



In Memory Of The 50 Million Victims Of The Orthodox Christian Holocaust

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October 1999 Written by Reverend Father Raphael Moore
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History Of Asia Minor: 1894-1923

During 1894-1923 the Ottoman Empire conducted a policy of Genocide of the Christian population living within its extensive territory. The Sultan, Abdul Hamid, first put forth an official governmental policy of genocide against the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire in 1894.

Systematic massacres took place in 1894-1896 when Abdul savagely killed 300,000 Armenians throughout the provinces. Massacres recurred, and in 1909 government troops killed, in the towns of Adana alone, over 20,000 Christian Armenians.

When WW1 broke out the The Ottoman Empire was ruled by the "Young Turk" dictatorship which allied itself with Germany. Turkish government decided to eliminate the whole of the Christian population of Greeks, Armenians, Syrians and Nestorians. The government slogan, "Turkey for the Turks", served to encourage Turkish civilians on a policy of ethnic cleansing.

The next step of the Armenian Genocide began on 24 April 1915 with the mass arrest, and ultimate murder, of religious, political and intellectual leaders in Constantinople and elsewhere in the empire. Then, in every Armenian community, a carefully planned Genocide unfolded: Arrest of clergy and other prominent persons, disarmament of the population and Armenian soldiers serving in the Ottoman army, segregation and public execution of leaders and able-bodied men, and the deportation to the deserts of the remaining Armenian women, children and elderly. Renowned historian Arnold Toynbee wrote that "the crime was concerted very systematically for there is evidence of identical procedure from over fifty places."

The Genocide started from the border districts and seacoasts, and worked inland to the most remote hamlets. Over 1.5 million Armenian Christians, including over 4,000 bishops and priests, were

killed in this step of the Genocide.

The Greek Christians, particularly in the Black Sea area known as Pontus, who had been suffering from Turkish persecutions and murders all the while, saw the Turks turn more fiercely on them as WW1 came to a close. The Allied Powers, at a peace conference in Paris in 1919, rewarded Greece for her support by inviting Prime Minister Venizelos to occupy the city of Smyrna with its rich hinterlands, and they placed the province under Greek control. This action greatly angered the Turks. The Greek occupation was a peaceful one but drew immediate fire from Turkish forces in the outlying areas. When the Greek army farmed out to protect its people, a full-fledged war broke out between Greece and Turkey (the Greco-Turkish war).

The Treaty of Sevres, signed in 1920 to end WW1 and which provided for an independent Armenia, was never ratified. The treaty's terms changed not long after the ink dried as England, France and Italy each began secretly bargaining with Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk) in order to gain the right to exploit oil fields in the Mozul (now Iraq). Betrayed by the Allied Powers, the Greek military front, after 40 long months of war, collapsed and retreated as the Turks began again to occupy Asia Minor.

September 1922 signaled the end of the Greek and Armenian presence in the city of Smyrna. On 9 September 1922, the Turks entered Smyrna; and after systematically murdering the Armenians in their own homes, the forces of Ataturk turned on the Greeks whose numbers had swelled, with the addition of refugees who had fled their villages in Turkey's interior, to upwards of 400,000 men, women and children.

The conquering Turks went from house to house, looting, pillaging, raping and murdering the population. Finally, when the wind had turned so that it was blowing toward the sea so that the small Turkish quarter at the rear of the city was not in danger, Turkish forces, led by their officers, poured kerosene on the buildings and homes of the Greek and Armenian sectors and set them afire. Thus, any remaining live inhabitants of the city were flushed out to be caught between a wall of fire and the sea. The pier of Smyrna became a scene of final desperation as the approaching flames forced many thousands to jump to their death or to be consumed by fire.

The Allied warships and shore patrol of the French, British and American military were eyewitnesses to the events. George Horton, the American Consul in Smyrna, likened the finale at Smyrna to the Roman destruction of Carthage. He is quoted in *Smyrna (1922)*, written by Marjorie Dobkin as saying: "Yet there was not fleet of Christian battleships at Carthage looking on a situation for which their governments were responsible." This horrible act unleashed the last phase of the genocide against the Christians of Turkish Asia Minor.

