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The Mysteries

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What are the Mysteries (Sacraments) in Christianity? Are the Mysteries an outward tradition by the faithful? Are the Mysteries inward vessels of grace to the Christian Church? How many Mysteries are there in the Christian church? How many Mysteries are there in the Orthodox Church? Let me state from the start, the greatest mystery is the Incarnation and Resurrection of Jesus Christ in history. Another great mystery is the soul departing upon death from a person. This article will advance the notion that since the 13th century, the Orthodox Church has adopted and practiced Seven Mysteries: Baptism, Chrismation, Holy Communion/Eucharist, Repentance/Confession, Unction, Marriage, and the Priesthood and that these mysteries were prefigured in Holy Scripture.

By the 4th century, Cyril of Jerusalem, Cyprian, Augustine, and others, adopted the rights of Baptism, Chrismation, Holy Communion, Confession, and the Priesthood. By the 8th century, John of Damascus, adopted two rights: Baptism and Holy Communion. By the 9th century, Theodore the Studite and others adopted Baptism, Holy Communion, and Unction. By 1270 A.D., Job of Sinai had adopted 8 mysteries, the eight being Monastic Tonsure. By the 13th century, Symeon of Thessaloniki adopted the 7 mysteries we have today in the Orthodox Church. Fathers had some number differences.

The Seven Mysteries have their genesis in the Holy Scriptures beginning in the Old Testament. For example, Almighty God blessed the union of one man and one woman, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall become one flesh." Gen. 2:24. St. Paul quotes this verse in the New Testament and calls marriage, "A great mystery." Eph. 5:32. Moreover, St. Paul points to a greater mystery, the Marriage of Jesus Christ and the True Church, His Bride. Eph. 5:22-33. The Lord Jesus Christ was asked about divorce, and He quoted Genesis. The Lord Jesus Christ made some profound announcements!

Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator made them male and female," and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate. Matt. 19:4-6.

The Lord Jesus Christ authenticated that there was a CREATION which had a CREATOR; that All mighty God made man and woman, male and female; and that God's intent was the permanent union of Marriage but allowed Moses to divorce in God's Economy.

Why is this first Marriage such a great mystery? Why is this union mystical? An insightful explanation is that:

[Continued p.2\)](#)

Turkey tests Russian-made S-400 defines system,



NATO-member Turkey has tested its Russian-made advanced air defense missile system, Turkish media reports said Friday, raising the specter of a new standoff with the United States.

A Haber television, which is close to the government, said on its website that Turkey's military test-fired the Russian S-400 air defense system in the Black Sea province of Sinop.

It based its reports on an amateur video, reportedly filmed in Sinop, showing a contrail shooting into the sky. Other media carried similar reports.

Turkish military and defense officials have refused to comment on the reports.

Washington strongly objected to Turkey's acquisition of the Russian anti-aircraft system and suspended Turkey from its hi-tech F-35 fighter jet program, saying the S-400 are a threat to the stealth fighter jets.

It has also warned Ankara that it risks U.S. sanctions under the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act if the S-400 system is activated.

Turkey insists it was forced to purchase the Russian system after Washington refused to sell it the U.S. Patriot system.

Russia delivered the the first batch of the Russian defense system last year. Turkey had initially said the S-400 would be operational in April but it has since delayed activating the system.

During a visit to Turkey earlier this month, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg reiterated that the Russian-made S-400 system cannot be integrated into the NATO air and missile defense system and can lead to sanctions by the United States.

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Younger people lead
new wave of Covid-19
infections in Greece



Greece recorded a new daily record of coronavirus cases on Tuesday, topping the 600 mark for the first time, with younger people accounting for a majority of the new infections, health authorities said.

Nationwide, there were 667 new confirmed infections and eight new deaths, authorities said.

"The pandemic is showing clear signs that it is steadily spreading," said epidemiologist Gikas Magiorkinis, adding that people in the age group of 18 to 39 years old made up some 60% to 70% of the new infections.

He said the pandemic was spreading increasingly in the northern part of the country and urged young people to comply with mask-wearing and social distancing measures.

Earlier, Greece scrapped a plan to allow spectators back into sporting events to help curb the spread of the virus, Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis' office said.

"It is not the right time for sports fans to return to venues, it would send the wrong message," said Deputy Civil Protection Minister Nikos Hardalias.

Hardalias said the epidemiological picture of the pandemic in the Athens metropolitan area remained "critically stable."

