

PERSECUTION

Farewell

(A tribute to V.I. Chernyshov)

In less than three quarters of a century the world has witnessed the rape and destruction of many nations by the terror and mass murder of communism.

The list of doomed nations includes: Azerbaijan, Armenia, the Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, China, North Korea, North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Cuba, Mozambique, Angola, Ethiopia, and Afghanistan.

Each country which is conquered is cleansed of capitalism by means of mass murder. Recently in Cambodia between three and five million people were brutally murdered because it was easier to kill them than to attempt to re-educate them as Marxists.

Russian Communists have killed far more of their own people than Adolf Hitler did Jews. More Russians have been killed by their "comrades" than by enemies without. Even today there are some seventeen million Soviet citizens in slave labor camps where an estimated 500,000 die every year from torture and abuse.

It was the Chinese communists, however, who made their way into the Guinness Book of World Records by murdering between 34,300,000 and 63,784,000 victims.

There is a punishment in Communist countries, however, which some feel is worse than death. In the vernacular of Soviet science, faith in God is considered to be a form of mental illness. Those who are afflicted with this "insanity" sometimes receive psychiatric "treatment" which destroys their humanity and reduces them to zombies which are incapable of posing a threat to the totalitarian state.

Consider this dramatic appeal which was smuggled out of a Soviet psychiatric "treatment" center by mathematician and poet V.I. Chernyshov. Those who can read this without a broken heart have missed the meaning of Christlike compassion:

In America, Angela Davis was arrested. The whole world knew . . . she has lawyers, people protest in her favor.

But I . . . not once did I meet a lawyer, I wasn't present at the trial, I have no right to complain. . . .

. . . they tie protesting political prisoners who refuse to take food or "medicine," give them a shot, after which they cannot move, and forcibly feed and "treat" them . . . with aminazin, which results in a loss of individuality, the intellect gets blunt, the emotions are destroyed, the memory disappears.

Even though I am afraid of death; let them rather shoot me. How vile, how repulsive is the thought that they will defile, crush my soul!

I appeal to believers. N.I. Broslavsky, a Christian, has languished here for over 25 years. And Timonin . . . they jeer at (his) religious feelings, they demand that he repudiate this faith, otherwise they won't let him out.

Christians! Your brothers in Christ are suffering. Stand up for their souls! Christians!

I'm terribly afraid of torture. But there is a worse torture . . . the introduction of chemicals into my mind. The vivisectors of the 20th Century will not hesitate to seize my soul; maybe I will remain alive, but after this, I won't be able to write even one poem. I won't be able to think.

FAREWELL

I have already been informed of the decision for my "treatment."
Farewell!"

Adapted from *Peace, Prosperity, & The Coming Holocaust*
by Dave Hunt

Richard Wurmbrand

There is in the world today a man of prophetic voice and message whose name is Richard Wurmbrand. From an early life and youth of religious indifference and, by his own admission, no little amount of serious sin, Rumanian-born Richard Wurmbrand became a disciple of Jesus Christ and later a flaming evangelist. For his zeal in preaching the gospel not only to his fellow citizens in Rumania but to Russian soldiers sent there to conquer and subdue his land, Wurmbrand eventually wound up in a communist prison.

He spent fourteen years totally isolated from his family, the outside world, his Bible, books, and even the sight and sound of a bird, a dog, a kitten. He was beaten; he was humiliated through the grossest of indignities just because he was a Christian preacher. Wurmbrand saw literally hundreds of priests, rabbis, and Protestant ministers beaten and starved to death in the same prison where he, somehow, survived.

On August 10, 1967, Richard Wurmbrand testified before the House of Representatives Committee on Un-American Activities, now called the House Internal Security Committee, with Congressman Edwin E. Willis of Louisiana, Chairman, presiding.

