

# News in Brief

## ALBANIA

### *Death of Bishop Coba*

Bishop Coba, Apostolic Administrator of Shkodër, died in labour camp in April 1979. He was caught celebrating the Easter Mass in the camp in which he was confined. He was severely beaten and found dead the next day. (*Albanian Catholic Bulletin*, Summer 1980)

### *Internment and Expulsion as Administrative Measures*

In June 1979 a decree was passed on the internment and expulsion of those considered by a special commission to "present a danger to the social system of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania". The decree applies not only to foreigners or Albanian citizens over 14 years old who are deemed to constitute a danger, but also to the families of refugees or those hiding from the police. (*Albanian Catholic Bulletin*, Summer 1980)

### *Reaction to Polish Strikes*

The newspaper *Zeri i Popullit* (7 September 1980) carried an editorial on events in Poland. It stated that the Polish strikes, though directed against the counter-revolutionary government, were not revolutionary but were "inspired and manipulated, internationally by the capitalist bourgeoisie of the West, and internally by the almighty Polish Catholic Church and reaction".

## BULGARIA

### *Patriarch Maxim Visits Cyprus*

Patriarch Maxim visited Cyprus 25-29

April 1980. He was returning a visit to Bulgaria by Archbishop Chrysostom of Cyprus in 1979. Patriarch Maxim was accompanied by Metropolitans Pankrati of Stara Zagora and Grigori of Lovech, Protodeacon Dr V. Velyanov and I. Zh. Dimitrov. The delegation toured the island, visiting churches, the monastery of Kikos, Archbishop Makarios's grave and early Christian sites at Paphos. The Patriarch was thanked for Bulgarian support of Cyprus, both by the Orthodox Church and the State, at a difficult time in Cyprus's history. (*Tsurkoven vestnik*, 21 September 1980)

### *St Cyril's Day Celebrations*

Bulgarian Orthodox delegations visited Thessalonika, Istanbul and the Vatican in 1980 to celebrate SS Cyril and Methodius Day (24 May). The delegation to Thessalonika was headed by Metropolitan Pimen of Nevrokop, that to Istanbul by Metropolitan Kalinik of Vratsa (who had an audience with Patriarch Dimitrios while there), and that to Rome by Metropolitan Filaret of Vidin (who had an audience with Pope John Paul II on 20 May).

St Cyril's Day was also celebrated in Geneva for all Bulgarians living in Switzerland. Bishop Simeon, Patriarch Maxim's deputy in Western Europe, attended the celebrations both in Geneva and at the Orthodox Centre of Chambésy a few days later. Professor Todor Subev, Deputy General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, spoke at Chambésy about the historical development, the eleven-centuries-old mission and the present condition of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. There was also an exhibition

of icons, pictures, photographs, albums, records of church music and books published by the Bulgarian Patriarchate. (*Tsurkoven vestnik*, 11 July 1980)

#### *Peter Yanev Joins His Wife*

Peter Yanev, one of the five Bulgarian Pentecostals imprisoned in 1979 (see the article in *RCL* Vol. 8, No. 4), was released on 29 July 1980 and married his Finnish fiancée on 17 August. He arrived in Finland to join his wife on 1 December. As he was issued with a five-year passport, he retains the right to travel back to Bulgaria. (*Keston News Service*, No. 113, 11 December 1980)

#### *Peace Parliament in Sofia*

The Bulgarian Orthodox Church took part in the "World Parliament of Nations for Peace" held in Sofia 23-27 September 1980. An interview with Patriarch Maxim was published on the front page of *Otechestven front* (19 September 1980), for as deputy chairman of the National Committee for the Defence of Peace he was actively involved in the preparations for the Parliament. He was also a delegate to the Parliament, as was Metropolitan Pankrati of Stara Zagora. The church newspaper *Tsurkoven vestnik* (11 September 1980) published a patriarchal and synodal letter which urged the clergy and laity to support the Peace Parliament's activities and decisions.

#### CHINA

#### *Conference of Islamic Association*

The fourth national Conference of the Islamic Association of China, representing China's ten million Muslims, opened in Peking on 6 April 1980 after an interlude of 17 years. In an address to the Conference Xiao Xianfa, Director of the Religious Affairs Bureau attached to the State Council, acknowledged Islam's extensive influence in vast areas of the world and commented: "Respect for people's religious beliefs is of positive significance for strengthening unity among people of all countries, and for promoting mutual understanding." (*Evangelical Times*, October 1980)

#### *Restoration of Matteo Ricci's Grave*

According to the New China News

Agency, the Chinese government has decided to restore the grave of Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), the Italian Jesuit missionary to China. The grave was damaged during the Cultural Revolution.

