

The surfacing of Holy Mother Rus: The Russian Orthodox Church

by Criton Zoakos, Editor-in-chief

For the last 15 years, the Soviet Union has been experiencing a religious revival centered around the Russian Orthodox Church and especially the mystical/military cult of the state of Saint Sergii of Radonezh. It is this outlook that forms the bedrock of the current imperialist perspective of the Kremlin leadership to make Russia "the Third and Final Rome." Among the four institutions which comprise the leadership of Russian society—the Soviet military, the KGB, the Communist Party, and the Russian Orthodox Church—it is Patriarch Pimen's church that plays the most dominant if less visible role in shaping the "Holy Mother Rus" perspective. It is therefore the church—its personnel, its outlook, and influence—that we turn to in this Special Report. The first part of this series (published July 26, 1983) documented the emergence of the Third Rome strategy within the Soviet military. Future articles in the series will examine the role of the party apparatus and the KGB in shaping Russia's current policy.

A sweeping religious revival whose strategic and political implications cannot be overlooked has been under way in the Soviet Union for a few years now. Among Soviet leaders, religious metaphors are increasingly employed to justify their current policies. The keenest among Western observers, starting with the *EIR*'s own Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., but also including senior Western European strategic analysts, senior policy makers of the Church of England, of the Vatican, and so forth, are drawing attention to those features of current Soviet foreign policy and strategic postures which cohere with the Russian Orthodox Church's centuries-old perspective for the "Third and Final Rome," the 15th-century aspiration to lead a reorganization of world affairs around an imperial scheme in which Moscow itself would be the center, the "Third and Final Rome" (assuming Byzantium to have been the "Second Rome").

Such imperial aspirations of Soviet Russian Orthodox clergymen had been observed since at least the late 1960s at various international conferences, such as those arranged by the World Council of Churches, and witnesses to these events have on many occasions reported the arrogant statements and attitudes of Russian Orthodox clergymen. In one instance, the late Metropolitan Nikodim of Leningrad



Russians gathered in the Cathedral of the Holy Life-Giving Trinity, Pskov, for religious services.

boasted to the foreign-policy aides of the Archbishop of Canterbury that Moscow will inevitably “rule the world as the Third and Final Rome.”

Evangelist Billy Graham, returning from a visit to the Soviet Union in late May of 1982, startled both his fellow evangelists and the entire “neo-conservative” religious fundamentalist movement of the United States by asserting that “there is genuine freedom of religion in the Soviet Union,” and that while visiting there, he observed more religious devotion on the part of the population than he sees in the West, including in the United States. Billy Graham was denounced by his fellow religious activists as a “liar” and a “dupe of Soviet propaganda.” Billy Graham, however, was reporting the truth. Evidence accumulated since at least the mid-1970s demonstrates beyond reasonable doubt that there is a gigantic religious revival afoot in the U.S.S.R. Among professional “anti-communists” in the West this evidence is almost systematically either ignored or dismissed, essentially because it does not fit the standard preconceived notions of run-of-the-mill street-corner anti-communism. Among policy makers, the evidence of Russian religious revival is also either dismissed or misinterpreted. The most frequent misinterpretation is based on the delusion that a Russian religious revival would be a “natural ally” of the West’s conflict with Moscow’s “communist regime.”

This last misinterpretation, when adopted for national security evaluations, could prove to be a major intelligence disaster for the United States and for the West generally: The Russian Orthodox religious revival is the main policy engine which provides the impetus for Moscow’s ongoing imperial and messianic foreign-policy posture today.

Take the example of the Soviet government’s behavior with respect to the barbaric Korean Air Lines flight 7 massacre of Sept. 1. For over a week now, the Soviet mass media have been heaping megalomaniac praise on the Soviet military for having “gloriously protected the *sacred* territory of the motherland, the *sacred* airspace of the U.S.S.R., the *sacred* soil of Holy Mother Russia,” and so on *ad nauseam*. These sacerdotal justifications of the massacre were not, however, employed merely as domestic propaganda addressing the misinformed Soviet population.

Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, speaking before the Madrid Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) on Sept. 8, said: “We state: Soviet territory, the borders of the Soviet Union are *sacred*.”

Marshal Nikolai V. Ogarkov, Chief of Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces and Deputy Defense Minister, held a press conference on the same day in Moscow, jointly with Communist Party Central Committee International Information Department chief Leonid Zamyatin, who said: “Protection of the *sacred*, inviolable borders of our country . . . was worth to us—as you know very well—many, many millions of lives.”

The employment of sacerdotal arguments, by a state officially professing atheism, to justify its barbaric behavior in massacring 269 innocent civilians is not the sort of accidental detail most people would like to imagine. There has been an underlying profound transformation going on in Soviet society over the last 15 years, a thorough-going “paradigm shift” which makes a mockery of the preconceived notions that “area professionals” have been carrying in their professional baggage. This now-completed “Third Rome paradigm

shift" dominates the character of the strategic crisis the world finds itself plunged into.

President Reagan's March 23 speech

Long before Foreign Minister Gromyko and Marshal Ogarkov started dabbling in religious affairs, the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Pimen of Moscow was innovating in matters of strategic policy. Ten months before President Reagan announced his policy of developing beam weapons for anti-missile defense, Patriarch Pimen made a speech on May 10, 1982, in Moscow, denouncing such weapon systems in the following terms: "What, except losing the sense of responsibility, can account for a mounting chorus of voices in support of the doctrine of a nuclear first strike? The only sensible alternative to this idea should be the defensive concept. It must include as its major element a pledge not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. . . .

"Following the new military strategies unavoidably means the development and production of basically new types of weapons and weapon systems and seeking new areas of their application. For example, there is mounting interest toward the possible military uses of outer space. Military superiority in space holds the promise of having such superiority on the ground. The proposed development of space anti-missile systems is not only the threat of outer space being turned into a military base. Military experts say that the prospect of laser guns and radiation weapons being deployed in space is quite realistic. International agreements signed over the last 15 years do limit to some extent military uses of space. But these measures are clearly not enough. Signing a treaty banning the deployment of all types of weapons in space, approved by the United Nations General Assembly, would be a most timely step for easing international tension."

