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Series C: Interreligious Activities. 1952-1992

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David Roth
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STATEMENT BY RABBI MARC H. TANNENBAUM, DIRECTOR
OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH
COMMITTEE, AT GREEK ORTHODOX DINNER HONORING
ARCHBISHOP IAKOVOS AND COMMEMORATING 100TH ANNIVERSARY
OF BIRTH OF ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH ATHENAGORAS
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1986, WALDORF-ASTORIA HOTEL, NYC

It is a rare and special privilege for me
to be invited to address once again this distinguished
audience of Greek Orthodox Christians who have
assembled to honor your great Primate and my
beloved friend of many years, His Eminence
Archbishop Iakovos. He embodies the noblest
virtues of ecumenism and reconciliation that
characterized the life and career of the Ecumenical
Patriarch Athenagoras whose centennial birthday
we have come to acknowledge this evening.

HABRAISM
The friendship and mutual regard which
have dominated the relationship between Archbishop
Iakovos and myself over several decades are
grounded in larger historic realities. Hellenism
and Hebraism, in all their complexities, are the
foundation-stones of Western Civilization.

Western democratic societies are inconceivable
without the fundamental contributions of the Greek and
Jewish peoples across the past millennia. In innumerable
ways, the fate and destiny of the great Greek and
Jewish peoples are interdependent. In light of that
historic reality, no person, no force can ultimately
succeed in severing those profound bonds nor in
alienating Greeks from Jews, nor Jews from Greeks.

There are problems outstanding today
between Greece and Israel, and between Greeks
and Jews, both of whom cherish the centrality
of their ancient homelands in their lives. But

the paths we have chosen to deal with such difficulties are those of dialogue, reconciliation, and healing. Provocation and alienation are not the modes that Greeks and Jews choose to resolve their problems.

Whatever the differences, I know that responsible Jewish leadership is convinced that the avenues of dialogue are always open with Archbishop Iakovos and Greece's Ambassadors to the United States and to the United Nations. And we plan to pursue that dialogue with them in the days ahead.

I wish not only to recall the historic context of the Greek-Jewish relationship, but also to say a brief word about the importance of the interrelationship of Greeks and Jews in America.

I have devoted the past 25 years of my life to building bridges of understanding and mutual ~~new~~ knowledge ~~between~~ and respect between Christians and Jews, and particularly between Greek Orthodox Christians and Jews. One of the critical turning points in that relationship took place about 20 years ago when Archbishop Iakovos asked for the support of the Jewish community in behalf of a Congressional resolution that would recognize Greek Orthodox Christianity as one of "the Four Major Faiths of America."

Until that time, only Catholicism, Protestantism, and Judaism were publicly acknowledged as "The Three Major Faiths," as if Greek Orthodoxy did not exist. My response to Archbishop Iakovos' request was immediate. "Of course, we would support that sense of Congress resolution that

publicly established Greek Orthodoxy as a major faith of the American people," I told the Archbishop, and so we issued a public statement supporting that resolution, and we urged members of the U.S. Congress, particularly those of the Jewish faith, to advocate the ~~cause~~^{recognition} of Greek Orthodoxy through this resolution.

The Congressional resolution was adopted unanimously, and Greek Orthodoxy has since then be recognized as one of "The Four Major Faiths of America."

That experience symbolizes the true state of Greek-Jewish relations in America.

R E L I G I O U S N E W S S E R V I C E

FOREIGN SERVICE

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MONDAY, MAY 2, 1977

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH AND CANTERBURY SIGN
DOCUMENT A VOWING WISE TO END 'OBSTACLES'

By Religious News Service (5-2-77)

ISTANBUL, Turkey (RNS) -- Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios I, spiritual leader of world Orthodoxy, and Archbishop Donald Coggan, spiritual head of the worldwide Anglican Communion, signed a joint declaration expressing "the firm desire" to overcome the "obstacles" which stand in the way of dialogue between the Orthodox and Anglican Churches.

The declaration was signed here after a day of meetings, which included an ecumenical service in St. George's Church, during which the two churchmen had expressed disagreement over the issue of women priests.

The document noted that the Ecumenical Patriarch had reaffirmed "that the Orthodox Church does not accept the priestly ordination of women." It also noted that the Archbishop of Canterbury had expressed the hope that the Orthodox Church would have "understanding" for the position of those Churches in the Anglican Communion (in the U.S., Canada, and Hong Kong), which allowed women to be ordained to the priesthood.

"The leaders of the two Churches," the declaration continued, "consider the continuation of theological dialogue ... a means of resolving the problems which separate the two Churches and of finding the points which unite them."

Calling for "development" in the movement toward Christian unity, the two churchmen also called for "collaboration with all religions," to the end that "charity and peace among men will prevail in the world, "racial and religious discrimination disappear" and "full religious liberty be safeguarded in all nations."

