

Chronicle

Summaries of Events and Background Information

Paranoia Religiosa Adventistica

The troubles of Karel and Jindřiška Kořínek began soon after their conversion to the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in 1966. Their flat in Brno was raided by a group of policemen who turned the place upside down and dragged the pregnant Mrs Kořínek down the stairs while her three small children looked on. The couple were then taken to a psychiatric hospital; the children were put in the care of state orphanages, in spite of the fact that the Koříneks had relatives willing to look after them. The liberal upheaval of 1968 soon led to the couple's release, but in the wake of the Soviet invasion and the "normalisation" policies that followed, their parental rights could not be restored to them. In 1973 Mrs Kořínek gave birth to a son, Libor, who was taken away from her five days after his birth and given for adoption. Mrs Kořínek then decided that the only way to bring her plight to the attention of the courts was to kidnap her own daughter Renata, which led to her second incarceration in a psychiatric hospital. This time, however, she was soon released with a certificate stating that she was a perfectly healthy person. The couple thus had an opportunity to claim their children back. This posed a threat to the officials who had made the original court decision in Prostějov; they demanded a second hospitalisation of the couple with the purpose of correcting the diagnosis. This time they were interned together with their eldest son Marek.

Again they were eventually released but had to continue receiving treatment even though their parental rights have at last been restored. For six years now they have been waging a legal battle to get their

youngest son back while their oldest son Marek has sued the authorities for compensation for the time he has spent in children's homes. On 24 March 1983, after realising that they had developed "symptoms of Parkinson's disease", the couple refused to take drugs. The district procurator then decided to reopen the case on the basis of the original diagnosis of 1966, "Paranoia Religiosa Adventistica", to have the couple permanently incarcerated in hospital and out of the way. When the court assembled on 4 August 1983, the hearing was immediately postponed because of the embarrassing number of people in the courtroom. The court met again on 18 October and sentenced the couple to hospitalisation on the grounds of Dr Hulva's witness that "the fact that the couple refuses to take drugs constitutes the basis for their enforced hospitalisation". The Koříneks appealed against this decision and the regional court ordered the district court in Prostějov to start the proceedings all over again. Thus on 30 March 1984 their case was to reopen, this time *in camera*; yet again, presumably because of the number of protesters in front of the court building, the case was adjourned. The Christian protesters (mainly Catholics) were being identified by the police. On 2 April, they issued a protest in *samizdat* stating that "Jindřiška and Karel Kořínek are reasonable people and the only reason why they are to be put away now is because they demanded the return of their son Libor who was taken away from them without any legal basis."

As sometimes happens in provincial courts, the case has been badly confused even by the standards of the Czechoslovak

judiciary. Their case has generated a good deal of support in Moravia, even though communications and dissident activities are much more difficult there than in the capital. Further legal proceedings would lead

to great embarrassment for the authorities in Prague, in spite of Czechoslovakia's withdrawal from the World Psychiatric Association.

ALEXANDER TOMSKY

Review of Lutheran World Federation Meetings

The seventh Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation, attended by two thousand guests, was held in Budapest from 22 July to 5 August this year (Assemblies take place every six or seven years), and was preceded for the first time by a pre-Assembly Youth Gathering which brought together over three hundred young Lutherans from all parts of the world. Official speeches at both gatherings noted the fact that a religious assembly of this kind was being held in an East European country for the first time, and the Hungarian authorities were certainly anxious to appear in positive support not only of the Assembly itself but also of the more unpredictable Youth Gathering. The organisers of the Youth Gathering had aimed to recruit fifty per cent of the delegates from Eastern Europe, and in fact achieved forty-five per cent. To Bishop Káldy, welcoming the delegates, this fact indicated that "practically the Iron Curtain does not exist any longer"; for Hungarian Vice-President R. Trautmann, welcoming delegates to the Assembly itself, the fact that the Lutheran World Federation had chosen Hungary to host its Assembly was "a sign of confidence in . . . the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary, the Hungarian State, and the whole Hungarian nation".

The churches in Hungary enjoy substantial freedoms. There is no shortage of Bibles, and a surprising range of religious literature is available. Protestant Churches have facilities for teaching children and adults about the faith (opportunities in this respect are more limited for the Catholic Church). Many Christians point to the rising standard of living in Hungary and preoccupation with material wealth — problems of secularisation with which we in Western Europe are all too familiar — as representing more of a challenge to the churches than atheist pressure or anti-religious discrimination. From the point of view of the state, the churches are welcome as partners in the struggle for social

justice. Since 1956 state policy has been to involve a wide range of interest groups in the building of Hungarian socialism on the principle that "he who is not against us is with us". The attitude of the state towards the church was summed up by Mr Trautmann: "Our relationship is more than simple coexistence: it is a practical alliance (*szövetség*) within which we are able, on different ideological bases but out of a common sense of responsibility, to cooperate in the service of the interests of our people and of humanity."

The leaders of the main Hungarian churches, for their part, have enthusiastically entered into this "practical alliance" with the state. As far as the Lutheran Church is concerned, cooperation with the social, economic and political policies of the state is carried on in the framework of the "theology of diaconia" or "theology of service" (see *RCL* Vol. 12 No. 2, pp. 130-48). Over the years there has been a good deal of criticism of this official theology and of Bishop Káldy personally for the autocratic manner in which he is said to impose this theology on his clergy and discipline those who do not adhere to it. I have heard the interesting statement that in many ways a Protestant pastor has less intellectual freedom within his own Church than, say, a university student in his faculty, where nominally obligatory Marxist-Leninist views are often enforced less rigorously than the official theological line within the churches. The state security forces do not need to interfere in the internal affairs of the churches in order to keep the clergy loyal to the state: the church leadership does this for them.

In the extensive publicity material on show at the Assembly about the Hungarian Lutheran Church and its achievements, the "theology of service" was illustrated in action. What was shown was charitable work amongst church members; but it was also stated that "service" for a Christian does not end with charity at home: the