Patriarch Pimen was the very first person of any authority in the U.S.S.R. to denounce a policy which no one on earth knew to exist as an active policy. Pimen was in fact attacking a policy proposal made three months earlier, in February 1982 at a well-attended Washington, D.C., conference by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., that the United States adopt a policy of developing anti-missile beam weapons in parallel and in coordination with the U.S.S.R., as the only way available to get past the doctrine of "Mutually Assured Destruction" and into an era of "Mutually Assured Survival."

Eight months after Patriarch Pimen's denunciation, President Reagan went on national television to announce to the world that the United States was going to develop defensive weapons. The President, the secretary of defense, and other White House officials subsequently made repeated, generous offers to Soviet representatives along the lines of sharing the new technologies and parallel or coordinated deployment of them.

However, as had been indicated by Patriarch Pimen, the Soviet Union's lay authorities repeatedly rejected the President's offer. At the end of this report, we shall demonstrate

that the reasons for this rejection are not strategic-military but virtually exclusively cultural and cultural-political in the sense of cultural grand strategy. Upon closer examination, we shall find that this rejection of the President's generous offer was dictated by a cultural principle which is characteristic not of communist culture but rather of Russian Orthodox culture specifically.

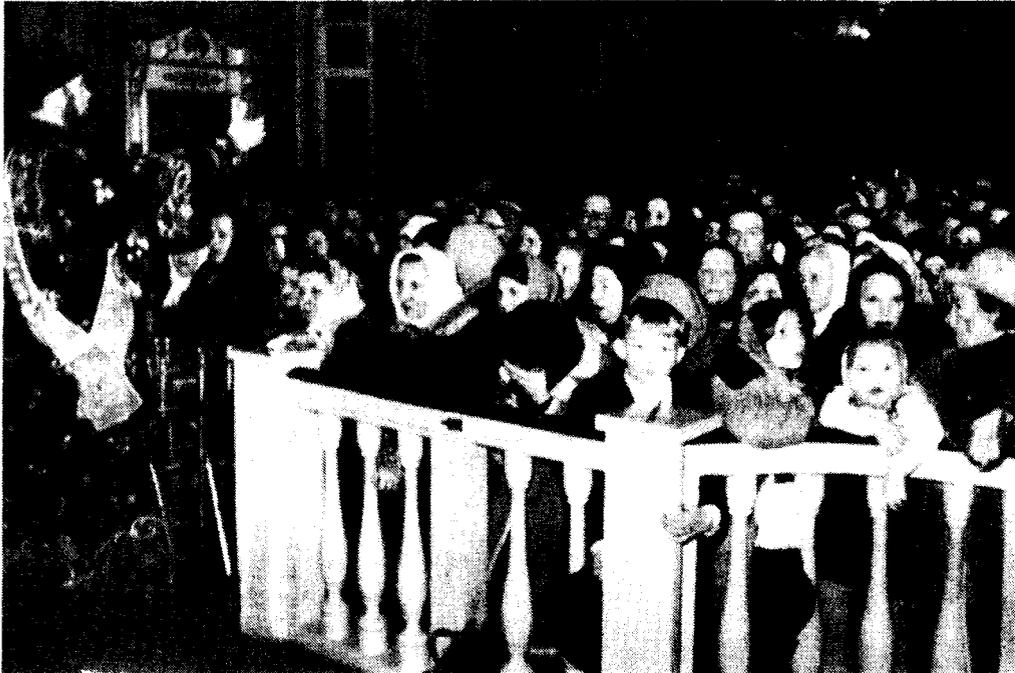
But, for the intelligence analyst to be able to arrive at this conclusion with any competence, he or she must endure delving into the much-ignored and much-neglected considerations of strategy which follow below.

The resurfacing of the Russian 'Church Militant'

For the last five years, numerous morsels of information were reaching the West, to the effect that a religious revival in the Soviet Union was under way. The scanty evidence was then either neglected, or misinterpreted as some simple sort of "KGB mischief." About two years ago, a Soviet diplomat who considers himself a sophisticated atheist confided to myself and a colleague of mine, in Washington, that he was somewhat alarmed by the rapid growth of church attendance in his country. "Over 25 percent of the population," he said, "are now practicing Christians." He later added that "this might become worrisome for world stability." During that same period, another Soviet diplomat also stationed in the United States, a man of rather comically proud nationalist comportsment, speaking on the same subject, boasted rather than worried, about the growth of the Russian Orthodox Church. He was in fact categorical in asserting that the Russian church works in total conformity with "the interests of the Soviet state." The discrepancy in the two Soviet officials' attitudes toward the subject was instructive.

It turns out that the number of Russian Orthodox believers is greater than the 65 million indicated by the hypothesis of "25 percent of the population." Although no statistics are made public officially by either the Moscow Patriarchate or the Soviet government, Russian Orthodox Church officials at the World Council of Churches let it be known "unofficially," that their church-going membership is "upward of 80 million." Certain Western observers of Russia, especially observers from the Roman Catholic Church, estimate that the total number of faithful is probably 135 million persons. This number would include regular church-goers, frequent and occasional church-goers, and those whose contact with the church is through such occasions as baptism, marriage, and burial.

Recent official Soviet sociological surveys have found that in surveyed locations of the RSFSR, one out of every two infants is baptized into the Russian Orthodox Church. Recent Soviet defectors report that as much as 40 percent of Communist Party members prefer to baptize their children in the church. Officers of the KGB who have defected report two types of phenomena. One, widely reported, is of KGB



A Russian Orthodox priest conducting services in a crowded church.

officers assigned as priests and bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church; second, less well-advertised, that many KGB officers are themselves privately believers. Each year in recent years, Western travelers report that they observe hundreds of thousands of faithful pilgrims from all over the U.S.S.R. gathering at the summer festival of Saint Sergii of Radonezh at Zagorsk.

An English visitor to Moscow in the 1970s described his experience in three Orthodox Churches on Good Friday evening as follows:

At the first, Skorbyashchenskaya (The Joy of the Sorrowing), we found that the service would not start until 8 p.m. and so we decided to return. Nearly two hours before, people were already gathering. The next was St. Nicholas. We stood at the back for a while. I do not think I have ever seen a church so full, with people standing shoulder to shoulder as at a football match. Where would one see that in England? The priest attracts the young and the intellectuals as well as the *babushki* (old women). The third church, St. John the Warrior, we could not get into at all. A couple of good-natured policemen were standing outside, apparently in case any mocking youngsters should try to break things up. The crowded congregation was tight-packed and reverent.