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Welcomed At Orthodox Center Service

DR. COGGAN ARRIVES IN GENEVA
FOR TALKS AT WORLD COUNCIL

By Religious News Service (5-2-77)

GENEVA (RNS) -- Shortly after his arrival here May 2 for a visit with leaders of the World Council of Churches (WCC), Archbishop Donald Coggan of Canterbury was welcomed at a service in the Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The spiritual leader of the worldwide Anglican Communion came to Geneva from Istanbul, Turkey, where he had met and prayed with Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios I, spiritual leader of world Orthodoxy.

The visit of Archbishop Coggan with Patriarch Dmetrios followed his two days of talks and prayers for Christian unity with Pope Paul.

(more)

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RELIGIOUS NEWS

SERVICE

FOREIGN SERVICE

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MONDAY, MAY 2, 1977

In a brief address at the service in the Orthodox Center, the Primate of the Church of England described his meeting with Patriarch Demetrios as "joyful and profitable."

Orthodox Metropolitan Damaskinos, welcoming the Archbishop, said it was "here (at the Orthodox Center) that the warm interest shown by your Church towards rapprochement with the Orthodox Church and the theological dialogue with her in mutual love was acknowledged and appreciated on a pan-Orthodox level."

The metropolitan addressed the Anglican Church leader "in the bond of peace and charity."

ORTHODOX OBSERVER

8 EAST 79TH STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10021

MEMO

Dear Rabbi Jannenbaum,

Please see page 1 and page 16

items on harassment of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Your support will be deeply appreciated.

Sincerely,
Yeh's Capoulas
James Conchell

ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΟΣ ΠΑΡΑΤΗΡΗΤΗΣ ORTHODOX OBSERVER

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Harassment of Patriarchate Is Reported By Archbishop Heavy Taxes Imposed on Schools and Churches

NEW YORK — Millions of liras in taxes have been imposed by the Turkish authorities upon the schools and churches of the Greek Orthodox minority in Constantinople. At the same time, by refusing to issue them passports, they do not allow "certain hierarchs and many Turkish citizens of Greek descent" to travel abroad.

The above information was contained in a letter from a high-ranking bishop of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to Archbishop Iakovos. The letter indicates that through these new initiatives Turkey seeks, on the one hand, to terrorize the Greek Orthodox faithful and, on the other hand, to oblige the Ecumenical Patriarchate "to cease its religious activities abroad," thus condemning it to oblivion.

The financial harassment, which would appear to be aimed primarily at closing the schools of the minorities, has been masked by the Turks with a change in the classification of these schools from "minority schools" to "private schools." Private schools, of course, are required to pay real estate taxes.

This effort to close the schools has already begun. The well-known Zappeion School for Girls, for instance, which has now been reclassified as a private school, has had taxes amounting to millions of liras levied against it. Not having such funds available, the Turkish authorities have already catalogued all the school's carpets, furniture and other moveable objects that can be auctioned off to pay the taxes. When that happens, the school, of course, will be forced to close.

The content of the letter from the bishop, whose name has not been released for obvious reasons, is tragic. Archbishop Iakovos characterized it as "a cry of despair." He said that in Constantinople "individual freedom, freedom of speech and the right to protest do not exist. We talk about human rights throughout the world," he stated, "and do nothing about the human rights of the Greek community in Constantinople. Greek Orthodox citizens of Turkey are being terrorized to such a degree that they abandon their homes and property and leave Turkey."

May His Memory Be Eternal!

Timotheos of Rodostolou Falls Asleep in the Lord

NEW YORK — With great sadness, Archbishop Iakovos announced that Bishop Timotheos (Haloftis) of Rodostolou, 60, his auxiliary bishop and spiritual leader of the Second Archdiocesan District (Chicago), fell asleep in the Lord on December 21, 1977, in Chicago.

The announcement of the bishop's death was received with great regret by all his spiritual flock in the Second District, as well as by all the faithful throughout the Archdiocese. The Archbishop was notified of the death while in the chapel of the Archdiocese, serving a Supplication Service for the recovery of the bishop, who had been extremely ill for some time. His Eminence then tearfully served a Memorial Service for the soul of Bishop Timotheos. Praying with him was the entire staff of the Archdiocese. Just two days earlier the Archbishop had visited Bishop Timotheos in the Chicago hospital where he died.

CHICAGO FUNERAL

CHICAGO, IL — The faithful of the Second District bid farewell to their spiritual leader, the late Bishop Timotheos of Rodostolou, at the Cathedral of the Annunciation.

On Friday afternoon, Dec. 23, Archbishop Iakovos arrived from New York, accompanied by Bishop Silas and Archdeacon Methodios. They proceeded directly to the cathedral, where His Eminence officiated at the Vesper Service, followed by a Memorial Service. Serving with the Archbishop were his aux-

iliary bishops and Archbishop John of Chicago (Russian Orthodox), who was accompanied by eight priests and a choir.

On Saturday morning the Divine Liturgy was celebrated by Bishop Iakovos of Catanis. Archbishop Iakovos presided at the funeral. Also present were Bishops Iakovos of Apameias, John of Thermon, Philotheos of Meloa, Sotirios of Constantia and Anthimos of Christoupolis.

