

ENING BULLETIN, PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 1952

## Court Temporarily Restrains Consecration of Bishop

A temporary order was issued yesterday in Federal Court here restraining the consecration of a new bishop for the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America.

U. S. District Judge Grim ordered the postponement until a further hearing at 10 A. M. Wednesday.

The Rev. Viorel D. Trifa, of Cleveland, was scheduled to be made head of his church in the United States and Canada in ceremonies at the Descent of the Holy Ghost Church, American and Brown, the only parish in this city. Festivities were to have continued today and tomorrow.

The restraining order was brought by attorneys, John R. Ventilla, of Cleveland, and William M. Gerber, of Philadelphia, in behalf of Bishop Andrei Moldovan, of Detroit.

### 5 Named as Defendants

Named as defendants in the action were: the Rev. John Popovich, of 722 N. Bodine, pastor of the Romanian church; here; the Rev. Ioan Trutza, of the same address; Archbishop Ioan Theodorovich, of Bala-Cynwyd, metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the U. S.; Archbishop Mystyslew, of South Bound Brook, N. J.; and the Rev. Trifa.

The petition alleges that Bishop Moldovan has been "the duly elected bishop of the episcopate" since November 12, 1950, and that Trutza, "in reckless disregard of the bishop . . . is deliberately misrepresenting that he is president of the episcopate council."

### Challenges Procedure

All this is "inimical to the plaintiff's interests and is calculated and does deceive and confuse the members of the plaintiff's religious organization," the suit said.

The Rev. Trifa, it went on, represents himself as the elected bishop "by virtue of an illegal church congress held in the name of the plaintiff's religious organi-

zation on or about July 1 or 2, 1951, in Chicago, Ill."

The Archbishops Theodorovich and Mstyslew, the petition continued, were scheduled to take part in the actual consecration ceremonies of the new bishop.

"Not only . . . have (they) no authority whatever to consecrate or ordinate . . . on behalf of the Romanian Orthodox Church," it read, "but they, themselves, are not members of the Orthodox Church, but are Ukrainians."

### Action Refers to Funds

The defendants, it was alleged, "have in their possession funds amounting to \$13 000 belonging to the episcopate raised for the purpose of constructing a monastery at Vatra, Grass Lake, Mich.; general funds from various parishes amounting to approximately \$5,000; a weekly newspaper, Solia, official organ of the episcopate; and Solia Calendar, the official almanac."

Bishop Moldovan was consecrated November 12 at Sibiu, Transylvania, and came to this country shortly afterward. He replaced Archbishop Pollicarp Morusca, who had been in Romania in 1939 when war broke out and, it was claimed here, was detained in his native land by the Communists after the war.

The Rev. Trutza was president of the Interim Committee that supervised the church in the Archbishop's absence.

The Rev. Trifa, who is 37, was born in Transylvania and came to this country about two years ago. He was elected bishop by the Congress of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America at a meeting in Chicago last summer.

The church is electing its own bishop, a spokesman pointed out, in order to demonstrate that they "do not and will not tolerate any interference in their affairs by the Communist-controlled Patriarch of Bucharest."

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