"How things unfold with the pandemic is in our hands," Hardalias said. "Apply the measures."

Despite the increase in infections, Greece is still faring better than many other European countries, with a relatively low level of Covid-19 infections.

Tuesday's data showed Greece's total tally of COVID-19 cases since the start of the pandemic has reached 26,469, with 528 deaths. [Reuters]

The Mysteries

Grace is the power of the Holy Spirit that penetrates the inward being of man, leading to his spiritual perfection and salvation...and a mystery is a sacred act which under a visible aspect communicates to the soul of a believer the invisible grace of God.¹

The Mysteries are vessels of grace manifested from the invisible to the visible world. The physical objects, such as: water, oil, bread, or wine are changed to holy objects by God's grace and become channels of God's grace. This infusion of God's grace or uncreated energy happens mystically and invisibly.

In the physical world, can two people become one? No! However, in the spiritual world, two people can become one just as the Lord Jesus Christ is one with His Church. The two people become one in Christ! The True Church becomes one in Christ!

Photos show strong Greek naval presence

Both in the Old Testament and the New Testament there are examples of anointing: The Lord said to him, "Go back the way you came, and go to the

Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Syria. Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet. I Kings. 19:15-16.

In the New Testament, beginning with the Lord Jesus Christ, Pentecost, the Apostles and the Seventy laid hands on believers to receive the Holy Spirit.

When the Apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit." Acts 8:14-17

Holy Communion was ordained by the Lord Jesus Christ. And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after the supper He took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. Lk. 22:19-20

St. Paul warns believers to properly prepare to take communion, "So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the Cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord." I Cor. 11:27.

Holy Fathers call this Mystery the "medicine of immortality." This mystery was prefigured in the Old Testament. "Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was Priest of God Most High." Gen. 14:18.

The Lord Jesus Christ was baptized by St. John the Baptist. Why? Probably the best answer is the fulfillment of prophecy and for the manifestation of the Holy Trinity. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." Matt. 3:14-17.

After the Lord Jesus Christ's baptism, he began His ministry and commanded His disciples to, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." Mark 16:15-16.

Yet, the Lord Jesus Christ went further, "Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit." John 3:5. The Lord Jesus Christ instructs persons to repent, be baptized and be "born again" by the Holy Spirit.

The great St. Paul, the one after The ONE, believed and afterwards was baptized. "Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized." Acts. 9:18.

St. Paul also received the Holy Spirit when Ananias laid his hands on him. "Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Acts 9:17.

From the beginning of Christianity, adult persons believed and were baptized. In certain cases, their families were also baptized: Lydia and her family, Acts 16:15; ; The Phillipian Jailer, Acts 16:33; and Stephanos' house, I Cor. 1:16.

Without doubt the ancient Christian Church followed the pattern of repent, believe, and be baptized. Later, schools appeared to teach new believers catechism before they were allowed to partake in Holy Communion.

Repentance/Confession is the change or broken heart and a humble spirit, to go before Almighty God and ask.

but when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you." And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words." Matt. 6:6-7.

Believers are to forgive as they expect the Lord Jesus Christ to forgive them. As one undresses in front of his doctor, believers should undress spiritually before the Lord Jesus Christ or before a spiritual person and confess their sins.

For both healing the soul and for healing the body, the brother of

The Mysteries

the Lord Jesus Christ, James, instructs believers, “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.” James 5:14.

The Priests or church believers can pray this Mystery, anoint with oil and ask for God’s mercy, grace and healing of the passions of the soul and the passions of the flesh.

From the beginning of Christianity, there was an understanding of the three liturgical offices: Bishop, Presbyter, and Deacon. However, the Head of the Christian Church is the Lord Jesus Christ. The real mystery with these three offices is whether the uncreated grace of God flows through the persons holding the offices? Also, does the uncreated grace of God flow to the laity? Let’s hope that the former are worthy to minister and the latter worthy to receive?

There are other Mysteries, such as Monastic Tonsure, Memorials and Holy Water.

Life is a mystery. The whole Christian life is a mystery. The believer lives in the world but is not of the world. The believer is the citizen of this country or that country but is a citizen of heaven. The human soul is a mystery. The universe is a mystery. Beyond knowledge begins the mystery of faith. Relationships are fused together with the mystery of love. The Incarnation and the Resurrection are the greatest mystery. God is a mystery. The Mysteries reveal that God loves us so much that He is willing to be united to us who synergistically accept His invitation to receive his uncreated grace as a gift.

