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# RCDA RELIGION IN COMMUNIST DOMINATED AREAS

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The purpose of this publication is to make available and to analyze information on the attitudes and practices of Communist Parties with respect to the life, work and vital concerns of believers in Communist countries. Particular attention is given to the violation of religious freedom and other human rights in all closed societies.

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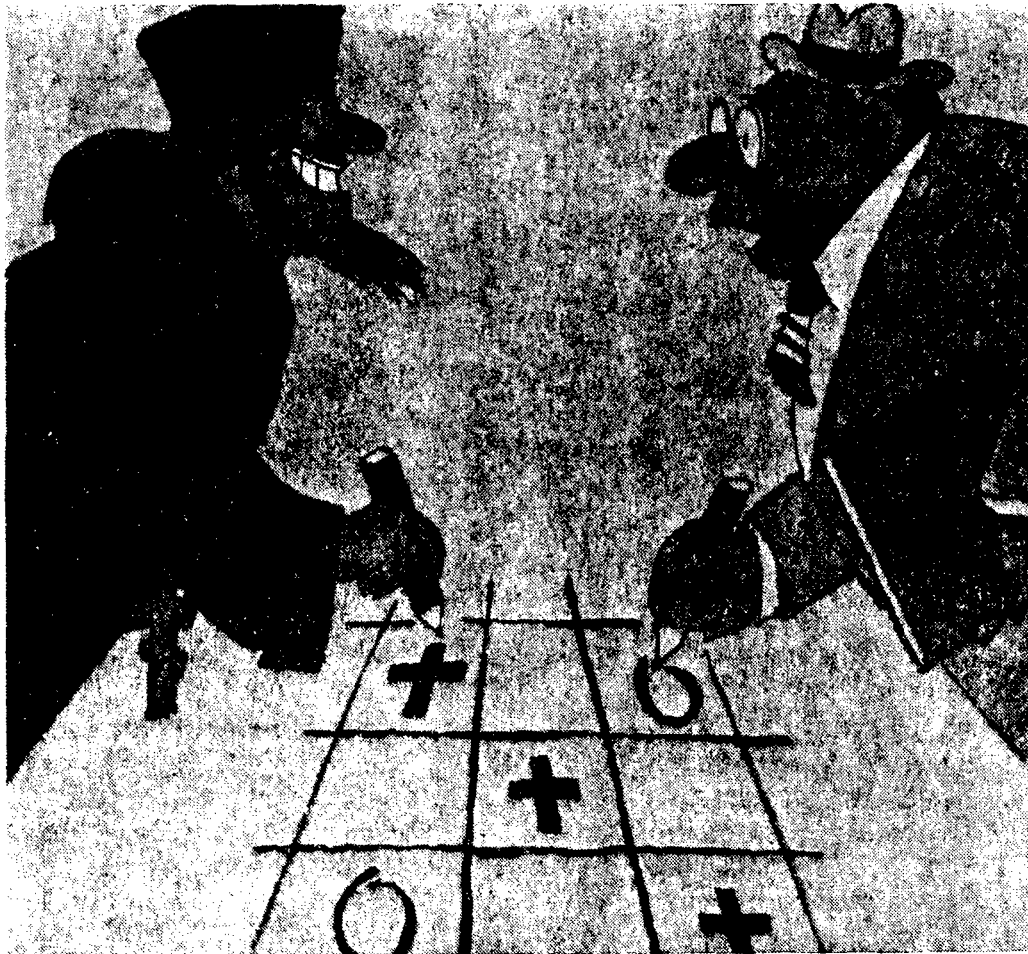
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## USSR

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### **CLEVER PRIEST AND INEFFICIENT PROPAGANDIST OF ATHEISM**

*RCDA Comment:* A perennial problem in the Soviet Union



*Caption:* TIC-TAC TOE

*Title of the book:* ATHEISTIC WORK

*Cartoon by* Yury Cherepanov

*Schubert'syn 1980*

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## SOLZHENITSYN'S WARNING TO THE USA AND WEST

By BLAHOSLAV HRUBY

*"TO THE WEST I have made but one request: Please do not force us into the grip of dictatorship, do not betray millions of our countrymen as you did in 1945, and do not use your technological resources to further strengthen our oppressors. And the advice: Take care lest your headlong retreat lead you into a pit from which there is no climbing out." These are the words of Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn in his article in this issue of RCDA addressed to those people who criticized his memorable speech at Harvard University which we had the honor of publishing in RCDA. "I was called a fanatic, a man possessed, a mind split apart, a cynic, a vindictive warmonger," Solzhenitsyn writes, "I was even simply told to 'get out of the country' (a fine way of applying the principle of a free speech but hardly distinguishable from Soviet practice)."*

*In this critical period of human history which lacks leaders of wisdom, courage and vision to lead, galvanize and organize the free nations in defense of freedoms, including the freedom of religion, and human rights against the danger of Soviet totalitarianism, the prophetic voice of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn is most welcome. The fact that secular and even religious news media failed to take his admonitions and warnings seriously does not detract from their utmost urgency.*

*The word "prophetic" has been too inflated in our time and it is often being attributed to people who politicize the Christian or other religious messages to fit their particular cause, either leftist or rightist or capitalist, socialist, pacifist, etc. This heresy is not new. A movement of "Deutsche Christen" (German Christians) in Nazi Germany wanted to adapt the Christian message to Adolf Hitler's totalitarian, barbaric program to conquer Europe and then "die ganze Welt" (the whole world). It did not work. The "Bekennniskirche" (Confessing Church) stood up courageously against this theological perversion and through martyrdom of many of her members proved her loyalty to the Church of Jesus Christ.*

