hieromonk Anastassy (Sourzhik), as ruling Bishop of Far-East with the title: of Vladivostok and the Far-East. 3) Priest Victor Pivovarov, as vicar bishop of the European diocese with the title: of Slavia and Southern-Russia(?!).

Also Bishop Barnabas proposed future possible candidates: Archimandrite Alexis (Makrinov) and Hieromonk Joseph (Filosofov). About those two it was resolved: taken under consideration.

As we have previously reported, the undertakings of Metropolitan Vitaly (made with the persistent of Bishop Barnabas) from the very beginning were in direct violation of the "Letter of the same Holy and Ecumenical Third Council addressed to the Sacred Synod of Pamphylia, about Eustaphy, their former Metropolitan". Bishop Barnabas himself – who is possessed by ambition while lacking the slightest idea of the existence of the canons of the Orthodox Church – continues to extend his destructive activities, misusing the ailments of the 90 year old Metropolitan Vitaly

When reading the titles of newly appointed hierarchs – one does not know whether to laugh or to cry!

The "Synod" also published its "Epistle of the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia" in which, among other things, it declared that, "the storm which broke over our Church more than ten years ago could not destroy her by its initial blows". These are early 90's. No decrees or epistles of the Bishops' Councils warned the faithful about any "storms".

Maybe the very first warnings about the danger to the Church Abroad came from the late Archbishop Andrew (Rymarenko), who died in 1978. On many occasions told his admirers that if ever Archbishop Vitaly were to become Metropolitan it would mean the end of her. At a later time, Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) in his letter to Metropolitan Vitaly of March 24th/ April 6th 1994 wrote:

"It is absolutely necessary for you to quickly and strongly turn the rudder of our administration toward observing the canons, while it is not too late.

Do not allow, Vladyko, your name to be connected in the history of Russian Church, not with the continuation of the peaceful disposition of her ecclesiastical life, but with her abrupt and shameful destruction in Russia and Abroad".

Both of these warnings came true before our own eyes with amazing accuracy!

SERBIAN CHURCH GLORIFIES BISHOP NICHOLAS (VELIMIROVICH)

The official publication of the Serbian Patriarchate "Pravoslavljje" of June # 869 (it seems that the newspaper with the same name has been converted into a magazine) reports that the Council of Bishops, held on May 19, 2003, has unanimously decreed to list Nicholas, Bishop of Ohrid and Zhicha among the Serbian Saints. The feast days appointed were the day of his repose, March 5/18 and the translation of his relics into Serbia, on April 20/May 3.

Bishop Nicholas was born in 1880 and died in the USA in 1956.

He, together with Patriarch Gabriel, was arrested by the Germans in 1944 and sent to Dachau concentration camp, from which he was liberated at the end of war by the Allied troops and went to England then to the USA. He died in St. Tikhon's Monastery of the OCA, but was buried in the Serbian monastery in Libertyville.

Bishop Nicholas was a splendid speaker and religious writer. He left more than 20 volumes of published works.

All the members of the Council performed the solemn service of glorification in the huge St. Savva Cathedral in Vrachar.

St. Nicholas of Ohrid was a great admirer of the Russian people and used to tell Serbs at that time (the 1930's) that only the Russian language is heard before the Divine Throne and that he deeply respects even a drunk Russian, lying in a ditch.

Bishop Nicholas was an immediate vicar of Patriarch Gabriel. No one has so far been able to ascertain the reason for their arrest by the Germans.

LETTER OF PRIEST GEORGE EDELSTEIN TO PRESIDENT PUTIN

We have received by fax from the Internet "of News" ("Lenty Novostei") an "Appeal by a member of the Moscow-Helsinki Group, clergyman of Kostroma Diocese of the ROC MP Priest George Edelstein to the President of the RF V. V. Putin". This MP clergyman has already on several occasions publicly criticized his hierarchy. Despite his "Appeal" being unusually long for our publication, we consider it significant and well documented. This is why we have decided to publish it here. scroll

"Respected Mr. President;

By your order of September 26, 2002, Metropolitan Methody of Voronezh and Lipitsy was awarded a Friendship decoration "for achievements and conscientious work of many years". On March 27 you handed to His Eminence this high award in the Catherine Hall of the Kremlin. When addressing all present, and among them Metropolitan Methody, you said that "these people knew how raise their lot to the highest level" and that without such people "the achievements of Russia would be impossible". This is, indeed, a significant award: the head of the state, the President of the Russian Federation in a festive surrounding, declared *urbi et orbi* that the Voronezh metropolitan is the most worthy clergyman of the Russian Orthodox Church. Unfortunately, the order does not explain in which field for many years this metropolitan has been working so hard and what are his achievements.

I believe, that not at all by accident, the authoritative reporter of NTV (National TV) V. Kondratiev told the world that Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Alexis II is very ill and that in the highest spheres there are discussions about a new First Hierarch and, that knowledgeable people in the upper circles consider Metropolitan Methody and Cyril to be the most probable aspirants to the patriarchal throne.

In his report Kondratiev related many interesting and important details about both candidates. Each of them undoubtedly is worthy to don the green patriarchal mantle, the snow-white veil and receive in their hand the staff of St. Peter, Metropolitan of Moscow, as a symbol of the authority of a first Hierarch of the Russian Church, that means, over all of us!

However, **if looking from the side**, the klobuks of Metropolitan Methody and Cyril are snow-white, to symbolize a pure angelic life, the irreproachable spiritual and moral authority of the wearers of this headgear. About either of them one can without doubt say (or sing) "rule of faith and image of meekness, teacher of abstinence", each one has acquired "the heights through humility and riches through poverty" because this is what the Church sings when glorifying her bishops.

It is not without a reason that our media explained this award in the context of "the President of the Russian Federation and the Russian Orthodox Church". For example, a commentary on a TV channel: "The Russian Orthodox Church had all the grounds for believing that the President is leaning on the Church: the order of Friendship was given to Metropolitan of Voronezh and Lipetsy, Methody (Nemtsov)".

