

word. I did send manuscripts and documents to the West, and I did it completely disinterestedly. I repeat: I have nothing to do with some mythical ideological enemies into whose hands I am supposed to be playing. Up to now the West has offered the only possibility of preserving these documents, saving them from physical destruction or oblivion. In doing this I was guided not only by my right of free spiritual orientation, but also by the demands of Christian duty and conscience, for I am convinced that genuine spiritual values cannot be created in a closed atmosphere where there is disinformation. Therefore I considered, and still consider, the materials that I sent out as a serious contribution to Russian culture, Russian thought and self-awareness. That is why I transmitted the manuscript journal *Chronicle of Current Events* which testified to the persecution of people who insisted on their right to freedom and human dignity. I did transmit the works, unpublished here, of great Russian poets: Anna Akhmatova, Marina Tsvetaeva, Osip Mandelstam and Boris Pasternak. I did transmit materials on the history of Russian culture, of the church, religious philosophy and unofficial theology. I also have some share in the publication of works by Nikolai Berdyaev and the martyrs Father Pavel Florensky and Lev Karsavin. I did transmit poems of Daniil Andreyev and Anatoli Radygin, commemorating the tragic image of the prisons and camps of our time. I transmitted the prison diaries of Eduard Kuznetsov – a man of outstanding courage who sacrificed himself for the right of the Jews to emigrate to Israel. I transmitted photographs of contemporary social activists and writers suffering persecution, people of good will. The aim of this statement is not self-justification. If I am arrested I shall consider it an act of gross arbitrariness. But the question does not simply concern me, but Russian culture: should it exist regardless of whether or not it is permitted by the official ideology and censorship? Should manuscripts perish if the authorities will not publish them here? Should people be forgotten who have already become the victims of arbitrary cruelty? To allow this would be to allow an injury not only to Russian, but to world culture. The world would not know the whole truth about our country, all the complexity of her life, her spiritual problems, the tragic nature of her historical experience. Our century would be deprived of some of its meaning and depth if it did not draw this experience into itself. I appeal for support to all people, whatever political and religious convictions they hold. I want people to understand the meaning of my actions. One of the serious threats hanging over the world is the constant tendency to isolation, to false secrecy, to the hiding of evil. There would be less violence and evil in the world if everybody knew about them.

## Ukrainian Catholics Appeal

*A petition signed by 180 Ukrainian Catholics reached the West in 1972 and was published in several Ukrainian Catholic newspapers, including Ukrainski visti (7 December, 1972), a weekly published in Edmonton, Canada. This document illustrates the predicament of the Ukrainian Catholic (Uniate) Church – the largest of the Byzantine Rite Churches – which was driven underground by the Soviet authorities when, in clear violation of the Soviet constitution, they staged a forcible “conversion” to Russian Orthodoxy of the Uniates in the Western Ukraine (1946-1949).*

## To the Council for Religious Affairs under the Council of Ministers of the USSR

### COMPLAINT

We, Ukrainian Catholics in the city of Stryi, Lviv region, ask that you assign to us one church for our religious use. When our local authorities took away our churches and began to drive us into the Orthodox Church, we were forced for many years to gather in our homes to fulfil our religious needs.

And now, we are even forbidden to pray there. We are being dispersed and arrested – including elderly people. It is painful to see our Ukrainian authorities acting in such an unjust manner towards us. Yet in our city they have left in peace the Polish church serving Polish Catholics. However we are of the same Catholic faith as they are. Why is it that they are allowed to pray in their own church, according to their customs, in their native language, and we are not? Is it for this that so many thousands of our sons and brothers have given their lives fighting at the front against German Fascists? Why should so many of our invalids, who survived after shedding their blood, receive such unjust treatment from our own authorities? These are the same authorities as those who left the Poles their churches, who give full freedom to the Orthodox and even drive us into their churches. Only we, Ukrainian Catholics, are forbidden to have even one church where we can pray according to our customs.

We are constantly told that it was our own priests who liquidated our Church and who converted to Orthodoxy. Yes, according to our Soviet laws there exists full freedom to believe or not to believe, to confess one faith or another. Those very priests who discarded their [Catholic] faith and converted to Orthodoxy, could also abolish the Orthodox Church and become atheists tomorrow. Who will forbid them to do so? But, in the name of this freedom of Soviet citizens, what right have they, the Orthodox priests, to force their Orthodoxy upon others, on those who steadfastly decide to hold on to their Catholic faith and Church?

Our Soviet authorities do not persecute the Catholic Church, particularly now that the Pope has joined the ranks of those who champion peace and justice in the world, alongside the Soviet Union. In the Soviet Union, the Poles, Byelorussians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Germans, and even inhabitants of Moscow have their own Catholic churches. It is only we, Ukrainian Catholics, who are not allowed even one church. What is more, contrary to common hospitality, we are not allowed to invite one another to our homes and to pray there according to our religious Catholic customs.

Therefore, we appeal to you, the highest representatives of the Soviet government, who expertly and justly govern a great state of 200 million people: tell our Ukrainian authorities not to wrong us, their citizens, like a step-mother her children; tell them to give us that which the Soviet government offers to Catholics of other nations. Do not allow further discrimination against our Catholic faith by local authorities, who in their atheist and Orthodox persistence bring only tears to our eyes, and deep pain to our hearts, and this in no way teaches us to respect and love our Soviet system. Tears and pain lead only to bitterness and hatred. Only the enemies of the Soviet government need that. Please assign a Catholic church to us, as you have to other Catholics and, in return, we shall be deeply grateful to you in word and deed.