

The Situation of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the Soviet Union

By now forty years have passed since the Ukrainian Church descended into the catacombs. The Soviet government, with its Beria and men of his ilk, eliminated all the bishops of the Ukrainian Church. But, the Ukrainian Catholic Church survived the dark years of Stalinism. After the condemnation of the crimes of the tyrannical Stalinists, the particular situation of the Ukrainian people and the Church of its forefathers was not normalized.¹

In the last five years there has been a growing wave of repression of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the Soviet Union². This has been a time of change at the top of the Soviet Communist Party: Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko and then Gorbachov. The first three were old and ill, so that, in practice, the levers of power remained in the hands of others. During Andropov's tenure in the

KGB, there was a very severe repression of dissidents, defenders of the Helsinki accords, and religious movements. Many were expelled abroad, and others were imprisoned, deported, confined, searched, calumniated and threatened.

Despite these repressions, the Ukrainian Catholic Church continues to live, grow and celebrate.³ The trials and persecutions endured by Catholics have strengthened their faith and hope.⁴ On 9 September 1982 was created the Initiative Group for the Rights of Believers and of the Church, whose members are⁵: Josyp Terelja, Fr. Hryhorij (hieromonk Herman)⁶ Budzinskyj, Fr. Dionisij, Fr. Ihnatij and Stefanija Petras-Sicko. After the arrest of Terelja in December of 1982⁷, Vasyl Kobryn became member and president of the Group.⁸ Terelja remained a member of the Group⁹ and also presides over the

1. Initiative Group for the Defence of the Rights of Believers and of the Church, *Appeal to the Soviet Government*, in *Russia Cristiana* 4 (190), Milan, July-August 1983, pp. 93-94.
2. Terelja, J., *Initiative Group for the Defence of Believers*, in *Russia Cristiana* 4 (190), p. 87.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. Blazejovskij, D., *Byzantine Kyivan Rite Students in Pontifical Seminaries, and in Seminaries, Universities and Institutes of Central and Western Europe*, Rome 1984, p. 125. Budzinskyj lived at Russicum from October 1937 until 9 July 1939, and studied philosophy at the Gregorian University.
7. Terelja, J., *Letter to the President and to the Knesset of the Republic of Israel*, 3 May 1984, in *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Ukraine* 3, in *Visti z Rymu* 2 (365), Rome, February 1985.
8. Kobryn, V., *Autobiography*, in *Chronicle* 4, in 3 (366), March 1985.
9. Colloquy of Terelja with Mychajlo Hryhorovyc Chomenko, Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic; V. Bodnarenko, scientific collaborator of the Institute of Atheism of the Academy of Social Sciences with the Soviet Communist Party; N. N.

Central Committee of Ukrainian Catholics.¹⁰

The Initiative Group of the Defence of the Rights of Believers and of the Church turned to the government of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic with a memorandum¹¹ in which is requested that there be studied certain dispositions for the legal recognition of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. These dispositions are:

1. Free elections in all the eparchies of Western and Eastern Ukraine; it is necessary that in the eparchies where the majority of faithful are of the Greek-Catholic faith, there be returned their churches, monasteries and chapels.
2. Wherever the faithful belonging to the Ukrainian Catholic Church are in the minority with respect to other groups of believers, the former are to be permitted establishment of houses of prayer.
3. Reopening of the scientific institutions of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and of the major seminaries in Lviv and Uzhorod.
4. To permit 50 students of theology to complete their studies in the Vatican and to concede visas to Vienna, Warsaw and Munich for another 10 students.
5. The restitution of the publishing

houses of the five eparchies of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, which were sequestered by the state.

6. The establishment of investigating commissions examining the criminal actions of the KGB and MVD, which were responsible for reprisals against Ukrainian faithful and priests.
7. The establishment of investigating commissions examining criminal activities of Soviet psychiatrists, who were responsible for reprisals against active members of the Ukrainian Catholic Church.
8. The Church obliges itself to respect all dispositions and laws of the State and to urge the faithful to do so as well.
9. The Church recognizes as its supreme authority His Holiness the Pope of Rome; therefore, it is impossible that the former have any dependence on Soviet authorities.

Also requested is respect of the law of separation of Church and State.

