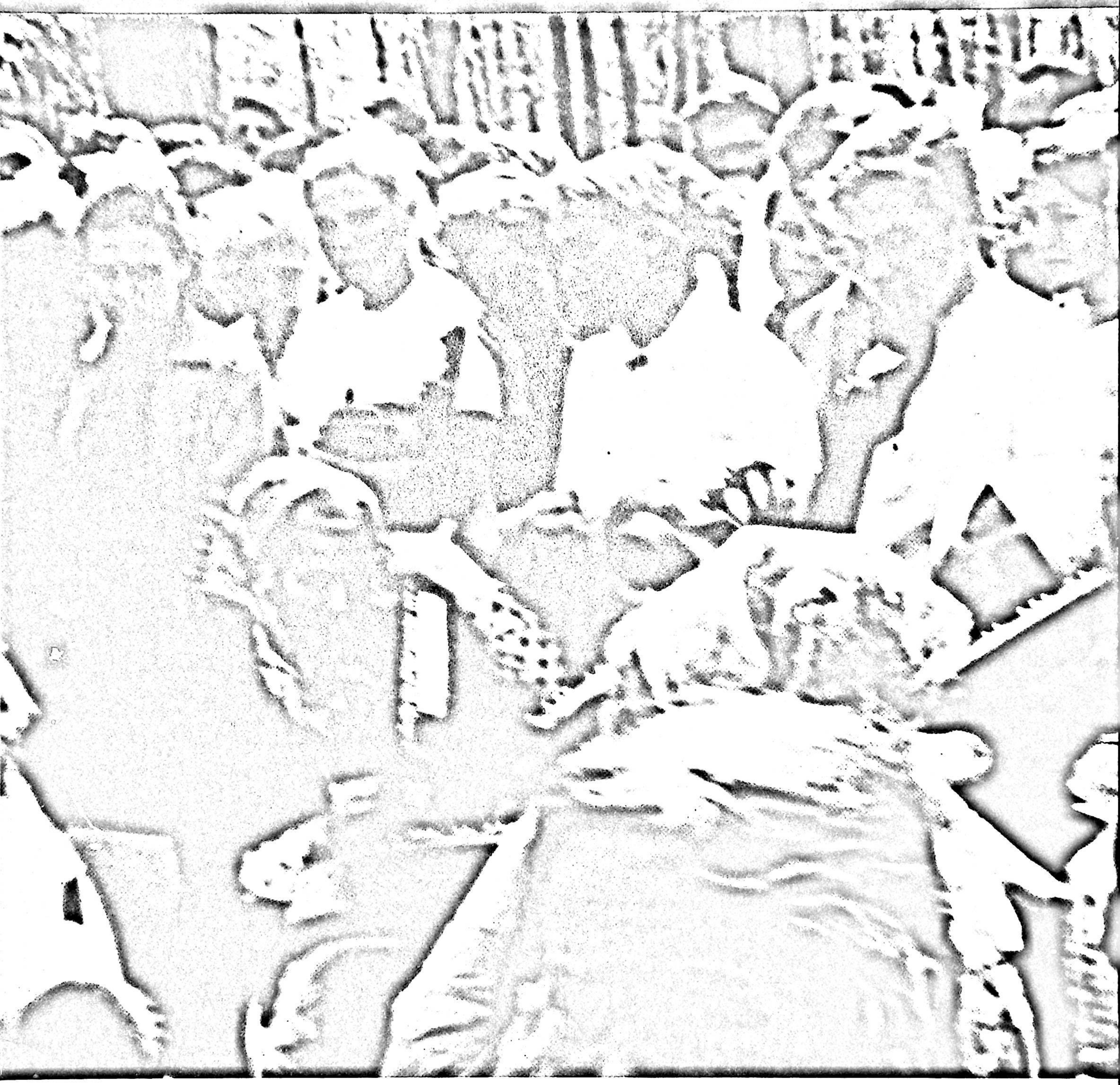
RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN THE SOVIET UNION



mrg

Report No.1

Third edition

Price £1·20

MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP

The **MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP** is an international research and information unit registered in Britain as an educational trust under the Charities Act of 1960. Its principal aims are –

- To secure justice for minority or majority groups suffering discrimination, by investigating their situation and publicising the facts as widely as possible, to educate and alert public opinion throughout the world.

- To help prevent, through publicity about violations of human rights, such problems from developing into dangerous and destructive conflicts which, when polarised, are very difficult to resolve; and

- To foster, by its research findings, international understanding of the factors which create prejudiced treatment and group tensions, thus helping to promote the growth of a world conscience regarding human rights.

The Minority Rights Group urgently needs further funds for its work. Please contribute what you can. MRG is eligible to receive a covenant if you prefer.

OFFICE

Benjamin Franklin House
36 Craven Street
London WC2N 5NG
01-930 6659

The report that follows has been commissioned, and is published, by the Minority Rights Group as a contribution to public understanding of the problem which forms its subject. It does not necessarily represent, in every detail and in all its aspects, the collective view of the Group.

For details of the other reports published by the Minority Rights Group, please see the back cover.

RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN THE SOVIET UNION

A report prepared for the Minority Rights Group by Michael Bourdeaux, director of the Centre for the Study of Religion and Communism, and two associates, Kathleen Matchett and Cornelia Gerstenmaier.

CONTENTS

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion: this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

– Article 18
Universal Declaration of Human Rights
adopted by the General Assembly of the
United Nations, 1948.

From the draft 1977 Constitution of the USSR:

"**Article 34.** Citizens of the USSR shall be equal before the law, irrespective of origin, social and property status, nationality or race, sex, education, language, attitude to religion, type or character of occupation, domicile, or other particulars.

Equality of rights of citizens of the USSR shall be ensured in all fields of economic, political, social, and cultural life.

. . .

Article 50. In conformity with the interests of the working people and for the purpose of strengthening the socialist system, citizens of the USSR shall be guaranteed freedom of speech, press, assembly, meetings, street processions and demonstrations. Exercise of these political freedoms shall be ensured by putting at the disposal of the working people and their organizations public buildings, streets and squares, by broad dissemination of information, and the opportunity for using the press, television and radio.

. . .

Article 52. Freedom of conscience, that is, the right to profess any religion and perform religious rites or not profess any religion, and to conduct atheistic propaganda, shall be recognized for all citizens of the USSR. Incitement of hostility and hatred on religious grounds shall be prohibited.

The church in the USSR shall be separated from the state, and the school from the church."

INTRODUCTION
by Michael Bourdeaux

The Soviet regime clashed head-on with the Russian Orthodox Church after the Revolution of October 1917. It seemed obvious to the Revolutionaries that if the new era was going to engender a different society, the temporal power of the Church must be broken. They were wrong, however, in seeing the Church as nothing other than a negative force. The 'corruption' of the Church in 1917 has consistently been used as an excuse for what ensued, but the degree to which this was prevalent should not be exaggerated. On 19 January 1918, as one of the first acts of his reign, Patriarch Tikhon excommunicated those who were attacking church property and personnel. In view of the desecration which was occurring, moderation of language could hardly be expected:

'Recall yourselves, ye senseless, and cease your bloody deeds. For what you are doing is not only a cruel deed; it is in truth a satanic act, for which you shall suffer the fire of Gehenna in the life to come, beyond the grave, and the terrible curses of posterity in this present, earthly life. By the authority given us by God, we forbid you to present yourselves for the sacraments of Christ and anathematize you ...'

(Quoted in W.C. Fletcher's *A Study in Survival*, S.C.M. London, 1965, p.13).

Words such as these led to a hardening of attitude among religious people, but were not themselves the cause of the physical measures against the Church which the Bolsheviks had introduced at the very onset of the Revolution. It is doubtful whether these would have been avoided even if the attitude of Church leaders had been more conciliatory, given the militantly anti-religious character of Lenin's philosophy and of Bolshevik ideology.

Conversely, members of sectarian groups (Baptists, Seventh-Day Adventists and others) who had been badly treated under the Tsars, were treated leniently for a decade, but after 1927, when Stalin began to bring every aspect of Soviet society under rigorous control, they suffered severely.

The 'dual allegiance' of some religious groups has also been cited as a reason by the Soviets to treat them with suspicion. Roman Catholics, Jews, Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses do indeed have a focus outside the country, but many other governments, faced with the same fact, have still been able to treat people of these faiths as loyal citizens.

It was not until the Second World War, when Stalin gave concessions to the Church in order to gain its maximum support during this time of national danger, that religious people gained any real respite, but even this was not to be permanent.

In 1960–64 Mr. Khrushchev's government began (but could not finish) a new campaign of attempted liquidation against all religious groups. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union had, it seems, never relinquished its ultimate aim of rooting religion out of society altogether.
Mr. Khrushchev, furthermore, seems to have been disturbed by an increase in church weddings among *Komsomol* members and even some full party members were known to be taking their children for baptism. This more active anti-religious policy was affirmed by an important meeting in January 1960 of the Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge, which controlled atheist propaganda in the USSR. It was attended by several of the most senior politicians in the land, and it seems to have been the spearhead for the renewed attack against religion.

The call was for all party and administrative organs to use the full force of the law against any religious practices which could be regarded as illegal. This meant, in the first instance, the disbanding of the numerous unregistered congregations which had grown up throughout the country, many of which had never received any satisfactory answer to their petitions to register. But in practice the local authorities received a *carte blanche* from Moscow to reduce religious practices in whatever way they thought most effective and without any particularly scrupulous regard for the law or the rights of believers. There seems to have been some local rivalry in chalking up anti-religious successes and the provincial newspapers gave prominence to articles claiming the closure of churches of all denominations and describing the court cases of priests and ministers who had allegedly broken the law or who were accused of moral dereliction.

At the highest administrative level, G.G. Karpov, head of the government's Council for Russian Orthodox Church Affairs, who had come almost to a 'live and let live' agreement with the Moscow Patriarchate, was replaced by the much tougher V.A. Kuroyedov. Metropolitan Nikolai, who had for many years been responsible for the foreign policy of the Russian Orthodox Church and who was regarded by many as the most likely successor to the aged Patriarch, was dismissed without explanation and died in obscurity in 1961.

Mr. Khrushchev himself re-affirmed the general direction of the campaign at the XXII Party Congress (*Pravda*, 18 November 1961), but its culmination did not come until early in 1962. Apparently what had been so far achieved was insufficient in the eyes of the Party. *Pravda* (2 March 1964) summed up the situation as follows:

'Now that the building of communism has been broadly undertaken ... the Party has put into its programme the task of fully and completely overcoming religious prejudices ...

The resolution of this problem, as set out by N.S. Khrushchev at the XXII Congress of the CPSU, envisages the elaboration of concrete measures to establish a system of atheist education and in every way to strengthen the programme of scientific atheism.

The Ideological Commission of the Central Committee of the CPSU has devoted an augmented session to the questions of forming a scientific world outlook for Soviet people, giving them an atheist education and creating a scientific system of atheist activity. L.F. Ilichov, Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, in his speech, and the participants at this meeting discussed the question of atheist education from all angles. The practical recommendations worked out by the Ideological Commission have been approved by a decree of the Central Committee of the CPSU, 'Measures to strengthen the atheist education of the people'.

Party organizations, ideological institutes, *soviets*, trade unions, the *Komsomol* and creative organizations now have a concrete plan of action which, when operated, will allow religious survivals to be very successfully overcome.'

One may assess the nature of Mr. Ilichov's advice from an article he wrote in *Kommunist* ('The Communist') in January 1964. He sanctioned the most direct resolution

of the 'problem' by, for example, advocating the break-up of religious families:

> We cannot and must not remain indifferent to the fate of children, upon whom fanatical religious parents are carrying out what is virtually spiritual rape.

The 'educational programme' of which *Pravda* spoke in 1964 was implemented and is still in operation, but there has been a more careful approach to the whole question of religion in the Soviet Union since the beginning of 1965. Some imprisoned Baptists were granted an amnesty during that year, the nationwide closure of churches was halted, there were a few exposures in the press of illegal or morally dubious acts against believers – such as, for example, the case of Alla Trubnikova, who was attacked by the chief atheist periodical, *Nauka i Religia* ('Science and Religion'), for having disguised herself as a pilgrim in order to insinuate herself into a convent (October 1965, p.14). V.N. Lentin in his book, *The Seventh-Day Adventists*, published in 1966, said that the overwhelming majority of the members of this sect were honest people, loyal in their attitude to the state (p.37). Similar statements were made about the Baptists – almost always, however, excepting the group of reformers (see Chapter Four). More recently, nevertheless, one Soviet article almost justifies this reform movement by saying that it grew up principally where churches had been 'closed without due reason' (*Questions of Scientific Atheism*, Vol.9, 1970, p.98). The opinion expressed in much of the recent atheist writing is that the overwhelming majority of believers are loyal and conscientious citizens.

After the fall of Mr. Khrushchev, there was a call for an end to the anti-religious excesses not because there had been any basic change of heart by the regime, but because the physical measures which had been so widely employed were considered to be counter-productive. G. Kelt, an atheist lecturer writing in the central Soviet youth newspaper, *Komsomolskaya Pravda* ('Komsomol Truth') on 15 August 1965, puts this succinctly:

> 'Insults, violence and the forcible closing down of churches not only fail to reduce the number of believers, but they actually tend to increase their number, to make clandestine religious groups more widespread and to antagonize believers against the state.'

The essential dilemma of Soviet atheism has never been more aptly summarized. Official policy did not allow this debate to continue long. There has been a hardening of attitude again over the last few years, accompanied by the arrest of numerous believers who are considered to have broken the law, but there has not been an outright return to the massive repressions of the early 1960s.

The full evidence is lacking on why the Soviet State is still so actively hostile to religion – still, indeed, committed to eliminating it completely – while the historical circumstances of 1917 have so entirely changed. In recent times there have been a number of appeals from Soviet believers, emphasizing this change in circumstances and asking for an appropriate alteration in official attitudes to religion. On 20 June 1976, twenty-eight Christians of six denominations signed such an appeal – the first of its kind. Among other things they said:

> 'It seems that we are dealing here with a case of *ideological atavism*, whereby outdated concepts of militant atheism continue to motivate actions which not only do not benefit anybody, but are actually harmful from the point of view of the real life-interests of all sections of the population. Must all these interests and the future of our country really be sacrificed to a spectre from the past? ...
>
> The aims on which the present attitude of the state to religion is based were developed more than half a century ago, when the total destruction of faith in God was proclaimed as a realistic goal that could be attained in the near future. But life has demonstrated the illusory nature of these hopes. The influence of religion is spreading, young people are being drawn to it. In these new cirumstances we must not cling to points of view which life has totally refuted. The attempt to ignore reality is always dangerous, particularly when it concerns one of the central questions in the life of a nation.'

In the East European countries, where communism has been the imposed ideology since the upheaval of the last war, various circumstances obtain with respect to religion. In almost all cases, conditions are less severe than in the Soviet Union. In some countries clergy salaries are even paid by the state and religious education permitted in the schools – things that would be unheard of in the USSR. From time to time there are reports of high-level decisions to the effect that conditions in the satellite states must be tightened up, drawn closer to the Soviet model; but the actual implementation of a harsher line often appears to relate more to pragmatic circumstances, for example the 'Prague Spring', than to any central policy decisions.

It may be that the 1960–64 campaign in the Soviet Union can be partially explained as an attempt by Mr.Khrushchev to show that, although he was committed to de-stalinize in the political field, he was yet a 'good communist' at heart. As a practical demonstration, he picked upon religious believers, perhaps thinking that they were the most defenceless sector of the population, among the most cowed and unlikely to hit back. If this was indeed his reasoning, he miscalculated. As Kelt indicated, in the words quoted above, it was precisely the renewed pressure which caused believers to find a voice – to find many voices – in their own defence. Even worse (from the Soviet point of view), this latter phenomenon seems to be directly connected with the widespread increase of interest in religion on the part of young people, to which the Soviet press now testifies almost weekly in some form or other.

There is probably also a more deep-seated reason for continued Soviet hostility to religion, a reason which perhaps the activists do not always fully realize themselves. This is that religion provides the only legal alternative ideology to communism in the Soviet Union. The church is persecuted, in fact, because it threatens the monolithic ideology, but the threat is, of course, more potential than actual. In a recent case, however, the state did feel itself more directly menaced. Extraordinarily severe sentences were imposed at a closed trial in Leningrad (November 1967) of leaders of the All-Russian Social-Christian Union for Liberation of the People (see John Dunlop, and *The New Russian Revolutionaries*, Nordland, Belmont, Mass). This is the one group known to have a definite political programme inspired by Christianity. Igor Ogurtsov, the leader, then aged 30, was given fifteen years, Mikhail Sado (30) thirteen, Yevgeni Vagin (30) ten and N. Averochkin (28) eight. In March–April 1968 a further seventeen young people were given up to seven years for belonging to the same group.

The pages which follow perforce, because of the terms of reference, deal mainly with the 'negative' side of the situation. Every fact stated is fully documentable – but it remains important to remember that side by side with the continuing repression of religion in the Soviet Union, services go on in registered buildings of worship in virtually every major city of the country; a few religious publica-

tions appear; unofficially, religious literature is written and circulated to believers in whatever way is practicable – mostly in typescript – and this is increasing, despite the attempts of the authorities to stop it. A certain proportion of young people are turning to religion; the churches are, despite all obstacles, being regenerated in many ways.

A report similar to that which follows could have been written to document any of the above statements, but here a brief excursus is given on one of them only – the involvement of young people, as seen through the eyes of Soviet atheist writers.

A.I. Klibanov and L.N. Mitrokhin, the first being the most eminent and objective writer on religion and atheism in the Soviet Union, published an article in *Questions of Scientific Atheism* (Vol.3, 1967), in which they stated:

'Among those Baptists under the influence of the "Action Group"* there are more young people than in the other Baptist congregations. Sometimes members of the "Action Group" have simply been called "young Baptists". Young people numbered more than half in some of these groups.' (p.105)

More recently Vol. 9 of the same publication (1970) has devoted a whole article to religious influence among the younger generation. It bears witness to an increase here by every major Christian denomination in the Soviet Union and by several minor ones as well. Here is a quotation from this book referring to religious instruction of the young:

'In the Russian Orthodox Church, similar functions are carried out by activists from the church or from church circles. Where there are no Orthodox churches, this is done by so-called "nuns".† They exercise surveillance over the internal, spiritual life of families, especially over the young, and they "supply" children for baptism, creating public opinion and a "micro-environment" of support for religious education.' (pp.70-71)

To broaden the perspective, a very great deal of the unpublished writing being produced by younger authors in the Soviet Union today hints at a more than passing interest in religious themes. The poet-publicist, Yuri Galanskov, for instance, included a defence of the Pochaev Monastery in his unofficial periodical, *Phoenix 1966*. The Ukrainian dissident writer Valentyn Moroz has written extensively about the persecution of the Greek Catholic Church in his homeland.

It has been necessary, in a work of this length, to take some arbitrary decisions. Not all religious 'minorities' could be included for reasons of space. This report therefore excludes the Lutheran Church (Latvia and Estonia), the Georgian Orthodox Church and the Armenian Church, which except for a few scattered communities, are confined to certain geographical areas where local factors play an important role. These could not be discussed without embarking on a study of general Soviet policy towards the relevant nationalities, which would have taken this report well beyond its terms of reference. Therefore it directs attention to those religious minorities which are spread more widely, even though the total number of their adherents may, in some instances, be smaller than those concentrated in a single defined area. Within these limitations, this report tries to maintain some sort of balance between various religious groups. Attention in the Western press has, up to now, been devoted mainly to the Jews, Baptists and the Russian Orthodox. While this study could not ignore these categories, it was felt to be important to direct attention at some length to other minorities, even though this meant leaving aside most of the massive available documentation on the Baptists and the Orthodox. In the case of the Jews, the Western press has principally drawn attention to them as an ethnic minority. This report treats them from the religious point of view and it therefore does not deal with the vast amount of evidence relating to other areas of Jewish life.

