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Class. CHANGED TO **CONFIDENTIAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP**

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COUNTRY Turkey/France

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SUBJECT Controversy Over Russian Church in Paris

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ORIGIN [REDACTED]

SUPPLEMENT [REDACTED]

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This document is hereby upgraded to CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the terms of 13 October 1982. Director of Central Intelligence. Archivist of the United States. Next Fiscal Year.

1. The French Consul General in Istanbul, Lagarde, has unofficially notified the Patriarchate that his government is opposed to the Russian Orthodox Church in Paris continuing under the administration of Mgr. Germanos of Thyatire in London, Metropolitan of the Orthodox Churches in Western Europe. Mgr. Germanos has always been persona non grata at the Quai d'Orsay, because of his pro-British sympathies. In calling this matter to the attention of the Patriarchate, Lagarde explained that, in view of the excellent relations existing between Moscow and Paris, following the agreement signed by General de Gaulle, the French Government had no objection either to the Russian Church in Paris continuing under the orders of Moscow (as has been the case since its foundation by Peter the Great) or being placed under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Phanar, but that it did object very seriously to its administration by ecclesiastical authorities located in London.

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* See [REDACTED], distributed on 26 November 1946.

2. At the same time, the Phanar has been advised by Mgr. Germanos of Thyatire that Orlof, Professor at the Russian Institute in Paris and the leading member of the Russian Church in Paris, has protested that the Holy Synod in Istanbul has failed to live up to the agreement which was concluded between Eulogius and Patriarch Photius II. The said agreement stipulated that the Russian Church in Paris had been given the privileges of an Exarchate directly attached to Istanbul and that there was no question of a re-attachment through Mgr. Germanos of London. Orlof requested that the Patriarchate of the Phanar carry out the terms of the original Eulogius-Photius agreement.

3. Alexandre Bogomolov, Soviet Ambassador to France, continues to prevail upon the members of the Russian Church in Paris to support Mgr. Serafim Rodianov, nominated by Patriarch Alexei to succeed Eulogius. As a result, the Russian Church community is divided into two groups. The Vladimir group, which at present is the stronger, favors the direct attachment to the Phanar, whereas Serafim's followers advocate Moscow's jurisdiction.

4. The Secretary General of the Phanar has approached the French Consul General on behalf of the Holy Synod, with the recommendation that Lagarde submit a written memorandum on the subject, but Lagarde categorically replied that it was neither the intention of his Ambassador nor of himself to comply with this request. He made it very clear to the Secretary General of the Phanar

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that the French Government was not prepared to tolerate even a nominal control of the Russian Church of Paris by Mgr. Germanos of London, particularly since the majority of the members of the Russian Church of Paris were French citizens. Lagarde further warned that, in the event of the Patriarchate's failure to conform to the desire of the French Government, the latter might decide to back Mgr. Seraphim Rodianov, thus compelling Vladimir of Paris to withdraw completely. Such a withdrawal would result in placing the Russian Church of Paris directly under the influence of Moscow.

5. The Secretary General of the Patriarchate explained that placing the Russian Church of Paris under London's jurisdiction had no political significance, the Holy Synod having merely acted in accordance with the provisions of the Canonical Law #28 of the Chalcedonian Council. Lagarde's reply to this explanation was that the Patriarchate could very well disregard such a provision, since the French authorities were determined to put an end to the jurisdiction of Archbishop Germanos.
6. The French Consul General conceded, however, that his government had no objections to having the Russian Church in Paris come under the control of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul. The Secretary General of the Phanar thereupon inquired why the French Government had never objected to the control which Mgr. Germanos had always exercised over the Greek Orthodox Church in Paris. Lagarde replied that the Phanar was just as much in error in permitting Mgr. Germanos to exercise control over the Greek Orthodox Church in Paris as it was in allowing the Russian Church of Paris to come under his jurisdiction.
7. The Holy Synod unanimously agreed to approach the Greek Ambassador, Pericles Skeferis, and has requested him to take up this question with the French Ambassador, Gaston Maugras, with a view to ascertaining more precisely the views of the French Government and, incidently, whether the French Ambassador was, in fact, aware of the action taken by the French Consul General.
8. Mr. Maugras later notified the Greek Ambassador that he had no previous knowledge of this matter. This rather startling information caused not only considerable confusion, but a division of opinion within the Holy Synod. Some of the Metropolitans fear that Lagarde is in a position to carry out his threats and force Vladimir to withdraw from office, while others believe that the incident was created by Lagarde personally and without the backing and knowledge of the French Government. This latter group recommends that Mgr. Germanos in London be notified and his advice requested in regard to the further maintenance of the Russian Church in Paris under his jurisdiction.

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