*Nevertheless, I do not hesitate to call Solzhenitsyn's warnings and exhortations to the USA and the West a prophetic voice in our contemporary society which seems to be leaderless and confused. And I hasten to add that I see two more persons of unusual courage wisdom, and vision whose voices I call prophetic: Pope Paul John II and Andrey Sakharov. If anybody objects that Sakharov is not known as a religious man I can only say that I see more religion in his most courageous defense of the persecuted dissenters in the USSR, including Christians, than in the silence of the state-recognized churchmen.*

*Paul John II receives considerable attention of news media because he is the head of the Roman Catholic Church and of the Vatican state. His courageous, prophetic words about freedom of religion, human rights and human dignity were gratefully received not only by Catholics but also by Protestants, Orthodox and other believers, and citizens of countries on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Unfortunately the prophetic*

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voices of Solzhenitsyn, who lives in exile in the USA, and of Sakharov, who is in exile in Gorky, USSR, have not received adequate attention of secular and religious news media. It seems that the people in the Free World who seem to live in the uninspiring and frustrating climate of appeasement are not yet ready to listen attentively to these men who know better than anybody else the true nature of Soviet terror and Soviet plans to dominate the world.

Reading of articles and statements by Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov should be a matter of priority for all those who help formulate national and international policies of free nations. It should be a matter of priority for educators, clergymen and all people concerned about the survival of the Free World and about the freedom of the Church of Jesus Christ.

In the past we published in RCDA most major statements by Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov because we considered them so vital for the Free World. We are very happy and proud to publish in this issue another article by Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn who graciously granted us his permissions to reprint it from the "Foreign Affairs." In the past many readers of RCDA appreciated the opportunity to read his statements. We trust that they will study attentively his prophetic analysis and that they will be encouraged to stand up for defense of the free World and of those whose freedoms and human rights are being violated by Communist and other dictatorships.

Solzhenitsyn sees that the West is not only in a deep crisis but even in mortal danger because many people are obstinate in their blindness to the essence of Communism. "Many Western diplomats have abandoned painstaking analysis (of the USSR) in favor of incurable self-deception, as we can see in such a veteran of the political arena as Willy Brandt," Solzhenitsyn writes, "whose 'Ostpolitik' is suicidal for Germany. Yet these ruinous ventures are the very ones honored with Nobel Prizes for Peace."

Solzhenitsyn complains rightly that "America continues to be fed a soothing diet of fond hopes and illusions" about the Soviet Union. Western news media have not noticed that Soviet government aims at "the final destruction of the Russian peasantry."

"And at this moment, when religious circles in the USSR are being persecuted with such unmitigated ferocity," — Solzhenitsyn angrily comments, "— How fine and edifying it is to hear Russian Orthodoxy reviled by the Western press."

## COMMUNIST VIEW OF JOHN PAUL II AND CHRISTIAN-MARXIST DIALOGUE

THE ELECTION of Karl Cardinal Wojtyla as John Paul II, the first "Polish pope," stunned the Communist world. Communist leaders and ideologues seemed unprepared for the almost unbelievable news that the head of the Roman Catholic Church would be a prominent churchman and a citizen of the Communist Poland. They were apprehensive about the impact of this outstanding spiritual leader upon believers and other citizens of the socialist countries.

The Roman Catholic Church of Poland, which unites

Solzhenitsyn reminds us how in 1945 the West sacrificed hundreds of thousands of Soviet citizens who "were not even allowed to surrender to the Americans but were turned over to the Soviet Union, there to face reprisal and execution."

He believes that the West "allowed itself to be duped over the Helsinki agreement (for which it paid by recognizing forever all the communist takeovers in Europe)." He does not believe in détente because "Communism will never desist from its efforts to seize the world, be it through subversion and terrorism, or by subtly undermining society within."

Solzhenitsyn wonders rightly how the West can continue to believe in détente. "Today Afghanistan, yesterday Czechoslovakia and Angola, tomorrow some other Soviet takeover —." "Détente will continue to stand Soviet communism in very good stead: for the purpose of stifling the last flicker of dissidence in the Soviet Union and buying up whatever electronic equipment is necessary."

Solzhenitsyn criticizes the West for lacking the will to sacrifice and offers us these sobering words: "Communism will never be halted by negotiations or through the machination of détente. It can be halted only by force from without or by disintegration from within. The smooth and effortless course of the West's long retreat could not go forever, and it is now coming to an end: the brink may not have been reached, but it is already never defended, the nearer ones will have to be held. To the merest step away. Since the outlying borders were day the Western world faces a greater danger than that which threatened it in 1939." He believes that it would be "disastrous for the world if America were to look upon the Beijing leadership as an ally while regarding the Russian people as no less a foe than communism: by so doing she would drive both these great nations into the maw of communism and plunge in after them."

"On the eve of the global battle between world communism and world humanity, would that the West at least distinguished the enemies of humanity from its friends, and that it sought an alliance not of foes but of friends," Solzhenitsyn concludes his warning. "So much has been ceded, surrendered and traded away that today even a fully united Western world can no longer prevail except by allying itself with the captive peoples of the communist world."

more than 90% of population, represents one of the most vibrant and stubborn spiritual forces in the Communist world. She helped the Polish nation survive long periods of invasions, partitions and occupations. While other Communist states succeeded in controlling the Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant churches and other religious communities through infiltration and manipulation, the Catholic Church of Poland was able to reject Communist control.

(Continued on page 26)