Clearly, in the present political situation within the Soviet Union, it was unthinkable for the authorities to even partially satisfy the hopes of the Group. On the contrary, "the

Semenjuk, secretary of the Regional Committee of the Transcarpathian Party; also present was one person who did not specify his identity, but instead limited himself to a self-description of being young. A colloquy held in East Ukraine at Uzhorod on 23 April 1984 and reported in the *Chronicle* 6, in *Visti z Rymu* 8 (371), August 1985.

10. Sannikova, E., *Letter to John Paul II*, in *Martyrology of the Ukrainian Churches*, vol. II, *The Ukrainian Catholic Church. Documents, Materials, Christian Samvydav from Ukraine, compiled and edited by Osyp Zinkenych and Rev. Taras R. Lonchyna*, Toronto-Baltimore 1985, pp. 586-589. The volume is in the Ukrainian language, and will be published soon in English. Sannikova writes her letter in defence of Terelja and the Ukrainian Catholic Church.
11. Terelja, J., *Group...* see no. 2.

Ukrainian Catholic Church has remained that which it was: a clandestine Church"¹², and the repressions and persecutions have multiplied. "Since 1980 the local authorities, with the help of KGB agents disguised as priests (and Monsignors), began to methodically destroy Ukrainian architectural monuments, all for the sake of the struggle against the Uniate Church"¹³. From the beginning of 1983 through 23 April 1984, more than 30 Ukrainian Catholic Churches, where the people did not wish to accept Russian Orthodox priests, were closed.¹⁴ "The Moscow government has released a new circular which foresees the complete destruction of the Ukrainian Catholic Church."¹⁵

In 1982 died in Lviv Bishop Nikanor Deneka. On 26 May 1983 at Karaganda died a heroic confessor

of the faith, Bishop Olexander Chira, at the age of 87 and after 35 years of prison and deportations.¹⁶ In 1982 were imprisoned the priests Vasyl Kavacyk and Roman Esyp, and on 29 September 1982 was killed a nun, Maria Sved, aged 28; and imprisoned at the same time was Fr. Petro Pyrizka.¹⁷ In 1982 was arrested Fr. Ihnatij Soltys, head of the Catholic-pokutnyky.¹⁸ On 7 March 1984 were arrested Fr. Stepan Hryhorovyc and his daughter.¹⁹ In April of the same year, in the village Zastavne of the Transcarpathia region, was searched the house of Fr. Olexander Tovt, with the confiscation of books, among which was the *Bible for Children*, Estella, Spain 1981, edited by the Aid to the Church in Need, with an introduction by Patriarch Sliptyj.²⁰ On 29 May 1984, in a concentration camp near Lviv, the KGB tortured to death a school colleague of Card. Lubachiv-

12. Terelja, J., "We cannot be passive spectators of the destruction of the world. Open letter to Hans Maier, in *Russia Cristiana* 4 (190), pp. 88-92. Hans Maier is the President of the Central Committee of German Catholics.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Colloquy of Terelja with M. H. Chomenko... see no. 9. The *Chronicle* 4 in *Visti z Rymu* 3 (366) of March 1985, reports that on 17 March 1984 in the village of Korosne in the Lviv region the church was closed. The *Chronicle* 5, in *Visti z Rymu* 6 (369) of June 1985, tells us that in '83 was closed the church in the village Merysciv in the Lviv region; in '84 in the village Kymyr; on 23 May 1984 was destroyed the church in the city Bibrka; and, on Easter of '84 in the village Stare Stryjske in the Lviv region, the church was closed; in spring of '84 in the village Verjacja the church was destroyed; on 21 June 1984 in the village Pnjatyn of the Lviv region the church was burned down.
15. Terelja J., *Letter to the President of the Central Committee of Austrian Catholics*, in *Chronicle* 6, in *Visti z Rymu* 8 (371), August 1985. Also: *Decree of the Regional Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party of the Transcarpathian region and of the regional Soviet of Deputies to perfect the methods of struggle with Nationalism and Zionism*, 3 July 1984, in *Chronicle* 6, in *Visti z Rymu* 8 (371), August 1985. This document is considered secret, and bases itself on an "Instruction no. 81 of 28 May 1984".
16. *Martyrology...*, p. 97. See no. 10.
17. Interview given by Card. Lubachivskij to Charles Robertiello of Radio Liberty and Free Europe on 25 October 1985, in *Visti z Rymu* 11 (374), November 1985.
18. *Chronicle* 1, in *Visti z Rymu* 1 (364), January 1985.
19. *Chronicle* 3, in *Visti z Rymu* 2 (365), February 1985.
20. *Chronicle* 6, in *Visti z Rymu* 8 (371), August 1985.

