

P. 19: 20th Century ~ The Pinnacle of Martyrdom

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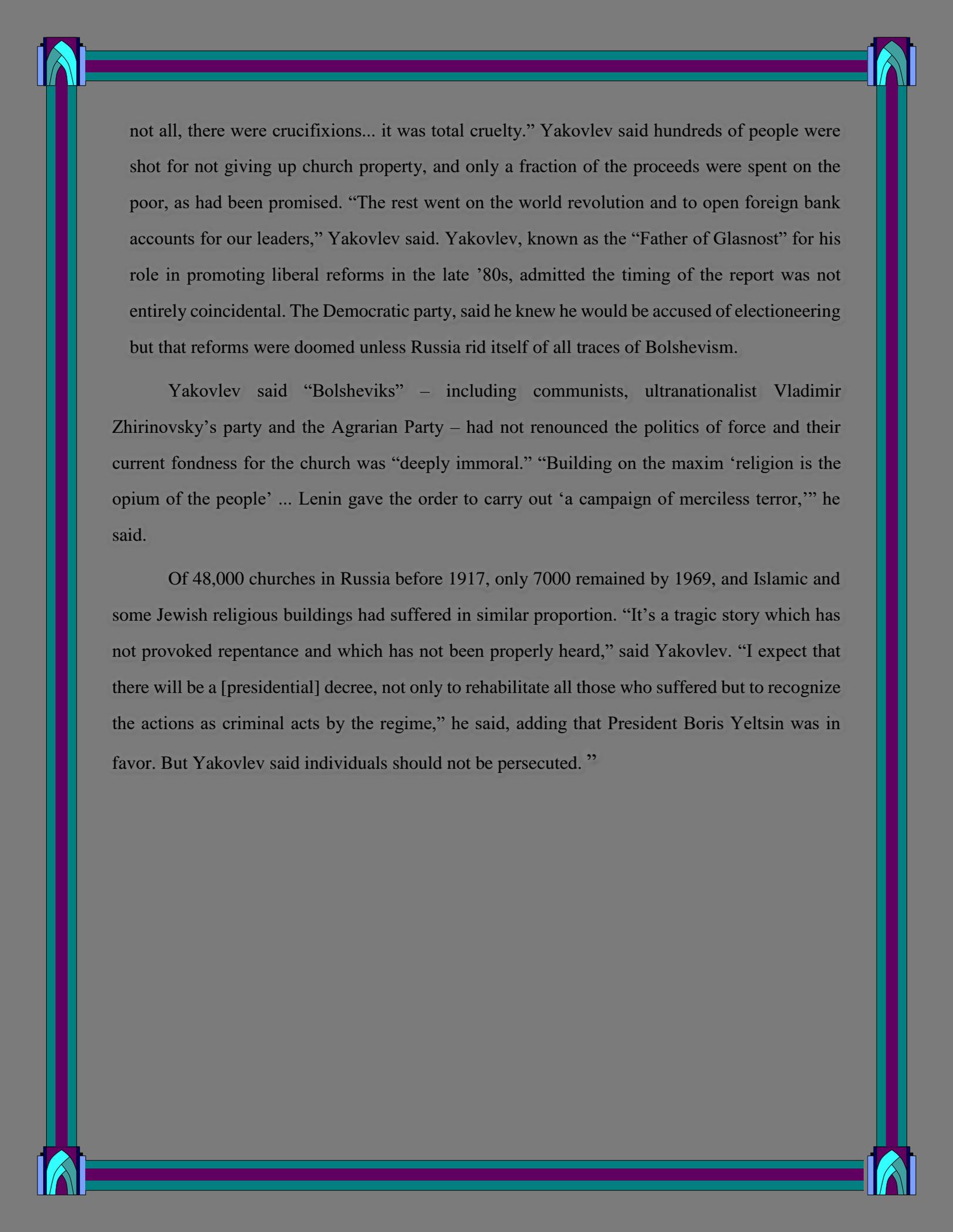
“ Philippa Fletcher, Reuters, Hobart Mercury, Australia, November 29, 1995

A Russian presidential commission confirmed yesterday that 200,000 clergy were systematically murdered under Soviet rule after the [Jewish group] known as the Bolsheviks, took control via outcome of the 1917 revolution. They implanted communism [Zionism] as a new form of government. Then ordered a horrific cycle of crucifixions, scalping's and other “bestial tortures.” These communists had long desires to eliminate Christianity worldwide.

Commission chairman Alexander Yakovlev, presenting the report at a news conference, seemed unconcerned the disclosure might deter electors from voting communist or nationalist in parliamentary elections on December 17, and he added: “If it has an influence, I will be very satisfied.” The report by the Commission for the Rehabilitation of the Victims of Political Repression also found another 500,000 religious figures had suffered persecution in the decades after Lenin's Bolsheviks seized power.

“Documents relate how clergymen, monks, nuns were crucified on royal gates and shot in the basements of the Cheka [secret police], scalped, strangled, drowned and submitted to other bestial tortures,” he said.

Yakovlev said some of the material, from archives of the former ruling politburo and security services, had not been previously published and that uncovering it had been traumatic. “I was especially shocked by accounts of priests turned into columns of ice in winter. But that's



not all, there were crucifixions... it was total cruelty.” Yakovlev said hundreds of people were shot for not giving up church property, and only a fraction of the proceeds were spent on the poor, as had been promised. “The rest went on the world revolution and to open foreign bank accounts for our leaders,” Yakovlev said. Yakovlev, known as the “Father of Glasnost” for his role in promoting liberal reforms in the late ’80s, admitted the timing of the report was not entirely coincidental. The Democratic party, said he knew he would be accused of electioneering but that reforms were doomed unless Russia rid itself of all traces of Bolshevism.

Yakovlev said “Bolsheviks” – including communists, ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky’s party and the Agrarian Party – had not renounced the politics of force and their current fondness for the church was “deeply immoral.” “Building on the maxim ‘religion is the opium of the people’ ... Lenin gave the order to carry out ‘a campaign of merciless terror,’” he said.

Of 48,000 churches in Russia before 1917, only 7000 remained by 1969, and Islamic and some Jewish religious buildings had suffered in similar proportion. “It’s a tragic story which has not provoked repentance and which has not been properly heard,” said Yakovlev. “I expect that there will be a [presidential] decree, not only to rehabilitate all those who suffered but to recognize the actions as criminal acts by the regime,” he said, adding that President Boris Yeltsin was in favor. But Yakovlev said individuals should not be persecuted. ”