

barriers of mistrust, have separated themselves from each other choosing different directions at crossroads of history. Much time was lost before Christians began to realize their responsibility for this disunity and its consequences, but this finally led to the rise of the ecumenical movement and the constitution of the WCC and its various organizations.

When we look at the different stages in this movement we can compare it with the stream of people who are seeking to find a way towards the unity of the Church of Christ — the unity which they have lost. Thus we can only rejoice when Christians, in the search for this way, come together in a common effort to reach "one mind" in resolving questions which separate not only themselves but all mankind. By doing so, they confess the guilt of this dividedness.

We rejoice that the WCC considers its most urgent task to be the achievement of "oneness of mind" and the cooperation between the Christian churches so as to satisfy and remove the most vital needs of mankind.

Moved by Christian love, this action gradually leads to the ground where Christians really come nearer to each other, realizing the strength of fellowship as an expression of unity in Christ.

Love, which is ready to sacrifice, will indeed overcome many distortions of the faith which have hitherto prevented Christian unity. It is hardly necessary to say that, in our time as never before, Christians should be unanimous not only in furthering the highest efforts of mankind but also in the struggle against the threat of destructive war.

Despite a general longing for peace, there has never been on earth such an accumulation of weapons of mass destruction, the production of which absorbs man's creative forces and his riches. There has never before been such a real danger of a sudden outburst of war.

This is why Christian oneness of mind could become a force able to lessen the present sharp division of the world.

By united action Christians could contribute to the abolition of nuclear and other kinds of deadly weapons.

The resolution of the most difficult problem of general disarmament not to mention the day-to-day fight against hunger, poverty and disease, depends to a great extent on united Christian action.

Calling the participants in your meeting, and through them all Christians, to the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4. 3) we wish the WCC every success in its efforts and in its search for ways of cooperation towards the peaceful organization of human life and Christian unity, to the end that "they all may be one."

May our Lord send us new apostles who shall again enlighten the world with the supreme light of the truth of Christ, so that in the end the whole Christian world, hitherto divided, will, according to the unalterable word of the Gospel, unanimously submit itself to God in spirit and in truth; and that all believers may reach unity of faith, together glorifying the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Holy Trinity one in substance and undivided.

ALEXIS, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia.

Moscow, July 29, 1960.

ECUMENICAL PRESS SERVICE QUOTES NIKODIM AND BISHOP JOHN, BOTH
DELEGATES TO WCC'S THIRD ASSEMBLY AT NEW DELHI, INDIA: UNITY
AND PEACE LINE PROMOTED: OTHER ECUMENICAL JOURNALS ALSO
FAVORABLE

(From Ecumenical Press Service of May 19, 1961)

Russian Orthodox Leader Cites Desire for Unity

(Geneva) - A leader of the Russian Orthodox Church said last week that by its application for membership in the World Council of Churches his church expressed its "desire for the unity of all who confess Jesus Christ as the true God..."

Bishop Nikodim, head of the Office of Foreign Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, writing in Neue Zeit, an East Berlin daily published by the Christian Democratic Union party, said the bid also "expressed the wish of the Russian Church to strengthen the fellowship between Christians as brethren in the faith, realizing that the whole of mankind with its different races all over the world is created of one blood".

Bishop John, Russian Orthodox Exarch of Central Europe whose See is in East Berlin, in another article in Neue Zeit said that it is hoped that membership in the Council would provide "the ecumenical fellowship, through conversations, personal contacts and theological discussions which would enable Christians to get to know one another better, and (lead to) the stage where they can share their witness and their service... testifying for God and our Lord Jesus Christ. This witness and service", he added, "I consider to be obligations in the cause of world peace."

The application continued to evoke widespread comment last week from church press in Europe and the United States.

Reforme, an independent French Protestant weekly, said membership of the Russian Church in the WCC would represent "a victory of the Holy Spirit

Pamphlet issued by
International Council of
Christian Churches
(Photographically reproduced)

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what's the
DIFFERENCE
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IN AMSTERDAM, Holland, in the summer of 1948, two church councils on the world level were organized. The first met August 11 to 19 and is called the International Council of Christian Churches. Representatives of 61 Protestant bodies from 29 countries met in the English Reformed Church, where the Pilgrim Fathers worshiped before coming to America. The second, the World Council of Churches, met August 22 to September 5, in the Concert Hall, where 149 denominations from 43 countries participated.

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