skyj, Fr. Antin Potocnjak. On 7 October 1984, in the penitentiary hospital of Leningrad, died Valerij Marcenko, aged 37. In November-December of 1984 "disappeared" Fr. Hryhorij Budzinskyj. In December of that same year, at the principal train station in Lviv, drunken hooligans barbarically killed a Ukrainian Catholic nun who was preparing children for their First Communion. On 22 March 1985 Vasyl Kobryn was condemned to three years of general regime camps, and recently, on 20 August 1985 in Uzhorod, Josyp Terelja was condemned to 12 years, 7 of forced labour and 5 in exile.²¹

These are but a few facts that testify to the fact that, even during the era of Gorbachov, willingly presented by the Western press as smilingly and openly "democratic", the iron hand still strikes religious groups in the Ukraine. The Helsinki Accords have remained mere words on paper.

On the other hand, in these last two years, Western mass media have spoken more and more about the catacomb situation of the Church in Ukraine. Credit for this statement of position belongs to Terelja, Kobryn and Budzinskyj, who, with their declarations, and principally with the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Ukraine* and the *Ukrainian Catholic Bulletin*, have given a great deal of news concerning the violation of the Helsinki Accords by the Soviet Union to the West.

To the present time there have arrived in the West nine normal numbers of the *Chronicle* and extraordinary number concerning police actions against Vasyl Kobryn, and

also concerning number 10 and other materials for further numbers of the *Chronicle*. There has also been released one number of the *Ukrainian Catholic Bulletin*.

Still, is the *Chronicle* an authentic document, or is it a collection of false or tendentious data meant by the Soviet regime to infiltrate within the new materials that reach us through the channels of samizdat?

Cardinal Lubachivskyj, Archbishop Major of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, confirms the authenticity of the *Chronicle* based on trustworthy sources in Ukraine. Institutes specialized in the analysis of religious events within the Soviet Union and beyond the Iron Curtain, such as the Archiv Samizdata of Munich and the Galube in der Sweiten Welt in Switzerland, assure us of the authenticity of these documents.

Another external index for the document could be the article of A. Lucjuk, *Huk poroznjoji bocky* (The Din of the Empty Barrell), in *Lvivskaja Pravda* of 3 April 1985, where the *Chronicle* of Kobryn, Terelja and Budzinskyj is discussed.

An internal index of the *Chronicle* - or better, indices - could be the mistakes that are encountered in various numbers. In the *Chronicle* 2²² "Sunday 7 February, 1984" is mentioned, while that day was indeed a Tuesday. In the same number is discussed the "liquidation of the Catholic Church in Transcarpathia in 1950", while the exact date of this event is 28 July 1949 at Uzhorod. In the *Chronicle* 4²³ is discussed the "life of Polanja Batjo" - that is, arrest and

21. Interview given by Lubachivsky ... see no. 17; *ABM Correspondence* May-August 1985, Munich, p. 70; *International Society for Human Rights and Keston College Press Releases*, September 2, 1985.

22. *Visti z Rymu* 1 (364), January 1985.

23. *Visti z Rymu* 3 (366), March 1985.

senteñcing - while the *Martyrology*²⁴ speaks of the same Polanja Batjo as a priest. Here it seems that the mistake is in the *Martyrology*. In the same number 4, there is a letter from Terelja to Reagan, "letter from Catholic to catholic" - but Reagan is not Catholic. In the *Chronicle* 6²⁵ are discussed the confiscated books belonging to Fr. Olexander Tovt, among which were mentioned the *Bible for Children*, printed in Rome. This *Bible* contained only a preface of Patriarch Slipyj given in Rome, but was printed in 1981 at Estella in Spain.²⁶ In *Chronicle* 9²⁷ is discussed the arrest of Metropolitan Andrew Sheptyckyj "in December of 1914", while the Metropolitan was really imprisoned in September of that year.