Having gone to both Catholic and Protestant schools, my experience is that the Orthodox Church has a deeper and fuller outward liturgical expression of God’s uncreated grace through the Seven Mysteries. As St. Philaret so eloquently summarized: In Baptism man is mystically born into spiritual life. In Chrismation he receives grace which gives growth and strengthens. In Communion he is spiritually nourished. In Repentance he is healed of spiritual diseases (sin). In Priesthood he receives the grace, spiritually, to regenerate and nurture others, by means of teaching, prayer, and the Mysteries. In Matrimony, he receives Grace, which sanctifies marriage and the natural birth giving and upbringing of children. In Unction, he is healed of diseases of the body by means of healing of spiritual diseases.² With the fear of God, faith and love, let us experience the Mysteries!

1. Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky, *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 2009.
2. St. Philaret, Metropolitan of Mosco, *The Longer Catechism of the Orthodox Catholic Eastern Church*, quoted by Protopresbyter Pomazansky in *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*.

Photos show strong Greek naval presence near Kastellorizo



At a time of heightened tensions in the region due to the presence of Turkey’s Oruc Reis seismic vessel, the Hellenic National Defence General Staff (GEETHA) has published photos showing the strong presence of Greek ships on Tuesday morning in the area of the Kastellorizo island complex.

"More proof that the armed forces are fully prepared but also fully determined to carry out their mission successfully, defending our sovereign interests," GEETHA said in a relevant statement.

The experience of the previous crisis in the summer has reportedly helped the leadership of Greece’s armed forces to develop the means needed to monitor Turkish mobility in the Eastern Mediterranean rapidly.

The Greek Defense Ministry and the Prime Minister’s office also remain vigilant to the possible dissemination of false information or fabricated incidents in order to nip them in the bud.

Turkish research vessel sailing 10 nm off Kastellorizo



Turkey’s seismic survey vessel, Oruc Reis, was sailing 10 nautical miles off the Greek island of Kastellorizo on Tuesday morning.

The vessel, which had its transmitter off, was heading northeast and, assuming it continues its course at its current speed, it was expected to reach a point 12 nautical miles off Kastellorizo by around noon.

The offshore supply ships, Ataman and Cengiz Han, which are flanking the Oruc Reis had their transmitters on.

The Oruc Reis has been conducting seismic surveys in the area which Ankara claims is inside the Turkish continental shelf.

The navigational warning (Navtex) issued by Turkey on October 12 expires on October 22.

On Monday, Turkish Energy Minister Fatih Donmez said in an interview that the Oruc Reis “is currently making 2D seismic surveys” and estimated that it will complete its work in two months.

If the ship finds an area “with high expectations,” Ankara will deploy a drilling ship.

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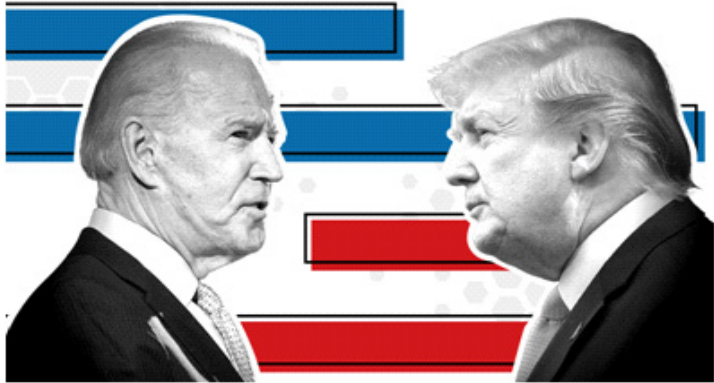
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US President Donald Trump takes part in a live one-hour NBC News town hall forum image.

1. Presidential Trump and Democratic rival for the White House, Joe Biden took part in separate town hall events last night, taking questions from a moderator and members of the public.

We've fact-checked some of his claims.



Trump: "Just the other day, they came out with a statement that 85% of the people that wear masks catch it."

Verdict: We can find no evidence to support this claim.

The CDC has said: "The interpretation that

more mask-wearers are getting infected compared to non-mask wearers is incorrect."

2. Trump: "We've given you the greatest tax cut in the history of our country."

Verdict: That's not right for tax cuts in general - previous ones have been larger. It is right for corporation tax. According to tax specialists, the cuts were big but not the biggest.

