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The Orthodox Church and Contemporary Politics in the USSR:
A Special Report to the National Council For Soviet and East European Research

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A Personal Introduction

This Special Report is presented to the National Council for Soviet and East European Research in gratitude for their support of my research during the academic year 1990-91. My research focused on the role of the religious revival in the Russian and Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and especially upon the church and social structure in the "post-glasnost" USSR. Some of my work is specifically related to culture and theology, and I am now writing articles and a book manuscript on new Russian religious thought. This Special Report is an attempt to help secular scholars see the implications of church structure and religious thought in the emerging "new" order of the USSR as we once knew it.

The political atmosphere within the Slavic Republics is still volatile. As you will see, church issues are hardly confined to the mystic, otherworldly realm which Orthodox prelates so long showed to the west. Indeed, church issues have much to do with the current political volatility. When I began this work, massive changes were already affecting the whole of Soviet society. Indeed, having lived in the USSR during the upheaval in Eastern Europe, I experienced the life of the Church as it began to enjoy a new, increasingly
confident energy. The Orthodox Church flexed its muscles just beneath the flesh of the old Soviet order, but few scholars really perceived its strength. That strength is now apparent.

My own "mixed identity" has given me special access to the life of the Orthodox Church. I am secularly trained in literature and literary theory, and I teach English literature at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. For many years, from 1977-1989, I visited the USSR as a "secular" scholar, doing work on Soviet culture and literary theory. At the same time, I was also an Orthodox Christian in discreet contact with religious dissidents and the families of their jailed colleagues. For some years I took their manuscripts out of the USSR, brought them assistance, raised money for the American branch of the Keston College Institute, and reported on the status and whereabouts of prisoners of conscience. The nature of my work prevented me from publishing in this area during those years, but I was ordained a deacon and am now a priest in the Orthodox Church.

I was a visiting scholar at the Theological Academy in Leningrad from September 1989 to late April 1990, funded on an exchange program through the National Council of Churches and its counterpart in the USSR. (In accordance with the name change, I will hereafter refer to "Leningrad" as "St. Petersburg.") During that year I worked with students and faculty at the academy on the current state of theology in the USSR. I also served as a deacon at Preobrazhenskaya Cathedral in St. Petersburg, and immersed myself in a firsthand view of urban parish life. Occasionally, I also served with then Metropolitan Alexei, who later was elevated as Patriarch of Moscow. He gave me several opportunities to interview him for my work. I include here just some of the insights I gleaned from those interviews.
I also made immediate contact with my old network of friends from the "old days" of my contacts with prisoners of conscience, all of them now released from prison. A group of them were engaged in founding the "Society for an Open Christianity," a group of Orthodox lay scholars engaged in a dialogue with nonbelievers. Since I found most social action in the church moribund, I joined their efforts and co-founded a branch for the young adults now joining the church in great numbers. Many of my closest associates in this group (Vladimir Poresh, Viktor Popkov, Konstantin Ivanov) had been jailed or harassed for their religious activities before perestroika. Cautiously, they were then beginning to enjoy the credibility and influence lent them by their former imprisonment.

From July 1990 to July 1991, I remained in the U.S. and attempted to keep track of the massive internal shifts in the Orthodox structure, especially in Ukraine. As the report indicates, I had found that the majority of seminarians were of Ukrainian heritage and I noted their attempts to rediscover their own religious heritage, attempts which the Russian superstructure at the Academy tried to frustrate. In the U.S. I interviewed active laity, churchmen, and political figures; I traveled several times to the archives of St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox college at the University of Manitoba; at Fuller Theological Seminary and other places I explored efforts of the American evangelical community to expand their movement in the U.S.S.R. (During this time I also was ordained to serve as a priest.)

From June 1 to June 18, 1991, I visited the USSR again. My "official" task was to secure a building from the city government in St. Petersburg, which it had promised to give to the Society for an Open Christianity. In continuing these prolonged contacts, carried over from my year in St. Petersburg, I saw firsthand the way in which the Church and State
were now engaged in open and highly politicized negotiation. The goal was to secure, from the city government in Leningrad, a building to house a Christian school and advanced academic center. I had assisted in raising American funds for the renewal of a building on Nevsky Prospekt, near the Monastery of Alexander Nevsky. After long and painful resistance, the "official" church hierarchy had also endorsed the effort.

During this visit, I managed to slip away for an unauthorized week in Ukraine, where I spoke with Patriarch Mstitslav of the new "Autocephalous" Ukrainian Orthodox movement in Ternopil and also had an audience with the newly appointed Ukrainian Catholic Cardinal Lyubachevskij in Lvov. During a massive demonstration in Ternopil, I was able to hear and speak with many regional Ukrainian officials. I also saw firsthand, in several Ukrainian villages, the battles between various religious factions to seize property or commandeering materials to build new churches.

My friends at the Theological Academy in St. Petersburg (most of them Ukrainian), also put me in close touch with contacts in the Moscow Patriarchate, now in an unstable, troubled state marked by open schism and much internal dissension. I travelled to Moscow, where I met with a few people who work high up in the Patriarchal Offices, and also with representatives of the "Free Church," a conservative, anti-establishmentarian faction of the Orthodox Church which will emerge in clearer outline later. Once more, in September of 1991, I returned to St., Petersburg immediately after the failed coup to speak at a scholarly conference arranged by the Society for an Open Christianity. (My subject, calling for a reassessment of sexuality and the Church, was a topic which could not have been tolerated just a year before. It is now being published in Moscow.) I stayed behind in St. Petersburg
after the conference to assess the new situation of the church after the coup, to verify the reactions of the church during the coup itself, and to meet delegates from the Ukrainian church who were able to update me as to the situation within that country.

This report, then, is based not only upon archival research, but upon immediate contact with leaders and movements in contemporary church life. Secular scholars (and I myself often work in a "secular mode") have too often relegated religious ideas in Eastern Europe to the past. My own experience has convinced me that religious issues remain an integral part of cultural and political life in Russia and the Slavic Republics. Official atheism often formed a hard, impenetrable veneer over a deeply ingrained religious consciousness, remaining alive within a vast number of families and local social structures across Russia, Byelorussia and Ukraine. Orthodoxy, as an ethical and religious system, integrates religion with culture. That integration has survived to play a role in contemporary Russian and Ukrainian life.

Background

Orthodoxy in the United States offers a bewildering array of ethnic prefixes: "American" Orthodoxy, "Russian" Orthodoxy, "Ukrainian" Orthodoxy, "Greek" Orthodoxy all have roles in the Slavic community here and now in Europe. Within those various categories are subgroups: the "Carpatho-Russian" Orthodox church and the "Autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox" church to name a few. To complicate matters further, there are also millions of "Ukrainian Catholics" who do not look like or worship like Catholics at all, but who are
virtually indistinguishable in worship and custom from "Ukrainian Orthodox." These differences can prove very confusing, especially to those trying to understand the Orthodox world. This section is merely to provide a brief historical sketch to assist secular scholars in following current developments within Russia, Byelorussia, and Ukraine.

These divisions should not be seen as an analogue to the division of "sects" in American Protestantism. A seminal Orthodox philosopher, Alexei Khomyakov (1804-60), promulgated a concept known as sobornost, loosely translated as "conciliarity." In general terms, the idea allows for the manifestation of one essentially undivided Orthodox Church to subsist within many separate "jurisdictions" existing within many separate nations or ethnic groups. Hence "Greek" Orthodox are not a separate church from the "Russian" Orthodox. They may have different traditions or different languages, but they worship in essentially the same way and admit each other into full communion.

In East Europe, whole "churches" were shifted from one jurisdiction to another, not through any "Reformation" process as occurred in west Europe, but simply in the course of political events. Thus, in the seventeenth century, a politically weakened Ukraine lost its own defined ecclesiastical structure. In the west, the former "Orthodox" bishops were absorbed into a newly shaped rite of the Catholic church. Preserving their Orthodox ritual and customs, the bishops led their people in pledging obedience to the papacy in ecclesiastical communion with the Catholic monarchs who now ruled west Ukraine. In the east, a now aggressive Moscow absorbed the Ukrainian Orthodox Church into itself. Ukrainian presses were destroyed, and the Ukrainian language was suppressed.
Thus "Russian Orthodoxy," under strong czarist controls established under Peter the Great, became dominant on Slavic soil. After the Revolution, however, the monolith of Slavic Orthodoxy shattered into fragments as immigration sent the Slavic population westward.

Among the Russians themselves, the problem was embodied in the relationship of the Church to the State. Freed of the czarist control, the Orthodox Church elected its first Patriarch in modernity shortly after the abdication of Nicholas II. The Patriarch Tikhon, who had served as a bishop among immigrants in the New World, was well aware of the role emigre bishops would play in preserving a "shadow hierarchy," independent of state controls. Initially, he forbade them in an order or \textit{ukase} from obeying the behest of Bolshevik authorities or pledging loyalty to them.

Patriarch Tikhon, however, after imprisonment and intense pressures from Communist authorities, seemed to revoke his \textit{ukase}. Confusion and dispute over this event, especially during the Terror of the pre-war years, led to three concurrent "jurisdictions" of the Orthodox Church in the west. One of them remained loyal to the Patriarchal Church. The other, called the "Metropolia," awaited some resolution of the problem. The third, called the "Synod" or "Church in Exile" (\textit{Zarubiezhni tzerkov}), took a monarchist, rigidly anti-Communist position and refused compromise of any kind with any bishop who would serve under Communist authority.

This first Russian jurisdiction, the Patriarchal church, served essentially as an American outpost for a Russian-appointed bishop, who used his chair at St. Nicholas cathedral in New York to become an apologist-in-exile for the Moscow Patriarchate.
Appointments originate in Moscow, and bishops serve for a limited term before they are recalled to the homeland.

The second and largest Russian jurisdiction came to an agreement with Moscow in 1970 and became the Orthodox Church in America, or O.C.A., a base from which they sought to eventually shape a Church in America. This jurisdiction, regarding the Moscow Patriarchate as a troubled but valid "Mother Church," still serves as an "ecumenical arm" of Orthodoxy, leading American churches in an influential "pilgrimage" to Russia in the years before and after the millennium of Christianity in Russia in 1988. The current President of the National Council of Churches, Fr. Leonid Kishkovsky, is from this jurisdiction. Also, a deacon from this group, Fr. Deacon Michael Roshak, has headed the "USSR desk" of the National Council of Churches for some time. Ecumenically, the role of the Orthodox Church in America is a difficult one within the very liberal National Council of Churches; the jurisdiction has resisted some feminist and gay initiatives incompatible with current Orthodox thought, but it has also served the "peace groups" within the NCC by providing them with immediate contacts with Moscow.

The Third Church, the Church in Exile, remained rigidly opposed to any accommodation with a Marxist regime. With active Russian-language printing presses and its early canonization of "new Russian martyrs," it won a strong underground influence among dissidents in the USSR. Even in the wake of glasnost and liberalization in the USSR, this jurisdiction resists the Moscow Patriarchate and is now winning converts inside the Russian Republic. Its domestic political profile in the U.S. is quite different from that of the O.C.A.; it has been affiliated here with anti-Marxist, conservative causes and condemns the National
Council of Churches. Some American academics who specialize in Russian culture, like James H. Billington, have become converts to this jurisdiction. The Church in Exile canonized the late Czar Nicholas II and his family as saints, and the cult of the czar has won this movement support among monarchists in the Russian Republic.

If these three American jurisdictions all had implications on Slavic soil, so also did the many "ethnic jurisdictions" which sprang up in the New World. Many Ukrainians and West Slavs developed a renewed or even unprecedented sense of their national identity in America. Most of these Slavs resented a "Russian imperial Orthodoxy" which had suppressed the native traditions of their own Slavic churches. Thus they formed their own "jurisdictions" in America which reflected their religious and nationalist feeling.

Ukrainians and west Slavs, however, had a unique problem. The principle of sobornost presumes a mutual recognition and a concord. The Patriarch in Moscow, however, had refused until 1990 to recognize any effort to build a specifically "Ukrainian" Church. The only other avenue of recognition, or means of the "canonicity" which would grant an Orthodox Church a kind of legal status, comes through the chief Orthodox Patriarch in Constantinople (Istanbul). He is himself subject to Turkish policy and diverse political pressures. An ethnic Greek, his chief constituency is the Greek Orthodox Church in America, the strongest Orthodox presence in the United States. He needs the support of his counterpart in Moscow to maintain his delicate position in what is now Turkey. At the same time, however, he is the natural court of appeal for the Ukrainian Church which according to tradition was founded in 988 under his authority.
After the Revolution in 1917, Ukrainian Orthodox appealed to the Patriarch in Constantinople (Istanbul) for recognition of a Ukrainian church distinct from that of Moscow, but in the turmoil of civil war he did not grant it. The Ukrainian Church then appointed its own bishop, in a canonically questionable way, to assert its independence. When Ukraine fell under domination from Moscow, this movement was brutally suppressed—as, eventually, was all organized religion in the USSR. This impulse toward an self-headed or "Autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Church," however, remained alive in the Ukrainian community abroad.