We returned to the first of the three, the church of Archbishop Kyprian, who was once Bishop in Berlin. Now the service was only a quarter of an hour away. We went into a side entrance and soon found ourselves beyond the *babushki*, some of whom were sitting on the floor in the growing heat (but they would

all stand up with the beginning of the service) and among the vesting priests. The chief of them was the Archbishop, white-haired, short and stocky, his eyes twinkling through rimless spectacles. Here we were in a different world from the patriarchal cathedral and its solemn order; here there was happy chaos—nobody quite knowing what to do or what would happen next.

On Tuesday of Easter week the same visitor was in Leningrad, and reported:

In the morning liturgies were being celebrated in the churches which were open. At each one crowds of people were present, mostly *babushki*, but “old men and maidens, young men and children” too. Rather than staying in any one church we went from one to another. As this was a day for processions outside round the buildings to follow the triumphant cross, there was coming and going within the congregations too and people outside could join in services without necessarily seeming to. This was particularly true of the church, Prince Vladimir’s, where Metropolitan Nikodim himself was offering the liturgy and where a vast throng assembled who had to be carefully held in check, all wanting to be wetted in the asperging.

We went to four churches—St. Nicholas cathedral, which was in two storeys with a church and liturgy upstairs and downstairs and a crowd at both; and the church of the Transfiguration; then to St. Seraphim’s in a public park and cemetery, a small green wooden building which we should certainly not have gone into if we had not been able to get into the sanctuary behind

the iconostasis by a private side door; and finally Prince Vladimir's. It was interesting to go from church to church and hear part of the service at each. By this time I had completely absorbed the Easter Greeting and the Troparion, and I was also becoming fascinated by the congregational settings of the *Our Father* and the *Creed*: how melodiously Russian congregations sing, without any musical accompaniment. Those two congregational settings sung by massed soprano voices, pure without being trained, were a foretaste of angels' voices, they are so clearly part of the life and soul of the Russian people. At each of these services we were just in time to hear the congregations in the full joy of belief in the Risen Christ. (From Trevor Beeson, *Discretion and Valour*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1982.)

What is the number of practicing Russian Orthodox believers today? Official statistics are not given out by either the Soviet government or the church itself. In its official publications, the Moscow Patriarchate objects to official census taking of its faithful and poses the matter in the following way: "The flock of the Russian Orthodox Church consists of many millions of believers. Because of the variety of the forms of the Church's spiritual life, a statistical count of the devout does not exist and it is impossible to determine an exact figure. Our Church rejoices when its flock multiplies and grieves when it declines. However, it is mindful of the Savior's words about men who honor Him with their lips, but not with their hearts (Matt. 15, 7-9). The Russian Orthodox Church now includes only those who are truly faithful to Christ." In private conversations with foreign officials at the World Council of Churches, Russian hierarchs like to encourage the estimate of "upward of 60 million" in the above category of "truly faithful to Christ." The former Jesuit priest and publicist Malachi Martin, an early associate of Pope John XXIII, was estimating in August 1983 that "135 million Soviets are practicing Orthodox Church members and another 45 million are believers." These figures would include members of the Georgian and Armenian Orthodox Churches in addition to the Russian. Nonetheless, such figures of church-going publics would be astounding for any country in the world, let alone one whose government officially professes atheism.

Moreover, the experience of attending church in Russian Orthodoxy is not quite the same sort of church-going Americans are accustomed to. The Russian Orthodox service is conducted in the ancient Byzantine style, excessively lengthy and elaborate, of several hours' duration during which the flock is supposed to stand on its feet, inside darkened and poorly ventilated churches whose air is filled with the smoke of ceremonial incense. Russian Orthodox hierarchs during the Soviet period, just as in the earlier past, have adamantly insisted on the preservation of the ancient liturgical style. In point of fact, as the Roman Catholic Benedictine Order has well appreciated, for the Orthodox believers, the elab-

orate ritual magic of the liturgy itself is their religious experience, their faith and their dogma. Most of what is said and chanted by the priests, their deacons, and cantors is in Old Church Slavonic, sometimes memorized by the flock but rarely understood.

The phenomenon merits the most detailed sort of study by Western intelligence analysts: What happens every Sunday to tens of millions of Soviet citizens as they huddle together in darkened, incense-filled churches, crowding shoulder to shoulder and standing on their feet for hours to listen to incomprehensible Byzantine chants as the temperature gradually rises, the air becomes stale, as they become caught in the magic until they are swept into the maelstrom of communal chanting?

The phenomenon merits study especially because more and more millions opt for it every year. In 1970, an official Soviet study published the results of a research project indicating that 15 to 20 percent of the population were believers. In 1976, a booklet published by two Leningrad researchers published the findings of a sociological survey: 41 percent of the persons surveyed within the cosmopolitan city of Leningrad answered that they observe religious celebrations. Small-scale surveys in rural areas and spot-checks in municipal cemeteries indicate the same sort of results: In the Moldavian village of Bachoï, of 206 babies born in 1977, 185 were baptized and most of them were children of young couples with college-level education; a survey in Leningrad's Southern Cemetery in 1979 found that of 222 graves dug between 1974 and 1979, 132 were marked with a cross, 17 with a red star, and 73 had no markings.

The world outlook of the Russian Church

To understand what is going on inside the minds of all these rapidly multiplying millions of Russian Orthodox faithful inside the Soviet Union today, one must pay close attention to a rather unique phenomenon, the cult of Saint Sergii of Radonezh. In a certain sense, one can credibly argue that what appears to be a revival of Orthodoxy is, above all, an epidemic spread of the cult of Saint Sergii of Radonezh. Every summer, hundreds of thousands of believers come to pay homage to the Saint's festival at the Trinity-St. Sergii Lavra in the Moscow suburb of Zagorsk. Inside the church of the Trinity-St. Sergii Lavra, masses are celebrated for the saint incessantly 365 days of the year. All year round, visitors and pilgrims arrive to pray at the consecrated relics of the saint at the Lavra. Russian Orthodoxy's most celebrated 20th-century theologian, Father Pavel Florensky, wrote in 1919:

"In order to understand Russia one must understand the Lavra (of St Sergii of Radonezh), and to fathom the Lavra one should look closely and attentively at its founder."