Pastor Wurmbrand first produced credentials identifying himself and certifying to the truth of his background. Then he began to tell of his efforts to speak and preach in the United States. He explained that he had been invited to many local churches across the country and he used these words:

“I have preached with the Catholics and with the Lutherans and with the Jews and with everybody. The rank and file believers weep when they hear what is happening there, only they have no influence at all. When you arrive at the top leaders of churches, some either disbelieve you or ask you, beg you, not to speak.”

Committee member Richard Roudebush then asked, “You

mean the heads of churches where you appear ask you not to be candid about your experiences?" Wurmbrand answered, "Yes." Congressman Roudebush exclaimed, "This is an amazing thing."

Again in his words, Wurmbrand said:

"I came as a naive to America. I believed if I was told that this is the head of the World Council or the National Council or the Presbyterian Church or of the Lutheran Church that he is a representative of Christ on earth. I went to him as to a brother. But I did not find them with the sympathy of Christ for the martyred church."

He then related an incident in Philadelphia. The newspapers had announced a rally protesting the war in Viet Nam. Wurmbrand had never seen a protest rally in communist Rumania because, he said, "such a thing does not exist in the communist camp."

He told of a Presbyterian pastor who was leading the rally. That preacher spoke against President Johnson, against the war, and against American forces in Viet Nam. Wurmbrand said he did not mix in the internal affairs of this country because he was a foreigner. But then the American preacher began to praise communism.

Wurmbrand, by his own testimony, went to the platform, pushed the man away from the lectern, and said to him, "How do you dare to praise the communists? The communists are torturing Christians." The American preacher then inquired, "What do you know about communism?" Wurmbrand replied to the man, "I am a doctor of communism and I will show you my diploma as a doctor."

Without realizing that there are laws in the United States against disrobing in public, Wurmbrand removed his jacket and shirt and showed the crowd eighteen angry scars across his back and told them, "This the communists have done to me."

Chairman Willis, at this point, said, "I can't conceive of responsible, religious people not wanting you to speak out against

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communism and cautioning you to keep your mouth shut. To me that is incredible.”

Pastor Wurmbrand then presented original newspapers, magazines, and official documents from Russia, Rumania, and other communist countries reporting the arrest and imprisonment of native citizens accused of such things as:

Teaching their children about Christ in the home. . .
Reading the Bible from handwritten pages to the family. . .
Praying to God in the privacy of their own homes. . .
Serving as leaders in the underground church that smuggles
in Bibles and hymnbooks . . .
Preaching the gospel to such a gathering.

There were a host of other similar charges. Children as young as three and four years of age have been taken from Russian and Rumanian homes, Wurmbrand said, because their mother or father was teaching them about God and Jesus Christ.

Pastor Wurmbrand is still in the United States but his heart is heavy.

So is mine.

Condensed from *Life Line*

Man Without God

(Nero)

Like a motor with a missing part, man without God is destined to be an abnormal and unnatural span of years. Solomon affirmed in Eccl. 12:13 that the whole of man could be realized by "fearing God" and "keeping His commandments." Man without God is something less than man was intended to be.

History provides many striking examples of the heinous lives of men without God. For instance, take a long look at Nero.

Newman's Church History, Vol. I., Page 112 describes the youthful Nero with these words:

. . . Gifted in poetry and in music, genial, humane, the beginning of his reign awakened high expectations. Augustus had esteemed it a personal affliction to be obliged to punish, and he had inflicted the death penalty only in extreme cases. The youthful Nero, some time after his assumption of the purple, rejoiced that in his entire empire not a drop of blood had been shed. When it appeared necessary for him to sign death warrants he lamented that he could write. Under the tuition of such philosophers and statesmen as Seneca and Burrhus it was expected that the ingenuous youth would become a paragon of wisdom and of justice. Seneca thought him "incapable of learning cruelty" and expected that the emperor's gentleness of disposition would permeate the entire empire and so transform the world as to restore the innocent, golden age of mankind.