An index that would hold against the *Chronicle* could be the fact that Terelja seems to know too many things about Ukrainians outside the Soviet Union. This problem can be resolved if one takes into consideration the fact that Terelja listens to the Ukrainian and Russian programs of Radio Liberty and Vatican Radio, and that he is entirely satisfied with what he hears²⁸

Officially there are only six names known of persons who belong to the Group and who also write for the *Chronicle*.²⁹

The authors of the *Chronicle* refuse to collaborate with Soviet au-

thorities, and do not wish to have anything to do with the latter, even if at the beginning the Group spoke of the "legal recognition of the Ukrainian Catholic Church".³⁰ Later, however, they changed their views.³¹

At least 1000 persons have destroyed or returned their Soviet passports. In the *Chronicle* 1 is discussed the burning of 520 passports.³² In the *Chronicle* 3³³ - 290 passports returned in the Transcarpathian region, and between 921 and 927 in Western Ukraine. Terelja estimates that more than 3000 Catholics will do the same thing, and adds: "one can enter the concentration camps even without a passport".³⁴

The centers of the *Chronicle* are Lviv and Uzhorod. The *Chronicle* speaks of the state of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and its faithful, not only in the Ukraine but in the entire Soviet Union as well.

Those who know more or less the situation in the Soviet Union can easily understand that the documents of the samizdat would never see the light of day without the support of large segments of the population. The fact that the *Chronicle* makes it to the West through diverse channels testifies to its moral support from the people.

According to the *Chronicle* 2³⁵, "In only the last three years, in the

24. *Martyrology*. p. 109.

25. *Visti z Rymu* 8 (371), July 1985.

26. *Biblija dlja ditej*, Estella 1981. Bible published and edited by the Aid to the Church in Need.

27. *Visti z Rymu* 4 (367), April 1985.

28. Terelja, J., *Group*... see no. 2; Kobryn, V., *Autobiography*' see no. 8.

29. *Chronicle* 5, in *Visti z Rymu* 6 (369), June 1985.

30. Terelja, J., *Group*... see no. 2.

31. Colloquy of Terelja with M. H. Chomenko, see no. 9.

32. *Visti z Rymu* 1 (364), January 1985.

33. *Visti z Rmu* 2 (265), February 1985.

34. *Chroynicle* 1, in *Visii z Rymu* 1 (364), January 1985.

35. *Visti z Rymu* 1 (364), January 1985.

Transcarpathia region 81 Catholic priests have been ordained, of whom only 9 have completed middle-technical studies the rest having done higher studies. In Eastern Ukraine there exists a clandestine monastic school, of three years, in which boys and girls learn the bases of Christian teaching". This is very precise testimony, which attests to the dynamism and life of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, and also attests to the great amount of work done in very difficult conditions by the bishops and priests of this Church. Priests are persecuted and required to pay a fine of 50 rubles for celebrating the Liturgy in private ³⁶.

Likewise, the *Chronicle* 7 ³⁷ describes the missionary vivacity of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. On May 5 of this year (1984) in Belorussia, in the village Oleksycjach of the Hrodnensko region, there were searches of the Catholics there. The KGB was looking for 'subversive' Catholic literature. Recently the authorities have launched a campaign of intimidation of Belorussian Catholics... The Belorussian Catholic Church of the Eastern Rite was almost completely liquidated by Muscovite invaders, but despite this, since the late '70's five Ukrainian Catholic priests have gone to Belorussia, and they have begun a harsh missionary task in a catacombs situation. So far have been renewed three deaneries and tens of individual parishes. The Belorussians have not forgotten their faith, and the fact that they are Belorussians. Pray for Belorussia, for its martyred Catholic Church! Ukrainians! Catholics! Help with

your work and prayer for the rebirth of the Belorussian Catholic Church. God is with us. May His love illumine you and illumine all those who burn with desire to be members of the living Church of Christ".

If one takes into consideration the situation and the proportions, as well as the fact that a deanery includes at least ten parishes, then one arrives at the conclusion that in Belorussia there are at least 30 Greek Catholic parishes, contained within "three deaneries and tens of parishes", which have been given a new life thanks "to five Ukrainian Catholic priests".

In the *Chronicle* 9 ³⁸ are discussed the "local Uniates" of the region of Homelska in Belorussia. In the *Chronicle* 7 ³⁹ "tens of Catholic priests are at mission work in East Ukraine; they perform a hard and heroic task, full of valour, in a completely ungrateful land", and again in the *Chronicle* 5 ⁴⁰ are spoken of persecutions of Ukrainian priests and faithful doing missionary work in Russia.

From what has been said above can be seen not only the vivacity and dynamism of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, but also a certain missionary expansion.

The deportation and imprisonment in Soviet camps of this Church has been an advantage and a favour. While the Ukrainian Catholic Church testifies to the risen Christ in Western,

36. Budzinskyj, H., *Letters*, in *Martyrology*, pp. 499-530. In this book are photoreproductions of the fine certificates paid by Fr. Budzinskyj. The letters can also be found in *Visti z Rymu* 6 (351), 15 December 1983.