* The same reform Baptists referred to above.

† This is new information, so it is not known precisely who these 'nuns' are. Possibly they may be from convents forcibly closed during the anti-religious campaign of 1960-64.

I LAW AS AN INSTRUMENT OF SOVIET COMMUNIST PARTY POLICY

by Michael Bourdeaux

Discrimination and the Law

It has sometimes been said that if only the authorities would abide by their own laws, the major areas of discrimination in the Soviet Union would disappear. Such statements are, at best, only partly true, for although there are certain guarantees of the individual's rights contained in the Constitution (technically the 'supreme law'), the fact is that the Penal Code can, in practice, negate what are supposed to be the superior freedoms of the Constitution. In no area is this contradiction more damaging to the rights of the individual than that of religious life.

This study supports this last statement by a brief summary of the relevant laws, followed by a longer examination of the way these affect some of the major religious bodies.

The Soviet law, as at present formulated, declares church and state to be separated. It further makes it quite clear that discrimination against the individual for reasons of his religious adherence is a punishable offence. These, originally, were Leninist principles. The first ever decree of the Soviet State on religion, in the formulation of which Lenin himself had a considerable say, proclaimed that it was illegal 'to restrain or limit freedom of conscience' and that 'every citizen may profess any religion or none at all'. This was logically reflected in the first Constitution (July 1918), which stated that 'the right to religious and anti-religious propaganda is recognized for all citizens'.

The right to 'religious propaganda' was obviously a highly significant principle – indeed, to Stalin it was an emotive one, which was not compatible with his policy of gathering every strand of Soviet public life under his personal scrutiny or the direct control of the secret police. The basic legislation, 'On Religious Associations', was promulgated on 8 April 1929 and it reflects, in almost every one of its 68 paragraphs, the determination of an emergent dictatorship to impose itself totally upon religious life throughout the land. This law would obviously have made a mockery of the Constitution if the latter had been left unchanged. Therefore the Constitution was modified a month later (18 May 1929) to exclude the right to 'religious propaganda'; the right of 'religious profession' was substituted (contrasted to the right of anti-religious propaganda). The present Article 124 of the Constitution reads even more severely, with 'the freedom to hold religious services' as the believers' sole right. Significantly, the Stalinist law, 'On Religious Associations', stands to the present day, not only unrepealed, but powerfully – if sporadically – enforced. In the summer of 1975 the 1929 Law was officially emended for the first time,

although it is possible that this only made public certain secret changes which had been introduced earlier. The main significance of the changes was that the existence and functions of the Council for Religious Affairs, the government's central controlling body, were for the first time recognized in a basic legal text.

Even more significant for this report is the trend of penal (as opposed to civil) legislation in the 1960s. One of the old laws (Article 142 of the Penal Code) merely set a maximum sentence of one year's corrective labour or a fine of 50 (new) roubles for infringing the laws governing the separation of church and state. New and much harsher penalties were brought in on 27 June 1961 (Article 227) for certain specific offences. Leaders of groups proven to have encouraged religious activities 'harmful to the health of citizens or encroaching upon the person or the rights of individuals', or of inciting people 'to refuse to participate in social activity or fulfil their civic obligations', or of 'enticing minors' to participate in such activities, are now liable to a maximum sentence of five years' imprisonment or exile, with or without confiscation of all their property. Other participants in such activities (who are not leaders) are liable to serve up to three years in labour camp. In the Ukraine, a peculiar twist of penal law permits a maximum sentence under Article 227 of ten years – five years in the camps followed by five years exile. This was the sentence given to Baptist pastor Georgi Vins in the much-publicized trial in Kiev in January 1975.

On 18 March 1966 the net was cast even wider, for the old Article 142 was amended to provide a maximum penalty of three years' imprisonment for second offenders – and such offences were designated as 'the performance of deceitful acts with the aim of arousing religious superstitions among the public', as well as the more expected ones of refusal to register congregations, the organization of religious education for the young and the printing and distribution of literature calling for an infringement of the law.

It is hardly possible to clarify what the published Soviet legislation envisages – not only because of certain glaring contradictions which we shall enumerate below, but also because of the imprecision of the wording. What offences, for example, are covered by the nebulous phrase: 'the performance of deceitful acts' which we quoted above? It is not impossible that at the height of some Soviet anti-religious campaign a prosecution counsel might stand up in court and claim that the celebration of Holy Communion in a Russian Orthodox church contained precisely the intention of 'arousing religious superstitions' – though this has never yet happened, as far as one knows. There would be no legal mechanism in the Soviet system for asserting at this point the technically superior guarantee of the 'right to hold religious services' contained in the Constitution.

Even supposing it were possible completely to clarify the published legislation, this would still not shed sufficient light upon current Soviet practice towards religion. This is because we know for a fact that some areas of religious life are regulated by secret laws. The Council for Religious Affairs is known to pass on to its local representatives whole series of secret instructions which sometimes go well beyond the public laws. Some of these instructions have become known to Soviet believers and have been sent out of the country. A translation of one set appears in *Religious Ferment in Russia* by Michael Bourdeaux (Macmillan, London, 1968, pp.14-16) – and their authenticity was not denied by Metropolitan Nikodim of the Russian Orthodox Church when questioned on the subject in the West, or subsequently by Soviet agencies when they reviewed this book. The late General Secretary of the Soviet Baptist Church, Alexander Karev, has referred to such unwritten laws. He spoke clearly of them during discussions with the reform Baptists in 1966.

Inevitably, therefore, if we approach Soviet practice towards religion from a purely legal standpoint, we find ourselves faced with many contradictions. It is all part of the pattern that the penalties for discriminating against believers on the grounds of their religion appear never – or at best very rarely – to have been invoked, though there has been occasional restitution of rights to believers who have been illegally deprived. Since 1966, for example, it has been an offence punishable by up to three years' imprisonment (Penal Code, Article 142) 'to refuse to accept citizens at work or into an educational institution, to dismiss them from work or exclude them from an educational institution, to deprive them of privileges or advantages guaranteed by law, or similarly to place material restrictions on the rights of citizens as a result of their religious adherence'. Hindering the celebration of religious rites which do not disturb public order has long been an offence (Article 143). Although the Soviet press has from time to time criticized the excesses of anti-religious zealots, there is no known documentable example of any penalties having been imposed for the offences cited. It is possible, however, that such penalties, when invoked, would not be publicized in the press. At the same time, every clause of the law which could restrict the basic human rights of Soviet believers has been exploited within the last decade, not to mention a number of practices which have no basis in public legality. The basic lot of the average Soviet believer seems to have been less severe under Brezhnev and Kosygin that under Khrushchev in his later years – yet the existing framework of past practice and present legislation offers no future security against a new physical anti-religious compaign such as took place in 1960-64.

Clearly, then, the empirical approach adopted in the rest of this study is of greater help to us in assessing the actual situation than a legalistic one.

Here are some signposts (not an exhaustive list) to the types of discrimination which have been practised towards religious believers in the Soviet Union within the last decade. Not all categories apply equally to all religious denominations, but every one is reflected at some point in the text. The list below gives some indication – though a far from exhaustive one – of the groups worst affected in each category.

1. **Outlawing of a whole denomination.** There is no published legal basis for this and it must be regulated by a secret decree (Eastern-Rite Catholics* in 1946, Pentecostals, Jehovah's Witnesses, many sectarian offshoots of the Orthodox Church and most branches of the Old Believers†, etc., throughout Soviet period).
2. **Enforced merging with other denominations, losing individual traditions.** There is no legal basis for this (Uniates from 1946 could continue to worship only by becoming Orthodox; the Pentecostals could

* Catholics who use the Slavonic liturgy, often called 'Uniates'.

† The Old Believers went into schism with the Russian Orthodox Church in the seventeenth century, since when the Old Believers have splintered into at least fifty known groups.

become accepted from 1945 by merging with Baptists; similarly Evangelical Christians from 1944 and Mennonites** from 1963).

3. **Enforced closure of legally-existing places of worship.** After the passing of the 1929 Law, very few congregations could in fact register, but many did during and after the Second World War. In 1960-64 there was a massive illegal closure of places of worship throughout the Soviet Union, helped by state ownership of all religious buildings (1918 Decree, Article 13; 1929 Law, Articles 27-30). Only a very few of those closed churches have since been re-opened (all religious denominations, as far as is known).

4. **State control of all legally-existing places of worship.** This is achieved by the registration regulations (1929 Law, Articles 2, 5 and 6), enforced by the supplying of lists of members to communist authorities (Article 8) and the right of veto by those authorities over the membership of the executive body (Article 14). These provisions, guaranteed in law, at the same time break the fundamental constitutional requirement of the separation of church and state (applies to every religious congregation in the USSR, except those which manage, illegally, to exist unregistered). There are many documented instances of refusal by the authorities to grant registration (Baptists and Orthodox). The authorities are not legally obliged to state reasons for refusing registration, and since the 1975 revision of the law they are no longer bound to say yes or no within the time limit of one month after receiving the application (1929 Law, Article 7, revised 1975). Often they simply do not reply (Baptists, Orthodox). There seems to be no legal basis for the registering of clergy (although congregations are obliged to 'submit information' about their ministers to the registering agencies), ments, but these last two are complex subjects which could not be discussed within the confines of this report.

5. **Banning of all religious activities, except worship within registered churches** (Constitution, Article 124). a) For worship anywhere else, permission must be sought two weeks in advance for each individual instance (1929 Law, Articles 59 and 61). Permission is often not granted (Baptists). b) The clergy's activity is restricted to their own areas (1929 Law, Article 19). c) There is an absolute ban on all relief work (1929 Law, Article 17). d) No parish societies or discussion groups may be organized (1966 Decree). e) The law technically does not ban the production of religious literature, provided it does not call for 'infringement of the laws' (1966 Decree) – but *de facto* it is treated as illegal (Baptists, Orthodox, Roman Catholics) except for the single central periodical and occasional inadequate editions of calendars, the Bible, prayer and hymn books produced by some denominations. f) All Sunday schools are banned – as is informal religious instruction for minors (1966 Decree); restrictions are placed even on that given by parents to their own children (1968) Marriage and Family Law). g) Religious education is limited exclusively to 'ecclesiastical educational institutions that have been opened according to established procedure' (1929 Law, Article 18, revised 1975). The existence of permanent theological seminaries is not recognized in law and presumably their existence would end at once if the 'special permission' were to be withdrawn. Only Orthodox (three)*, Roman Catholics (two), Armenians, Georgians and Moslems (one each), have formal institutions, though the Jewish *yeshivah* in Moscow is still reported from time to time to be nominally open. Lutherans and Baptists have correspondence courses, and the Russian Orthodox Church has also been able to increase its theological education by instituting one of these. h) No other religious institutions whatever are recognized in law, though the Orthodox and Armenian Churches retain a few monasteries. Many existing monasteries were closed in the early 1960s (Orthodox). (These provisions relate to all religious groups).

6. **No religious association (parish) is a person at law** (1918 Decree, Article 12; 1929 Law, Article 4). Therefore no parish can contest its rights at law, nor can it formally apply for redress (all religions). (However, the 1975 revisions appear to grant the *de facto* right of juridical personality.)

7. **No central representative bodies.** No provision for these is recognized by the law. Discrimination is exercized here: Orthodox, Old Believers, Baptists, Moslems and Buddhists are allowed representative bodies; Jews, Roman Catholics are denied them. That of the Adventists was abolished in 1960. This is a violation of the constitutional principle of separation of church and state.

8. **Restrictions on local and national congresses.** These may be held with especial permission (1929 Law, Article 20) – but *de facto* take place only in the rarest instances. Baptists alone have, since 1963, established the principle of regular congresses; they met in 1963, 1966 and 1969, when a five-yearly congress was instituted. The next was held in December 1974. Some denominations have never been permitted to hold a convention of any kind (Jews), while the Uniates met in 1946 under duress, only to abolish themselves!

(All the above restrictions are in some sense related to the law; those which follow have no basis whatever in law – indeed, the 1966 elaboration of Article 142 of the Penal Code theoretically protects religious believers from them).

9. **Defamation in the press with no right to reply.** This has been frequently practised against all denominations; the worst instances since 1966 relate to Baptists, Adventists, Uniates, Jehovah's Witnesses and – less directly – to Jews.

10. **Rooting out of old religious customs.** There has been an attempt to replace them by 'new socialist traditions' (sic). (Orthodox, Old Believers, Roman Catholics, Jews, Buddhists, Moslems are affected more than Protestant denominations).

11. **Discrimination at places of work.** This is strictly illegal, though still practised (Baptists and other sects, more than Orthodox and Moslems).

* If one counts the two academies for advanced education separately from the seminaries (although they occupy the same buildings as the institutions at Zagorsk and Leningrad) the figure would be five.

**A Protestant Anabaptist group of Dutch-German origin.

12. **Discrimination in housing.** There has sometimes been a refusal (strictly illegal) to grant adequate housing for religious believers; houses used – sometimes with permission – for religious gatherings have been attacked, with windows smashed and doors broken down (Orthodox, Baptists, Adventists).

13. **Discrimination in education.** Quite apart from the restrictions on religious education noted in No.5 (f) above, believers are often quite illegally denied equal opportunities in secular education (all denominations). Religious children at school often have to bear scorn from teachers and other pupils (Baptists, Orthodox). Students are often expelled from colleges and universities if their faith is discovered.

14. **Discrimination in public life.** This is not dealt with in the text, because known believers of all types are, with very few exceptions, effectively prevented from reaching positions of authority and therefore being discriminated against 'publicly', as it were. There are some known instances where believers have, for example, been expelled from the Communist Party, from managerial positions or from teaching posts. It is a nationwide feature of Soviet life, however, that believers are almost always prevented from reaching such positions in the first place – even from entering higher education. This phenomenon is difficult to document, though it is made explicit in Party pronouncements on religion and is well known to all observers of the Soviet scene. It is mainly in the world of the arts that there are persons known to be believers active in public life, though individual instances have been reported in the scientific sphere and even the higher military command. Such political and social discrimination at a very early stage in the person's life inevitably leads to an economic discrimination also – the emergence of believers as a huge group of second-class citizens (in an economic as well as civil rights sense) throughout the Soviet Union.

Punishment for breaking the law

Over the last decade, there have been thousands of documented instances of where the full force of the law has been used against believers, not to mention the existence of cases which we do not know about, in numbers which may only be guessed. Crippling fines have been widely imposed, often repeatedly on the same people, for organizing religious worship (the one 'constitutional right' of every Soviet believer) – often in cases where registration has been applied for but not granted. Most of our documented information here comes from Baptists.

Orthodox and Uniate believers (from bishops down), Jehovah's Witnesses, Roman Catholics, Baptists, Adventists and Pentecostals have been imprisoned for three or five years, sometimes even longer, for activities which are not considered criminal by the great majority of other countries in the world. Even some other communist countries permit religious practices which are considered illegal in the USSR (for example religious instruction for children). In many documentable instances, false accusations of moral delinquency have been brought (see especially the case of the Orthodox Archbishop Iov of Kazan).

Special punishments have been meted out to those who have attempted to continue their religious observances in prison or labour camp. There are a few known instances of where the especially harsh conditions to which believers have often been subjected in prison and labour camp or during interrogation have led to serious physical injury (the Baptist, Georgi Vins) or even to death under torture (the Baptist, Nikolai Khmara; the Orthodox Monk, Grigori Unka).

It is interesting to compare Soviet constitutional, legal and penal formulae with regard to religion with those of other communist states. Clearly this is a subject too large to investigate here. One interesting example, however, is the recently proclaimed Cuban constitution. Article 54 here states that:

> The socialist State, which bases its activity on and educates the people in the scientific materialist concept of the universe, recognizes and guarantees freedom of conscience and the right of everyone to profess any religious belief and to practise, within the framework of respect for the law, the belief of his preference. The law regulates the activities of religious institutions. It is illegal and punishable by law to oppose one's faith or religious belief to the Revolution, to education or to the fulfilment of one's duty to work and defend the homeland with arms, to show reverence for its symbols and to fulfil other duties established by the Constitution.

This is considerably sharper than the corresponding Soviet clause, and admits some of the limitations on religion which are concealed in the Soviet Constitution, although largely evident in the law.

II THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH AND ITS OFFSHOOTS

by Michael Bourdeaux

One of the chief aims of Lenin's 1918 decree on the separation of church and state was to ensure that the special privileges which had been granted to the Russian Orthodox Church since the tenth century should be abolished and that all religious denominations should be treated as equal before the law from henceforth. In practice, however, there are still certain privileges accorded to the Orthodox Church (reportedly still holding the allegiance of as many as thirty million people) not equally shared by other religious groups. There is no denomination which is accorded all of these privileges: extensive representation abroad (at the World Council of Churches, the Vatican, numerous international religious conferences and through the staffing of certain parishes and bishoprics situated outside the frontiers of the Soviet Union); the publication of two journals; the maintaining of theological academies and seminaries. Admittedly, the extent of the last two was severely restricted within the decade of the 1960s, but at the same time the scope of the first was considerably increased. Despite the repeatedly avowed intention of the Soviet regime to eradicate religion in the long term, the central organization representing nationwide Orthodoxy (the Moscow Patriarchate) has become an integral part of foreign policy since the Second World War.

It is interesting to compare the status of the Orthodox Church in Romania. There is here an even greater identification between religion and nation than in Russia, and there can be no doubt that in the eyes of the state, the Romanian Orthodox Church holds the place of *primus*

inter pares. It enjoys a position of relative security and freedom that is perhaps unique in Eastern Europe – even the powerful Polish Catholic Church, notably in the person of its primate, the formidable Cardinal Wyszynski, has regular confrontations with the state which are not normal for the Orthodox Church in Romania.

In the Soviet Union, there exists the danger that the splendour of a public display of ritual at home and the regular travel abroad of Orthodox dignitaries (usually young) may blind world public opinion to the realities behind this appearance.

Extensive documentation is now available, for example, about the nationwide enforced and illegal closure of churches during the latter part of Mr. Khrushchev's regime (1960-64). Precise statistics on this are unobtainable, for we do not know for certain the number of open churches either before 1960 or now. However, the number of closures given by two young Orthodox priests resident in Moscow, Nikolai Eshliman and Gleb Yakunin, in a careful study of church-state relations during the early 1960s, is ten thousand – or roughly half of all those which existed at the beginning of the Khrushchev period. An official anti-religious publication in Moscow (*Propagandist's and Agitator's Handbook*, 1966, p.149) said later that the number of churches remaining open was as low as 7,500; this figure was repeated in 1971 in the book *Critique of the Bourgeois Falsification of the Situation of Religion in the USSR* (p.9). Since 1964 this mass closure of churches has ceased, but despite hints that individual buildings have been re-opened since then, the number is not substantial and there has been no return to the *status quo ante*. The most reliable source for the re-opening of churches since 1964 is Archbishop Basil (Krivoshein), of the Moscow jurisdiction, who has stated the number to be 500 – or perhaps 5% of those closed (*Episkepsis*, Geneva 14 July 1970, p.7).

Exhaustive documentation on the enforced closure of churches in the Soviet Union will be found in the present author's *Patriarch and Prophets*, Chapter 4. Details in this are culled from a number of Soviet reports, from the official *Zhurnal Moskovskoi Patriarkhii* ('Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate'), and from several accounts by Soviet citizens, unpublished in the Soviet Union. One of these is Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who has written a passionate lament on the closure of the churches 'Along the Oka'. Boris Talantov, author of a detailed case-study of the strangulation of parish life in the Kirov diocese, states that 40 churches there out of 75 were closed in the years 1960-64. He quotes the example of one village, Korshik, where 477 people complained fruitlessly at the closure of their church, thus proving that this action was quite illegal and demonstrating the damaging effect on believers of neither being able to own their own building nor being able to have legal representation as a religious body.

