

Part II

Chapter 2

The Restoration of Church Life and the 1946 Council of Bishops *

The year 1945 had a profound effect upon the life of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. In addition to the loss of their dioceses and parishes in the countries which fell under Communist domination, a new schism developed in North America in 1946. Because of the Communist seizure of power in Eastern Europe, the Orthodox countries in those lands came under the control of the Moscow Patriarchate. Of course, this meant that their contacts with the Church Abroad were terminated. In the West, the Patriarchate attempted to exercise its influence among the émigrés, though these efforts were largely unsuccessful. The Patriarchate was only able to establish new parishes in North America and France in subsequent years. Essentially, this was so because of the uncertain stance of the leadership of the American Metropolia and the Paris Jurisdiction in the years 1943-46.¹

It seemed as though the Church Abroad, perhaps the entire Russian ecclesiastical emigration in general, was nearing its end. Metropolitan Eulogius (Georgievsky), with the bishops, priests and parishes of the Paris Jurisdiction, also joined the Moscow Patriarchate. In his three-volume *History of the Russian Church*, Chrysostomus (who is certainly no well-wisher of the Church Abroad) writes as follows, "Metropolitan Eulogius . . . seriously believed that the old Orthodox Russia had been reborn; he literally rhapsodized over Soviet marshals and generals. Later, he even submitted a request for a Soviet passport and received it. He showed himself to be an extreme Sovietophile in all things.... Metropolitan Nicholas found him a

reliable ally, not to say a willing instrument, for the implementation of the objectives of the Moscow Patriarchate."² The Paris group moved so quickly to join with Moscow that, in the summer of 1945, it was in two jurisdictions simultaneously: It had not yet withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate when it united with Moscow.

A similar coup was brought off by Stalin and the Soviet Union in that part of the Russian emigration which was in North America, the ecclesiastical administration of one portion of which met the Moscow Patriarchate half-way, in the sense that it entered into negotiations with it, beginning in 1944, to consider the possibility of uniting the North American parishes with Moscow. Bishops Alexis (Panteleev) of Sitka and Alaska and Macarius (Ilyinsky) of Brooklyn were dispatched to Moscow for the talks, and, early in 1946, they defected to the Moscow Patriarchate while still in the Soviet Union.

Nevertheless, the Church Abroad unexpectedly recovered from these blows. This was primarily due to three facts: (1) the immediate and energetic leadership of Metropolitan Anastasius during the difficult months following the end of the War; (2) the loyalty of many of the adherents of the Church Abroad -- bishops, priests, monastics, and the majority of its faithful as well; and (3) the mass of new emigrants who escaped from the Soviet Union in 1944-45 and who lived in Germany, at first as foreign laborers, and later as "D.P.'s" (Displaced Persons). The memory of the terror of Stalin's Purge and the complete subservience of the Moscow Patriarchate to the Soviet regime were fresh in the memories of these millions of emigrants, so they were hardly prone to share the Sovietophile ecstasies of some of the old Russian emigrés, bishops and priests. Thus, these new emigrants -- bishops, clergymen and faithful -- unhesitatingly joined the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. Even the enemies of the Church were compelled to acknowledge these facts: S.S. Struve wrote "It [the Church Abroad]

exerted a significant, magnetic force upon the new emigration, which was composed of several hundred thousand emigrés"³; and D. Pospelovsky, whose history of the Church is infamous for its intransigence towards the Church Abroad, wrote that the Church Abroad "achieved a reunification of bishops and clergy in Germany."⁴ The "directly pro-Soviet attitudes [of the Metropolia] led to the establishment of Synodal churches in America and Canada by the new refugees from Germany."⁵ Both authors, however, pass over in silence the fact that the pro-Soviet position of the bishops in North America and France caused confusion and unrest among the ranks of the diaspora and the parishes of those emigrations, resulting in the separation of many parishes, from which the Moscow Patriarchate gained the most: from the Paris Jurisdiction in Western Europe and northern Africa, approximately twenty parishes dissociated themselves and joined the Moscow Patriarchate; and in North America, the Patriarchate was in control of more than fifty parishes by 1947.⁶ The Paris Jurisdiction and the Metropolia realized too late that unification with the Moscow Patriarchate was impossible: Paris severed its relations with Moscow once again, as it had once before, in 1931; and the Metropolia terminated its negotiations in 1946.

