

House-searches in connection with three arrests took place during July and August in the home of Yakov Mesh, a Hebrew teacher from Odessa, and two other young *refuseniks*, Valeri Pevzner and Alexander Kushnir. A month later Mesh was badly beaten up by the militia, an incident which led to his immediate arrest on charges of "resisting the authorities". Mesh, 33 and married with an eight-year-old son, had been subjected to regular pressure in the form of threats, house-searches, and denunciations in the press, and he had been warned of imminent arrest if he continued his "Zionist activities", i.e. teaching Hebrew and defending the right of Soviet Jews to emigrate. Mesh was arrested on 16 October in Odessa. Four days earlier another Jewish activist from Odessa, Mark Niepomniashchy, who at 53 was one of the few remaining active representatives under threat of arrest and had therefore gone into hiding for a short period, was arrested on 12 October while he was in the capital visiting friends. At the same time a search was being conducted in the home of the Niepomniashchy family in Odessa (Mark's daughter Yudit is the fiancée of Yakov Levin, arrested in August). Niepomniashchy faces charges under Art. 190-1 which could mean a sentence of up to three years, but there is the additional threat of internment in a psychiatric hospital, as he has previously been given psychiatric treatment following a mental breakdown in 1959. His family were told shortly after his arrest that he might have to undergo examination in a psychiatric hospital during the course of the investigation, but at present Niepomniashchy is being held in Odessa prison.

Both Niepomniashchy and Mesh had been attacked in an article by A. Svidnitsky which appeared in a Kiev paper, *Robotnycha gazeta* (Workers' Gazette) on 14 June 1984. The article, entitled "Saboteurs", made the accusation that

Yakov Mesh, Mark Niepomniashchy and V. Boguslavsky have "special merit" for the Zionists and "special

rights" to their moral and material support . . . in their apartments they organised group gatherings where, under the guise of studying Hebrew and Judaism, they openly indoctrinated those present with a Zionist, pro-Israeli spirit.

The accusation of "Zionist" links levelled at the *ulpanim* (Hebrew and Judaic study groups) has also been used to attack Alexander Kholmyansky. During one of the house searches conducted in connection with the investigation of his case, his friend Alexander Kogan was asked about Kholmyansky's alleged organisation of an "all-Union *alpan*". This line of questioning, and the fact that Kholmyansky's trial — due to take place on 25 October — was indefinitely postponed, have given rise to fears that the judicial authorities are collecting "evidence" against him which is unrelated to the "discovery" of a gun in his flat, and which may be used in a show-trial similar to that of Josef Begun in 1983.

Additional house-searches following the arrests of these five Hebrew teachers have included two at the homes of Dan Shapiro (a friend of Yuli Edel'shtein) and Inna Brukhina (one of Edel'shtein's former Hebrew students). Several Hebrew books, including a Bible and Talmud, were confiscated from Brukhina's flat; during the search at Shapiro's home a *mezuzah* was wrenched from the lintel and his *tefillin* (phylacteries) were confiscated as possible hiding places for drugs. Shapiro, Brukhina and her husband Dmitri Khazankin were all summoned by the police for questioning by the investigator in charge of Edel'shtein's case, but they refused to go and instead sent a joint statement that they had no knowledge of the drugs "found" at his flat.

More than fifty Jews in the major Soviet cities have organised a rota of week-long hunger strikes in protest at the arrests and the increase in pressure on Hebrew teachers and students.

CAROLYN BURCH

## Cardinal Slipyj: The Man and his Church

Cardinal Iosyf Slipyj died in Rome on 7 September 1984 at the age of 92. The spiritual leader of the world's six million Ukrainian Eastern-Rite Catholics (or Uni-

ates), he had lived in Rome, exiled from his native Ukraine, since 1963, where he tirelessly represented the interests of his church, banned in the USSR, and fought

unsuccessfully for recognition by the Pope as Eastern-rite Patriarch.

The Ukrainian Catholic Church is in communion with Rome but retains the customs, ceremonies and liturgy of the Orthodox rite. It was established by the Union of Brest in 1596 within the boundaries of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which at that time included the lands of western Ukraine, and the Uniate Church commanded the allegiance of the majority of the faithful in that area until the Second World War, when it had over four million members. The head of the Uniate Church, Metropolitan Sheptyts'ky, died in 1944, and his successor, Iosyf Slipyj, Archbishop of L'viv, immediately faced the problems which followed the Soviet occupation of western Ukraine in 1945. The Soviet authorities unleashed a violent campaign against the Eastern-rite Catholic Church, branding it as a hotbed of "bourgeois nationalism" and accusing its members of treasonable collaboration with the enemy. Slipyj himself was arrested and charged in 1945 with "hostile activities against the USSR" and "fraternisation with Fascists". Meanwhile, the Soviet authorities persuaded a small number of Eastern-rite Catholic priests to take the initiative in a move to "reunite" their Church with the Russian Orthodox Church and to sever its links with the Vatican. The Synod of L'viv of 1946, seen as uncanonical and unrepresentative by the vast majority of Ukrainian Catholics, duly set the seal to this reunification. All bishops and many of the priests of the church, when faced with the choice between accepting Orthodoxy or a ten-year prison sentence, took the second option. As Cardinal Slipyj told the International Sakharov Hearings in 1977: "All our bishops except myself died in prison or exile". He said that 1,500 priests died, hundreds of thousands of believers were sent to labour camps and after the war, of the pre-war total of 4,195 churches and chapels, not one remained open.