One hopes that when you signed the order for the award, you were not sufficiently informed about the person who became a recipient of the Friendship order. One wants to believe that the bureaucrats have led you into delusion and have informed about Metropolitan Methody nothing more that the TV reporters have told us, the ignorant laymen.

I believe to lean on His Eminence Methody and others like him in no way means to lean upon the Church.

As early as 1992 the Archbishop (by now Metropolitan) of Vilna and Lithuania Chrysostom declared to the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church: "in our Church there are genuine members of KGB, who have made head spinning careers; for example Metropolitan Methody of Voronezh. He is a KGB officer, atheist, fallacious, constantly advised by the KGB. The Synod was unanimously against such a bishop, but we had to take upon us such a sin; and then, what a rise he had!" (Emphasis by "Ch. N.")

I repeat, all this was said not at a private conversation, not in the common kitchen, it was an official declaration of the venerable hierarch at the Council of all his brother hierarchs. Each word was recorded in the Council's documents. Later, Chrysostom repeated similar accusations in his interviews. They were published in the newspapers and magazines in Russia and abroad.

The Council, at which such scathing revelations were thrown into Methody's face, kept silent: the Sacred Synod who supposedly was unanimously against such a bishop, kept silent. Methody himself kept silent. It is doubtful that any one questions the popular proverb that such eloquent silence is more informative than the most heart-rending cries.

By the way, on the very same Council a Committee of 8 young bishops was elected to investigate the accusations that some clergy were connected with the KGB. The president of this Committee is my ruling bishop, Alexander of Kostroma and Galich. *For eleven years I approached His Eminence in writing and verbally with humble request that he say at least two or three words about the results of the efforts and investigations of this Committee. The answer was the very same eloquent silence.* Maybe they will answer you, if you will show an interest? I am afraid that this Committee was still-born, it was created in order to pacify those who were too importunate.

I do not have enough foundation to affirm that every word of Chrysostom is right. Such matters should be resolved by the Sacred Synod and the ecclesiastical court. But I have no doubt that if any bishop has deliberately misled the whole Council, has viciously slandered his brother, he may not stand before the Holy Altar; he may not exchange kisses with his brethren, may not address them with the wonderful greeting: "Christ is in midst of us – He is and will be!"

The ecclesiastical court is obliged to severely punish vile slanderers. If the accusation is a valid one, if he said the truth, it is obvious that Methody cannot be a bishop, cannot be a monk and should not be called a member of the Church. Such

people should be invited to the Catherine Hall, if need be, but only as participants in some non-ecclesiastical institution. I hope everyone will be in agreement that a clergyman does not put on his riasa in order to hide his shoulder straps.

Common sense and personal experience convince me that Chrysostom is not a slanderer. I know him well; in 1979 he ordained me a deacon and a priest. I served under his omophorion until May 1982, have met him on many official and unofficial occasions. Met him from time to time also after that. He is hot-tempered, often rude to the point of boorishness, but he is truthful.

May I remind you that Chrysostom is the only hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church who has publicly admitted that he was enlisted in KGB, and for many years has worked as their secret collaborator. He has also declared his code name "Restovrator" (Restorer); he revealed also the date when he stopped his collaboration with them. But his pride and selfishness have prevented him from repenting and condemning in principle his collaboration.

Although the Kremlin administration by some standard considers Methody to be a more worthy candidate, I in no way want to affirm that Cyril is to be preferred. Both of them are in many ways the worst. The official document of the parliament of Russia distributed in March of 1992 states: "Within the line of Department of Foreign Relations of the Church there were traveling abroad and have completed their assignments given by KGB the agents: 'Sviatoslav', 'Adamant', 'Mikhailov', 'Topaz', 'Nesterovich', 'Kuznetsov', 'Ognev', 'Yessaulenko' and others. The character of the assignments given to them verifies the closeness of the said Department to the state and its transformation into the secret center of KGB agency among believers". (A local definition by the Committee of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of Russia regarding the investigation of the causes for and circumstances of the GKChP.)

The President of the Department of the Foreign Relations of the Church – this "secret center of KGB among the believers" was then and now is Metropolitan Cyril, one of the most probable candidates for the patriarchal throne.

Cyril is a frequent guest on the nationwide TV. He is a progressive and ecumenist, an unsurpassed master of ecclesiastical eloquence. Especially beautiful and convincingly does he talk in public about the necessity of self-denial. I remember how he especially beautifully and convincingly developed this theme at the conference in Kishinev 8 years ago, then we were to heard a short version of these basic themes on TV, then again in the club "Textilshchik" we had in Kostroma. All ideas are excellently slick and correct. But for some reason, the dirtiest and most scandalous financial machinations in the last years, of which the newspapers and magazines in Russia and abroad have written, are inevitably connected with the name of Metropolitan Cyril and his most odious Foreign Relations Department.

When Chrysostom spoke of Methody as a KGB officer, an atheist and an evil person, he reminded the Council that in June of 1985 Methody was appointed the chief of the managing administration of the Patriarchate and, in fact, for several years managed all her finances. According to experts, it was precisely during this period that the corruption in the state and church agencies flourished in the most overt manner. The renown researcher in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church in 20th century Dimitry Pospelovsky wrote about this period: "The person representing the Church, Patriarch Pimen, in his stagnation, dullness and lack of will was, in a way, the counterpart to the personality heading the state and the party. Yes, the corruption which surrounded Pimen matched Brezhnev's ("Vestnik Russkago Dvizheniya" "Herald of the Russian Christian Movement" #159, p. 213). Certainly, the Patriarch was surrounded not by corruption, but by corrupted bureaucrats in cassocks, but the professor doesn't want to name them.

Pimen himself, as early as the 60's, unyieldingly declined from a position in this very same managing administration.

