

# General George Patton and the Christian Churches: Purveyors-in-Arms of the Grand Illusion as the Path of Glory

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## “MILITARY ARCHDIOCESE PRAISES VETERANS FOR SERVING NOBLE CAUSES”

CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE 11/12/07

This headline introduces a little gem of Christian doublespeak which was recently presented to the world by the Catholic Military Archdiocese of the United States. It deserves our attention. A couple of volumes of exegesis would not suffice to untangle the explicit and implicit mythology and mytho-logic it contains and, effectively, baptizes. What especially recommends it to us here is its broad-brush storybook depiction of the nation-state and its wars—a conception which is, in fact, diametrically opposed to reality, but which is nevertheless widely accepted by most Christians in the United States, and in all other countries “Christianized” after Constantine (AD 313).

Officially sent out under the authority of Bishop Richard B. Higgins, Administrator of the Catholic Military Archdiocese of the U.S.A. on the occasion of Veterans’ Day, this Statement attempts to “Christianize” the mythology that validates and glorifies the state and its wars. When a bishop, via an official Church organization, extols “every man and woman who faithfully served in the noble causes of securing peace and freedom in the military service of our great nation,” he *ipso facto* sanitizes and “sanctifies” the mythical fabrications by which the state and its wars are rendered admirable. To a degree bordering on sycophancy the Statement lavishly praises that “same devoted spirit that drove our patriotic ancestors to fight alongside General George Washington in the Revolutionary War and General George Patton in World War II [and that] still rings true for those who fight alongside our current generals in Iraq and Afghanistan and wherever American troops are deployed” (CNS 11/12/07).

## Praise what? And why? And how?

Now, a person or group praises that which he, she or it considers praiseworthy. Why “this” is considered praiseworthy and not “that” depends on the operative value system that a person or group actually lives by—which may or may not be consistent with their publicly verbalized value system. If words and deeds reveal that the publicly presented value system is not actually the operative value system of the person or group doing the praising, then a problem arises for the deceiver-flatterer. He, she and/or the group must either publicly abandon one or the other of the two inherently contradictory value systems—and thereby risk losing their moral cachet in the eyes of those for whom they are performing—or else they must implement a public relations strategy and embark on a propaganda campaign to convince their followers that what is intrinsically illogical and utterly incompatible is neither illogical nor incompatible. Said succinctly in the context of mainline Christianity, bishops, priests, ministers and evangelists must convince their flock to accept an absurd interpretation of Jesus of the Gospels and His Way, namely, that Christ and Caesar are comrades-in-arms going along the same or compatible ways.

An example of the latter choice would be the 600-year-long theological propaganda campaign which sought to brainwash people into believing that burning Jews at the stake is a just, merciful, and acceptable way of following Jesus. (“Justicia et Misericordia” was the motto of the Holy Inquisition.) A second example would be the PR tactic of employing a cacophony of logical fallacies, e.g., *argumentum ad verecundiam*, *petitio principii*, *circulus in demonstrando*, etc., as well as first premises that are not self-evident, to persuade people that burning the face off of one’s enemy is morally consistent with Jesus’ teaching of “Love your enemies.” A third example would

be described as the awareness that the devil is in the details, coupled with the refusal to present those heinous details in which the devil resides. Such a refusal in effect would be whitewashing the evil in an event, so that people would morally evaluate the event not on what is actually happening in the event, but rather on the broad-brush whitewashing of it, which is the only reality they are permitted to see. This intentional “out-of-sight” placing of details, that are critical to a proper moral evaluation of what is going on, is what then confers upon the event the appearance of at least minimal moral acceptability.