As a mathematician and astronomer Ricci was particularly attractive to Chinese intellectuals. He left around 20 works in Chinese, of which the best known is a world atlas. (*AKSA*, 27 June 1980)

#### *Buddhist Monks Ordained*

At the beginning of October 1980, 31 Buddhist monks were ordained in Peking. The *Peking Daily* states that this was the first such ordination since the Cultural Revolution. (*Le Monde*, 21 October 1980)

#### *Islam among the Uigurs*

The November issue of *China Pictorial* contains a substantial article about Muslim life and worship among the Uigur people. It focuses on three centres: Urumqi, Kashi and Taxkorgan. Accompanying photographs show a "working" mosque, celebration of the Aid al-Fitr festival at the end of Ramadhan, and examples of Muslim costume. The article outlines the history of Islam in the area and describes religious and other customs.

#### CZECHOSLOVAKIA

#### *Jewish Services Well Attended*

Religious services held throughout Bohemia and Moravia on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur were well attended. Services took place at the ancient Old-New Synagogue and the Jerusalem Synagogue in Prague, and in synagogues and prayer houses in Brno, Ostrava, Liberec and Teplice. In contrast to previous years, the services were publicized well in advance in the August issue of *Vestnik*, with a precise schedule and, in some instances, the address of the synagogue. (*ICJC Newsletter*, Vol. XI, No. 4 (61), October 1980)

#### *Theology Students Protest*

On 21 October 1980 all 150 students at Slovakia's only theological seminary (in Bratislava) went on a two-day hunger strike. They were protesting against "Pacem in Terris", the government-sponsored association for priests, which had opened a conference on Pope John

Paul II's encyclical *Redemptor Hominis*. This was particularly ironical because the encyclical cannot be published in Czechoslovakia. However, several thousand copies have been printed in Czech by a group of young Catholics in Poland and smuggled across the border. (*Keston News Service*, No. 112, 29 November 1980)

#### *Charge against Priest Withdrawn*

The charge against Fr Josef Zvěřina, Czechoslovakia's leading theologian, was withdrawn in early November 1980. He had been charged on 10 September 1979 with "obstructing state supervision of the Church" after the arrest of a group of Catholics who operated a clandestine printing press. Fr Zvěřina had contributed to the theological review published by this group.

#### *Hebrew Studies*

Forty students are reported to have enrolled at the Prague Language Institute for Hebrew courses for the 1980-81 term. (*ICJC Newsletter*, Vol. XII, No. 1 (62), January 1981)

#### *Support for Father Yakunin*

The Czechoslovak League of Human Rights and the Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Prosecuted (VONS) have written to Patriarch Pimen, head of the Russian Orthodox Church, in defence of Fr Gleb Yakunin, a founder-member of the Christian Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights in the USSR. The letter, dated 12-September 1980, calls for his release and rehabilitation. (*Keston News Service*, No. 110, 30 October 1980)

#### HUNGARY

#### *Press Bureau Established*

The Hungarian Bishops' Conference has decided to establish a bureau to coordinate the activities of the Catholic press in Hungary and to issue information in foreign languages about the life of the Church in Hungary. Ferenc Magyar, editor-in-chief of the Catholic weekly, *Uj Ember*, is to head the bureau. (*AKSA*, 3 July 1980)

#### *Cardinal Casaroli Visits Hungary*

Cardinal Casaroli, Vatican Secretary of State, visited Hungary for the celebrations

of the 1,000th anniversary of St Gellert. While in Hungary he met Pal Losonczi, head of State, and Janos Kadar, leader of the Communist Party, with whom he discussed church-state relations. (*AKSA*, 10 October 1980)

#### *Theology Students in Rome*

For the first time since the communist takeover in Hungary, four theology students have been permitted to pursue higher studies in Rome. They are studying at the "Germanicum et Hungaricum" College. (*Catholic Herald*, 16 November 1979)