Recent closures include the Cathedral of the Resurrection in Chernigov (Ukraine) in 1973. The congregation was told to use a small wooden church, quite unsuited to their needs, outside the city. On 26 November in the same year, the authorities closed the Church of the Epiphany in Zhitomir, also in the Ukraine. They gave as their reason for this the proximity of the church to a school. However, as the parishioners pointed out in an appeal to the United Nations, the church and the school 'have stood side by side for 32 years and neither has interfered with the other, there has not been a single incident, not a single unpleasantness in all this time'. For two years the believers waged an insistent struggle to regain their church, but in vain – it was demolished on 13 August 1975, eleven days after the signing of the Helsinki Agreement. On this occasion the authorities cited town reconstruction as the reason. When the news of the impending closure was first received, the priest of the church suffered a heart attack and died.

It is quite certain that many other parishes have unsuccessfully tried to gain registration since 1964, despite the legal provision that any group of twenty people of the same denomination has the right to be granted a building for worship. Especially well-documented is the case of 1,500 believers in the city of Gorky, who applied in 1967 for the right to open a church. In a letter to Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches (published in the *Church Times*, London, 1 August 1969), 36 of the petitioners state that in the whole of their city, with a population of 1,200,000, there are at least 120,000 Orthodox Christians. Yet they have between them only three small churches, all situated at a distance from the city centre and holding no more than 4,000 standing people altogether. They said that the provision of an extra church would help to relieve the dangerous overcrowding in the existing buildings. For months these petitioners received no answer whatsoever (despite the law which until 1975, stated that a reply must be received within a month) and finally they were told that the existing churches were sufficient. The application was several times repeated in 1967-8 and finally in desperation the case was made known to the outside world. It is not known whether Orthodox believers have since received back any of the 37 churches in Gorky which had been expropriated under Lenin and Stalin.

Orthodox believers of Naro-Fominsk, near Moscow, have been trying for forty years to have a church registered. They appealed in 1970 to the Soviet authorities (in a petition with 1432 signatures) and their cause was also taken up by the civil rights leader (now in the West) Valeri Chalidze, who is not a Christian.

A western visitor to the Soviet Union brought back an interesting report on the picketing of a church at Easter 1976. This happened in Novosibirsk, Siberia (the visitor did not discover the name of the church). The church was surrounded by police and pickets who let only a few, older people in to the Easter service. The visitor said:

> 'I stood as close as possible. It was plain that all men and women under about 40 were not being permitted to proceed to the entrance or approach the railings, with the exception of some mature women who were accompanying old people. Several times I witnessed some determined efforts by women to get by with young daughters of about 11 years of age and more, and in one case with a boy of about 11. They protested volubly but were firmly separated from their old folk. There was no roughness in these cases and the child was held gently by the hand or arm while a mass of picketers edged her and her mother outside the line ... A few young men persisted until they were forced roughly away by groups of picketers and policemen ... Out of the steady trickle of tiny black-clothed old women one seemed to be involved in a slanging match with a policeman which ended in her being thrown away from the entrance where she collided with me and just managed to keep her feet.'

Enquiring of an Intourist guide about the church the next day, the visitor was told: 'the name was of no importance as the church was going to be pulled down soon, as there was no need for such buildings in Novosibirsk'.

Chapter 3 of *Patriarch and Prophets* gives details of the closure at the beginning of the 1960s of most of the 69 monasteries and convents and of five of the eight theological seminaries.

During the later 1960s there have been far fewer cases of slander against Orthodox believers in the Soviet newspapers than during the first part of the decade. It was formerly common practice to accuse Orthodox believers (from Archbishops down) of all kinds of debauchery and immorality. In the 60 years that such allegations have been made (with some intermissions), there has not been a single instance where the person slandered has been given any right of public reply. In many instances, the articles appear to have been written in order to pre-judge a forthcoming trial and to whip up public sentiment against the accused.

The most notable case of such public slander in recent years occurred in 1960 (*Izvestia*, 8 July). Archbishop Iov of Kazan, an Orthodox dignitary of nationwide reputation, was accused in the courts of financial dishonesty and of swindling the state of more than two million roubles' income tax. Not content with reporting such a charge, the author of the article, L. Zavelev, accused the Archbishop of being a fascist who supported Hitler when a large part of the Ukraine came under Nazi rule during the Second World War. Zavelev incidentally reveals the independent mind of the Archbishop in stating that he had refused to support the Kremlin-inspired 'peace campaign' in the late 1940s and 1950s, which was considered an essential part of the duty of every Orthodox bishop. Some such fact is likely to be the real (though undisclosed) basis of the charge against him. Zavelev also gives inadvertent testimony to the high regard in which his flock held the Archbishop, stating that many of his warmest supporters followed him from one diocese to another in succession to work for him. Iov allegedly received 840,000 roubles in 1958-9 in excess of his salary, which were used to support 'his luxurious villa, cars, drinking bouts and orgies'.

If all these accusations were true, the sentence of three years was extraordinarily mild, seeing that many people were shot for 'economic crimes' in the Khrushchev era.

Presumably Archbishop Iov was released in 1963, at the conclusion of his sentence, and retired somewhere quietly. But his story was not over. In November 1967 the Holy Synod appointed him Archbishop of Ufa. Such an act would have been inconceivable, either on juridical or on ecclesiastical grounds, if there had been any truth in the accusations. It virtually proves that the original accusations were a fabrication, backed up by the slander of the government newspaper, *Izvestia*.

This was very far from being an isolated episode at the time, but there have been no such scandals since the fall of Khrushchev (though Archbishop Yermogen was deposed and retired to a monastery in November 1965 for his opposition to illegal state interference in church affairs). More recently, Archbishop Pavel (Golyshev), who similarly resisted official pressure, was removed from his diocese of Novosibirsk, first by transfer to the less important see of Vologda, then by enforced retirement. Before his final dismissal, he spoke of a 'vile provocation' against him by the local official of the Council for Religious Affairs.

A priest who has been subject to recurring problems over the last decade is Fr. Gleb Yakunin (mentioned above). In 1965, together with Fr. Eshliman, Fr. Yakunin initiated much of the present ferment in the Russian Orthodox Church with his letters to the patriarch and to the Soviet government, exposing the anti-religious campaign of the early 1960s and demanding normalization of the situation. The following year both men were suspended from serving as priests. After some time Fr. Eshliman laid down the priesthood, but Yakunin has retained it, although still unable to serve. In 1975 the Soviet authorities declared Easter Sunday a working day, and Fr. Yakunin addressed a letter of sharp protest to the Politburo. On 10 July he was fraudulently dismissed from his job as watchman in the Church of the Ineffable Joy in Moscow. He managed to find work as a reader in a church in the Moscow region. In October he and a layman, Lev Regelson, wrote a long and impressive appeal to the World Council of Churches Assembly in Nairobi. Immediately after this the Moscow official for religious affairs ordered his dismissal from the new job, which he had held for only one and a half months.

In November 1967 and April 1968, 21 young men were given sentences of up to fifteen years' imprisonment for belonging to a Christian political group sympathetic to Orthodoxy, the 'All-Russian Social-Christian Union for the Liberation of the People'. This was undoubtedly a special case.

In 1969 the prominent Orthodox layman, Boris Talantov, was imprisoned for three years and he died in prison hospital in January 1971. The lay church writer, Anatoli Levitin, was arrested soon after Talantov, and, after some legal confusion due to the fabrication of the case, sentenced to three years. After his release in June 1973, Levitin was able to emigrate to the West. In 1970 an article appeared attacking Father Pavel Adelgeim (*Pravda Vostoka* – 'Truth of the East' – 12 and 26 July) at the time of his trial and sentence for allegedly beating his wife and the daughter of another family. The parish priest of Kagan (Uzbekistan) appears, nevertheless, to have been a man of irreproachable character. No.13 of the underground human rights journal, *Chronicle of Current Events*, produced regularly in Moscow with painstaking accuracy, states:

> Father Pavel Adelgeim was arrested in December 1969. He is widely known in church circles. Thanks to his initiative and energy, the believers in Kagan have been able to erect a new stone church in place of the old barn which had been serving as a local place of worship. Pavel Adelgeim, a young, well-educated priest, and a good preacher, enjoyed great love and authority among his parishioners. His ecclesiastical activity was beyond reproach from the viewpoint of the civil law.

Even the writer of the first *Truth of the East* article, before launching into his accusations, confirms the good character of this priest:

> He did not indulge in even the smallest weaknesses, to which many old priests had succumbed. He did not drink and performed the religious rites earnestly. The faithful came from all parts of Kagan to hear Father Pavel's sermons: he spoke with eloquence.

In view of this testimony from an atheist writer, quite apart from what was written in the *Chronicle*, it is highly unlikely that there is any substance in the subsequent accusation of physical violence for which Father Adelgeim was sent to prison. The second article in *Truth of the East* gives what is almost certainly the real reason for the sentence – the fact that this priest was a supporter of Fathers Eshliman and Yakunin and of Anatoli Levitin, all of whom have been campaigning for greater religious freedom in the Soviet Union. Their manuscripts were found among Father Adelgeim's private papers during a search of his flat. While in labour camp, Fr. Adelgeim was run over by a lorry and

had to have one leg amputated. It is thought that this 'accident' was in fact engineered. After release, he is reported to have resumed pastoral work in the Fergana region of Uzbekistan.

Yuri Ivanov is an Orthodox painter. He spent sixteen years in the camps, where he made many sketches of his fellow-prisoners (some of these have reached the West). Released in October 1971, he was kept under surveillance by the KGB. In April 1973 Ivanov went to the KGB in Leningrad to protest against this treatment, and he was taken from there to mental hospital. On 4 January 1974 he appealed to the West for help.

Yevgeni Barabanov is a young Russian art critic, married with two young children. As well as being the author of a number of interesting religious essays himself, he has been responsible for handling many other writings by Soviet Christians, Jews and other dissidents, and transmitting some of them to the West. On the night of 24–25 August 1973, the KGB searched Barabanov's flat in Moscow. Two days later they began to interrogate him. By the beginning of 1974, his friends fully expected his arrest. So far this has not happened, although Barabanov sent urgent appeals to the West for help in September 1975, when he was threatened with internment in psychiatric hospital.

One of the best-documented instances of discrimination against Orthodox believers in the matter of housing is quoted in *Patriarch and Prophets* (p. 165). As an example of discrimination in education, the case of the Old Believer, Yevgeni Bobkov, is well known. Anatoli Levitin has described in some detail (*Dialogue with Religious Russia,* Paris, 1967, pp. 21-9) how this brilliant law student at Moscow University was expelled in 1959 because he was a standard-bearer in processions in the Old Believer church in the city.

Less is known about the treatment of Orthodox believers in detention than about the Baptists. It is quite certain, however, that there has been brutality, at least during the early part of the decade. For example, the Spiritual Council of the Pochaev Monastery described the death of their young novice, Grigori Unka, in prison in 1963:

> His mother received a telegram from the prison administration in Chertkov . . . that her son had 'died suddenly' and she should come and take the body away . . . The mother collected the remains of her beloved martyr-son. Although the body was dead and silent, it still bore many visible marks – it was black and blue from bruises, the clothes were torn and pierced right through the side. He had never had any physical ailments, but had been tortured to death in his prime at 25 years of age.

This event does seem to be attributable to the sadism of an individual prison officer, rather than part of a planned campaign. Incidents of this kind are, at the present time, rare in the Orthodox Church, although a number of Baptists are known to have died in detention (see Chapter Four). In none of these instances, however, is there any record of the guilty officers having been brought to trial.

Fr. Boris Zalivako, an Orthodox priest in his thirties, attempted to escape from the Soviet Union in 1969. He was picked up near the border in Czechoslovakia, returned to the Soviet Union and sentenced to eight years strict regime, followed by five years exile. Andrei Sinyavsky, the Russian writer now living in Paris, has testified thus of his witness in the camps:

> In my encounters with Father Boris I experienced a new level of true faith, one which surpassed many others I had witnessed. After coming to our camp Father Boris became the camp priest in the fullest sense of the word. I had not seen such a man before: he fulfilled all the obligations and ritual duties of a priest with complete devotion amid the highly oppressive and sometimes unbearable camp conditions. He would hold services beneath the open sky at night, in rain or snow (religious services are harassed and worshippers are dispersed if found, so the faithful usually gather in secret), and for our entire camp he soon became an outstanding example of Christian service to God and his fellow men.

Early in 1971, Fr. Boris was sent to the severe Vladimir prison for three years, because of his influence on the other inmates of the camp. According to Sinyavsky:

> Father Boris, a physically healthy and rather young man (he was born in 1940, I believe) has been reduced to such a state of physical debility in the Vladimir prison that there is now every reason to fear for his life. After an operation for appendicitis which he underwent in prison, the wound would not heal, to such an extent were the tissues of his body sapped of their vitality.

No more encouraging news has been received since then.

In 1972 Fr. Vasili Romanyuk from the village of Kosmach in the Ukraine was sentenced to two years in prison, followed by five in the camps and three in exile, for signing a letter in defence of imprisoned Ukrainian historian Moroz. On 1 August 1975 Fr. Vasili began a three-month hunger-strike, demanding a review of his case, the return of a prayer-book which had been taken from him, and permission to have a Bible. Possession of religious literature in the camps is not forbidden in theory, only in practice. Fr. Vasili did not achieve his aims. Romanyuk, now aged 51, was previously sentenced to ten years when he was only nineteen. At the end of 1975 another Orthodox priest visited Fr. Vasili's family and reported that: 'In his second year in camp, he is being kept under especially strict regime doing harmful work (glass dust is settling on his lungs).'

Early in 1974, the name of Fr. Dmitri Dudko became known to many people throughout the world. This was due to his startling (for Soviet conditions) innovation – informal question-and-answer sessions after the Saturday vespers in St. Nicholas church in Moscow. Retribution was not slow. The patriarch himself (either on orders from the authorities, or in expectation of the same) banned the sessions in May of that year. Fr. Dmitri was forbidden to preach again until further notice. It may have been as a result of the international pressure concerning his case that he was transferred to a rural church in the Moscow region. The same thing happened – the congregation grew, and many of his old parishioners, particularly young people, travelled regularly from the capital to hear their pastor preach. Fr. Dmitri was subject to various pressures during this period – his flat was searched, he sustained an 'accident' in which he broke both legs. In December 1975 he was again forbidden to preach. The news in April 1976 was that he had been transferred yet again, to another village in the Moscow region. Fr. Dmitri had already been subjected to interrogation by the authorities in 1972 because of his profound influence on young people. He managed at that time to resist the pressure and stay in his Moscow church.

Some of his answers to the interrogator at that time testify vividly to the religious revival currently going on in Russia – a phenomenon which it is becoming more and more difficult for the Soviet authorities to hush up. He said, for example:

> You're behind the times. Many young people go to church now. You should be grateful to me that I keep young people away

from crime. People have a thirst for religion now ... You can't indoctrinate people with religion, you have to feel it. Young people are beginning to feel it. In 12 years I have already baptized about 1,000 adults. And I know how they came to accept God. The main weakness of atheist propaganda is that it tries to indoctrinate. So it's produced the opposite effect: everyone is fed up with atheism.

It seems most likely that the sects which have gone into schism this century (such as the 'True Orthodox Church') and which the Soviet State has rendered illegal, have been worse treated than the Orthodox Church itself in recent years, though at the moment we lack concerted information. No.15 of the *Chronicle of Current Events* (August 1970), for example, contains information that three female members of the 'True Orthodox Church' were in Women's Camp 385/3 in Mordovia and were nearing the end of their ten-year sentences. Despairing of justice within the system, members of this group have sought to organize their religious lives entirely underground – thus under prevailing conditions they may expect severe penalties when exposed, even though Soviet accusations against them of being 'monarchists' have not been backed up by evidence.

Two recent press articles have referred to the discovery of 'death chambers', allegedly constructed by the *Innokentevtsy* (a sectarian Orthodox group dating from the beginning of this century) in Moldavia, and supposed to contain about 20 corpses – some said to have been buried alive. There were no details of arrests or sentences. (*Molodëzh Moldavii – Youth of Moldavia* – 16 January 1973 and 5 May 1973).

The Old Believers seem to have kept relatively in the background, as they have learned to do from long habit, and may not have suffered so much as some other denominations in the anti-religious campaign of Khrushchev. After 250 years of persecution under the Tsars, they are better adapted than most to ride out modern storms and steadfastly await calmer times.

III THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE UNIATES

by Cornelia Gerstenmaier

Roman Catholics

Roman Catholics are persecuted in the Soviet Union today not only for their religious steadfastness, but for their international connections and because, to some extent, they are identified by the authorities with 'separatist' elements among Ukrainians, Belorussians, Latvians and above all Lithuanians, who make up the main body of professing Catholics in the USSR. The journal *Bezbozhnik* ('The Atheist') has said:

A more bitter struggle is being waged against the Catholic clergy than against the Russian Church, because Catholic organization is more powerful than that of the Orthodox, and Catholic ideology is better adapted to the general conditions of life (18 March 1923).

In these words are written the whole tragedy of Roman Catholics as it was to unfold under Stalin.

Right up to now this Church has never been able to restore any central leadership. Ironically, the Russian Orthodox Church is today represented in Rome, but not the Soviet Catholics, though since the Second Vatican Council some bishops have been able to visit Rome.

The only functioning dioceses today are in Latvia and Lithuania, while the difficulties in remoter areas are more acute. Outside the Baltic states, Belorussia and the Ukraine, there are known to be registered Catholic churches in Moscow, Leningrad, Tbilisi (Georgia), Kishinev (Moldavia) and Frunze (Kirgizia). The latter is a German congregation. The others are likely to be strongly Polish or Lithuanian in character. Bishop Kindermann in West Germany has stated that:

It is true that in a vast expanse of Siberia there now exists a true diaspora Church – a Church, to be sure, without organized parochial life and pastoral care, but with several hundred so-called 'itinerant priests' and undoubtedly some secretly consecrated bishops.

In August 1974 a local newspaper in Lvov, Ukraine – where there are two Catholic churches – reported that Fr. Bernard Mitskevich had been sentenced here for preparing children for communion and conducting other pastoral work. This sentence is very similar to several in Lithuania in recent years. In August 1970 the *Chronicle of Current Events* No.15 reported the forcible closure by the police of two Catholic churches in Belorussia in 1969-70. At the end of 1975, a document was received in the West from Catholics in Latvia, a protest against the threatened closure of the Catholic church in Daugavpils. The appeal was signed by no less than 5,043 believers. As a result of state control, contacts between dioceses and congregations inside the USSR have practically ceased. Thus, for example young people from Belorussia may not study at the seminaries of Kaunas and Riga, although they come under Baltic jurisdiction.

There are probably over three million Roman Catholics in the Soviet Union today. Here we devote special attention to Lithuania, where the greatest concentration of them resides.

When Stalin annexed Lithuania shortly before Hitler invaded it, he took over a strong and impressively organized Church. But now monasticism, once flourishing in over a hundred centres, has been abolished. Official religious journals are no more. There has been an inadequate edition of a prayerbook. In 1973 the New Testament was printed in 10,000 copies, but such a printing is tiny in comparison to the needs. In order to try to meet these needs, Lithuanian Catholics have resorted to secret printing work. This has included both spiritual literature, and also the important *Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church*, the first numbers of which appeared in 1972.

At the time of writing, the Lithuanian Catholic Chronicle has reached 22 issues and continues, despite severe pressure, to provide detailed and accurate information about the ongoing life and difficulties of the Church here. From the earliest stages, the authorities have made determined efforts to close this publication. In issue No.9, the editors stated boldly:

Dear Readers: Despite the government's repressions, the *Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church* will continue to appear. It will stop appearing only when the government grants to the Church and to the believers at least as much freedom as is guaranteed by the USSR Constitution. We ask our readers to continue with their assistance in collecting material for the Chronicle. It has, however, no use for unreliable information and inaccurate facts ... Numbers, dates, names, places and other data must be especially clear, correctly recorded and authenticated. We await your information.