At various times, the Patriarch in Constantinople has validated some manifestations of the Ukrainian Orthodox movement, giving them an unquestioned "canonical" status on soil outside Ukraine itself. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada (joined to the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1989) and the smaller Ukrainian Orthodox Church in America, are in this category. In the rapidly shifting political environment of Ukraine these jurisdictions now serve as somewhat moderating political influences, seeking to keep Ukraine in ecclesiastical contact with other national groups. Other Ukrainians, however, have hesitated to submit themselves to his authority: these have constituted their own "self-headed" jurisdiction on American soil. Most Orthodox in the world do not recognize the full "canonicity" or legality of this group, the Autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Church. (Its elderly leader, Mstyslav, was chosen as "Patriarch of Ukraine" by a newly spawned Autocephalous Movement in 1989; he is now an influential political figure in Ukraine with strong contacts in RUKH, the nationalist movement.)
A watershed year in the Soviet Union was 1988, the year of the "Millennium of Christianity in Rus." The government, still reluctantly at that time, gave permission in 1986-87 for a celebration of the conversion of the ancient city of Kiev to Christianity. The celebration led to increased contacts with the west, and increased publicity within the Soviet Union itself for its own religious tradition. A marked and sudden increase in baptisms, church weddings, and church involvement began as preparations for the Millennium neared.

There was a "vacuum of credibility," however, within church circles. Many existing hierarchs were seen as compromised, for reasons which this report will later make clear. The church, for so long a barely tolerated structure, did not have the institutional resources to meet its own rapidly growing needs. Thus the Orthodox in Russia and Ukraine looked quite naturally to their counterparts in the New World, embodied in these various jurisdictions, for assistance and guidance. For that reason these separate "jurisdictions," confusing though they may be to the novice, became increasingly important forces as they assisted the Orthodox Church in assuming a new political role in the USSR. After the coup, that role has taken another quantum leap. The Church itself has begun to provide substance to fill the "vacuum of leadership" left by the official dissolution of the party. Also, its own ideology provides a ready frame of reference for those ideologically disinherited people looking for a "system" in which to believe.

In the remainder of this report, in subheaded sections, I will address the political situation of the church itself and the effect of the church on the larger structure of Russian and Ukrainian society. Please forgive my primary concentration on the Orthodox community: Orthodoxy does represent the tradition of the majority of Slavs, however; and it also reflects
the world of my own experience. There are many other sources for the minority Protestant and Evangelical traditions in Russia and Ukraine, which I address only with respect to their evangelization efforts.

Let me emphasize also that this report is, by design, introductory. That is, I do not delve deeply into the thought and ideology of these parties, nor do I treat except in outline the interesting encounter between the Christian tradition and remnants of the old Bolshevik order. In my past publications, and in ones yet to come, I will deal with these issues in more depth. This is to serve basically as an outline for those without a specific Orthodox background.

A Crisis of Trust

One anecdote, a story which I confirmed through three separate sources, now clarifies the darker side of the situation in the Patriarchate of Moscow. Within the last year a group of students came to the Bishop of Chelyabinsk in the Russian republic. The students asked for help in organizing an Orthodox youth group ministering to the many young people now taking baptism in the Church. The bishop agreed, and asked for a list of all those willing to work as organizers. When the students provided the list, the bishop sent it to the local KGB Office, instructing the intelligence officers to deal with the "troublemakers."

Such incidents had occurred before. (In 1989, there were reports of a similar incident in Voronezh, which led to the arrest of the principals.) The conclusion to this story, however, is even more surprising. The KGB sent a letter back to the bishop, instructing him
that they were no longer involved in such "internal matters." What is more, the KGB sent a copy of the bishop’s correspondence and the their own response to the local Soviet, which the local authorities proceeded to publish. The bishop, insofar as I can determine, remains in his see at this date. The KGB, no doubt, was delighted with the way in which the Church was thus discredited.

The KGB, as is no secret, was intimately involved in church matters. Their interpenetration was so severe, in fact, that even within the Church individuals have been regarded as KGBeshniki by other believers. As the incident in Chelyabinsk illustrates, that involvement leaves a bitter legacy in the Russian church. The fact that old records can now be published, and that faults can now be publicly known, has forced even the most established of church authorities to take new stock of their situation.

In the west, we have noted the controversy over KGB archives and Party records. The consensus seems to be, even among those who suffered long jail terms, "let the records rest." The fear is that they will be destructive of the entire order of society, not to mention the church. It must be noted, however, that those who have "done time" constitute in their very persons a kind of "living archive." Let me use another anecdote to illustrate my point. Volodya Poresh, at the commencement of his imprisonment, was interrogated in long and painful sessions at the KGB headquarters. During one interview, the interrogator stepped into the hall and left the door open. There, in sight of Poresh, he greeted cordially the pastor of a central city parish where the interrogator and the priest exchanged pleasantries and made a date for a social engagement of their two families.
The former "dissidents," then, are an unstable force within contemporary church structure. Poresh, despite his open and completely unthreatening nature, is a person much feared and openly reviled in church circles. The Rector of the Theological Academy in St., Petersburg, for example, does not hide his feelings. When the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg agreed to make a concession to a group of laity, the Rector stormed, "But there you'll find Poresh!" In the atmosphere after the coup, the former dissidents take on an even more enhanced credibility among laypeople, and presumably their power to indict will become more feared.

The Church has anticipated this problem, and even those who were once compromised within the State Structure have made an effort at self-rehabilitation. In an interview in Izvestia (Tuesday, June 11, 1991), Patriarch Alexei who has thus far remained silent about his own complicity in these matters, publicly asked for forgiveness. He confessed that there had been much complicity between the Church and the KGB, and stated that he himself had done so with the intent of helping the Church through a difficult time. The problem, however, seems deeper than such a confession can address. The question remains among many who suffered: those who complied lived, in fact, very well and remain in positions of power; those who did not comply are still excluded from trust and leadership in the Church.

This "crisis of trust" is plain among laity who have rejected Communism, but who regard the Church as indicted by virtue of its own past corruption. The "crisis of trust" is most notable, however, among intelligentsia and academics now openly committed to the Church, but who will no longer take an uncritical stance within it. There are now in the Church people known as "white bolsheviks," people who used the Party apparatus for
professional advancement or survival, but who kept up a religious practice in the sanctuary of their own private lives. Significantly, if perhaps hypocritically, even these people now call for a kind of "cleansing" within the Church to grant it greater credibility.

I will address the situation in Ukraine later. In the Russian republic itself, there are now a number of schisms and attempts to separate from the jurisdiction of a Church which is seen as "sold out" and unwilling to cleanse itself from within. Indeed, one deputy of the St. Petersburg Soviet conveyed to me his assessment of the current crisis: the Patriarch himself, even if he wished to expel an unpopular hierarch like Metropolitan Philaret of Kiev, could not do so because such hierarchs retain such strong ties to the local security forces. (And in fact, as you will see later, the Patriarch has been unsuccessful in unseating Metropolitan Philaret.)

Despite this chaotic environment, however, local churches now experience an unprecedented growth. Everywhere, at parish churches on the outskirts of St. Petersburg, at village churches in western Ukraine, in urban parishes in the center of Moscow, there is an increase of youth participation. Over the past five years I have noticed that the population in local churches now more fully reflects the age distribution in general society. There is now the noise of children in church. Young adults, unlike the norm ten years ago, now show a knowledge of liturgy and ritual forms. The middle-aged generation, from ages 40-65, is notably sparse in its church attendance; this is of course most likely the product of their anti-religious indoctrination. The young, however, are now joining the elderly babushkas in almost equal numbers. In urban churches, in fact, there is a definite increase in church membership among more affluent young people who sport western fashions. The tense
political infighting within the ranks of the clergy does not seem to affect normal parish life within the Russian church communities.

Many claims have been made as to the numbers of people coming into the churches. There are as yet no reliable statistics. I will say, however, that I have been able to collect some immediate impressions backed up by statistics. I served in an urban parish in St. Petersburg; on Saturdays in 1990 we baptized no less than 40 and up to 125 young adults. My fellow priests and deacons in rural parishes were registering 200 and 300 baptisms a week. There was also a rush to register for the venchanie, or "crowning" which is at the center of a church wedding. As reported by Father Deacon Andrei Chizhov, in 1989 and 1990 there were an average of 40 such weddings a weekend at Nikolskii Sobor in St. Petersburg.

The simple demographics of this mass movement into the church is causing some serious problems of readjustment. Priests are fatigued simply with the sheer volume of the ritual for which people express such a longing. They have little energy left to organize the youth who now demand attention. The needs of young people are different from those of the elderly, whom priests in the old USSR have long been confined to serving. There are few printed materials to meet the needs of those thousands who come for catechesis and instruction. Thus all except the most energetic of young priests seem somewhat besieged by the clamor for religious attention. There is even the frequent criticism among clergy that the older faithful are "more spiritual" than many of these young activists, whose interest is sometimes indicted as fashionable or superficial.
I would point out as well, however, that people are now more aggressive in assessing the calibre of their clergy. The judgement as to whether a priest is "spiritual" or not, or has in the past been close to the political authorities (including the episcopate), enters into lay appraisal of his quality. In Russian parishes, the sermon is now taking on more importance. There is some resentment among young people in particular that gospel readings and all liturgical services are held in Old Church Slavonic.

These problems within the Russian church are often featured in promotional materials printed by western missionaries, some of whom seek to draw people away from Orthodoxy. The "crisis of trust" in the Moscow Patriarchate, then, has implications for movements and personnel coming in from the U.S., Canada, and west Europe.

Missions from the West

Protestant organizers are now active in organizing publishing enterprises within the USSR. Beginning with the first flush of glasnost, they came into Russia and Ukraine beginning in 1988 with publishing expertise, but with little experience in the complex economic environment of the Soviet Union. When I met with several such concerns during 1989, 90, and 91, they had been engaged in negotiations with secular printing efforts in urban Moscow and St. Petersburg. Their initial efforts, of course, are focused upon Bible production and distribution. They also, however, now print catechetical materials from a non-Orthodox perspective. In many areas, the Orthodox Church has been long suppressed and there are no parishes. In the newer urban regions of Siberia, for example, no churches
have been built. Missionaries from various Protestant groups, from the Mormons, from the
Unification Church and even the Krishna consciousness movement have been making
headway and meeting with initial interest.

In Russia, however, the Orthodox Church has been responding with some hostility to
this movement, which they see as an effort to capitalize on past persecution of the Orthodox
themselves. They also point out open attacks upon the Orthodox Church in the literature of
some western groups. Western concerns with long experience in the USSR, like the Slavic
Gospel Association in Wheaton, Illinois, foresee or fear efforts on the part of the Orthodox
to limit their activities; other groups like the Mennonite Central Committee are more
optimistic about possibilities of cooperation with the Orthodox in the "new Russia."

Activities by western groups are a political factor within the USSR. Boris Yeltsin has
openly courted the Moscow Patriarchate for its support. Editorial policy in Patriarchal
journals, especially after the coup, has been very kind to Yeltsin. Yet his democratic
movement is called to task within the Patriarchal journals lest it show an estrangement from
"organic Russian identity." There will indeed be pressure upon him to limit the most overt
efforts of western missionaries to draw Russia into a western forms of religious practice.

My own observation is that these Protestants have made even the Orthodox more
conscious of marketing techniques. They mix the gospel with very American insights about
marketing, distribution, and efficiency. They are also very effective in reaching the
unevangelized youth with little cultural connection to the arcane rhythms of Old Church
Slavonic. (One group, "Gospel Light Publications," is producing a Biblical source book for
which I was consulted to determine if it would be useful to the Orthodox as well.) The
missionaries do draw in a solid minority of the "new Christian movement" and in their numbers create a people who will be culturally in touch with western religious values.

These converts are not inclined, however, to be the political "democrats" some westerners expect as a product of Protestant evangelization. On the contrary, they are culturally quite conservative. Although they may embrace principles of private ownership, their social agenda is a conservative one and they are inclined to authoritarianism. I cannot verify this with any survey. My long experience with the Russian Baptist and Evangelical movement, however, has introduced me to a people whose politics are as yet unformed, but who rarely fall within the "Christian Democratic" framework of the progressive Orthodox laity.

Agnostic or atheist people in Russia and Ukraine now tend to be "tactically friendly" toward religion in its Orthodox form. Rising Christian politicians are almost always of Orthodox background. There is no tradition as yet of Protestant involvement in the very structures of the local political order; rather, Protestants tend to "negotiate" with authorities for concessions. Their much readier access to western funds makes those concessions forthcoming: often, as in St. Petersburg, their title to buildings is conditional upon funds in foreign currency to rehabilitate them. Protestant social structures are more "self-contained" than Orthodox ones. Like their position in the old czarist order, they are distinguished by those customs and habits which separate them from the general population. A Russian who crosses himself, right to left, is recognizably "Russian" even to an agnostic; a man who refuses to drink vodka for religious reasons, however, may win respect but not widespread acceptance.
Clearly, I am myself an Orthodox and hence must struggle toward an objectivity. I have been ecumenically active with Protestants, however, and I endorse absolute religious liberty even in formerly "Orthodox" states. Nonetheless, for cultural reasons I am convinced that Protestants in Russia will remain politically marginal for some time to come. They have little place, and no solid position, in the strength of the new nationalism in Russia, Byelorussia and Ukraine. They engage in contracts with the civil authorities but have not yet appreciably penetrated their ranks. They are closer to the "market economy" which carries a current mystique in the USSR, but they are also perceived as "foreign" in religious origins in a country which now emphasizes native traditions and native roots.

Some religious groups have tried to render themselves "native," at least legally, by incorporating themselves as distinctly "Russian" Protestant sects. The former "German Lutherans," for example, have experienced schism in the past two years. Pastor Jozef Varonas, a Latvian born in the borders of the old USSR, has incorporated a separate "native Lutheran church." He thereby qualifies for claims under the 1991 "confiscated properties act." German Lutherans note Pastor Varonas' connections with Baltic business interests who seek to purchase and develop some of the properties seized from the old German Lutheran Church (but now claimed by the "native movement" which Pastor Varonas heads).