On 9 September 1997, a series of speakers and memorial services, honoring the memory of the 3.5 million Christians who were murdered by Turkish persecutions from 1894-1923, were held in the greater Baltimore Washington area. The memorial service was conducted by the choirs of St. Mary's Armenian Church, St. Katherine's Greek Orthodox Church, Fr. George Alexson of St. Katherine's, Fr. Vertanes Katayjian of St. Mary's and other Orthodox clergy.

The 75th anniversary of the Christian Holocaust was memorialized on 9 September 1997, the date in 1922 of the destruction of the city of Smyrna. This memorial honors the memory of over 3.5 million Christians who were murdered by Turkish persecutions from 1894-1923. Not only was this the memorial of the Holocaust of Smyrna (now Izmir) and the martyrdom of Smyrna's Metropolitan Chrysostomos, but also of the 3.5 million Christians who perished during the first Holocaust of this century. But the events of 1922 are not an isolated incident. The atrocities committed by Turkish forces against a civilian population began before WW1 and have never ended. This event seeks to expose the continuum of a Turkish campaign of persecution, deportation, and murder designed to rid Asia of its Christian populace.

GREEKS

1914 400,000 conscripts perished in forced labor brigades

1922 100,000 massacred or burned alive in Smyrna
1916-1922 350,000 Pontions massacred or killed during forced deportations
1914-1922 900,000 perish from maltreatment, starvation and massacres; total of all other areas of Asia Minor
TOTAL: 1,750,000 Greek Christians martyred 1914-1922

ARMENIANS

1894-1896 300,000 massacred
1915-1916 1,500,000 perish in massacres and forced deportations (with subsidiaries to 1923)
1922 30,000 massacred or burned alive in Smyrna
TOTAL: 1,800,000 Armenian Christians martyred 1894-1923

SYRIANS AND NESTORIANS

1915-1917 100,000 Christians massacred

The native population of Asia Minor traces its Christian roots to the early days of Christianity. The Armenians, an ancient people, trace their origins back 2500 years. In 301 AD. the Armenian King Dftad declared Christianity as the kingdom's official religion, making Armenia the first Christian political state in the world. The migration of Greek tribes to Asia Minor began just before 2,000 BC and the Greeks built dozens of cities such as Smyrna, Phocaea, Pergamon, Ephesus and Byzantium (Constantinople). The native inhabitants of Asia Minor, among the first to accept the message of Christianity, were later to be persecuted and uprooted from their lands because of that same faith. Turkish tribes plagued the region. Later another tribe, the Oyuz Turks who embraced Islam and ultimately produced the Ottoman Turks, conquered Persia, the Caliphate of Baghdad, and then the whole area presently occupied by Syria, Iraq and Palestine.

Under the Ottoman Empire the Christians suffered a steady decline. Forced conversions to Islam, the abduction of children to serve in the fanatical Janissary corps, persecutions and oppression reduced the Christian population. Oppression intensified, leading to Genocide. Christian clergy were a constant target of Turkish persecution, particularly once the 1894 policy of Armenian genocide had been declared by sultan Abdul Hamid.

Victims of horrible torture, many Orthodox clergy were martyred for their faith. Among the first was Metropolitan Chrysostomos who was martyred, not just to kill a man but, to insult a sacred religion and an ancient and honorable people. Chrysostomos was enthroned as Metropolitan of Smyrna on 10 May 1910. Metropolitan Chrysostomos courageously opposed the anti Christian rage of the turks and sought to raise international pressure against the persecution of Turkish Christians. He wrote many letters to European leaders and to the western press in an effort to expose the genocide policies of the Turks. In 1922, in unprotected Smyrna, Chrysostomos said to those begging him to flee: "It is the tradition of the Greek Church and the duty of the priest to stay with his congregation."