In 1945, the well-defined position of Metropolitan Anastasius with regard to the Moscow Patriarchate was diametrically opposed to the Sovietophile positions of the bishops of the Paris Jurisdiction, as well as to the position of a certain element in the episcopate in North America. Chrysostomus writes of this as follows: "But despite all such difficulties, the Munich Synod did not for a moment entertain any thought of submission to Moscow." Metropolitan Anastasius addressed an Epistle to his flock, in which he forthrightly rejected the Patriarchate's proposal [which would have entailed the submission of the Church Abroad] and set forth in detail the reasons that such submission to the Moscow Patriarchate was unacceptable to the Church

Abroad under the present circumstances. This Epistle is a document remarkable for its clarity and determination. One must also not forget that it was written at a time when any harsh criticism of Bolshevism and the Soviet system was readily branded as "fascism." The bishops at Munich were, in all likelihood, seriously threatened by the Soviet commissars, who were, at that time, forcibly "repatriating" Russian emigrants in western Germany, often by employing brute force. It was at just this time that the terrible tragedies in Lienz, Plattling, and several other places, were played out, when thousands of Russian prisoners of war were, against their will, handed over to the Soviet forces, and many of them, seeing no escape, chose to commit suicide. These dreadful scenes were still fresh in the memory of many. Every harsh statement against communism could be interpreted as "fascist propaganda" and could be cause for arrest, and in several cases for the extradition of some emigrants to the Soviet Union as well. For this reason, Metropolitan Anastasius's Pastoral Epistle to the faithful deserves particular attention. In it, he insistently emphasizes that the Russian Church Abroad has never severed its canonical, prayerful and spiritual unity with its Mother Church.⁷ The basic positions of this Epistle state that:

The division between Metropolitan Sergius and the administrative organ of the Church Abroad began from that point at which he, consciously and out of conviction, entered into a concord with the godless regime, expressing his new relationship to it in his well-known Declaration of 29 May 1927. Everyone understands what turmoil this act caused in the soul of the faithful Russian people, both in Russia itself, and in the diaspora. The bishops abroad could not accept the views expressed in it, because they [i.e., Metropolitan Sergius' views] are manifestly opposed to the spirit of the teaching of the Gospel, the apostles and the fathers of the Church, and are profoundly at variance with the ordinances of our Mother Church.... Our posterity will be ashamed when they

compare the language of the present primates [i.e., the hierarchs of the Moscow Patriarchate] in their address to those who rule with what the ancient Christians said to the Roman emperors. . . . If many of the bishops of the diaspora, and with them a great number of the clergy and faithful laymen, remain aloof from any canonical ties with the present ecclesiastical authorities in Russia, they are not compelled to this by 'pride' - the mother of all heresies and schisms - but by the voice of their ecclesiastical awareness and their Orthodox conscience, which demands obedience to God rather than to man (Acts 4:19). Each of us knows that it is easier to walk by the wide road, the so-called path of least resistance, than to walk the narrow way. . . . The only completely competent judge between the Church Abroad and the present head of the Church of Russia can be a freely and legally convened council of the entire Church of Russia, totally independent in its decisions, with the participation of as many as possible of the bishops abroad and, especially, of those presently imprisoned in Russia. Before such a council, we are prepared to render account for each moment and all of our actions during our sojourn abroad.”⁸

The result of this Pastoral Epistle was a campaign of slander against Metropolitan Anastasius and the Church Abroad, not only in the communist press, but also on the part of opponents of the Russian Church Abroad, who, while situated in the free world, expressed their solidarity with Moscow by attempting to accuse the Synod Abroad of collaboration with Hitler's regime.⁹

The membership of the Synod of Bishops, the highest organ of the Church Abroad's administration, consisted solely of Metropolitan Anastasius, Metropolitan Seraphim (Lade), and Protopresbyter George Grabbe (Count Grabbe, later Bishop Gregory). The following bishops were all those bishops who were still subject to the Church Abroad in summer of 1945: In