Saint Sergii of Radonezh was a major personality in Russian history, especially military history, and in particular he was the spiritual force behind the rise to world prominence of the Grand Duchy of Moscow. Active in the second half of the 14th century, Sergii, acting under advice from Byzantine imperial circles and from the religious fundamentalist influ-

ences of Gregory Palamas at Mount Athos, founded near Moscow the Monastery (Lavra) of the Trinity which he employed for the purpose of molding and forging into credible military shape the various petty, bickering Russian chieftains in order to deploy them against the Mongol Golden Horde on behalf of Byzantine state interests. As a result, Russian unity was achieved around Grand Duke Dimitri of Moscow, later called Dimitri Donskoi, who led the Russian armies to a historic victory against the Golden Horde at the Kulikovo Field on Sept. 8, 1380.

In subsequent centuries, the Moscow-centered factions of Russian politics developed the cult of Saint Sergii of Radonezh into a mystical/military cult of the state, namely the Moscow-centered (as opposed to Petersburg-centered) state.

The current revival of Russian Orthodoxy in the U.S.S.R. is the revival of the cult of St. Sergii, of the mystical-military cult of the state, of Holy Mother Russia. Below are quotes from the October 1981 issue of the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, which dramatize our argument about the cult. First is the text of the homily given by the Abbot of the Trinity-St. Sergii Lavra, Mark Lozinskii:

Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation (Heb. 13, 7), this is a commandment of the Apostle. Today we are fulfilling it by commemorating our teacher, St. Sergii of Radonezh, who preached the Word of our Lord not only by word of mouth but by his whole life. We solemnly commemorate the day when this great servant of God departed this life, who was lovingly called by our people the *Hegumen* [Greek word meaning abbot but also leader] of the Land of Russia. Metropolitan Filaret of Moscow says that to remember our teachers without emulating their faith is like seeds without fruit and sowing without harvest.

What was St. Sergii's faith like?

The faith he received as a youth he increased a hundredfold. Faith led him to the wilderness and strengthened him to bear the difficulties of a hermit's life. Subsequently faith nurtured in him paternal love for his brethren and for all who came to him. It lit in his soul a lamp of love for his Motherland, suffering under the Mongol-Tatar yoke. In those days when depression and despair overwhelmed the people, the steadfast faith in the Lord's mercy of the great Abba Sergii spiritually fortified the hearts of the Russian people and reconciled the warring princes thereby consolidating the Russian state. The Saint blessed Grand Duke Dimitrii of Moscow to go to battle against the Golden Horde and foretold victory over the enemy.

The life of St. Sergii is a great example of self-sacrificing service of God and men. And today, just as when he lived on earth, St. Sergii teaches all who turn to him active faith.

Bowing before his holy relics, let us ask him to



Above: St. Sergii blessing a Russian prince about to do battle with the Tatar "Golden Horde."
Below: An 18th-century ikon of St. Sergii.

multiply our faith, so that like him we, too, may be filled with love for God, our neighbor, and our Motherland. Amen.

The drift of the homily with its appeals to obedience to rulers and service to Motherland is rather obvious. And this is standard fare for Russian Sunday sermons. More interesting, and more profoundly disturbing, is another published item in the same journal which is instructive to those who seek to identify the kind of state, the characteristic contents and the philosophical purpose of the state that the mystical/military cult of state of Saint Sergii of Radonezh is attempting to instill among the Russian Orthodox believers; this is an essay by Hieromonk Tikhon of the Trinity-St. Sergii Lavra, titled "St Sergii of Radonezh and His School":

The Trinity-St. Sergii Monastery came into existence on the eve of the turning point in the Russian history: the middle of the 14th century saw the rise of Moscow and round it grew a majestic and unique new state—Muskovy Russ. The rise of Muskovy Russ—in the middle of the 15th century—coincided with the fall of Constantinople, a great cultural catastrophe. The Muscovite state adopted the culture of ancient Orthodox Byzantium. Here, in the vigorous

heart of a young nation, the achievements of medieval Greece are reunited anew, creatively and vitally, through the dazzling phenomenon of a single personality; from St. Sergii flow manifold streams of culture as from a fresh spring of unity, quenching the spiritual thirst of the Russian people, who gave them an original embodiment. . . . St. Sergii lived at a time when the theological teaching of the Holy Trinity was being evolved in the Orthodox Church through the spiritual experience of hesychasm and the theological works of St. Gregory Palamas as well as other Byzantine theologians. St. Sergii was also interested in the Palamite Controversies. To be well informed about them he sent a trusted representative to Constantinople. St. Sergii accepted the main trend of Orthodox culture. He touched the fiery summit of mediaeval Greece, round which, as petals of a flower, were concentrated the cultural flames and there his spirit was enflamed; this summit was the religio-metaphysical idea of Byzantium, an idea which blazed forth in the days of the saint. St. Sergii cognized experientially the Mystery of the Holy Trinity, thus becoming, according to the words of the Apostle, one of the partakers of the divine nature and attained mystical communion with the mysterious life of the Divine Trinity in so far as it is possible in earthly life.

The Tabor Light of the Transfiguration spread through St. Sergii and his disciples all over scattered Russ, spiritually transfiguring men's souls and hearts, making them regard the world and themselves in a new way.

Now, this is startling stuff, written and published in late 1981, in a land supposedly atheist. But then again, think twice, dear reader: With all this Sacred Light of Mount Tabor flowing through the sparkling and crackling fingers of St. Sergii and covering all of Russia, it is no wonder that its soil is *sacred*, as was so solemnly stated by both Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko and Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov. However, our Hieromonk Tikhon goes on in his narration of the St. Sergii cult:

The Church of the Life-Giving Trinity, built by St. Sergii, became the spiritual symbol of the gathering together of the Russian land. This church, according to the idea of its founder, was to become the centre of the cultural unification of the Russ wherein all aspects of Russian life would find their support and highest justification.

Under the influence of the books in the Trinity cloister the spirit of the Russian people was transformed. The Lavra library was founded by men who were at the head of Russian culture and life at that time. They were in close contact with Constantinople and with the main representatives of ecclesiastical life

in Byzantium. St. Alexii was in Constantinople for nearly a year; there he met Patriarch St. Callistus—the disciple of St. Gregory of Sinai—and Patriarch St. Philotheos, the beloved disciple of St. Gregory Palamas.