37. *Visti z Rymu* 12 (363), December 1984.

38. *Visti z Rymu* 4 (367), April 1985.

39. *Visti z Rymu* 12 (363), December 1984.

40. *Visti z Rymu* 6 (369), June 1985.

Eastern and Central Ukraine, for many years the late Bishop Olexander Chira spread the word of Christian truth in Karaganda and Kazakhstan, and in 1984, Nina Marcenko telegraphed John Paul II in favor of her son Valerij, who wished to become a Ukrainian Catholic priest, but who was imprisoned at Perm, Kucino,⁴¹ and in Rome were received greetings from Siberia.⁴² The Ukrainian Catholic Church testifies to the risen Christ from the Carpathians to Vladivostok.

The *Chronicle* does not speak of nuns, but from the Polish hierarchy it can be learned that in Western Ukraine there work at least 1000 Ukrainian nuns. Their daily work is performed in hospitals, schools, and hospices, but also in factories and co-operatives. In the evening, on Saturday and Sunday, they dedicate themselves to catechetical and pastoral work. They live privately or in groups of three or four. The nun Maria Sved was 28 years of age when she was killed on 30 September 1982.⁴³ This last fact confirms the existence today of a young generation of nuns in Ukraine.

As can be seen from the *Chronicle* and other documents, the great defenders of the Ukrainian Catholic Church are laypeople. Names such as Josyp Terelja, Vasyl Kobryn, Valerj Marcenko, Olexsa Tychyj, Polanja Batjo, Pavlo Kampov, Mychajla, Maria and Anna Trykur, Jurij and Maria Bodnar, Ivan and Fedir Versta, Ilja

Ulihanynec... testify to this fact, as do innumerable arrests.

In 1979 Oles Berdnyk wrote to John Paul II: "I was born and educated in a land where the official doctrine in atheism. I have come to Christ through struggles and sufferings, feeling his living reality..."⁴⁴ It would not be without foundation to think that no small number of Ukrainian youth think according to the same categories. The *Chronicle* often speaks of the youth.⁴⁵

The *Chronicle*, even if it is officially the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Ukraine*, does not limit itself to the enumeration of Catholic martyrs and confessors. It speaks of Orthodox, Baptists, Pentecostals, Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Jews and Muslims. The authors of the *Chronicle* describe their suffering, repressions, the transgression of their fundamental rights by the authorities. With regard to the official Church, the Russian Orthodox one, one sees a feeling of disdain, a lack of respect, a diffidence, because it is too close to the authorities. This attitude, in some measure, is also extended to convinced and faithful Orthodox believers. Much more strongly underlined are the ties of Catholics with various Protestant groups. On the other hand, a great many Catholic faithful go to the officially open Orthodox churches, especially when they have faith in

41. Valerij Marcenko *Schwebt in Lebensgefah*r, in *Glaube in der 2. Welt* 5, Zollikon, Switzerland 1984.

42. *Visti z Rymu* 1 (352), January 1984. Card. Slipyj regularly received holiday greetings from Siberia. Even after his death letters of condolence came to Rome. Some can be found in *Visti z Rymu* 10 (362), November 1984.

43. *Martyrology...*, p. 153.

44. Hrynioch, I., *Oles Berdnyk, Martyrology*, Rome 1979, pp. 41-84.

45. *Chronicle* speaks of the young in numbers 1, 2, 3, 5 and 9.

46. *Chronicle* 5, in *Visti z Rymu* 6 (369), June 1985. In this number is discussed bishop Sava of the eparchy of Mukaciv. He is presented as a member of the KGB

the pastor. There are also candidates to the priesthood "affected by the Uniate spirit" who are in the ecclesiastical academies of Leningrad and Moscow.⁴⁷ A great many priests who deep down have Catholic hearts serve the Russian Orthodox Church in order to salvage what can be salvaged.

Today the exclusive representatives of religion in Ukraine are no longer Orthodox and Catholics, but the various Protestant groups as well. Through the 40 years of persecutions in the Ukraine has been born the ecumenism of the cross and of martyrdom, which will be at the base of these Churches' future.

