

done and is being done by us as far as this is concerned. In Moscow, in the Leningrad, Lipetsk and Gorky regions, in the Tartar Autonomous Republic, faculties and departments for training atheist lecturers have been created in evening universities of Marxism-Leninism; in the Ukraine, in Moldavia and Lithuania seminars, run on a permanent basis, have been widely held for such lecturers. But, as a whole, the preparation of propagandist cadres for the anti-religious front needs to be expanded and improved significantly. An important role belongs here to the All-Union "Znanie" (Knowledge) society, which has great possibilities for drawing academics, specialists, writers and artists into such work.

To form a scientific outlook and overcome religious prejudices is one of the tasks of all ideological workers, of organs for mass information and propaganda. However, the press, particularly that aimed at the young, does not always contain the required systematic discussion of atheist education for the rising generation. Material on these themes published in newspapers and journals is sometimes superficial. Films are not sufficiently used for atheist education. Our press, television and radio should be efficient propagandists of atheist ideas.

To educate the workers in a spirit of scientific communism and decisively to overcome religious survivals involves raising yet higher the activity of the masses in the construction of the new society, in the struggle for the victory of communist ideals.

2. *Notes by a Russian Christian* (abbreviated text) (*Veche*⁴ No. 1)

They say it is winter now . . . "Winter wants to be". But I think that spring is on the way. Torrents of spring. Floods. An inundation if you like.

Winter being over, spring thoughts have awakened in everyone. A torrent of thoughts. They're difficult to hold back.

After the events we have experienced, everyone has become a philosopher. And I'm a philosopher of a kind. I cannot hold back the torrent of my thoughts.

That is, perhaps it is winter at the moment. The winter of a World Catastrophe. But this is one side, as seen from the valley. But I want to look from the other side, from the heights. From the heights one can see spring coming. Exactly that, spring coming. Flowers and all the rest are ahead.

The snow has now melted and water has poured forth. Water has poured forth over the Russian land. I went out onto the bank. I remember how, as a child, I used to love watching the water pouring forth, flooding

⁴ *Veche* is a new neo-Slavophile samizdat journal.

everything. It breaks the ice and carries everything with it. It was a joy to watch . . .

And what can the water carry away? Broken ice, all sorts of rubbish, but can it not sweep away the bank itself?

I stand firmly on the bank. Well, of course if you are not careful and fall into the torrent, watch out, for it could sweep you away too. But what will remain after all? The bank, the earth, the calm water will remain . . .

The sky and the sun will remain. The sky will go on being blue, the sun shining. From the number of sunny days, it will be possible to forecast the weather. The bank—the earth—this is Russia. The sky—the sun—this is Orthodoxy. Orthodoxy is inseparable from Russia.

Orthodoxy and Russia, Russia and Orthodoxy. You think it funny? Listen, why do you think it funny? Perhaps, atheism and, Russia sounds better? Russia and atheism? Don't you find that funny? Do you remember such a cry? It used to be heard at the most critical moments. For the faith, the tsar and the fatherland? . . . You think this even funnier? What a breath of the past, of the archaic! Are you ever at all mystical? Is there something mysterious in your soul? Go on with your mysticism, what's this about mysticism? Now listen. For how many centuries did they cry out these words! They cried out and with this, died. With this cry they shed their blood . . .

Must this mean something for Russia? Was not the Russian air sanctified by this cry? For the faith, the tsar and the fatherland! But this was the most sacred, the most self-sacrificing of cries. They died with it on their lips and hoped to enter the Kingdom of God . . . Oh, the Kingdom of God? . . . But in the Russian land stands the "gendarme of Europe"⁵. There's no tsar now. The fatherland remains. Or perhaps it doesn't?

I think that it does still exist even now. Do you remember the last war? For the Homeland, for Stalin—forward! And this too was a sacred cry⁶. He who took part in the war, knows how this raised the soldiers' morale . . . And what is it? Is it not the same cry as the other? Only in another form . . . Now to cry for atheism . . . What kind of a homeland can atheism have? Would you not think it funny, if they were to cry "for atheism"? What a thought . . . On no battlefield has anyone yet cried "for atheism". And the Russian air was not sanctified with this cry. Atheism is something alien, imported, not part of us. I think that atheism was imposed on the Russian land and did not take root in it. In the Russian land, as the philosophers affirm, atheism becomes a faith. Atheism is the dark side of faith.

⁵ This was first used with reference to Nicholas I.

⁶ The editor of *Veche*, in a footnote, stressed that the reference to Stalin in this document expressed the personal view of the author.