The Orthodox Church has been engaging in a "divide and conquer" strategy with respects to these non-Orthodox schisms. The Orthodox Church in St. Petersburg, for example, was quick to recognize Pastor Varonas' movement, despite the protests of the Germans who had done much to assist the Orthodox communities through the past winter of
1991. Other communities—the former Mennonites in central Ukraine, the Seventh Day Adventists, etc.—have been affected by such schisms.

Seminaries and Western Assistance

As my own publications printed since my return have indicated, the bulk of seminary enrollment throughout the Russian Republic has come in the past from Ukraine. These "village boys," most often from the religiously observant provinces of west Ukraine added to the old USSR after World War II, were probably given preferential admission for many reasons. In the days before overt nationalism was tolerated, they were thought to be more compliant. Since they were often assigned to Russian parishes, despite their Ukrainian accents and world view, they were also thought to be effective in distancing the church from the young generation.

Now, however, the situation has rapidly changed. Nationalist feeling has not only swept the seminaries, but indeed the seminaries are one of its most potent sources. The majority of seminary graduates in recent years have quit the Moscow Patriarchate, either to join the Ukrainian Catholic or Ukrainian Autocephalous Movement. Some students have become politically active in Ukraine. Thus Ukrainian seminarians are subject to special pressures and sometimes a kind of harassment if they come from regions which have now separated from the Moscow Patriarchate.

Shortly after the publication in Ukrainian of an essay in which I documented such harassment, the "inspector" of the seminary in St. Petersburg was relieved of his post.
the same time, however, the rector, Fr. Vladimir Serokin, summoned several people at the
seminary who were known to have associated with me--in particular the Ukrainians. He
questioned them about what they knew of my activities while I was there.

There are some interesting conclusions to be drawn from these interviews. First of
all, they were given well before the article had been published in Ukrainian. Thus the
Rector, whose English is not particularly fluent, was familiar with the article in detail before
he could have read it in published form. It is possible that someone in the States had read
the piece, translated it, and sent it on to him. As my Russian friends pointed out to me,
however, it is far more likely that he received a transcript of the piece through state
intelligence sources with church connections.

I was not at all critical of the Rector personally in the article in question, nor in any
other publication. Those Orthodox dissidents who had been jailed in the Brezhnev years,
and those who identify with these former "dissidents," are very critical of the Rector and
view him as a mere tool of the state. I have seen him, however, guide the Academy into
greater public visibility, if not academic excellence.

The strong reaction of the Rector, however, to my criticism of church policy shows
his great sensitivity to the western press. In June of 1991, I was in St. Petersburg to
negotiate with the city government for a building, the title of which was to be surrendered to
the "Society for an Open Christianity." I stopped in at the Academy in order to see him, and
he made his disapproval clear to me and to the students. Rather than summon me into his
office for our discussion, he made his displeasure known in public. A few moments later,
when he saw me again, he was more detailed in his specific objections--still in public--without giving me an opportunity to respond.

The Rector’s reaction clearly indicates his belied expectations. In the darkest years of the Church’s persecution, Orthodox from America (including myself) had striven to support the Church’s position. When support turned to criticism shortly after the church had an opportunity to loosen itself from state control, the result was a feeling of betrayal. That feeling expresses itself in anger toward westerners who criticize the church after having seen it from within. At least before the coup, that anger could be expressed in outright violence toward native Russians who were persistent in their criticism.

In my own experience, these expectations were less than subtly expressed. Shortly after I arrived at the Academy, the Rector made an appointment for me to meet a layman from the Otdel, the Department of External Church Relations. The gentleman greeted me and offered to help me in my work. He also offered me help in obtaining theater tickets, contacts with cultural figures, and other amenities relating to my scholarly project on Orthodoxy and modern Russian culture. He then spoke of the need for the Church to be "understood," and he made it clear to me that he sought to limit criticism of the Church’s connections to the State. He even offered me membership in a health club which was frequented by foreigners in the city. I eased free of his offers of assistance, and I never saw him again.

I pursued my own contacts, which suited me quite well in my work. Some of these contacts were with librarian friends who gained me access to collections in the state archive.
Many of these contacts were also with friends who had been in jail during the 'eighties, when I managed to get some assistance to their families. Though I was discreet about my activities with these people, it eventually became known at the Academy that I was not as tractable, as confined to the Academy, as previous students there had been.

Foreign students reside only at the St. Petersburg Academy. Americans resident at the Academy feel a pressure to conform and also a curiosity about their movements. Seminarians keep a distance from foreigners. If they befriend those foreigners, there is always the suspicion that the friend may be an informer, to seminary authorities, if not to the KGB. One seminarian confided to me that upon his admission to the seminary in 1986, which was accompanied by KGB visits to his family and harassment at work, the authorities met with him and promised him an easy time. The only cost was to be his "vigilance" with respect to foreigners studying at the Academy. (The reports, however, were made directly to a state officer without any church intermediary.)

The structure of seminary education inside the old USSR is changing. After Krushchev's anti-religious campaign of the 'sixties, only three seminaries remained open. One seminary operated at St. Sergius' Monastery or lavra outside Moscow, at Zagorsk, which also included a theological Academy. Another at St. Petersburg also included an Academy. In Ukraine, at Odessa, a third seminary also remained open. Each institution held several hundred students.

The seminaries produced parish priests; the Academies provided the opportunity for further theological education. The libraries at these institutions had been depleted by state seizures of books and archives. Even now, however, librarians angrily complained to me
that the Academy collections are still frequently pilfered of valuable books by church
officials. Books on Ukrainian church history, when nationalism was on the rise in 1989,
were removed from the library collection in St. Petersburg. Students write their theses
relying upon sources printed no later than the revolution of 1917. Western donations of
more modern books often never make the catalogue.

In the past three years, several new seminaries have opened: in Byelorussia, Kiev,
Siberia, the foothills of the Urals, and Lviv seminaries have obtained space and enrolled
students. The problems with library facilities which plague the older seminaries, however,
affect the new institutions even more acutely. Money, once in reasonably ready supply from
the Church sale of candles and from contributions, has become tight. Ukraine helped to keep
the coffers of the Moscow Patriarchate full. With the defection of parishes there to the
Ukrainian Catholics and another rival Orthodox movement, money for seminary development
is less readily available. In Ukraine and Byelorussia, administrators must also be vigilant to
see that nationalist sentiment is kept under control. Development is all the more
difficult because the kind of corruption which infects the secular market also permeates the
church. Specifically, there are three areas where funds show a lack of careful monitoring.
First, as I have already pointed out in a few articles, there is virtual proof of Church sale of
donated Bibles and religious publications. This takes place both within the Protestant and
Orthodox communities. Sometimes there is justification of charges for donated books on the
grounds that the churches need money for operational costs. Yet the state cooperates in the
endeavor. In Komsomolskaya Pravda, in late 1989, a KGB official himself announced that
only "officially sanctioned" Bibles were legally available for purchase. Needless to say, the
state received a substantial tax on such purchases and hence the state security apparatus was sustained at least in part through the sale of donated western religious materials.

Now that publications are more widely available and printed inside the USSR, this source of funds may dry up. There are still a host of western charities, however, which collect money in order to distribute Bibles or print religious material for Russia or Ukraine. The American Bible Society now has an on-site representative in Moscow who can help monitor sales and distribution. The Mennonite Central Committee also distributes through the All-Union Council of Baptists and Evangelicals. Some smaller organizations, however, have made claims for distribution which have not been validated. It remains a fact that the sale of such materials, collected through donations, can be extremely profitable to the unscrupulous.

A second area of concern underscores the first. A German pastor then studying at the Academy, Frank Lotichius, was head coordinator of a much-publicized effort in the winter of 1990-91. Under his supervision, the German Evangelical Lutheran Church sent German parcels of food aid to Leningrad. The Leningrad Coordinating Christian Relief Committee distributed 339,095 tons of food parcels to needy people through the existing church network in the city. This winter, the Committee promises to continue its work. The Rector and other priests at the Academy served with Mr. Lotichius in the organization.

Mr. Lotichius, however, complained of many irregularities in the process. He spoke of a “powerbroking” in control over the parcels in which the Rector and other church figures participated. He complained that the Rector and other figures in Leningrad had encouraged the schismatic “Russian” Lutheran jurisdiction under the leadership of Pastor Joseph
Varonas, a Soviet citizen. This group, according to Lotichius, received food for distribution without properly accounting for it. German foodstuffs became widely available for sale, at much inflated prices, on the grey market. They may have come from individual recipients, but it is far more likely that a network of diversion exists in which the church distributors have cooperated.

There is much current concern with food shortages in the coming winters. We can expect that aid will be distributed through western churches to Russian churches; indeed, the churches provide in the instability of the Russian market one of the most reliable of distribution networks. Through state sources, for example, a good percentage of food will most certainly be appropriated for illegal sale. The proportion of such diverted food in the ecclesiastical network will be much smaller.

Neither Mr. Lotichius nor I are concerned, then, with the appropriation of food by church people. Donors, however, must be aware that their donations have a profound political implication. In the current climate, those who have food, have power. Organizations with food to distribute will be able to broker that food and buy special prestige and influence. Secular assistance to Russia must either surrender its food to existing (and woefully inadequate) agents of distribution, or they must organize their own means of distribution. The latter is, as Mr. Lotichius and I will attest, extremely difficult. The former, however, will virtually hand over many thousands of tons of food to black marketers, and in the process give them more power to shape future channels of distribution.

Formal charitable organizations are virtually absent in Russia, Byelorussia, and Ukraine. Churches, however, have a presence throughout the country, and not only in major
urban centers. If food is given to the diocese or regional office, it can bypass the "skimming" process that takes place in major cities and reach those people most in need.

Finally, assistance in general must be given directly to local centers. There is a tendency in Moscow and St. Petersburg to hoard available assistance. There is, for example, a hospital for the aged in a building close to the Academy, a building which only last year housed an abortion clinic. This has been a showcase for the Academy, and it is indeed laudable that indigent elderly are receiving Church charity. The "Society for Charity," however, which once sponsored the hospital, has distanced itself from the Academy. They feel themselves to be far more productive in St. Petersburg precisely because, as they themselves say, they have broken from Church direction and diversion of funds and assistance. The personnel in the hospital outnumber the patients, and seminarians who have worked at the facility suspect that it is more "show" than "go."

I do not in any sense mean to imply that all assistance rendered to Russia or Ukraine, either through government sources or through the church, is hopeless. Russia is in dire need of all kinds of things, and I have myself been active in raising and donating funds and materials. Donors, however, have not always monitored and engaged in all efforts which they have funded.

Because of the important political implications of assistance, Americans must now be vigilant in monitoring and directing such aid if they wish to control the "political resonance" of their own contributions. They need on-site personnel fluent in the language and with an awareness of the political climate. Americans must also be aware that their own feelings about "separation of church and state" may lead them into a catastrophically inadequate
program of assistance. A well-monitored, secular network of assistance can work best administered along existing church channels, using parish buildings, storage space, transportation networks and contacts in a society where nothing gets moved or distributed without influence.

I would accompany this observation with multiple cautions. There is now much enthusiasm about aiding the Russian Church, but at the present time there must be great care in supporting a wholesale surrender of funds or assistance to any authorities, church or state, in the USSR. I have observed multiple business and church delegations to the USSR. There are seldom any real Russian speakers in the party, much less people who are politically sophisticated. Participants are sometimes easily manipulated into positions which are, in a Russian context, extremely partisan. It is not necessarily bad to help out friends, but it is helpful to be able to choose them for oneself.

The situation of the Ukrainian nationalists in the "Russian" Orthodox Church is one example of the way in which western observers, even specialists, can be misled. For many years western delegations and western religious specialists were guests of the Russian Orthodox Church in their visits to the USSR. The Church, through its own agency of hospitality, controlled its guests and guided their access to places and personnel. As a consequence, most of them were long unaware that the majority of the students in the "Russian" church, and that the plurality of believers who supported it, were in fact of an entirely different ethnic group with an entirely different set of sympathies.

Ukrainian students at the seminaries are now caught in an acute dilemma. They must rely upon the institutions of the Moscow Patriarchate for their education, yet while in study
they must suppress their Ukrainian identity. (In the seminary in Kiev itself, a student reported to me in June of 1991, students are penalized for speaking Ukrainian; this is not, ironically, the situation in St. Petersburg.) Now, after the coup, the situation has grown even more complex. Ukraine is now presumed to be an independent republic. Negotiations are underway among all Orthodox bishops, divided amongst themselves for the past two years, to form an Orthodox jurisdiction independent of Moscow. Yet the Ukrainian students remain enrolled in Russia itself, not knowing what ecclesiastical situation they will face upon their graduation and yet at the same time relying upon the Moscow Patriarchate for their stipend and support.

The "Catacomb Church" and Independent Orthodoxy

The liberalization of religious laws within the USSR has put the "Church in Exile" or "Synodal Church" (see "Background," p. 7 of this report) in a very different political situation. With its very existence based upon the premise that religious freedom had no place within the USSR, perestroika has undermined the base of this monarchist-inclined, conservative jurisdiction. With the failed coup attempt, the "official" Orthodox church and all of Russian society seemed to concur with its revulsion against the Party. In order to justify its existence, then, the Synod or Church in Exile (the two terms are used interchangeably) can no longer rely upon anti-Communism as a mark of identity. It must find a new ground for its activities.
In 1989, the Church in Exile seemed to be moving toward a reconciliation with the Moscow Patriarchate. Vera Shevzov, an American doctoral candidate from the church, the daughter of a Synodal priest, received a warm welcome at the Academy. She was accepted as a resident and communed while she was there. Similarly, a seminarian was accepted at the Academy in 1989 and studied there during my residence, until he suffered nervous exhaustion early in 1990.

