

- given about the information service of the sort mentioned in par. 6, part A.)
9. Eliminate the following names which describe ecclesiastical posts not mentioned in the decree "On the organization and nomination of ecclesiastical posts":
- The Vicar-economist (eliminate the word "economist")
The Rector of Pastoral Care
The priest concerned with the ministry among workers
10. Eliminate all terminology which suggests that the Higher Seminaries for Clergy have university status (e.g. academic years).
11. Publications based on foreign sources, or describing religious matters abroad, should not contain any material which, directly or by analogy, is subject to regulations concerning domestic religious matters.
12. Eliminate all critical references about the religious situation in the socialist bloc. Any information about religious problems in the socialist countries should be discussed with the Directorate.
13. All information about Archbishop Jan Cieplak, who died in 1925, must be eliminated.
14. When checking contributions about proposals for, or about steps already undertaken for beatification (canonization) of Poles, the following principles should be applied:
- It is permissible to allow publication only in cases where:
- the person in question does not come under another paragraph (e.g. Archbishop Cieplak).
 - it is not apparent from the context that the candidate for beatification has "distinguished himself" or suffered in the struggle against the socialist or communist movement.
- The Directorate must be informed about
- any proposition for the beatification of historical figures (rulers, politicians, scientists, etc.) or about anyone connected with Marxist ideology at some time in his life (converts from Marxism).
15. It is forbidden to publish any information about the present existence of the Uniate Church in Poland, its subordination to Cardinal Wyszyński, or any Uniate activities whatsoever.
16. Eliminate all information about the prohibitions declared by the Episcopate on cooperation with the Patriotic priests, Social organizations, Caritas and PAX.
17. All claims by church authorities concerning ecclesiastical property, now in the possession of government institutions, must be eliminated.
18. Material relating to the Second Synod of Bishops and its third session, held at the Vatican in 1974, must not contain any speculations regarding the content of Cardinal Wyszyński's speech or any assessment which emphasizes the role of Polish participants and the high quality of their contributions.
- Censors should also delete the term "Second World", often used by Cardinal Wyszyński to describe the socialist bloc. (This part was annulled on 1 March 1976)
19. The following should be ruthlessly eliminated from all Catholic publications (the official Catholic press, lay Catholic press, books, occasional publications, etc.):
- All information about help in the form of parcels (containing clothing, food, medicine) for the people of underdeveloped countries, from Catholic institutions, social organizations and donors.
20. Nothing should be published about the pilgrimage from Poland to Rome which is to take place in October 1975 in connection with the Holy Year celebrations. (see Inf. Note 10/75 & 29/75)

Kuroedov Praises Constitution

Since the new Constitution of the Soviet Union was accepted by the Supreme Soviet in October 1977, the Chairman

of the Council for Religious Affairs, Vladimir Kuroedov, has published an article in Izvestiya (28 January 1978)

entitled "On Freedom of Conscience, both Real and Imaginary". He claims that the Constitution guarantees freedom of conscience for believers, but omits to mention that believers cannot propagate their beliefs, unlike atheists who can organize atheist propaganda. The Church is free from state interference, he claims; yet it is known that the Council for Religious Affairs supervises the Churches at all levels. Kuroedov states that religious teaching is permitted in private: yet the authorities have in some cases removed children from parents who have given their children such teaching, and the Constitution (Art. 25) now stipulates that all citizens must be given a communist education. Although Kuroedov insists that the separation of the educational system from the Church protects children "from being forced to embrace religious beliefs", he fails to mention that teaching in Soviet schools is by no means ideologically neutral, but is used to propagate Marxism-Leninism. Kuroedov stresses that Soviet legislation on religion must not be broken since it protects the interests of society, the State and all citizens. Many believers, however, claim that the law as it stands, far from protecting them, restricts their lives and does not give them full "freedom of conscience".

The principle of freedom of conscience was proclaimed by the Soviet regime as early as January 1918 in a decree on "the separation of the Church from the State, and of the school from the Church". The decree established the right of each citizen to adhere or not to adhere to any religion, and believers were given full possibilities to perform religious rites provided that these did not affect public order and were not accompanied by encroachments on the rights of Soviet citizens. The decree stressed the voluntary nature of a citizen's attitude to religion; it forbade religious societies to use coercive or punitive measures vis-à-vis their members, removed any mention of religious status from all official documents, abolished the taking of a religious oath, and proclaimed equality of status for all religions. The principles laid down in the 1918 January decree were subsequently embodied in Soviet Constitutions. Art. 52

of the 1977 Constitution states that the "citizens of the USSR are guaranteed freedom of conscience, i.e. the right to profess or not to profess any religion, to perform religious rites, and to conduct atheist propaganda. It is forbidden to provoke enmity or hatred in connection with religious beliefs. The Church in the USSR is disestablished and the school is separated from the Church".