Finally, coming to the point of the political relevance of the mystical/military cult of St. Sergii for the present day, the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* eases its way into the subject as follows:

It should also be noted that throughout the centuries of Russian history the monks of the Trinity Monastery were always in the vanguard of Orthodox patriotic movements. It is in this monastery that the revision of service books was begun. The Lavra became the center of the liberation movement during the Polish intervention at the beginning of the 17th century. After the Time of Troubles, the father superior of the monastery, St. Dionysii, sent to Moscow books from the Lavra library; he struggled to see that books took a proper place in Russian life. . . . In 1814, the Moscow Theological Academy was founded there, on the basis of the old Slavonic-Greek-Latin Academy. Many of its theologians, historians and philologists were recognized throughout the world. . . . And today too, the house of the life-giving Trinity is the spiritual center of the Russian Orthodox Church. *As the Holy Archimandrite of the Trinity-St. Sergii Lavra, his Holiness Patriarch Pimen of Moscow and all Russia, the Primate of the Russian Church is under the blessed protection of St. Sergii. Here too are the Moscow theological schools! The local council of the Russian Orthodox Church took place here in 1971. Here the humble monks are working for the good and salvation of our people. "In order to understand Russia one must understand the Lavra, and to fathom the Lavra one should look closely and attentively at its founder," Father Pavel Florenski defines thus the important part played by St. Sergii, who was a great ascetic of the spirit, an enlightener and patriot, whose influence continues over his followers even today.*

Thus the Moscow Patriarchate. It has, however, been argued over the last few decades: "What can the poor Russian Church do? It has no choice but to carry out the dictates of the KGB and of the Soviet state, or be eliminated altogether." The further argument has been made among theological circles in the West, that the Russian church is in fact striking a precarious balance on a risky tightrope walk, in the course of which the salvaging of so many millions of souls which would have otherwise been heathen, makes the price of obedient service to the state well worth the while. All this rationalizing becomes reduced to nonsense when one faces the fact that what the Russian Orthodox Church is doing today under presumed coercion from the atheist state, is

what its leading hierarchy did throughout its history: Preservation of the Byzantine cult of the state and *not works of salvation* has been the function of Russian Orthodoxy—a continuation of the function of the state-cults of the Roman Empire as transmitted to Eastern Orthodoxy by Emperor Constantine the Great and reinforced by Justinian two centuries later.

The Constantinian-Justinian style of Christianity is, to employ political shorthand, an oligarchical device for population control in empire management. It is founded on a systematically *bestial* conception of human nature: Man is a beast like every other beast, a creature of material needs, his behavior dominated by lust for pleasure and fear of pain. This conception of man dominates the mental map of the oligarchical mind. In theological terms, it is summarized and encapsulated in one single proposition: rejection of the *Filioque* clause in the Confession of Faith. Namely, whereas the Western Christian theological tradition holds that the Holy Spirit, the life-creating aspect of the Trinity, “proceeds from the Father *and from the Son*” (*filioque* in Latin), Eastern Orthodoxy, the enshrined oligarchical caricature of Christianity, rejects the belief that the Son can command and transmit the creative aspect of divinity. From this assertion then follows the conclusion that individual man is not endowed with the gift of creativity. There is no such thing as imitation of Christ in Eastern Orthodox tradition, no man being God’s helper in the ongoing act of creation, thus no man being “in the image of God,” the Creator or Composer of the universal process, as the founders of the Christian Church had envisaged man. By means of the theological rejection of the *Filioque*, man is reduced to a mere beast. And the political task of the oligarchical mind is how to manage and manipulate human society, this herd of beasts.

Hence the glorification of the Byzantine state in the U.S.S.R. today.

The clerical gamemasters of the peace movement

The subject of persecutions suffered by the Russian Orthodox Church in the hands of “godless communist” government is, upon inspection, somewhat ludicrous. The Russian Orthodox Church was treated slightly less harshly by Czar Peter the Great than it was by the fire-breathing Bolsheviks of yesteryear. Peter the Great tried to keep the Moscow-focused Byzantine atavism of the St. Sergii cult out of his affairs of state and gave the clergy a good beating as he moved the capital out of Moscow into Saint Petersburg/Petrograd. Peter the Great also abolished the office of Patriarch in the year 1700.

The 1917 Russian Revolution brought about a great amount of discomfort to the church, but not destruction. Ironically, the office of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia was reestablished on Nov. 5, 1917, only a few days after the Bolsheviks’ ascension to power. The new Patriarch, Tikhon, initially opposed the Bolshevik government. In the

crucible of revolution, civil war, persecution, and violent coercion, a new long-term perspective began to be shaped by the Russian Orthodox Church. In 1920, Patriarch Tikhon declared that “the Church is apolitical under any social system.” Right before his death, in 1925, he signed an Address to Believers where he advised: “Without transgressing against our faith or our Church, without allowing any concessions or compromises in the matter of faith, we must be sincere as citizens in our attitude to the Soviet government and work for the common good.” This is a precise formulation of how matters stood between the Russian church and the 1925 Bolshevik regime before Stalin’s purges and after Lenin’s death. In the early years, church policy toward the Bolshevik regime was influenced primarily by conflicts over such issues as church land ownership and jurisdiction over education, rather than over profound ideological enmity (as far as the church was concerned). Also, the early expectations of an eventual early demise of the Bolshevik government made the church leadership “hedge its bets” with what then appeared to be viable opposition forces. When in the year 1939 the matter of who is the Russian state was finally settled with the conclusion of the final Stalin purges and the 16th Party Congress, the Russian church emerged as a partner of the government in the context of an exceptional enterprise: the Hitler-Stalin Pact!

The details, unfortunately, are not known. The broad outline of relevant facts appears as follows: The organized body of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1939 had been reduced to a handful of senior hierarchs in Moscow and Leningrad, all raised and trained during the pre-revolutionary period and all with the credential of regular apostolic ordination—members of what they like to call the “Royal Priesthood,” a term borrowed from Saint Peter, denoting the apostolic continuity of the episcopate secured by the laying of hands of the original Apostles on the heads of their successors, and theirs on their successors’ and so forth down to the present day. Beside this “Royal Priesthood,” the Russian church had been reduced to a mere few hundred parish clergy, down from 51,105 in 1917, and some hundreds of operating churches, down from 54,174 in 1917. No monasteries and no seminaries were operating at the time.

Then suddenly, in 1939, Stalin moved his army into eastern Poland as Hitler’s Wehrmacht took over the western portion. Renaming the conquered territory Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia, the Red Army installed Bishop Nikolai, the former vicar of the Petrograd Metropolitanate, one of the few survivors of the “Royal Priesthood,” as the archbishop of the conquered Polish territories.