With God's help this talented man could have commanded the summit with history's mighty men — but we remember him as one of the most degraded monsters who ever lived. Within a few years after becoming emperor, Nero had degenerated to a sadistic fiend. He ordered the murder of his brother, the assassination of his mother, and the murder of his first wife. His second wife died from personal abuse. Nero greedily sought praise for his poetic and musical ability and even stooped to play

the part of a public buffoon. Unbridled indulgence in vice of every description became characteristic of his life. His insane approach to matters of state led him to set fire to the city of Rome and then to blame the Christians for the crime.

Tacitus describes the persecution with these words:

First were arraigned those who confessed, then on their information a vast multitude were convicted, not so much on the charge of arson as for their hatred of the human race. Their deaths were made more cruel by the mockery that accompanied them. Some were covered with the skins of wild beasts and torn to pieces by dogs; others perished on the cross or in the flames; and others again were burnt after sunset as torches to light up the darkness. Nero himself granted his gardens for the show, and gave an exhibition in the circus, and dressed as a charioteer, mixed with the people or drove his chariot himself. Thus guilty and deserving the punishment as they were, they were yet pitied, as they seemed to be put to death, not for the benefit of the state, but to gratify the cruelty of an individual.

A tragic commentary on "Man without God."

In Memorial **(Sadegh Ghotbzadeh)**

Just a few short days ago Sadegh Ghotbzadeh, age 46, answered a late night summons and walked down the bleak corridors of his prison to a place of execution.

There he joined the ranks of some 20,000 people who have been murdered by the regime of the Ayatullah Robollah Khomeini since he came to power in July, 1981.

Mr. Ghotbzadeh's name became somewhat of a household word during the days of the Iranian crisis. He had been educated in the United States and France and spoke perfect English. He had known the Ayatullah Khomeini since 1963 and served as his interpreter and political advisor during Khomeini's long exile in Paris. He had taken the post as Foreign Minister of Iran in November, 1979 but stepped down following the country's post revolutionary elections. In January, 1980 he made an unsuccessful bid to be elected President of Iran.

Ghotbzadeh strenuously denied that he had ever plotted to kill the Ayatullah, but he made no secret of his disillusionment with the bloody regime he had helped to launch.

Shortly before his death he smuggled out of prison a note which declared:

"I want the record to be clear that I saw the light and tried as best I could to undo the damage I had done in terms of supporting the satanic regime of the mullahs."

The 26-day trial is now over and Sadegh Ghotbzadeh is dead. I have personally been touched, however, by his belated change of heart and wish to pen this personal tribute to his memory.

Our adversary is clever beyond our ability to understand or explain. The fact that the Ayatullah's regime was "satanic" must give us all pause as we reflect upon the deception, disillusion-

ment, and death of a fellow human being.

The people of God some twenty centuries ago were faced with a decision between Jesus and Barabbas. Barabbas was a violent man who had committed murder in insurrection. The word "Bar" means son of, and the word "abba" means father. The word "Barabbas" literally means "Son of the Father." It is therefore quite possible that Barabbas was more than a political leader.

Be that as it may the people in ancient Jerusalem were faced with a choice. They could choose the lowly Christ who had recently come into their city tottering on the back of a little colt on whom a man had never yet ridden. Or, they could choose the man who had proven his grit by shedding blood in robbery and revolution.

They made essentially the same choice that Mr. Ghotbzadeh made . . . and they were wrong just as he was wrong.

I do not know whether Sadegh Ghotbzadeh received Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior . . . but I pray that he did.

At any rate I feel a compunction to thank him posthumously for his courageous denial of the Ayatullah Khomeini and pray that his untimely death may serve as deterrent to others who endeavor to transform the world with a sword instead of a cross.

Information about Mr. Ghotbzadeh was
Condensed from *TIME* Magazine, Sept. 27, 1982

Jolly Joe **(Joe Kiwanuka)**

Jolly Joe Kiwanuka was one of Uganda's wealthiest and most influential citizens. He was stubborn and strong-willed, and his utter disregard for public opinion had made him a legend even to his closest friends.