### **Nurturing in untruth blinds to truth**

“Farfetched,” you say? “No Christian mother or father would ever let her or his child be taken in by a pied-piper pastor or church touting such an anti-Gospel evil spirit of deceit,” you say? But what if the Christian mother and father had themselves been previously seduced by, or nurtured into, the enchantments, pseudo-glories, and supposed moral rectitude of this “baptized” evil? Would they not then become unwitting agents of their own child’s destruction, by being part of the brainwashing process that equates, in his or her mind, the Way of Jesus with the way of the local tribe’s grand inquisitor, kaiser, czar or chieftain?

How difficult is it, for a human being born and brought up in a cannibal society, to see that cannibalism is evil, when the entire society, in millions of microscopic ways, daily reinforces the implanted ideas and emotions of the “noble cannibal”? How nearly impossible is it for him or her to grasp and accept that the understanding of God and reality on which “noble cannibalism” is based is a brutal fairy tale, a delusion concocted out of untruth? How difficult is it for a Christian—whether he or she be bishop, butcher, banker, or baker—who is born and brought up in one of the Constantinian Churches, to assent to and comply with the teachings of the Non-violent Jesus of the Gospels when, daily, in millions of microscopic ways, his or her Church unequivocally communicates that a Christian can perform acts that are an intrinsic part of war and, in doing them, be faithfully following Jesus? How difficult is it for such a Christian to apprehend that Christian participation in war is sophistic discipleship, and that the “baptized” mythology in which it is rooted

is a murderous, preposterous, anti-Gospel illusion? It is very, very difficult, when every instrument of church communication—from elementary school educational materials to vast global television networks—is from the cradle to the casket incessantly and subtly, explicitly and subliminally, cunningly and relentlessly pounding into the minds of its members as truth what is blatant untruth, namely, that the acts of war are acts in conformity with the Way and the Truth taught by the Nonviolent Jesus of the Gospel.

### **Microscopic, but deadly, untruth**

Consider! At the beginning of this reflection, I wrote, “A couple of volumes of exegesis would not suffice to untangle the explicit and implicit mythology and mytho-logic it [the Statement of the Catholic Military Archdiocese] contains and “baptizes.” While I do not intend to write those couple of volumes here, I do wish here to reflect, via the Statement, on one microscopic example of this mythology which is employed in the Church’s seemingly unceasing adulation of the military. It is a doublespeak deception that is as obvious, as destructive, and as intentionally manipulative as the falsehood spouted by the drug dealer, who tells youngsters that “Heroin is no more harmful than bubble gum.” The point of this brief and partial exegesis of one, tiny piece of the Statement is to try to expose how all the churches sanitize and “sanctify” millions of other microscopic pieces of the mythology of the state and its wars, to the detriment of the truth and the mission of Jesus—and to the detriment of those He chose to follow Him.

As noted above at one point, the Statement of the Bishop-Administrator of the Catholic Military Archdiocese reads:

*“The same devoted spirit that drove our patriotic ancestors to fight alongside General George Washington in the Revolutionary War and General George Patton in World War II still rings true for those who fight alongside of our current generals in Iraq, Afghanistan and wherever American troops are deployed” (CNS 11/12/07).*

Again, a person praises only what he or she considers praiseworthy. Now when a Catholic Bishop—who by the teachings of his own Church is the “Vicar of

Christ” for his diocese—praises a “spirit,” it means to the average person that he is saying that this spirit is in moral conformity with the Spirit of Jesus Christ. A bishop would be betraying his office to publicly praise a spirit that was not in conformity with the Spirit of the Holy made visible in Jesus. So, the reasonable, logical conclusion to be drawn from the Bishop’s statement is that the “spirit that drove our patriotic ancestors to fight”—“fight” non-euphemistically means kill, maim and impose suffering on other human beings—is consistent with the Holy Spirit made visible by God incarnate, Jesus. Otherwise, a Christian bishop or any Christian could never publicly praise a spirit without teaching untruth and doing evil.