The Committee for a Responsible Budget looked at the numbers and reported that President Trump's tax cuts would be the eighth-largest in US history, compared to the overall size of the economy. President Trump's tax cuts rank fourth overall.

3. Trump: "GDP is going through the roof."

Verdict: The latest numbers show a record fall in GDP during the pandemic. However the next set of figures, due out at the end of October, are expected to show a record increase. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the value of goods and services in the economy - and it's used to measure the size and health of a country's economy.

American think tank calls for full 'recalibration' of US relations with Turkey



A US think tank called on the next administration to remove American nuclear weapons stored in Turkey and review the full breadth of its foreign policy towards Ankara.

In a 95-page report titled "Recalibrating US Global Relationships," the Center for American Progress recommends that the country "actively de-leverage itself from its relationship with Turkey, especially on security matters" in the first 100 days.

The first step should be for the next administration should work to "quietly remove all nuclear weapons from Incirlik Air Base."

This should be "done immediately, without a lengthy interagency review, to allow the administration to a empty to rebuild relations from a more realistic foundation."

At the same time, the US should review issues of security, economic, and diplomatic relations with Turkey, the report continues. "The goal should be to craft a more realistic and updated strategy for dealing with a more assertive Turkey that is willing to take unilateral action and defy alliance norms."

The think tank recognizes that Turkey "will remain a major player" in both the Middle East and Europe, however the next administration should "send early signals that it will be taking a new approach."

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has sought "to chart a more independent course with less deference to traditional Western security partners... The next administration should recognize this reality and adapt," it explains.



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NEWS FROM GREECE

Erdogan tries to drag Greece into a hot episode



The military forces that accompany the Turkish ship but also their large concentration in the Eastern Mediterranean, enhances the possibility of an accident in the area.

Turkey's challenges continue unabated, with Oruc Reis a breath away from Kastellorizo and the Greek side on alert. These are unprecedented moves by Turkey. "It is the first time that a Turkish research vessel is so close to Greek shores."

The military forces that accompany the Turkish ship but also their large concentration in the Eastern Mediterranean, enhances the possibility of an accident in the area.

"There is no doubt that Turkey is trying to drag Greece into a hot episode. He wants us to follow the tension in order to sit down later and discuss with Turkey issues that are not the subject of dialogue for us."

Referring to the next moves of the Turks, Mr. Despotopoulos noted that the neighbors will continue to escalate their moves. "I will not be surprised to see a drilling rig, which of course will not aim to exploit something but to provoke Greece even more."

Greece, on the other hand, can step up its pressure for sanctions and "stay cool."

Why Greece and Albania choose to appeal to The Hague

Rama's announcement a month ago about the agreement with Dendias. How The Hague facilitates Rama to manage an agreement with Greece on the EEZ that he had fought in 2009. Turkey's role in the annulment of the then Greek-Albanian agreement. What is Athens seeking and what signal is it sending to Ankara.

The current development, Greece and Albania to announce that they will proceed to the definition of maritime zones between them, referring the issue to The Hague, was essentially announced by the Albanian Prime Minister a month ago.

In an interview with MEGA on September 20, Eddie Rama said:

"In a few weeks I will receive the foreign minister in Albania to discuss this issue and immediately afterwards I hope to receive the Greek prime minister as well. It has been an issue since 2009 that needs to be resolved. We can solve it."

Nikos Dendias's statement in Tirana after his meeting with Eddie Rama was clear:

"Having thoroughly considered the issue, we agreed that Greece and Albania should proceed together to submit this issue to international justice, at the International Court of Justice in The Hague."

In fact, the joint appeal in The Hague was the Greek side's attempt to overcome the abyss of the Albanian constitutional court, which had annulled the Athens-Tirana agreement of 2009. In order to circumvent the court decision that hinders a transnational agreement, it is necessary to decision of an international court.

Throughout the last 10 years, Albania has avoided any discussion citing the decision of the constitutional court which raised issues of constitutionality of that agreement on the maritime zones of Greece and Albania.



US Senators blast Turkey for S-400 test



The top majority and minority leaders of the US Senate's Foreign Relations Committee have strongly condemned Turkey's testing Friday of its Russian-built S-400 air defense system.

