

THE 1962 ROME-MOSCOW AGREEMENT DEFINITELY CONFIRMED

[The following introductory article by Jean Madiran, the letter to him by Mgr. Georges Roche¹ and Madiran's comment on Mgr. Roche's letter were published in the July/August 1984 issue of *Itinéraires*. These were first published in English as a supplement to *Approches*, No. 86, Nativity of the BVM, 1984. This article has been reproduced on the *Apropos* website www.apropos.org.uk Our thanks are extended to A de M who help scan the original text. ASF, Editor, *Apropos*.]

THE 1962 ROME-MOSCOW AGREEMENT Confirmation by Mgr. Roche

Despite the insults it contains here and there, I am publishing Mgr. Georges Roche's letter: I am publishing it in full so that suspicious minds may not suppose that in omitting the insulting passages I might also have concealed some important point.

Mgr. Georges Roche had for long been an intimate friend of Cardinal Tisserant². The purpose of his entire letter is to defend the memory of the Cardinal and to exculpate him concerning the shameful 1962 Agreement to which we devoted our editorial '*The Rome-Moscow Agreement*' in last February's issue.³

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The essential point is that *Mgr. Roche confirms the existence and the contents of the Agreement*, concerning which public opinion is entirely ignorant.

In his letter, Mgr. Roche repeatedly uses formulas such as 'everyone knows', 'no one can be unaware', 'it is for obvious reasons'. When in fact nothing was obvious, no one knew and all were unaware. Among the authors who have reproached the Second Vatican Council's scandalous silence concerning Communism, to my knowledge no one has called in question the Nikodim-Tisserant Agreement concluded at Metz in 1962⁴. Which Agreement had been exposed and commented upon in the April 1963 issue of *Itinéraires*. But when I made a precise allusion to it in an article in *Présent* in December 1983 I could see very clearly

¹ As can be seen from the text of the letter, Mgr. Roche was an intimate friend of the late Cardinal Tisserant who negotiated the Rome-Moscow Agreement with Mgr. Nikodim. Mgr. Roche is now preparing Cardinal Tisserant's biography.

² 1884-1972; Pro-Prefect Vatican Library, Archivist 1930-1936; Created Cardinal 1936; Dean of the Sacred College of Cardinals 1951; Secretary of the Congregation for Eastern Churches 1936-1954. (Notes on this page are by Ed. *Approches*)

³ This article was published in full as a supplement ('*The Rome-Moscow Agreement*') to *Approches* No.84.

⁴ Without knowing about Madiran's exposure of the Rome-Moscow Agreement, Gregory Macdonald wrote the Supplement to *Approches* No.79: '*Vatican II: The Questions No One has Dared to Ask.*'

with what amazement or incredulity I met among its readers. That is why I took up the entire question once more in the February 1984 issue of *Itinéraires*. And it is to this editorial that Mgr. Georges Roche replies.

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The footnotes accompanying Mgr. Roche's letter are all by me⁵. They refer to some minor anomalies in his letter.

Jean Madiran

⁵ Except, where indicated, a note has been added by Ed. Approaches.

MGR. ROCHE'S LETTER

May 14, 1984

Dear Editor,

It is with the greatest interest that I have read your article which appeared in the No. 280 (February 1984) issue of *Itinéraires* entitled: 'The Rome-Moscow Agreement'.

You comment, not without reason, on this Agreement which you say dates from 1962. You therefore seem to be unaware of an earlier agreement which took place during the Second World War, in 1942 to be more precise, and of which the protagonists were Mgr. Montini and Stalin himself. This 1942 Agreement seems to me to be of considerable importance.

For the moment, however, I wish to deal exclusively with your comment concerning the Agreement of 1962.

Everyone knows that this Agreement had been negotiated between the Kremlin and the Vatican at the very highest level. Mgr. Nikodim and Cardinal Tisserant were merely spokesmen, the former for the master of the Kremlin, the latter for the Sovereign Pontiff then gloriously reigning.

If Mgr. Nikodim had wished to meet Cardinal Tisserant qua authentic representative [of the Holy See] it is for obvious reasons which everyone knows. In the first place, Cardinal Tisserant spoke Russian. Moreover, from 1936 until 1954 he had been Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church. Finally the two men knew each other and they had met to deal with problems concerning the Vatican Library of which the Cardinal had been pro-prefect from 1930 until 1936.¹

However, I can assure you, Mr Editor, that the decision to invite the Russian Orthodox observers to the Second Vatican Council had been taken personally by His Holiness Pope John XXIII² with the obvious encouragement of Cardinal Montini who had been adviser to the Patriarch of Venice when he himself was Archbishop of Milan. What is more, it was also Cardinal Montini who secretly directed the policy of the Secretariat of State during the first session of the Council from the secret place that the Pope had prepared for him in the famous St. John Tower within the very walls of Vatican City.