On 9 September crowds were rushing into the cathedral for shelter when Chrysostomos, pale from fasting and lack of sleep, led his last prayer. The Divine Liturgy ended as Turkish police came to the church and led Chrysostomos away. The Turkish General Nouredin Pasha, known as the "butcher of Ionia", first spat on the Metropolitan and informed him that a tribunal in Angora (now Ankara) had already condemned him to death. A mob fell upon Chrysostomos and tore out his eyes. Bleeding profusely, he was dragged through the streets by his beard. He was beaten and kicked and parts of his body were cut off. All the while Chrysostomos, his face covered with blood, prayed: "Holy Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Every now and then, when he had the strength, he would raise his hand and bless his persecutors; a Turk, realizing what the Metropolitan was doing, cut off his hand with a sword.



Metropolitan Chrysostomos was then hacked to pieces by the angry mob.

Among the hundreds of Armenian clergy who were persecuted and murdered were Bishop Khosrov Behrigian and Very Reverend Father Mgrdich' Chghladian.

Bishop Behrigian (1869-1915) was born in Zara and became the primate for the Diocese of Caesarea/Kayseri in 1915. He was arrested by Turkish police upon his return from Etchmiadzin where he had just been consecrated bishop. Informed of his fate, the bishop asked for a bullet to the head. Deliberately ignoring his request, the police tied him to a "yataghan" where sheep were butchered and then proceeded to hack his body apart while he was still alive.

Father Chghladian was born in Tatvan. In May 1915, as part of the campaign of mass arrests, deportations and murders, the priest was tortured and displayed in a procession, led by sheiks and dervishes while accompanied by drums, through the streets of Dikranagerd. Once the procession returned to the mosque, in the presence of government officials, the sheiks poured oil over the priest and burned him alive.

Four of the martyred bishops who were murdered between 1921-1922 are today elevated to sainthood in the Greek Orthodox Church: They are, in addition to Metropolitan Chrysostomos, Bishops Efthimios, Gregorios and Ambrosios.

Bishop Efthimios of Amasia was captured by the Turkish police and tortured daily for 41 days. In the last days of his life he chanted his own funeral memorial until finally dying in his cell on 29 May 1921. Three days later a written order for his execution arrived from Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk).

Metropolitan Gregorios of Kydonion remained with his church until the end, helping 20,000 of his 35,000 parishioners escape to Mytilene and other free parts of Greece. On 3 October 1922, the remaining 15,000 Orthodox Christians were executed; the Metropolitan was saved in order to be buried alive.

Metropolitan Ambrosios of Moshonesion, along with 12 priests and 6,000 Christians, were sent by the Turks on a forced deportation march to Central Asia Minor. All of them perished on the road, some slain by Turkish irregulars and civilians, the remainder left to die of starvation. Bishop Ambrosios died on 15 September 1922 when Turkish police nailed horseshoes to his feet and then cut his body into pieces.



"I was five or six years old in 1922, and I still remember the songs of Akrita and the mourning of the Greek women who carried baskets full of severed heads down from the mountains. I will never forget the women who suddenly realized that one of the heads in the basket she carried was that of her son." - Constantine Koukides, refugee from Pontius

"I have given orders to my Death Units to exterminate without mercy or pity, men, women, and children belonging to the Polish speaking race. It is only in this manner we can acquire the vital territory which we need. After all, who remembers the extermination of the Armenians?"

- Adolf Hitler, 22 August 1939

THE UKRAINIAN HOLOCAUST OF 1932-33

Sixty-five years ago, between seven and twelve million Ukrainians were systematically and deliberately starved to death in Ukraine, the "Bread Basket of Europe".

Long before there was a Russia, Kyivan Rus' (Ukraine) was a free and fiercely independent nation. Indeed, it was to Ukraine that Christianity was first delivered by St. Andrew - the First called

Apostle - and only much later, from Ukraine, on to Russia. In the 13th century Kievan Rus' was decimated by invasions from Asia; and by the time the invaders were driven back, the base of power had shifted North to Muscovy. For centuries thereafter, Ukraine was subjugated to Tsarist Russia. Then in 1918, following the murder of the Tsar and his family by the Communists, the Ukrainians declared Ukraine a free and independent country, just as it was centuries before there even was a Russia.