In a "private conversation" with the KGB colonel, a representative for matters of religion in Moscow, A. Plekhanov, Pimen characterized one of the central managing departments of the Patriarchate: "a crook sitting upon a crook being driven by crooks". Certainly there is no need to tell you all this: if you wish, you can immediately get the answers about relevant instances and incomparably more detailed and precise information about the corruption in any department of the Moscow Patriarchate than that available to me, a typical village priest.

At the same time, I can tell you about a topic about which I cannot pass judgment: the principle difference between Cyril and Methody?

When accepting from the hands of the President this high award, Metropolitan Methody said that the Church in Russia became a high standard moral authority. It means he realizes this award to be significant. I am afraid that what happened, if it happened, was not because, but contrary to, a lot that was done yesterday and is done today by our senior hierarch. Also, the limited experience of a typical priest testifies that some 20 to 25 years ago the Russian Orthodox Church used to have much higher moral authority in the eyes of the lay people and a person in a cassock at that time enjoyed a much higher reputation.

But the issue is not about the morality of an individual clergymen nor even the authority of the Church, which would not necessarily interest the President. The very same "Local Resolution of the Parliamentary Committee" of March 6, 1992 starts with the words: "The Committee turns the attention of the Russian Orthodox Church to the unconstitutional usage by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and USSR KGB organs of number of the church organs in their own interests by means of enlisting and implanting into them the agents of the KGB... Such deep infiltration of the special services into the religious communities presents a serious danger for society and the government: the state agencies which are responsible for its security *can possibly influence without any control millions of religious communities as well as through them the situation in the country and abroad. As it was proved by the state revolution on August 19th – 21st, 1991, the possibility of using religion in an unconstitutional manner was the reality*".

The President is a guarantor of the Constitution and therefore the use of religion in un-constitutional purposes cannot but disturb him.

The deep infiltration of agents of the special services into religious communities undoubtedly presents a serious threat for the state. And this also cannot but disturb the President.

For all the years of its existence the USSR remained a state of militant atheists. The founder of this state, whose corpse now lies in the mausoleum next to your residence and Catherine Hall, considered every religion to be "an opiate", "raw vodka" and "ptomaine poisoning".

His successors and continuers of his deeds insisted on the theory and practice that the cadres in all fields make all decisions. *One of the most important and fruitful methods of struggle against the Church was considered to be the selection, training and positioning of the cadres.* The results of this careful labor, which our wonderful confessor Archbishop Hermogen was writing about even in the 60's, we are harvesting today.

It is a common opinion that *the Russian Orthodox Church has completely freed herself from the bone-crushing embrace of the state, but in recent times there has arisen the most paradoxical situation.*

Professor Dm. Pospelovsky wrote in the same article: "Over the last decade, when the late Patriarch Pimen no longer was in business, the Church was ruled in his name by favorites, who surrounded the Patriarch, and those favorites were ruled by the renown "office", not seldom also by means of blackmail". Those ill, weak, and lacking will power are ruled by the favorites, and favorites rule the "office" But, as far as I know, nobody ever has accused Patriarch Pimen himself of being a member of the "office".

Pimen died on May 3, 1990. Alexis II was elected the new Patriarch. After the collapse of the USSR, in Estonia ("Postimees" on March 18th 1996) and later in Russia documents were published, stating that *Priest Alexis Ridiger was enrolled in the KGB on February 28, 1958. For more than 30 years he actively and fruitfully collaborated with the agencies. As a result he was promoted to the episcopacy, and several times traveled abroad. Then he became the administrator of the affairs of the Moscow Patriarchate, a permanent member of the Sacred Synod. By the way, he was the principal organizer and instigator of the persecution of Archbishop Hermogen.*

In the year of the millennial anniversary of the baptism of Russia, which coincided with thirty years of secret collaboration by Alexis with the agencies, he, according to reports in the press, was *awarded a special certificate (gramota) by the leadership of the KGB, signed by the chief of the KGB, V. Kriuchkov. But no one reported that Alexis was a trained officer of the KGB.* About the present candidate and pretender this was already being said publicly, and not by journalists who "fall for sensational news", not by "hunters for the fried facts", but by his brother and co-server – a bishop of the Orthodox Church.

In no way am I interested or excited by the festive acts in Catherine Hall. I would be quite indifferent if, at the same time with the Friendship decoration, Metropolitan Methody received an Oscar, Booker or the Nobel peace prize.

But I am in no way indifferent to the fate of the Russian Orthodox Church. I cannot be indifferent to the name of the First Hierarchy of the Church, whom I, as a priest, commemorate no less than six times during the Divine Liturgy. *To elevate the name of an atheist means to actively participate in the sacrilege.*

On March 27th when the festive ceremony in the Catherine Hall was held, -- is the day commemorating the greatest object of veneration in Kostroma and one of the most important days in the history of Russia. A month passed, and on April 27th we celebrated Pasha. The Patriarch is still ill, he cannot serve. And all of those, who should have raised their voices, see nothing, hear nothing and know nothing. But the Scripture teaches us, that God is betrayed by silence.

I do not deny that I am afraid to write and publish this letter, that to stand in the path of such people as Metropolitan Cyril and Methody is very dangerous. May be this is why I was undecided for a whole month. But even more I am afraid to become a participant in treason.

In our society to this day there lives the mythology that our hierarchs were "forced", "made" to actively cooperate with the militant atheists, to lie to the whole world about the wonderful freedom of conscience in the USSR, praise Brezhnev's Constitution, send Hermogen into "retirement" and ordain Methody. Unfortunately, not a single hierarch has so far told us: how and by whom they were "forced" or "made" when neither mauzer, nor forced labor in forests, nor Solovki threatened anybody. It is said that by lies and treason they were "saving the Church" or, using the expression of Metropolitan Chrysostom, "they took upon themselves such a sin".

I would hate to learn that some 10 or 12 years after the enthronization of an "officer of KGB, an atheist and a depraved person, who was foisted on us by KGB-ists," some hierarch, a member of the Council would reveal to us the frightening secret: "The whole Council was unanimously against such Patriarch, but we had to take upon ourselves such a sin".