Patriarch Alexei, when he was Metropolitan of Leningrad, expressed an acute interest in this possible accord. On several public occasions at the Academy, and in a private interview, he alluded to some "points of reconciliation" between the Synod and the Patriarchate. He condescended, in a way unusual for a hierarch of his position, to pay small courtesies to foreign students at the Academy who were from this church.

At this time, the Synod chose its implacable opposition to the ecumenical movement as its point of differentiation with the Patriarchate. In this position, the conservative Church in Exile won much sympathy even within the Moscow Patriarchate. The delegations from the World and National Council of Churches, it was widely believed, had shut their eyes and ears to the suffering of the Church in the name of ideology. Also, Orthodox are in their systematic theology resistant to the recent ideological movements of radical feminism, gay rights, and theological syncretism. In fact, the meeting of the World Council in Canberra in 1991 has recently added more fuel to this element in the Synod’s self-identity: they can now offer themselves as champions of Orthodox purity in a sullied world, of which the Moscow Patriarchate is but a part.
There is much evidence that the Synod itself, in North America at least, is split within its own ranks. I have some Russian friends who have come to the U.S. at my invitation. They have visited the Synod, expecting a united focus of the true "Russian spirit." They have found instead a resistance on the part of the "old emigration" against the new immigrants from the Soviet Union. Bishop Ilarion, a young bishop of the Synod, seems to struggle toward a reconciliation with other Orthodox. He has bitter enemies, however, within the Synod ranks. A friend of mine who resided there complained that Bishop Ilarion is routinely excluded from meetings by Synod functionaries, and that he is excluded from audiences with his own Metropolitan. Russian students at the Synod's seminary in Jordanville, New York, also are reluctant to express any hopes for a reconciliation, lest they be terminated and sent back home.

The position of the Synod within Russia is now parallel to its position in North America—that is, it is a product of divisions and discontent within the canonical jurisdictions. It seems now that the atmosphere of possible reconciliation has dissipated. Patriarch Alexei has recently condemned, in fact, the Synod's activities on Russian soil and seeks the cooperation of the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople in declaring them "uncanonical." Now in various dioceses there have been maverick parishes which have bolted from the Moscow Patriarchate and have declared themselves part of the "Free Church" or "True Church" within Russia. This "True Church" is the Russian incarnation of the Synod; it is the "Church in Exile" in effect come home.

Again, such churches have had to justify their existence. The failed coup attempt and the events of August 19-21, 1991, have caused a shift in their apologetic. The chief rationale
for schism at present is that of corruption within the Moscow Patriarchate. It is common, even within the very heart of the Patriarchal Offices, to view many bishops and priests as having been "sold over" to the State. Indeed, the Patriarch himself through his recent interview in Izvestia (June, 1991) has acknowledged as much. The Synod has won over many members of the former "Catacomb" or underground church to its ranks. (The "Catacomb Church" is a term for dissident Orthodox congregations which refused to register with the State from 1923 to 1990). They now resist a reconciliation with the priests and bishops whom they view as traitors. Like the Donatists in ancient North Africa, they tend to view the official Orthodox Church as "without grace" by virtue of its former compromise with the State.

I researched these people within the USSR. I met in Moscow with a chief Synod figure in Russia, Father Amvrosii Sievers. He met with me in his apartment at the outskirts of Moscow on June 13, 1991. Although he was never himself jailed, he was a member of the Catacomb church and now aligns himself with the Synod or "Free Church" within the Soviet Union.

Father Amvrosii is a lay monk, living austerely like many Russians who choose to live as "monastics in the world." He is not affiliated with a monastery. He identified Archbishop Lazar Zaruzhluko as the head of the Synodal movement within the USSR. He spoke of 5 synodal parishes at present within Moscow. The situation is fluid, with parishes joining throughout the nation, but he estimated some 500 communities of various sizes throughout the USSR. He seemed to speak honestly, without an attempt at exaggerating the strength of the movement. Indeed, he dismissed claims in the Synod press in the U.S.
spoke of the movement as larger than it is, and he admitted that the movement as yet lacks coordination and organization. In effect, his church now picks up parishes on appeal, after a scant review.

He identified a problem with former Catacomb churches which did not wish to join the Synodal movement, for various reasons. Some, like the Old Believers of another era, had been without priests for so long that they did not know how to function within a liturgical framework. Indeed, some of the more remote congregations had developed in effect "female priesthood," with old ladies acting as baptizing ministers and guardians of tradition. Though they did not preside at Eucharist or formally preach, these women were reluctant to resign their authority and were mistrustful of any "legal" Church. Some "Catacomb Orthodox" simply had problems with Archbishop Lazar. But he estimated that most of the former Catacomb Orthodox had joined their movement.

There are various evaluations of Archbishop Lazar, whom I have not met. He is generally thought to be theologically unsophisticated: in essence, a simple priest who has become a bishop by virtue of his commitment to the Synod. One American Synod member with experience in Russia said, "If they had to choose a bishop, they certainly did not choose the best one." This Synod member felt that Archbishop Lazar was a product of the very system he reacted against, and that corruption was in effect present within the "Free Church" as well as in the official Russian Orthodox Church. I have, however, no evidence of this assertion and have met many Orthodox themselves who regard this movement as "purer" than the Moscow Patriarchate, if only by virtue of its long separation from the Soviet state.
The complexity of current problems in the Russian Church have brought into relief confusion over the nature of "canonicity." The issue has profound implications for Orthodoxy in turmoil both here and abroad. The Synod members within Russia "count" canonicity, literally by the fingers, as they trace the legitimate consecration or ordination of specific bishops or clerics in question. Canonicity thus becomes confused with succession; indeed, at times among both Synod members and Autocephalous Ukrainians who desire this elusive quality, "canonicity" becomes something which can "pre-exist" by expectation. That is, they tolerate their present noncanonical status in the expectation that the Church will some day, even after their deaths, "recognize" them.

This confusion has increased the importance of the Ecumenical Patriarch in Istanbul, who now plays a little-recognized political role within the nationalist struggles of the former USSR. All Orthodox, whatever the state of their "canonicity", must respect the position of the Ecumenical Patriarch. Even the Synod members, Fr. Ambrosii included, looked to the eventual reconciliation with the Ecumenical Patriarch. He alluded to the present political situation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate as an "excuse," in effect, for not appealing to His All Holiness as an arbiter of canonical status. The Ukrainians, too, whom I will treat later, regard the Ecumenical Patriarch as a possible solution to their problems with recognition, a "legimitator" of their struggle for an independent Church at the core of an independent State.

Those in communion with the Ecumenical Patriarch look to him as the embodiment of their "canonical" status. The late Patriarch, Dimitrios, who died (Oct. 4, 1991) but a few days before this writing, was the first such hierarch to visit the United States in the summer of 1990. He was able to effect a reconciliation among some Ukrainian parties, receiving all
the Ukrainians in Canada into a "canonical" communion. The Synod or "Church in Exile," however, has chosen to remain apart.

The Synod, with its loose definition of "canonicity," is now a dissident jurisdiction in Russia as well as North America. This jurisdiction claims a "pure Orthodoxy" and now defines itself against other Orthodox. The Ecumenical Patriarch does not neglect the issue of corruption within the Moscow Patriarchate. Yet, in accordance with tradition, he recognizes Moscow as the legitimate authority "in its own territories." (Significantly, he does not clarify to what extent Ukraine belongs to those territories.) Thus the Synod and "Free Church" remain somewhat tentatively estranged from other Orthodox in the world.

The "Free Church" does have political implications in Russia. Though the majority of its members concentrate on religious matters, the movement does attract a monarchist element, among them the monarchist wing of the Pamyat movement. The Synod has, after all, canonized the last czar, who has taken on a romantic and mystic cast in the Russian imagination. Pictures (indeed, icons) of the czar, and monarchist regalia, sometimes accompany an allegiance to this movement.

The publications of ultra-patriot journals exhibit both a sympathy toward the "Free Church" movement and an anti-Semitic trend. (This is not to confine the trend to the Free Church; it is also sometimes present within the Patriarchate of Moscow.) The trend is not so overt as the anti-Semitism of the Third Reich, but it is in these times a disturbing political factor. In the Pamyat parlance, Jewish sympathy for the revolution in its early years conveys a culpability to Jews in general for the atrocities of the years of terror. There is an unwillingness to view Jews as fellow victims in Russia's suffering, and in fact a tendency in
the most extremist literature to see them as at least partially responsible for the events which laid waste to Russia.

I want to emphasize that this anti-Semitism is not a "necessary condition" within the Free Church. Indeed, many intellectuals within the movement would immediately repudiate the positions of Pamyat and its sympathizers. It is a movement, however, readily accessible to those with a domestic right-wing agenda. And, like most Orthodox jurisdictions in the USSR, there are too few people within it who are willing to openly and uncompromisingly attack the anti-Semitism which emerges in conjunction with Russian nationalism.

Ukraine: The Kurds of Christianity

The Kurds of northern Iraq have been hostages to history, suffering yet unaided by those who fear to offend others through their charity. So also the Ukrainians who wish to remain Orthodox yet to break free of Moscow's domination, find themselves suspended between two enemies. They are isolated, and potential friends fear to offend one or the other warring party.

In Ukraine more than any other place in the former USSR, religious disputes are virtually indistinguishable from political disputes. In order to understand the complexity of Ukrainian politics, then, it is necessary to understand some central facts of Ukrainian ecclesiastical history. For this is an emerging nation in which the most bitter battle is not for sovereignty among rival ethnic parties, but rather for a sense of "nationhood" among rival religious groups.
The much publicized "Millennium of Christianity" in Russia gave a boost to Ukrainian national feeling. Ancient Kiev, of course, was the cradle of culture in "ancient Rus." As the architectural and literary manuscripts attest, this was a culture centered in the Church. Although the Soviets focused upon the native monarchical sources of ancient Rus in the person of Vladimir and Yaroslav the Wise, the ecclesiastical structure of church government came from Byzantium. Thus Constantinople "commissioned" the bishops of ancient Kiev, both before and after they were themselves native Slavs.

The kingdom of ancient Kiev fell into a long process of dissolution and decay. Even as the civil government of Kiev was eclipsed by that of Moscow, however, the ecclesiastical government of Kiev remained distinct and far-reaching. As Ukraine was in effect absorbed by Moscow in the east and Poland (or later, Austria Hungary) in the west, Kiev retained an independent Metropolitan or "chief" among regional bishops, sanctioned by Constantinople. (From 1453, when the Turks occupied Constantinople, this connection became formal only; yet in that connection subsisted the canonicity of the Kievan Church.) During the centuries, then, when Ukraine developed her distinct language and distinct cultural identity, the roots of that distinction lay in her independent and sanctioned ecclesiastical government.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth century, however, this separate regional church was in effect divided between Moscow and the west. In the west, through a series of developments beginning when west Ukraine was placed under Polish dominion in 1569, these essentially Orthodox peoples were placed under the jurisdiction of the papacy. Though they retained their distinct liturgy and customs, and though they worshipped in the same way that Orthodox do, they were grafted onto the structure of the Catholic Church as a separate
"Ukrainian or Eastern rite." In the east, the Patriarch of Moscow was now in a much stronger position than even the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople whose Church was now subordinate to the Muslim Ottoman Turks. Thus Moscow prevailed upon Constantinople to subject the ancient church of Kiev to Moscow in 1686. In the process, Ukrainian-language presses were suppressed, Ukrainian hierarchs suppressed in favor of Russian ones, and Ukrainians became in effect "Russian" Orthodox Christians.

Thus over the past three hundred years, Rome and Moscow have made religious claims upon Ukraine. On the one hand, "Ukrainian Catholics" were strong in the west but subject to Rome, whereas on the other hand the "Ukrainian Orthodox" were strong in the east but subject to Moscow. Periodically, in both east and west, individual bishops or writers have advocated a return to an independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church, with its "canonicity" or legal status deriving from the Patriarch of Constantinople. The politically vulnerable Patriarch in Constantinople, however, could not encourage or openly recognize this Ukrainian desire without offending the Patriarch in Moscow. This situation still affects church politics in Ukraine.

Both the Ukrainian Catholics and the Ukrainians who wanted an independent Orthodoxy have suffered under Soviet rule. The Orthodox, who are strongest in the east, felt the opposition of the Soviets first. During the civil war, a group of Ukrainians hastily organized an "Autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Church." Haste caused them to ignore canonical regularities, and this nationally popular movement did not win the recognition of the Orthodox world. It was suppressed by the Soviets, sooner and more insistently than the Moscow Patriarchate.
In the Polish-controlled areas to the west, however, there was an Orthodox presence alive between the world wars, during the strongest period of religious persecution in the USSR. This Orthodox "minority" among a Roman Catholic and Ukrainian Catholic population appealed to the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople for some form of recognition. He complied. He sanctioned an Orthodox movement in Poland, and for his precedent he claimed the ancient Metropolitanate of Kiev. In effect, then, in a move very meaningful to Ukrainians, he saw their Church as a remnant of and a successor of the old Church of Kievan Rus.