In 1974-75 there were three trials involving seven individuals who had been implicated in the printing work. Five of them, including one woman, Nijole Sadunaite, were sentenced to terms ranging from two to eight years. Sadunaite in her final statement at her trial exclaimed:

> This is the happiest day of my life: I am being tried because of the *Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church*, which fights spiritual and physical tyranny. It is my enviable lot not only to fight for the people's rights and for truth, but also to be condemned for it ... I am sorry that I was only able to work for a short time on behalf of others ... I shall go joyfully to slavery, so that others may have freedom, and I am willing to die, so that others may live.

She was sentenced to three years and is now in the notorious Mordovian camp complex.

Almost half of the churches have been closed. The number of priests has fallen from 1,480 in 1940 to 811 in 1970. Of four seminaries, only the one at Kaunas remains. It is restricted to a maximum of thirty seminarists, so there are no more than five or six ordinations a year. Although the old dioceses remain in name, there are only five active bishops instead of fourteen, while two others are under permanent house arrest.

The Roman Catholics received fewer concessions than some other religious groups during 1954-7, while 1960-64 was a period of renewed physical persecution. Quite apart from slanderous attacks against individual priests and bishops in the press, such as we know from the examples quoted under the Orthodox Church, travel restrictions were placed on the clergy even within their own dioceses, which prevented them from holding confirmations and dispensing the sacraments. People known to attend church or who had had their children baptized found that discriminatory measures were taken against them. Writing to Mr. Kosygin in 1969, 40 Lithuanian priests described a young couple who were married in church and as a result had their permission to buy a piece of building land rescinded.

The Communist Party set up a special committee in Vilnius in 1963 with the special task of devising new secular 'rites' to replace traditional ones, but this campaign seems to have had even less success in Lithuania than in other parts of the Soviet Union.

Soon after the worst of the Khrushchev anti-religious crisis had passed, a very few concessions were made to the Lithuanian Catholics. The most important of these was the episcopal ordination in Rome in 1965 of Mgr. Labukas-Matulaitis, administrator of the archdiocese of Kaunas. He, in turn, was able to consecrate a new bishop of Telsiai in 1966 and two assistant bishops at the end of 1969. The hierarchy of the Church is under constant pressure from the state to comply with its demands. Thus, for example, in December 1971 Lithuanian Catholics organized a Memorandum addressed to Mr. Brezhnev, briefly setting out their grievances, and managed to collect over 17,000 signatures (there would have been many more but for KGB interference). In April, the church leaders were summoned by the Lithuanian official for religious affairs and forced to sign a 'Pastoral Letter' condemning the memorandum action. All priests were directed to read this letter in their churches. State officials were present in each church to monitor their response. Some priests read the full text, others read a partial version, many ignored it completely.

The most significant feature of the last decade is that the Lithuanian Catholics, like the Orthodox, the Baptists and the Jews, have found a voice. We have already mentioned the Lithuanian Chronicle. Before the Chronicle began its appearance, there were a number of individual and group appeals. In January 1968, 63 Lithuanian priests (the number is given in Vatican sources) complained in a letter to the Soviet Council of Ministers and the Council for Religious Affairs about intrusions by the state into religious life. The specific case in point was the attempt by the authorities, through the enforced *numerus clausus* concerning the seminaries, to hinder the training of priests.

A few months later, in December 1968, priests of the diocese of Vilkaviskis addressed a similar petition to the Lithuanian bishops and diocesan administrators. They wrote:

> The present seminary is obviously unable to fulfil the needs of the Lithuanian Catholic Church. Therefore a well-justified question arises: Who in the near future will proclaim God's word? Who will give the sacraments? Who will officiate at the mass? It is not the leadership of the seminary but government officials who have the decisive voice about the acceptance of candidates to the seminary. Those wishing to enter the seminary are dissuaded, many are forbidden outright to enter it, without any explanation (*East-West Digest*, 6, 1970, p.181).

The authorities responded to this appeal with severe reprisals against many of the signatories. Some were dismissed from their posts, or forcibly transferred, others were imprisoned and sentenced in secret trials. The Dean of Vilkaviskis, Konstantinas Ambrasas, was dismissed from his post, charged with having neglected to inform the Council for Religious Affairs of the imminent protest by the priests of his diocese. Although more than a thousand members of the congregation signed an appeal on his behalf and sent a delegation to the diocesan administrative office at Kaunas and to the local official for religious affairs, Ambrasas was forcibly transferred to Leipalingis. The question of the seminary is still a crucial issue, and has come up more than once in the Lithuanian Chronicle.

Despite all the state oppression and notwithstanding the increased atheist 'education' campaigns, reports agree that church attendance remains very high. Even today only few children are said to be unbaptized in Lithuania. Clearly this is a phenomenon which is causing the Soviet authorities extreme embarrassment and concern. This has manifested itself in a number of trials and other forms of repression, particularly against priests who have conducted pastoral work with children. Because of the acute shortage of spiritual literature, many Lithuanian Catholics consider themselves inadequately equipped to teach their own children the essentials of the faith. Since the children should be properly prepared to receive their first communion, the parents naturally ask the priests to assist in this. According to Soviet law, a priest may catechize children one at a time (there is no explicit permission to this effect, but it is implicit through the prohibitions, and has been thus interpreted in practice), but may not do it in groups, still less give the children group instruction beforehand. Because of the numbers involved, it is often impossible for the priests to observe these restrictions. For this 'crime', Fr. Antanas Seskevicius was sentenced in September 1970 to one year's detention. Similar sentences were meted out to Fr. Juozas Zdebskis and Fr. Prosperas Bubnys in October 1971. At his trial, Fr. Zdebskis declared:

> I am being tried for fulfilling my rightful duties ... If the courts do not judge us priests now, then our nation will judge us! And finally will come the hour for the true judgment by the Supreme

Being. May God help us priests to fear this more than your judgment.

It is this kind of spirit in laity, clergy, and to some extent even hierarchy, that renders the struggle against the Lithuanian Catholic Church so difficult. The solidarity in Lithuania is a unique phenomenon in the Soviet Union.

The solidarity of the Lithuanian Catholics might be compared with that of the Poles. But circumstances here are very different. The Polish Catholic Church claims the allegiance of the great majority of the people, thus, like the Romanian Orthodox Church, it is without dispute *primus inter pares*. The Polish Catholic Church is further strengthened through the person of its primate, Cardinal Wyszynski, probably the most uncompromising church leader currently in office in Eastern Europe. This is undoubtedly one of the causes behind the periodic clashes between Church and state in Poland – confrontations that would be wildest fantasy in the USSR today. In these clashes, moreover, the Polish Church rarely emerges totally vanquished.

The Eastern-Rite Catholics (Uniates)

The history of the Eastern-Rite Catholics is highly complex and cannot be discussed here. Using the Orthodox rite and Slavonic language, but owing allegiance to Rome, they have been a constant subject of strife and have never fitted easily either into an Orthodox or Catholic framework.

About three and a half million of them came under Soviet rule with the annexation of the Western Ukraine in 1939. Their allegiance to Rome made them highly suspect to the Soviets, who saw a clear chance to 'resolve' the problem after the war. Metropolitan Andrei Szeptycki was falsely accused of being a Nazi collaborator. After his death in 1944 they imprisoned his successor, Metropolitan Joseph Slipyj, and with him all four Uniate bishops from Western Ukraine. In a secret trial Slipyj and his bishops were sentenced to between five and ten years' imprisonment and they were subsequently re-sentenced. Only Slipyj survived, spending seventeen years in concentration camps.

At the same time the Soviet authorities, with the active support of the Moscow Patriarchate, initiated a massive campaign for the 're-unification' of the Eastern-Rite Catholic Church with the Russian Orthodox Church. This takeover occurred most notably at the Synod of Lvov in 1946, attended by some of the Eastern-Rite clergy, but without a single bishop being present. Thus the Eastern-Rite Catholic Church was officially liquidated and in practice banished underground. About 300 Uniate priests managed to escape the ensuing mass terror by fleeing abroad. Between 1945 and 1953 50% of the 2,950 diocesan priests who refused to submit to the Orthodox Church were imprisoned. Others continued to operate underground. Some died mysteriously. About 1,600 monks and nuns were expelled from their monasteries and convents and some were imprisoned. The same fate awaited the 540 seminarists, while the remaining believers were all forced into submission. All 4,440 churches and chapels either passed into Orthodox hands or were closed. More than a thousand schools and other social institutions were disbanded and all the 28 periodicals were banned.

In the course of attempts at a *détente* with the Vatican, the Soviet authorities released Metropolitan Slipyj in 1963 and allowed him to go to Rome. However, the officially hostile position towards the Eastern-Rite Catholics was in no way modified. While in the Orthodox *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* in 1966 the twentieth anniversary of 'reunion' was celebrated in triumphant articles, from about the same time atheist attacks against the increasing activity of the Eastern-Rite catacomb church began to appear.

Because of the reactionary essence of the Uniate Church, its loyalty to the ideals of the money bag, of imperialist circles, and of the Vatican, whom the Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists serve, the reactionary clergy of the Ukrainian Catholic Church are striving to reinstate the union ... The clergy, allied with bourgeois nationalists, have completely exposed themselves and revealed their true face in their rotting philosophy and hostile acts. In spite of this, clerical-nationalistic organizations still exist abroad; so do various leaders who continue as in the past to please the imperialists, they distort the policies and ideology of the CPSU and slander our country. Naturally this 'song' is aimed at the politically backward, ideologically unstable people; among whom we find those who are not very familiar with the history of Uniatism.

'Uniatism', says Professor V. Tancher of Kiev University in answer to a reader's letter in *Pravda Ukrainy* ('Ukrainian Truth'), 'will never have a place on Ukrainian soil. Remember this well, you who would revive the ideological corpse of the Uniates' (*Digest of the Soviet Ukrainian Press*, January 1969, p.24).

The *Chronicle of Current Events* in its seventh and eighth issues (1969) reports on the most recent reprisals against the Eastern-Rite Catholic Church. Here we learn that at a meeting of Orthodox priests at Pochaev in 1968, the question of the 'illegal' operation of banned Eastern-Rite believers was discussed. All priests operating illegally, it was decided, should be located and reported to the authorities. The Orthodox Metropolitan Filaret promised to appeal to the top leadership of the Ukrainian Communist Party for an end to be put to the activity of this underground movement.

Doubtless as a result of this, house searches were carried out in October 1968 and at the beginning of 1969, involving numerous priests and former nuns in the Lvov area and the whole West Ukraine. Two Eastern-Rite priests were imprisoned and one of them, Pyotr Gorodetsky, charged under Articles 138 and 187 of the Ukrainian Penal Code (slander of the Soviet State and the socialist system, and infringement of the laws on the separation of church and state).

The *Chronicle* No.7, 1969, says:

The Eastern-Rite Church continues to function underground. It has become more active in recent years, and the number of its priests detained and beaten up by the police has grown. On 18 October 1968 ten of them had their homes searched: forbidden religious objects were confiscated, including even the Holy Sacrament – all this represents a flagrant encroachment into the sphere of religious observance.

At the end of 1968 Bishop Vasili Velichkovsky (already over 70) was imprisoned at Kolomyya. 'In the course of his activity', says an official press commentary, 'he not only spread the word of God, but behind this screen he has been educating the faithful in the spirit of hate against everything Soviet' (*Slava Rodiny* – 'Glory of the Fatherland' – 15 November 1969). The report goes on to say that Velichkovsky was 'only' sentenced to three years because of his age and in accordance with the 'humane character of Soviet laws'. After his release in 1971, Bishop Velichkovsky was permitted to leave for Rome.

In January 1975 an Eastern-Rite priest, Fr. Mikhail Lutsky, was found hanged in a wood near the village of Dronovyo in Western Ukraine. A suicide note in his pocket claimed that he had decided to kill himself after reading the Bible. But Christians in the village, who knew Fr. Lutsky to be a holy man, described this as false. The priest had been called out early on the morning of 30 January by plain-clothes policemen who asked him to visit a sick man. He was then taken to a wood and hanged, it is claimed. Fr. Lutsky had already been warned three times that his religious activities were illegal. He had celebrated Mass and distributed the Eucharist.

Even excluding the question of those who try to maintain the Eastern-Rite under the severest repression, the Roman Catholic Church continues to have many difficulties to face – despite the diplomatic *rapprochement* between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Vatican in recent years. More recently, however, the situation has been put in question once more by the outspokenness of Cardinal Slipyj. After the 1971 Synod of Bishops in Rome, he held his own Synod of Ukrainian Bishops and denounced the policy of the Vatican as a betrayal of Ukrainian Catholics. There has been pressure for Slipyj to be elevated to the office of Patriarch, which would have repercussions in East and West. The Vatican recently rejected a new constitution prepared by Cardinal Slipyj for his Church.

The history of the Eastern-Rite Catholics throughout Eastern Europe has been a chequered one. One of the phenomena of the 'Prague Spring' was the legalization of this group in Eastern Slovakia – an unusual and striking move. This legalization has still not been officially reversed, although it is known that the Uniates in Slovakia are suffering from the general worsening of church-state relations in Czechoslovakia.

IV BAPTISTS AND OTHER PROTESTANTS

by Michael Bourdeaux

The Mennonites are Anabaptists of Dutch and German origin who found sanctuary in Russia from the eighteenth century, and were by and large well treated under the Tsars. The Soviets found about 100,000 in their territory after the Revolution – and within a decade had set about rooting them out completely, a process accelerated during the purges. They were suspect partly because of their Western origins, but even more because of their traditional pacifism – a key feature in their religious outlook. It should be emphasized, however, that there is no hint of extremism in their religious make-up. A recent Soviet writer on the subject, F. Fedorenko (*Sects, their Faith and Practice*, p.153) admits that 'a new wave of activity began in the sect in 1956-7, when active preachers began to return from prison' – in other words, the effort at total suppression by Stalin had signally failed. The Soviet Union remains the only country of the world where there is a major Mennonite colony, which has no right to set up an administrative body. Since 1963 they have been encouraged to throw in their lot with the Baptists, which means being forced to give up their pacifism and other special characteristics. In 1967 came the first news of registration of a Mennonite congregation in its own right (*Bratsky Vestnik* – 'Fraternal Herald' – the official organ of the Russian Baptists, No.4, 1967, p.42). It is not yet clear whether this presages any major change in Soviet policy towards this denomination.

It seems to have been part of Soviet policy towards the Protestants since 1944 to force as many streams as possible to merge with what is now called the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists. Lutherans have never been pushed into such a union, however, which was instituted not primarily by the Protestants themselves for reasons of ecumenism, but by the state to facilitate its attempts at control.

Baptists – the term is normally used to signify Evangelical Christians as well – suffered as much under Khrushchev as the Orthodox did in the matter of enforced closure of churches. Possibly there was a drop of over half in the 5,400 congregations registered before 1960 (see Bourdeaux, *Religious Ferment in Russia*, p.2).

The Minsk newspaper, *Sovetskaya Belorussia* ('Soviet Belorussia' – 12 May 1963), gave precise information about what had happened at Brest:

> In 1960 the Brest Baptist congregation united with a similar one at the village of Vulka-Podgorodskaya (Brest District). But only about 100 of the 380 believers would go to Vulka. The rest, incited by their spiritual pastors, Matveyuk, Shepetunko, Kotovich and Fedorchuk, began to organize illegal gatherings in private houses in the town.

Here is a clear revelation of an illegal act in an official Soviet source. The church at Brest had been abolished with no legal justification whatsoever. It needed, according to the 1929 Law, only twenty members to ensure its continuity, whereas it had 380. The so-called 'uniting' with a relatively inaccessible village church is irrelevant to this legal issue. Such events occurred all over the Soviet Union at the time. Since 1966 there has been scattered evidence about the re-registration of individual churches, but it is unlikely that the proportion of those recently 'legalized' again (in Soviet terminology) exceeds the 5% figure suggested for the Orthodox.

A recent, but rather special, case of the total outlawing of a Protestant group is that of the Council of Churches of the Evangelical Christians and Baptists. Extensive documentation on this reform movement which began in 1961 has been presented in *Religious Ferment in Russia*. This group went into schism from the All-Union Council not for any strictly theological or doctrinal reason, but because its members believed that it was illegal for the state to interfere in church affairs. Its leaders constantly quoted the Leninist principle of the separation of church and state in support of their own position and two of them, Georgi Vins and Gennadi Kryuchkov, went on from this in a notable document (*Religious Ferment in Russia*, pp.105-13) to claim that the 1929 Law was irreconcilable with this principle. This criticism of Soviet law, although justified and carefully presented, inevitably brought down the full wrath of the Soviet State upon the leaders of this movement. For over a decade now they have been one of the most severely persecuted of all Soviet minorities and they usually have between one and two hundred of their most active supporters in detention.

One of the accusations which has been constantly reiterated against these *Initsiativniki* ('Action-Group') Baptists, as they are commonly called in the Soviet Union, is that they 'refuse to keep the Soviet law'. Such allegations have not only been repeated incessantly in the Soviet press, but they have also been spread to foreign contacts by official representatives of the All-Union Council. In fact, these reform Baptists often know more about their legal rights than their detractors, but have rarely been able to avail

themselves of them. They have, for example, consistently been unable to register their own congregations, although they have often sought his and are legally entitled to do so. Attempts to register took place on a large scale after their conference in Tula in 1969, which issued a directive to this end. However, the authorities rejected the believers' initiative and refused registration, at the same time stepping up the persecution. Police frequently break up the meetings, claiming that they are illegal. The organizers have been heavily and repeatedly fined.

Official tactics changed in 1975, when the authorities began a new drive to make reform Baptist congregations register. The condition for registration, however, was that these congregations omit all mention of their spiritual centre, the Council of Churches, from their registration papers. A few congregations, including that of Georgi Vins in Kiev, have apparently registered on this basis. The great majority regard this, probably with justification, as a manoeuvre to alienate them from their chosen leadership. Many have submitted registration papers including the name of the Council of Churches. These have been totally rejected.

The reform Baptists have sought to establish their right to teach religion privately to their children and it was probably with their activities specifically in mind that one clause of the March 1966 revision of the Penal Code made the organization of any kind of Sunday school more explicitly illegal than ever before.

This law is now enforced with extreme severity and it is pushed well beyond the limits of common sense. To quote a recent example (*Baptist Times*, London, 1 October 1970), Mikhail Khorev was sentenced to three years' imprisonment on 7 July 1970. The prosecution's case against him included an accusation that he had taken his children to a birthday party in a friend's house, where he probably said grace and may have offered a few other prayers. Khorev, whose sight is severely deficient, had suffered greatly during his previous spell in prison, after which he had had less than a year's freedom. It seems virtually certain that the real reason for Khorev's arrest was that he continued to occupy a position of leadership among the reform Baptists and took a prominent part in their consultations during his brief period of freedom.

The Baptists, at the time of writing, are the only religious group in the whole Soviet Union to have won the right to hold regular national congresses. These were held in 1963, 1966, 1969 and 1974. Although the reform Baptists considered that they were not truly representative (as only registered congregations could send delegates), it was undoubtedly a direct result of continuous pressure from the reformers that they took place at all. Some Orthodox leaders have now commended this Baptist initiative in the establishing of such a principle and would like to see their own Church follow suit. Even the reformers were given permission for the above-mentioned Tula consultation in December 1969, but this has not been followed by any legalization of their position. The official permission for the congress was, in fact, later revoked and the chief participants arrested.

