

Religion a necessity but Fanaticism a menace

IN A NICHE in a beautiful church on the Red Square in Moscow, now the House of the Moscow Soviet, is inscribed Lenin's great challenge to religion:

"Religion is the opium of the people."

Is atheism to prevail in Russia?

Persons who are international-minded have watched with interest Russia's struggle for freedom, and have sympathy for its people, who are going through an uncomfortable rebirth of government. Not, however, many church people are viewing with alarm the Soviet's campaign against the church, saying that it can lead only to destruction of the Russian social structure.

When the leaders of the Russian people succeeded in throwing off the yoke imposed upon them by the monarchical form of government, they saw their country the victim of domination by an aristocratic few, who had kept the masses of the people in ignorance and poverty. The church was a factor in that aristocracy's scheme of power. Under the Czars, the Church of Russia was second in power and authority only to the ruler himself. The Soviet leaders were jealous of any group or institution that might threaten the Soviet's power, so they began to take from the church both its power and its wealth. They have taken the church's land and income, and in some cases have even taken over control of the church buildings, allowing services to be held only with the permission of the local authorities. Public officials are not allowed to evidence religious beliefs of any kind.

The Russian church has offered many medieval practices and superstitions to its people as religion. The masses of the people know too little of true religion. To modern Christians, religion is spiritual light and joy and happiness, a practicable guide for living; to the Russians it was too largely mystery and superstition.

Because of their inherent religious tendencies and their ignorance, the Russian people were easy subjects for the church's domination. Before the religious revolt the country was filled with wandering priests and pilgrims, traveling from shrine to shrine, worshipping the "incorruptible saints." Each of these saints was a religious fanatic who had literally buried himself alive in a cave, receiving food and water through a small opening. After a time he died, and in the dry climate the body became a mummy. The mummified body was carried to a monastery and

inscribed as an object of worship.

Often such mummies were found by the Soviet authorities to be mere waxen images, placed by unscrupulous churchmen to exploit the people. The churches were also filled with "ikons," richly adorned images and reliefs of the saints. These the Russians were taught to worship and kiss in reverence. In Leningrad the Soviets have a collection of eleven hundred pairs of spikes, each pair of which previously hung in some village church, labeled as the original spikes that held the Saviour on the cross.

The professional pilgrims who spent their time traveling from shrine to shrine,

worshipping the ikons and lavishing their money upon the priests and churches, form the main body of the 12,000,000 Russian dissenters from the church. They are said to have deserted the church principally because theirs was never a religion of the heart. To them religion was a thing of rituals, of deified shrines, and of jeweled ikons. They were impressed by the wealth and beauty of the cathedrals, and awed by the supernatural knowledge of the priests. Of the teachings of Christ few of them knew very little. One man wrote that he asked a group of Russian travelers what they thought of the teachings of

the Sermon on the Mount. They had never heard of it.

Fantastic practices and rituals once made a strong hold, whereby the church held the people, but these same practices are now type chief weapon for the attack upon the church. It is this part of the church that the Russian people are discarding from their religion.

Great numbers of Russian churches and cathedrals are deserted today. Many are being used for government purposes. But this fact in itself is not significant. The large majority of the churches were built during the Czarist régime, and represented the lavish power and wealth of the monarchy, rather than any religious devotion of the people. After all, religion is not a matter of churches, but of people and of souls. The Russians who still attended services attend solely for the worship, not because of superstitious fear or compulsion. The churchmen, in an effort to prove their sincerity in the face of so much antagonism, are keeping the services plain and devout.

The majority of the Russian people have not deserted God. They are even more faithful because of the attack that is being made upon the church. The 1926 census of Russia showed that the country then had a population of 147,013,609, of which 120,000,000 were church

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The West India Australian Team

Those Cricket fans who can afford to make the trip, would be doing themselves well to take a turn to Panama on the 20th. of Oct. to meet the West Indian players journeying to Australia to try conclusions with the Champions of the world.

The team will arrive at Cristobal on the 20th. Oct. and proceed to Australia on the 23rd. during which days they will get an overwhelming reception by the West Indians domiciled on the Isthmus.

The pick of West Indian Cricketers in the locality will make up a team so as to engage them in test matches, thus giving Captain Grant an opportunity of getting accustomed to the several accompan-

ments of his men. It therefore behoves every Cricketer and sporting enthusiast who can afford to make the trip leaving here on Saturday 18th. by the New York boat and returning on the 24th. to do so, not only for his own gratification of pleasure and information but also to assist in promoting that adhesion to West Indian interests, so very necessary to be inculcated between the different groups. Any persons going would of course secure credentials from the Board of Control of the Cricket League and Sporting entities of Costa Rica so as not to be insulated.

Will none of our Fans think of this suggestion?

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In Keeping with the famous happenings around Estrada

We have information that there is much agitation at Estrada in consequence of our recent article, re the Professor,

and that the life of the Editor is being threatened.

If because we point out to the Police officer what's

happening in his district that he might not have known, is the cause of ones life being threatened we will prepare to meet it.

It is evident that Estrada is not yet civilized.

We know that a plot was set for us, to be engaged in a row, then be arrested, ill-treated and locked up, so soon as we disembarked from the train on Wednesday last, but it is not only the Professor who can see into the future. We were shadowed by an emissary from Estrada to Madre de Dios. It is evident that Estrada cannot stand scrutiny.

We hope Governor Hernandez Sanchez's eye will catch these occurrences and investigate.

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Cricket

The six Cricketers taken out by Mr. J. K. Holt to the United States to supplement all Jamaican eleven and compete with all other West Indians resident in that country reinforced by another six of the pick from Barbados, Trinidad and British Guiana players, have upheld the prestige of

Jamaican Cricket by not losing a match, what they could not win, they succeeded to draw.

They were given a great ovation on Monday last when they arrived home by their many friends; as an appreciation of their signal successes.

GIFTS OF GRAMMOPHONES

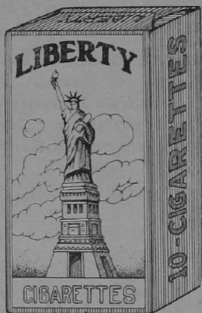
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