

Ukrainian President Prepares to Ban Ukrainian Orthodox Church

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In a stunning announcement, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said that he intends to ban the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the country.

Zelensky's decision comes on the heels of an investigation into the church's ties with "the Patriarchate in Russia."

Friday Dec. 2 also saw Ukraine ban the activities of any religious organization "affiliated with centers of influence" within Russia.

"We will ensure for our state the fullness of independence. In particular, spiritual independence. We will never allow anyone to build an empire inside the Ukrainian soul," Zelensky said.

The announcement affects a large population of Ukrainians, as Orthodox Christians make up the largest demographic in the country.

While there have been some internal disagreements about who they support in the war between Ukraine and Russia, the large majority of Orthodox leaders have announced their support for Ukraine.

In May of this year, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church announced its full independence from the Moscow Patriarchate, and that it does not support the Russian invasion.

Now, any religious organization who does not support Zelensky may find themselves in the crosshairs of the government. And what will become of the nation's largest denomination and

those who worship in the UOC?

These actions are not the actions of a democracy, as many within the international media have tried to portray Ukraine. Instead, these actions are reminiscent of Vladimir Putin, who is known for his crackdowns on political and religious opposition and the one whose hunger for power led to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

While Zelensky fears that Russia may be trying to use the UOC to plant agents within it and undermine the Ukrainian war effort, as reported by the New York Times, his paranoia of this unfounded and refuted claim instead positions the UOC and its members to turn against him.

Throughout history, governments, regimes and religious organizations have tried to oppress worshippers from practicing their faith. And it never works.

The people will pray and find hope in the darkness. In times such as these, God sends His light into the fog of war to the faithful and give them the strength to endure their current trials. {eoa}

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