#### *Primate Supports Continuing Dialogue*

In an interview with foreign journalists in late 1980, Cardinal Lékai, Primate of Hungary, said that he supported a continuing and judicious dialogue between Church and State. A conflict would not serve the interests of Hungary's 5½ million Catholics but would only increase existing difficulties. He reported that some difficulties had been resolved by cautious agreements and that discussions were continuing on many subjects. Unresolved issues included the recognition and activities of religious orders, Catholic schools and religious education. However, a number of matters had been settled in the last year, including theological correspondence courses for the laity, the appearance of "important theological works" and the building of churches (170 have been built since the War). In reply to a question, the Cardinal emphasized that the establishment of diplomatic relations between Budapest and the Vatican was the concern of the government. (*AKSA*, 21 November 1980)

#### POLAND

#### *"L'Osservatore Romano" Re-admitted to Poland*

Fr Adam Boniecki, editor of the Polish edition of *L'Osservatore Romano*, was informed on 21 November 1980 that delivery of the paper to Poland could be resumed. The reason for the ban appears to have been the contents of the first issue, which included an article on the delicate issue of the Church's status as a legal entity, news of the "Oasis" youth movement, church statistics, and the full text of

the 171st Plenary Conference of the Polish Episcopate. Although the second issue was dedicated entirely to the Pope's speeches and Vatican affairs, it took more than eight months of negotiations between the Vatican and the Polish government to persuade the authorities to allow the paper back into Poland.

The new agreement makes some concessions to the sensibilities of the state censors. The document which Fr Boniecki received from the Vatican defines the Polish edition of *L'Osservatore Romano* as an unofficial religious-theological publication of the Holy See. The paper will inform believers of the Pope's activities, publish his speeches, the decisions and instructions of the Holy See, and the documents and pastoral programmes of the Polish episcopate. As an integral part of the Holy See's authority among the local churches, the paper will therefore be sent directly and without any restrictions to the Polish dioceses. Further distribution of the paper will then become their responsibility. The publication will be granted unlimited circulation in Poland and will be free of charge.

Of the 95,000 copies of the Polish-language edition of *L'Osservatore Romano*, 90,000 will be sent to Poland. (*Keston News Service*, No. 113, 11 December 1980)

#### *Mass Broadcast Regularly*

Since 21 September 1980, Mass has been broadcast on the radio each Sunday from the Holy Cross Church in Warsaw. The authorities are thus partially fulfilling their commitment to give the religious denomination's access to the mass media, as agreed in paragraph 3 of the Gdańsk agreement of 31 August 1980.

Since 1975 the hierarchy has been demanding that the Church have access to the mass media, and in the last few years more than 700,000 people have signed a petition calling for the Dominican Mass to be broadcast and televised. Until the unrest last summer the authorities insisted that they were "not prepared to utilize the state-owned mass media for religious propaganda", but they were finally forced to capitulate to the workers' demands.

#### *Pope to Visit Poland*

On 23 October 1980 Jerzy Kuberski, the Minister for Religious Affairs, told western

journalists that Pope John Paul II is to visit Poland again in 1982. Although no exact date was mentioned, it is most probable that the Pope would like to attend the celebrations of the 600th anniversary of the "Black Madonna" icon at Częstochowa. The celebrations at the shrine of Jasna Góra should take place in May or August but could be moved to any Marian feast. (*Gość Niedzielny*, No. 45, November 1980)

#### *Joint Episcopal and Government Commission Established*

A joint episcopal and government commission has been established with the aim of normalizing relations between the Catholic Church and the State. The commission's first session was held on 24 September 1980. Cardinal Franciszek Macharski of Kraków, Bishop Lech Kaczmarek of Gdańsk and Bishop Bronisław Dąbrowski, the secretary of the Polish episcopate, represented the Catholic Church. The government delegation, led by deputy premier Kazimierz Barcikowski, also included Jerzy Kuberski, the Minister for Religious Affairs, and his deputy, Alexander Merker. The meeting reviewed contemporary church-state relations and mapped out the future work of the commission.

Three further sessions were held 20-21 November, 8 December 1980, and 10 January 1981. At its December meeting, the commission created two working groups: one to specialize in problems related to seminaries, the other to study the growth of alcoholism. (*Keston News Service*, No. 108, 2 October 1980)

#### *Ozdowski's Rise to Prominence*

On 21 November 1980 Jerzy Ozdowski, one of the pro-government "Catholic" leaders, became one of the seven deputy prime ministers of Poland. He was given special responsibility for family and social policies.