Cardinal Tisserant had received formal instructions not only to negotiate the Agreement but also to supervise its being carried out precisely during the Council. Thus whenever a Bishop wished to touch on the question of

¹ Mgr. Nikodim was born in 1929. He died in the arms of Pope John Paul 1 in the course of an audience.

² No one had ever supposed that this decision could have been taken by anyone other than John XXIII.

Communism, the Cardinal intervened from the desk of the Chairman's adviser to recall the order of silence [concerning this question] in accordance with the Pope's wishes.³

I was truly scandalised, Mr Editor, on reading in Textual Note 3 of your Appendix (p.13) the nine lines which to my mind are unworthy of a serious historian. You actually write: '*Cardinal Tisserant liked to be considered a Gaullist from the very outset.*' This sentence is ridiculous. No one could really be unaware that Cardinal Tisserant was a Gaullist from the outset.⁴ First of all, qua native of Lorraine, and also for reasons which he had given time after time.

What is more, during the war he was regarded as chaplain to the Resistance and, without seeking to do so, at Rome he had created a veritable Resistance group which included His Excellency Mgr. André Jullien, then Dean of the Roman Rota Tribunal and unofficial representative of General de Gaulle⁵; Mgr. Fontenelle, correspondent of the newspaper *La Croix*; and Mgr. Martin, then of the Secretariat of State and now Prefect of the Apostolic Palace; and many others. In order to avoid having to give formal military honours to the German Army, Cardinal Tisserant refused Pius XII's offer of the Archdiocese of Rheims where he would have replaced Cardinal Suhard who had been transferred to Paris.⁶

This first sentence of your Textual Note 3, Mr Editor, continues thus: '*and as an uncompromising anti-Communist (which is much less certain).*'

Having collaborated with the Cardinal for 25 years in Rome, I think I knew his mind. He was an anti-Communist by religious, philosophical and social conviction. Time and again he denounced the persecutions which raged and still rage behind the Iron Curtain. If you so desire I shall send you the pastoral letter which he published on this question. However, I am sending you two little brochures in French on this theme.⁷

Your second sentence is much shorter but I find it frankly abominable. You dare to write of Cardinal Tisserant: '*I have always had the impression that he was a deceitful rogue**,' [Note by Ed. *Approaches*. In our translation of Madiran in the Supplement to *Approaches* 84 we had wrongly rendered *fourbe* simply as

³ There had never been any open reference during the Council to an '*order of silence in accordance with the Pope's wishes*'. This order was in fact imposed by various oblique means and deceitful methods.

⁴ However, the sentence contained a parenthesis which Mgr. Roche omits. Here is the unabridged sentence. '*Cardinal Tisserant liked to be considered a Gaullist from the very outset (which he no doubt was) and as an uncompromising anti-Communist (which is much less certain).*'

⁵ I cannot possibly believe that Pius XII had accepted Mgr. Jullien qua unofficial representative of General de Gaulle at the Holy See. I am not surprised to find Mgr. Fontenelle and Mgr. Martin in this secret and divisive Vatican cell which had been established in direct opposition to the wishes of Pius XII.

⁶ Until now there had never been any mention of the Archbishop of Rheims having to give formal *military* honours to no matter whom.

⁷ One of them is dated 1949, the other 1951;

rogue, wrongly because fourbe also implies the element of deceit.] I, Georges Roche, in reading this sentence from your pen have the impression that you had never known the Cardinal. If he had faults, and he had, I would emphasise rather his lack of deceit. In other words, he had none of the ecclesiastical unction that one frequently associates with prelates of the Holy Roman Church. He was a man who was direct, frank, even to the point of being blunt. For him the best form of diplomacy was truth, straightforwardness and loyalty. He was a soldier. As I have said, he obeyed his chiefs, his superiors, even when the orders given scarcely corresponded to his personal views, even when he found these orders positively displeasing. I feel ashamed for you, Monsignor Madiran, on reading this calumnious statement from your pen: 'Quite a lot could be said about him [Cardinal Tisserant]. In any case, his presence at the negotiations was no guarantee of innocence and, purity of intention.' No, this is not just malicious gossip, it is calumny and you know that calumny is an injustice and that all injustice demands reparation. No, no, no, Mgr. Nikodim was not deceived by Cardinal Tisserant and Cardinal Tisserant was not deceived by Mgr. Nikodim. And you deceive yourself very much indeed in thinking that 'all things considered he [the Cardinal] had conceived the desire to negotiate at no matter what price'.