Europe – Metropolitans Anastasius and Seraphim (Lade), and Bishops Philip (von Gardner), Alexander (Lovchy, ordained in July of 1945), and Basil (Pavlovsky, died in October of 1945); in North America – Metropolitan Theophilus (Pashkovsky), Archbishops Vitalis (Maximenko), Tikhon (Troitsky), Leontius (Turkevich), Alexis (Penteleev), Hieronymus (Chernov), and Bishops Joasaph (Skorodumov), Arsenius (Chagovtsev) and Macarius (Ilyinsky); in South America – Archbishop Theodosius (Samoilovich); and in the Far East – Bishop John (Maximovich) of Shanghai. In all, there were sixteen bishops remaining.

The bishops of the Belorussian and Ukrainian Autonomous Churches had not at that time yet submitted themselves to the Church Abroad, but they were collaborating with it closely in ministering to the emigrants in Germany. The fact that the competence and authority of the Synod of Bishops had not yet been challenged by the North American parishes, which later seceded to form the Metropolia, irrefutably proceeds from the following: The Council of Bishops which met in America on 24 May 1945 declared that unification with Moscow was impossible at present and that relations with the Synod of Bishops would be restored:

The American Metropolitan District has hitherto collaborated with the Council [of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church] Abroad, on the basis of the Temporary Statutes worked out under the presidency of Patriarch Barnabas of Serbia and accepted by the All-America Church Council of 1937, which remains in force to the present time.¹⁰

Thus was the former unity, as it existed in 1936-1937, restored. For this reason there were no changes in the composition of the episcopate from the very outset of the War. After the restoration of contacts with the Head of the Church and the Synod of Bishops, Metropolitan Theophilus appealed to the Synod, which decided to make several changes. One change was to elevate Bishops Leontius and Joasaph to the rank of archbishop (16 October 1946). Another was

to consecrate Archimandrite John (Zlobin) as bishop of Sitka and Alaska to replace Archbishop Alexis, whose retirement was approved by the Synod. Also, Archbishops Vitalis and Tikhon were rewarded for their services with the right to wear the jewelled cross on their klobuks (19 February/3 March 1946). All of these decisions were accepted by the Synod at the request of Metropolitan Theophilus, clearly demonstrating that the Metropolitan accepted and acknowledged the competence and authority of the Synod of Bishops in Munich over the Church in North America. As far as possible, contacts were reestablished with other dioceses and ecclesiastical institutions. It was decided to appoint a vicar bishop in Paraguay, for the Diocese of Brazil (26 August/8 September 1945).¹¹

However, it was extremely difficult to reestablish contacts with the rest of the dioceses while situated in Germany. One ought not to forget that, even between the zones of occupations controlled by the three Western allies in the summer of 1945, there was still no postal communication. It was restored only in October of 1945. For communication outside the individual zones of occupation, the permission and approval of the authorities was required. Thus, one begins to understand why Metropolitan Anastasius sought to make the administrative governance of the Church easier and, therefore, accepted the invitation to relocate to Switzerland. The Swiss government even offered to issue a Swiss passport to him and other clergymen. In September of 1945, Metropolitan Anastasius moved to Switzerland; he did so at a time when postal communications had not yet been restored in Germany, and it was even difficult to foresee when that difficulty would be overcome. Thus, the slanderous assertion of the enemies of the Church Abroad, who to this day maintain that Metropolitan Anastasius "escaped to Switzerland" or "fled to Switzerland," is totally without foundation.

Metropolitan Anastasius remained in Geneva until April of 1946. Prior to his relocating

in Switzerland only three sessions of the Synod of Bishops had been held: from September to March of 1946, there were six sessions. It was resolved, however, that all decisions made prior to relocation concerned the Diocese of Germany alone. At the session of 1/14 July 1945, it was decided to set the Austrian parishes apart as an independent diocese, separating them from the Diocese of Germany. The new bishop received the title "of Vienna and Austria"; Bishop Basil (Pavlovsky) was assigned to govern the new diocese. At the following session, which took place on 24 August/6 September 1945, the episcopate of the Ukrainian Autonomous Church was accepted into the Church Abroad, and Archbishop Panteleimon (Rudik), formerly of Kiev, was appointed a member of the Synod.