At the 1974 Congress, there was a very unusual occurrence. A group of Christians within the official Moscow Baptist church (possibly other churches too) produced an appeal to delegates at the congress to elect worthy candidates to leadership positions, and to remove those who do not deserve such posts. Attached to the appeal, when it was handed on to western visitors, was a list of those who were in fact elected to the All-Union Council at the congress. Each man is marked with an assessment by these Christians. This appeal bears a great similarity to some of the documents of the 'dissent' movement within the Russian Orthodox Church – which has not so far gone into schism. The group of those who wrote the appeal included at least 50 people, particularly young persons. It is not known how far their appeal penetrated to leadership circles, or what response it evoked. Failure to respond adequately could have pushed these young believers further towards the unregistered groups. This action is an interesting manifestation of the currents of disquiet that must be flowing through many sections of the registered evangelical movement. Given the pressure by the state on church leaders, and the resulting ambiguities of their behaviour, it is perhaps surprising that such occurrences are not more frequent.

Nevertheless, the state-recognized Baptists have profited from the pressure exerted by the reformers. A series of decrees controlling the internal life of the Church which had been forced on the leadership in 1960 was annulled; Bibles and hymn books were printed (though in completely inadequate quantities); theological education for the ministry was re-introduced after a gap of 40 years. This latter was no more than a correspondence course, but the Russian Baptists were thereby put on the same footing in this as the Lutherans in the Baltic States. A series of talks took place with the aim of re-unifying the two Baptist factions. In the last few years these seem to have completely broken down, although the official Church renewed its call for unity before the congress in 1974. Unity was a major topic at that congress, but little progress appears to have been made. Individuals and congregations seem to 'change sides' periodically.

Paradoxically, Baptists are now at once among the most favoured and the most persecuted religious groups in the Soviet Union. It should not be imagined, however, that there is a clear division between the state-recognized Baptists and the others, nor that persecution is the lot exclusively of the latter. Not only are the state-recognized Baptists subjected to some types of discrimination (in university education, for example) – but this can extend even to non-Baptist relatives.

Ulyana Germanyuk, whose husband Stepan was sentenced in 1973 to 4½ years in the camps and 3 years in exile, completed medical training and began work as a vet. She was twice dismissed from work, although she was already married and had several children to support. She moved to a new home, hoping to be able to work undisturbed, but as she writes:

> ... here too 'busy hands' found me again. I was only able to work for a year in the new place. After all that I have described above, I decided to forget my education and went to wash doorsteps. Then I worked as a stoker. Recently I worked as a watchman, hoping that I would not be dismissed, but after some time there was no longer any room for me there either.

A recent appeal from the unregistered Baptists mentions two nurses, Zoya and Lyudmila Dubinina, who have been subject to constant repression at their work in Kiev. They were again dismissed on 1 January 1976.

Discrimination has often been exercized against the children of religious believers at school – where the classes include compulsory lessons in atheism throughout the Soviet Union. There are hundreds of documented cases relating to many denominations, but an especially notorious

recent case about which more is known than most was that of the children of Ivan and Nadezhda Sloboda, from the village of Dubravy in Belorussia (see *The Times*, 6 November 1969). The two elder children were removed from their parents on 11 February 1966 and sent to a boarding school. Here they were badly treated and inadequately cared for physically, so they ran away and came home. Before long the police arrived at the Sloboda home to carry off the screaming children again. Soon after this their mother was sentenced to four years' imprisonment and on 13 February 1970 the other children were removed, leaving only the father at home out of a family of seven. The two eldest daughters have since been allowed to return home, and Mrs. Sloboda was released in December 1972.

A more recent example is Zoya Radygina of Perm, who lost maternal rights to three children in the summer of 1973. Even if they do not actually lose children, many Baptist parents – particularly those in unregistered groups – are forced to see their children victimized at school. This can range from mild discrimination (lowered marks, mockery from other children, incited by the teachers) to cases of serious physical violence. According to a very recent appeal from the reform Baptists:

The Silonovs, a Christian family in the village of Razdolnoye, Primorsky Territory, have 13 children. The youngest children have been subject to beatings and mockery from the teachers. They have pulled their hair, banged their heads against the wall, and threatened to put their parents in prison. The children often came home in tears, with headaches. Complaints to the local council remained unanswered.

Some Baptist mothers, particularly the wives of prisoners, are deprived of their family allowances, and do not receive such distinctions as 'Heroine-Mother' (awarded to every woman who bears ten children). They also know that their children are unlikely to climb the educational ladder. Many cases have been documented of Baptist (and other) young people being expelled from higher educational establishments. Recent Baptist documents suggest that their children are simply not being accepted for higher education.

In a long appeal addressed to the Soviet government at the beginning of 1976, the reform Baptists write about the persecution of their young men in the army. They say that this has been going on for some time (the best-known example being the death of Vanya Moiseyev – see below). Now, they write, it has taken on a systematic character, so that they can no longer be silent about it. They give a list of eleven young Baptists between the ages of 19 and 24 who have been sentenced, allegedly for refusing to do military service, but in fact for refusing to take the oath on religious grounds. Here is one case:

Nikolai Andreyevich Lavrenchuk, born 1955, from Rovno region, was called up on 22 November 1973. Having been brought up in the evangelical faith, he refused to take the oath (but not to do military service), because of the scripture: 'But I say unto you, swear not at all' (Matt. 5:34). Because of his refusal to take the oath, he was taken to Moscow several times for interrogation, accompanied by threats. Then they sent him to the Yakovenko psychiatric hospital in Moscow region, where he remained from 24 December 1973 to 31 January 1974 ... On 31 January they sent him back to the army. He was taken for interrogation twice more. On 14 February the divisional commander said to Nikolai's father: 'I don't care that your son has a good conduct record. We prefer a drunk to him.' On 25 February a military tribunal of the Moscow garrison sentenced Nikolai to three years detention under Article 249 'a' of the Russian Criminal Code for 'refusal to carry out service duties'. He was sent to Arkhangelsk region.

Some young Baptist soldiers are also beaten up, like Mikhail Shishkin on service in Armenia. After one beating, 'when Mikhail came to, he saw the soldiers removing traces of blood from the floor and walls'.

Conditions for Baptists in prison have often been especially severe and the number of those who have been arrested since 1961 runs into many hundreds. At the beginning of 1976, there were just over a hundred in detention. This severity is probably due partly to the continuing attempts of the Soviet authorities to inflame nationwide feelings against the reformers and represent them as 'anti-Soviet'; partly to the determination of many of them to continue their religious observances in prison.

Pavel Overchuk was sentenced in 1966 to 2½ years' imprisonment when he was 34 (*The Observer*, 19 November 1967). He was put in the *shizo* (punishment cell) because he 'prayed to God and talked about Him to other prisoners'. Overchuk described his treatment there and managed to have what he wrote taken out of the prison and eventually abroad. He wrote:

What is the *shizo* like? It is a cell without windows, light or air, about 14–16 square yards in area. Electric light filters in from the corridor through a Judas-window with a narrow grille. In such a cell, deprived of air and light, about 12–15 or more people are crowded, after they have had their warm clothes, handkerchiefs and bedding taken away from them ... One may ask whether such treatment stopped me praying to God. On the contrary, I value all the more the divine gifts of air and light.

Georgi Vins, one of the two most prominent leaders of the reform Baptists, was so badly treated during his prison sentence which lasted from 1966-69 that at one stage his friends and supporters feared for his life. It is highly likely that when they made the facts known to the outside world, this persuaded the Soviet authorities to begin treating him better and he in fact survived to resume his leadership after a period of convalescence. In March 1974 he was again arrested and in January 1975 sentenced to five years in the camps, followed by five years in exile. He is at present in the severe conditions of Yakutia (Siberia), and his friends and relatives fear that the authorities do not intend him to return.

At the beginning of 1976, the reform Baptists furnished a list of fourteen men who had died in unnatural circumstances since 1962. Of these fourteen, four died through mistreatment under interrogation or in prison (Kucherenko 1962, Khmara 1964, Wiebe 1964, Zakharov 1971), four died in labour camp (Lanbin 1967, Afonin 1969, Iskovskikh 1970, Kudryashov 1972), one died a few weeks after release from labour camp (Shevchenko 1968), two died in exile (Ryzhenko 1968, Ostapenko hanged 1975), one was murdered in the army (Moiseyev 1972) and two were murdered in civilian life (Yagozinsky 1972, Biblenko 1975). At the same time, they give a list of eight men who had been subjected to slow-acting poison while in the camps, and another one in civilian life. Three of these eight are still alive (Bartoshchuk, Dubitsky, Shcherbina), the other five have died (Lanbin as above, Shevchenko as above, Melnikov 1972, Khivuk 1974, Bondar 1975).

Nikolai Khmara, within a short time of his conversion to Christianity, was tortured to death in Barnaul prison in January 1964, immediately after having been sentenced

to three years for his religious activities. Stepan Yagozinsky was a presbyter in the church at Akstafa in the Azerbaidzhan republic:

During a lunch break at work on 21 December 1972, he was struck three times above the right ear with the edge of an axe. Stepan Timofeyevich was held in great respect where he lived and enjoyed great authority at his place of work.

The death of Ivan Biblenko has been widely reported in the West. Biblenko was imprisoned from 1972-75. It seems that before his release, the KGB sought his collaboration. Because he refused to comply, after release he was put under surveillance, although, according to his friends, 'he was always joyful, singing psalms'. On 13 September 1975 he set out from his home in Krivoi Rog (Ukraine) to attend a Harvest Festival in the nearby town of Dnepropetrovsk. For thirteen days his relatives heard nothing more from him – then they received a telegram informing them of his death, allegedly in a road accident. When the family received the body for burial, they discovered a number of strange markings on it. The fact that the official version of his death contained inconsistencies only reinforced the believers' conclusion that: 'the death of Ivan Vasilievich Biblenko... cannot be accidental: it was deliberate. He died as a result of torture.'

On 2 May 1974 a group of young reform Baptists met to worship together in the woods outside Mogilev in Belorussia. At twelve noon they were surrounded by representatives of the local authorities and the meeting was broken up by shouting and gunshots. During this, seventeen-year-old Nikolai Loiko from Minsk was seriously wounded by a shot in the upper left chest. Bleeding heavily, he was taken by the authorities to hospital in Mogilev and underwent an operation. No further news has been received about the boy, thus it must be assumed that he has recovered.

In July 1972 there occurred the martyrdom of Vanya Moiseyev, a 20-year-old soldier from Moldavia. While serving his military duty in the Crimea, he incurred the growing wrath of his superiors for his fearless Christian witness. After a number of punishments which failed to break his spirit, he was eventually tortured and drowned in the shallows of the Black Sea. The incident has attracted such lively attention in the Soviet Union and worldwide that the Soviet authorities have attempted a widespread but unconvincing cover-up. The Baptist documents on the case are remarkable for their restrained quality, and the most recent letters testify to the purifying effect the incident has had on Baptist believers and, indeed, on some atheists. The death itself has been repeatedly confirmed by the Soviet authorities, especially by a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* (16 December 1972), though the cause of death has been contested.

In June 1971, the reform Baptists announced the setting up of a printing agency called 'The Christian'. Although they did not give further details (as is otherwise customary in their documents), they make it clear that the output of this press had already been significant: in August the same year, they spoke of 'over 40,000 copies of the New Testament, hymnbooks and other religious literature' having already been produced. In October 1974 the police discovered one of the secret printing presses on a farmstead in Latvia. Two young men and five young women were arrested, also a man who had acted as their driver. Several tons of paper were confiscated, and 15,000 completed New Testaments. These young people had dedicated their lives to the printing work, living and working virtually underground, expecting arrest at any time.

They were held in prison in Riga for several months, and then sentenced to various terms of imprisonment up to four years. They were charged under Article 162 of the Criminal Code dealing with 'prohibited trades' (although the Constitution guarantees freedom of the press). The owner of the farm, a German named Hauer, was arrested a few months after the others, and sentenced to four years. It is reported from Russia that he was not a believer before these events, but that he became a Christian at that time.

In June 1975 the five women were released under an amnesty in recognition of International Women's Year (although four other Christian women have remained in detention). Their first action after release was to petition the government on behalf of the men still in detention. The driver has also been released early, but it is reported that Hauer has been suffering considerable persecution in the camp, likewise 26-year-old Viktor Pikalov, one of the printers.

One item of Baptist literature which now appears off the printing press is the 'Bulletin of the Council of Prisoners' Relatives'. Founded in 1971, this is the organ of a Council dedicated to the gathering and dissemination of accurate and painstaking details on Baptists who have been imprisoned. The Council consists of wives and mothers of prisoners, and was first set up in 1964. It is only one outstanding example of that steady courage and faith which the reform Baptists have shown without interruption since their movement began.

There are Baptist communities in a number of other East European states. Baptists in Romania have displayed a particular activity in recent years. A profound movement of renewal, largely under the inspiration of Pastor Iosif Ton, has won notable concessions – and incurred serious wrath – from the authorities. The renewal has in turn led to considerable success in evangelism. This has caused a problem in the specific religious and national conditions of Romania, where Protestants are traditionally a small group, drawing partly on non-Romanian ethnic minorities. It could be that the gains of the current Baptist renewal in Romania (which has also affected other Christian denominations) will be swallowed up in a fresh persecution. Whatever the future holds, the Romanian example serves as an inspiration to many other East European Christians.

V THE JEWS AS A RELIGIOUS MINORITY

by Cornelia Gerstenmaier

In scarcely any case is the religious problem so closely bound up with the national as with the Jewish minority in the USSR. As Walter Kolarz writes: 'Much of the national oppression to which the Soviet Jews have been exposed is rooted in the communist assessment of Judaism as a reactionary religious force' (*Religion in the Soviet Union*, p.372). 'Judaism', says M.S. Belenky, a Soviet commentator, 'has been and still is an enemy of progress and of the class struggle of the workers. The synagogue has always been the greatest obstacle on the path to the development

of a truly democratic culture among the Jewish masses' (*Judaism*, p.199).

After 1917 the first attempt to secularize the Jews consisted in a large-scale campaign against the Jewish festivals such as Passover, *Rosh Hashanah* (New Year), *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement). Keeping the Sabbath – that is, refusing to work – was strictly punished from that time. Study of Hebrew – the language of the Old Testament and the theologians – was banned. The Jews, like the Catholics, were deprived of any central organization, so that contact with congregations abroad was made in practice impossible. Except for some small calendars and the Peace Prayerbook of 1956, there have been no Jewish religious publications since 1917. In 1922 the *Hedarim* and *Yeshivot* (the Jewish elementary and higher schools) were closed. However, they continued to operate more or less secretly until 1938.

Towards the end of the 1920s there began a massive persecution of the rabbis and the *magids* (travelling preachers). At the same time synagogues were closed down *en masse*, after they had been represented in anti-religious propaganda as meeting-places for 'profiteers', 'parasitical' and 'anti-Soviet elements'. At a time when the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany was reaching its peak, the Soviet authorities were persecuting the rabbis as alleged spies for fascist secret services.

Religious Jewry was badly hit (especially its important centre in Vilnius) when in 1939 with the annexation of the Baltic and the West Ukraine over two million Jews came under Soviet rule. When between 1941 and 1945 the German occupation forces physically annihilated the majority of East European Jewry, a part of the rabbinate threw in their lot with the Soviet authorities in the active struggle against the fascists. Like other religious communities, religious Jewry was subject to much less persecution by the state during the war. This soon changed. Zhdanov's cultural policy (1946-53) was chauvinistic and virtually anti-semitic. Religious Jewry inevitably came under pressure at a time when an official campaign raged against specifically Jewish traditions and customs.

After Stalin's death the repression lessened visibly again, even towards religious Jews. For the first time in decades, a Yeshivah (seminary) was able to be legally opened in Moscow in 1956 attached to the Moscow synagogue, even though the registration of students was limited and made extremely difficult. In April 1972 it was reported that the Moscow *Yeshivah* had been re-opened after six years (*Soviet Jewish Affairs*, 2/72 p.124).

In the summer of 1973 Ilya Essas entered the seminary as a student. Not long after that he and his family submitted an application for emigration to Israel. Aware of the attitude of the leaders of the synagogue towards emigration, he did not inform them of his intention, nor did he tell them that in November 1973 he received a refusal to his request. On 1 March 1974 he was arrested on the street by officials of the KGB and police. He was released the same evening. Three days later the president of the Moscow Jewish religious community and synagogue, Efraim Kaplun, said to him: 'As from today you will not set foot in this Yeshivah. You should be a Soviet man and not think of going to Israel.'

Also in 1956 there appeared for the first time since 1917 a Jewish prayerbook (*Molitvennik Mir*) in 3,000 copies. Hardly any copies seem to have reached the provinces; it is likely that most copies went abroad to demonstrate the 'tolerance' of the Soviet authorities.

During the last fifteen years the situation for religious Jews has progressively deteriorated, though less rapidly since 1966. Had the rate of decline remained constant, then, as the synagogue statistics set out below illustrate, there would have long since been no synagogue whatsoever in the Soviet Union. These figures are based on a table quoted in the periodical *Russia Cristiana* (Milan, January 1970, pp.53-4). They would seem to be a reasonably accurate estimate of the number of open synagogues, except possibly for the discrepancy between 1956 and 1960 totals. The latter comes from a Moscow Radio broadcast of 22 July 1960, which, if accurate, may mean that the former is too high. It seems more likely that Moscow Radio's figure was too low, so there would have been more closures in the early 1960s.

1917	3,000 (approximately)
1941	1,011
July 1956	450
July 1960	150
February 1964	97
July 1964	92
1966	62
1969	40/50

A book published for foreign consumption in 1967 ('USSR: Questions and Answers', *Novosti*) stated that there were 97 synagogues. The corresponding French edition spoke of 'about 100 synagogues and up to 300 prayer houses, and a seminary in Moscow'.

Eighteen of these synagogues are in Georgia alone, although only 2.5% of the Jewish population lives there. Seventeen more are in the Asiatic part of the USSR and in parts of the Caucasus outside Georgia. This means that almost half of all the synagogues are in the non-Russian parts of the Soviet Union, in areas containing less than 10% of the Soviet Jewish population. The region of Birobidjan, designated by Stalin as an area to which Jews would be moved, is almost completely secularized and has no synagogues at all, as far as is known.

Even if these statistics should prove to be not entirely accurate, we have documented information from Soviet sources about this progressive decline, as well as certain events which were reported by eye-witnesses. It was reported, for example, that when the campaign against Jews was intensifying, the synagogues of Malakhovka (near Moscow) and Tskhakaya (Georgia) were burned down in 1959 and 1962 respectively. Money collected by Soviet Jews to build new synagogues was confiscated by the authorities. Extreme pressure was exerted against those who attempted to exploit their legal right of forming councils of twenty (*dvadtsatki*) and petitioning for the opening of synagogues, which meant that Jewish congregations were deprived of the one freedom which Lenin had unambiguously bequeathed to religious people.

Leningradskaya Pravda ('Leningrad Truth') on 11 November 1961 reported the sentencing of three members of the Leningrad synagogue to four, seven and twelve years' imprisonment. They were accused of having contacts with Westerners and of having furnished the latter with 'anti-Soviet' material. In 1962 the Lvov synagogue was closed after a series of attacks in the Soviet press. The press campaign against religious Jews went so far as to assert that some had been guilty of ritual murder.

In 1964 T.K. Kichko's book, *Judaism Without Embellishment* (Kiev) was published. Its anti-semitic tone aroused protests from some Western Communist Parties and it was eventually officially condemned in the USSR also. Yet a brochure by Yu. Ivanov: *Beware! Zionism* (Moscow, 1968; second edition 1970) has, not unjustly, been compared by Russian and foreign Jews to the notorious 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion'.

The baking of *matzos* and kosher butchery was made increasingly difficult for believing Jews. In 1962 the baking of *matzos* – the 'counter-revolutionary bread' – was forbidden throughout the Soviet Union. In Moscow in 1963 three Jews were sentenced to prison for illegal baking of *matzos*. The packets of it which Western Jews sent their fellow-believers in the Soviet Union were seen as an 'ideological diversion'; they were frequently confiscated. Only after protest from abroad was the ban on baking of *matzos* lifted in some towns of the USSR in 1964-5.