Among his many investments he was also owner of Uganda's champion soccer team. On more than one occasion, while watching his team compete, he had rushed out on the field — stopped the game — and forced the referee to reverse his decision. Once while competing with a Catholic team he had slapped a priest across the face. When questioned about the incident by reporters he simply replied, "There is no God" and walked away.

Jolly Joe was an atheist and humanist who had no time for religion. He was a powerful man both politically and financially and seemed impervious to the Gospel.

Jolly Joe was the founder of the Ugandan National Congress and also a member of Parliament. His outspoken opposition to President Milton Obote caused him to be arrested and imprisoned without a trial.

On January 25, 1971 General Idi Amin led the Ugandan army in a successful "coup d'etat." Political prisoners were set free and everyone expected a golden age of liberty and progress to ensue.

Unfortunately, they were wrong. As bad and oppressive as Milton Obote may have been, he was an angel of mercy by comparison with Idi Amin.

In the last three months of 1972, while the western world dismissed stories of genocide as wild exaggerations by frightened refugees, Idi Amin and his henchmen had killed over 90,000 Ugandans. Like other communist dictators his victims were primarily among the prominent citizens in the community.

Initially the victims were buried in mass graves. But as the kill-

ings continued bloated bodies were to be found everywhere. Many of the executions were on public television, others were private occasions in the presence of family members.

The assassins seemed determined not to merely kill, but also to torture and humiliate. The head of the family, for example, might be dismembered and disemboweled in the presence of his wife and children. Before the mother was raped and killed she might be made to eat her husbands intestines.

But always as in communist terror, the primary victims are the prominent.

It was in this context that Jolly Joe Kiwanuka gave his life to Jesus Christ. After more than 20 years of suffering and hardship he had dreams of happiness on earth in his country which had once been described by Winston Churchill as the "Pearl of Africa." Idi Amin had dashed those dreams. In utter desperation and despair Jolly Joe dared to turn his eyes from the storm clouds of earth to a land where moth and rust do not corrupt and where thieves do not break through and steal. He said, "From the beginning I have been looking for a kingdom. I have been looking for a kingdom of freedom. . . ."

In Christ he found that freedom.

Joseph Kiwanuka had the dubious distinction of being killed by Idi Amin himself. First, however, he was kept in Makindyd Prison for several days of torture. On the day of his execution Amin and a top official named Malire determined to beat him to death with hammers. They intended to drag out the ordeal and prolong his suffering, but as Joseph began to pray out loud for the forgiveness of their sins, Amin went into an uncontrollable rage, grabbed a nearby sledge hammer, and dashed out his brains.

Amin then cut off his head and practiced blood rituals over his remains. Recognizing Jolly Joe as the smartest man in Uganda he stored his head in a deep freeze, superstitiously believing that he could thus appropriate his ability to think.

Jolly Joe Kiwanuka has found the Kingdom!

Adapted from *A Distant Grief* by F. Kefa Sempangi

Escape From Russia **(Sergei Kourdakov)**

In the July '72 issue of Guideposts is the thrilling story of Lieutenant Sergei Kourdakov of the Soviet Union, who escaped to freedom Sept. 3, 1971. Here are the highlights of that article.

Sergei was orphaned at the age of four. His father was shot when Kruschev took over and his mother died a few months later. He was raised in an orphanage in Western Siberia . . . communism was his religion and Lenin was his saviour. Three times he lined up in Red Square to do homage to the mummified remains of a man who could not even save himself . . . let alone the whole wide world.

Sergie "gives the lie" to the myth of religious freedom in Russia. He and his friends at the Naval Academy were hired by the local police to break up religious meetings. These "plain clothed" ruffians gave the appearance that such opposition to Christianity was not "official" but of the people. The Christians were beaten and their literature was taken to the police station and burned.