### **One Christian icon of untruth: General George Patton**

As notable embodiments of this praiseworthy spirit, the Catholic Military Archdiocese’s Statement refers to George Washington and George Patton and “our current generals in Iraq, Afghanistan and WHEREVER American troops are deployed” (emphasis added). These men are presented as exemplars of that spirit that Christians can follow, and upon whose orders Christians can slaughter and mangle other human beings with clear consciences. For those who would like to get beyond an elementary school awareness of the Revolutionary War and the spirit behind it (by John Adams’ own estimation, two-thirds of the colonists did not care to go to war), or beyond a Fox News awareness of the wars, and the spirit behind the wars, on Iraq, Afghanistan, Grenada, Panama, El Salvador, Guatemala, Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, Mexico, the Philippines, etc., I can only recommend a trip to the library, where books abound that clarify the historical realities and spirits behind these planned mass homicides. In this article, I will focus on the Statement’s glorification of one man, General George Patton, as a minuscule but succinct sample of how the Constantinian churches incessantly, by millions of microscopic acts, daily propagate the untruth that the spirit and the deeds of war are morally consistent with the Spirit and the deeds of Jesus.

Assuming my reader knows the words and deeds of Jesus, I shall go about this clarification by simply highlighting some of the words and deeds of General George Patton.

*“Now I want you to remember that no dumb bastard ever won a war by dying for his country. You win by making the other poor, dumb bastard die for his country.”*

*“May God have mercy upon my enemies, because I won’t.”*

*“We are not just going to shoot the bastards, we are going to cut out their living guts and use them to grease the treads of our tanks.”*

*“A good plan violently executed now is better than a perfect plan next week.”*

*“We are going to murder those lousy Hun bastards by the bushel.”*

*“We entered a synagogue which was packed with the greatest stinking bunch of humanity I have ever seen. Either these Displaced Persons never had any sense of decency or else they lost it all during their period of internment by the Germans...My personal opinion is that no people could have sunk to the level of degradation these have reached in the short space of four years. [Others may believe]...that the Displaced Person is a human being, which he is not, and this applies particularly to the Jews, who are lower than animals.”*

*“I have no particular desire to understand them [Russians, Chinese and Japanese] except to ascertain how much lead or iron it takes to kill them. In addition to his other amiable characteristics, the Russian has no regard for human life and they are all sons-of-bitches, barbarians, and chronic drunks.”*

—General George S. Patton

On July 26, 1932, in the midst of the Great Depression, George Patton, then a major, led a charge of 600 troops of the Third Armored Cavalry against 17,000 desperate World War I veterans and their families, known as the Bonus Army. The veterans came to Washington to lobby Congress and President Herbert Hoover to repeal the timeline on a law regulating veterans’ bonuses. A repeal would have allowed them to receive all or part of their WW I military bonuses, bonuses that otherwise would not become due until 1945.

Major George Patton's troops advanced on the veterans with rifles at the ready, with unsheathed bayonets, and with tear gas. At one point, when the veterans resisted by throwing stones and curses, George Patton led a mounted attack against them. Several veterans and/or their family members died; hundreds were injured; and the shacks they were living in were destroyed by fire. The nation was appalled.

In 1918, Joe Angelo, one of the veterans in the Bonus Army, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions during a battle in France. During this battle, a young officer, under whom Angelo was serving as an orderly, was seriously wounded and left on the field of battle, in a place that readily exposed him to the German army. Showing great courage under enemy fire, Joe Angelo brought the officer to safety, saving the man's life. Fourteen years later on July 28, 1932, Major George Patton ordered his troops into the Bonus Army's encampment. In the aftermath of the assault on the camp, Joe Angelo approached Patton, told him he was the man who saved his life in France in 1918. Patton immediately recognized him. Patton also dealt with him harshly. The last historically verifiable words between the men were a murderous lie uttered by Patton: "I do not know this man! Take him away and under no circumstances allow him to return. If he approaches me again, shoot him."