Committee Chairman Jim Risch (R-Idaho) said that the test firing "is unacceptable behavior from a (NATO) ally that put Turkey "beyond the pale" and called for sanctions:

Chairman Risch: Turkey's Test of S-400 System is Unacceptable

BOISE, Idaho – U.S. Senator Jim Risch (R-Idaho), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, released the following statement regarding Turkey's S-400 missile defense system testing today:

"Turkey's test of the Russian S-400 missile defense system is unacceptable behavior from a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ally. It further damages the alliance and poses a direct threat to the F-35 and other U.S. and NATO allies' systems.

"Turkey and Russia have a deep history of disagreement and conflict. The burgeoning relationship between these two nations that Erdogan is pursuing has started to raise serious concerns for the security of the eastern Mediterranean and the Caucasus. These interests are in direct conflict with Turkey's long-standing allies in NATO and fuel instability in the region.

"U.S. law requires sanctions against countries that continue to deepen their defense relationship with Russia, and the administration should send a strong signal that Turkey must divest its S-400s. My position on this is not new – President Erdogan must be accountable for his actions over the last several years. Today's further action is beyond the pale."

###

State Department warns of 'potential serious consequences' if Turkey activates S-400 system



The United States has expressed to senior levels of the Turkish government that the acquisition of Russian military systems such as the S-400 is unacceptable, the State Department said on Friday, warning of "potential serious consequences" for its security relationship with Turkey if it activates the system.

"If confirmed, we would condemn in the strongest terms the S-400 test missile launch as incompatible with Turkey's responsibilities as a NATO? Ally and strategic partner of the United States," State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus said in a statement.

False and misleading assumptions for U.S. elections

In the final weeks of the US election campaign all manner of false and misleading things are being shared on social media.

Here are some of the most recent - and false - claims.

Postal votes

The Trump campaign has often claimed, without evidence, that increased postal voting ("mail-in" is the American term) due to the pandemic will lead to tremendous fraud.

In fact, electoral fraud is incredibly rare.Last week, President Trump suggested 50,000 people in Ohio getting erroneous absentee ballots was evidence of a "rigged election".

He repeated the example at a town-hall event on Thursday, when the moderator put it to him that the director of the FBI says there is no evidence of widespread fraud.

The elections board in Franklin County, Ohio, said the ballot error was a "serious mistake" but in its response to the president's tweet, it added: "Our board is bipartisan and our elections are fair. And every vote will be counted."

The error came through a technology malfunction - a high-speed scanner stopped working - that meant a chunk of more than 250,000 absentee ballots, for those not voting in person in their state, sent out were inaccurate. Everyone affected now has the correct voter slip, the elections boards said, and there are various safeguards in place to make sure no one votes twice.

"Dumped" ballots

In September, pictures of ballot envelopes in California were shared thousands of times on Facebook along with further unsubstantiated claims of "vote rigging". The official County of Sonoma Facebook page published a statement addressing the claims. "The pictures are of old empty envelopes from the November 2018 election that were disposed of as allowed by law," they said.

The county's ballots for this year's presidential election had not yet been sent out to voters when the pictures were shared. Numerous national and state-level studies show that voter fraud is incredibly rare in the US. There have been isolated cases of postal-ballot fraud and the FBI is currently investigating a case of nine military ballots that were discarded in Pennsylvania.

But Ellen Weintraub, commissioner of the Federal Election Commission, which oversees campaign spending laws, has said: "There's simply no basis for the conspiracy theory that voting by mail causes fraud."

Do postal ballots lead to voting fraud? How to spot election disinformation Campaign ads and attack videos.

Misleading videos and adverts vilifying opponents, spinning facts and exaggerating the truth are of course common during election campaigns - and this one has been no different. Donald Trump Jr posted a video featuring an interview with Joe Biden replying affirmatively - using the word "bingo" - when asked about gun control.

But the actual question was not about a wholesale ban on guns, but rather on one specific type - assault weapons. Mr Biden does indeed support a ban on the manufacture and sale of those high-powered weapons, and proposes that owners will either be able to sell them back to the government or register them.

The clip and Mr Trump Jr's tweet dropped any such nuance, however. A Democratic Party-supporting Twitter account published its own video on the issue. Referring to the president's supporters, it claimed: "Hey MAGA, Trump is coming for your guns". Attached was a clip from a press conference in which the president says: "Take the firearms first and then go to court". But here the president was referring to a policy of removing weapons from the hands of potentially dangerous people.

Misleadingly edited videos have been a recurring feature of the campaign. This week, a Trump campaign ad was edited to make it look like Dr Anthony Fauci, one of the leaders of the White House coronavirus task force, was praising the president. In reality, Dr Fauci was talking about his own response to the pandemic.