Not for a single instant did this alleged '*desire to negotiate at no matter what price*' cross the mind of this uncompromising son of Lorraine who, speaking of the Communist regime in 1949, stated without ambiguity: '*The events in Poland and Hungary, following on the signing of agreements between the Bishops and the respective governments, demonstrate how futile it is to believe in the word of governments which, uniquely inspired by Marxist philosophy, do not regard themselves as being in any way bound by their own word, and which consider as legitimate anything which permits them to achieve their objectives.*'

On the other hand, it is your parenthesis which rings true. Obviously, when you write: '*All things considered, I think he had conceived the desire (or received a command) to negotiate at no matter what price*', you ran no risk of making a mistake. One or other of the alternatives is necessarily true and the other false.⁸ The Cardinal had received firm, irrevocable directives from the Pope himself, and the Cardinal had always been a man of faith. He believed in authority, he obeyed authority even when he was convinced there had been a diplomatic or political error.⁹ His respectful and filial observations were made straightforwardly and quite outspokenly to the cardinals who were his colleagues as also to the pontiffs whom he had loyally served, and in particular

⁸ They could also be both true at the same time. But the sentence didn't seek to pose alternatives. It said something quite different: that if it had been possible to negotiate in this way with Moscow, it was truly because there was preparedness *to negotiate at no matter what price*. It is in this that the scandal, the shame and the treason consist. This doesn't appear to have been noticed by Mgr. Roche.

⁹ The Rome-Moscow Agreement was not an error of the *diplomatic* or even of the *political* order. It was something quite different. It constituted *religious treason*. Certainly, it also had *political* consequences. It certainly derived from an *error* of judgment. But I repeat: ESSENTIALLY, IT CONSTITUTED RELIGIOUS TREASON and before the bar of history it will be regarded as the 20th century disgrace of the Holy See.

St. Pius X, Benedict XV, Pius XI, Pius XII, John XXIII and Paul VI.

Mr Editor, I leave you this letter, already no doubt too long from your point of view, but too brief from mine (for there is much that could still be said about Cardinal Tisserant, but not in a tendentious, calumnious spirit such as yours). This I hope to be able to say and write in his biography which I am preparing with difficulty because of the bulk of the documentation I have been working on for more than ten years.

I beg to remain, Sir,

Yours sadly,

Georges Roche

JEAN MADIRAN'S EDITORIAL OBSERVATIONS

In the final analysis, this letter from Mgr. Roche confirms everything and contradicts nothing. For even in Mgr. Roche's version, we are still faced with the same deceitfulness; a deceitfulness in which Cardinal Tisserant had been the active accomplice.

Here, once again, are the essential features of this deceitfulness:

In his opening address to Vatican II, in October 1962 - which had been drawn up by Cardinal Montini, but accepted and docilely uttered by the Pope - John XXIII insisted on the fact that whereas previous Councils had suffered from pressures exerted by temporal powers, the Council then beginning would take place in perfect freedom.¹

By speaking in this way, he said what he knew to be quite untrue: he had himself accepted an abominable restriction of the Council's freedom; he had been pressurised by a temporal power, and he had yielded to this pressure of his own free will. And this Council, which was going to boast that it would confront and get down to the roots of the '*problems of this period of time*' was condemned to remain silent concerning the most serious, the most dramatic of these problems: the continual expansion of Soviet Communism and its enslaving domination. Undoubtedly, previous Councils had suffered from influence or pressure from political authorities, but it had been a question of pressure from *Christian princes*. By contrast, Vatican II took place under the pressure, the conditions, the limits, the law laid down by the Kremlin: it was forbidden to reiterate the Church's appeals for a general mobilisation against Communism.

Such was the exorbitant price paid for obtaining the worthless presence at the

¹ The relevant passage from John XXIII's Opening Address to the Second Vatican Council is reproduced- as an Appendix. Ed. *Approaches*,

Council of certain Russian Orthodox 'observers' who were themselves under the control of the KGB.

Mgr. Roche pleads that in this matter Cardinal Tisserant was simply carrying out his orders docilely. But where deception, where treason is involved, docility is no excuse.

That is why telling us that he was simply '*obeying his chiefs, his superiors*' and that he '*believed in authority*' in no way excuses him. It wouldn't excuse him even if it were true. Moreover it is not even true and we are given the proof of this by Mgr. Roche himself. He recalls that from the very outset - i.e. as from 1940 - Cardinal Tisserant had stirred up Gaullist action within the Vatican which was downright disobedience to the orders of Pius XII.

The Cardinal was therefore capable of disobeying. He had not disobeyed when he should.