Since the Six-Day War of 1967 the general situation of Soviet Jews has become even more acute. There has been a general hardening of domestic policy as an inevitable corollary of the extreme anti-Israeli position of the Soviet government. Any sectors of the population with anti-semitic instincts believe that they can give vent to them with impunity under such circumstances.

There are about 40,000 Jews in Lvov and they seem to have maintained two *minyanim* (prayer groups) even after the onslaught against their synagogue in 1962. Nevertheless, these were forcibly closed at the beginning of 1970 (*Jewish Chronicle*, 27 February 1970).

Today religious Judaism has been reduced to its lowest point in Soviet history. There are probably no more than 35-40 active rabbis. Moscow has half a million Jewish inhabitants – the largest number in any city of the world after New York – yet it has only one of its former eleven synagogues and two smaller prayer houses remaining open. According to recent reports, even the synagogue itself, seating 2,500 people, is endangered, since work has begun directly underneath it on the building of a new underground railway (*Jewish Chronicle*, 25 September 1970).

But there is one major new factor in the situation: Soviet Judaism, like Christianity, has recently found its voice. A large number of petitions have been reaching the West in recent months, mostly addressed to the UN and the Israeli government. In these Soviet citizens ask for active support for their attempts to emigrate to Israel. Most of the very recent pleas have come from Jews of Moscow, Leningrad, Georgia, Lithuania and Latvia. In many of these letters there is direct reference to religious discrimination; almost all the documents describe the struggle of the Soviet authorities against Jewish traditions that are thousands of years old. A number of these appeals have been published in the journal *Iskhod* ('Exodus') – modelled on the clandestine organ, *Chronicle of Current Events* – which first appeared in April 1970 and ran to four issues, until its editor emigrated to the West. It was later replaced by another journal *Herald of the Exodus*.

One of the most important documents that has so far reached the West is a comprehensive analysis of the present situation of the Jews in the USSR (circulated in translation by the Institute of Jewish Affairs in May, 1970). It states:

> The basic aspects of the Jewish question in the Diaspora are (a) discrimination; (b) assimilation ... In the post-war years ... discrimination, together with the liquidation of all forms of Jewish national existence in the USSR, resulted in national sentiments concentrating upon the only legally preserved institution, the synagogue. Against its own desire and even despite plain fear, the synagogue has become the centre of Jewish spiritual life. But it is unable to answer the people's questions and to satisfy their needs for the following fundamental reasons:
>
> a) The active hostility of the state towards all religions in the country is strongest perhaps against Judaism, the 'religion of the enemy from within' and has reduced the synagogue to a slavish degradation and to constant fear of repressions and, therefore, to a meek agreement to all the authorities' demands, however unjust.
> b) Advanced assimilation has raised a wall of linguistic and cultural alienation between the synagogue and the Jews. A Jew who does not know his own language, or his history, who has grown up in the traditions of Russian culture and who, moreover, has no opportunity for assistance or guidance by the Jewish religious community, moves, like a blind man, by his sense of touch. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that an intellectual of Jewish origin who is seeking religion, not infrequently turns to Russian Orthodoxy which, in a final analysis, means one more step on the road to assimilation.

When the greetings of seven Moscow Jews for *Rosh Hashanah* reached the American Jewish Congress in September 1970, this was probably the first letter from Soviet citizens to an American Jewish organization. They write:

> We are approaching the New Year with the confidence that in spite of the attempts to deprive us of our Jewishness and forcing us to live in, for us, an alien country, we will attain our rights to live in what is to us the holy land, the Land of Israel. And we repeat our centuries-old words with a renewed feeling of reality: 'Next year in Jerusalem' (*Jewish Chronicle*, 9 October 1970).

Of all religious (and of course ethnic) minorities in the Soviet Union, the Jews are those whose destiny is worst affected by their government's external policies. These, in their turn, may be partly affected by the worst side of Russian and Ukrainian nationalism. It is hard to foresee any substantial improvement while the Soviet 'anti-Zionist' campaign continues. It should be noted, however, that an increasing number of intellectuals dissociate themselves from anti-semitism in any form.

The fate of the Jews in other East European lands too has been fairly grim. In Prague, for example, Jews believe that Judaism, once a powerful factor in the intellectual and artistic flowering of the Czechoslovak capital, will be dead within 20 years. Of the estimated 360,000 Jews in Czechoslovakia before the Second World War only some 5,000 professing Jews remain. Today 1,200 Jews live in Prague, meeting only for worship in the two remaining synagogues. Two cantors do what they can to fulfil the spiritual needs of the community. There is no pressure among the remaining Jews to emigrate, there are no appeals to the West. Most of the population are old. Those who wanted to leave did so after the war or during the upheaval of 1968, when an estimated 4-4,500 Jews escaped. One pensioner has said: 'To leave would mean giving up our pension to face very uncertain lives abroad, cut off from out beloved Czechoslovakia. Here, provided we don't make trouble, we don't get trouble.' Since Czechoslovakia's Chief Rabbi, Dr. Richard Kedar, died at the age of 95 on 18 November 1970, there has been no successor to the top religious office.

VI MOSLEMS

by Kathleen Matchett

The Moslem population of the Soviet Union is largely concentrated in the Central Asian republics, with other groups in the Caucasus, Bashkiria and the Kazan area. According to A. Puzin (*Religion in the USSR*, Moscow, 1967) there is a 'Congress of Community Representatives' as the supreme Moslem body. It is not said how often this meets, but it held a conference in Tashkent in 1962. Beneath this central body there are four administrative districts, with muftis resident in Tashkent, Ufa, Buinaksk and Baku. At the recent death of Patriarch Alexi, these four muftis sent messages of condolence to the Patriarchate. Beyond such unusual events, and outside official publicity statements, almost nothing is heard of the activity of these administrations.

Another *Novosti* publication for foreign consumption, *Moslems in the Soviet Union*, says that Moslem monuments are being restored by the state as a part of its cultural heritage ('Historic Monuments', p.2). The same claim is made by Constantine de Grunwald in his *God and the Soviets*, (London, 1961) – quoting the words of the secretary-general of the Tashkent administration. However, in Puzin's book a Pakistani Moslem visitor is quoted as saying: 'Mosques are built and kept in repair by voluntary contributions of Moslems. The Moslem administration appoints imams and hatibs. The state does not in any way interfere in the internal affairs of religious communities.'

Whether or not there is a conflict here, there is certainly a sharp difference between the picture drawn by official publications for foreign readers, and the treatment of the Moslem faith as it emerges in Soviet publications for internal consumption. The book *Empirical Researches into Modern Religious Beliefs* (Moscow, 1967) contains a study of three areas in Azerbaijan republic. Of these areas it says: 'The mosques and theological schools are almost all closed today' (see *Osteuropa*, 7, 1969, p.A48). Janis Sapiets, a BBC commentator on Soviet affairs, said in December 1967 that the number of mosques had been decreased 'to twelve hundred by 1959 in the whole of Central Asia, compared with twelve thousand in the province of Turkestan alone before the Revolution' and that the clergy had been reduced 'to fewer than nine thousand for the whole of the Soviet Union, as against nine thousand in Bashkiria alone before the Revolution'. *Science and Religion* in September 1963 (p.75) stated that there were eighteen mosques and 69 imams (registered) for the whole of the Tadzhik republic (population 1½ million in 1959); in January the following year it said that there were then no more than 39 imams working there officially (p.22). In other words, nearly half of the imams had been barred from religious activity within a four-month period. It is well known, however, that such direct action merely drives religious activity underground. For example, *Empirical Researches* states that in Zakatalsky *raion*, only seven mullahs were registered, but that many more preached (*Osteuropa*, 7, 1969, p.A48).*

In 1974 a booklet was published in Moscow entitled *Legislation on Religious Cults*. This stated among other things that:

> Speculating on the ignorance and superstition of individual citizens, so-called wandering Moslem preachers in the Tadzhik and Kirgiz republics, in the Dagestan and Checheno-Ingush Autonomous republics and in many other places encourage believers to conduct rituals and participate in ceremonies degrading to human dignity... In the Narpaisky district of Samarkand region, for example, a certain Isayev declared himself a 'holy man'. Exploiting people's superstitions, he pretended to heal credulous folk, extorting large sums of money from believers. Isayev was sentenced for his illegal activities (pp.48-9).

The same booklet revealed that:

> At the beginning of 1971 in the Khodzhentsky district of Tadzhikistan an open session of the people's court considered the case of the 'new' Moslem preacher Yusupov, who for purposes of gain organized an illegal school for teaching children the Koran. Yusupov was severely punished for violating Soviet legislation (p.40).

Press treatment of the Moslems is chiefly directed to accusations about harmful traditions that have survived amongst Moslem groups. There is, for example, the Moslem attitude to women; frequent attacks are made on the practice of *kalym* (enforced payment of dowry). One article tells how a report of the kidnapping of a girl was investigated, only to find that the young couple had eloped in order to avoid the ruinous wedding presents demanded by their family. In April 1975 the central newspaper of the Turkmen republic announced that the Supreme Court in this republic has re-introduced into its Criminal Code an article designed to curb Moslem activity. This made the practice of *kaitarma*, keeping a bride in her parents' home until a dowry is paid, punishable by a maximum of two years detention.

Another recurrent theme is the blood-feuds allegedly demanded by the Moslem religion – the shedding of blood to wipe out a first offence, and so on through generations. This custom is apparently still strong, according to the Soviet press, among the Checheno-Ingush people. An article in *Science and Religion* (December 1966, pp.20-25) describes how many of these people were persuaded to accept reconciliation over outstanding feuds.

It is often said in the press that Moslem rituals do not favour hygiene and health. One significant article in *Science and Religion* (March 1970, pp.62-6) lists various diseases that may be contracted through the observance of different rituals, including syphilis, malaria, arterio-sclerosis and cancer. This is even worse than the accusations that have been made against Baptists that multiple baptisms are unhygienic!

One fact that must be mentioned in this context, although it does not at once appear to be part of it, is the cruel treatment of the Crimean Tatars. This ancient people's home, the Crimea, belongs to the traditionally Moslem lands of the USSR. In 1944 they were deported *en masse* by Stalin, who accused them of having collaborated with the Nazis. Many of them died on the way to Central Asia under the appalling conditions of the journey. Since then,

* *The Economist*, 22 January 1977, adds: The Koran was last printed in 1972, in an edition of 20,000 copies. In the whole of the Soviet Union there is only one training College for teachers of the Islamic religion. Obligatory alms to the poor are forbidden in Russia, although they are a pillar of the Moslem faith, and the once-in-a-lifetime journey to Mecca which every believer is supposed to make is barred to all but 25 or 30 carefully selected pilgrims a year.

But the Moslems do have one secret weapon; they multiply. Their numbers are rising 3 or 4 times as fast as the Soviet average. If they continue like this, by the year 2000 a third of the new recruits in the Soviet Army will be Moslems.

the survivors – numbering now several hundred thousand – have been consistently denied the right to return to their old homeland. Their traditional religious practices have been curtailed and they have protested about this – but this, as with the Jews, is a case of discrimination being practised against a whole ethnic group.

This raises the important point, however, of where religion ends and national entity begins. An article in *Science and Religion* of April 1967 has expressed this difficulty well: 'A word (Moslem) which indicates religious adherence is being used to define a group of nationalities, amongst whom this religion was once widely spread' (p.50). And again: 'An incorrect understanding of the word Moslem not only complicates the process of the withering away of religious rituals and customs, but also opens up loopholes for ideas of nationalism and panislamism' (p.51). This is an unusually frank treatment of a crucial point. The dilemma of the Soviet authorities with regard to Islam has been well defined by Janis Sapiets: 'Soviet policy towards Moslems is determined by two basic considerations: on the one hand, to convince foreign Moslems of Soviet friendship for Islam, and, on the other, to bring the day nearer when there will be no more Moslems left in the Soviet Union, because they will all have been "liberated from their religion", as the communists say. To reconcile these two aims requires a certain amount of ideological acrobatics . . .' This is apparent in the Soviet article mentioned above, and indeed the author seems to be aware of it towards the end when he remarks: 'In recent years our links with Arab countries have become significantly stronger. I have heard from those who have been there that they easily found a common language with the population of these countries: "As soon as they discovered that we were Moslems, our relations became most warm". Without wanting to say anything bad about our Arab friends, I would nevertheless like to point out that it did not become representatives of a socialist country to look to religious adherence as a basis for friendship between nations' (p.52). To appear as champions of religious liberty to people in the Middle East and in Orthodox communities, while sounding the death-knell for religion at home, will continue to involve the Soviet authorities in the most complicated ideological manoeuvres.

In Eastern Europe, Moslems are to be found particularly in Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Albania. On 1 June 1975 the Albanian communist party paper *Zeri i Popullit* denounced the survival of religious customs in the country. It noted that in some areas 'there have been occasions when religious services have been held, such as baptism or circumcision, as for example at Barbullush, or worshippers have requested Masses from ex-priests. They have celebrated the Easter Vigil, Bairam, the Feast of St. Nicholas, Easter and in some areas local religious celebrations, e.g. Ramadan and Lent, are kept.' The paper then described the emergence of religious activities in disguise. 'Instead of a cross, a laurel branch is used; baptism is celebrated in other ways (by gifts); name days are celebrated as birthdays; suppers and dinners are held for the "spirits of the dead".' Other indications of the survival of religious activities include the fall in attendance at canteens during Ramadan, religious literature still exists within the family and so on. 'New religious objects' are also manufactured. These include 'crosses from cloth, rosaries from olive stones, which are also peddled, blessings are found in the dowry of brides . . .' The paper called for an intensification of the struggle against religious remnants.

VII SURVIVAL OF THE BUDDHISTS

by Michael Bourdeaux

As readers of Walter Kolarz's excellent chapter on the Buddhists in *Religion in the Soviet Union* will know, few religious denominations were as highly organized when the new regime took over in the Soviet Union. Only a brutal use of force could destroy the existing structure which bound together half a million people into an integrated unit. The spiritual leader of the community, Avgan Dordzhiev, a man of outstanding calibre, believed, furthermore, that Buddhist teachings were compatible with the building of a 'socialist society' on the Leninist model. Stalin, always as severe to his near-sympathizers as to his outright opponents, crushed the whole structure of Soviet Buddhism with a severity which was experienced by few other religious groups in the USSR. The stock slander against the Buddhists in the 1930s, for which no evidence was ever produced, was that they were in the service of Japanese imperialism and were therefore enemies within. The Kalmyks suffered worst of all, being deported immediately after a decree abolishing their autonomous republic on 27 December 1943. They were not allowed to return until 1957 and not surprisingly found it impossible to rebuild their life along traditional lines.

This savage policy towards Buddhism has encouraged some commentators to go beyond the evidence, however. Nicholas Poppe wrote (*Religion in the USSR*, Munich, 1960, p.179) that the death of Dordzhiev in prison in 1938 'was the end of organized Buddhism in the USSR, of which not a single memorial remains . . . Nothing remains of the Buddhist temples in Buryatia and Kalmykia. The fate of Lamaism in the USSR deserves attention as an example of the complete destruction of a religious group as a whole.'

Not even the combined might of the Soviet secret police, atheist agencies and political commissars could in fact achieve such a result. The evidence of a revival in Soviet Buddhism has been mounting in recent years. Very importantly, a Buddhist Central Council was re-established after the Second World War, based at Ivolginsk, 25 miles south of Ulan-Ude in Buryatia. This has not had the right of calling representative assemblies, except for the purpose of electing first Lama Sharapov and then later Lama Gomboev as head of the Soviet Buddhists (Bandido Hambo Lama). The former election, in 1956, may have been rigged, for Lama Darmaev, the former holder of the office, had retired and his deputy had gone at the same time. Lama Sharapov at once became a most successful mouthpiece for the Soviet cause when required, especially in dealings with the Buddhist peoples of Asia.

There has been much more to the revival of Buddhism than the setting up of a propagandist Central Council. There may be now as many as 300 active lamas on Soviet territory (excluding the Mongolian People's Republic, which falls outside the framework of the present study) though Soviet sources usually say there are no more than 'a few dozen'. What is certain, however, is that 'pilgrims constantly come to the *datsan* (monastery) at Ivolginsk, arriving on horseback, in cars and by aeroplane' (*Science and Religion*, Moscow, No.7, 1961, p.7). *The Propagandist's and Atheist's Handbook* (Moscow, 1966, p.150) even admits that 'active religious propaganda in post-war years has succeeded in attracting a considerable number of young

people into the religious communities'. Whether or not the recent claim of the Bandido Hambo Lama that 'practically every village' in Buryatia still has its own lama (*The Times*, 6 October 1970) is true, these small pieces of Soviet testimony demonstrate that the question of religious freedom for the Soviet Buddhist is still an important one.

A recent Soviet book on the subject, *Buddhism*, by A.N. Kochetov (Moscow, 1968), which has very few pages on the present internal situation, strongly suggests that normal religious practices undertaken by the lamas are treated as illegal. This implies that village communities are not able to exercize their legal right and become registered:

> Lamas and those acting as such are infringing the legislation on religious cults; they carry out religious rites even in believers' houses and some practise traditional medicine. The lamas are resurrecting barbarous old customs, such as giving minors in marriage, collecting bride-money, etc. (p.156).

There has in recent years been a slanderous campaign against Buddhists in the Soviet press, though much of this has been in the local-language Buryat and Kalmyk newspapers which are not available in the West. But there have also been Russian-language articles, such as V.S. Ovchinnikov's 'The reactionary and anti-Soviet activities of the Buryat Lamaist priesthood' (published in the *Transbaikal Region Yearbook*, 1967). Towards the end of 1972, news began to reach the West of new reprisals against Soviet Buddhists and Buddhist scholars. The outstanding name was that of Bidya Dandaron, a world-renowned Buddhist scholar and expert on the Tibetan language. Dandaron was arrested in late August and tried in December; he was sentenced to five years imprisonment with confiscation of property, on charges of founding a Buddhist sect. Documents on the case have demonstrated that the charge arose from the misunderstanding of a Tibetan word used by the group that had formed around Dandaron, and which resembled the leader's name. In September four members of the group were arrested and put in mental hospital. A further eight were to be tried, but this case was subsequently dropped. A private letter to the West from a Soviet scholar close to these events stated 'The objective evidently is to liquidate all study of Buddhism ... This trial is patently the first act leading to much worse deeds. Times are worse than they have ever been since 1953.' Bidya Dandaron died in labour camp in October 1974.

The main burden of the literature on contemporary Soviet Buddhism which is available to us concerns the enforced rooting out of old customs and their replacement by new Soviet ones. Such campaigns are known to have had very limited success elsewhere and it seems most unlikely that the basic hostility of these Asian people to their European colonizers will have permitted them to embrace the ineptly-named 'new traditions' with anything approaching enthusiasm. One atheist article will talk of 'coloured ribbons fluttering in the breeze above the roofs of houses, adorned with texts of prayers and incantations against evil spirits' as a common feature in the villages of Buryatia (*Science and Religion*, No.7, 1961, p.32). Another will describe the success of the secular replacements for just such old customs. There is contradiction and confusion among Soviet atheists – but Buddhism persists. Recent testimony to this fact has been borne by a Soviet newspaper, *Uchitelskaya Gazeta* ('Teacher's Gazette'), which on 12 December 1972 spoke of the liveliness of Buddhism in Buryatia. The writer noted, for example, that 'When it was decided to send to the Mongolian Buddhist School for Monks a party of ten youths who had had secondary education, numbers of volunteers promptly appeared.' This article undoubtedly reflected the same official concern which resulted in the trial of Dandaron referred to above.