Do you remember the first years of the revolution? With what religious fervour they destroyed everything! They destroyed . . . And now we sit on the ruins. We sit and think about what we have done. We sit and grieve over the ruins of our churches, of our history. We sit and weep over our downfall, like the ancient Jews: "By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept." Atheism on Russian soil became a faith. People began to awake. A surprising thing is happening: the sons of Communists are becoming Christians.

.....⁷

In Russia even the thieves went about their business under the protection of the sign of the cross. Perhaps you know how thieves became believers? There were twelve thieves . . . you remember Nekrasov? Why was this? Because Russia (*Rus*) is a God-bearing (*bogonosnaya*) country. Whoever lives there is caught up involuntarily in the religious current. In Russia the religious question is now the main question of the day. Consider this. The Russian soul bears God within it, it has unfolded and suppressed atheism, it has made a faith of atheism. And now the Russians, like the thieves, are hanging on the cross and saying: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom . . ."

There are also thieves who lack wisdom; these still listen to non-Russian propaganda. Do you know this? Orthodoxy and Russia—this is a faith. That Orthodoxy is a faith is comprehensible to all. The poet said of Russia: "One can only believe in Russia." And we believe in Russia. What has atheism given us? I do not know what it has given; what it has taken away is apparent to all. It has taken away history and culture, although it shouts about culture. Is it possible to build anything on atheism? Atheism, if it has done anything, has stripped the Russian woman and corrupted her. But, you say, it has freed us from old ways. What is the use of such freedom when there are no families, no moral principles? This is freedom under slavery. They say, the Russian nation is decreasing in numbers . . . Remember Russian literature, the classics . . . Remember Russian history . . . Remember all the churches, remember the sound of bells . . . Oh, where has all this gone? . . . What music there was. When forty times forty bells began to thunder . . . Think what it would be like if all the old bells began to ring now. Whose Russian heart would not begin to beat? We make records of the Rostov bells, but what is that? What is that compared to those other bells? Nothing. Who is to blame? And there is no need to say—atheism, as everyone understands. Atheism will soon become a swear-word in Russia. Ring the remaining bells! We are being attacked, we have been surrounded from all sides . . .

⁷ Denotes a cut.

But I believe in the strength of Orthodoxy and I believe in Russia! It is only possible to believe in Russia . . . Russia is saved by Orthodoxy. Orthodoxy is indestructible. It is God's work, and a Russian can only be Orthodox . . . Russia and Orthodoxy, Orthodoxy and Russia . . . But atheism—muddy water, floods, the ice is breaking, rubbish of all kinds is being carried away. Spring is coming, the torrent . . . The torrent of thoughts—I cannot hold it back in my head, it has spilled out here on paper . . . Perhaps you too have been carried away by this torrent?

3. *The Teaching of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk on True Christianity*
by Mikhail, Archbishop of Voronezh and Lipetsk⁸
(*Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* No. 10, 1971, pp. 60-75)

St. Tikhon of Zadonsk⁹ began his book, *On True Christianity*, during the period when he was still teaching at the Tver seminary (1759-1761). He completed his work on this book in 1771, when, having left the Voronezh bishopric, he lived in Zadonsk in retirement. Thus, two hundred years will have elapsed this year since one of the most important Russian theological works was completed.

.....

(p.60) The reasons which led the saint to explain and present the essence of true Christianity were entirely serious ones: the situation around him, the lives of people, amidst whom he achieved the victory (*podvig*) of his earthly life of obedience, abounded in examples of distortions in the basic principles of the Christian faith; love and truth were forgotten, piety was for show, rich landowners and powerful men used force over the deprived and those without rights, and a crude mentality and total ignorance prevailed.

.....

(p.70) If a Christian wishes to possess a sure guarantee of salvation and the key which opens the way into the place of Divine Light, he must without straying follow his Saviour and Divine Shepherd, entrust himself to His guidance, follow His footsteps and fulfil what is expected from him by the Head and Guide of salvation—the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Such a skilful and wise leader is shown to us in the Gospel, Christ the Son of God of Whom the Father says to us from heaven: ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him’ (Matt. 17 :5). That is, I sent Him to you, as a Teacher, Mentor and Guide. When you

⁸ Now transferred to the see of Vologda. One of the Russian Orthodox Church's outstanding scholars.

⁹ For biographical accounts of St. Tikhon and additional work by him, see G. P. Fedotov *A Treasury of Russian Spirituality*, London, 1950, pp. 182-241.