To this day, then, the Ukrainian Catholic Church remains the largest single religious group in the USSR which has no legal existence. There is little doubt that if it were again to function openly, it would have between four and five million members within the USSR. It is estimated that its clandestine existence is served by at least three secret bishops and 300-350 secret priests; meanwhile it is consistently perse-

cuted by the Soviet authorities.

Destalinisation in the 1950s and the development of a Vatican *Ostpolitik* aimed at improving relations between the Vatican and the USSR did not lead to any major improvement in the lot of the Ukrainian Catholics; but one positive result of international pressure and of the efforts of Pope John XXIII was the release of Cardinal Slipyj from Siberia in 1963 after almost 18 years prison, labour camp and exile. He was allowed to leave for Rome where he spent the rest of his life. In 1964 he was elevated by Pope Paul VI to the office of Archbishop Major and appointed to the Vatican Congregation for Eastern Churches. He was made a Cardinal in 1965.

In Rome, Cardinal Slipyj became steadily more critical of what he saw as an excessively conciliatory *Ostpolitik* on the part of the Vatican. From the 1960s, and particularly after 1968 when the Eastern-rite Catholic Church was again legalised in Czechoslovakia, the Church's activities in Ukraine have steadily increased, involving petitions to the Soviet authorities, the reoccupation by Uniate priests of closed or abandoned churches and the circulation of *samizdat* Ukrainian Catholic literature. The Vatican has always made clear to the Cardinal its deep sympathy with his personal plight and that of his flock in the USSR; but has repeatedly turned down his petitions to be created Patriarch of a world-wide Ukrainian Patriarchate which would unite under its jurisdiction Ukrainian Catholics in Ukraine and in exile in the West. The Vatican has always argued that its refusal to create this post is based on juridical rather than personal grounds; but both the Cardinal and his flock in the West have understandably experienced deep frustration. From 1971, after one such refusal, Slipyj became more outspoken in his criticism of the Vatican and his condemnation of the attitude of the Soviet government to the Ukrainian Catholic Church. In November of that year he and 16 Uniate bishops held their own Synod in Rome, convened by the Cardinal as if he were a Patriarch. But a further refusal came in 1975; and the Vatican remained silent while Ukrainians in the West marked the thirtieth anniversary of the dissolution of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in 1976.

The accession of the Polish Pope, John Paul II, in 1978 brought new hope to Uniates both inside and outside the USSR.

Although the new Pope continued to refuse to create the post of Patriarch for Slipyj, he has convinced Eastern-rite Catholics worldwide of his sympathy with their plight. The increase in Soviet propaganda against the

Vatican and the Eastern-rite Catholics shows that the Soviet authorities, too, understand that he intends to seek a long-overdue solution to this serious problem.

PHILIP WALTERS

## Catholic Poetry in Czechoslovakia

The *samizdat* authors of Czechoslovakia form a fairly large community (over two hundred) created by the actions of the post-1968 regime, which, fearing the authors' liberal influence, sacked the entire Writers' Union and imposed strict censorship. At first the authorities were prepared to tolerate only the hack writers of the worst category, joined later by a few who had recanted their past activities, and a handful who were re-admitted into the official literary world, partly because of their fame and partly because their writings did not pose any direct threat to the regime. The unofficial Czech writing community publish in *samizdat* and abroad, and although their homemade books are seized by the police whenever they are found, and the writers themselves, often without jobs or income, are periodically summoned for interrogation, they are very rarely actually imprisoned for their writings. For one thing, there are too many of them and for another, it gives a bad impression to put people on trial for putting pen to paper. Instead, the regime persecutes those who reproduce the *samizdat* (when they can find them) and those who attempt to bring the manuscripts across the border.

The case of Iva Kotrlá, a 37-year-old Catholic poet and novelist, is not untypical in contemporary Czechoslovakia. She had been "publishing" her books with impunity for 15 years in various unofficial series of typewritten manuscripts such as the well-known *Padlock Edition*, or the *Moravian Reader*. In addition, two collections of her poems had been published abroad. Then on 24 September 1984, the police intercepted Petr Kozánek of Kyjov in a routine road check and found a number of *samizdat* books in the boot of his car, including Kotrlá's poems and a novel. The police used this as a pretext for a raid on her flat the fol-

lowing day, while Kotrlá was in hospital giving birth to her fifth child. They intimidated her children and invalid husband and took away her *samizdat* books together with a large amount of personal manuscripts and papers. However, they did not charge Kotrlá herself, but have kept Petr Kozánek in custody; he is charged with attempting to take the books to Austria (where he was to travel at a later date). Kotrlá's husband, Zdeněk, is charged with intention to do likewise. Both men are indicted under Art. 112 of the penal code, "defamation of the republic abroad", and face sentences of up to three years.

In a letter to the Minister of the Interior, dated 11 October, Iva Kotrlá asks whether it is an offence to lend one's poetry to one's friends. As one would expect, she has received no reply.

ALEXANDER TOMSKÝ

*Growing up*  
In the years  
When secret police took our faces  
On the way out of church . . .

We too trespassed —  
Into our own dreams,  
Every night,  
Adulthood approached the bed with a lamp,  
Quietly pulled aside the curtain,  
And, tenderly as a mother,  
Spoke to us.

IVA KOTRLÁ

*The Church Underground*  
The dust of walls!  
Ever cementing a fresh reality.  
Now a new dawn  
Closes over the worn-out steps  
Leading onward.

IVA KOTRLÁ