For this Orthodox Church, in Warsaw, were consecrated bishops, most of them Ukrainian nationalists and some of them former adherents of the old "Ukrainian Autocephalous" church. One of them, the most Rev. Mstyslav Skrypnyk, was a veteran of armed Ukrainian resistance to the Soviets and would become in his lifetime a symbol of Ukrainian national feeling. During World War II, as Soviet forces advanced, these anti-Communist bishops fled the Red Army. Portrayed by the Soviets as fascist sympathizers, and by nationalist Ukrainians as heroes of anti-Communist resistance, they became the centers of the emigre community in the west. As they immigrated to the U.S., they formed here an "Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church" (see pp. 9-10 of this report) which now plays a new role in Ukrainian affairs.

In the Soviet Union itself, during the '20's and '30's, Orthodoxy as a whole experienced cruel suppression. When Stalin allowed the Church to re-establish itself during the Second World War, he established a tight control over the church by an efficient network of local state "procurators" and secret police. A centralized Russian church served his needs
for regulation, and hence he did not allow a resuscitation of the independent "Ukrainian Orthodox" movement in Ukraine. When, after the war, he absorbed the three provinces of west Ukraine where the Ukrainian Catholics were a strong native movement, he brutally suppressed their church. He offered local priests the option of joining the Russian Orthodox Church or facing imprisonment. Those loyal to their "Catholic" identity were killed or imprisoned. Ukrainian Catholics went "underground," in an organized program of fidelity to their distinct identity. Orthodox hierarchs cooperated, or at least complied, with this process of suppression.

Thus in both east and west Ukraine, there is a legacy of bitter resentment against Russian ecclesiastical authority. Among believers here more than in Russia itself, there is a strong consciousness of corruption and sycophancy in the relations of church with state. From the beginning of glasnost, Ukrainian nationalists took an intense interest in church politics. From 1988 the publications of RUKH and other Ukrainian nationalist papers published in the Baltics were full of invective against corruption among the "Russian" hierarchy.

Ukrainians expressed particular animosity against Metropolitan Philaret, the Moscow-appointed chief prelate of Ukraine. An ethnic Ukrainian, he is seen as a tool of Russian domination. He was widely reported to have kept his secretary woman as his wife, and to have had children by her. (Orthodox bishops, as monastics, are presumed to be celibate.) He also had used his position to build important allies among government authorities in Ukraine, and claims were made that there was financial misdealing involved in these contacts.
Open resistance to Moscow in Ukraine began, in fact, with church movements. The Moscow Patriarchate, after glasnost, became an only intermittently veiled metaphor for Soviet authority itself. The state, in relaxing its policies regarding religion, also unwittingly opened the floodgates for nationalist feeling in Ukraine as in other Orthodox republics. This feeling against Moscow had different manifestations among "Catholic" and "Orthodox" Ukrainians.

The "Ukrainian Catholics" gained legal toleration through a meeting between Gorbachev and Pope John Paul II in 1989. The Ukrainian Catholics were immediately suffered once more to exist, even before their legal recognition. In fact, almost immediately factions formed within western Ukrainian parishes which wished to "reclaim" the church building and property, "Orthodox" only for the past two generations, and to reclaim the parish once more for the Ukrainian Catholic Church. These factions grew into organized movements, and through 1989 to the present moment there have been pitched battles between "Catholic" and "Orthodox" camps for church property. In Lviv (Lwow), the Russian Orthodox bishop was held in virtual siege in the city’s cathedral. Finally he ceded the location to the Catholic camp, and in his former residence dwells the Vatican-appointed Cardinal Lyubchevskij, himself an import from the Ukrainian Catholic community in the United States.

The Orthodox movement for independence from Moscow began concurrently, with the return of Ukrainian Catholicism. In the autumn of 1989, Bishop Ioann Bodnarchuk, a prelate serving in Zhotimir under the Patriarchate of Moscow, declared himself the head of an "Autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Church." He appealed to the Patriarch of Constanti-
nople for recognition. Patriarch Dimitrios did not respond to the appeal. Looking to the emigre community in Canada and the U.S. for moral and financial support, Bishop Ioann then launched his movement inside Ukraine. This Autocephalous Ukrainian Church was perceived among Ukrainian nationalists as a credible alternative to Moscow’s ecclesiastical authority. It thus halted, in some instances, the flow of property and believers to the Ukrainian Catholics: Orthodox communities could claim properties that were previously "Orthodox," or they could build new churches in outlying regions.

These two movements away from Moscow, Catholic and Orthodox, virtually depleted the Moscow Patriarchate of all its parishes in west Ukraine. The movements also spread eastward. Some Ukrainian Catholic parishes were founded in areas where there had been no Catholic presence before the revolution. The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church also gained strong support in Kiev and in areas further east. In response to this threat to its authority, the Moscow Patriarchate in effect excommunicated Bishop Ioann Bodnarchuk and his followers in late 1989, formally revoking his ordination and monastic tonsure and declaring the ministries of his priests to be "without grace."

This Orthodox movement, however, continued to claim some popular support. In an important move, an assembly of laity and clergy met in Kiev in June, 1990, and elected a Patriarch for their church in the person of Metropolitan Mstyslav. This prominent living symbol of Ukrainian nationalism was at first denied a visa to come to Ukraine and rule his "mother Church," but eventually the authorities relented. He traveled to Ukraine and assumed some control over his Autcephalous Movement. He is now ailing and at his residence in South Boundbrook, New Jersey. In the next section of this report, I describe
my on-site observations of the Autocephalous Church in west Ukraine, which has had some severe problems of adjustment to the rule of an aging emigre.

As if three warring parties were not enough, Moscow sought to stem the tide of resistance to its ecclesiastical authority by establishing yet another church jurisdiction. Patriarch Pimen before his death in 1989 had through his agents protested the actions of the Ukrainian Catholics in the west, and he had at least formally presided over the excommunication of the Ukrainian Autocephalous hierarchs. But Russian churchmen well knew that as Russians, they were at a distinct disadvantage in holding on to Ukraine. Now, to replace the former Moscow Patriarchate in Kiev, the Patriarch in Moscow formally established yet another body. Called the "Ukrainian Orthodox Church" in effect this church continued virtually unchanged as the continuation of Moscow’s old ecclesiastical power. This Church was to be the sole canonical Orthodox authority in Ukraine, and its leader was to be Metropolitan Philaret. Significantly, the Soviet government would recognize only this church.

The Ukrainian Catholics were left unharrassed in the western provinces; but the Autocephalous Church had no legal status.

The choice of Philaret as leader of this movement proved to be a tactical mistake, acknowledged later by sources in the Moscow office of the Patriarch. Philaret had in fact built important contacts among conservative government forces in Ukraine, Communists who were rapidly "converting" to a form of Ukrainian nationalism. But he also suffered a "credibility problem." Widely perceived as a compromised and corrupt hierarch, he could no longer claim the same loyalty on the street that he could in the corridors of power. In the Church, the woman rumored to be his wife had alienated subordinates with an imperiousness
of manner. Philaret could thus hold onto an official place, but the source of his power and loyalties were beginning to erode. After the coup, this process of erosion accelerated into a near collapse.

Philaret had been the chief rival, against now-Patriarch Alexei, for the office of Patriarch after Pimen's death. Had glasnost never happened, he would no doubt have succeeded. But at the present time, he remains a hierarch in Kiev whose scandals are openly reported in the press. He remains a power to be negotiated with among those who seek some avenues to church unity in Ukraine, but he has lost much of his former power.

The Patriarch of Constantinople remains an important figure in the background of religious-nationalist feeling in the former Soviet Union. As Ukraine demonstrates, he is an ecclesiastical court of appeal for those Orthodox who resist Moscow's authority. His "recognition" of a movement gives it a strong claim to validity. He has not as yet recognized the Autocephalous Movement in Ukraine, but in a step which gave encouragement to Ukrainians he did recognize the formerly estranged Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, which commands great respect in Ukraine. Thus the late Dimitrios, who died (Oct. 2, 1991) but a few days before this writing, has resisted formal recognition but at the same time given the movement reason to hope for eventual reconciliation with his authority.

In a testimony to the "Byzantine" roots of politics in east Europe, the Patriarch of Constantinople is himself a hostage to Turkish politics. His very title challenges Turkish claims to the area of his see, and his movements are restricted by Turkish authorities. The Turkish government in the 1970's and 80's closed the last remnants of the prestigious Orthodox theological school at Halki in Turkey, and it seems embarrassed by the importance
of this Orthodox hierarch on what Turks regard sometimes as Muslim, sometimes as
"secularized" soil. When Patriarch Dimitrios was elected in 1972, the Turkish government
had vetoed alternative candidates and demanded that the Patriarch be a Turkish citizen. The
Turkish government retains an important influence on this decision.

Who succeeds Dimitrios in Constantinople will to some degree affect nationalist
politics in Ukraine, Byelorussia, and Georgia, where Orthodoxy has an important role in
shaping a new nationalist vision. The non-Russian republics contain elements who wish to
separate their Orthodox churches from Moscow. The ancient see of Kiev can by precedent
claim a vast territory in Ukraine and Byelorussia. Should the Patriarch of Moscow lose this
area, he will also lose an area where a greater number of believers survived the official
atheist campaigns. He will also lose an area where he has drawn priests, monks, and
financial revenues from generous believers.

Vice President Quayle attended the funeral of the Patriarch of Constantinople. One of
the chief claimants to the Patriarchal throne is Archbishop Iakovos of the Greek Orthodox
Church in North America, an 80 year old but influential hierarch whose earlier candidacy the
Turkish government had vetoed. The Greek community in the United States has appealed to
President Bush to use his influence to prevent a Turkish veto for this election. The alterna-
tive is Metropolitan Bartholomeos, a former aide to Patriarch Dimitrios who is Turkish-born.
In either case, the successor to Dimitrios will pay careful attention to the Ukrainian plea. As
those who work at the Phanar (the Greek "Vatican" in Istanbul) have testified, it will be hard
for the Patriarch to resist an appeal from a unified, and politically liberated Ukraine.
Ukraine has also had better historical relations with Turkey than has Russia itself. Russia, as the powerful champion of Orthodox peoples under Ottoman rule, had with its power once protected the Patriarch in Constantinople himself. Ukraine, as an entity which resisted Russian rule, has sometimes relied upon Turkish alliances to assist it against Moscow. One Ukrainian bishop in the west, bishop Vsevolod, leads a Ukrainian diocese which has consistently served under the Patriarch of Constantinople. (Vsevolod is the bishop of the writer of this report.) To the annoyance of some Greek hierarchs in America, but in good service to the Phanar, he also maintains a warm diplomatic relationship with the Turkish diplomatic community in the United States. Bishop Vsevolod, as a strong advocate of a canonical link between Ukraine and the Patriarch of Constantinople, is likely to have an influence with both parties.

At the present moment, the ecclesiastical situation in Ukraine changes in concert with its political fortunes. In the first blush of the post-coup weeks, the bishops of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church acted against the wishes of Patriarch Mstyslav and "made an offer" to the canonical, formerly Moscow-directed, Ukrainian Orthodox Church. They are still engaged in negotiation. Politically, the Autocephalous Party is at some advantage: they are the acknowledged Ukrainian nationalists; they definitely oppose links with Moscow; and they are perceived to be the spiritual heirs to the "Ukrainianism" now sweeping cultural and intellectual life. Ecclesiastically, however, the Moscow-linked "Ukrainian Orthodox Church" retains the claim to canonicity important for Ukraine's links with the non-Ukrainian world.

I learned in September, 1991, that the Autocephalous Orthodox Church proposed to reunite with the Moscow-linked Ukrainian Orthodox Church only under certain conditions.
Chief among those conditions was that all Ukrainian Orthodox would renounce the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Moscow over Ukraine. In return, the Autocephalous Church would give up its link to the elderly Patriarch Mstyslav whom they had elected; the new united Ukrainian Orthodoxy resulting from the union would, however, choose its own Patriarch and, for now at least, remain "uncanonical." Political forces in Ukraine are reported to favor such a reunion.

A Visit to West Ukraine

Rome and Moscow still do battle with each other in western Ukraine. Officially, there is some ecumenical diplomacy in progress. The pope, genuinely heartened by the religious revival among Orthodox, is reluctant to offend Moscow. As I learned through an audience with Cardinal Lyubachevkij, he directs his Ukrainian Catholic bishops to be cordial with Russian Orthodox hierarchs. This diplomacy, however, does not extend to the Autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Now, in fact, a battle for Ukraine is fought through the Autocephalous Ukrainians. This jurisdiction, which admits its own haste and ineptness in declaring its independence, yet sees no alternative to its choices.

I visited Western Ukraine illegally, with the assistance and technical help of several Ukrainian seminarians who had become my friends at the St. Petersburg Academy. They guided me through west Ukraine, arranging for my travel, concealing me from authorities, and taking me to various sources in Lviv, Druobich, Ternopil and various villages between these cities. They also arranged for my meetings with both Autocephalous Orthodox and
Ukrainian Catholic hierarchs, priests, and parishioners. In the process of my travels, I took a videotape which contains much footage of parish life, church construction, and a mass demonstration in Ternopil on the first anniversary of Patriarch Mstyslav’s election.

In Druhobich, I saw a sample of the struggle between Autocephalous Orthodox and Ukrainian Catholics in Ukraine. Druhobich is typical of west Ukraine in that there is now virtually no representation by the Moscow Patriarchate: only in major cities where Russians or Russified Ukrainians dwell is there any weak presence of those still religiously loyal to Moscow. Taken to the one fully functioning parish which remained Orthodox, I discovered that in the space of a week it had become Ukrainian Catholic. Under the "restoration of religious properties act," the newly-renovated parish had been awarded to the "Catholic faction" in the parish. It was crowded with parishioners for the Sunday service. Most parishioners whom I questioned were unaware of a shift in "jurisdiction": they simply thought that a new priest had been assigned.