An important guarantee for the upholding of freedom of conscience is the disestablishment of the Church. State organs do not interfere with internal church affairs such as questions of dogma or liturgy, and the Church does not interfere with the affairs of the State. Nevertheless, the State takes into account the interests of its believing citizens, and conditions required to satisfy religious needs have been created in the country. The provision, which forbids the provocation of enmity and hatred in connection with religious beliefs, is directed towards the defence of the rights of the individual without making this dependent on his religious views.

It follows from the provisions of Art. 34 of the Constitution, which stipulate that all citizens are equal in law, that while on the one hand it is not admissible to infringe the rights of believers or to offend their religious beliefs, atheists on the other hand are protected from the hostility of those who adhere to religious ideology. In contrast with many western countries where reaction, in league with clerical forces, fans inter-religious differences in an attempt to divert the workers from the struggle against social and national oppression, the above-mentioned provision of the Soviet Constitution shows the fairness and humanism of the socialist way of life; it reflects the deeply democratic nature of the Soviet State and the interests of the popular masses of believing and non-believing citizens.

The Soviet Constitution emphasizes that the most important duty of all Soviet citizens, including believers, is the observance of Soviet laws and adherence to legal norms operating in the Soviet State and in Soviet society. It is forbidden to break Soviet legal provisions relating to religious cults, to use gatherings of believers for inciting them

to shirk their civil duties and to opt out of socio-political activities, to perform religious rituals which are harmful to the health of citizens, etc. All this derives from the provisions of Art. 39 of the Constitution which stipulate that the enjoyment by citizens of rights and freedoms, including freedom of conscience, must not harm the interests of society, of the State, and the rights of other citizens.

The adoption of the new Constitution has again confirmed the worthless nature of reactionary bourgeois propaganda which alleges that only "compulsory atheism", but no freedom of conscience, exists in the USSR. Bourgeois propaganda proclaims these fallacies, but conceals from the wide masses of workers such facts as the following: that over 20,000 religious associations function in the USSR; that religious literature, namely the Bible, the Koran, journals, prayer-books, calendars, and theological works – up to 50 publications in all – are being published; that objects needed for the performance of religious rites such as church plate, candles, and unleavened bread are being produced; that monasteries exist in the USSR; and that church funds consisting of voluntary contributions made by believers are exempt from tax.

It is so difficult even for the most skilled anti-Soviet propagandists to equate such contradictory concepts as atheism by compulsion and the normal functioning of church institutions that they just pass over in silence the fact that freedom of religious worship is guaranteed in the USSR.

An event which speaks volumes and could be described as unprecedented in the history of mankind was the holding in the USSR, on the initiative of Patriarch Pimen, of a World Conference of religious leaders for lasting peace, disarmament, and just relations between peoples. It was held in June 1977 and was attended by leading representatives of almost all religions from 107 countries. The Conference made a great impact and the Moscow Patriarchate, the Muslim and other religious centres in the USSR, received a great number of letters of thanks for the organization of such an authoritative forum. [*Kuroedov publishes here extracts from letters by Dr Guido Seits, member of the leader-*

ship of the Berlin Conference of Christian Catholics in European Countries, and by the Rev. Fielding Clarke, vice-president of the British Religious Committee of the Christian Peace Conference.]

The constitutions of bourgeois countries contain references to "freedom of conscience", "freedom of religion" etc., but not one of them acknowledges the right of the citizen to be an atheist. The interests of many millions of non-believing people are totally ignored and the proclaimed "freedom of conscience" is reduced to the right to choose a religion. Some bourgeois constitutions proclaim the separation of the Church from the State, but this is only a tactical move designed to deceive public opinion. In the USA the principle of disestablishment of the Church was proclaimed a long time ago, but no freedom of conscience exists there to this day.