This letter of Fr. George Edelstein does not reveal anything new to all those who have carefully followed church affairs in Russia. Certainly, as an officer of the KGB, all this is known to Putin himself.

One thing is surprising: Fr. George knows that his Patriarch is an active KGB agent who was awarded a certificate of honor of this organization (quite obvious for information and betrayal of a multitude of people, including also respected by him Archbishop Hermogen) and is not afraid to commemorate him at the Liturgy!

Are Metropolitan Methody and Cyril any worse than the dying Patriarch "Drozdov"?

It is also most astonishing that the First Hierarchy of the ROCOR, Metropolitan Laurus and his Synod, pretend that they even do not suspect such treason within the Church in Russia and, behind the scenes, they are maneuvering for unity with her, in another words – with the very same KGB agents! As Fr. Edelstein has written, of all the MP hierarchs, members of the KGB, only Metropolitan Chrysostom has announced that he has left this organization.

METROPOLITAN BARNABAS OF MP "BLESSES" PAGAN STATUE

The Internet agency "Vertograd" # 346 of May 23 reports that on May 9th Barnabas (Kedrov) Metropolitan of Tcheboxary and Tchuvashia has committed a sacrilegious act when he "blessed" a gigantic statue of "Mother Protectress" on the shores of the River Volga. The statue presents a woman standing with the outstretched hands dressed in the national Tchuvashi costume. This creation is 46 meters high, and on the base has the inscription: "Blessed are my children, who live in peace and love". The statue was installed on... Great Saturday and its official opening was performed on May 9th, when there was celebrated "Victory Day" – the day of the Communist regime's victory in 1945!

"On that day the metropolitan read some prayer standing by the statue, and a concelebrating Deputy Abbot of the Tcheboskary's Monastery, Archimandrite Savvaty (Antonov) sprinkled the statue with holy water. The cathedral choir then sang "let us come and worship", what was considered by the present people as an invitation to worship the statue". (Emph. by "Ch. N").

Then it is reported that on May 11th the parishioners of the Holy Virgin's Dormition parish in Tcheboskary had a parochial meeting at which they, basing their decision on number of quite correctly cited canons, declared that they refuse to be under the pagan metropolitan, and informed him in a well documented letter. Metropolitan Barnabas immediately suspended Fr. Andres Berman, the parish priest and summoned him to answer for his action before the Diocesan Council. Fr. Andrew, quite naturally, refused to come to this meeting and did not recognize his suspension, even more because three members of this Council participated in this sacrilege. In this letter the parish accuses the metropolitan of open idol worship, that he has totally ignored the outrage of the believers over the installation of this statue and, by his own authority, stopped their protest letter to the President of Tchuvashia.

The parishioners have turned for help to the Moscow Patriarchate, but, as expected, they got no answer. At the same time they made an effort to meet with the blasphemous metropolitan. But he, upon seeing the approaching deputation, hid in the diocesan building.

The whole parish has declared that it is not going to be under the idol worshiping metropolitan unless he publicly repents. The blasphemous metropolitan meanwhile issued an order to liquidate the Dormition parish and transfer it to Holy Trinity Monastery in Tcheboxary!

The monument of the "mother protectress" was installed by order of the President of this republic, Nicholas Federov, who explained that "the sculpture unites the Christian concept of the image of the Theotokos, together with a Tchuvashi character, protecting the Tchuvashi culture." It seems, that he has realized in time, that this statue might provoke a lot of controversy, and therefore, Fedorov began to say that "we are putting up a secular monument dedicated to such a shining and holy value to every human being as motherhood"!

The local newspapers have supported the idol worshiping bishop and wrote that in the event of stubbornness by the priest who condemned this sacrilege, "there will be raised the question of his being defrocked"

In the Tchuvashi tribe the paganism is not completely eliminated and 80 years of atheism in USSR gave no opportunity for preaching Orthodoxy. Certainly, the almost total absence of missionary work on part of the Moscow Patriarchate, even after the fall of Communism, and in this case blatant permissiveness toward paganism on part of a local metropolitan does not promise anything good for Orthodoxy.

MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE AND RUSSIAN FEDERATION GOVERNMENT

The Internet agency "Forum 18 News Service" of May 27th published an article by Geraldine Fagan "Orthodox becoming first among equals".

The article stresses that without any changes to the RF Constitution (in which it is a secular state, not connected with the church) the Moscow Patriarchate has made a number of official agreements with the government which make it a quite powerful tool in the hands of the government. Of course, this Forum, being a Protestant organization with its center in Oslo (Norway), is mostly concerned that as a result of these agreements the Western sects which have flooded into contemporary Russia might suffer. The article details a number of these agreements:

On August 1996 the Moscow Patriarchate made an agreement with the Internal Ministry about clergy serving in the prisons. At request of deaneries and diocesan administrations, the incarcerated are to work on church restorations.

This agreement includes also cooperation with the police and militias. Near the Ministry of Internal affairs a chapel was built which is supposed, "to serve and educate personnel within the Internal Affairs Departments and police officers".

Another department of the same ministry, the FSB (formerly the KGB), according to the Vertograd report, has reported that at the request of Archbishop Eulogy of Vladimir and Suzdal, the local authorities have awarded the head of the local FSB "for help in the return of property belonging to the Russian Orthodox Church which happened to be in the hands of schismatic religious groups".

Thank God, so far nothing has been taken from the Russian Autonomous Church, but the FSB quite obviously is not taking any measures in cases where the former's peaceful residents are beaten up and its churches are burglarized.

On April 4th 1997 the Moscow Patriarchate made an agreement with the Defense Ministry which stated that there is "cooperation in working together to revive the Orthodox traditions of the Russian army and navy". The commanders are urged to invite the clergy for any military festivities.

In an agreement dated October 31, 2002, the newspaper "Izvestiya" reported that in the city of Orel an Orthodox priest was commissioned "to expose scoundrels who refuse military service by hiding behind the faith".

The Moscow Patriarchate has not published the number of strictly military churches attached to the units, but it is considered that they are no less than 100.