In Druhobich, only one small cemetery chapel remains Orthodox. The tape, with its footage of a vigorous children’s choir, clearly indicates that the chapel is crowded with those who have chosen this option. Meeting with me in the churchyard after liturgy, they complained loudly that "the very ground had been stolen from underneath them." (Perceiving me as an Orthodox cleric, they were of course vocal in attributing all fault to the Catholic side.) In this town the authorities were sympathetic to the Catholic movement. Throughout west Ukraine both sides, Catholic and Orthodox, acknowledged that the authorities now appealed openly to a religious constituency. The authorities were more
willing to award property to those who were able to draw funds from the west for restoration, maintenance, and (not always rarely) for substantial "legal fees" paid to local officials.

The process by which this transference occurs is simple. The tape, in first footage, shows a neatly restored, newly painted parish. The parish council had undertaken those restorations with the full expectation that the parish would remain Orthodox. All it took in Druhobich, however, was an appeal on the part of the Catholics to the local authorities to sign over the property forthwith to their party. The priests were expelled or urged to defect; the parish then became officially "Ukrainian Catholic" and subject to the authority of Cardinal Lyubachevskij in Lviv. The same process, of course, could occur on the other side.

The role of the local authorities in this process is crucial. In 1989-90, Gorbachev came to an agreement with the Vatican. In effect, the west Ukraine has been "signed over" to the Catholics who were dominant (but not exclusive) here before the war. With the return of Catholic figures like Cardinal Lyubachevskij also came western funds. These are sometimes identified as funds "from the Vatican," but in truth their source is varied. Much of it comes from Ukrainian Catholic sources, probably heavily amplified by Roman Catholic funds, based in the U.S. At any rate, these funds are a very effective source of power. A single dollar is now well over 30 roubles even on the official market. Western money, or valiuta as it is known here, buys a lot of influence.

The Patriarchate of Moscow has experienced a wholesale rejection on the part of an Orthodox population who accuse Moscow of simony, domination, and suppression of
Ukrainian identity. The only Orthodox presence, then, is that of the Autocephalous Movement. Yet this movement is isolated from the Orthodox world at present and in possession of fewer funds than its Catholic counterpart. Its legal position is challenged both by Moscow and by the Ukrainian Catholics. Thus this movement is in an extremely vulnerable position. No Orthodox congregation can be certain of its property. The Catholics in fact are in league with the Moscow Patriarchate in weakening the Orthodox presence: both challenged the civic legality of the Autcephalous Church before the coup, and both resist its "canonical" recognition by other churches.

This has not prevented the Autocephalous Orthodox Church from vigorous building and restoration. Village parishes through voluntary labor are erecting impressive new churches across the countryside. They must contend, in a market of scarcity, for the bricks and mortar with which to build, but the feeling is that a parish which newly incorporates as Orthodox is more likely of retaining its property. This device, however, does not always work against local authorities who are of another persuasion.

I drove through the countryside and stopped at a number of these village parishes. As I spoke with the Orthodox there, they were both resolute in their Orthodoxy and eager for the sympathy of the Orthodox world. They made frequent appeals to the Ecumenical Patriarch to penetrate the political obstacles in order to receive them under his protection. There was an aura of resignation, even a kind of fatalism in their appeal. They understood that they were not likely to gain outside recognition for their movement, but they seemed dogged in their commitment to this option.
There are strong efforts to undermine the movement. The strongest effort was in the form of rumors and warnings issued through the Moscow Patriarchate. One rumor, which was received as true by every cleric I met, claimed that The Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople was soon to meet in Moscow with Patriarch Alexei and other Orthodox patriarchs. These Patriarchs, it was claimed, were to anathematize, together, all schisms in the areas once controlled by the Patriarch of Moscow.

The rumors had met with success. There was a perceptible demoralization of the Autocephalous Church even at the suggestion that the Ecumenical Patriarch would pronounce an anathema. When questioned as to why the Patriarch would wish to explicitly condemn them, the clerics of the autocephalous movement claimed that they had been given a rationale by sources in Moscow. Alexei of Moscow upon his visit to Jerusalem, it was claimed, had given Patriarch Dimitrios certain concessions in the Holy Land. In return, the rumor asserted, the Ecumenical Patriarch was to give up all claim to Ukraine and anathematize those in Ukraine who would appeal to him for recognition. Such is the atmosphere of the church in the USSR that these rumors received wide credence, and that a source in the Department of External Church Relations admitted that these reports had been fed to Ukraine (though, he claimed, they had been spread only as "possibilities" in order to discourage the movement.)

Patriarch Mstyslav of the Autocephalous Movement resided in Kiev at the time of my visit. I went to Ternopil for a demonstration in honor of the Sobor (or Church Council) which had proclaimed him Patriarch in June of 1990. The demonstration was, in effect, more of a partisan assertion of Orthodoxy than a celebration of Patriarch Mstyslav. Many
thousands of people prayed, sang hymns, and carried icons together in a sign of their solidarity. As the speeches indicate to those who understand Ukrainian, their Orthodoxy was in part at least an "apologetic" for their loyalty to Ukraine.

These speeches must be heard in context: the Ukrainian Catholic nationalists, so long suppressed, made consistent claims that the Orthodox were puppets of the Russians and under Communist control. Thus the Orthodox Autocephalous movement, no less nationalist, is especially fervent in claiming their Ukrainian identity. They thereby invite further charges from both Catholics and "canonical" Orthodox that they are "mere" nationalists, and not a church at all.

The demonstration in its essence, apart from the presence of Patriarch Mstyslav, shows the vitality of Orthodox "self definition" in west Ukraine. The elaborate banners in the demonstration were taken from rural parish churches, and the bulk of the people who actually marched to the central square in Ternopil were in fact collective farmers from the surrounding villages. In the square, the demonstration attracted Ternopil residents. The highlight and focus of the demonstration was the arrival and public blessing of Patriarch Mstyslav, a symbol of pre-revolutionary Ukrainian nationalism.

Aside from his symbolism, Patriarch Mstyslav presents a series of difficulties to his clerics in west Ukraine. I have met with him at his consistory in South Boundbrook, among his clergy in the United States. I also saw him here, in west Ukraine, where he presented himself quite differently. Although he is at present still a figurehead for Ukrainian Orthodox identity, as an effective leader he has disappointed many of those who chose him. Three of his own priests, who spoke to me in confidence, described him as a "disaster" (katastrof).
This estrangement is responsible for the current Synod of bishops acting independent of his control. Consequently, it is important to view the Autocephalous Movement in Ukraine as an entity apart from this leader who has, in effect, attached himself to a movement which chose him sight unseen.

Speaking at the demonstration, the Patriarch spoke primarily of Ukrainian nationalism and of his church as its symbol. A shrewd politician, Mstyslav has made alliances further east in Kiev, to balance against the Galician and west Ukrainian authorities in suit to Cardinal Lyubachevskij. There is one difference, however, crucial to west Ukraine: Mstyslav’s alliances do not much help his people here, where the bulk of his supporters actually live. Ukrainian priests and one of his Bishops complained that they had seen virtually none of the money which American Ukrainians had sent. The authorities in Kiev had absorbed most of it. Reportedly, the printing press and other facilities which Mstyslav had set up in east Ukraine were yielding profits to his own family.

Present at the banquet held for Mstyslav following the demonstration, I was struck by the number of empty places, set and ready. In a society where good, restaurant-produced food is at a premium, the absence of so many invited priests spoke volumes about the popularity of this Patriarch among his own clergy. Although I did not hide my own identity from my hosts, they also did not introduce me to their Patriarch. Rather, they secreted my letter of introduction from my own bishop and arranged to speak to me later, in secret, after the banquet.

What distinguished the Patriarch’s remarks were their exclusive focus upon himself. Priests were offended, for example, that he made such comments as these: "Didn’t you know I said
that? It's a pity you did not read my remarks in the Ukrainian press." A priest responded to me in an aside: "How could I have read his remarks in the 'Ukrainian press'? Doesn't he understand our situation here?" Mstyslav's apparent self-absorption, and his archaic distance from the plight of contemporary Ukrainians, have made him less popular with his clergy than he is with the people who do not encounter him.

He has attempted to bolster his position by shifts of assignments and responsibilities, replacing those who question him with loyalists. There is some concern that among these "loyalists" chosen in Ukraine are those who report directly to Moscow and do their best to undermine the movement they lead. These charges, of course, are unanswerable. Pavel Bodnarchuk pointed out to me, however, that among those who now proclaim Mstyslav the most loudly are those who a year ago were the most ardent Russophiles.

The result of this disappointment in Mstyslav, however, is a decided leaning among the Ukrainian clergy toward the "canonical option": that is, the alliance of the Ukrainians in Canada with the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople. Bishop Vasilii and many priests, none of whom yet knew of my meetings with Ukrainians in Canada, told me outright: "From America, we receive almost nothing. All of our assistance has come from Canada." The Canadian Ukrainians give encouragement and support to the Autocephalous movement, and the Ukrainian seminary in Winnipeg, St. Andrew's, is offering instruction in the newly established seminary. "Canonically," however, this link cannot be effected. The Patriarch in Constantinople still holds the key to recognition of a separate, independent Ukrainian Church.
The conventional wisdom assumed that the elderly Patriarch Mstyslav, who has stormy relations with Constantinople, would die first and open the road for negotiations. As it happens, however, Patriarch Dimitrios of Constantinople has preceded Mstyslav in death. It will be at least forty days from Oct. 8, 1991, before a new Patriarch can be chosen.

President Bush has been approached for his assistance in dealing with the Turkish government; the Turkish government in return may not exert its usual pressures. In this case Archbishop Iakovos, with forty years of American experience, will assume the Ecumenical throne. If not, Metropolitan Bartholomeos will likely take the office. In either case, there will be an unwillingness to recognize a Ukrainian Orthodox church unless Ukraine itself can unify under a single Orthodox banner.

In Lviv, I spoke with a seminarian in the Patriarchal seminary in Kiev—a seminary in Ukraine but yet loyal to Moscow and Metropolitan Philaret of Kiev. Although a student at a Patriarchal seminary, he was loyal to the Autocephalous movement and indicated the depth of resistance to Moscow among seminarians in the newly opened seminary. He confirmed, independently, an assessment I had received from Bishop Vasili and other priests in Ternopil. If given a canonical alternative to Moscow, the bulk of Ukrainian priests would tomorrow join the Autocephalous Movement. Several seminarians told me that the seminary in Kiev was an unhappy place, enforcing loyalty to Moscow and yet well aware that the Patriarchate was not popular there. In May of 1991, the Ukrainian language was still "discouraged" at the seminary. This was, of course, a biased observation: but it demonstrated a bias which today characterizes the atmosphere in Ukraine.
In Lviv, I also submitted my letter of introduction from Bishop Vsevolod at the palace of Cardinal Lyubachevskij. To my own surprise, he received me and granted me an interview. I gained a great deal from this interview, and I can offer some insights as to the state of the Ukrainian Catholic mind in west Ukraine.

First of all, the staff of the Cardinal openly refer to him as "Patriarch" when they receive guests. (Ukrainian Catholics commonly view their own confession as the legitimate heir to the ancient Metropolitanate of Kiev.) The Cardinal himself, however, pointedly avoids at least one mark of that office. When I was received by him, I used the Russian title appropriate to Patriarch: "Your Holiness." The Cardinal corrected me, stating that this title was appropriate only for the papacy.

The Cardinal was diplomatic but cool. His own ideological leanings were in many ways far more conservative than those of Rome. Aware of my activity in Orthodox-Ukrainian Catholic dialogue in the U.S., and of an upcoming American conference which I was organizing in order to ease tensions between us, he spoke of such efforts as "useless." (Rome officially encourages such efforts.) In Catholic terms, he expressed a pre-Vatican II theology. He alluded to Orthodox as "schismatics" who "lied" about the Ukrainian Catholics; he maintained that the Orthodox had surrendered all claim to continuity with the Apostolic Church of St. Vladimir (again, not a position in line with conciliatory gestures Rome has made toward the Orthodox.) His rhetoric was very different from that which the papacy has used toward Orthodox since the time of Pope John XXIII. Yet it was also clear, through the Cardinal's repeated references to his audiences with Pope John Paul II, that he believes he enjoys the confidence of the papacy.
Publications which the Ukrainian Catholics produce in Canada and Ukraine currently inflame hostilities between the two groups. These catechisms are an embarrassment to the most prominent Catholic theologians, for they allude to Catholics who marry Orthodox as committing "the gravest of sins." The literalism produces tragic results. In Ukraine I confirmed one story of a pious dead Orthodox woman whose burial was prohibited in her own churchyard, for she had died Orthodox and the parish had recently been shifted to the Uniates. There are other such stories I was unable to examine. The Autocephalous Orthodox press responds with its own polemic, claiming that the Ukrainian Catholics are in effect a "foreign" element in Ukraine.

In the Cardinal's conversation there were hints that the pope hoped for some accord with the Russians. He informed me that the pope was especially interested in the Cardinal's recent conversations with the Russian Orthodox bishop of Smolensk: "How did it go?" the pope was reported to have asked, anxiously. The Cardinal assured the Pope that he had not offended his Russian counterpart to the east. It is clear that the Cardinal is not eager to openly offend the Russian heirarchs: the focus of his hostility was the Autocephalous Orthodox movement, which is in a much more vulnerable position.