So much for the words, deeds, and spirit of George Patton, compared and contrasted with the words, deeds and spirit of Jesus Christ. So much for the spiritual, intellectual and institutional fraud of "baptizing" and glorifying, as consonant with Jesus, whatever it was that drove Christians to follow Patton rather than to follow Jesus—and yet still permit them to believe they were following Jesus. So much for whatever it was that justified, in the Christian's mind, standing alongside Patton in order to kill and savage other human beings upon his commands, rather than standing alongside Jesus and obeying His commands to "Put up your sword," to "Love your enemies," and to "Love one another as I have loved you."

### Tip of a spiritual iceberg

Again, as noted above, a couple of volumes of exegesis would not suffice to untangle the explicit and im-

PLICIT mythology and mytho-logic that the Statement of the Catholic Military Archdiocese contains. This short analysis reveals only the tip of what is a most deceptive and destructive spiritual iceberg. Worldwide Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and Evangelical churches' are incessantly bombarding the minds of their memberships with symbols and language that deceitfully attempts to connect Jesus and His Way with the ways of nationalistic wars and militarisms. This is an error about Jesus and His Way of tragic, transnational, Titanic dimensions for the Church and for humanity.

A few more examples of the same method and spirit of deceit would be these: uniformed, government-paid Christian military chaplains who do not teach the full Gospel to those Christians in their spiritual care; ROTC and Jr. ROTC within Christian colleges and high schools, Christian elementary schools employing books, magazines and other pedagogical materials that contain military advertisements or that glorify war; pastors at Sunday Worship praying for "Our troops, that God may protect them from all harm and bring them home safely to their loved ones" but who never offer the same prayer for the sons and daughters of the "Father of all" that the local politicians and media have labeled as "enemy." All these, and a daily dose of millions of other morally similar but barely perceptible acts, represent the Constantinian-Pattonian Churches' modus operandi for conflating in the minds of people Jesus and His Way with the ways and means of nationalistic, ethnic, racist or religionist violence and enmity.

The results are deformed, misinformed and misguided Christians, primed by the spiritual leaders of their Churches to do evil under the guise of good, to do the horrific in clear conscience in the name of the Nonviolent Jesus— provided only that the local Pooh-Bah, and his pastoral and theological acolytes signal that it is okay to do it.

### Nothing personal

So, this analysis is not meant in any way as a personal moral judgment on the state of soul of the Christian George Patton, because no one knows the mind of another sufficiently to be able to assess whether he or she is freely choosing to do what he or she is morally certain is evil. It is most probable that Patton's

words and deeds simply represent the actual human being that the Christian George Patton was nurtured to be, by all levels of the institutional church he was brought up in and/or attended. Patton is not the fundamental problem being addressed here.

### **A communicable spiritual pandemic**

This analysis is about the hundreds of millions of Christian men and women throughout the world made into the moral image of Patton via the Churches of Christianity. This analysis is about Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and Evangelical bishops, priests ministers and pastors nurturing hundreds of millions of human beings into believing the tommyrot that the mind of Patton is a mind compatible with the mind of Christ, that the way of Patton is a way that a disciple of Jesus can follow and still be following Jesus. This analysis is about church officers who have themselves been nurtured within the structures of Constantinian-Pattonian Christian institutions, and who then go on to develop ever more sophisticated structures whereby they in their turn can form future generations of those chosen by Jesus to follow Him and His Way into Christians who will not follow Him and His Way. This analysis is about the one Great Untruth, The Grand Illusion, that is the one great “truth,” around which exists almost universal ecumenical agreement among the institutional Churches’ rulers and deciders, as well as, among the various institutional Churches’ congregations.