We've also seen campaign adverts on Facebook push inaccurate claims.

A frequent falsehood includes allegations that the president called coronavirus a "hoax". An ad seen a few hundred thousand times on Facebook this week and promoted by "Color Of Change PAC" - a "political action committee" separate from the political parties - includes the false claim.While he has at times made wildly unscientific statements, President Trump did not directly call coronavirus a hoax.

The rumour seems to stem from a speech he gave earlier in the year, in which he called the Democratic Party's reaction to his handling of the pandemic "their new hoax".

Following the first presidential debate, the Trump campaign posted ads promoting a false claim that Joe Biden wore an earpiece.Further ads falsely claimed Mr Biden had been using a teleprompter in TV interviews.

Conspiracy theories

Tweets generating thousands of shares in recent days promoted a bizarre conspiracy theory, claiming to reveal secret information about the

capture and death of Osama Bin Laden - an idea that was amplified by the president himself.

An article reporting these unfounded claims eventually entered the mainstream conversation after President Trump retweeted it.

The "whistleblower" in the story claims to have information to prove that a "body double" of Osama Bin Laden was killed by American troops in Pakistan, rather than the real Al Qaeda leader.

The article went even further, with the interviewee accusing Joe Biden of orchestrating a cover-up and the shooting down of a US helicopter in Afghanistan in 2011. They provided no evidence to support the claims.

The accusations prompted fury from a member of the elite Navy Seal unit who took part in the mission. He totally rejected the theory, telling CNN it was "trampling on the graves of some of the best heroes I have ever personally worked with".

The author of the article retweeted by the president admitted on Twitter: "I have no proof that the Whistleblower's claims are true."

At Thursday's town-hall event the president was asked about his decision to retweet the dubious article, and responded: "I'll put it out there - people can decide for themselves."

Mr Trump has promoted conspiracy theories in the past and also became the subject of some when he caught coronavirus.

One particularly far-fetched theory shared on Facebook and Reddit this week claimed that Mr Trump has been replaced by a clone.

A collage of images entitled "The real Donald Trump never left hospital" contrasted photos of Donald Trump before and after his stay in hospital, labelling him a "new-born clone".

Though some people clearly shared the post as a joke, other comments suggested the idea was taken seriously by some.

Te president has been seen in public multiple times since his release from hospital, and there is no evidence to support the wild theory.

This isn't the first time a sitting president has been accused of being replaced by a clone during an election campaign.

In 2018 a viral rumour that Nigeria's President Buhari had been replaced by a body double became so widespread that the president himself responded, saying: "It's the real me, I assure you".



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Coronavirus: Explosion in the recent weeks



Of the 667 cases announced by the National Organization of Public Health (EODY) in the last 24 hours, 250 are recorded in Attica - second negative record - while other regional units of the country are moving at high levels.

Attica emerged as the "champion" of coronavirus cases for another day, which is at an extremely critical turning point in terms of the evolution of the pandemic.

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Coronavirus: Explosion in the last 24 hours - The distribution map
For example, 125 new cases were recorded in Thessaloniki, in Boeotia 30, in Kozani 20, in Serres 10, in Larissa 16, in Ioannina 15, while the dispersion is large throughout the country.

As far as Attica is concerned, according to the Deputy Minister of Civil Protection, Nikos Hardalia, the situation remains fragile, therefore still dangerous, reiterating that the controls are ongoing to observe the measures and ensure the protection of citizens.

He, however, announced that the situation in Attica is stable and there is no increase in cases and deaths.

"The central sector of Attica is overburdened. Attica is in a stable situation, it does not produce a large number of cases. "Due to the volume and the population that accompanies metropolitan Athens, the situation can be reversed in a few 24 hours," he noted characteristically.

At the same time, addressing the citizens of Thessaloniki, Kastoria and Ioannina, he drew attention to be vigilant. He announced that tomorrow, October 21, he will go to Kastoria and on Thursday to Thessaloniki to coordinate the overall effort with local agencies.

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Nagorno-Karabakh: Civilians hit amid Armenia Azerbaijan conflict



Azerbaijan said an Armenian missile had killed at least 13 civilians in Ganja, a city far from the front lines.

Armenia meanwhile accused Azerbaijan of shelling residences in Stepanakert.