He didn't even have any need to disobey; it would have sufficed simply to decline the undertaking; to tell John XXIII that he refused to be the negotiator at Metz, just as he had told Pius XII that he refused the archbishopric of Rheims.

If Mgr. Roche wants to exculpate his Cardinal his defence pleas will require to show more imagination and somewhat less incoherence.

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However, whether Cardinal Tisserant negotiated at Metz willingly or unwillingly is of secondary importance. What is important is the treason itself; what is important is the moral disarmament of the Church confronted with Communism. Before the bar of history, this will constitute the dishonour of those who in an authoritarian manner imposed this moral disarmament on the Church and who know themselves to be so dishonoured by their having done so that they have concealed their crime. If in their eyes their action had been salutary and glorious they would have boasted of it. At the present moment, July 1984, twenty-two years after the conclusion of the Rome-Moscow Agreement, we are still waiting for an official declaration from the Vatican justifying this Agreement. There is no admissible justification. If there were one they would not have hesitated to produce it for our benefit.

The infamous Agreement is still in force. The Vatican still considers itself a prisoner of this Agreement. And the moral authority which today tells the world the truth about Communism is Solzhenitsyn. Since 1962 it is no longer the Sovereign Pontiff.

Jean Madiran

APPENDIX

Excerpt from John XXIII's Opening Address to the Second Vatican Council

'We feel we must disagree with those prophets of gloom who are always forecasting disaster, as though the end of the world were at hand.

'In the present order of things, Divine Providence is leading us to a new order of human relations which, by men's own efforts and even beyond their very expectations, are directed toward the fulfilment of God's superior and inscrutable designs. And everything, even human differences, leads to the greater good of the Church.

*It is easy to discern this reality if we consider attentively the world of today, which is so busy with politics and controversies in the economic order that it does not find time to attend to the care of spiritual reality, with which the Church's magisterium is concerned. Such a way of acting is—certainly not right, and must justly be disapproved. **It cannot be denied, however, that these new conditions of modern life have at least the advantage of having eliminated those innumerable obstacles by which, at one time, the sons of this world impeded the free action of the Church. In fact, it suffices to leaf even cursorily through the pages of ecclesiastical history to note clearly how the Ecumenical Councils themselves, while constituting a series of true glories for the Catholic Church, were often held to the accompaniment of most serious difficulties and sufferings because of the undue interference of civil authorities. The princes of this world, indeed, sometimes in all sincerity, intended thus to protect the church. But more frequently this occurred not without spiritual damage and danger, since their interest therein was guided by the views of a selfish and perilous policy.***

*'In this regard, we confess to you that we feel most poignant sorrow over the fact that very many bishops, so dear to us, are noticeable here today by their absence, because they are imprisoned for their faithfulness to Christ, or impeded by other restraints. The thought of them impels us to raise most fervent prayer to God. **Nevertheless, we see today, not without great hopes and to our immense consolation, that the Church, finally freed from so many obstacles of a profane nature such as trammled her in the past, can from this Vatican Basilica; as if from a second apostolic cenacle and through your intermediary, raise her voice resonant with majesty and greatness.**'²*

² cf. *The Documents of Vatican II* (Abbott edition pp 712-3). Emphasis added by Ed. Approaches.

Postscript by the Editor, Approaches

The foregoing items demonstrate more clearly than ever how necessary it is to insist that Vatican II be authoritatively judged by the Church: i.e. by the Pope (John Paul II or a successor) and possibly also by a future Council (which would of course be incapable of making an authoritative pronouncement unless its deliberations were promulgated by the Sovereign Pontiff).

However, the judgment of Vatican II by the Church belongs to the future. What is imperative today is the freedom of the Church which cannot be made possible save by the effective abrogation of the 1962 Rome-Moscow Agreement. This is not a matter for the future. This is a matter which concerns all of us. For, clearly, this infamous Agreement will not be abrogated until Russia *per se* is collegially consecrated to Mary's Immaculate Heart.

Which explains, why this Collegial Consecration is so resolutely opposed by Neomodernist Bishops and clergy for whom only anti-Communism is '*intrinsically evil*'.

However we can all do something effective towards overcoming this opposition. For as Sr. Lucia has told us, God will permit the grace of the Collegial Consecration only '*when a sufficient number are complying with the message of Fatima*'.

In short, it will come when a sufficient number are fulfilling the duties appropriate to their state in life - the penance Our Lady of Fatima has insisted upon. It also implies our making the First Saturday Communions of Reparation and honouring Our Lady by wearing the Brown-Scapular in accordance with her requests.³

³ For further details see *Our Lady of Fatima's Message to the Laity* by Patrick McAvoy.