### **Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

This analysis is about a spiritual reality which is essential to the individual life of a Christian and to the collective life of the Church. It is a unified ontological, spiritual, experiential, cognitive, moral, aesthetic reality which has been mutilated almost beyond recognition by “Christianized” wars. I am speaking of the purpose of the Christian life, which, individually and communally, is to glorify God. The corollary to this is that the Christian life, individually or collectively, is not to glorify an idol(s). When the Word “became flesh” in the Nonviolent Jesus, all possibility of authentic glory departed forever from the spirit, words and deeds of war and the warrior because “One is Holy, One is Lord, Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father.” As the Great Doxology,

the *Gloria*, faithfully echoing the New Testament (PH 2:10-11; JN 1:14; 1 COR 2:8) proclaims it: “For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the most high, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.”

The Christian is chosen to participate in and to reflect the glory of the Father by being changed into the image of Jesus (2 COR 3:18), who is the “visible image of the invisible God” (COL 1:15), who is one with the Father. Therefore when St. Paul tells the Christian that whatever they do, “do all for the glory of God” (1 COR 10:31), this responsibility can only be fulfilled by imitating Christ, mirroring Jesus, obeying His *new commandment* to “Love one another as I have loved you” (JN 13:15, 13:34-35, 15:12). He is the definitive presence of the glory of God in time, in space and in the flesh. Jesus is the Word of God, the “splendor of His glory and figure of His substance” (HEB 1:3). He is “the Lord of glory” (1 COR 2:8)—and He is Nonviolent and lives and teaches a Way of Nonviolent Love of friends and enemies, even potentially lethal enemies. The essential revelation of the New Testament is the connection of glory with the person of Jesus. The glory of God is entirely present in Him, not only in His Resurrection but in His life, His teaching, His ministry and His death. What is in conformity with His Way and His Spirit glorifies God. What is not in conformity with His Way and His Spirit does not. Therefore since Jesus lives and teaches a Way of Nonviolent Love of friends and enemies, even unto death on the cross, this is the Way that must be followed in everything in order to “do all for the glory of God.”

### **Agapé and doxa in the New Testament**

Christlike love (agapé) is the true path of glory (doxa). Agapé and doxa, love and glory, are inseparable in Jesus and therefore must be inseparable in the Christian and the Christian Church. The activities and spirits of violence, enmity and war are illusionary paths of glory. They are the deceits of idols. They are the bogus glory represented by the little multicolored chest-ribbons or pieces of metal that a government agent gives a human being for killing other human beings with efficiency. They have no more genuine or lasting glory in them than the Tinseltown grand illusion of glory peddled in John Wayne war movies. Why?

The answer could not be clearer: Christic doxa and Christic agapé are indivisible. If Jesus is who the Churches proclaim He is, then God is love (agapé) and the Nonviolent Jesus is the incarnation God. Therefore God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—can never, never be glorified by homicidal violence and enmity. A Christian can glorify God by living and dying as Jesus lived and died, but he or she can never glorify God by killing—even if the weapon he or she is using has a rosary wrapped around it, or an icon of Christ pasted to it, or the name “The Peacemaker” bestowed on it. Since individually and in tandem violence and enmity are the very “blood and guts” of war, war and the acts of war are phenomena in which the glory of God is absent. In a sentence, “War is hell and the acts of war are the presence of the perverted and perverting spirits of hell on earth.”

The glory of God cannot be found or fostered through them, with them or in them—and Christians, their Churches and their Church leaders have no business even intimating otherwise.

The glory of God cannot be found or fostered through them, with them or in them. Christians, their Churches and especially their Churches’ leaders have no business even intimating otherwise. As *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* formally teaches—consistent with the understanding of most other Churches—“All the activities of the Church are to be directed, as toward their end, to the sanctification of people and the glorification of God” (§824). The word employed is “all” not “some” or “most.” The sanctification of people and the glorifying of God cannot take place by incarnating spirits from hell, even if under the name of Jesus. Why? “One is holy, one is Lord, Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit to the glory the Father.” And, that “One,” through whom sanctity comes and in whom God is glorified, is Nonviolent and teaches by word and deed a Way of Nonviolent Love of friends and enemies. What human being, whether he or she be friend or enemy, seeing a “Christian Rambo” charging at them with his machine gun blazing, will think: “Here comes Jesus!” “There is holiness!” “There is the glory of God!” No Church, no Christian and especially no Church leader has the right to con his or her fellow Christians into believing that this is the Way of faithful discipleship, that this is the Way of sanctification revealed by Jesus, that this is the Way to glorify God.