Ozdowski rose to prominence only after he had refused to participate in the protests of Catholic intellectuals against the constitutional changes in 1976 (see *RCL* Vol. 4, No. 3, pp. 12-15). He became one of the nominated members of the new "Catholic" parliamentary faction which is subservient to the government. In the wave of criticism against compromised and corrupt officials, Ozdowski lost his post as

chairman of the Poznań Catholic Intellectuals Club in an election in which the overwhelming majority of members turned against him. However, this did not affect his political career. Arrangements were even made for him to visit the Pope, who could not refuse to receive an official representative of the Polish State (Ozdowski is a member of the Council of State). The Polish papers described this visit, which took place on 13 November 1980, as "a private meeting with the Pope"; thus creating the impression that the Pope approves of him personally.

In one of his recent speeches in the Polish Parliament Ozdowski called for an increase in the price of basic foodstuffs. In his first interview (given on 13 December 1980 to the Italian newspaper *Il Tempo*) he openly admitted that he had tried to influence the Bishop of Silesia to persuade the miners to return to the old system of shift work (abolished as a result of the summer strikes in Silesia) and to call from the Church's pulpits for farmers to increase productivity. It seems that the authorities needed the help of a non-Party man to introduce necessary but unpopular measures, and that they have tried to use the Church's authority to consolidate the Party's own position.

#### *175th Plenary Conference of the Polish Episcopate*

The 175th Plenary Conference of the Polish Episcopate took place on 12 September 1980 in Częstochowa. The conference was attended by members of the delegation of West German bishops who were visiting Poland at Cardinal Wyszyński's invitation. Cardinal Wyszyński and Cardinal Joseph Höffner delivered papers discussing high-level co-operation between the Polish and German episcopates on examining the teachings of the Second Vatican Council. Kazimierz Majdański and Franz Hengsnasch discussed pastoral problems of the family in the contemporary world, and Archbishop Jerzy Stroba and Archbishop Johannes Dagenhardt discussed the problems facing young people. During the discussions the bishops stressed the need for applying similar pastoral solutions to these problems in both countries. A joint study of the problems preoccupying the two Churches would therefore be helpful. The bishops felt that pastoral co-operation

would help spread the Christian faith in both nations, as well as in other European countries.

#### *176th Plenary Conference of the Polish Episcopate*

The 176th Plenary Conference of the Polish Episcopate, which took place in Warsaw from 15-16 October 1980, mainly discussed Poland's economic, social and political problems. In the communiqué issued at the end of the conference, the bishops commented on the unrest of the previous summer:

"The events of the last few months have shaken every sphere of national life—social, economic, cultural—and the personal life of every individual. The workers drew attention to the social isolation of Communist Party members at all levels in society. They acted with dignity and out of a sense of duty to their country . . . Today we live in hope and share this hope with others that the socio-political changes will take the right direction, for the common good of the whole nation."

The hierarchy gave full support to those demands of the workers which were considered just, and emphasized that the stabilization of life in Poland depended on the fulfilment of the social agreement which was accepted by both the authorities and the people during the unrest last summer. The bishops pointed out that "social peace" and "economic order" were essential for helping stabilize the country and in order to "build a better future for the country". In a clear reference to the radical elements among the opposition, the bishops warned that careful consideration should be given to Poland's geographical and political position in Europe before any "unwise" action was taken.

The bishops stressed the need for moral renewal in social and political life: evil should be condemned as evil, and good upheld as such. "We should also work towards creating an autonomous society and making the service of man the ultimate aim of economic progress." Renewal should be based on the principles of economic development and political life as formulated by the Second Vatican Council in *Gaudium et Spes*. The bishops' communiqué listed a number of these principles, including the right and duty of citizens to contribute to the progress of

their community, the right to form free trade unions, and the right to strike. "These principles should be adhered to by both the authorities and the people."

The bishops commented on the food shortages caused by an agricultural policy which favoured collective farms, and expressed their hope that the authorities' promise to give more assistance to individual farmers would result in increased productivity and would eventually make Poland self-sufficient.

They also discussed the problems facing young people and appealed to them to "prepare themselves thoroughly for the difficult task of governing the country". Their active participation in different governing bodies within society would "release creative energies which are essential for social progress, and would instil in young people a sense of responsibility for the country."

The episcopal communiqué expresses the bishops' joy at the re-establishment of the joint episcopal and government commission. They hoped that the talks would result in full normalization of relations between the Church and the State, and between Poland and the Holy See.