In the *Chronicle* 7⁴⁸ we read: "The Soviet Empire will survive if: we do not unite in the lands of emigration, if there is no union on the religious level, or on some other ground. We, in the metropolitanate (that is, in Ukraine) form an almost compact body, which stands on its own two feet; but, unfortunately, the diaspora is divided. Likewise in our Ukrainian Catholic Church not everyone shows obedience with regard to the head of the Church, and this can lead to undesired consequences. May those who used to disobey Patriarch Josyf I remember: we cannot understand how this came to be, but if this is true, the people who go against unity will be eliminated by the nation without pity. For people of this ilk the road to Ukraine will be closed forever. These people have not contributed at

all - I repeat, at all - in favor of the liberation of Ukraine, but when they were able, they wronged, and they continue to damage... Sometimes we think that they are agents of the KGB...". These are words of the strongest type, but they are authentic.

In the *Chronicle* 5⁴⁹ the administration of Radio Liberty is referred to "Patriarch Josyf I - head of our Church" to clarify questions concerning the pokutnyky. Likewise, Terelja, when he spoke with the authorities on the question of the legal recognition of the Ukrainian Catholic Church affirmed: "About the fate of the Church it is necessary to speak with the Ukrainian Patriarch Josyf I and not with me", and again: "I do not have the right to decide these questions; after all, I must listen to what my bishop has to say. Secondly, the questions of this type, such as the legal recognition of the Church, are decided by Patriarch Josyf I - therefore, speak to him".

There are two principal requests of the Catholics of Ukraine to their brothers scattered all over the world: unity and obedience to the Head of the Ukrainian Church. There are also other requests, such as prayer, solidarity, etc. Another fact of great importance - at least for the authors of the *Chronicle*, the Ukrainian Catholic Church is led by its Patriarch.

The *Chronicle* demonstrates solidarity with nearby peoples and their struggles. Solidarity with the Poles⁵¹, with Russian dissidents⁵², with the

47. *Rapport secret au Comite Central sur l'etat de l'Eglise en URSS* = Furov Report Paris 1980.

48. *Visti z Rymu* 12 (363), December 1984

49. *Visti z Rymu* 6 (369), June 1985

50. *Chronicle* 6, in *Visti z Rymu* 8 (371), August 1985. Colloquy of Terelja with M. H. Chomenko...

51. Terelja, *J. Letter to Lech Walensa*, in *Chronicle* 3, in *Visti z Rymu* 2 (365), February 1985.

52. *Letter to the Lands of emigration in favour of Jelena Sjannikova*, in *Chronicle* 4, in *Visti z Rymu* 3 (366), March 1985.

Rumanians⁵³, and with Afghanistan⁵⁴. Through the *Chronicle* Ukrainian Christians also appeal to the nearest and farthest people, to the Western Churches in favor of cooperation and Christian solidarity in their battles.

In synthesis, we have seen the situation of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the Soviet Union in these last years. The Initiative Group for the Defence of the Rights of Believers and of the Church has very far-reaching goals and seems to be the most public representative of the Catholic Christians in Ukraine. Thanks to this Group, the 10 numbers of the *Chronicle* which seems to us to be authentic – have seen the light of day⁵⁵. Thus we see the different aspects of

Ukrainian catholicity. The clandestine bishops are not explicitly named, but only implicitly, and the fruit of their work can be seen: missions and ordinations⁵⁶. The persecutions continue and are intensified; there is no collaboration with the authorities; the churches which have remained standing are destroyed; for the *Chronicle* the Pokutnyky are Catholics; young priests are many; laypeople energetically defend their Church; popular support for the *Chronicle*, with centres at Lviv and Uzhorod; the missions as a sign of life; the ecumenism of the cross; the requests to the brothers of the West; international solidarity; appeal for solidarity with the persecuted; the young.

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53. *Common Declaration of the Romanian Rebirth Group and of the Ukrainian National Front*, in *Chronicle* 2, in *Visit z Rymu* 1 (364), January 1985.
54. Cf. *Dati nuovi sulle vittime in Afghanistan in L'altra Europa* 4 (202), Milan, July–August 1985; cf. *Lettera al Ministro della Difesa dell'URSS*, in *L'altra Europa* 3 (201), May–June 1985; cf. *Chronicle* 6, 7.
55. The many statistics given to us by the *Chronicle* could be considered negatively, as going against the authenticity of the document.
56. There exist authors that offer statistics of how many clandestine bishops there are today in Ukraine. We think that this could lead to further arrests and persecutions, and for this reason we do not cite these statistics.