On August 2, 1999, the Patriarchate signed an agreement with the Education Ministry in which both parties pledged cooperation in the field of education of youth "in the spirit of high moral values".

On December 5, 2001 the Moscow newspaper "Arguments and Facts" published a declaration of the Minister of Education, Yuri Kovrizhskh, in which he said that the cooperation between the government and the Church will "save the young generation from totalitarian sects and religious fanaticism".

On May 5, 2003, there was an agreement made between the Patriarchate and the Ministry of Health. According to it churches will be permitted in the hospitals and visiting of patients by the clergy, as well as acquainting the medical students with basics of Orthodoxy.

In 2002 there was an agreement made also with the Ministry of Transportation. By this agreement there will be churches on the railroads, but the admission of the non-Orthodox to them will not be welcome.

So far, the Moscow Patriarchate has not signed an agreement with the Ministry for Foreign Relations, but as we know, Patriarch Alexis visited this ministry on March 6, 2003. Minister Ivanov believes that the total cooperation of the Church with his Ministry, considering that the Russian diplomacy historically had the support of the Russian Church, will "raise her moral authority on the world stage" and "helps us to deepen our understanding of global developments".

Official agreement to this is expected to happen very soon.

Starting with 1997, the influence of the Moscow Patriarchate is noticeable also on the outlying regions of the country. On September 15 an agreement was concluded between the Belgorod Diocese and the local administration which commits both parties to forward the studies of "Russian language, Russian history, Russian culture and Orthodoxy" in the state schools.

In the beginning of 2003 a similar agreement was signed in the Smolensk region.

In December of 2002, the newspaper "Izvestiya" reported that the Saratov governor Dimitry Ayatskov proposed "financing our Orthodox religion" with government money. The devotion of this Governor to Orthodoxy extends so far that on his order of March 12th 2003 in all the state owned cafeterias all meat dishes were taken off the menu for duration of Orthodox Great Lent.

Seemingly, all these agreements between the government and the Moscow Patriarchate are quite advisable and can be even greeted, because all these present agreements before the Revolution were quite natural for an Orthodox state. However, considering the extremely low moral level of the bishops who signed them one can be sure, this is being done not for preaching Orthodoxy, but to gain power over the people, ignorant of church matters. We happened to read in some newspapers in Russia about priests who refused to teach children the Law of God, unless they are sufficiently paid!

An example of these efforts by MP to seize power is provided by a letter published by the "Press-Center Ru" written by Archbishop Anthony of Krasnoyarsk and Yeniseysk, who proposed censorship of all the media, which touch upon church affairs.

As this report states: "According to the opinion of the heads of the Krasnoyarsk diocese, as declared at the meeting of the regional inter-religious Council, all information by mass media should inform the confessions that there are materials, ready for publication and publish them after they have been corrected (emphasis by "Ch. N."). The introduction of such a mechanism, according to the ideas of Anthony, should help the Church to bring her correct positions to the faithful, while at present, the materials published are far from presenting the truth, distort the religious sacraments, the loftiness and depth of the events. In case the media continues to supply citizens with 'ignorant information', Vladyka relies 'upon the maturity of the regional agencies'!

Very promising hopes for the rights of free speech!

ISRAELI GOVERNMENT TRIES TO GET RID OF CHRISTIANS

The newspaper "The National Catholic Reporter" of June 6th reported that despite the war situation in the Holy Land and the resultant dramatic fall in the number of tourists, the Israeli government is taking a lot of trouble on behalf of the volunteer clergy from abroad who need to extend their visas.

The Israel government policies regarding religious institutions, especially the Roman Catholic who spread their propaganda among the Orthodox Arabs, even in the cases when they try to import the "pro-Israeli Christians," still create difficulties.

At present there are some 100 Catholic priests, nuns and seminarians who, according to the newspaper, are 'in a state of limbo' because the Israeli government refuses to extend their visas and even to review their appeals.

This puts the Catholic institutions in the Holy Land in much trouble, because the future of their seminary in Bait Jalla (near Bethlehem) is placed in question. 22 seminarians are to be expelled because their visas will expire between May and September.

The number of Catholic missions is explained by fact that the once Orthodox Arab population is extremely poor and the Catholics catch followers by offering material support and well established schools in these areas.

FIRST ORTHODOX CHURCH IN ROME

The Internet publication "Mir Religii/Sobytiya ("The World of Religions/Events") on May 7th reported that at the beginning of May of the current year the building of the first Orthodox church at the Russian Federation's in Rome will begin. Negotiations about building the church in Rome have lasted for four years! It is interesting to note that in the very same Rome there was built many years ago the largest mosque in Europe!

The laying of the first bricks, with the blessing of Patriarch Alexis, was performed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Igor Ivanov.

The Ambassador of the Russian Federation, Nicholas Spassky, noted that the permission to build the Orthodox church in the center of Rome (right across from the main church of the Roman Catholics, St. Peter's Basilica) is not important only from the religious point of view, but is **also a great political achievement**.

It is estimated that the church of St. Great Martyr Catherine will require a year and a half and that it will be financed from donations by Russian business corporations. The agreement provides that Italian citizens can also make donations.

The project envisions that the cross on the Russian church will be 8 meters lower than the cupola of St. Peter's cathedral. Such was the unofficial request by the Vatican.

The very same publication reports that "in concord with the Russian Orthodox Church and the Foreign Relations Department of RF" a "working group" was created.

When Alexis II visited the Foreign Affairs Ministry of the RF in May, he noted that "the interaction of the Ministry and the Church in support of the Diaspora, is expressed by *the defense of the rights of their fellow countrymen and first of all in the defense of their religious freedom*".

It seems that the "Patriarch" over at least a decade has not yet realized that the Russian people abroad are living in the truly free countries and in no way need any "*defense of their religious freedom*".

Unfortunately, this is what is most needed in their own homeland, in regards to the Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church which is so outrageously persecuted by the Moscow Patriarchate in collaboration with the government authorities!