Only after relocation to Switzerland did contacts outside the boundaries of the Diocese of Germany become possible: the contact with North America mentioned above was restored at the first session in Geneva (16/29 October 1945); there followed the restoration of relations with the Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem (13/16 November 1945); the retirement of Abbess Tabitha from her position as superior of the Gorny Convent and the appointment of her successor, Sister Galina (Elizabeth Ampenova), as well as the elevation of Hieromonk Basil (Kondratovich) to the rank of archimandrite. Furthermore, Protopresbyter Michael Polsky of the London parish was given an award, since he had not followed his ruling bishop (Metropolitan Seraphim [Lukianov]) into the Moscow Patriarchate. In February of 1946, the rector of the parish in Beirut, Archimandrite Hermogenes, was awarded the right to wear the miter, since he had also refused to submit to Moscow. The widowed Diocese of Western Europe was provided with a new bishop: Archimandrite Nathanael (Lvov) was consecrated bishop of Brussels and Western Europe (decision dated 10/23 February; consecration on 25 February/10 March 1946). On 10/23 February 1946, the episcopate of the Belorussian Autonomous Church was accepted into the

Church Abroad. By a decision of 7/20 March 1946, Bishop Nathanael was appointed a member of the Synod of Bishops, and it was decided to consecrate Archimandrite Seraphim (Ivanov) as bishop of Santiago and Chile.

Over the course of half a year, the Synod was able to re-establish contacts with a great many parishes and dioceses. This was of tremendous significance, and for this reason, beginning with 1945-46, agents of the Moscow Patriarchate began to appear everywhere; their objective was to bring the émigré parishes into subjection to Moscow. And although instances of the submission of parishes of the Church Abroad to the Patriarchal Church continued to be the exception rather than the rule, there was a real danger that they would increase in number so long as contact with the Ecclesiastical Administration and the Synod of Bishops was in abeyance since many of the parishes were not even aware that the Synod continued to exist at all. By his move to Switzerland, Metropolitan Anastasius foiled the plans of the Patriarchate and the hope of the opponents of the Church Abroad that it would cease to exist. Thus, the far-seeing decision of Metropolitan Anastasius, to make his residence temporarily in Switzerland, was to a significant degree responsible for the post-War restoration of the Church Abroad.

Also significant is the fact that the Synod of Bishops had acquired new members. By spring of 1946, the following hierarchs constituted the membership of the Synod: Metropolitan Anastasius, as president; Metropolitan Seraphim (Lade) for the Central European Metropolitan District; Archbishop Panteleimon (Rudik) as representative of the Ukrainian clergy and faithful; and Bishop Nathanael (Lvov), representing the Diocese of Western Europe. Also, Protopresbyter George (Grabbe) attended the sessions in the capacity of secretary.

Even in this connection, the enemies of the Church Abroad again and again voiced their contention that, after the evacuation, the Synod of Bishops had not the least authority, since, they

would have us believe, "no bishops" belonged to it any more. Thus, Professor Troitsky, in his book *The Falseness of the Karlovtsy Schism* (p. 113), to which we have made reference above, maintains that Metropolitan Seraphim no longer belonged to the Synod after 1945, quoting a letter allegedly written by Metropolitan Seraphim, in which the writer complains that he was driven from the Synod. The provenance of this letter is extremely dubious; furthermore, Troitsky himself only cites the fact that the letter was written on the Metropolitan's stationery ("on the original of the letter are the letterhead and seal of Metropolitan Seraphim"); no mention is made, however, of any signature. The Metropolitan's chancery had fallen into the hands of the Soviets when they invaded Berlin; but even if they had not found official stationery, paper and a seal could have been easily fabricated. The fact remains that Metropolitan Seraphim was appointed a member of the Synod of Bishops on 11 June 1942¹² and remained such to the end of his life. After the conclusion of the War, he regularly took part in the sessions of the Synod. Thus, mention is made that he delivered a report at the session of 16 August/8 September 1945.¹³ At its 15 April/4 May 1946 session, the Synod of Bishops retroactively approved all appointments.¹⁴ The fact that Metropolitan Seraphim belonged to the Synod was repeatedly announced in his own periodical.¹⁵

The number of its members notwithstanding, the authority of the Synod of Bishops, as well as that of the Head of the Church, was, in any event, not subjected to doubt at this time, as we have pointed out in detail above. This was done much later, by certain elements within the American Metropolia, to cloak their own apostasy of 1946 in the guise of legitimacy.