#### *177th Plenary Conference of the Polish Episcopate*

In the communiqué issued by the 177th Plenary Conference of the Polish Episcopate, which took place in Warsaw from 10-11 December 1980, the bishops express their deep concern about the economic, social and political situation of Poland.

"Although new attitudes to society and morality and the changes which are taking place are the source of great hope, there are still many dangers . . . Every Polish citizen should strive to strengthen the process of renewal in society. This would help to create the conditions required for working out the agreements reached during the summer between the authorities and the people. Any attempts to halt the process of national renewal should be opposed."

However, the bishops warned against any activities which could "jeopardize the country's independence and freedom". They issued a pastoral letter to the nation calling for "Christian responsibility for the country", and designated 1 January 1981 a Day of Prayer to Our Lady of Częstochowa, Queen of Poland.

The bishops also designated 14 December 1980 as a Day of Prayer for "the unity of the nation" to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the 1970 December riots in the coastal towns of Gdynia, Gdańsk and Szczecin, during which many workers were killed. They appealed to the participants and organizers of the celebrations to "create an atmosphere of peace and dignity".

The bishops were informed about the work of the joint episcopal and government commission. They also learned that the authorities had given permission for two new seminaries to be built in Koszalin and Szczecin. The bishops who had taken part in the Rome Synod on the Christian family in the modern world (26 September to 25 October 1980) then presented their reports.

#### ROMANIA

##### *New Bishop of Alba Iulia*

Antal Jakab received state recognition as Roman Catholic Bishop of Alba Iulia in September 1980. He succeeded Mgr Aaron Marton who died on 29 September, having retired in April. Antal Jakab, 71-years-old and of Hungarian origin, is now the only Catholic bishop recognized by the Romanian authorities. He is a doctor of theology and was formerly a teacher at the Roman Catholic high school in Alba Iulia. (Radio Free Europe, *Romanian Situation Report*, No. 47, 10-14 October 1980)

##### *Appeal for Church*

On 16 November 1980 members of the Mihai Bravu Baptist Church in Bucharest sent a memorandum to President Ceausescu. The memorandum states that negotiations for rebuilding the church have been in progress since 1962. It lists the options as a new building on the present site at 106 Mihai Bravu, a new site in Matasari Street (for which permission has already been received from the Department of Cults), or a new site on state property near the present address of the church in exchange for the present property. President Ceausescu is asked to approve a site for the new church building and to authorize its construction. (*Keston News Service*, No. 110, 30 October 1980)

##### *Orthodox Believers Released*

Dr Ioan Cana and Gheorghe Brasoveanu,

two Orthodox Christians sentenced to five-and-a-half and seven years' imprisonment respectively for their involvement in the creation of the Free Trade Union in 1978, were released in 1980. Their pardon was seen as a gesture by the Romanian authorities to the Madrid Helsinki Review Conference. (*Keston News Service*, No. 113, 11 December 1980)

#### *Police Discover Russian Bibles*

Between 18 October and early December 1980, 12 Romanians were detained and interrogated in connection with the distribution of Russian Bibles from Romania. Over 30,000 Bibles are said to have been found by the police. Four of those interrogated were detained in prison. (*Keston News Service*, No. 113, 11 December 1980)

#### SOVIET UNION

#### *Printing Press Seized*

In June 1980 the Soviet authorities tracked down a fourth printing press operated by unregistered Baptists. It was discovered in the village of Glivenki, Belorechensk district, Krasnodar region. Seven printers and four local contacts were arrested. This was the second press to be confiscated in five months. (*Keston News Service*, No. 105, 21 August 1980)

#### *Georgian Patriarch Visits Vatican*

Catholicos Ilya II, Patriarch of All-Georgia, visited the Vatican on 6 July 1980 and was received by Pope John Paul II. This was the first visit by a primate of the Georgian Orthodox Church to the Vatican. (*Episepsis*, 15 July 1980)

#### *Pentecostals Arrested*

Boris Perchatkin, a leader of the Pentecostal emigration movement, was arrested in Nakhodka on 18 August 1980. Nikolai Goretoi, a bishop and also a leader of the emigration movement, was sentenced in August 1980 to seven years' strict regime labour camp and five years' internal exile. He was charged with anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda and with leading unregistered religious communities (Arts. 70 and 227 of the RSFSR Criminal Code). (*Keston News Service*, No. 106, 4 September 1980; No. 113, 11 December 1980)