Communist forces eventually recaptured the land and once again, as in the time of the Tsars, Ukraine would become little more than a part of a larger whole. But as never before in their long history, Ukrainians would be forced to pay a dreadfully high price in their survival as a people. Probably more than other Bolsheviks, Stalin had an exceedingly low opinion of peasants; for he considered them to be incurably conservative and a major barrier to revolutionary change. And because Ukrainians were an overwhelmingly peasant people, among whom native nationalism was on the rise, they were doubly vulnerable to his designs. Ukraine continued to be a land of innumerable villages of peasants working the land, with the Orthodox Church and traditional values dominating their lives. Perhaps most galling for the Bolshevik revolutionaries was the fact that the peasant showed little inclination for sharing their dreams of a Communist utopia.

Stalin's plans for industrial expansion were based on the state purchasing cheap grain, from the peasants, which would be sold abroad at a profit; the proceeds would then be used to finance the industrialization of the nation. But the prices that the state offered, often at one eighth of the market price, were so low that the peasants refused to sell their grain. Infuriated by what he called "sabotage". Stalin ordered an all-out drive for total collectivization. All land and all property, including livestock, were to be taken away from private ownership and given over to the state. Small farms were to be incorporated into huge Collectives. The plan was accompanied by such brutality and horror that it can only be described as war waged by the regime against the peasantry. It was to be one of the most traumatic events in Ukraine history.

Those who resisted most stubbornly were shot. Others were deported to forced labor camps in the Arctic and Siberia. The rest were deprived of all their property - including their homes and personal belongings - barred from the collective farms, and told to fend for themselves. In the winter of 1929-30 hundreds of thousands of peasants and their families were dragged from their homes, packed into freight trains, and shipped thousands of miles to the north where they were dumped amidst Arctic wastes, often without food or shelter. In this way a large part of Ukraine's most industrious and efficient farmers ceased to exist.

When even these severe measures failed to have the desired effect, the government dispatched thousands of urban workers to implement its policies in the villages. Their efforts produced pandemonium and outrage; often officials were beaten or shot. The most common form of protest, however, was the slaughter of farm animals. Determined not to let the government have their livestock, peasants preferred to kill their animals instead. Between 1928 and 1932 Ukraine lost about 50% of its livestock. Because of poor transportation facilities, much of the grain which was produced either spoiled or was eaten by rats. Even more serious was the lack of draught animals, many of which had been slaughtered earlier. Government officials were confident, however, that they could provide enough new tractors to replace the missing horses and oxen. But the production of tractors fell badly behind schedule, and a very high percentage of those which were delivered broke down almost immediately. As a result, in 1931 almost one third of the grain yield was lost during the harvest. To make matters worse, a drought hit southern Ukraine in 1931.

The Ukraine continued to resist and to dream of a free and independent nation; and since Joseph Stalin could not kill that dream, he first decided to deport all Ukrainians to other parts of the Soviet Union. Discovering that there were too many of them to move, Stalin decided to kill the dreamers instead; and his weapon of choice was a man-made, artificial famine which was designed to eliminate the troublemakers and force the survivors into total, complete submission. The famine which occurred in 1932-33 was to be for Ukrainians what the Holocaust was to the Jews, and what

the Massacres of 1915 were for the Armenians. A tragedy of unfathomable proportions, it traumatized the nation, leaving it with deep social, psychological, political, and demographic scars that it still carries to this very day. The central fact about the famine is that it did not have to happen. Food was available; but the state confiscated most of it for its own use. All crops were requisitioned by the Soviet government and shipped elsewhere. This confiscation of food included seed which was intended for spring planting. Any man, woman or child caught taking even a handful of grain from a government silo could be, and often was, executed. In Moscow a law was enacted stipulating that no grain could be given to the peasants until the government's full quota had been met. Gangs of party activists conducted brutal house-to-house searches, tearing up floors and delving into wells in search of any grain which remained. In fact, if a person did not appear to be starving, he was suspected of hoarding food.