The restoration of contacts with the dioceses and parishes in Western Europe and overseas - and North America in particular - constituted the prerequisite for the convocation of a Council of Bishops. In the *Temporary Statutes of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of*

Russia of 1935, which were still in effect, the objectives and competence of the Council of Bishops (III, pars. 1-10) and the Synod of Bishops (IV, pars. 105, a-n) were set forth.

Among the duties and responsibilities of the council of Bishops were "the issuance of epistles on behalf of the entire Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia" (III, 4), "the establishment of episcopal sees, their closure, the alteration of their boundaries, outside the borders of the districts" (III, 7), and "awarding bishops honors"(III,*). During the intervals between Councils of Bishops, the above-mentioned duties and responsibilities could be exercised temporarily by the President of the Synod of Bishops - i.e., the Head of the Church - and the Synod of Bishops, but had to be confirmed or rejected by the next Council of Bishops.

The last Council of Bishops in which all the bishops of the Church Abroad took part met immediately after the Pan-Diaspora Council of 1938. After the outbreak of the War, the convocation of the Council of Bishops became impossible, since the majority of the bishops were in areas occupied by the Allies. In 1943, a Council of Bishops met, in which a total of eight bishops from Europe, including two bishops of the Belorussian Autonomous Church - Archbishop Philotheus (Narko) and Archbishop Benedict (Bobkovsky) -took part. At this Council, the election of Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) as Patriarch of Moscow was condemned as uncanonical, since only eighteen of the approximately one hundred hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church had participated in the vote. Furthermore, the directives of the Pan-Russia Council of 1917-18 regarding the election of the Patriarch were violated in the crudest fashion.

Thus, the convocation of a Council of Bishops became all the more urgent, the more so in that the great number of decisions and the appointment of the Synod of Bishops and the Head of the Church required confirmation by the Council of Bishops and, with it, the approval of the

entire Church.

Here one ought first to point out the "Epistle to the Russian Orthodox People concerning the 'Address of Patriarch Alexis to the Archpastors & Clergy of the So-called Karlovsty Orientation,' of October, 1945," in which Metropolitan Anastasius clearly and unambiguously refused Patriarch Alexis' proposal that the Church Abroad subject itself to Moscow.¹⁶ Although this Epistle was addressed to the Russian flock abroad, thus falling within the competence of the Head of the Church, according to the "Temporary Statutes" (V), it was simultaneously an epistle written on behalf of the entire Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (par. III, 3), thus falling within the competence of the Synod of Bishops. Hence, this Epistle was so important for the well-being of the entire Church, that its ratification or rejection by the Council was desirable, the more so in that in North America a portion of the Church was already prepared to enter into negotiations over reunification with Moscow. Furthermore, a whole series of decisions which required the agreement of the Council had been submitted: the consecration of new bishops (Bishops Alexander, Nathanael and John), the exclusion from the Church Abroad of those bishops who had defected to the Patriarchate (Metropolitan Seraphim [Lukianov], Bishops Alexis and Macarius), changes in the boundaries of dioceses (the founding of the Diocese of Vienna and Austria; the consecration of Archimandrite Seraphim [Ivanov] as bishop of Santiago and Chile); the elevation of bishops to a higher rank, as well as their appointment as members of the Synod of Bishops; and, finally, the unification of the episcopates of the Belorussian and Ukrainian Autonomous Churches with the Church Abroad.