#### *Tatyana Velikanova Sentenced*

Tatyana Velikanova, an Orthodox Christian and a longstanding human rights campaigner, was sentenced on 29 August 1980 to four years' imprisonment and five years' internal exile on charges of anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda. (*Keston News Service*, No. 106, 4 September 1980)

#### *Baptists Arrested*

Pyotr Rumachik, a vice-president of the Council of Churches of Evangelical Christians and Baptists (CCECB), was arrested in Dnepropetrovsk on 5 August 1980. In Lvov, Pavel Rytikov, his son Vladimir and Galina Velchinskaya were all sentenced in August 1980 to three years' labour camp for organizing a summer camp for the children of Baptist prisoners and leaders living in hiding. Pavel Rytikov, who has already served a five-year camp sentence, was sentenced to strict regime. Nikolai Baturin, who succeeded Georgi Vins as secretary of the CCECB, was arrested on 5 November 1979 and sentenced in August 1980 to five years' strict regime labour camp plus confiscation of property. He was charged under Art. 209 of the Ukrainian Criminal Code ("infringement of the health and rights of citizens under the guise of conducting religious rites"). (*Keston News Service*, No. 108, 2 October 1980; No. 109, 16 October 1980)

#### *Pilgrims Harassed*

Since August 1980, pilgrims coming to the Pochayev Monastery in Ternopol region have been harassed by the local police. In one incident, on 20 August, a number of people were rounded up and driven off to an unknown destination, while others had their passports confiscated and were forced to leave. Checks on visitors are being made, nearly every day, making it virtually impossible for the believers to pray in peace. Local people have been forbidden to perform everyday tasks at the monastery, and priests from other monasteries or parishes are not allowed to remain for more than five days. Even the instructions issued by the superior of the monastery are being controlled and checked by the police. (*Keston News Service*, No. 112, 29 November 1980)

#### *New Factory for Religious Artefacts*

A factory producing religious artefacts for the Russian Orthodox Church both in the

USSR and abroad was opened on the outskirts of Moscow in the autumn of 1980. The premises house silversmiths, goldsmiths, artists and other craftsmen who produce icons, candles, crosses and other items. Patriarch Pimen and a number of bishops and archbishops attended the ceremony of blessing. (*The Guardian*, 8 October 1980)

#### *Jehovah's Witnesses Arrested*

A group of Jehovah's Witnesses was arrested in Kalinin at the end of August or in early September 1980. No further details are known. (*USSR News Brief*, No. 18, 30 September 1980)

#### *Christian Seminar Members Sentenced*

Vladimir Poresh, the Leningrad representative of the Christian Seminar (see the article in *RCL* Vol. 8, No. 2), was sentenced in April 1980 to five years in a labour camp and three years' internal exile. He was charged with anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda. On 8 September 1980 Alexander Ogorodnikov, a founder-member of the Christian Seminar, was given a second sentence following on from a year spent in labour camp on charges of parasitism. He too was charged with anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda (the Christian Seminar had published an unofficial journal, *Obshchina*) and was sentenced to six years in a strict regime labour camp and five years' internal exile.

#### *Lutheran Conference in Tallinn*

A European Conference of the Lutheran World Federation which took place in Tallinn, Estonia, 7-14 September 1980 was attended by 100 representatives from 32 member-churches. After the conference the delegates from the Lutheran World Federation visited Lutheran parishes in the three Baltic countries and in Kazakhstan. (*Ecumenical Press Service*, 25 September 1980)

#### *Suspended Sentences for Regelson and Kapitanchuk*

Lev Regelson, an Orthodox layman and leader of the Christian Seminar after Ogorodnikov's arrest in November 1978, was sentenced in Moscow on 24 September 1980 to a five-year suspended sentence. During his trial he pleaded guilty to charges of anti-Soviet agitation and propa-

ganda, although only four weeks earlier, when called as a witness at Fr Gleb Yakunin's trial, he had told the court that he still fully agreed with all that he and Fr Yakunin had written together.