This Bishop Nikolai, later *Metropolitan Nikolai of Krutitsy and Kolomna*, is a singularly important personality in understanding the Russian Orthodox Church. In later years he founded the peace movement and was a crucial inspirer of the Pugwash Conference movement, a personality perhaps more influential in world ecclesiastical politics than the Church of England’s Herbert Waddams. Metropolitan Nikolai, born

Boris Dorefeyevich Yarushevich on Dec. 31, 1891, was the son of the dean of the Saint Alexander Nevski Cathedral of the town of Kovno. After receiving an honorary scholarship to study mathematics and physics at the University of St. Petersburg, he enrolled at the Theological Academy, and by the age of 24 he started publishing significant theological and historical works. His research work was guided by his protector, the powerful rector of the Academy, Archimandrite Anastasii Alexandrov, a prominent theologian, doctor of church history, and Slavacist. While at the Academy, Yarushevich and his rector were conducting a special missionary project in the working-class districts of Petersburg. He received his degree in theology on the basis of a dissertation on Byzantine and early Russian documents on ecclesiastical law, and was ordained priest two months after the outbreak of the First World War. Between then and 1918, he wrote extensively on history, law, archaeology, and he taught at the Theological Seminary on liturgics, homilectics, church archaeology, and German. In 1918 he was made dean of the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul and superior of the St. Alexander Nevski Monastery.

In 1922, at the age of 31, he was consecrated Bishop of Peterhof and made vicar of the Petrograd Metropolitanate. The man who consecrated him was Bishop Alexii of Yamburg, later the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia from 1945 to 1970. In fact, the Russian church from 1925 onward was ruled jointly by three very unusual persons: Bishop Nikolai (Yarushevich), Bishop Alexii (Simanskii, later Patriarch), and Metropolitan Sergii (Stragorodskii, Patriarch in 1943-44). All three of them were highly trained theologians and historians and their pre-1917 curriculum vitae indicates that they would have attained high ecclesiastical positions revolution or no revolution. In this sense, the continuity of the leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church was never ruptured by the Bolshevik revolution. Alexii was the son of the chamberlain at the imperial court, Vladimir Simanskii. The life of (Patriarch) Alexii and that of (Metropolitan) Nikolai beginning out of the See of Petersburg/Leningrad continue to overlap and interweave throughout their lives until death. These two are the original grand strategists of the Russian church. Nikolai, the younger, died first on Dec. 13, 1961, as chief of the Patriarchate's Department of External Church Relations. Alexii, the elder, died on April 17, 1970, having ruled as Patriarch of Moscow for 25 years.

The fortunes of these three men, Nikolai, Alexii, and Sergii, began to turn in 1939 when the first was appointed archbishop of the conquered Poland. Two years later, on June 22, 1941, the day of the Nazi invasion of Russia, Sergii, acting as Patriarchal Locum Tenens, beat Stalin by two full days in issuing his dramatic call to rally the faithful in defense of the Motherland. Alexii, operating out of the Patriarchate, funded with church collections the outfitting of a tank division, named after Dimitri Donskoi, and an air squadron named after Alexander Nevski.

On Sept. 4, 1943, Nikolai, Sergii, and Alexii the son of

the imperial chamberlain, met with the chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, I. V. Stalin, opening a new chapter in Russian history. Four days later, a number of theological publications surfaced and an extraordinary episcopal council of the Russian Orthodox Church was convened to elect the Patriarchal Locum Tenens Sergii to the dignity of Patriarch Sergii of Moscow and All Russia. He died eight months later and was replaced by the son of the imperial chamberlain Alexii, who led the church until his death in 1970.

At the end of the war, the results of the three religious leaders could be seen in the shape of a flourishing church: All 73 traditional dioceses of the Russian church had been reopened never to be closed again. The number of parish priests grew from a miserly few hundred in the 1930s to over 20,000; almost half of the churches of the pre-revolutionary period were reopened. Two theological academies and eight seminaries were reopened to train new clergymen. Patriarch Alexii was a close personal friend of the national hero of the day, Marshal Zhukov, the hero of Berlin. The Patriarch himself was decorated with five Red Banners of Labor, the medal "For Defense of Leningrad," and the medal "For Valiant Labor during Patriotic War."

From that point onward, the status of the Russian Orthodox Church would never again really diminish. True, from 1960 to 1964, Premier Khrushchev made a desperate effort to break the church, but this should be viewed properly in the context of Khrushchev's struggle against the marshals of the Soviet Union and not as an anti-religious obsession as is usually portrayed. Even though the 1960-64 "Khrushchev persecutions" did hurt the Russian church somewhat, their effect is generally exaggerated and at any rate was not long lasting.

The main political fight in the Soviet Union from the sacking of Zhukov in 1957 to the demise of Khrushchev in 1964, was of the following general character:

Nuclear weapons of mass destruction had just emerged as the principal fact of life among states. Khrushchev and the Cominternist International Department of the Central Committee under Otto Kuusinen had opted for a McNamara-type approach of stripping all conventional capabilities and using their resources for the build-up of a serious nuclear deterrent, possibly even a nuclear first-strike capability. Zhukov and his marshals at the General Staff were in perpetual revolt against the Soviet McNamara and organized their opposition around Chief of Staff Marshal Sokolovskii, rallying to a military program known today as the Sokolovskii Doctrine, a militarily rational perspective of total war in the nuclear age, in which all three echelons of the total military effort—strategic nuclear forces, strategic conventional forces, and tactical forces—are built up and organized to win a total thermonuclear war. The leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church, and primarily Patriarch Alexii and Metropolitan Nikolai, were viewing themselves as the successors of St. Sergii of Radonezh, the military/mystical inspirers of the Russian

state. In agreement with Zhukov's and Sokolovskii's marshals, they undertook the task of wresting from Khrushchev and the Central Committee the "back-channel" networks with the West which would have made the McNamara-esque "deterrence" strategy of Khrushchev possible.

The role of the Russian Orthodox Church in promoting military strength for the U.S.S.R. and peace and disarmament movements in the West, is unique in explaining to outsiders how Soviet policy making really works. Since Khrushchev was kicked out in 1964, and as a result of changes in the West in the aftermath of the Vatican II Council, the Soviet Union has redoubled the Khrushchevian peace-posture internationally and more than redoubled the Zhukov-Sokolovskii commitment to military supremacy. Metropolitan Nikolai's career will explain a great deal of this.

