

Professor Fischer. It is precisely this policy of across-the-board industrialization which, therefore, the regime cannot afford to alter, even though its continuation into the 1970's is limiting Romania's ability to pay her way in Western markets, threatening to increase her economic dependence on a hostile USSR, and reducing the prospect for further improvement in living standards.

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Michael Bordeaux, *Patriarch and Prophets*. Macmillan, London, 1969.  
Pp. 359.

The Gospel contains the Dominical command to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's" and every Church is always faced with the tasks of defining for itself the duties of both Church and State and of establishing a policy for its practical dealings with the ruling power. Although those Churches which enjoy the tolerance or official support of their Governments have problems to face in this respect, it is inevitably much more difficult when the powers that be are declaredly atheistic and anxious to suppress the practice of religion in any form. This book, which has as its subtitle, *Persecution of the Russian Orthodox Church Today*, deals with precisely this issue. The author, the Reverend Michael Bordeaux, well-known for his writings on the contemporary ecclesiastical situation in Russia, which he knows intimately, presents a wide collection of documents from the last decade showing clearly the conflicting opinions within the Church and also the measure of Soviet opposition. This volume forms a companion to the same writer's "Religious Ferment in Russia" (1968), studying the same problem in the Evangelical Christian and Baptist Church where, as is well-known a schism has occurred between those who are anxious to change the present policy and those content with the status quo. But even if language has been used that mentions schism, such an action is more difficult for Orthodox with their different concept of authority within the Church.

As the title of the book suggests, Mr. Bordeaux does not wish to be partisan. In an eirenic introduction, he tries to present as fairly as possible the position taken by both sides. "The Spirit blows where it wills,"

and as at all times the institutional and prophetic elements in the Church must not see each other as alternatives but should re-act upon each other to the mutual advantage of the Church as a whole. If the documents here seem to paint a one-sided picture, this is only because, by the nature of the case, the official voice cannot declare its exact intentions without compromising the position it has taken.

Constitutionally, Church and State in Russia are separate and all are free to worship God or to propagate atheism. In practice, and in theory, however, the Church is severely hampered and secret instructions from the State circumvent the law. All church buildings are leased and can thus be closed easily, preaching inside churches can be restricted and religious education of children is illegal but is allowed by parents. Moreover, anyone who professes to be a Christian cannot hope for any personal advancement in secular life.

In 1927, Metropolitan Sergi, in later years to be patriarch, pledged his own loyalty and that of his flock to the Soviet Union "as our civil motherland." This caused some bitterness within the Church but after the religious revival during the Second World War it seemed that such a policy might work. Christians have always been under serious disabilities in Soviet Russia but from 1960 - 1964 under Khrushchev, without any change in the law there was a renewed and intensified persecution which often surpassed the limits of legality. The Patriarch's passivity and refusal to speak openly against this, though A. Osipov who had openly apostatised was excommunicated, is attacked by many writers in this book. In 1961, a hastily convened Synod removed the responsibility of the upkeep of buildings from parish priests, ostensibly so that they might concentrate on their pastoral duties but this action had the effect of causing mass closures of churches—there were about half the number open in 1962 (approx. 11,500) that there were in 1959 and thousands more suffered the same fate in subsequent years. Evidence is also presented that atheist infiltration into the Church may well have taken place and not only at the lower levels. Many monasteries were closed during the same period and some monks have undoubtedly become martyrs. As an example of this monastic persecution, documents relating to the Pochaev monastery are included. Here, the monastery was eventually left open, perhaps because of the foreign publicity this case had received. It seems true that world opinion can and does have some effect on internal policy but doubtless in less publicised cases closures were enforced. The State is subtle enough to know that Christian martyrs

do not help the atheist cause. Usually, the State is careful to make sure that people are not imprisoned simply for being Christians, but on charges of anti-Soviet political activity or, as in the case of the monks, as idle vagrants. Many moving instances of personal persecution are cited—the vituperation of the State's activity at least reflects the seriousness with which it takes the Church as an influence on society—yet the patriarch could declare in 1966 that “the state of the Church in Russia is entirely normal and with God's gracious help it is quietly and confidently fulfilling its mission of salvation.”

A number of people have protested at the closure and destruction of churches and have also been highly critical of the rôle of the Patriarchate in this and of its treatment of those who desire a more vigorous attitude towards the State. Plenty of material is included that accuses the Patriarch of complicity with the State's Council for Russian Orthodox Church Affairs, now the Council for Religious Affairs, a body that has considerably hindered the work of the Church. Priests who openly protested against what was happening were often quickly removed or like Frs. Eshliman and Yahanim were suspended by the Patriarch. The brave protests of these two priests was seen by him as an undermining of the favourable mutual relations already established between Church and State. Similarly, the action of Archbishop Yermogen in requesting the reconsideration of the 1961 regulations led to his deposition.

What can be said for the official position of the Church? Presumably it is thought that open conflict with the State would only result in a more vicious persecution that would leave the Church weaker than it already is. The representatives of the Patriarch have been eager to play down the extent of persecution, thereby exacerbating the annoyance of those who plead for more militant action. No doubt the Patriarchate thinks that little can be gained by such provocation. This position is a more difficult one to maintain. It receives less sympathy than the cause of the confessors and martyrs but the long-term results may be more beneficial to the life of the Church. On the other hand, it might be argued, the Baptist Church has secured some rights as a result of its protests. Some of the opponents of the official line have used understandably intemperate language but the unedifying wrangles over the interpretation of some of the canons is unlikely to sway those not already persuaded.

Some of the best writings from those who desire a change in policy are by Anatoli Levitin whose work has been violently denounced by

the State. He points out that atheism is not free precisely because it is imposed and he thinks that a dialogue and frank discussion with atheism is both desirable and possible.

The hopes for the future expressed in this book are all the more impressive when seen in the context of so much that humanly speaking is a cause for despair. Even Frs. Eshliman and Yahanim could write in an open letter to the Patriarch, "The Russian Church is heavily afflicted! Her grief is profound, her sorrow is bitter, but we are seriously convinced that the sickness is not unto death, but is for the glory of God."

It is evidence of the work of the Spirit that, despite all its difficulties, the Church in Russia remains as strong as it is. All Christians have something to learn from this paradoxical triumph of the joy and faith of a Church firm in the knowledge that it shares in the sufferings of its Lord whose strength is made perfect in weakness.

This book makes sad reading. Internal bitterness and strife within the Church is inevitably pleasing in the sight of a régime committed to atheism. Christians in Russia have during this century faced the largest persecution in the history of the Church, a trial endured by Christians of other communist countries. The author dedicates his work "To the people of Czechoslovakia, who will find a reflection of their own spirit in the finest traditions of Christian Russia." Since the publication of the book, the foreseeable death of Patriarch Alexi has occurred and the election of his successor is awaited. It will be interesting to see what effect this has on future Church-State relations. Mr. Bordeaux is to be thanked for making this material known to a wide audience and no doubt he will continue to keep us informed and aware of subsequent developments.

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*Some Aspects of the History of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.* Nomikos Michael Vaporis. Published by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America. Pp. 151.

It is a cause for some satisfaction that, although much work remains to be done in this field, recent years have seen a number of notable contributions to the study of the Greek Orthodox Church during the period of Turkish domination, a period which all too often in the past