

seriously ill and appealed against their sentences. (For further information on Fr Bárta see *RCL* Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 46.)

### *Charter 77 Supports Catholics*

On 10 March the Czech human rights movement, Charter 77, issued its second strong condemnation of the violations of religious liberty in Czechoslovakia in an open letter to the president and other state officials. (The first Charter 77 document on religious liberty, dated 22 April 1977, was published in *RCL* Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 158-61.)

In the opening paragraph, the spokesmen note that in spite of numerous official declarations creating the impression that religious freedom is being respected, the persecution of believers, particularly members of the Catholic Church, has recently been stepped up. Details of these restrictions are listed. The publishing of religious literature has been greatly reduced. In 1981 the only Catholic publisher "Charita" issued one theological book and one hymnbook. In the seminary at Litoměřice the staff are not properly qualified and professors are appointed by the Office for Religious Affairs. Last year just over half of sixty candidates for the priesthood were accepted. Priests are under increasing pressure to join *Pacem in Terris*, a pro-régime organization not recognized by the Church (see *RCL* Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 43). Matěj Lůčan, the deputy prime minister, said in Banská Bystrica on 12 November 1981 that any criticism of *Pacem in Terris* is an indirect attack on the socialist coexistence between Church and State.

The imprisonment of Catholic priests and laymen is noted (see *RCL* Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 44-8). In connection with the case of Jaroslav Duša, a priest imprisoned for fifteen months for saying a Mass without state approval, police raided a Dominican house for retired nuns on 27 October and a house for retired

priests in Moravec. All religious literature, typewriters and duplicators were taken away and rumours were spread about Poles hiding there, about the hoarding of jewels and even that a radio transmitter was being kept in the "monastery". More and more young people and their alleged leaders are being interrogated for being present at religious gatherings. New and more violent police methods are being used against some young people. Stanislav Adámek, the twenty-year-old son of the imprisoned Josef Adámek was severely beaten by four "unknown" men after being taken from his place of work and driven to woods near Tišnov. Still unresolved are the cases of two alleged suicides, that of Přemysl Coufal, a secret priest and monk (see *RCL* Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 48-9) and Pavel Švanda, a student architect from Brno.

The letter speaks of an increasing mistrust of the official proclamation concerning the creation of a new society in which all are equal irrespective of origin and conviction. It explains that distortions between the spirit and the letter of the law do not come from a discrepancy between the Czechoslovak Penal Code and international human rights' agreements signed by Czechoslovakia, but rather from an arbitrary interpretation of the former. The judiciary is not guided by the overall meaning of the law but by particular legal explanations of every article. Examples are then cited from the *Commentary on the Penal Code*, Prague, 1980.

The letter ends with a demand that the law be interpreted in accordance with the principle of human rights, so that the true spirit of the law would not be nullified, but fulfilled. The letter is signed by Charter 77 spokesmen: Dr Radim Palouš, Anna Marvanová, Ladislav Lis and Fr Vaclav Malý. (A translation of the document appears in *Keston News Service* No. 148, pp. 15-17.)

ALEXANDER TOMSKY

## The Soviet Press on Religion and Youth

Over the last ten years, *RCL* and other publications of Keston College have frequently referred to the increasing interest shown by Soviet young people and intellectuals in

religion. It has been claimed that a genuine revival of Christian faith is occurring among these groups, based on evidence from such varied sources as the Soviet press, the Mos-

cow Patriarchate and religious dissenters. In 1981 the Soviet press was perhaps more explicit than in any previous year regarding the development of religious convictions among educated young people in the USSR.

Most striking have been articles by top figures in the KGB, calling for increased vigilance against religion by organizations charged with propaganda work among the young. General V. M. Chebrikov, deputy chairman of the KGB, claimed that religion is among the subversive doctrines which anti-Soviet centres abroad are strenuously attempting to disseminate among Soviet youth. "The clericals (*sic*) hope to induce young people . . . to god-building and god-seeking, and in this way to turn them away from an active civic life," he wrote in the April issue of *Molodoi kommunist* (*Young Communist*). Another KGB deputy chairman, the late General Semyon Tsvigun, made similar charges in the September issue of the leading Party journal, *Kommunist*. A third KGB general, Vitali Fedorchuk, in an article in a Ukrainian ideological journal in October 1981, warned that "nationalist prejudices and religious intoxicants" were being used to bring about the "spiritual decomposition" of the Soviet people. (In May 1982 Fedorchuk replaced Yuri Andropov as head of the KGB.)