Famine, which had been spreading throughout 1932, hit full force early in 1933. Lacking bread, peasants ate pets, rats, bark, leaves, and the garbage from the well provisioned kitchens of Communist Party members. Whole villages were erased and people were dying by the tens of thousands. Cannibalism existed. At first cannibals were shot on the spot, but later were thrown into concentration camps. The most terrifying sights were the little children with skeleton limbs dangling from balloon like abdomens. Cordons of troops prevented peasants from entering cities; those who managed to break through wandered about until they fell in the streets. Such people were loaded onto trucks, together with the corpses, and dumped into pits outside of the city.

With the climbing death rate during the famine, the publication of death statistics was forbidden by the Soviet government. When deaths due to famine took on major proportions in Ukraine in 1932-33, physicians certifying the cause of death were forbidden to name the killer - starvation. The word "holod" (hunger) was decreed as counter-revolutionary, and no one valuing his own life and those of his relatives dared use it publicly. When the results of the census of 1937, for example, revealed shockingly high mortality rates, Stalin had the leading census takers shot.

Elsewhere there was no famine - much of Russia proper barely experienced it - but the borders of Ukraine had been sealed by the secret police; there was no escape. The Ukrainians had been sentenced to death. And thus, the greatest genocide in history was systematically accomplished. A noteworthy aspect of the famine was the attempt to erase it from public consciousness; the Soviet position was to deny that it had occurred at all. To curry Stalin's favor, for example, Walter Duranty - the Moscow based reporter of the New York Times, repeatedly denied the existence of a famine in his articles (while privately estimating that about ten million people may have starved to death). For the "profundity, impartiality, sound judgment and exceptional clarity" of his dispatches from the USSR, Duranty received the Pulitzer Prize in 1932.

Yet, even to this very day, there are those who deny or minimize the Ukrainian Holocaust to such a degree that it is being referred to as "the hidden holocaust of the twentieth century". In 1984, for example, a documentary film entitled HARVEST OF DESPAIR was shown on Canadian television. This film won numerous prizes at World Film Festivals and a 1986 Academy award nomination; yet all three top commercial networks in America refused to show it. As recently as 1994, the New Jersey state legislators were being pressured to exclude the Ukrainian Holocaust from Resolution A-589 (The Holocaust Education Bill). Media coverage has been just as one-sided about the Greek, Armenian, Syrian and Nestorians Holocausts of 1984-1923 and, more recently, the Serbian Holocaust. The atrocities against Christians - especially Orthodox Christians - continue to this day!

ORTHODOX PERSECUTIONS TODAY

Of all the Christian confessions, it has been the Eastern Orthodox Church which has suffered the brunt of persecutions in the 20th century.

In the first two decades, there were massacres of Orthodox Greeks, Slavs, and Armenians in the Ottoman empire, culminating in the 1915 genocide of the Armenians in Anatolia and the near destruction of the ancient Assyrian community in Iraq. In 1923, the entire Orthodox population of Asia Minor was forced to leave their homes, bringing to a close a 2000 year Christian presence.

During the Second World War, two groups of Orthodox Christians were especially targeted for genocide by the Nazis and their allies - the Gypsies and the Orthodox Serbs of Bosnia and Croatia, while the population of Greece, Serbia, European Russia, and Ukraine were designated by the Nazis to serve as slave labor for the Third Reich. By special order of Heinrich Himmler (21 April 1942), clergyman from the East (as opposed to their counterparts from Western Europe) were to be used for hard labor.

At the same time the Orthodox suffered in greater proportion to any other Christian group at the hands of the Communists, who sought to completely eliminate religion.

First in Russia and Ukraine, then in Eastern Europe, in Greece during its civil war (1945-49), and in Ethiopia, the Orthodox Church was the principle target for attack, subversion, or destruction.

Finally, the Orthodox of the Middle East have found themselves caught in the crossfire of the conflicts between Muslim and Jew in Israel and the West Bank, and the civil war between Maronites, Muslims, and Palestinians in Lebanon.