Running one's eye down a list of these Soviet rituals now being enforced among the Kalmyks (as published in *Questions of Overcoming Survivals of the Past and the Establishment of New Customs, Rituals and Traditions among the Peoples of Siberia*, ed. A.P. Okladnikov and D.D. Lubsanov, Ulan-Ude, 1968), one is amazed to see how singularly out of tune they are with anything traditional in the lives of these people: Pension Ceremony, handing over of identity cards, farewell to those drafted into the Soviet Army, honouring the veterans of labour. Even the harvest festival seems to be by the Christian Church out of the Communist Party, with a hammered emphasis on the successful fulfilment of norms. At the most solemn moments, objects associated with Soviet power are venerated. This is what young men about to be enlisted into the Soviet Army must do:

> The most emotional moment of the ritual is the bringing-in of the Red Banner. The future soldiers come up to it one by one, kneel down, kiss the red flag and pronounce the words of solemn promise (p.64).

The text quoted above makes no suggestion that religious feelings are in fact offended by such ceremonies, but where they are enforced this could well be the result.

VIII SOME OTHER MINORITIES

by Kathleen Matchett

Seventh-Day Adventists

The Seventh-Day Adventist movement reached Russia in the late nineteenth century; it is therefore one of the more established recent movements of Western origin to have taken root in that country. After the 1917 Revolution, there was a split in Adventist opinion regarding the new regime. One side declared its loyalty, another (according to recent Soviet sources) remained intransigently hostile to the Soviet system. This latter group has been called the 'Adventists of the True Remnant' and it is unknown how far it still exists. Insofar as it does, it is totally underground.

In the spring of 1976 some documents reached the West from unregistered Adventist communities in the Soviet Union. One document tells the story of two women on trial in Beregomet, Vizhnitsa district, in the southern Ukraine. In August 1974 Maria Florescul received a sentence of three years in detention and her friend Orysya Kondruk (the mother of two small children) two years. They were accused of hiding Orysya's nephew, Seryozha, a boy of nine years. Seryozha had been brought up in Orysya's family and did not want to go back to his father, an atheist who had never cared for him. The atheist public was hostile to Orysya's family and insisted on 'saving' the boy from the believers.

Another document tells of a search which took place in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, on 28 August 1975 in a few houses of the 'True and Free Adventists'. All the religious literature, including Bibles, was taken away. During the interrogation the people were threatened. KGB workers forced their way into the house of the son of Vladimir Shelkov

(chairman of the All-Union Christian Church of True and Free Adventists) during his absence and frightened his children.

It is not clear whether the 'True and Free Adventists' belong to the same group as the 'Adventists of the True Remnant' mentioned above, or whether this is a further fragmentation of the denomination.

The remainder of the movement, which accepted the new authority, has fared a little better, but still suffered badly during Khrushchev's anti-religious campaign. It has been estimated by Soviet sources to have around 20,000 members, but is probably larger. The Adventist central organization was banned in 1960 and the whole movement has occupied a penumbra between legality and illegality ever since. In some places, however, the Adventists are permitted to use the Baptist churches for worship on Saturdays, while in others they do have their own registered meeting places.

Numerous articles and books describe the Adventists as 'fanatics' and show that they are in conflict with the state over the question of religious education for children. Adventist parents are accused of keeping their children away from state schools – see for example an article in the newspaper *Komsomolets Tadzhikistana* ('Young Komsomol of Tadzhikistan' – 21 December 1969), where it is stated that Adventist parents have recently been brought to court for this alleged offence. No details are given of their conviction.

Maria Ivanovna Vlasyuk, an Adventist mother in the Ukraine, has been threatened with the loss of custody of her eldest child, Svetlana, aged ten. In April 1975 the court of the Starosinyavsky district decided that Svetlana should be put into care. Her religious upbringing was said to have 'deprived her of childhood joys': she had to join in religious rites, was kept from school on Saturdays, and suffered poor health as a result of her 'participation in a religious sect'. An appeal to a higher court only confirmed the decision, referring to the Law on Marriage and the Family, which states that parents must bring up their children in the spirit of the Moral Code of the Builder of Communism. After this, rumours spread that Mrs. Vlasyuk had 'sacrificed' Svetlana, who was still at home pending a final confirmation of the court's decision. Police visited the Vlasyuk home on 15 June, demanding to see Svetlana and promising they would not take her away. A crowd gathered, alarming the child, who ran away, while the mother fainted. No further news of the family is available at present.

The Estonian newspaper *Noorte Hääl* ('Voice of Youth' – 22 February 1967) reported that a thirteen-year-old schoolgirl had committed suicide by swallowing a pestkiller, allegedly because of tension between Adventist religious teaching at home and school attitudes. The article says that the father was brought to court, but no details are given.

Reports like this are typical of the accusations made against Adventists and others, with no right of reply. Adventists have been accused of such diversified 'crimes' as adultery and causing deaths through adult baptism in icy rivers.

The latter charge was made in a book on Soviet Adventists by A.V. Belov in 1964 (p.131). The whole of this book is written in a crudely polemical fashion, in contrast to the book by V.N. Lentin in 1966. This latter even gives a picture of Adventists as the most progressive Christian group in the Soviet Union. The publication of such a work (short though it was) clearly reflected a thaw in government policy towards the Adventists. This was, however, short-lived. In 1968 another book by Belov appeared, not even mentioning Lentin's writing. It was admittedly less crude than the 1964 publication, but nevertheless marked a hardening of tone yet again.

On 31 July 1970 the Latvian newspaper *Cina* ('Struggle') reported the trial in Riga of a Latvian Adventist for using a private printing press to produce religious literature. Printed in Russian, this literature was apparently used in the Russian Republic, the Ukraine and even in Poland. The man was given a sentence of three years.

As with other religious groups, Adventists have to suffer discrimination in secular life simply because they are believers. *Science and Religion* in June 1966 (p.8) condemned the authorities responsible for confiscating a house belonging to an Adventist family in the Ukraine (a traditional stronghold of this movement). In the same journal in February 1970, arbitrary discrimination is reported against Adventists in Moldavia, in the spheres of housing and work (pp.29-33). It is stated that local authorities disregard law and morality simply in order to keep religious elements out of their jurisdiction.

The *Chronicle of Current Events* in its June 1970 number reported the case of Galina Trofimova of Vitebsk, Belorussia. It describes how she was detained arbitrarily by the police, searched, and a large sum of money confiscated without receipt. Subsequent attempts to reclaim the money have failed. This happened in December 1969; in April 1970 their house was searched and religious literature confiscated. The same report mentions the trial of the leader of the Vitebsk Adventists, Mikhail Sych, in December 1969.

Kazakhstan Truth on 16 June 1971 wrote about an Adventist community which is claimed to have commissioned a large printing of religious literature from a state firm. The literature was printed in Alma-Ata and forwarded to Kuban but confiscated en route. The state printer was brought to court and undoubtedly members of the community as well.

Despite official statements that this movement is declining, it is apparent that it is very much alive and that the authorities are still severely worried about is gains, particularly among young people.

Pentecostals

The Pentecostal movement reached Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century. It first began really to spread in the 1920s. A wave of general religious persecution drove them largely underground in the 'thirties, but when the Union of Evangelical Christians and Baptists was created during the war, some Pentecostals joined. However, some of these later left the Union again. V.D.Grazhdan (*Who Are the Pentecostals?*, Alma-Ata, 1965) claims that an underground network was set up in the 'fifties in Kazakhstan (p.27). A.T. Moskalenko (*The Pentecostals*, Moscow, 1966) says that in 1956 an administrative body was set up in the Ukraine and even held a congress, at which Pentecostals were urged to leave the Union and form illegal congregations (pp.83-4). More recently, a press article has claimed that after the 'liberation' of Belorussia, a local Pentecostal pastor went to Vilnius to help organize

an 'illegal Pentecostal centre' there. (*Sovetskaya Belorussia*, 23 April 1972). As has been noted in the Introduction, Pentecostal congregations are *de facto* illegal. This is admitted by Soviet sources. *Basic Questions of Scientific Atheism* (Moscow, 1966, p.136) says that 'The congregation does not have a regular prayer house and gathers for worship in believers' homes, in the forest, fields, etc.' A number of recent publications have gone so far as to state that Pentecostals are forbidden by law, but have given no official basis for this. It was, however, stated in 1970 by a Soviet Baptist leader and by returning travellers from the USSR that fifteen Pentecostal churches have recently been registered.

It is generally admitted by Soviet sources that the Pentecostals are zealous in their worship and evangelization. 'Pentecostalism is one of the most active and fanatical religious sectarian movements' (*Questions of Scientific Atheism*, Vol.1, Moscow, 1966, p.231). 'The first thing that strikes you on acquaintance with the life of sectarian communities is the number and length of their prayer meetings. With the majority of Pentecostals, these are held daily or at least three times a week, in the evenings. In many congregations meetings are held twice daily: before work, usually from five to six a.m., and after work, from eight to ten p.m. Meetings last two, three or more hours. On Sundays and holidays Pentecostal meetings are held two or three times during the day, the total length reaching eight to twelve hours' (*Questions of Scientific Atheism*, Vol.2, Moscow, 1966, pp.285-6). 'The dynamism of the religious sects is noticeable from the age groups. Among the three sects, Evangelical Christians and Baptists, Jehovah's Witnesses and Pentecostals, the last two illegal sects are notably becoming younger in average age' (A.O. Yerishov: *Results of Sociological Investigations into Religious Observance*, Kiev, 1967; quoted in *Osteuropa*, Stuttgart, July 1969, p.A41). One recent press article complained that the Pentecostals in one Ukrainian village were so active that on the occasion of the death of one of their members, they held a procession through the village, unhindered by the local authorities (*Pravda Ukrainy* – 'Truth of the Ukraine' – 15 June 1971). Such is the testimony of Soviet writing to the recent activity of Pentecostals.

They are continually being accused in Soviet writing of being 'anti-social' or even hostile to the Soviet political regime: 'In many Pentecostal congregations individuals come forward as "prophets" and leaders who are hostilely inclined to the Soviet system, therefore sometimes in these congregations there are harmful political sermons' (*Basic Questions of Scientific Atheism*, ed. I.D. Pantskhava, Moscow, 1966, p.137). Occasionally accusations are even more violent, even going so far as to say that Pentecostals are guilty of ritual murder (Moskalenko, *op.cit.*, pp.7-8, quoting from the newspaper *Izvestia*). As the Soviet public is so starved of genuine information about religion, this often has the effect of increasing general hostility.

On 8 May 1969 *Truth of the East* reported the trial of eight Pentecostals in the town of Angren. Among them were the leaders V.P. Frizen and P.G. Shmidt. The accused were charged with 'organizing illegal meetings of the sect, enticing minors into it, injuring the health of believers through fanatical rites and drawing believers away from participation in social life and from fulfilling their civic duty'. How did they achieve these things? 'In the experts' findings it was stated that the fanatical rites of the sect – the holy salutation, the washing of feet, the breaking of bread, speaking with God in tongues, and others not only facilitated the spread of infectious diseases, but also had a harmful effect on the human psyche.' How did the court prove that believers had been drawn away from society? By quoting Frizen's daughter, Vera, who testified that 'of all books she preferred to read the Bible'.

It was revealed that Frizen had already been in prison for five years. On this occasion he was again sentenced to five years, in strict-regime camps, with confiscation of property. Shmidt also received five years; the others – two or three.

In Tallin, capital of Estonia, a young fitter at a building works was noticed, first for his good behaviour and work, then for his religious influence on his workmates. It turned out that Petya Babak was a youth worker in his own Pentecostal group. He was brought before a works tribunal, which advised him to cease his religious activity in the factory, or to face more severe punishment (*Molodyozh Estonii* – 'Youth of Estonia' – 6 June 1972).

The Belorussian newspaper *Banner of Youth* on 20 October 1970 wrote about the community in Pinsk. The man in whose home this unregistered group was meeting, Nikolai Abramchuk, has been sentenced. The article also stated that many Pentecostals have ended up in a local mental hospital. This is perhaps an official admission of the alarming new policy being used against 'dissidents' of all kinds, including Christians. It also happened with the Baptist Ivan Lazuta of Belorussia, and the Orthodox layman G.M. Shimanox has graphically described his incarceration for religious reasons in a mental institution.

A Pentecostal girl, Anya Paramonova, who lived in Perm, was offered a flat to live in if she was prepared to give up her faith. She refused. When she took an exam for promotion in her job, she was failed because she was a Pentecostal (*Science and Religion*, November 1966, p.30). The government daily newspaper *Izvestiya* (28 February 1968) reported how the children of a Pentecostal mother were taken away from her. Her husband divorced her and re-married.

In January 1963, a group of 32 Pentecostals from Chernogorsk in Siberia, including fourteen children, pushed past the Soviet guards into the American Embassy in Moscow. There they requested political asylum and assistance to emigrate – without success. Nothing more was heard of these Christians for a number of years, until fresh news made it clear that they were still persisting in their efforts to leave Russia. In the meantime, a considerable section of the Chernogorsk congregation had moved to the port of Nakhodka in the Soviet Far East (near Vladivostok). From there they had hoped to leave Russia by ship, but again to no avail. In recent months and years these two groups, separated by thousands of kilometres but connected by family and congregational ties, have been making joint petitions regarding emigration. Acting as spokesmen for the congregations were Yevgeni Bresenden and Grigori Vashchenko, both in Nakhodka. Not long ago Bresenden succeeded in emigrating to the West, where he is now attempting to help his fellow-believers through publicity. The desire of these Pentecostal Christians for emigration may have been encouraged by the Jewish and German emigration of recent years. It undoubtedly reflects a deep longing to escape the debilitating pressures on Christian life in the USSR, and to be able to practise the faith in peace and freedom.

In March 1973 three Pentecostal Christians, Stepan Salamakha, Alexei Zhiltsov and Vasili Pererva were

sentenced to five years each, in the town of Lisichansk (Ukraine). Two had additional sentences of three years in exile. In July the same year G. Orzhekhovsky and A. Bondarenko, both invalids, were sentenced in the town of Nikolayev, also in the Ukraine. In June the following year, in the same town, Mikhail Khlevnoi was sentenced to five years in the camps, followed by three years in exile. Among the accusations brought against him was the conduct of 'fanatical rituals' including 'prayers in other tongues, foot-washing and breaking of bread'.

Pastor Ivan Fedotov of Maloyaroslavets (Kaluga region) was last arrested in August 1974 and sentenced in April 1975 to three years in labour camp. He had previously been sentenced to ten years in 1960, on a trumped-up charge of ritual murder. Protesting his loyalty to the Soviet state (which he had been accused of 'slandering'), Fedotov burst out at his recent trial:

> Why are you trying to alienate me from Soviet society? Do what you like to me, send me away for another ten years, but don't tear me apart as a person, as a citizen. Don't torment my soul.

In 1974 a young man in Dokuchayevsk (Ukraine), Valeri Andreyev, was converted from a life of drug addiction, hooliganism and parasitism. His life quickly took on a different character, he got a job and began for the first time to help his mother. When the enterprise where he worked as an unskilled labourer found out that he was a believer, he was immediately dismissed. Valeri applied for another job. During the preliminary medical examination, the doctor asked him whether he resented having been dismissed from his previous job. Valeri replied that God had healed him from the disease of resentment. The doctor then sent him for psychiatric treatment. He was in hospital from 16 December 1974 until 14 February 1975, and was given injections of triftozin and haloperidol.

In February 1975, a slanderous article was published in a Vinnitsa newspaper, attacking a young Pentecostal Christian, Eduard Darmoros. The article alleged that, while a music student in Kiev, Darmoros had incited another man to commit ritual murder. Darmoros appealed to the editor, asking that he prove these facts. The editor replied that he was unable to do so. Darmoros then asked him to print a denial of the story, which was causing him much unpleasantness. The newspaper refused to do this, but promised him a certificate disclaiming the facts that had been cited in the article. The certificate was never supplied. This is a recent example of the unprincipled use of slander in the media, when the Christian has absolutely no right of reply or redress.

There are larger or smaller Pentecostal communities in most East European countries. In Bulgaria, where the Orthodox Church is the largest denomination, Pentecostals represent the largest Protestant grouping. It has been reported that here, where conditions most closely approximate to those of the Soviet Union, the authorities have made extensive use of the weapon of fear. By one means or another, they have sown suspicion between Pentecostal believers (and presumably in other denominations also), resulting in a far-reaching neutralization of effective church life.

Jehovah's Witnesses

This movement reached the Soviet Union as late as 1940. It spread, according to F.I. Fedorenko (*Sects, Their Faith and Practice*, p.200) from the Western provinces of the Ukraine and Belorussia. W. Kolarz (*Religion in the Soviet Union*, p.340) says that it also came in with Soviet prisoners returning from German camps where they had met Jehovah's Witnesses.

The sect is treated as strictly illegal, but there is no statement to this effect in the published Soviet law. The recent book by E.M. Bartoshevich and Ye. I. Borisoglebsky, published in Moscow in 1969, says that 'the real reason for this abnormal situation is their hostile position with respect to the socialist countries' (p.166). It is argued that both Adventists and Baptists have their headquarters in America, so this is not *ipso facto* a reason for refusing registration. Fedorenko records the successive 'unmaskings' in 1947, 1952, 1957 and 1960, of the Witnesses' 'East European Bureau' in Lvov. Each time, the organization re-emerged with new personnel. One of those mentioned as being among the staff before the 1947 arrests is P.G.Zyatek (pp.202-3). Two later press articles claim that this man (the name is variously spelled Zyatek or Zyatik, although the writers are supposedly ex-leaders of the Witnesses themselves) was deputed to lead the Soviet movement, but that an opposition group formed itself, accusing him of collaboration with the authorities. This finally led to a split in 1959.

The recurrent Soviet line is that the Witnesses' Brooklyn headquarters is a religious cover for political activity, and anti-communist activity at that. The Witnesses are regularly linked with the CIA. Although Soviet writers ridicule the teachings of the Witnesses, the thrust of their attack is almost always political. One article, however, has suggested that the movement received instructions to relax its internal discipline because of 'socialist conditions'.

The continual hazard to Soviet believers, that of slander in the press without right of reply, applies very much to the Jehovah's Witnesses. They have been accused of political hostility, anti-social activity (persuading members not to join collectives, read newspapers or visit the cinema), maltreatment of children (by keeping them back from school, and even beating them when they join communist youth organizations), stealing state property (for example, printing and building materials), espionage, reprisals against those who leave the movement, and even murder.

This last charge was made in an article in the newspaper *Pravda Ukrainy* ('Truth of the Ukraine') on 13 June 1969. The subject of the article was a film which had been made about the Witnesses, entitled 'Made in America'. This film apparently showed scenes from trials of Witnesses. *Kazakhstan Truth* (16 June 1970) reported on a further film this time 'unmasking' both Jehovah's Witnesses and reform Baptists.

Persecution has by no means been limited to press accusations. *Science and Religion* (February 1966, p.2) recounted how a man was hounded out of his factory after an unsuccessful attempt to 're-educate' him. Official action has frequently gone to court level. There have been many trials of Jehovah's Witnesses in recent years. *Truth of the East* referred on 12 June 1969 to a trial of Witnesses in Angren; but in not untypical Soviet style, the reader is not told exactly how many of those mentioned were in

fact in the dock, or what their sentence was. However, details are given of several individuals who had previously been sentenced. One is Vasili Russu, who was also mentioned in *Kazakhstan Truth* (16 March 1968). The latter article says that he had already been sentenced twice, the more recent one says that it was three times: once for desertion during the last war, once for anti-social activity and once for parasitism. In another case a father and four sons are mentioned, all sentenced for breaking Soviet laws (apparently because the father said his sons would not serve in the army). It is recorded that literature has been confiscated from Witnesses, as well as tapes and tape recorders. The *Chronicle of Current Events* No.15 (August 1970) gives a list of women detained in camp 385/3, Mordovia, among them two Jehovah's Witnesses. Yevgenia Kislyachuk was about 65 and was to complete a ten-year sentence in 1972. Vera Bozhar was 46 and was to complete seven years in camp in December 1970, to be followed by five years' exile. Both women were sentenced for belonging to the Witnesses.