Alongside these clarion calls many more informative, if less chilling, articles about Soviet youth and religion appeared in the most prestigious periodicals above the names of some of the most prominent anti-religious propagandists. For example, A. V. Belov, a leading ideologue with strong KGB ties, answering readers' questions in *Komsomolskaya pravda*, (4 April, "Time and religion", p. 4), admits not only that there are young believers but that the average age of members of the Protestant sects is actually declining. He attributes this to the following causes: 1) the influence of religious parents; 2) the efforts of the sects to recruit young people; 3) the modernization of religious ideology; 4) the influence of western religious propaganda; and 5) the failure of atheists to provide convincing answers to questions about the meaning of disappointment and suffering in life. Belov addresses only the last point at any length, but without originality.

A more detailed analysis by Ye. Filimonov, a doctor of philosophy, appeared in the 9 October issue of *Izvestiya*. The article, entitled "What is happening to religion, its rituals and traditions?," begins with the statement that

the majority of Soviet citizens are not influenced by religion. It continues:

"On the other hand, there are still not a few people who are unable, for one reason or another, to master a scientific-materialist world view, who pay their respects in various ways to religious confessions and who observe religious rituals and traditions. And in Orthodox and other churches, especially in the prayer-houses of Baptists, Adventists, and Pentecostals, one may see young people at the services. It has become 'stylish' to marry in church, baptize one's children, and to wear a cross.

What are we to make of these facts? Is there a 'religious renaissance' in the USSR as bourgeois clericalist propaganda, and various 'sovietologists' and 'specialists' on questions of religion and the church in our country are noisily and ceaselessly proclaiming? No! This merely testifies to the fact that the overcoming of religion in Soviet society is not a straightforward process, but a complex and contradictory one . . .

. . . we are really dealing with a growth of interest in religion and the church, which is stimulated not by the need for religious consolation or any other-worldly ideal, but by a natural demand for knowledge and a desire to understand the role of religion in the history of the spiritual and cultural life of nations, and the reasons for religion's increased role in the contemporary ideological struggle.

On the other hand, without a doubt . . . fashion is fashion."

Although Filimonov admits that there is a "growth of interest in religion and the church", he is not alarmed by it because such interest is the result either of curiosity about "religion's increased role in the contemporary ideological struggle", or of a mere fad, disturbing only in that it indicates the ideological immaturity of those who follow such fads. In the first case, however, Filimonov has turned things topsy-turvy. Surely, religion has an "increased role in the ideological struggle" precisely *because* there has been a revival of interest in religion among Soviet young people, and not the other way around. As for attributing the interest in religion to youthful faddishness, Filimonov seems to contradict this notion himself by suggesting that religion has made a new, rather deeper penetration into Soviet culture:

"Where has this fashion . . . come from . . . Western television and films have played no small role . . .

Unfortunately, it is possible that, without realising it themselves, some of our artists, performing artists, film-makers, and especially the devotees of the 'patriarchal dark ages' (*patriarkhal'shchina*), whose works are full of idealizing admiration for church antiquities and old traditions, have played their part in inflaming this interest."

This is a reference to the dominant *genre* in Soviet literature over the last decade, the "village prose" of such writers as Shukshin, Rasputin, Astafiev and Proskurin—hardly a trivial group. (See the article "The Attitude to Religion in the New Russian Literature" on pp. 145-55—Ed.)

The 21 October issue of *Pravda* contained another significant admission, this time by a Ukrainian ideologist, V. Ostrozhinsky ("Atheism is the struggle for man", p. 2)

"Today it is essential to re-examine the traditional concept of a believer. *The mass of believers* are people who, as a rule, are literate, engaged in socially productive work, and interested in both domestic and international affairs as well as in information about science. *For a significant number, the tendency toward a rational basis for their faith . . . is characteristic.* (Emphasis supplied.)"

Presumably this number does not exclude Soviet film-makers and writers. Indeed, it is in the prestigious weekly *Literaturnaya gazeta*, the organ of the Union of Writers, that the most curious article on the religious revival appeared in 1981. Entitled "'The Religious Boom' or a means of devising myths", the two thousand-word article appeared in the pre-Christmas (23 December) issue over the name of I. Grigulevich, a corresponding member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. The title might lead one to expect comprehensive sociological data indicating that no religious revival has taken place in recent years, but no such data are provided. Instead Grigulevich writes:

"For decades bourgeois propaganda impressed upon people the notion that in the Soviet Union the church and believers are suppressed . . . Now they are screaming about a religious explosion . . .

The idea of a 'war against religion' is nonsense and harmful from the Marxist-Leninist viewpoint. Here the Church is separated, and effectively, from the State. The Church is separated in many other countries of the world. After the Second Vatican Council even the Catholics support

such a separation. So, is there any reason for surprise when today the anti-Soviets write no longer about persecution, but about the rise of the churches in socialist countries?! Although there are no objective causes for any such 'explosion'. As for religious rituals, there is similarly no increase (in instances of their performance) here. In some regions such phenomena are facilitated by the weak development of (secular) civil ceremonies, by formalism in educational work, by the strength of tradition and by other purely subjective causes."