Nikolai, Patriarch Sergii and Alexii's partner since 1922, the sacerdotal proconsul of occupied eastern Poland in 1939, had a most extraordinary career during and after the war. From the standpoint of the church's war effort, he was the organizer of the victory in the field. In his special ukaze of July 15, 1941, Patriarchal Locum Tenens Sergii said the following: "Traveling from place to place in the front-line zone, Metropolitan Nikolai constantly upholds the morale of the local population with his prayers and archpastoral exhortations which, in its turn, lends moral support to the Red Army men. I praise with all my heart this beneficent work of His Eminence the Exarch and consider it meet to grant him the possibility of extending his archpastoral service. In view of this, I consider it necessary to translate His Eminence to the vacant seat of the Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich, Exarch to All the Ukraine, and to bestow upon the newly appointed ruler, the traditional external distinctions of this see: the right to wear two panagias and to be preceded by the Holy Cross at divine services."

Later, throughout the period of the siege of Moscow by the German Army, as Sergii was evacuated to Ulyanovsk, Metropolitan Nikolai stayed in the besieged city as his deputy



Archbishop Alesky of Kalinin and Kashin, with medals won in fighting in the "Great Patriotic War."



Patriarch Pimen of Moscow and All the Russias.

in the Diocese of Moscow and chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchate. Stalin decorated him with the medal "For the Defense of Moscow." His colleague Alexii the future Patriarch was during that time leading the spiritual side of the struggle in the besieged city of Leningrad. In his capacity as the Exarch of All Ukraine, Metropolitan Nikolai was appointed in November 1942, by the Soviet Council of Ministers, to the Extraordinary Commission to identify and investigate crimes of Nazis and Nazi collaborators in the occupied territories of the U.S.S.R. At the end of the war, in May and June 1945, Metropolitan Nikolai visited the Middle East and England where he met King George and the head of what was then called *World Council of Churches-in-formation*.

Next year, April 1946, Patriarch Alexii founded the Department of External Church Relations and made Metropolitan Nikolai its first chief. One of the first acts of the new department was the founding in April 1949 of the organization which today runs the "nuclear freeze" movement, the World Peace Council. The World Peace Council, founded by the Moscow Patriarchate during a Congress in Paris, is the classic Soviet "front" organization. Many people consider it "KGB." Metropolitan Nikolai, the boy-genius theologian of 1914 from the Petrograd Theological Academy, was a prominent member of its standing committee at the founding. He had been sent there by his Patriarch, the son of the imperial chamberlain.

More importantly, Nikolai played a historically exceptional role in shaping a long chain of events which today has led to the fact that West Germany's Evangelical Church—the organizer, inspirer, retainer, and funder of the Green movement and spawning ground of neo-Nazism—is also the leading force, in open and confessed collaboration with the Soviet KGB, of the unilateral disarmament movement in Western Europe. We quote from the official biography of Nikolai, published in the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*:

Metropolitan Nikolai exerted great efforts for the development of relations between the Churches of the

Federal Republic of Germany and the Russian Orthodox Church, which was of special importance. The wounds of the war were still not healed. In the beginning of 1952, the Rev. Dr. Martin Niemoeller, President of the Evangelical Church of Hessen, Chairman of the Department of External Church Relations of the Evangelical Church in Germany, a prominent public figure and anti-fascist, came to the Soviet Union at the invitation of the DECR [Nikolai]. His meetings and discussions with His Holiness Patriarch Alexii and Metropolitan Nikolai laid the foundation of bilateral links. The visit also served to improve relations between the two countries. In June of 1954, a delegation of the Evangelical Church of Germany led by the President of the Synod Dr. Gustav Heinemann, paid a visit to the Soviet Union. This meeting marked the beginning of an active dialogue between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Protestant Churches of Western Europe, and led to the opening, in 1959 of the "Arnoldshain" theological conversations between representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Evangelical Church in Germany. . . . In June of 1956 in Moscow, there were theological conversations between representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Anglican Churches. The Anglican delegation was led by Dr. Michael Ramsey, Archbishop of York, and the Russian Orthodox delegations by Metropolitan Nikolai. In March 1956, a delegation of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., led by its president Dr. Eugene K. Blake, paid a visit to the Russian Orthodox Church. It was received by His Holiness Patriarch Alexii and Metropolitan Nikolai. . . . During these visits, the two sides discussed theological questions and peace-making. (from *JMP*, 2, 1982).

During this period, Nikolai was also cultivating further relations with the Old Catholics in Holland and with various factions inside the Roman Catholic Church. Throughout this period until 1956, the Moscow Patriarchate, Nikolai and Alexii, were refusing to join the World Council of Churches, because the latter had been rejecting the Moscow-sponsored "peace movement" of the World Peace Council.

But in 1956, many important things occurred. First, there was the 20th Communist Party Congress of de-Stalinization fame. Then the emergence of systems-analysis in Soviet official thinking through the establishment of Institute of World Economy and International Relations (MEMO) and other similar Soviet "think tanks." Then also the first rumblings of Lord Bertrand Russell's Committee for Nuclear Disarmament. The Pugwash Conference "back-channel" process was about to be launched. So, during 1956, Metropolitan Nikolai reopened correspondence with the World Council of Churches.

In 1958, the year of the First Pugwash Conference, "Metropolitan Nikolai, who led the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church, met in Utrecht the delegation of the World Council of Churches led by Dr. Franklin Frey, Chairman of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, and Dr. W. A. Wissert Hooft, WCC General Secretary. The meeting determined the subsequent entry of the Russian Orthodox Church into the World Council of Churches at its 3rd Assembly in 1961." (from *JMP*, 2, 1982).

When he died in 1961, Nikolai was an accomplished gamemaster in the grand Byzantine imperial style of church politics which he had so diligently studied during his precocious pre-revolutionary youth. He had the distinction of being the executor of the religious portion of Poland's division under the Hitler-Stalin Pact, in 1939, as well as the midwife, together with Martin Niemoeller, of the atrocious birth of the new Nazi-Communist movement of the 1980s under the aegis of the EKD, the Evangelical Church of Germany.