Bishop Silas of Amphipolis conveyed the condolences of the Church, and accepted those of the dignitaries present: Mayor Michael Bilandic of Chicago; Cardinal John Cody; and other religious and civic leaders.

BURIAL IN GREECE

Immediately after the funeral, the body of Bishop Timotheos was transported by plane to Greece, to be entombed in his birthplace, Megara, in Attica. Accompanying the body were Bishop Iakovos of Catanis, also from Megara, and Frs. Aneste and Karambis.

Overseeing all the funeral arrangements was Bishop Philotheos of Meloa, who has been appointed Administrator of the District until a new bishop is appointed here.

BIOGRAPHY

The late Bishop Timotheos of Rodostolou (whose given name was Alcibiades Haloftis) was born in 1917, in Megara, where he received his elementary and high school education. In 1934 he enrolled in the Theological School of the University of Athens, where he received

(Continued on Page 2)

Patriarch's Encyclical Dedicated to Children

CONSTANTINOPLE — His All Holiness, the Ecumenical Patriarch, Demetrios I, indicates in his 1977 Christmas encyclical that our Mother Church, on the holy night of Christmas, "kneels beside the Mother of God, lovingly and worshipfully, and prays with her as she hovers over the infant Jesus."

From the humble Phanar, the spiritual center of worldwide Orthodoxy, Patriarch Demetrios calls upon the Orthodox faithful and the entire world to see the naked reality that lies behind our beautiful, stylized icons of the birth of Christ. "The true icon is harsh," he says.

"The Christ of Bethlehem is a newborn babe, homeless, wrapped in whatever was handy. His only comfort is the sweetness of Mary, the tenderness of Joseph, the hay, the sympathy of the animals, the innocence of their shepherds."

"Beyond this, the icon is surrounded by an unfriendly environment, by cold indifference and a criminal lack of compassion. Around that child, the newborn infant, 14,000 children were slaughtered.

"Under such conditions God became human and took upon Himself humanity with all its weaknesses, in order to save it."

"But this Child, Jesus, is not alone in being born under such conditions, even after the passage of nearly 2,000 years since His birth.

"The harshness of the icon of the first Christmas receives its finishing touches today from the tragic situation of humanity. On our planet earth, millions of children, small brothers and sisters of Christ, are born, exist and live without comfort and tenderness, in an unfriendly and indifferent environment, oppressed by the Herod's of hunger, of nakedness, of ignorance.

"This, then, is the reason our Christmas encyclical to the Church and to the world is dedicated to children."

Patriarch Demetrios goes on to say that Christ demonstrated to us the value and sacredness of children (Mark 9:36-37; Matt 18:3,6). Our relations with children have divine aspects, to the extent that when love and tenderness govern this relation then we are with Christ in His Kingdom; and when this relation is tainted by scandal, by abandonment, by indifference, by abuse, by any sort of evil, then we should be prepared for self-condemnation.

Recognizing the great value of children, the Church has always given special attention to their spiritual and physical health and development and to their protection.

At the end of the last century many nations and organizations started to provide more systematic protection for children. Nevertheless, despite all these

(Continued on Page 2)

NY Times Reports On New Oppression

NEW YORK — "In an atmosphere of despair" the Greek Orthodox faithful in Constantinople celebrated Christmas, Archbishop Iakovos told George Dugan, a reporter for The New York Times.

The cause of the despair, he indicated in a recent interview, is the new efforts of Turkish authorities to close the schools and churches of the Greek Orthodox minority. "The situation is very serious," the Archbishop said, "and grows worse each day."

The Archbishop told Mr. Dugan that his information was based on a letter from Constantinople, and made a translation of the letter available to him. Subsequently an article on the new oppression of the Greek minority appeared in the December 25 issue of The Times.

Patriarch Assures Pope of Desire for Unity

VATICAN CITY (RNS) — Relations between the Roman Catholic Church and Eastern Orthodoxy may never have been better.

This was the view of some observers when Pope Paul VI received this note from Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios I which said:

"The Orthodox Church is ready to break down all the barriers separating the Catholic and Orthodox Churches with the aim of being able to share the body and blood of the Lord together in the same Holy Eucharist."

Earlier, in a conversation with Metropolitan Meliton of Chalcedon, dean of the Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Pope Paul had said that "slowly but surely our communities are advancing toward complete union."

The views of the Patriarch were contained in a letter delivered to the Pope by Metropolitan Meliton.

The Patriarch expressed joy over a message sent to him by the Pope and

emphasized his gratitude for the continuation of dialogue "conducted with fraternal sincerity in preparation for theological dialogue between the two Churches."

Metropolitan Meliton also brought with him to Rome a gift for Pope Paul sent by the Patriarch, a lamp from Demetrios' private chapel. Demetrios suggested that the Pope use it in his own chapel as a sign of the light of Christ.

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