Between the tolls exacted from prisons, concentration camps, forced marches and exiles, warfare, famine, and brutal military occupation, it is reasonable to conclude that up to 50 million Orthodox Christians have perished in the first eight decades of the twentieth century.

Even in the United States, where so many Orthodox have found refuge, the Orthodox Native Americans of the Aleutian Islands were forcibly interned during World War II and many of their churches deliberately destroyed by the U.S. Army.

Unfortunately, the depth and range of the Orthodox suffering throughout the world in this century, remains largely unknown and unappreciated in the West.

1987 - 1997

Harassment of the Orthodox Church in the former Soviet Union continued through the Gorbachev era. Many of the churches supposedly returned to the Orthodox between 1988 and 1990 were in Western Ukraine. This was part of an attempt by the KGB to sow open discord between Orthodox and Catholics - only 100 churches were returned in Russia itself. The KGB continued to target Orthodox clergymen involved in the struggle for religious freedom and democratization; in 1990 several prominent priests, among them Fr. Alexander Men, were murdered. It was only under President Boris Yeltsin that full freedom was restored to the Orthodox and other Russian based confessions. In other parts of the former Soviet Union, notably in Uzbekistan and Tadjikistan, the governments have continued to limit the rights of the religious and ethnic minorities.

The triumph of democracy in Poland has not led to full religious freedom for members of its 1 million strong Orthodox minority. Although the height of anti Orthodox activity seems to have peaked in 1991 after several Orthodox churches and an historic monastery were vandalized, Orthodox continue to be viewed as second-class citizens in Poland; where they are described in a secret Foreign Ministry report as an "alien body in Poland's state organism." Laws on religious education in the schools have virtually established the Roman Catholic Church to the detriment of both the Orthodox and the Lutherans; and Orthodox believers continue to complain of petty harassment endured at the local level.

In Slovakia, the government in 1991 announced its intention to review ownership of the country's 125 Orthodox parishes. Since that time, over 90 church buildings have been taken away from the Orthodox and given to the Catholics; and the Orthodox have been blocked by local officials from constructing new edifices, opening schools, or holding services. Even the official policy of the vatican announced 16 July 1990, which counseled Slovak Catholics to share disputed properties with the Orthodox, has been ignored.

The wars in the former Yugoslavia have been disastrous for the Orthodox. The Croatian government has all but liquidated the Orthodox Church in its territory, beginning with the dynamiting of the residence and library of the Orthodox Metropolitan of Zagreb on 11 April 1992. Following the

Croatian offensive of fall 1995 and the departure of over 200,000 Orthodox Serbs in Diocese in Krajina. (which brought a total of over 800,000 displaced Orthodox Christians), four dioceses of the Serbian Orthodox Church ceased to exist. In Croat controlled territory in Bosnia, the Orthodox Bishop of Mostar was driven from his see, and most of the Orthodox population was expelled. Estimates are that over 154 Orthodox churches in the territory of Bosnia and Croatia were deliberately destroyed. On March 25, 1999 NATO began bombing of Kosovo in Serbia. It is one of the tragic ironies of History that Western "Christian" nations have joined forces to eradicate Serbs in Kosovo who are accused of "Ethnic cleansing". History repeats itself ----Kosovo was the site 500 years ago of the Christian Resistance to the Turks.

In Turkey and Turkish occupied Cyprus the position of the Orthodox continues to deteriorate. Despite international guarantees contained within the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, the Turkish government continues to enforce the closure of the famous Halki Orthodox Theological Academy in Istanbul. Families of those Orthodox illegally expelled in the 1950's and 1960's have never been allowed to return to their homes, again in contravention of the 1923 treaty guaranteeing their right to do so. On Cyprus, 450 Orthodox Churches on the northern part of the island have been desecrated; some have become night clubs while others have been turned into public toilets. Other churches and historical monuments, some dating back to the 5th century, have been looted and left to rot away. There is a sustained campaign to remove entirely the last traces of the 2000 year old Orthodox presence from occupied Cyprus.