Viktor Kapitanchuk, secretary of the Christian Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights in the USSR, was tried in Moscow 8-9 October 1980. He likewise pleaded guilty to charges of anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda and received a five-year suspended sentence. (*Keston News Service*, No. 108, 2 October 1980; No. 109, 16 October 1980)

#### *Ukrainian Catholic Synod*

The Synod of the Ukrainian Catholic Church met at the Vatican in early December 1980. Seventeen bishops from the West and four experts took part in the meeting. The Synod officially pronounced the decisions of the "so-called synod at Lemberg" of 1946, which abolished the Ukrainian Catholic Church and incorporated it into the Moscow Patriarchate, as invalid. They drew up a list of 15 candidate bishops, which they sent to the Pope. The Synod also heard a report by Cardinal Josyf Slipyj, the Church's leader, about the situation of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the Ukraine, which now exists only underground. Members of the Synod were granted an audience by the Pope. (*AKSA*, 12 December 1980)

#### *Jewish Activist Arrested*

On 5 September 1980 Viktor Brailovsky, editor of two Jewish *samizdat* journals (*Yevrei v SSSR* and the religious-cultural journal *Tarbut*), was officially ordered to find work within a fortnight if he wished to avoid arrest on charges of parasitism. He was arrested on 13 November 1980. (*Keston News Service*, No. 108, 2 October 1980, and *The Times*, 14 November 1980)

#### *Statements by Christian Committee Members*

Fr Vasili Fonchenkov and Orthodox layman Vadim Shcheglov, members of the Christian Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights in the USSR, have issued statements upholding their commitment to the aims and work of the Christian Committee. Fr Fonchenkov's letter, dated 17 May 1980, reports that he was questioned by the KGB on 16 May. Shcheglov's letter, dated 8 October 1980,



reports that his telephone has been disconnected and that he was to be demoted at work. He expected to be arrested at any time. (*Keston News Service*, No. 112, 29 November 1980)

#### *Plea for a Church in Azerbaïdzhân*

Patriarch Pimen has been sent a petition by 410 Orthodox Georgians and Russians living in Azerbaïdzhân. They state that there are up to 20,000 Orthodox Georgians and 3,000 Orthodox Russians in the Kakhsk, Belankan and Zakatalsk regions of Azerbaïdzhân. Although there are at least 50 churches in these regions, they are all closed. The believers have been petitioning for the opening of at least one church for years, but without success. They ask the Patriarch to intervene so that permission will be given for one church to be opened in Kakhi. (*Keston News Service*, No. 112, 29 November 1980)

#### *Pentecostals Call for Unity*

In an undated document recently received at Keston College, the Council of Pentecostal Churches states that the Pentecostal, Baptist, Adventist, Roman Catholic and Orthodox movements in the USSR exist in isolation. By failing to support one another they help the enemy to do his destructive work. The Council of Pentecostal Churches hoped to strengthen its ranks by ordaining 30 people for service. It had decided to hold talks with other Pentecostal groups about unification and also with Baptists and Adventists in order to unite forces and help one another in difficult times. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35).

#### YUGOSLAVIA

#### *The Church and Atheism*

A theological-pastoral week was held in June 1980 at the higher seminary of Rijeka. The theme was "Our Church face to face with atheism". Eighty priests attended the course, led by their bishops. Lectures were given on "Atheism as a phenomenon of the contemporary world", "Social conditions of atheism", "Atheism in school textbooks, films and primary school, and children's magazines". There was a discussion on the spread of atheism in a number of specified localities. (*AKSA*, 27 June 1980)

#### *New Bishop of Srem*

Bishop Andrej, the new Orthodox Bishop of Srem, was installed on 15 July 1980. He was formerly Bishop of Banja Luka. [Bishop Andrej is one of the ecumenically-minded and more progressive Orthodox bishops. During his time in Banja Luka, he and the Catholic Bishop Pichler were close friends and collaborators. *Ed.*] (*AKSA*, 25 July 1980)

#### *Bishop Criticizes Festival Play*

Bishop Pernek of Dubrovnik refused an invitation to the official opening of the 1980 Dubrovnik Festival and protested to the organizers about the performance of R. Marinković's play *Glorija* on the grounds that it insulted religion and offended believers. He particularly protested that one performance was to take place in front of the Jesuit Church of St Ignatius. The bishop's protest was followed by polemics in the press, discussions and a press conference. The play took place as scheduled. (*AKSA*, 8 and 22 August 1980)

#### *New Cathedral for Mostar*

The newly-built Catholic cathedral in Mostar, Hercegovina, was consecrated in the autumn of 1980. Government leaders in Bosnia and Hercegovina gave an official reception to mark the occasion. (*AKSA*, 19 October 1980)