## A shrine in a church

Yet, consider the following. Not too long ago I spoke at an Episcopal parish on the Nonviolent Jesus and His Way of Nonviolent Love of friends and enemies being non-negotiable to a correct understanding and implementation of the Gospel. Inside this parish’s church is a memorial to General George S. Patton, containing memorabilia from his life. It seems he summered in this area and attended this Church when in town.

Now, what must the average child in this parish think when, year after year, he or she goes to Church on Sunday and walks by the honored “second class relics” of General George Patton in the back of a building palpably dedicated to the worship and service of Jesus Christ? Could the child even possibly conclude anything other than that the ways and means of General George Patton must be all right in the eyes of Jesus and the Church? And, since the life of General George Patton is about war, would not the child be “told” by the very presence of the memorial, and with the full authority of church and parents behind it, that Christian participation in the acts of war is in conformity with following Jesus and His teachings? How could the child not be absolutely certain that Patton, Jesus and His Church are all comrades-in-arms going down the same path of glory? How would a child so graphically instructed ever figure out that Patton and Jesus are going in opposite directions down a One Way street?

Must not the adults of this parish also believe the same grand illusion in order to continue to permit this ennobling memorial to remain in the church? Surely this lionizing of Patton inside the church is woven from the same fraudulent mythological cloth as the Statement of the Bishop-Administrator of the Catholic Military Archdiocese—and without doubt it communicates untruth, passing as Gospel truth, at least as effectively as does that Statement.

## Naming an evil is not judging a person

Again, this analysis is not an exposé of, or a judgment on, the state of the soul of George Patton, let alone on anyone who followed him thinking that they were also thereby following the will of God as revealed by Jesus. It is a disclosure of only one of the

millions of subtle microscopic techniques, employed daily by the churches of Christianity, which techniques distort, indeed undermine, the teachings and Way of the Nonviolent Jesus of the Gospel—distort and undermine them to the detriment of those who place their trust in church officials to tell them the truth about Jesus and His Way.

This essay is an effort to expose a long-standing, massive and relentlessly metastasizing spiritual cancer in the hearts of the Churches of Christianity. This cancer is preventing the hearts of the various mainline and Evangelical churches from witnessing to the Sacred Heart of Christ-God. This essay is a biopsy of only a single cancerous tumor out of billions of similar tumors that for 1,700 years have disrupted the sustaining and unifying relationship that is supposed to exist between the Heart of Jesus and the hearts of His followers and His Churches.

### **Judgment is now**

If a person is a member of a church that morally accepts Pattonian-like behavior and/or allows for its glorification within the Church, then he or she has a major spiritual problem to contend with once they recognize that what Patton said and did was not in conformity with the will of God as revealed by Jesus. He or she has a moral problem at least as serious as that of the church which houses a memorial to Patton, or as that of the bishop writing aggrandizing rhetoric about the moral legitimacy of a Pattonian-like spirit or as that of the Jesuit Universities and/or high schools that have as their motto *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*, (AMDG) “For the greater Glory of God,” and yet offer programs to young Christians under the auspices of AMDG that teach them how to be competent killers of enemies—ROTC and Jr. ROTC. Why?

Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and Evangelical Christians: In the time and place allotted to you by Jesus to be His faithful disciple, you are now, almost certainly in your Church, face-to-face with an unavoidable moment of decision—if you see Jesus as Nonviolent and His Way being a Way of Nonviolent love of friends and enemies. You are in the presence of a larger-than-earthly-life crisis. *Krisis* is the Greek word for Biblical judgment. You are being directly called to acknowledge the truth of what Jesus

is teaching and to stop tolerating what your parish, your Church and your Church leaders are teaching as if it were the truth of Jesus—but which in reality is 180 degrees opposite the truth of Jesus. You must today begin without equivocation or reservation to teach and to try to live what Jesus taught and lived in relation to violence and enmity, namely, He totally rejected both as the will of God or as a Way to Glorify God. You must now decide to insist and plead that your bishop, priest, minister, pastor and fellow community members do the same. You must accept your Baptismal commission as prophet in the Truth and Spirit of Jesus Christ and exercise it in the parish and church in which Christ has placed you. You must exercise it with the fervor, obedience, and perseverance shown by Jeremiah, for that is what is required in the face of this cleverly-orchestrated, well-maintained and highly-financed evil of using Jesus as a religious legitimizer of violence and enmity. If you believe what the Gospel says about Jesus, please do not abandon your Church and its people to the Snake.

### **Follower or mere admirer**

“Why must the Christian do this with his or her allotted life’s time?” The straight-forward answer to this question is that before time existed the Christian was chosen by the Word of God to be His follower, not merely His praising-admirer. Each Christian was chosen by Jesus to be a recipient of the gift of faith in Jesus in order to participate in a Divine Plan far beyond present human comprehension. Fidelity to this gift and to the One who bestowed it cannot exist without being faithful to His Teaching and His Way.

Why is it spiritually and morally imperative for each Christian, each Christian parish, each Christian Church and each Church leader to drive out every trace of the perennial falsehood that “Jesus can be followed and God can be glorified by participating in war”? There is only one response. It is logically, theologically and psychologically impossible to follow Christ-God and “Love as Jesus loves” while executing the vile and perverted deeds that are the realities of war. If this reason isn’t good enough for any Christian, then I have no better to offer and know of no other. Every form and scrap of Constantinian-Pattonian “Christianity” must once and for all

be up-rooted from every Church of Christianity because, by the Light that the Word (Logos) of God incarnate brings into the world, Constantinian-Pattonian Christianity is nothing other than a dark, putrefying, mutilating, murderous, ichabodian, grand illusion conjured up and palmed-off as Gospel truth by the “Father of lies, who was a murderer from the beginning” (JN 8:44).

## The beginning

The required metanoia, change of mind, or turning around begins with the personal courage to accept the grace to perseveringly speak—with that love of which 1 Corinthians 13 speaks—the truth of the Nonviolent Jesus and His Way of Nonviolent Love of friends and enemies to those who, knowingly or unknowingly, maliciously or benignly are proclaiming, believing or living the untruth of Constantinian-Pattonian “Christianity.” If one does not have the courage to so speak in his or her Christian community, then one’s course is clear. He or she must earnestly pray for the grace required for the courage to break the chains of fear that are rendering one silent in the face of grotesque untruth masquerading as the truth of his or her Lord, God and Savior—Jesus Christ.

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## EPILOGUE

*What follows is an excerpt from a short article that appeared in the Boston Globe written by Dorothy S. Zinberg, a faculty member of the Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Governments.*

### Russian Military-Clergy Has 19th Century Cast

The Russian Orthodox Church is undoubtedly looking forward to a dramatic resurgence of its influence in this once officially atheistic country...Just last month I witnessed a fascinating, almost surreal scene, which in the midst of Moscow’s preelection frenzy provided a momentary glimpse into a little discussed alliance: the church and the military.

No sight—glittering or squalid—prepared me for a scene that transported me back to a Russia I know only from the 19th-century literature—the dazzling drawing rooms of the nobility, so memorably de-

scribed in the novels of Tolstoy and Turgenev, where powerful priests mingled with the aristocracy and generals. Only the aristocracy was missing; or perhaps they were the new aristocracy, and I had not yet recognized them.