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE AND THE JEWS

Information published via the Internet by the MP parish of Three Saints in Garfield, NJ on May 31st states that from May 27 to May 29 the fifth "Academic Meeting" was held in Thessaloniki between the "Orthodox" and Jews. It was designated "Faithfulness to Our Sources: Common Commitment to Peace and Justice".

This meeting was organized by Metropolitan Emmanuel, who resides in France, and is the head of the Office of International and Intercultural Affairs to the Liaison Office of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to the European Union, in cooperation with the International Jewish World Congress presided over by a Rabbi Joel Meyers. More than 60 delegates from around the world participated in this meeting.

The main event of this gathering was its festive opening by the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew, who in his speech pointed out that "Judaism and Christianity have been living in a state of dialogue for two thousand years". The Patriarch strongly insisted that this "dialogue" (rather than a preaching to these unbelievers) has to be continued. Bartholomew strongly condemned "religious fanaticism" and the "slandering" of any other religions.

The meeting turns out to have been on an extremely high level. In particular, the Greek government was represented by Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Ioannis Magriotis and the Minister of Culture Evangelos Venizelos. Also present was the Chairman of the World Jewish Congress, Rabbi Israel Singer and an observer from the Vatican.

Greetings were received from the Patriarchs of Jerusalem and Alexandria!

All the themes of the lectures were duplicated by both the "Christian" and Jewish sides.

The first subject was presented by Rabbi Dr. Allan Brill from the USA, entitled "Athens and Jerusalem - Memory and Recollection". It was followed immediately by Professor Dr. Vlasios Phidas (from Greece and Switzerland).

The second lecture on "Commitment to Peace and Justice in Jewish and Orthodox Traditions", presented by USA Rabbi Daniel Polish and Roman Silantiev from Russia.

The third and final subject was "Religions as an Ethical force in the World Crisis" was addressed by the Serbian Bishop Irinej and then an Israeli rabbi.

At the same gathering a permanent day was established "to remember the victims of the Holocaust" and the date was set to be January 27th. This is already being observed in several European countries.

Then the following principles were established:

"Judaism and Christianity, while hearkening to common sources, inviolably maintain their internal individuality and particularity."

"The purpose of our dialogue is to remove prejudice and to promote a spirit of mutual understanding and constructive cooperation in order to confront common problems" and so on.

At the same time, there was established a permanent Committee that will manage the continuation of mutual relations. Both parties have pledged to continue these dialogues and mutual understanding, each one in their own communities. It was suggested to have annual meetings of each group's communities, devoted to Judeo-Christian relations. Among other things, this gathering decided to urge the Israeli government to recognize the Jerusalem Patriarch Irineos.

The conclusion of this meeting with the enemies of Christ the Savior, on May 30th was held at the monument to Thessalonica Jews who perished during the Second World War where Bartholomew declared "endless grief" over this and necessity to "explain to our children and our fellow human beings that such crimes of the past must never be repeated, since they were a result of hatred and misjudgment."

Then this group visited the Jewish Museum where, at a special ceremony, the Ecumenical Patriarch and the President of the World Council of Churches were proclaimed honorary members of the Jewish Community! When accepting this title, Bartholomew said; "It is in our interest to have justice and equality for all minorities... Fanatics are not the elect of a specific faith, but rather the weakest among its believers".

As we see from the themes of the lectures, the Ecumenical Patriarch did not have in mind that there is any need to preach Christianity to the Jews.

With this, the "missionary labors" of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew – who was spoken of as "the leader of 250 million Orthodox", making of him sort of a counterbalance to the Roman Pope – are far from over.

This bulletin, but of May 27, reports that Bartholomew is to be present in the Roman Catholic church of the Holy Spirit where he will preach about "John Paul II and His Service to Peace" on account of the 25th anniversary of his election as Pope.

It is self evident that this "sermon" will be nothing but praise for that heretic!

WILL BULGARIAN AND GEORGIAN CHURCHES RETURN TO WCC?

The Internet site of the Greek Exarchate of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in America (<http://www.goarch.org>) reports that the WCC, through the participants of an international academic symposium in Thessalonica which was held from June 1st to June 3rd, has written a formal appeal to the Bulgarian and Georgian Orthodox Churches urging them to reconsider their decision to leave the WCC and to return to the "world family".

The letters to both Patriarchs (Bulgarian Maxim and Georgian Elias -- "Iverieli" in the KGB) with the blessing of Athens's Archbishop Chrystodulos were signed by all the members of the Symposium, held at Thessalonica's theological school, in order to discuss the theme: "Orthodox Theology and the Ecumenical Dialogue: Problems and Perspectives".

The members of this Symposium wrote "in the spirit of "hope and Christian love... to make an appeal, out of that love and with deep respect, that your Holy Church review and reconsider its active participation in the multilateral and bilateral dialogues and conversations, and also return to the broad ecumenical world family".

Under the pressure of the believing "lower ones" (the laity) both these Churches left the WCC in 1998.

In this letter there was also stated that in August of last year there was a meeting of the central administration of the World Council of Churches and that in its "special committee" the matter of the participation of "Orthodox" Churches was raised, to which, supposedly, there are "opening new possibilities for taking seriously and dealing responsibly with Orthodox concerns".

The Athens' Archbishop Chrystodulos, in opening the Symposium, admitted that, "In spite of the negative experience, we have acquired all these years we view the future of the theological dialogues with our non-Orthodox brothers and sisters with optimism... We are not allowed to stop the dialogue and break down the bridges of communication between Christians". He also reminded the Symposium that the Greek Church was "a founding member of WCC of which it remains a full member to this day". However, Archbishop Chrystodulos noted that he has "hopes that as Orthodox we can have an equal voice with the Protestants... I think that new bases have been created for our presence in the WCC".

Thus, for this contemporary "Orthodox" archbishop the main reason from not leaving the heretical establishment is a hope for "equal rights with the Protestants"!