The one thing one would expect this article to contain, an unambiguous denial that any sort of "religious boom" is occurring, is conspicuously absent. There are no "objective causes", or grounds (*prichina*), for such a "boom". But what would qualify as an "objective cause"? Certainly no-one has claimed that the constitutional position (or non-position) of the Church in Soviet society has changed, nor that the number of open churches has been permitted to increase in recent years, nor that greater access to the printing press has been granted, nor that the legal basis for charitable activity has been restored. These, presumably, would be "objective causes". Indeed, Grigulevich would probably describe those developments which have been suggested as the causes of the religious revival—namely disillusionment with Marxism-Leninism and the quest for ethical values and meaning in life—as "purely subjective".

In addition, Grigulevich's denial that there has been an increase in the performance of religious rituals is extremely vague, especially so in that he admits that they still flourish in some regions. If both these claims are true, then there must also be regions where there has been an actual decline in the performance of religious rituals, and statistics from these regions would have been powerful supporting evidence for Grigulevich's view—but again, no such statistics are produced.

The remainder of Grigulevich's article is anti-religious propaganda: the themes are traditional but the arguments are more erudite than usual. "Soft" views of the church and religion are dismissed. According to Grigulevich, religion in the West, particularly Catholicism in Latin America, is forced to embrace progressive political movements in order to survive, but religion remains an essentially reactionary phenomenon and its activization in socialist countries can serve

only reactionary purposes. These are the article's prophylactic elements. The article serves to impress the reader with the high culture of the professional atheist, and at the same time remind him of the political stigma which the

régime still attaches to religion. It is significant that readers of *Literaturnaya gazeta* should be thought in need of such a reminder.

PAUL A. LUCEY

## The Church in Poland under Martial Law

The declaration of martial law in Poland ended the period of renewal which began in the shipyard of Gdańsk in August 1980. The Solidarity union, claiming ten million members, was suspended overnight as were all social, charitable and religious associations. Thousands of people were arrested and interned in special camps, among them many prominent Catholics such as Professor Władysław Bartoszewski, a lecturer at the Catholic University of Lublin, Janusz Bazydło, the editor of the unofficial Catholic quarterly *Spotkania (Encounters)*, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the editor of the Solidarity weekly, five members of the editorial board of the Catholic Journal *Więź (Bond)*, a number of the activists of the Catholic Intellectuals' Clubs, and many others. Publication of all newspapers, apart from a few published by the military authorities, was also suspended. The authorities tried hard to secure the Church's backing, or at least passive silence, so no direct measures against it were taken. Although some priests were interned they were released after interrogation, like Fr Józef Tischner in Kraków, or after a short time of internment, like the Dominican, Fr Tomasz Aleksiewicz in Poznań. Even though one priest, Fr Bolesław Jawulski, was put on trial for an anti-state sermon, he was released into the custody of his bishop. Though a total ban on public gatherings was imposed, the Church was free to carry out its pastoral tasks, including celebrating masses, to arrange visits to internment camps and to distribute food and clothing. However, the Roman Catholic hierarchy rejected martial law and has constantly condemned the wrongs of the "war against the nation" and called for a return "to the broken path of dialogue". They were joined in this condemnation by the Pope, who has been constantly reminding the world of the unjust sufferings of his fellow countrymen.

### 13 December

On Sunday afternoon, the day when martial law was declared in Poland, Archbishop Glemp, the Primate of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, said in a sermon: "The Church has received with pain the severance of the dialogue which had started with such difficulty, and the switch to the path of force in the form of martial law. This cannot happen without the infringement of basic civil rights. It means, in many instances, the flouting of human dignity, arrests of innocent people, contempt for men of culture and science, and anxiety in many families". He assured the believers that "the Church will continually demand the release of citizens who have been detained without justification . . .", but stressed that "saving life and prevention of bloodshed" was "the most important matter". The archbishop pleaded: "Do not start a fight, Pole against Pole. Do not give your lives away brothers, workers, because the price of human life will be very low. Every head, every pair of hands will be essential to the reconstruction of Poland, which will, which must take place after the end of the state of martial law."

The need to prevent bloodshed in Poland was also stressed by Pope John Paul II during his usual Sunday prayer in St Peter's Square in Rome: "Polish blood must not be shed, too much has already been shed, especially during the last world war. Everything must be done to ensure the building of Poland's future in peace".

### 15 December

The main council of the Polish Episcopate met for a one-day session in Warsaw. The bishops expressed their deep conviction that despite such a setback the nation would not retreat and give up the democratic renewal begun in August 1980. They appealed to both