

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Lobanon

DATE DISTR. 20 Dec 1948

SUBJECT Delegation of a Russian Priest to Patriarchate of Antioch
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DATE OF INFO

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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

1. Alexander Tahhan, Patriarch of Antioch, has received another letter from Aleksei, Patriarch of Moscow, reminding him of the need to delegate a Russian priest as representative to the Patriarchate of Antioch who would distribute Russian aid to the Orthodox churches, schools, and needy people.
2. According to source, Tahhan has refused such a delegate for three reasons:
 - a. The opposition in Greek Orthodox clerical and lay circles to rapprochement with the Soviet Union is stronger than the close personal relations which exist between Tahhan and some of his archbishops with the Soviets.
 - b. There is no precedent for a Russian representative, even in Tsarist times when the church did receive aid from the Russians.
 - c. Each archbishop is independent in managing his archdiocese. The only other controls over the archbishops are the Community Councils, which work in agreement with the former.

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Comment. [redacted] it was reported that the Patriarch of Antioch had received a letter from Aleksei, Patriarch of Moscow, which proposed, among other actions, the delegation by the Russian Patriarch of a priest to act as secretary to the Patriarch of Antioch. [redacted] stated that the question of a Russian priest to be delegated to the Patriarchate of Antioch was a matter yet to be solved by the Church. [redacted] also stated that the Greeks, in order to counteract Soviet influence, had tried to persuade Tahhan to accept a liaison man from the Greek Church and had suggested the archpriest Constantinos Moraitakis as candidate for the post. [redacted]

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Next Review Date: 2-73

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