MODERNITY AND THE SIN OF SODOMY

Newspaper "The Jewish Press" published on May 16 an article on "Criminalizing our Religious Beliefs."

Although the Apostle Paul warns that there are some sins of which it is better not even to talk publicly, in our sad times it is actually impossible not to mention this problem.

The newspaper complains that New York state Senate on December 17, 2002 in Bill S 720 declared sexual discrimination due to sexual orientation illegal and this Act has in mind the sin of homosexuality.

The first part of this Bill warns that discrimination based on hatred of "sexual orientation menaces the institutions and foundation of a free democratic state and threatens the peace and order, safety and general welfare of the state and its inhabitants".

Because of this new law the Orthodox Jews, who follow the Bible directives that this sin is "abomination" in God's eyes, as a result of this become "bigots" in the eyes of the state. It is quite obvious that under this law Orthodox Christians, who also follow the Bible regulations, also will be treated as "bigots". The newspaper stresses that in Canada and a whole number of European countries to only mention the Bible in connection with this sin is already considered a crime against humanity. A law in Pennsylvania has already questioned the right of the clergy to preach in their churches against homosexuality.

The newspaper is extremely concerned that the state's institutions acknowledge and protect only those school organizations which have not committed "discrimination" and to the Orthodox Jews that means that many of their religious

schools (yeshivas) will lose their tax exemptions. Besides, according to this law, no parochial school may refuse to accept a homosexual as a teacher. And this is not all: a landlord who rents an apartment in his home may not ask a prospective tenants of their "sexual orientation" – this is already considered to be crime! Besides, the authorities will take care that the "local, regional or state wide, as well as in its judgment will aid in effectuation the purpose of this article" and have the right to use informers, supporting of this debauchery.

Of the 50 states of the USA, 13 already recognize the legality of the same-sex "marriages". They are also recognized in Canada! In Europe some countries, in particular Denmark, Holland and Belgium recognize this debauchery, condemned in the Bible!

Information in "The New York Times" published on June 9th testifies to the corruptness in Europe. A certain man, Spencer Tunick, specializes in "art photography" of absolutely nude people. In Barcelona (Spain) he called for volunteers to come to the center of this city and strip of any clothing. The "photographer" asked people to take off even their socks! **7,000 absolutely nude people** of mixed sexes positively responded to his appeal, who at his command lowered themselves to the ground in the manner used in Orthodox churches when making prostrations. After the photographs of these shameless people were taken, many of them ran naked in the streets! The newspaper has even published a photograph of this mass shamelessness in a formerly Christian country.

The very same "artist" about a year ago informed the public in New York City that he needs some 15 people to pose completely nude. More than 200 nudists came to one of the public places of the city!

The author of the article in the "Jewish Press," Rabbi David Eidensohn, is absolutely right when he sounds an alarm and appeals to all his fellow Jews who are upset by those who propagate this profligacy to organize protests addressing the governors and other members of state government.

"Church News" feels it necessary to support this excellent article of Rabbi Eidensohn and will be happy to send to any one of our readers the copy of this article in order to form a protest. Please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope.

One would hope that the Orthodox Church administrations also will start a campaign against these laws in a number of states and countries protecting this debauchery.

This rabbi is quite right when he says: "America used to be different, but as gay rights bills proliferate, there is a real question of how much longer religious freedom will prevail!"

BLASPHEMOUS ALTERATION OF SERMON ON THE MOUNT AND LORD'S PRAYER

Every one who drives on the highways knows what trouble the groups of motorcyclists are to passing cars. They are a danger to themselves as well as to drivers, who do not want to be a cause of their death or injury.

Just recently, in early June, there were ecumenical gatherings of all Christians living in Germany. Of course, there were also special prayers. One of them was held at Berlin's Brandenburg Gate.

According to "Ecumenical News International" (June 11th) on Sunday hundreds of Germany's motorcyclists came together for a special prayer about good behavior on the roads!

This was the prayer: "Lead us not into the temptation to speed, to overtake and to force our way in front of other traffic".

There was also another prayer: "Blessed are the meek, who do not use their horsepower as a weapon, and the peacemakers, who behave themselves on the highway".

This blasphemous "service" was organized at the same time as the "Ecumenical Kirchentag" (an illiterate mixture of English and German). Similar blasphemies sponsored by Christian ecumenism also occurred in other places around Germany.

As was reported by the bulletin, "Motorbike services are more relaxed (than the traditional church services, easy-going and great fun... We do not have to sing the same boring old hymns", said one of the participants of such a "prayer meeting".

FROM THE UNPUBLISHED WORKS (letter to Fr. Dimitry Dudko of August 25th/September 7th, 1992)

Dear Father Dimitry;

Herewith I am sending a volume of my works just published. I do this under the influence of reading recently your article entitled "An Attempt to Interpret".

At the end of this third volume you will find my article written more than 10 years ago about you under the influence of and because of your inward repentance before the Moscow Patriarchate.

All these years I have remembered you with love and sadness, because through your repentance before the enemies of God, you have already destroyed your soul. However, comparing your declaration made "under the stick" and with your last article, I do see that between your convictions and mine there remains something in common.

You write: "But will there be a chance to choose? We forget that the world is nearing to its end. The horrible ecology, the fall of morality, the spreading criminality". This, in your letter, is an extremely short list of signs of the approaching end. There is something much more frightening. Here with us is visible the actual (although not yet with its full power) non-Christian international government; the preparation of a one world currency, the goal of annihilating national borders, declarations by the Jews about the appearance of their "Moshiach" soon to come, to us the antichrist... there was

published, but noticed just by very few, the agreement of the Pope with the Jews about a common cooperation in preparing for the arrival of 'Messiah'.

The second coming of the true Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, will happen with no human efforts and political machinations. There is a huge literature about the founding of the new religion uniting all, which probably has not yet reached you. In this matter the atheist Gorbachev has joined with the Pope, while the Jews here trumpet that in the near future their messiah will appear. In contemporary terminology this is called the creation of the "New Age", which many years ago was declared by the Masons to be their aim. The first and the main victory of the dark powers was the removal from Russia of the one [the Tsar] who according to the Apostle was "the Restrainer" in the world.