It is the capital of the Nagorno-Karabakh region, internationally recognised as part of Azerbaijan but run by ethnic Armenians.

A six-year war over the territory ended in 1994 with a ceasefire but not a peace treaty.

Fighting flared last month and has killed hundreds of people. Both sides signed a Russian-brokered truce last weekend, but the conflict has continued.

Officials in Azerbaijan announced that at least 13 people had been killed and more than 40 injured after a missile struck populated areas in Ganja, the second-largest city in the country.

About 100 rescuers are working to reach people believed to be trapped under the rubble, BBC Azeri reported.

A foreign ministry statement accused Armenia of "deliberate and indiscriminate targeting of civilians".

Armenian officials denied the attack, and accused Azerbaijan of attacking civilian areas.

Defence ministry spokeswoman Shushan Stepanyan posted a video on Facebook which she said showed devastation in the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

"At night, once again violating the humanitarian ceasefire, the Azerbaijani Armed Force struck with missiles at [civilians]... including the capital Stepanakert."

What's the latest on the ground?

In a televised address on Saturday, Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev denied attacking civilians while accusing Armenia of destroying or damaging "more than 2,000 houses" in Azerbaijan.

He also said that his country's forces had taken the city of Fuzuli and seven villages in Nagorno-Karabakh.

"Our revenge is on the battlefield," he said. "The Azerbaijani army is achieving its goal, no force can stop us."

On Thursday, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said his country had suffered "numerous casualties" on the battlefield, but added that despite "losses of manpower and equipment", Armenian forces were still in general control and had inflicted "numerous losses of manpower and equipment on the enemy".

"This is not a statement of despair or desperation. I provide this information because I am committed to tell our people the truth," he said.

Nagorno-Karabakh - key facts

A mountainous region of about 4,400 sq km (1,700 sq miles)

Traditionally inhabited by Christian Armenians and Muslim Turks

In Soviet times, it became an autonomous region within the republic of Azerbaijan. Internationally recognised as part of Azerbaijan, but majority of population is ethnic Armenian An estimated one million people displaced by war in 1988-1994, and about 30,000 killed Separatist forces captured some extra territory around the enclave in Azerbaijan in the 1990s war Stalemate has largely prevailed since a 1994 ceasefire Turkey openly supports Azerbaijan. Russia has military bases in Armenia.

Dutch king cuts short vacation in Greece after criticism



The Netherlands' King Willem-Alexander and his wife cut short a vacation to Greece on Friday after coming under criticism for traveling during the coronavirus pandemic.

"We see the reactions by people to reports in the media," Willem-Alexander and his wife Queen Maxima said in a statement published by the Royal House late on Friday.

"We wish to leave no doubt that it's necessary to follow the guidelines in order to get the Covid-19 virus under control. The discussion over our vacation is not contributing to that."

Though the king's vacation in Greece did not break any of the Netherlands' lockdown rules, including new restrictions introduced this week amid one of Europe's biggest coronavirus outbreaks, the government has discouraged unnecessary travel.

"This is unwise and incomprehensible," the ANP news agency quoted lawmaker Joost Sneller of the D-66 party, one of the coalition partners in Prime Minister Mark Rutte's governing coalition, as saying of the King's vacation.

Rutte had urged the nation in an televised address on Tuesday "not to test the boundaries of the rules."

"You can go on vacation, but then go to the place where you've booked your cottage or hotel room and don't move around," the prime minister said. "If you do go abroad – well your options are limited as there are few countries that want to have us anymore."

Willem-Alexander, who has a private villa in southern Greece, traveled by government jet, ANP reported.

The Netherlands reported nearly 8,000 new coronavirus cases on Friday, a record.

Willem-Alexander and his wife Queen Maxima issued an apology after a previous vacation to Greece, in August, after a photo was published showing them breaking social distancing guidelines on the island of Milos. [Reuters]

Virus infections hit fresh high with 508 cases

New SARS-CoV-2 infections hit a fresh record in Greece in the last 24 hours reaching 508, while the total number rose to 24,450, Greek health authorities announced on Friday.

Of the new cases, 12 were imported, detected at the country's entry points.

The National Organization of Public Health (EODY) said in its daily bulletin that eight patients died bringing the total number of fatalities to 490. The median age of the patients who died was 79 years.

Eighty-one patients remained intubated while another 255 have left ICU The total number of tests conducted by EODY health officials is 1,508,460 and 32,621 rapid antigen tests.