The Cardinal's attitude clearly demonstrated this hostile focus upon the Autocephalous movement. The Cardinal admitted that the civil authorities in west Ukraine were now, in effect, helpful to the Catholics. "Perhaps they are afraid of us, I don't know," he said with a wave of his hand. He claimed that the Ukrainian Autocephalous Movement could "never survive." "They are a movement based upon a politics, not upon Jesus Christ," he said.
Yet in Ternopil, the speeches of civil officials at the demonstration--some of them themselves not believers--appealed for a cessation of hostilities between the two parties.

Most controversial was the Cardinal's assertion, often repeated in advancing the Catholic position, that "the Orthodox never suffered under the Communists." The Catholics were indeed victims of the forced cooperation between Church and State after World War II, and of course the Orthodox officially complied with the complete suppression of the Ukrainian Catholics. Public penance from Orthodox figures has not been forthcoming, despite appeals from former dissidents like Fr. Gleb Yakunin. There are, however, abundant examples of Orthodox suffering as well. What is more, there is plenty of evidence that the Orthodox were themselves the victims of corruption in Ukraine rather than its perpetrators. Now some believers on both sides are growing weary of the scandal their disagreement has caused.

The Ukrainian Orthodox are aware of their increasing isolation. Bishop Vasilii of Ternopil, who has experienced hardships including imprisonment in the Gulag and exile in Siberia, conveys a profound weariness in his private moments. The rumor that the Ecumenical Patriarch was about to anathematize the Autocephalous Movement clearly weighed heavily upon him. At all levels, from the clergy to the parishes, there was a desire to make the larger Orthodox world aware of the Ukraine's isolated position. The Ecumenical Patriarch has clearly emerged as a great hope for canonical communion, but it is a hope few expect to be soon realized.

In fact, those willing to defend the elevation of Metropolitan Mstyslav as Patriarch (most clerics I met seemed to acknowledge the move as a mistake) saw Mstitslav as a way to
"force the hand" of the Orthodox authorities outside the USSR. Without him, they maintained, they would be invisible. Better to have a champion, even an irritating champion, than to be absorbed by a Moscow which forced itself upon them--or so they seemed to think.

Patriarch Mstyslav, when he spoke among his own clerics, showed a clear awareness that this desire for visibility and reconciliation was his strong suit. He is quick to suppress or transfer those who openly express a commitment to the Canadians: for a new movement, his bishops show a great degree of mobility. He shows a hostility to Bishop Vsevolod, which has an edge sharpened by jealousy at Bishop Vsevolod's link to the Patriarchate. He made much of his own political connections to past heirarchs, to former President Reagan, to figures in the Ukrainian political scene. (The priests present regarded these Ukrainian connections as "archaic." He wanted to convey a confidence that he could steer his people through to safety and inclusion in the Orthodox world.

Patriarch Mstyslav's weakness, however, is his strength: he assumes so much authority, despite his advanced age, that it is difficult for a strong successor to emerge. Like the Ayatollah Khomeini, and indeed like Cardinal Lyubachevskij, his strength is based upon conflict. It is in his interest, then, that conflicts continue. And the atmosphere within his Consistories in June was one of a "pre-glasnost" tension and rumor: spies were feared from Moscow among those loyal to the idea of Autocephaly or autonomy under Constantinople; agents of Mstyslav were feared by those who oppose Moscow yet wish an alliance with the "Mstyslav-free" Ukrainians in the diaspora.

The Prognosis for Orthodoxy in Ukraine
For those weary of this conflict and intrigue, the best internal solution is clearly to promote conciliation among all Orthodox Ukrainians. There is little if any support for Moscow among the people in west Ukraine. As we move eastward, however, the Moscow Patriarchate becomes a greater force to contend with. Priests and seminarians simply do not wish to commit to an "uncanonical" jurisdiction and an hierarch without world recognition. If any promise or hope of canonicity could be given to Ukraine, I would agree that masses of Ukrainian parishes in the east as well would join in the Ukrainian Movement.

In September of 1991, after the coup, Metropolitan Philaret had established alliances with the now "conservative nationalist" leadership in Kiev. By now, however, reports of scandal surrounding his rule have been published in the press. He engaged in counter-charges with his accusers. Priests seem weary of their own divisions, and the current attempts at reunion between the Autocephalous church and the "Moscow-based" church are likely to continue. There is a strong sentiment on all sides to sever connections with the Patriarch of Moscow.

My friends among the former "dissidents" first reported to me that Patriarch Alexei, in order to improve the situation in Ukraine, had wanted to move Metropolitan Philaret to another see, but that the Metropolitan's "government connections" prevented him from doing so. These sources, of course, were prone to be negative about the Metropolitan in the first place. However, another direct government source, a deputy in the LennSoviet friendly to the "Society for an Open Christianity", repeated the same charge. And I asked a third source, a press secretary to Patriarch Alexei himself, why Metropolitan Philaret had not been
transferred. He said to me (unofficially, of course) that Metropolitan Philaret would be a
disaster wherever he were sent.

Any assessment of the situation in Ukraine, then, has to take into account three
important figures. Cardinal Lyubachevskij has a popular following, but his basis of support
in Ukraine is in some ways an embarrassment to the Vatican outside Ukraine's borders.
Patriarch Mstytслав also has a popular following among the uninitiated, but the clergy as they
draw close to him lose enthusiasm for his leadership. And finally, Metropolitan Philaret of
Kiev is extremely unpopular both with his clergy and with the people. He seems to be
sustained by civil authorities which show every sign of weakening. What support he has in
eastern Ukraine is derived from his canonicity.

The Ukrainian Orthodox have had less success than other groups in attracting
financial help from the west. Money sent to west Ukraine through Kiev does not usually
leave the capital, reflecting a similar situation in Moscow. Books are now redundant gifts:
they can be produced much more cheaply on Ukrainian soil. What clerics seek is technical
equipment, computers and layout and type-setting capacities, for the Church on its own soil.
Yet Ukrainians in the diaspora have not organized themselves for this effort as well as
Protestant groups and other proselytizing sects; nor do Ukrainian Orthodox in America
appear to have the finances available to other groups. (On the video you can see a young
Ukrainian Krishna devotee selling copies of the Bhaghavad-gita on the streets of Lviv.)

The "canonically Orthodox Ukrainians" in diaspora act in a rather haphazard
coordination with the Ecumenical Patriarch. There are times when Ukrainian interests in
Ukraine do not correspond, exactly, to the Greek or Turkish politics which weight heavily in
Constantinople. Patriarch Alexei II of Russia will visit the U.S.A. in mid-November, 1991. Prominent on his agenda is an attempt to meet with SCOBA or the "Standing Conference of Orthodox Bishops" in New York. He can be expected to plead his case against a recognition of an independent Ukrainian church. The canonically recognized Ukrainain hierarchs are likely to meet together, with representation of the Ecumenical Patriarch, to discuss these issues and coordinate their policies.

In Ukraine, as in Russia, the cultural and political stakes are very high. The current intrigues within the Ukrainian church, despite their unseemly and even scandalous undertones, are in effect a reorganization and reshifting of the religious sensibilities of the people. These religious feelings have arisen with great strength. For those of us who worked with these communities through the seventies and eighties, it was apparent that they shaped a strong but largely invisible current in the cultural life of the USSR before "glasnost." The community of Sovietologists has long placed religion in the backwater of Soviet studies, but clearly religious interests are now prominent ones among academics and politicians in Ukraine.

In the resurgence of interests in Ukrainian national identity, the early history of the Ukrainian church enjoys a new popularity among humanists and linguists. Ukrainian bishops in the west are viewed as "repositories of Ukrainian culture" during the years of suppression. The late Metropolitan Ilarion, of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, is widely regarded as a scholar in Ukraine; and scholars from Ukraine itself now travel to use his archive at St. Andrew's seminary in Winnipeg. Even those authors, poets, and singers who are manifestly secular now show a marked hospitality to religious images and themes.
Added to this, of course, is the power of religious identity as a galvanizing popular movement. In Ukraine more than in Russia, youth groups and associations are springing up within the structure of the churches. Patriotism reflects itself, as it did in Ternopil, in the context of religious expression. Suppression of religious symbols is not seen as a way to promote pluralism, but rather as a reminder of the forced suppression of all religion through the years of Soviet power. The provinces of west Ukraine were spared a generation of religious persecution during their Polish administration in the space between wars. Thus the west of Ukraine is a kind of "religious resource" for the whole of Ukraine. What we see now in these religious controversies is a struggle for the Ukrainian imagination. The outcome is far more important than that of a mere sectarian struggle.

The Russian Church in Domestic and International Politics

The political situation inside the USSR, as might be expected, has undergone dramatic shifts. The Moscow Patriarchate struggles to keep afloat in a turbulent sea, but it is weighted down by its former cooperation with the oppressive Communist Party. Within the Patriarchate, there are efforts to rid the Church of this heavy weight, but they meet with only limited success. For one thing, the Church finds it difficult in Russia to be "apolitical." There are inbred impulses to accommodate to any authority: hence the Patriarch has a tendency to act too swiftly to support what he perceives as the emerging strongman. The Church is not used to a democratic environment; in fact, there are those within the Church who are hostile to democracy in Russia. Previous to the events of August 1991, the election
of Boris Yeltsin as President of the Russian Republic complicated the situation and added to a level of instability. Some "public penitence" for past mistakes on the part of the Patriarch, and his marked shift toward "constitutional authority" during the coup itself, has caused the Russian church to look forward to a new political vitality.

This has not been an easy transition. A few months ago, for example, Gorbachev was perceived as "cracking down" on dissent and consolidating his strength under the conservatives. Patriarch Alexei, accordingly, was one of the co-signers of a letter urging him to exert his authority and suppress "destructive forces" hostile to the Soviet Federation. This hurt the credibility of the Church in many quarters.

The Ukrainians, understandably, saw the Patriarch as urging the central government to impose its own will—and concurrently that of the Moscow Patriarchate—on Ukraine. Indeed, before August the officially articulated line from the Patriarchate was that the Ukrainian Orthodox movement was a nationalist one and that the Patriarchate "would never allow it to be recognized [by the government]" for that reason. Now, however, the secular government in Moscow has lost its ability or desire to "recognize" religious movements in the republics. The Patriarchate cannot use, then, the secular arm to support its power outside the Russian republic.

Orthodox Christian dissidents, many of whom have only recently spent long hard years in prison, tend to support the democratic movement in Russia. They, too, see the Patriarch as supportive of a Communist hegemony over dissent. The most highly placed of Church officials do in fact fear and despise the dissidents, especially since most of those released from prison know from firsthand experience who in the Church cooperated with the
regime in imprisoning them. The Rector of the Academy in St. Petersburg, for example, urged the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg not to support the Society for an Open Christianity on the grounds that "they have Poresh [a former dissident]. (As reported earlier, Vladimir Poresh has identified at least one influential priest as a frequenter of KGB headquarters during the time of his interrogation.)

Now, however, the KGB itself shows western reporters the two rooms at the Lyubyanka prison from which the church was once manipulated. This does not, as it might in the west, undermine the credibility of the church itself—"the Church" is believed to subsist in the will and piety of the purest of believers. It does, however, place on a precarious footing the position of many hierarchs of highly placed priests who once served the old order. These were also, incidentally, the same officials who maintained contacts with western ecumenical and peace movements in the 1980's, when the Russian church increased its visibility in the west.

The reality of glasnost and the erosion of the Old Order has completely turned over old evaluations of the Russian hierarchy. Metropolitan Pitirim, once celebrated as an intellectual and as leader of the publishing arm of the Moscow Patriarchate, is now dismissed even within the Patriarchal Offices as a collaborator. The World Council of Churches, which once portrayed itself as the champion of the Russian Church, has been largely discredited inside Russia for its notorious silence during the difficult years and its tendency to favor essentially Marxist analyses of the world order before glasnost. Some hierarchs who were regular stops on the old "church tour" circuit, such as the Bishop of Voronezh, are now widely perceived to be financial criminals of the highest order.
Some perceptions of the internal political situation come to me directly from the sources. Former dissidents now have high credibility, ironically even among deputies and civil authorities once inside the Party. These people are, then, often in closer communication now with local civil authorities than the representatives of the official church. Even the government now views many "official" churchmen as potentially dishonest.

In an interesting interview, I also met with a highly placed official at the offices of the Patriarch, a young and aggressive "church progressive." In June he agreed to meet with us only on the Metro and in transit away from church offices. He remarked with some bitter humor on the compromised nature of most church authorities. He remarked, as I have already reported, on the compromised nature of Metropolitan Philaret of Kiev. He had in hand the complete text of the Patriarchal interview in Izvestia, and viewed the "confession" of the Patriarch as quite significant.

On one hand, the secretive nature of my interview with this official was proof of the still compromised nature of the Patriarchate only a few months ago, in June 1991. The Danilovsky monastery is clearly not only infiltrated, but in some measure even administered by the apparatus of state security. When I arrived with my source at the residence of the Patriarch, we were met by a beefy man dressed in western clothes and a fashionable black T-shirt reading "Chanel-Paris," hardly appropriate garb for a church receptionist. He received me under the assumption that I was Soviet, and his greeting, "Where are you going?", was also an indication of his role. The official's decision to meet me outside, and to leave immediately in order to speak more freely, were also clear indications of aggressive monitoring.
On the other hand, however, there are signs that the church is asserting an independence as well. Many young activist priests are engaged, committed to social organization, and alive to the current political situation. Editorializing in the newly published church organ of the Patriarchate is polemical and blunt. It reflects a tendency to be critical of the secular, a-religious strains in the democratic movement and Yeltsin supporters. Yet it is also active in the youth ministry, which has long languished in a country where the religious longing of young people has been ignored even by the church.

