

FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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TO : Department of State

882.413/7-2750

FROM : ISTANBUL 67 JULY 27, 1950

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REF : --

SUBJECT : DISSENSION WITHIN THE PATRIARCHATE.

RECORDED
ACTION
INDEXED

Chronic dissensions within the Patriarchate have recently come to the surface as the result of various steps taken by Athenagoras to get rid of the opposition against him. This has taken the form of a shifting of archbishops and nominations of new Metropolitans, which has caused dissension within the Saint Synod and elsewhere. The nomination of Mgr. Jakovos, the Metropolitan of Imros, to be Metropolitan of Derkos has been particularly opposed, although it is known he is being personally pushed by the Patriarch. Actually, it is now rumored that Mgr. Jakovos may soon replace Mgr. Meliton as Grand Vicar.

DC/R Central Files

Perhaps the most serious breach has been the result of Athenagoras' attempt to remove the Director of the Theological Seminary at Heybeliada by assigning him to be Metropolitan of Leros and Kaliminos (Dodecanese). The Director, Mgr. Chrysostomos, is well known to have been opposed to Athenagoras ever since his arrival in Istanbul and has held meetings at the Seminary attended by a number of the younger Archbishops (Laodycea, Pergemum and Chaldea), at which the policies and general attitude of the Patriarch have been severely criticized. It is known also that a Turkish Professor of the Theological Seminary, Mubeyit Bey, has also been present and has enlisted the sympathy of the Istanbul Director of Education in the controversy. Mgr. Chrysostomos has now refused to comply with the decision of Athenagoras to remove him and has openly revolted against the decision, threatening to take it before the Saint Synod. The proposed successors to Mgr. Chrysostomos are Mgr. Koukouzi, a protegee of the Metropolitan of Derkos, and Mgr. Jakovos, both of whom are not acceptable to other Metropolitans. Most of the Orthodox community, however, is critical of Mgr. Chrysostomos, who has held his job for almost two decades, for refusing to acknowledge the Patriarch's order. Athenagoras has indicated that if the Istanbul Director of Education intervenes, he will take the matter up with the Minister of Education in Ankar

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Confidential File

The Patriarch himself in recent weeks has made attempts to reinsure himself with the new Government. It is well known that he voted against the Democratic Party in the recent elections but now explains this as his natural desire to support any Government in power. During the recent visit of President Celal Bayar to Istanbul, a reception was arranged at the Vali's office. The local press reported that warm cordiality was expressed on all sides and news pictures showed the Patriarch linked arm in arm

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with the President.

Although the Orthodox community now understands the necessity of the Patriarch's intention to cooperate fully with the Government, particularly since the departure of the People's Party from power, and supports him in his controversy with Mgr. Chrysostamos, there still exists opposition to many of the Patriarch's reforms which appear contrary to established tradition.



Charles W. Lewis, Jr.,
American Consul General.

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