In Egypt, the Orthodox continue to suffer from the many restrictions placed on their ability to function in the economic and political life of the country. There are many rules hindering their ability to build and repair churches, and they are increasingly becoming targets for armed attacks by Muslim extremists. In the past two years, dozens of Orthodox villagers in Upper Egypt have been murdered by Islamic gunmen.

In India Orthodox Christians report increased harassment on the part of both Hindu and Muslim extremists, with isolated attacks and vehement rhetoric demanding their removal from the Indian landscape.

THE CURRENT ATTITUDE OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

The government of the United States prides itself on its commitment to defending religious liberty. In the Middle East and Eastern Europe, however, the United States is seen as supporting only those churches who possess sufficient "influence" in Washington, while ignoring the plight of the Orthodox. Events over the last ten years have tended to confirm that assessment.

During the 1980's, the Immigration and Naturalization Service gave refugee status to any Soviet citizen who applied on religious grounds - except for members of the Orthodox Church. The very church which had suffered the most under Soviet rule, whose churches continued to be closed and her clergy arrested until 1988, was not considered to be a "persecuted" church by the American government.

After 1989, Orthodox Christians in both Poland and Slovakia warned the United States government that they were "at risk" as religious minorities. In 1991 the Congress of Russian Americans prepared two reports for the Commission of security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE: July & september 1991) warning of the dangers and asking that guarantees be obtained for the rights of the Orthodox in those nations. No action was taken, and at this time there is no indication that the US has pressed to secure the rights of these minorities in either Poland or Slovakia. There is also no indication that the US has ever linked economic assistance to either country or entry into the NATO alliance with improvements in the situation of their religious minorities.

Despite the large amount of economic and military assistance received by Turkey, there is no indication that the US has ever been prepared to use this leverage to secure the rights of the Orthodox minority, even though Turkey is bound by its own constitution and its international obligations to allow the Orthodox to maintain schools and other institutions. In contrast, US

senators have often publicly and vocally called for American assistance to Russia to be made conditional on Russia's acceptance of American Protestant missionaries.

Persecution and harassment of the Orthodox continues because of a belief that the United States is not interested in their fate, and that America will not undertake any effort (other than occasional lip service) to secure religious freedom for the Orthodox. In turn, Orthodox leaders around the world are watching closely to see whether or not future initiatives on religious freedom which emanate from the US are truly based on principle, or whether American policy will be selective in terms of who is faulted and who is exonerated.

The One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Orthodox Church has suffered greatly in this century, and continues to be a martyr church in many parts of the world. If the US chooses to ignore this fact for political gain, then the cause of religious freedom - for all - will be gravely compromised.

This information was borrowed from:

- The Library of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church USA - Ukraine, A History
- Ukrainian Orthodox League of the USA - Ukrainian Affairs Committee
- 3. The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies - University of Toronto
- 4. Ukrainian Orthodox League Bulletin - October 1998
- 5. Greek Orthodox Diocese of Denver Diocesan News: Dr. Nicholas Gvosdev - August 1998
- 6. Federation of Hellenic Societies of the Greater Baltimore Washington Region: Heritage Publications - 1997

(Editors Notes: We cannot even well imagine but "50 Million Victims Of The Orthodox Christian Holocaust" is not the correct number, as we have learned from Alexander Solzhenitsyn that **more than 66.5 million Orthodox Christians** also perished from 1917 and onward during the times of the Soviet Union. Secondly the New Martyrs of Serbia are increasing, the killing of innocent people, the destruction of Churches, Monasteries, Cemeteries, and homes, as well as a massive killings of Serbian Orthodox Christians, and countless missing people.)

Holy New Priest
Martyr Stefan of Kosovo,
Pray Unto GOD For Us!

Holy New Martyrs, and
Confessors Of Holy Orthodox Faith,
Pray Unto GOD For Us!

GLORY BE TO GOD FOR ALL THINGS!

Source: <http://orthodoxbrotherhood.com/node/36>