After his death, both the Patriarchate and the Department of External Church Relations remained firmly in the hands of the Solovyov-Dostoevsky theological tradition of the Petrograd/Leningrad Theological Academy. His old collaborator Alexii remained on the Patriarchal throne for another ten years. The post of the External Department was taken up by the flamboyant and charismatic young Metropolitan Nikodim of Leningrad, a protégé of both Alexii's and Nikolai's for years. Nikodim, a man of great flair, liked to drop about the rumor that he was a KGB General. He might well have been. However, for over 15 years until his death in 1978, wherever he operated around the world, in the various assemblies of the World Council of Churches, in the Russian mission in Jerusalem, at Mount Athos, in missions to Ethiopia, in peace conferences at Geneva, he always left the indelible impression of action from the vantage point of the thousand-year-old institutional memory of the Russian Orthodox Church. An Orthodox Church gamemaster in the style of Nikolai and Alexii, Metropolitan Nikodim had nothing to learn from the KGB.

Today, the External Relations post is held by Metropolitan Filaret (Vakhromeyev) of Minsk and Byelorussia, born in 1935, a 1961 graduate of the Moscow Theological Academy. He rose quickly to become rector of the Moscow Academy in 1966, one of the crop of new young Russian Orthodox leaders elevated alongside Alexii's chosen successor, the future Patriarch Pimen. Metropolitan Filaret co-organized the May 1982 Moscow conference where Pimen denounced beam weapons. He is the leading overseas activist of the Russian Orthodox Church/Moscow Patriarchate today: In 1981-83, his itinerary took him to the "Arnoldshain-IX" theological consultation with the Evangelical Church in West Germany, twice to Great Britain as guest of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the British Council of Churches, to France and Holland, with Patriarch Pimen to the United States and

to the United Nations in June 1982, to Switzerland for "ecumenical negotiations" with leaders of the Swiss Old Catholic Church.

Toward the millenary celebration of 1988

One ought to make a sharp distinction between two separate phenomena studied in this report. First is the epidemic spread of Russian Orthodox religious revival in the form of the mystical/military cult of St. Sergii of Radonezh, whose adherents number in the high scores of millions. Second is the emergence of the Russian Orthodox Church's hierarchy in position of high policy-making influence in cooperation with the Russian nationalist faction of the Soviet military leadership. The first phenomenon has its own reasons and its own history. In the long run, it is attributable to the inadequacy of the Marxist system of ideas and rationalizations to play the role of either a sustained motivating outlook of society, or a system of successfully administering a state. The accumulated frustrations, over decades, of the Soviet population, the evident large-scale bankruptcy of once-cherished public Marxian ideals, the epidemic spread of corruption in public life have driven an increasingly despairing and morally emptied-out population back to the certainty and warmth of true-and-tried sentiments associated with the religiosity of Holy Mother Rus.

The secure institutional position attained by the church during the 1939-45 period as a result of the strategy of Sergii, Alexii, and Nikolai was never really threatened during the four years of "Khrushchev persecutions." Later, in 1975, certain new drastic changes were made in the Soviet Law On Religious Associations which provided the free room for the subsequent epidemic spread of the fundamentalist revival. Of the 30-odd changes in this important law, three stand out as being of particular long-term significance: first, restoration of property rights to churches, or "freedom to acquire church utensils, cult objects, means of transport; rent, construct and purchase buildings for their needs in accordance with established procedure"; second, removal from local Soviet authorities of the right to close down churches or inhibit church activities; third, abandonment of the requirement that church members attending local, regional, and national religious conventions register their names with the central government.

These new liberties, together with the larger social and political forces at work and the successful long-term strategy of the church leadership in cooperation with the "Russian Party" in the military leadership, have created a massive and growing popular following for the cult of Holy Mother Rus within the Soviet Union.

With respect to the matter of the Russian Orthodox Church's dominant position in current policy making: The Moscow Patriarchate has displayed over the years an extremely sophisticated grasp of the strategic issues of the nuclear age. Nikolai's and Nikodim's careers are but a small piece of the evidence. The large piece, which also is the

crucial experimental evidence for our case, is their attitude toward President Reagan's offer for a laser-based anti-missile defense program. It is not accidental that Patriarch Pimen was the first to denounce the President's offer a full eight months before the President publicly announced it.

The implications of a laser-based technological breakthrough in general technological and industrial practice involve what amounts to the final destruction of the cultural matrix of Russian society based on the rejection of the *Filioque* or "dialectical materialism" (which is the same thing. The argument for this case has been amply demonstrated recently in the *EIR* and elsewhere in writings of Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. The relevant point is that of all the Russian political factions participating in the process of policy making, the Russian Orthodox Church has the greatest stake in this matter).

In the final analysis, the military leaders of the Soviet Union know that President Reagan's proposed policy makes sense from the standpoint of *their national security*. Economic policy makers and Marxist planners have been painfully aware for years now that their economy's basic problem is its systematic failure to technologically innovate on any meaningful scale. They know that U.S. society, despite its current problems, could easily lead a worldwide economic boom by assimilating in its civilian sector the technological spin-offs of the laser and high-energy-manipulation technologies associated with the anti-missile laser-beam effort. And they know that such a worldwide economic boom would pull up their own stagnant economy, even though it would leave it far behind in rank in relation to a thus-revitalized U.S. economy.

But such a development would kill once and for all the irrationalist, barbaric, "blood and soil" mentality of Holy Mother Russia. The uncivilized, Byzantine cultural matrix which for almost 1,000 years has been fostered and promoted by the Russian Orthodox Church would disintegrate. Hence, the ugly cult of St. Sergii of Radonezh, the cult of imperial state tyranny, the cult of the "Third and Final Rome," has been put forward. As the barbaric Korean Air Line massacre was meant to signal to the world, as *Literaturnaya Gazeta* published last August, the matter of laser-beam anti-missile weapons is a *casus belli*, an occasion for launching pre-emptive nuclear war as far as Moscow is concerned.

Nineteen-hundred eighty-eight will be the year in which the Moscow Patriarchate will celebrate the one thousandth anniversary of the Christianization of Russ. The Russian Orthodox Church hierarchy had intended, according to calculations based on their strategic build-up during the 1970s, that that year should be the year to mark Moscow's worldwide imperial hegemony, the "Third and Final Rome." The offer made by President Reagan is incompatible with this perspective. Therefore, it is on behalf of this Third Rome perspective that the current Soviet leadership is threatening to go to war.