

Prayer to Christ Crucified

O Lord Jesus! By Thy Passion which Thou hast endured on the Cross, I beseech Thee: have pity on my poor sinful soul, and have mercy on it, when it shall depart from this perishable body.

Prayer before the Cross

O Lord of the world! My mind do thou enlighten,
May Thy Cross send a ray of faith, my heart to brighten.
Thy Cross and Thy Passion within my soul deep,
In my mind and my heart engrave, me for to keep.
With faith and with love I will thank Thee for ever,
For Thy mercy, my King and my God, failing never.
And Thy All-Holy Cross with tears I shall praise,
With mind and with lips, heart and soul, all my days.

(Translated by Vera Rich)

Pentecostalist on Trial

Ivan Fedotov, a Pentecostal pastor, was sentenced in July 1960 to ten years "on an absurd charge of 'trying to make a human sacrifice' as anti-Soviet propaganda" (see documents in RCL Vol. 3, Nos. 1-3, p. 28 and p. 29). On 4 August, 1974 a wedding service led by Pastor Fedotov was disrupted by the local authorities, and on 15 August he was arrested for a second time. The document below is a brief account of his subsequent trial. It appeared in the samizdat human rights journal, The Chronicle of Current Events No. 36.

The trial of Fedotov

Ivan Petrovich Fedotov (born in 1929, builder), was arrested on 15 August 1974 (see *The Chronicle of Current Events* No. 34).

From 10 to 18 April 1975 the Kaluga regional court examined his case. The Chairman of the court was Kuznetsov. The public prosecutor had the same surname. Fedotov conducted his own defence.

He was accused under article 227 ("Infringement of person and rights of citizens under the appearance of performing religious ceremonies"), 190/1, 191 ("Resisting a representative of the authorities or a representative of the community fulfilling his obligation to preserve public order") and 192 ("Insulting a representative of the authorities or a representative of the community") of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR.

Under article 227 Fedotov was accused of organizing unregistered prayer meetings. Five documents were produced as material evidence. A document

dated 2 December 1972 stated: "26 believers were singing, that is, they were celebrating religious rites. On the table were a Bible and a hymn-book published in 1968." A document dated 5 June 1973 said: "When we arrived the believers were sitting and chatting, and there was nothing on the table." A document dated 26 October 1973: "There were ten guests together with the hosts. While the document was being compiled, Fedotov said, 'You are the Gestapo', refused to name his denomination, and refused to sign his name." A document dated 2 June 1974 stated: "There were 31 people, who were reading poetry and singing to a guitar." A document of 4 August 1974: "There was a gathering of 150-180 people praying, singing and muttering, including about 30 children. When requested to give their surnames and show their passports, they refused." (On the last occasion the document was compiled at a wedding!)

Under articles 191 and 192 the charge against Fedotov was that when on 26 October 1973 representatives of the authorities (the deputy of the District Soviet Rudakov, the militia lieutenant Lovkov and others) climbed over the fence, burst into Fedotov's house and lieutenant Lovkov seized him by the chest, Fedotov said "You are like the Gestapo" and pushed Lovkov aside.

Article 190 section 1 apparently imputed to Fedotov only that at a meeting of the Administrative Committee of the District Soviet's Executive Committee Fedotov said that the communist Lomovtsev, head doctor of the medical epidemic station, was a drunkard. The majority of the witnesses of this episode, members of the Administrative Committee, attributed to Fedotov the words: "All communists are drunkards."

The judge behaved very rudely. When the witness Olga Loseva asked what the charge against the accused was, the judge replied: "We are asking you the questions, not you us." When Olga Loseva was about to begin to say: "I am obliged . . .", the judge interrupted her: "Here is what you are obliged to do - go away and register your marriage!" When the witness Natalya Loseva began to describe in detail how the militia had burst into Fedotov's house on 26 October 1973 (see above), the judge interrupted her too: "That's enough now, that's enough. You organized a meeting from beginning to end. Who set you against the Soviet militia authorities like this?!" In reply to N. Loseva's retort: "Well, as a witness I have the right to say freely everything known to me relating to the case," the judge cut her short: "You can demand your rights for yourself there, but here you have come to court."

V. I. Nazdrachev, presbyter of the Baptist community in the town of Maloyaroslavets, who gave evidence as a witness in court, testified that Fedotov had been expelled from the community, after which he had organized a separate group with 17 other members of the community. To the judge's question whether Fedotov's "unregistered group" was meeting after his arrest, Nazdrachev replied: "Yes, they are meeting. I have not been there myself, but one of our sisters has." The secretary of the Executive Committee of the Maloyaroslavets District Soviet informed the court that presbyter Nazdrachev had addressed the Executive Committee twice in writing and more than once verbally with a request to "remove" Fedotov.

In his speech the Procurator emphasized that Fedotov was being tried not for his convictions, but for violation of the laws. ". . . He organized a group of Pentecostalists involving minors and 17 Baptists . . . The activities of Fedotov's group bear an anti-social character, directed towards non-fulfilment of Soviet

laws, although this is not stated openly in the sermons . . . In the Bible are the words: 'They that take the sword shall perish with the sword', which is an indirect refusal to take an oath of allegiance . . ."

The Procurator asked for five years deprivation of freedom for Fedotov. Moreover, he demanded that criminal proceedings be instituted against the witnesses P. I. Pyzhkov, M. I. Smirnova and A. I. Smirnova for refusal to testify.

In his defence speech, Fedotov repudiated membership of the "Shaker-Pentecostal" group. "When I arrived in Maloyaroslavets, I did not organize an underground group, but came to the prayer-house. Everyone witnessed there that the presbyter set me beside him and I preached the word of God, but later, out of envy and malicious jealousy, he expelled me . . . I am a believing Christian and have never hidden myself; representatives of the authorities came to us and were present at the services. I do not harm the health of citizens. All the children who were present were children of believing parents and they had become believers before they came to me." He also repudiated the charges under other articles. In his final speech also, Ivan Fedotov denied his guilt and asked the court to take into account that his old mother, who did not receive a pension, a sick aunt, his brother, an invalid of the first group, and his wife were dependent on him, and that "as the Procurator asked for five years strict regime under article 227, and as I am not guilty, he should limit my sentence and replace the five years strict regime with five years exile."

The court sentenced Fedotov to three years in a corrective labour colony, strict regime. At the end of May the court of appeal confirmed the sentence.

Georgian Believer Sentenced

On 23 March, 1974 Mrs. Valentina Pailodze, a 50-year-old conductor of church choirs, was arrested. She is a member of the Georgian Orthodox Church and claims that she was arrested because of her active part in the movement against corruption in that branch of the Church. She was tried in June 1974 and sentenced to one and a half years for the anonymous writing of letters which allegedly slandered the Soviet State and also infringed citizens' rights by imposing religion on them. The following extract is taken from an article entitled "Rewarded according to her deserts" which appeared in Molodezh Gruzii of 10 December, 1974 (p. 4). The writer begins by talking to some of those gathered outside the court.

"The accused, Valentina Serapionovna Pailodze, proved to be a completely normal person," began the psychiatrist. "Moreover, she possesses an exceptional memory. 136 letters, and every one with surname, name and patronymic, address . . ."

"To whom were they addressed?" I said, not giving in.

"Well, to all of us - writers, scholars, students, procurators, judges. Surely you don't want to enumerate all of them! There they were as witnesses."

Meanwhile the guilty party in this confusion, Valentina Pailodze, a woman of advanced years, was sitting in the dock and cordially greeting all the people entering the court-room.