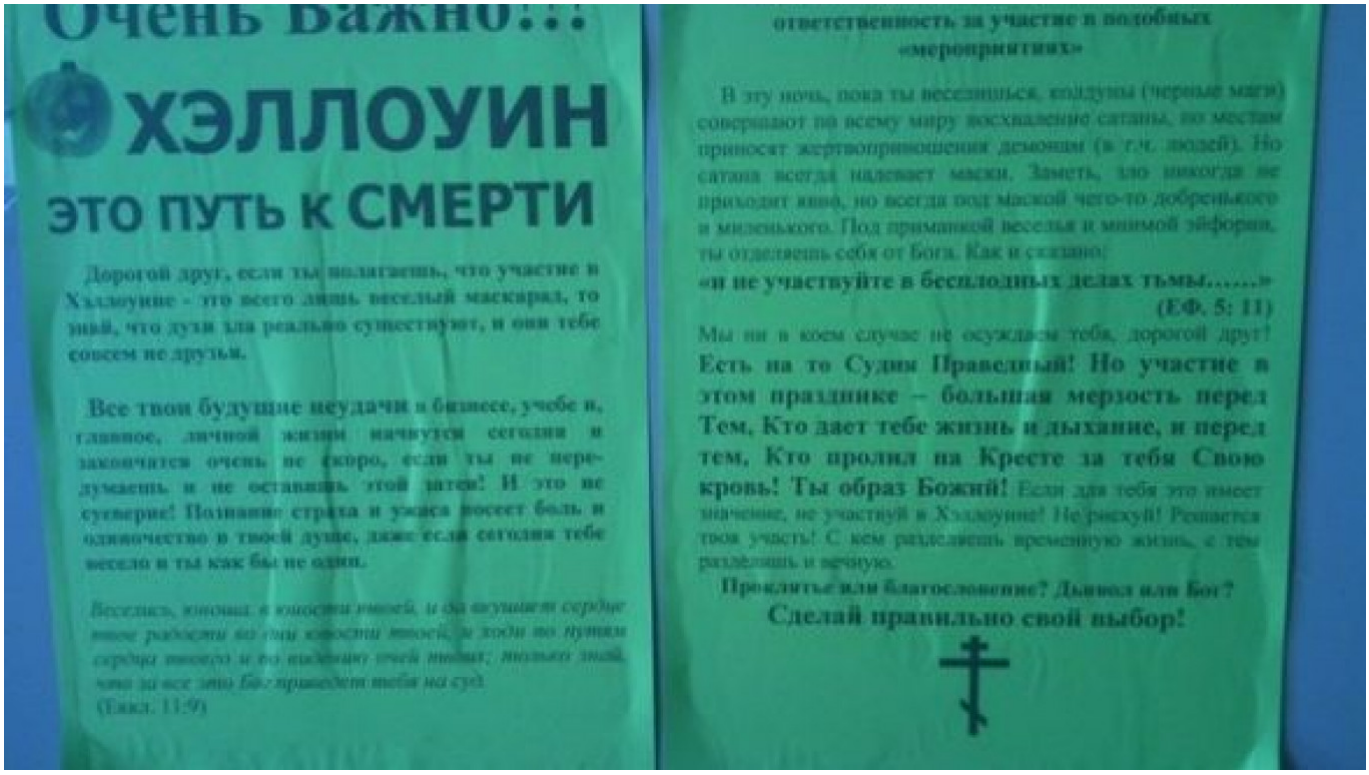
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30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Omsk Authorities Say Halloween Parties Lead to Extremism

By The Moscow Times

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A photo making the rounds on VKontakte says "Halloween is the path to DEATH." **MDK**

Dressing your child up in a witch or pirate costume and sending them off to a school Halloween party may seem innocuous, but it could actually have "destructive consequences," according to education department officials in the Omsk region.

A letter to the directors of education institutions and municipal departments advised them against celebrating Halloween in the region's schools this year so as not to encourage "extremist attitudes" among Omsk's youth, Interfax reported Wednesday.

Halloween's latent extremist influence has been demonstrated by studies at the Russian Academy of Education's institute of pedagogical innovations as well as the institute for family and upbringing, the department said in a statement.

These studies showed that Halloween's "mystical content, explicit promotion of the cult

of death, its personification, can have destructive consequences for the psychic, spiritual and moral well-being of students," the statement said.

Omsk education head Sergei Alexeyev has also said that he believes celebrations in schools must be conducted in a way that correspond to the basic cultural values of the Russian people.

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