From the balcony of the three-year-old Danilovska Hotel owned by the Russian Orthodox Church within its own monastery walls—the first surprise—I looked over a swarm of black-frosted clergy who were obviously awaiting the arrival of someone very important. Nervous security guards, clutching omnipresent cellular telephones, paced the gleaming marble floors until the patriarch of the church swept in, and the group was ushered into the dining room, itself modeled on a grand estate of the past.

Turning my back to chat with other intrigued hotel guests, I turned around and gasped, when I saw a new cast of characters fill the space just vacated by the clergy—some 40 high-ranking military officers, most of them generals. With a flourish the guards directed them into the room with the waiting priests.

Just as in the 19th century novels, the snow was falling outside, and as if to make up for the cold and the darkness, the dining room was brilliantly lighted. Waiters costumed in 19th century pale green gilt-trimmed jackets, more like Tchaikovsky’s Toy Soldiers than the dashing cadets in “War and Peace,” presided over a lavish buffet set on sparkling white tablecloths.

Going outside to get a better view, I pressed my frozen nose to the large window and watched, shamelessly, in fascination. What were these people—this unholy alliance of the church and the military—doing together in the new democracy? Hadn’t they been sworn enemies from the days of the Revolution until 1988 when the ban against the church was eased?

Within a short time the high-decibel conversations stopped abruptly. With a sonorousness reminiscent of Boris Godunov’s final aria, a small, powerful choir of basso-profundo priests sang grace. Truly awesome. The patriarch spoke a few words, and the group plunged into the vodka and the buffet. My decrepit taxi at that moment snorted up the driveway

and we drove (or more accurately, lurched) into the darkness toward Moscow.

The scene would not leave my mind. What did it mean? Long before the Communists came to power, meetings of the clergy and the military were emblematic of empire. Today the Communists have a new following—the losers in the rapid shift to privatization. For many Russians for whom “democracy” has meant little more than loss of jobs and ruinous inflation, dreams of Mother Russia have taken on a 19th-century cast.

Earlier on the day of the mysterious meeting, I had visited a Russian economist and member of the Duma who was campaigning for reelection. To get to the Duma, I had to walk by a picket line of angry, vociferous women carrying boldly lettered placards. This was a group of mothers, he explained, who were on constant vigil to protest their sons’ being sent to Chechnya—a deathtrap for many young, untrained conscripts.

Could the mothers’ cause somehow be connected to the high-level soiree of priests and generals? The overwhelming majority of those who attend church are women. Their support, financial as well as devotional, throughout the Communist era of virulent anti-church policies, has been unwavering. The military by making their case to the clergy could urge the clergy to speak out in the churches on the need to serve God and country. They [military and clergy] would be natural partners for nationalism, patriotism, moral authority, and nostalgia.

When I returned to Cambridge, I described the scene to a Russian scholar who immediately produced a copy of IRAR-Tass dated one month before I had begun to obsess over the scene. It began, “Aleksi II, the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, called upon draftees to ‘serve the Motherland’ and protect and defend it from external and internal enemies as true Orthodox warriors.”

The same news service reported that on the very day I peered through the glass, “Defense Minister Pavel Grachev met with Patriarch Aleksi II to mark the 18-month anniversary of the cooperation agreement between the army and the Russian Orthodox Church.” Henceforth liaison officers with religious

organizations would be stationed in military units. Finally, the meeting was decoded.

The rapid resurgence of the Russian Orthodox Church after decades of regression in Russia reveals that the church was always there, just under the surface of the officially nonreligious society. The signs [of extensive government financial and political support] are everywhere in Russia. Within sight of the Kremlin, hundreds of millions of rubles are being poured into the reconstruction of what will be the largest Orthodox church in the world, Christ the Savior Cathedral, which had been blown up by Stalin when he set about establishing his own power base more than seven decades ago...

What I had witnessed was the party to celebrate a major merger. The military and the church with their traditional authoritarian, anti-Semitic, nationalistic platform have returned.

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