At the same time, events in Germany also took a positive turn: Early in 1946, the American occupation authorities turned over to the Synod a spacious building at 5 Donaustrasse in the Bogenhausen area of Munich. (This building at present houses the Austrian General

Consulate). There was sufficient room in the building for a domestic church, the Synod's chancery, quarters for the Metropolitan, and so on. The new church was dedicated to the Holy Prince Vladimir, Equal of the Apostles. After the transfer of the Synod to the United States, the iconostasis of this church was presented to the Serbian Orthodox church in Munich as a gift, repaying the Serbs in token measure for the assistance the Church Abroad had received from the Church of Serbia. This also served as an expression of the good and close relations between both Churches. Even today, the Serbian church in Munich (on Infanteriestrasse), which is dedicated to St. Vladimir, is adorned with this iconostasis.

At one of the last sessions of the Synod of Bishops in Geneva (on 7/20 March 1946), it was decided to convene an "assembly" of all the bishops residing in Germany, to deliberate upon a whole series of important questions.¹⁷ On Pascha (8/21 April) of 1946, Metropolitan Anastasius returned to Munich. On 5/18 April 1946, invitations had been sent out to the hierarchs. These invitations, however, spoke not of an "assembly," but of a "Council of Bishops." Invitations were directed to Metropolitans Seraphim (Lade) and Panteleimon (Rozhnovsky), the primate of the Belorussian Church; Archbishops Panteleimon (Rudik), Benedict (Bobkovsky), Philotheus (Narko); and Bishops Stephen (Sevbo), Leontius (Filippovich), Eulogius (Markovksy), Theodore (Rafailsky), Demetrius (Magan), Athanasius (Martos), Gregory (Boriskevich), Nathanael (Lvov) and Alexander (Lovchy). Metropolitan Anastasius presided. In certain sources, one sometimes finds reference to sixteen bishops attending. It is possible that this number envisions the participation of Bishop Paul (Meletiev), who, however, was not invited and did not take part in the Council. In 1947, he founded the "Belorussian Autocephalous Orthodox Church."¹⁸

How difficult the situation in Germany still was is apparent from the invitations: The

accommodation of such a number of bishops entailed considerable hardship. Thus, the invitation was accompanied by the question: "Do you have friends or acquaintances in Munich with whom it would be convenient for you to stay during the Council?"

The Council opened on 24 April/6 May 1946 and lasted for three days. In addition to the fifteen bishops present in person, eleven bishops ratified the decisions of the Council in writing during the following weeks.

The Council's agenda was very broad, since it was confronted not only with the task of reviewing a whole series of the decisions of the Synod of Bishops, but also had to work out extremely important principles for the reorganization of the Church.

After the solemn divine service at the opening of the Council, in which all fifteen invited hierarchs took part, Metropolitan Anastasius delivered a report on the life of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.¹⁹ The Metropolitan pointed out the difficult position of the Synod of Bishops since the outset of the War and emphasized that, with the exception of the Diocese of Germany, practically all contact with the remaining dioceses had been interrupted. Even with Metropolitan Seraphim (Lukianov) in Paris, i.e. with the Diocese of Western Europe, contact was only occasional and was made in a roundabout way, through the Diocese of Germany. The German authorities placed obstacles in the way of anything that might have benefited the Church: "The German authorities were definitely against our unity." After the evacuation from Belgrade, the Germans hindered the restoration of contacts between the various bishops. "For a long time we had no news of one another." This also continued in the months following the end of the War. Only after relocation in Geneva did the situation change radically, since relations with parishes throughout the world could then be restored. The encyclical Epistle he composed in response to Patriarch Alexis' invitation to submit to the Patriarchate could be sent

out to parish leaders only after resettlement in Geneva. Unfortunately, the bishops in Manchuria had by then already joined the Moscow Patriarchate. In the Diocese of Western Europe, only four clergymen joined Metropolitan Seraphim in submitting to Moscow, while seventy-five parishes of the Paris Jurisdiction of Metropolitan Eulogius took that step.²⁰ In the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* you can read "...We consider Metropolitan Eulogius and his vicar-bishops, Archbishop Vladimir and Bishop John, with all their seventy-five parishes, united with the Mother Church, Metropolitan Seraphim and the parishes [N.B.: no indication of number] of his circle are considered reunited with the Mother Church...). Further on, the Metropolitan addressed the situation in the Near East, and in North and South America. Describing the critical situation in the United States, where tendencies to unite with Moscow had been noted, he later stressed that this step had been taken only by Bishops Alexis and Macarius, while the majority of the bishops were continuing in their loyalty to the Church Abroad: "The unity of the North American bishops with us is a great bulwark for us in the present grievous times." The Metropolitan did not touch upon the state of the Central European Metropolitan District in more detail, as Metropolitan Seraphim (Lade) was to deliver the report on this. Immediately after this report, the Church Abroad's attitude toward the Moscow Patriarchate was discussed in detail, and the Epistle of Metropolitan Anastasius was approved. Furthermore, a resolution of the following content was adopted:²¹