#### *Ecumenical Symposium*

The fourth inter-theological faculty ecumenical symposium was held in Ljubljana 22-26 September 1980. These take place every two years and bring together members of the Catholic faculties of Zagreb and Ljubljana and the Serbian Orthodox faculty from Belgrade. Members of the staff of the Macedonian Orthodox faculty in Skopje and observers from the Protestant Churches also take part in these symposia. (*AKSA*, 26 October 1980)

#### *Religious Publications Attacked*

An article in *Vecernje Novosti* of 16 October 1980 attacked both the Catholic fortnightly *Glas Koncila* and the Serbian Orthodox publication *Pravoslavlje*. According to Dr Ivan Lalić, president of the Commission for relations with the religious communities of Croatia, *Glas Koncila* is the voice of the political opposition around which all hostile forces

gather. The paper is accused of trying to poison relations between Church and State. *Pravoslavlje* is attacked for presenting the Serbian Orthodox Church as the exclusive defender of the heritage of the Serbian people and for artificially reviving the conflict between Serbs and Croats. (AKSA, 17 October 1980)

#### *New Bishop of Maribor*

The former Bishop of Maribor died over two years ago, but the Vatican has now appointed Dr Kramberger as his successor. The Slovene religious weekly *Družina* (23 November 1980), is devoted mainly to the appointment of Dr Kramberger as Bishop of Maribor and to the resignation of Dr Grmič, the assistant bishop, from all his episcopal functions. Archbishop Suštar of Ljubljana has written a personal letter to Bishop Grmič thanking him for all his work as priest, bishop and professor at the theological faculty in the diocese of Maribor and for the Church in Slovenia. (AKSA, 21 November 1980)

#### *Symposium on the Church in the Modern World*

In late 1980 the Centre for Ideological-Theological Work in Croatia and the Marxist Centre for Conferences of the city of Split held a symposium on "the Church in the modern world". The theme of the symposium, one of a series, was chosen because of the importance of changes within the Church and the Church's efforts to be increasingly involved in the transformation of the modern world. A focal point for the discussions was the publication of *The Crucifixion of Catholicism* by Boris Vušković and Srđan Vrcan. Two other significant books were also mentioned: *The Vatican and the Modern World* by Vjekoslav Cvrlije, former Yugoslav ambassador to the Vatican, and *Marxist Thought and Religion* by Ivan Cvitković. It was emphasized that one had to analyse what was happening in the world to understand what was happening in the Church, because changes in the world influenced changes in the Church. During the discussions it was pointed out that the accounts of religion in school-books were entirely negative and needed to be brought up to date by means of better knowledge, through dialogue and a search for positive values. Much has happened both in the Church and the Marxist world, especially

in Yugoslav society, that has been innovative and progressive. One should therefore look to a common future and not look back to the past.

The symposium also discussed pluralism in the Church and in the socialist and Marxist world. It was emphasized that atheism was in no way an essential element of socialism or Marxism. (AKSA, 28 November 1980)

#### VIETNAM

##### *Bishops' Conference Established*

The 28 Roman Catholic bishops of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam held their first Bishops' Conference from 24 April to 1 May 1980. Cardinal Archbishop Trinh van Can of Hanoi was elected president. (AKSA, 27 June 1980)

#### ZAMBIA

##### *Marxism, Humanism and Christianity*

In August 1979 a letter to all church members was published jointly by the Catholic Episcopal Conference, the Christian Council of Zambia and the Zambian Evangelical Fellowship. The church leaders realized that many of their members were confused by talk about advancing to humanism through scientific socialism (i.e. Marxist-Leninism) and by assurances that it was possible to be both a scientific socialist and a Christian.

The letter is quite lengthy (about 7,500 words) and it includes a brief history of socialism, a description of the two main types of socialism (democratic and scientific), a commentary on what is acceptable and what must be rejected from a Christian point of view in both socialism and capitalism, an analysis of Marxist-Leninist policy towards religion (with examples of the policy in practice in Angola and Mozambique), a discussion of different types of humanism and of Zambian humanist socialism, a presentation of the differences between Christian humanists and Marxist humanists, an acknowledgment of certain elements of truth in Marxism and a brief discussion of the possibilities for and obstacles to collaboration between Christians and Marxists.

The letter concludes with a warning about the insidious intrusion of scientific socialism into Zambian humanistic socialism. (*Christian Order*, Vol. 21, No. 3, March 1980, pp. 170-89)