[*Kuroedov then points to the legislation operating in some American States which bars non-believers from certain public activities or functions; to penalties which 16 states impose on atheist pronouncements; to the position and role of the Church in England, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, etc.; and he then stresses that the constitutions of 22 countries stipulate that only a person belonging to the state Church can become a head of State. He further states that religion is an obligatory school subject in the majority of bourgeois countries, including state primary and secondary schools in Britain.*]

Bourgeois propaganda declares that the separation of the school from the Church in the USSR means that children are forcibly torn away from religion and that the rights of believing parents are infringed. In reality, Soviet law does not prohibit the religious education of children. This must be carried out privately, i.e. by the parents and in the family; children can go to church and attend church services.

Soviet legislation establishes the secular nature of education in the USSR and the Soviet republics. The situation which arises from the separation of the schools from the Church protects minors from being forced to embrace religious beliefs, and expresses the truly humani-

tarian essence of Soviet legislation which protects children's interests and the right of children to spiritual freedom.

An outstanding proof of the victory of truly democratic Soviet principles relating to freedom of conscience is found in the normal relationship which has

evolved between the Church and the State in the USSR. Believers and members of the clergy are not only loyal to the Soviet State, but they actively support its internal and foreign policies, and have given warm approval to the new Soviet Constitution which guarantees freedom of conscience.

The New Georgian Patriarch

On 9 November 1977 the Patriarch of Georgia, David V, died. There had been considerable controversy over his appointment in suspicious circumstances as Patriarch after the death of Efreim II in 1972. A movement for reform within the Georgian Orthodox Church developed in reaction to evidence of corruption within the Church (see RCL Vol. 3, Nos. 4-5, pp. 14-23 and No. 6, pp. 45-54). The election of Metropolitan Ilya Shiolashvili in December 1977 as the new Patriarch and Catholicos, is felt to be a positive sign and has been greeted with much rejoicing by the Georgian faithful. The improvement in the atmosphere of some of Georgia's churches is evident even to tourists, reported a recent visitor. We print below a short biographical document about the new Patriarch, which was sent to the West earlier this year.

His Holiness and Beatitude Ilya II, Catholicos and Patriarch of All Georgia (whose secular name is Irakli Shiolashvili) was born in 1933, in Ordzhonikidze. His parents were believers: his father, Georgi Shiolashvili, was born in the village of Sno, Kazbegsky region (Georgia) and his mother, Natalia Kobaidze, was born in the village of Sioni in the same region.

He was baptized in Ordzhonikidze in a Georgian church, which was under the jurisdiction of the Catholicos and Patriarch of All Georgia. The baptism was conducted by Archimandrite Tarasy (Kandelaki), the former secretary of the then Catholicos and Patriarch of All Georgia. Later Archimandrite Tarasy became the Bishop of Tsilkani and was buried in the graveyard of Svetitskhoveli Cathedral. Mother Zolle Dvalishvili, the former Mother Superior of Bedia Monastery, and later Mother Superior of

Samtavro nunnery in Mtskheta, helped at the baptism.

He was brought up in the spirit of true Christian piety, and from early childhood was eager to serve the Lord. After finishing at secondary school he entered the Moscow Theological Seminary in 1952, and after graduating in 1956 he was accepted at the Academy. From here he graduated in 1960 as one of the Academy's best students.

On 16 April 1957, with the blessing of his Holiness and Beatitude Melkhisiedek III, who was then the Catholicos and Patriarch of All Georgia, he took his monastic vows in Tbilisi under the name of the Prophet Elijah (Ilya).

On 18 April 1957, in the Sion Patriarchal Cathedral, he was ordained hierodeacon by His Holiness and Beatitude Melkhisiedek III, Patriarch of All Georgia.

Then on 10 May 1959, Hierodeacon Ilya was ordained hiero-monk with the blessing of His Holiness Aleksii, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, in the Dormition Cathedral of the Trinity-St Sergius Monastery.

As a fourth year student of the Academy, Hiero-monk Ilya was given the degree of Candidate of Theology for his thesis, "The History of the Iberian Monastery of Mount Athos." By a decision of the Academy's Council, he was made a professor-scholar at the Academy.

But he was eager to serve the Holy Georgian Church and the Georgian people, and therefore returned to Georgia where His Holiness and Beatitude Efreim II, Catholicos and Patriarch of All Georgia, appointed him as a priest at the Batumi Cathedral.

On 19 December 1960, he was ordained Father Superior, and a year later he was raised to the rank of archimandrite.

On 25 August 1963, His Holiness and Beatitude Efreim II, Catholicos and Pat-