There are many prophecies about the coming of the son of lawlessness in the Apocalypse. And regarding the optimistic prophecies of St. Seraphim -- they are of dubious origin, and are often the result of optimism and delusion. Of much more authenticity are the warnings of St. John of Kronstadt. The longed for bliss of antichrist's world the false prophets present to us as an example of the bright future, which in history has already happened but was not recognized and was rejected by our people. We are living in the beginning of the last period of human life.

By now, as predicted, there may remain a little flock, to which I myself would like to belong through the mercy of God. It, the little flock, is little because in our times the majority has been lured into the nets of lies and sins. To save some of our loved ones from that, can be done only by the strength of our love toward God and those misled.

When the holy Fathers unmasked heresies and drew back to the Church those who had left her, this was a sign of their love for the deluded. We have to do it not for the sale of "our truth" [правда] as you write, but for the sake of God's truth.

I will give you an example: an important matter which separates us from the Patriarchate is Ecumenism -- a heresy against the uniqueness of the Church, as confessed in the Creed. In 1948, at the conference of various Orthodox Churches in Moscow, the impossibility the compatibility of Ecumenism with Orthodoxy was clearly declared. Especially good was the report of Archpriest G. Razoumovsky.

In 1961 the KGB acknowledged Ecumenism to be useful for Soviet politics. The Patriarchate was ordered to adopt it and to enter into membership of the World Council of Churches. This order of the godless is still, today, in effect.

Please tell me: If the rejection of Arianism, as a heresy against the teaching of the Church about Christ as Son of God, was a declaration of the Truth, then why is not equal significance credited to the confession, stated in the Creed, of the belief in His Body -- the SOLE Church? Why was the distortion of Orthodoxy by Arius intolerable in the eyes of God, but the acceptance of a multi-church Ecumenism on orders of the atheists to be covered up until today and be preserved in the supposedly free church of Alexis II? Why is the condemnation of heresies by the Councils recognized as acts of love toward those who were tempted by Arius and other heretics, yet the rejection in the same manner of ecumenism by the hierarchy to consider to be an act contrary to love? Where in the holy Fathers are the examples of confession of the truth obligatory only as measures of personal security (that is, what we call Sergianism)?

Was the canon of the 6th Ecumenical Council not an act of love, for example, which presents a list of various condemned heresies? Was it an act of hate or, on the contrary, a showing the right path to the believers?

The approach of apocalyptic times should make us, the remaining "little flock," especially careful in preserving the truth, when we are told of the fast approaching appearance of the "son of perdition".

May the Lord help you to interpret the material sent without prejudice and to make the right decision.

May the mercy of God be with you, + Bishop Gregory

The book of Bishop Gregory was sent to Fr. Dudko, but he did not answer this letter or even acknowledge the reception of the book! However, just recently we have read a declaration by Fr. Dudko, in which he praises Communism!

The letter of Bishop Gregory to the Abbess Magdalene (Grabbe) of Lesna convent, dated May 11/24th, 1986

Dear Mother Magdalene;

In order that you be informed of events, herewith I send you the response of Fr. Anthony to the Synod's Ukase for the forthcoming meeting next week. I have helped him with the argumentation, because, after all, he does not sufficiently know the canons. The inevitable decision regarding his case, made in advance by the investigation committee, resembles one of the resolutions from the time of the [Russian] Civil War: let him be judged and hanged. There is not to be seen even the slightest hint, even for the sake of external decency, of accepting any documentation in his favor.

The prejudice is so strong, that I have little hope of any impartiality being shown, except only maybe Bishop Anthony of Geneva will, who has a more independent mind. The expressions of sympathy by Archbishop Anthony of San Francisco to me in a letter and a telephone conversation sound like this: I love you and sympathize with you, but you have to be out of administration, and your son has to be liquidated along with everything he did in the Holy Land. They utterly do not understand and do not want to know what a huge labor Fr. Anthony accomplished, with even the Patriarchate. After all, when I went for the first time to the Holy Land during the tenure of Fr. Dimitry, during my presence a demand came from the Patriarchate, that we discontinue commemorating our Metropolitan. We beat off the attack, but with Fr. Anthony the relations with the Patriarchate became distinctly better than they were in the times of his predecessors and it seems that Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles, who left the Mission without any defense, cannot forgive him for this.

I am very much concerned with the activities of our First Hierarchy. He is attached to Montreal and is destroying New York. What our attentive and cultured parishioners say is very troubling: Vladyka does not want a center in New York.

Therefore he does everything he can to destroy it, so that it cannot survive materially and he will have a reason to sell the Synod building, purchasing in exchange a small house in the suburbs with a little church and transfer the millions obtained from the sale to Montreal where they will buy another modest building and keep the money in a security fund. By the way, at one time Nikita proposed a similar plan to the late Metropolitan. The very same people believe that now I am the obstacle and this explains my removal and wish for my immediate departure to France. Such concerns, especially by our American parishioners, Nastya has very sensibly described in a letter to Archbishop Anthony of San Francisco, but how can he help in a strange diocese?

To destroy the center, of course is not difficult, but to sell it (a national landmark) is not so easy, and morally it would be a terrible blow, after all this is a memorial to two metropolitans, especially Anastassy, and a place of several glorifications.

My schedule remains unclear. Since the Metropolitan is disturbed by my presence here and I myself feel not comfortable with his obvious lack of love – I want to leave as soon as possible. On the other hand, I have to wait for a visa and the operation, and then my friends want to hold a farewell party for me and this is hardly possible before August. If the situation in the Synod building becomes very difficult, for the time being I will move to Masha's or Mitya's [his children, "Ch. N"]. Also the Pennsylvanians, who have become very attached to me, want to hold a farewell party for me. So that at present I cannot give you an exact timetable.

May God's blessing be with you, With love, + Bishop Gregory