On 11 March 1972, a meeting of Jehovah's Witnesses in a village in Lithuania was broken up and participants arrested. The village was the home of Vilius Arajus, leader of the group. Those arrested included two participants from Latvia. About a year later, there was a trial in Klaipeda, involving at least some of those arrested in 1972. It is not clear whether they had been detained all this time (according to Soviet law, prisoners should be brought to trial within three months of arrest, at the very latest within nine months). The Russian-language daily *Sovetskaya Litva* ('Soviet Lithuania') described the trial on 1 April 1973 – nine people were sentenced to terms ranging from five to two years. The original arrest was described in the Lithuanian-language Party newspaper *Tiesa* on 5 August 1972.

The whole picture built up by Soviet atheist writers of the Jehovah's Witnesses is that of a fanatical underground political movement. But at the same time, a few sources do suggest that the majority of members are really honest workers who have merely been deceived by overseas manipulators. Gerald Brooke, the British lecturer who spent over four years in a Soviet camp, testifies to the scrupulous attention paid by the Witnesses to fulfilling their work norms while doing their sentences. It is difficult to be precise about the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Soviet Union while the evidence remains so one-sided. This very one-sidedness is, however, itself evidence of discrimination.

Adventists, Pentecostals and Jehovah's Witnesses are all showing astonishing resilience in the face of a concerted effort by Soviet power to root them out completely.

CONCLUSION

The question of whether religious minorities in the Soviet Union are more threatened now than they were fifteen years ago may be endlessly debated. Soviet methods are less physical now, generally speaking, than they were under Khrushchev, but there is greater subtlety in the methods of persuasion. The evidence set out above demonstrates conclusively that the Soviet State has not even begun to reconsider its intention of ultimately rooting religion out of society altogether. Furthermore, the Soviet laws are designed to facilitate this, which means that a major infringement of human rights is written into the statute book. There is no clause of the basic 1929 Law designed to give the believer true rights or to ensure the implementation of the Leninist principle of separation of church and state. Nevertheless, it is unquestionable that Soviet people are becoming more aware of the rights they do possess, which may mean there will be less illegal discrimination against believers in housing and at work in the future.

Today's world has a long and sorry list of countries and situations where there is discrimination against minorities – ethnic, linguistic, religious, social. Some of the most glaring of these have received extensive publicity in recent years and the cases are written on the conscience of the world. Decades of injustice to the religious believer in the Soviet Union have resulted in remarkably little publicity, thanks partly, in recent years, to the clever exploitation by the Soviet regime of the international contacts which it has encouraged some of its Churches to promote, and partly to a fear that publicity might further harm those already in difficulties. Now the real situation has been extensively documented. The Soviet believer has begun to implore publicity in countries other than his own, and when this has been granted it appears to have helped – or at least not to have hindered – the situation.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

A – General

Religion in the Soviet Union, by Walter Kolarz, London, 1961.

Religion in the USSR, ed. Robert Conquest, London, 1968.

Religion in the USSR, ed. Boris Iwanow, Munich, 1960.

Religion and the Soviet State, ed. M. Hayward and W. Fletcher, London, 1969.

Religion and the Search for New Ideals in the USSR, ed. W. Fletcher and A. Strover, New York and London, 1967.

Religion und Atheismus in der UdSSR, by Nadeshda Theodorowitsch, Munich, 1970.

'Freedom of Worship and the Law' by Peter Reddaway in *In Quest of Justice*, ed. Abraham Brumberg, New York 1970.

'The Soviet Treatment of Dissenters and the Growth of a Civil Rights Movement' by Peter Reddaway in *Rights and Wrongs*, ed. Christopher Hill, London, 1969.

Underground Russia, ed. Peter Reddaway, London and New York, 1971 (based on the *Chronicle of Current Events*).

Voprosy Nauchnogo Ateizma ('Questions of Scientific Atheism'); series published in Moscow, Nos. 1-19 so far appeared, 1966-76.

Aspects of Religion in the Soviet Union 1917-1967, ed. Richard H. Marshall Jr., Chicago and London, 1971.

Religion and Soviet Foreign Policy 1945-1970, by William C. Fletcher, London, 1973.

Church, State and Opposition in the USSR, by Gerhard Simon, London, 1974.

Discretion and Valour: Religious Conditions in Russia and Eastern Europe, by Trevor Beeson, London, 1974.

Religion and Atheism in the USSR and Eastern Europe, by B. Bociurkiw and J.W. Strong (eds.), Toronto, 1975.

Soviet Persecution of Religion in Ukraine, World Congress of Free Ukrainians, Toronto, 1976.

B – Russian Orthodox Church

Christians in Contemporary Russia, by Nikita Struve, London, 1967.
Patriarch and Prophets: Persecution of the Russian Orthodox Church Today, by Michael Bourdeaux, London and Oxford, 1975.
The Recent Activities of the Moscow Patriarchate Abroad and in the USSR, by John Dunlop, St. Nectarios Educational Series, Seattle, 1970.
Pravoslaviye ('Orthodoxy'), by V. Ye. Titov, Moscow, 1957.
Sovremennoye Pravoslaviye ('Modern Orthodoxy'), by N.S. Gordienko, Moscow, 1968.
The New Russian Revolutionaries, by John Dunlop, Belmont, Mass., 1976.
An Early Soviet Saint: The Life of Father Zachariah, by one of his spiritual daughters, London, 1976.

C – Baptists

The Christians from Siberia, by J.C. Pollock, London, 1964.
Religious Ferment in Russia, by Michael Bourdeaux, London, 1968.
Christian Appeals from Russia, ed. R. Harris and X. Howard-Johnston, London, 1969.
Faith on Trial in Russia, by Michael Bourdeaux, London, 1971.
Baptizm, by L.N. Mitrokhin, Moscow, 1966.
Aida of Leningrad, ed. Michael Bourdeaux and Xenia Howard-Johnston, London and Oxford, 1976.
Vanya, by Myrna Grant, Eastbourne, 1975.
Three Generations of Suffering, by Georgi Vins, London, 1976.
Young Christians in Russia, by Michael Bourdeaux and Katharine Murray, London, 1976.

D – Other Christian Denominations

'Old Believers' by Michael Bourdeaux, published in weekly encyclopaedia *Man, Myth and Magic*, London, 1970-71.
Staroobryadchestvo v Proshlom i Nastoyashchem ('Old Believers Yesterday and Today'), by V.F. Milovidov, Moscow, 1969.
Sekty, Ikh Vera i Dela ('The Sects, Their Faith and Practice'), by F.I. Fedorenko, Moscow, 1965.
Adventizm, by A.V. Belov, Moscow, 1968.
Adventisty Sedmogo Dnya ('Seventh-Day Adventists'), by V.N. Lentin, Moscow, 1966.
Pyatidesyatniki ('Pentecostals'), by A.T. Moskalenko, Moscow, 1966.
Kto Takiye Pyatidesyatniki? ('Who are the Pentecostals?'), by V. Grazhdan, Alma-Ata, 1965.
Pentecost Behind the Iron Curtain, by Steve Durasoff, Plainfield, N.J., 1972.
Svideteli Iegovi ('Jehovah's Witness'), by E.M. Bartoshevich and Ye. I. Borisoglebsky, Moscow, 1969.
Mennonity, by V.F. Krestyaninov, Moscow, 1967.

E – Non-Christian Religions

The Jews in Soviet Russia since 1917, ed. Lionel Kochan, London, 1970.
Iudaizm, by M.S. Belenky, Moscow, 1966.
The Jewish Religion in the Soviet Union, by Joshua Rothenberg, New York 1971.
Islam in the Soviet Union, by Alexandre Bennigsen and Chantal Lemercier-Quelquejay, London, 1967. (out of print)
Islam, by R.R. Mavlyutov, Moscow, 1969.
Buddhas Wiederkehr und die Zukunft Asiens, by Ernst Benz, Munich, 1963. (out of print)
Buddizm, by A.N. Kochetov, Moscow, 1968.

SELECTED FILMS

Films listed in THE TELCO REPORT on "Religion in the USSR". (B-Broadcast, D-Distributer, P-Producer).

713149 *Christ is Risen (Christus ist auferstanden)* (45 minutes, colour) shows Easter night in Moscow Cathedral. Some 5,000 worshippers fill the church, 10,000 listen outside. The service is celebrated by Metropolitan Pitirm. B-12 Apr. 1971 NDR/Hamburg. D-Polytel International, Tonndorfer Hauptstrasse 90, 2 Hamburg 70.

714835 *Evangelical Christian Baptists* (30 minutes, monochrome) traces the 200-year history of the Order's existence in the USSR and shows how the church has survived in a Communist society. It has its own journal, hymn book and has published four editions of the Bible. P-Central Documentary Film Studios, Moscow. D-ETV, 2 Doughty Street, London W.C.1.

731641 *The Russian Orthodox Church* (49 minutes 56", colour) examines how the church is allowed to function, worship in Moscow and the monastery of Zagorsk, and includes an interview with Archbishops Filavet and Juvenal. P-Oy Mainos TV Reklam AB, Pasilankatus 44, 00240 Helsinki 24, Finland.

744028 Interview with Anatoly Krasnov in Russian (13 minutes 38", colour), the first Christian publicist who has been exiled from the USSR after having been in camps for years. He explains that millions of Protestants are still in camps and talks about Catholic resistance against the government. P-NOS, Postbus 10, Hilversum, Holland.

760920 *Religion in Russia* (21 minutes, colour) takes a comprehensive look at her five major religions. D-International Film Foundation, Inc. 475 Fifth Avenue, Suite 916, New York, 10019.

Films on Soviet Jews:

751871 *Jews in the Soviet Union* (11 minutes, 30", colour) shows the religious and cultural life of Jews in Moscow and Donetsk. It includes an interview with Chief Rabbi Jacob Fishman and footage of the founding of the autonomous Jewish Republic of Birobidjan. B-24 Apr. 75 Sender Freies Berlin (in Kontraste programme). D-Polytel International, Tonndorfer Hauptstrasse 90, 2 Hamburg 70.

755258 Denis Tuohy interviews Dr. I. Jackobovits, Chief Rabbi of Britain, about his forthcoming trip to the USSR to visit Jewish communities and about the plight of Soviet Jews (4 minutes 41", colour). B-10 Dec. 75 BBC (in Tonight) D-BBC Enterprises, Villiers House, The Broadway, Ealing, London W5 2PA.

X7624i *A Calculated Risk* includes interviews with Soviet Jews who had been prevented from leaving the USSR. The film was part of a consignment confiscated by the Soviet authorities. B-14 June 76 Granada (in World in Action programme), 36 Golden Square, London W1R 4AH.

The above film list was provided by Richard S. Clark, TELCO, 19 Gurnells Road, Seer Green, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 2XJ, UK.

Enquiries regarding these films should be addressed to the producer, broadcaster or distributor, listed, and not to TELCO.

A report prepared for the Minority Rights Group by Michael Bourdeaux, director of the Centre for the Study of Religion and Communism, and two associates, Kathleen Matchett and Cornelia Gerstenmaier.

The Centre for the Study of Religion and Communism was founded in September 1970 as an independent research organization for initiating study and promoting the knowledge of all aspects of the relations between religion and communism. It is undertaking a broad research programme. It reflects a wide range of interests in the religious and academic communities and the Centre dissociates itself from any specific ecclesiastical or political viewpoint.

The photograph on the cover is of an unregistered meeting of reform Baptists in Ukraine, 1970

This report was first published in December 1970

Revised August 1973 and May 1977

Printed by Expedite Graphic Ltd., 51 Tothill Street, London SW1H 9LQ, England

The Reports already published by the Minority Rights Group are:

- **No. 1 Religious minorities in the Soviet Union (Revised 1977 edition) (price £1.20)**
  — 'systematically documented and unemotionally analysed'[1]; 'telling'[2]; 'outstandingly good and fairminded'[3].
- **No. 2 The two Irelands: the double minority — a study of inter-group tensions (Revised 1979 edition)**
  — 'a rare accuracy and insight'[4]; 'lucid . . . without bias'[5]; 'pithy, well-informed . . . the best 24 pages on Ireland's contemporary political problems that have found their way into the permanent literature . . . excellent'[6].
- **No. 3 Japan's minorities: Burakumin, Koreans and Ainu (New 1974 edition) (price 30p)**
  — 'sad and strange story . . . a frightening picture'[7]; 'expertly diagnosed'[3].
- **No. 4 The Asian minorities of East and Central Africa (up to 1971)**
  — 'brilliantly sketched'[12]; 'admirably clear, humane and yet dispassionate'[8].
- **No. 5 Eritrea and the Southern Sudan: aspects of wider African problems (New 1976 edition) (price 45p)**
  — 'clear, concise and balanced'[9]; 'an exemplary account'[3].
- **No. 6 The Crimean Tatars, Volga Germans and Meskhetians: Soviet treatment of some national minorities (Revised 1980 edition)**
  — 'brilliant'[11]; 'great accuracy and detail'[12].
- **No. 7 The position of Blacks in Brazilian and Cuban Society (New 1979 edition)**
  — 'another important contribution . . . from this increasingly important group'[1].
- **No. 8 Inequalities in Zimbabwe (New 1979 edition)**
  — 'outlines all the thorny problems'[30].
- **No. 9 The Basques and Catalans (New 1977 edition) (también en castellano) ('The Basques' aussi en français, auch auf deutsch)**
  — 'very valuable'[15].
- **No.10 The Chinese in Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia (price 45p)**
  — 'a well-documented and sensible plea'[14].
- **No.11 The Biharis in Bangladesh (Revised 1977 edition)**
  — 'a significant fusion of humane interest and objective clear-headed analysis'[17]; 'a moving and desperate report'[18].
- **No.12 Israel's Oriental Immigrants and Druzes (Revised 1980 edition) (price £1.20)**
  — 'timely'[8].
- **No.13 East Indians of Trinidad and Guyana (Revised 1980 edition)**
  — 'excellent'[19].
- **No.14 Roma: Europe's Gypsies (Revised 1980 edition) (aussi en français) (also in Romani)**
  — 'the first comprehensive description and analysis of the plight'[18]; 'one of the worst skeletons in Europe's cupboard'[14].
- **No.15 What future for the Amerindians of South America? (Revised 1977 edition) (aussi en français) (price £1.20)**
  — 'a horrifying indictment . . . deserves a very wide readership'[20].
- **No.16 The new position of East Africa's Asians (Revised 1978 edition)**
  — 'a comprehensive analysis'[9].
- **No.17 India, the Nagas and the north-east (Revised 1980 edition) (price £1.20)**
  — 'India has still not learned for itself the lesson it taught Britain'[16]; 'a lucid presentation of the very complex history'[21].
- **No.18 Minorities of Central Vietnam: the autochthonous people (New 1980 edition) (aussi en français) (price £1.20)**
- **No.19 The Namibians of South-West Africa (New 1978 edition)**
  — 'excellent . . . strongly recommended'[22].
- **No.20 Selective genocide in Burundi (aussi en français)**
  — 'a report exemplary in its objectivity, thoroughness and force'[14]; 'a most valuable report'[23].
- **No.21 Canada's Indians (Revised 1977 edition)**
  — 'excellent'[1]; 'fascinatingly explained'[14].
- **No.22 Race and Law in Britain and the United States (New 1979 edition)**
  — 'this situation, already explosive, is likely to be aggravated by the current economic plight'[24].
- **No.23 The Kurds (Revised 1977 edition)**
  — 'this excellent report from the Minority Rights Group will stir consciences'[1]; 'a model'[10].
- **No.24 The Palestinians (Revised 1979 edition) (price £1.20)**
  — 'particularly welcome'[1]; 'a calm and informed survey'[16].
- **No.25 The Tamils of Sri Lanka (Revised 1979 edition)**
  — 'a warning that unless moderation and statesmanship are more prominent, terrorism could break out'[18].
- **No.26 The Untouchables of India**
  — 'discrimination officially outlawed . . . remains as prevalent as ever'[18].
- **No.27 Arab Women (Revised 1976 edition) (aussi en français)**
  — 'skilfully edited, treads sensitively through the minefield'[25].
- **No.28 Western Europe's Migrant Workers (Revised 1978 edition) (aussi en français) (auch auf deutsch)**
  — 'compassionate . . . plenty of chilling first-hand detail'[14].
- **No.29 Jehovah's Witnesses in Central Africa (price 45p)**
  — 'a terrible fate . . . deserves widespread protest'[26].
- **No.30 Cyprus (New 1978 edition)**
  — 'a detailed analysis'[19].
- **No.31 The Original Americans: U.S. Indians (New 1980 edition)**
  — 'excellent'[12]; 'timely and valuable . . . well-researched and highly readable'[27].
- **No.32 The Armenians (Revised 1978 edition) (aussi en français)**
  — 'an able and comprehensive account'[18].
- **No.33 Nomads of the Sahel (Revised 1979 edition)**
  — 'cogent and convincing'[18].
- **No.34 Indian South Africans**
  — 'an outstanding contribution'[9].
- **No.35 Australia's policy towards Aborigines 1967 — 1977**
  — 'promised benefits to the Aborigines have been insignificant'[18].
- **No.36 Constitutional Law and Minorities**
  — 'possibly the MRG's most important single report . . . it can hardly be faulted'[27].
- **No.37 The Hungarians of Rumania (aussi en français)**
  — 'fair and unbiased'[14]; 'compulsive reading'[22].
- **No.38 The Social Psychology of Minorities**
  — 'must be greeted with enthusiasm . . . extremely important'[13].
- **No.39 Mexican - Americans in the U.S. (también en castellano)**
  — 'another excellent pamphlet from MRG'[28].
- **No.40 The Sahrawis of Western Sahara**
  — 'informative . . . vivid'[21].
- **No.41 The International Protection of Minorities**
  — 'Timely'[31].
- **No.42 Indonesia, West Irian and East Timor**
  — 'well-documented'[29].
- **No.43 The Refugee Dilemma : International Recognition and Acceptance**
  — 'The outlook appears to be a cumulative nightmare'[14].
- **No.44 French Canada in Crisis: A new Society in the Making?**
- **No.45 Women in Asia**
- **No.46 Flemings and Walloons in Belgium**
  — 'We have come to expect a high standard from MRG reports, and the 46th does not disappoint. Hopefully its lessons will not be confined to those interested in Belgium'[32]
- **No.47 Female circumcision: facts, programmes and proposals (aussi en français) (price £1.20)**

[1]The Internationalist; [2]New Society; [3]Times Lit. Supplement; [4]Belfast Newsletter; [5]Irish Post; [6]International Affairs; [7]Sunday Independent; [8]S.Asian Review; [9]The Friend; [10]Afro-Asian Affairs; [11]E. African Standard; [12]Sunday Times; [13]New Community; [14]The Times; [15]Information; [16]The Observer; [17]Irving Horowitz; [18]The Guardian; [19]Peace News; [20]The Freethinker; [21]The Spectator; [22]The Geographical Magazine; [23]New World; [24]Melbourne Age; [25]The Economist; [26]Neue Zürcher Zeitung; [27]Resurgence; [28]Feedback; [29]Time Out; [30]Evening Standard; [31]Tribune of Australia; [32]The Scotsman.

Copies, price 75p each, except where otherwise stated, plus postage and packing (25p by surface mail), are obtainable from M.R.G., 36 Craven Street, London WC2N 5NG, or good bookshops (ISSN:0305-6252)
Please also inform MRG if you would like to make a standing order for its future reports
Future reports will be £1.20 each; subscription rate, £5.00 (US $10) for the next five reports, post free.

10/80