The Church in Russia, according to the western press, made a "lukewarm" or "belated" endorsement of the pro-democracy forces during the coup. Cited is the carefully worded statement of Patriarch Alexei II, publicized late on August 20th. Yet the perception inside Russia is quite different. In fact, Orthodox groups which were active outside Moscow received calls and messages late on the 19th and early on the 20th, from Fr. Andrei Kugayev who is the press secretary for the Patriarch. The text of his message, which is in the possession of Volodya Poresh, urged general resistance to the coup among people of faith. In September, the Patriarchate was widely perceived to have done its duty well in supporting democratic forces. In fact, intellectuals in the democratic movement with whom I conferred at a symposium on "the return of Russian religious philosophy" in mid-September, 1991, were heartened. They felt that the strength of their "pro-democracy" faction in the Church was growing.

Much is made of anti-Semitic trends in the Church. There were even widely published speculations in the west that the murder of Fr. Alexander Menn in 1990 was motivated by his Jewish ancestry. It is true, on the one hand, that sources in the Patriarchate
exhibited anti-Semitic tendencies. These were directed, however, at sources inside rather than outside the Church. Indeed, in January of 1990 I accompanied a priest-official at the "Office of External Church Relations," while he escorted a group of Americans to the newly reopened monastery at Optina Pustin near Khozelsk. The priest associated the very dissident movement within the Russian church, headed by people like Fr. Gleb Yakunin, as resulting from a "Jewish" tendency to rely on social action rather than to steep oneself quietly in the streams of "authentic" Russian piety. This destructive tendency to view certain dissident figures as "Jewish" and hence democratic in character was present in the Church through 1990. Now, however, a democratic trend enjoys the endorsement of the church press itself.

Despite these earlier manifestations of anti-Semitism, I would say that the Church shows less rather than more anti-Jewish feeling than the general populace in both Russia and Ukraine. The large scale emigration of Jewish population to the west, and continuing contacts on the part of the Jewish population in major cities, has led to some widespread "speculation" in goods and currency resulting from travelers to and from the west. This can be confirmed by looking at incoming flights from New York to Moscow and Leningrad: the influx of western goods into Russia has a lot of visibility, at least, among the Jewish Soviets returning home after a visit. This leads to resentment, and anti-Jewish feeling, on the part of the general population. Also, some (but by no means all) of the important figures in the most visible Communist oppression of Christians was perpetrated by ethnic Jews--no doubt a deliberate attempt on the part of the KGB to foster interreligious hostilities. This, too, has contributed to a pernicious perception of Jews as "agents of Bolshevism."
This trend of course leads to some alliances between "ultra-nationalists" like Pamyat (but not confined to Pamyat), to exploit anti-Jewish feeling and to link with Orthodox interests. On the whole, however, this "ultra-Orthodoxy" is strongest among those who link themselves to the emigre-based "Church in Exile" (see section on "The Catacomb Church" in this report, pp. 30-35). Gorbachev himself, on Oct. 5, 1991, deplored anti-Semitism as manifest in the current Soviet Union. Those intellectuals within the Church who are friendly to the democratic movement also draw attention to its existence in Orthodox circles.

There is one important community which embodied resistance to this tendency in the Church. Though it does not often receive attention in the west, there has been a widespread conversion of Jews to Orthodoxy in both Russia and Ukraine. (The Jewish converts, because they are Russian speakers, are generally uncomfortable but consistent supporters of the Moscow Patriarchate; few of them are in the Autocephalous movement in Ukraine.) It is important to realize that this movement was not like the "forcible conversions" of the past, nor like the "conversions of convenience" in western Europe. On the contrary, these Jewish intellectuals were harassed by government authorities when they were drawn to the mystic traditions of Orthodoxy during the 1970's and 1980's. In the Church itself, though received, they sometimes experienced a subtle prejudice. They became, however, foremost intellectuals and leaders in the "revival of Russian Orthodoxy."

There are several "Jewish" faculty members at the seminaries in both St. Petersburg and the Monastery of St. Sergius. Some of them, like Fr. Alexander Meerson-Akeseniev, have emigrated to the west. But those who remained in Russia have been very influential in the return of Orthodoxy to its traditional sources. One of them, Fr. Alexander Menn in
Moscow, gained much notoriety in the west when he was brutally murdered in the autumn of 1990. Gorbachev himself commented on the murder and promised to pursue it in a vigorous examination. The "examination," however, led nowhere. Indeed, a priest who decided to examine the death was himself killed.

Though I knew Fr. Menn and discussed his materials in conjunction with our own "Society for an Open Christianity" in St. Petersburg, I can make no definitive statement about his death. I do know, however, that at the time of his death other vocal critics of the Patriarchate were being beaten up and intimidated. My friend Viktor Popkov, who was working with me on an attempt to trace the black market in western-donated religious materials, was beaten badly in January of the same year, 1990, by a crowd of men who were dressed in western sports clothes (not accessible to most Russians). They did not take his money. Fr. Menn appears to have been killed in a similar incident.

Horrible though such a charge appears, it is a suspicion (supported by others in Orthodox dissident circles) that Fr. Menn and the priest investigating his death were in fact eliminated by an alliance of criminals inside the Church and security forces profiting from activities which Father Menn were active in opposing. Fr. Menn has become a kind of "folk martyr", and is perceived as an Orthodox saint of Jewish ancestry. Like many of these Orthodox "children of Israel," Fr. Menn was an intellectual product of Russian culture. Yet like many Russians in the democratic movement, he was openly critical of his church.

I can offer some limited concrete insight into current political shifts within the Patriarchate. I do think that the Patriarchate in Moscow has now called himself to account-
ability. Other hierarchs can be expected to resist, but those conservative forces who were once compliant servants of the old regime will be weakened. The press in the west has spent enough time rejoiceing over a liberated Church. By the same token, sensationalist documentations of corruption in church circles are, in Russia, old news. We can expect new, younger bishops to take their places. Veterans of inter-ethnic struggles, in Russia they can be expected to concentrate on the new crowds of Russian believers coming into their own renovated churches.

The Russian Church will soon lose its monopoly over "Eastern Orthodoxy" in east Europe. The west has perceived this church alone to be the manifestation of this tradition in the "Soviet Union." Now, clearly, new ethnic churches in Ukraine and also in Byelorussia will concentrate on their own populations. These ethnic churches can be expected to make an appeal to their emigre counterparts in the west.

Ecumenism in the Russian Church will, I believe, fall upon hard times. Sustained by the World Council of Churches, it did bring western eyes upon a Church long neglected in the Cold War; in fact, ecumenism probably helped save the structure of the church in the old USSR. It also served, however, the interests of the atheist regime. Bishops were mouthpieces of state policy; ecumenical "ambassadors" from the west gravitated toward those English-speaking sources facilitated by the State. This built resentment against western ecumenists among young Russian priests and believers. Also, a liberal secular agenda in the World Council of Churches finds few sympathizers in the conservative, communalist atmosphere of Orthodoxy.
Conclusions

The Orthodox church, in all its religious, cultural, and political manifestations, now plays a crucial role in the new Russia. The structure of "Russian studies," nestled in the secular western academy, was quite hospitable in many ways to the anti-religious bias of the old Communist regime. There were some notable exceptions in the west like James Billington and Frederick Coplestone, but even these figures were primarily historians. The study of religion or theology as a shaping force on the contemporary Russian mind has been virtually absent in the American academy. We now find ourselves, however, living with the legacy of Nicholas Berdyaev's *The Origins of Russian Communism*, one of the most popular current theoretical texts in Russia. As Berdyaev pointed out, Russian Communism was not at all a western phenomenon, but a product of the Slavic mind reacting with and against its own past. Berdyaev and his colleagues in the philosophical tradition--Shestov, Rozanov, Solovyev, Florensky--are now names uttered with real reverence in Russia. Accompanying the bread shortages there is also a hunger for their works. As a matter of fact, in September the St. Petersburg city council voted to erect a monument in honor of the "emigre Orthodox philosophers" like Berdyaev, Bulgakov, and Frank at the very site of their ship's departure in 1927. (The place is very close, ironically, to a popular revolutionary landmark, the ship *Aurora* which is still moored on the Neva.)

Indeed, scholars now find the Russian religious mind where their predecessors neglected or hesitated to acknowledge it. Mikhail Bakhtin, the influential literary philosopher whose work is still shaping movements within American disciplines, was long celebrated as a
"Marxist." This tendency persisted, even when my own work, the work of Caryl Robertson at Princeton and that of Michael Holquist at Yale virtually documented his connections to the Orthodox church in Russia. Now Bakhtin's former students in Russia marvel at how he developed in the west, and they promise to "do very different things with him."

Reactions against Marxism in Russia, often but not always accompanied by religious associations, causes a certain hostility toward "Marxism" as an intellectual movement in the west. (Yeltsin, when asked where the former Communists would find jobs, quipped that they might find places in American universities.) There is, however, a fundamental misunderstanding of how Marx has often been used in the west: Russians sometimes assume that American academics with any Marxist leanings are allies of their former apparatchiks. Orthodox intellectuals are on the whole "oversimplifiers" of the Marxist legacy in the west. Their unwillingness to have anything to do with it can cloud their judgement, in my opinion, of social movements in the U.S. and western Europe. It may also lead to some eventual tensions between eastern and western academics.

There has been a mass exodus of academics from Russia to the west. In fact, many key literary and critical figures in Russia now lecture in American institutions. This "brain drain" may continue, especially given new economic strains in Russia itself. Given the hospitality of the American academy to secular-minded academics who know our own intellectual climate, it will leave the Russian academy open to those religiously oriented scholars with roots in the Orthodox mystic tradition. Thus Orthodoxy, with all its intellectual depth and yet with its historical tendencies to xenophobia, is likely to grow stronger in the Russian academy and in Russian intellectual life.
There is a tendency among us, on the other hand, to look in Russia for reflections of ourselves and to reward those reflections with publicity and publication. Thus Russian feminists in the western mold, Russian theorists in the "renewed Marxist" models, and other Russian figures who pick up on western interests will draw our own focus in scholarship and the media. This "scholarship with a mirror" can distort our picture of the internal situation in Russia and Ukraine. A 1991 ABC documentary Sex in the USSR, for example, featured gay spokespeople in Moscow. I had met them myself in another context: a former student of mine in Moscow introduced me to them as people associated with the "fringe" Radical Party in the USSR. I was most surprised to see these quite marginal people, now immigrants in New York, extensively quoted as authorities on sexual life in the USSR. The documentary made no attempt to capture the experience of the Russian priests, who deal with the real, everyday problems arising from the sexual climate in the USSR. (The one "cleric" in the documentary was a dour Russian nun who upbraided the west for importing promiscuity and tobacco!)

Thus western scholarship on and awareness of Orthodoxy in Russia and the "Republics" needs updating and expansion. Our own religious history, embedded in John Winthrop and William Bradford, Thomas Jefferson and Harriet Beecher Stowe, indeed in Martin Luther King, is a matter of cultural absorption. The most secular among us is likely to catch some religious nuance, whether it be from "Amazing Grace" or some allusion to the Pilgrim ethos.

We have, however, no such capacity in Russian culture. Liturgical cadences in public speech, allusions to Slavonic tropars or hymns, and appeals to the awakening religious
consciousness of a people we know only in a secular light often utterly miss us. In missing them, we assume that they are not there. Recent events in East Europe have taught us, however, that we can be hampered by our assumptions. It is true that a strong secular strain still exists in Russia. People often know very little about their religious traditions. What they do know is often marked by an astounding, often superstitious conservatism even among recent atheists. But Orthodoxy now provides a "subtext" for Russian life and Russian politics, as it does in its counterparts in those former republics with an Orthodox tradition.

Religion is more than a vague theme. It often yields a real power. In the negotiations for a title to a building on Nevsky Prospekt, the city council of St. Petersburg long weighed the proposals of the "Society for an Open Christianity" to open a center. The building would house a school for high-school age children, a school which now met in crowded quarters in center city. It would also house an academic center for scholars interested in the "intersection between secular and religious culture." The building is on a prime piece of real estate, near the square of Alexander Nevsky. Several western firms wanted it for hotel space. Several government offices wished it as well.

After long, tortuous progress through various political channels, and after virtual pounds of documentation, the Society maintained its claim at ISPALKOM, the city council. Though the other forces in St. Petersburg had either influence or capital, they were only able to stall proceedings without gaining title to the property. In June 1991, these forces almost won out at a "filibuster maneuver" held at the last hour of the council's meeting. Yet after the coup, giving in to the pure popular pressure of a group with wide credibility, the building was awarded to the Society--pending its proof of their ability to raise western capital.
This was a weak victory, perhaps, but a significant one. It is an emblem of myriad "local triumphs" of religious associations throughout the new Soviet Union. The Church has already laid claim to the imagination of the "new" Russia and Ukraine. Whether it will be able to lay claim to any more than that is an open question, subject to its will, its energy, and of course its capital. We western scholars, however, have invested a good deal of our own will, energy, and capital in the study of a once-powerful institution, the Communist Party. The Church which our scholarship so long neglected has outlasted the Party, and it promises to thrive in some form through the foreseeable future. Surely it too must now lay a claim to our resources and attention.

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