The supreme ecclesiastical administration in Russia, in the person of the present head of the Church of Russia, Patriarch Alexis, has repeatedly appealed to the bishops abroad, urging them to enter into canonical submission to the Patriarchate; but, obedient to our own pastoral conscience, we find it morally impossible to meet these appeals halfway while the supreme ecclesiastical authority in Russia is in unnatural union with the godless

regime, and while the entire Church of Russia is bereft of the true freedom inherent to it according to its divine nature.

We do not wish to close our eyes to the fact that the Soviet regime has, since the outset of the War, had to restore to the Church certain of the legal rights of which it had been deprived. However, the freedom afforded the Church of Russia bears a very limited – and, furthermore, a more outward and seeming, rather than genuine and essential – character. This freedom must be bought, moreover, by obligations imposed by the regime upon the clergy, which are inconsistent with the exalted dignity of the Church. If the communist government in Russia wishes to demonstrate a real respect for the Church of Russia and to create normal conditions for its activity, it must provide it with complete freedom for the realization on earth of the calling it has received from on high, and assure it of the position it enjoyed from of old in Orthodox Russia. First and foremost, the regime is obligated to open the gates of the prisons and concentration camps, to free the archpastors and pastors incarcerated there to this day, who have shown themselves to be true confessors of Orthodoxy, and to allow the clergy full freedom to preach the Word of God by word and in writing and to take care for the religious upbringing of the young generations.

Profoundly grieved by the present subordinate position of the hierarchy and clergy in Russia, we do not want to demand of them excessive sacrifices and or to lay upon their shoulders a burden beyond their strength to bear; however, we cannot without sorrow fail to point out that the upper hierarchy of the Church of Russia has taken an incorrect and dangerous path, in that, on the one hand, it keeps silence about the truth which is bitter to the Soviet regime, presenting the state of the Church and of society in

Russia as other than it is in reality, and forgetting the dictum of Gregory the Theologian, that, in such cases, "silence is a betrayal of God"; and, on the other hand, consciously upholds the blasphemous falsehood that the Church is not, and never has been, persecuted by the Bolshevik regime in Russia, and thus mocks the feats of suffering of the multitude of hieromartyrs and martyrs, whom it dares to compare to political criminals who, it would have us believe, are deservedly subjected to retribution by the government.

This is a truly great sin of blasphemy against their sacred memory and of calumny against our Mother Church, for which the hierarchy, and especially its leaders, will have to render a serious account before God and the tribunal of history.

Paying reverent homage before the image of our great passion-bearers, who have suffered for the Faith and for the truth of God, we earnestly pray for their repose, and for that of many other Russian people, especially for the thousands of prisoners of war who have suffered martyrdom at the cruel hands of the so-called German Nazis. We hope that their sacrifice, and that of others, has not been in vain, and that over their martyrs' bones a new, free Russia will arise, mighty in its Orthodox righteousness and the brotherly love with which it illumined the world of old. Then all its scattered children, without any application of force or compulsion, but freely and joyfully, will rush into its maternal embrace from every quarter. With full awareness of our unseverable spiritual bonds with our homeland, we fervently entreat the Lord to heal as quickly as possible the wounds inflicted upon our native land by the grievous, albeit victorious, War, and bless it with peace and all good will.²²

The Resolution was approved by all the bishops - even by those who did not personally attend at

the Council, in particular the North American bishops.

However, properly speaking, the import of the resolution lay in the fact that any further departure of parishes to the Patriarchal Church was halted. It led even to the return of many parishes and pastors to the Church Abroad, mostly in Europe (among them the parish in Cannes, with Archbishop Gregory [Ostroumov], who had joined Moscow for a period of approximately six months).