Your heart will melt with emotion when you read of Christians coming to worship time after time . . . even though they were beaten with truncheons. You cannot help but be moved by the testimony of this young lieutenant who spoke of one old woman who prayed for his salvation as he raised his club to beat her.

You will see again the power of the word when you discover that the conversion of this hardened atheist came as a result of reading a hand-written copy of the Gospel of Luke.

You will be disgusted with the policies of our own Government when you find out that Sergei was afraid to come to America for fear that we would send him back. The tragic story of the Lithuanian sailor who jumped from a Soviet ship and was returned to his slavemasters by the American Coast Guard had been effectively drummed into the Soviet public.

You will share the desperation of millions behind the Iron Curtain when you read of an all night swim in the icy waters off British Columbia as Sergei Kourdakov risked everything to escape Soviet slavery. He was found unconscious on the beach near the town of Tasu . . . just as the tide was coming in. He was found by a young girl who usually didn't walk that way, "except" she said, "something told me to take this path that morning."

After hospitalization and a month's internment by the Canadian Government, Sergei moved into Toronto's Russian community and was baptized into Christ. He is now involved in Christian work there . . . including participation in a radio ministry to his former homeland.

Words fail me as I think of our brethren in Russia who are faithful to God in spite of their persecution . . . who gather to break bread in His memory at the risk of their own lives . . . who will cheerfully abandon everything for even a chance to worship God in freedom.

Dear God . . . forgive us of our lethargy . . . indifference . . . and unconcern. Hasten the day when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Farewell **(Sergei Kourdakov)**

At about 10:00 p.m. on Sept. 3, 1971, Sergei Kourdakov plunged into the icy waters off the coast of British Columbia and escaped from the pitiless tyranny of communism. Once in a land of freedom he surrendered to Jesus and spent the last days of his life witnessing about the faith he had once sought to destroy. He spoke in churches, on television, before government officials, and in various other interviews telling the incredible story of Communist persecution of Christianity.

The defection of Sergei Kourdakov was a bitter loss to Soviet prestige. Because of his outstanding ability he was selected the communist youth leader of every school he attended. He had been honored on Russian television as the number one communist youth of his province. As an appointee to a Russian naval academy he was given the responsibility of supervising 1,200 elite, hand-picked cadets who would become the future military officers of the Soviet Union.

While at the Naval Academy, Sergei was selected to conduct terror operations against the Russian Christians. With a handful of sadistic bullies he led over 150 such raids before the power of God conquered his heart. In the fascinating book *The Persecutor* published by Guideposts Associates, Inc. he describes in gruesome detail the way that he and his comrades were brain-washed into brutality. He tells of the murder of an innocent pastor at a baptismal, of knocking out women's teeth and filling praying mouths with sand . . . his first-hand testimony will fill your heart with compassion for the thousands of believers who at this very moment worship God at the risk of their own lives.

The last words in his excellent book contain a touching note of gratitude to a beautiful young Christian named Natasha. Her face was scarred and disfigured by two consecutive beatings for the crime of Christian worship. On the third occasion, the disillu-

sioned young communist could beat her no more. He wrote:

Natasha, largely because of you, my life is now changed and I am a fellow believer in Christ with you. I have a new life before me. God has forgiven me; I hope you can also. Thank you, Natasha, wherever you are. I will never, never forget you!

Sergei was familiar with the communist reward for defection and warned that if any thing happened to him it "would have all the appearances of an accident."

In the early days of communism "accidents" were less accidental. Some of you will remember, for example, how comrade Trotsky died in Mexico with a hatchet in his brain. But these are days of detente. These are times of political finesse when it is advantageous for world governments to project a friendly image. So on January 1, 1973, Sergei Kourdakov died instantly from a single gunshot wound. The cause of his death was first reported internationally as a suicide . . . but this possibility was soon ruled out.

An inquest was held on March 1, 1973, and his death was officially ruled as an "accident."

On that very day he would have been twenty-two.
Farewell!