Subsequent sessions of the Council dealt primarily with the reorganization of the Church. First, administrative changes previously adopted by the Synod of Bishops were approved. Archbishop Philotheus reported on the state of the émigrés in the camps and the difficulties between refugees from Belorussia, the Ukraine and other provinces of the Soviet Union, all of whom were Orthodox. It was pointed out that everything should be done to preserve the unity of the Church. The Council pronounced anathema against a group of Ukrainian nationalists who wanted to form their own, independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church (the so-called Autocephalists).²³ With this in view, the reception of the Belorussian and Ukrainian episcopates and clergy by the Synod of Bishops was again, deliberately approved. To minister better to the needs of the parishes, it was decided to form vicariates in the individual zones of occupation.²⁴ One ought not to forget that by this time almost a million refugees were living in the three zones of Western occupation. If by the end of the War there were fifteen Russian parishes in Germany, their number had risen to eighty parishes by mid-1946, according to information communicated by Metropolitan Seraphim (Lade) at the first diocesan assembly in Germany, held in June of 1946.²⁵ The number of parishes at this time increased almost daily, ultimately totaling more than a hundred. The difficult situation of the refugees was dealt with in a separate memorandum, which was published shortly afterwards in German, Russian, English and French (*Memorandum*

sur la situation de l'emigration orthodoxe dans le diocese d'Allemagne, Munich, 1946).

The Council directed its attention particularly to the religious education of the faithful, especially the young. One should not forget that the majority of the refugees had had almost no contact at all with the Church in the homeland, since the Church as an organization had been all but destroyed by 1939. The children had not received instruction in the fundamentals of the Faith; rather, they had been brought up in the spirit of Marxism. For this reason, it was decided to arrange instruction in the elements of the Faith and catechetical courses in those refugee camps where such had not already been organized. Bishop Gregory (Boriskevich) gave a lengthy report on the opening of a theological institute in Europe for the training of future priests (*Notes for the Report on the Organization within the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad of a Theological Pastoral Institute in Western Europe*).²⁶ Furthermore, since it no longer had the possibility of educating future clergymen at the Belgrade Theological Faculty, which it had enjoyed in the period between the Wars, the founding of its own theological school became imperative, the more so in that there were among the refugees a considerable number of candidates who wished to receive pastoral training. Bishop Gregory proposed a solid program of instruction for the institute when it was founded: four courses of study were envisioned, consisting of some thirty hours of classes per week. Individual subjects followed the teaching plan of the former seminaries in Russia.

However, these plans were not realized in Europe, since there were no suitable buildings, nor was there any substantial material support. Moreover, the possibility of housing students near some monastery did not exist (the Monastery of St. Job in Munich had not yet been organized). Two years later, Bishop Gregory's plans were realized in the founding of Holy Trinity Seminary in Jordanville, New York, which has since become the most significant

educational institution within the Russian Church Abroad and has done its best to preserve the ideals of the seminaries which existed in Russia in the past.²⁷

In Germany, the plans were realized only partially: In the Fischbek Camp near Hamburg, theological courses were taught between 1946 and 1948, under the direction of Archimandrite (now Metropolitan) Vitalis, which followed the course of study outlined by Bishop Gregory. With other clergymen of the Camp, Archimandrite Vitalis provided an education for the first priests of the post-War period.

Based on the aforementioned decisions of and the developments emanating from the Council of 1946, one may with justification call it "historic." Its special significance lay in the fact that it restored the authority of the bishops within the Church, since it was in a position to cite the agreement of twenty-six bishops. The ecclesiastical administration managed to deflect the pretensions of the Moscow Patriarchate vis-à-vis the émigré parishes and to stem the flow of parishes from the Church. This was first and foremost thanks to Metropolitan Anastasius, who from his vantage point in Switzerland gathered together his scattered flock over the period of several months. The Council was the culmination of the first period of the post-War history in the life of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, which, thanks to the loyalty of its senior adherents and the confessors' witness of the new refugees of World War II, found itself stronger after the vicissitudes of that difficult period.

*Additional chapter added after the original publication.

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