

Monday, September 18, 1989

Ukrainian Catholics gather for mass, demand that church be made legal in Soviet Union

MOSCOW (AP) — Tens of thousands of Ukrainian Catholics gathered on Sunday for the biggest religious service since their church was outlawed four decades ago and demanded that Mikhail S. Gorbachev grant them legal status.

The two-hour outdoor Mass in the Ukrainian city of Lvov, which Western witnesses said drew up to 100,000 people, came on the 50th anniversary of the dictator Josef Stalin's annexation of the western Ukraine from Poland.

Ukrainian activists carrying candles planned to line up at dusk in the cobblestoned streets of the city of 650,000 to mourn the anniversary of the Soviet takeover, said Anatoly Dotsenko, a Moscow-based member of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group that monitors human rights abuses in the republic.

The action was designed to mirror Aug. 23 demonstrations in the three Baltic republics in which more than 1 million Estonians, Lithuanians and Latvians joined hands to protest the annexation of their lands.

The Baltics and the western Ukraine both became Soviet republics as a result of a secret pact between Stalin and Adolf Hitler.

"Tonight let us all turn off the electricity and put a candle in the window to commemorate the millions who died under Stalinist repression," Ukrainian Catholic activist Ivan Gel told the worshippers in Lvov. "Those candles will also symbolize the great hopes we have for our one, our dear Ukraine."

"The time has come for freedom for our church," declared Gel, head of the Committee in Defense of the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

The Ukrainians carried at least 300 blue-and-yellow flags of their once independent homeland, along with crosses, images of the Virgin Mary and banners reading "freedom for our church."

The outdoor service under an overcast sky was only the latest sign of reviving nationalist consciousness in the Soviet Union's second-most populous republic, where a new grassroots pro-democracy group called Rukh held its founding congress last week.

The Ukrainian Church, sometimes called the Uniate

Church, has up to 5 million members by some Western estimates, and is said to be the largest banned religious organization in the world.

In 1946, it was accused of widespread collaboration with the Nazis and forced to merge with the Lvov synod of the Russian Orthodox Church. The Ukrainian church's property was confiscated and believers who refused to accept "the reunion" were brutally repressed or driven underground.

Despite greater official tolerance of religion since Gorbachev became Soviet leader in March 1985, the Ukrainian church is still officially banned. In May, about 200 church members including Gel held a hunger strike on a Moscow street to demand legal recognition for their faith.

In a statement, hunger strikers charged authorities in the western Ukraine with waging "administrative terror" against Catholic priests and believers who petition Moscow for legalization. They said some priests were being placed under administrative arrest for up to 15 days.

The church's fate has been a major obstacle to improved relations between the Vatican and the Kremlin. In June, Pope John Paul II, in a clear reference to Ukrainian believers, deplored state policies that deny Eastern Rite Catholics the freedom of worship.

The Ukrainians' status under Gorbachev's reforms is likely to be a central issue at talks reportedly to be held between the pontiff and the Soviet leader when they meet for the first time during a November trip by Gorbachev to Italy.

The Red Army moved into Poland along a broad front of what is now the western Soviet republics of the Ukraine and Byelorussia.

In 1940, Soviet tanks rolled into the Baltic republics. Armed bands held out against Soviet power in the forested hills of the western Ukraine until almost a decade after the war's end in 1945.

East German refugees pursue higher quality of life in West; hope to escape decay, shortages

LEIPZIG, East Germany (AP) — Outside of East Berlin, the country's showcase capital, East Germans live in dreary and decaying cities where nagging shortages and chronic pollution aggravate a rigidly regulated life.

"Everywhere you look outside the city centers, where most foreigners go, the country is disintegrating," said Helmut Lange, a Leipzig student who recently joined an exodus to the West.

"It's crumbling before your eyes," Lange said.

Although East Germany's standard of living is the envy of its Eastern European neighbors, thousands are embarrassing the Communist leadership by fleeing shortly before next month's 40th anniversary celebrations.

Many of them come from the provincial cities where life is the toughest,

and the harsh crackdown on dissent is a universal complaint.

Travel to the West is severely restricted, making the lure of freedom that much greater.

The appeal of West Germany is especially strong. Unlike most other refugees, East Germans are granted automatic citizenship and help in building new lives immediately after their arrival in West Germany.

Most have left family and possessions behind to flee their bleak homeland.

In East Berlin, the Communist leadership has invested millions in modern, concrete housing blocks and launched an ambitious building and restoration program — part of an effort to compete with the Western part of the city.

But rural and regional capitals have withered and decayed. Provincial residents face an awesome short-

age of building materials and construction labor.

Young singles in this nation of more than 16 million can expect to wait up to 10 years for an apartment of their own.

"After I left home I ended up in a dormitory and had to share a room with two other women," Renate Friese, 23, said.

Friese recently joined three other young friends in the trek to the West.

More than 15,000 East Germans have crossed Hungary's border to the West in the week since Budapest suspended a treaty with East Berlin and allowed the refugees free passage.

In all, 25,000 have either fled or crossed legally through Hungary since May, the largest movement of East Germans to the West since the Berlin Wall was built in 1961.

More than 100,000 East Germans are expected to resettle in West Germany this year, including those with permission from their government.

The refugees say they have lost hope that their nation's aging leadership will ever embrace democratic and economic reforms like those underway in the Soviet Union, Hungary and Poland.

Although there is a fledgling opposition movement, dissent is swiftly crushed by state security forces.

Dissidents and environmental activists are routinely harassed and questioned by police and underground publications are frequently seized.

Daily life in East Germany is routinely filled with frustration and a tangle of bureaucracy.

The wait for East Germany's much-ridiculed Trabant car — its design has changed little in three decades — can be as long as 15 years. Because of the intense demand and the long waiting period, used cars often fetch more than the new asking price of 12,000 East German marks, the equivalent of an average worker's annual salary.

At the official conversion rate, that is \$6,500.

A trip to an auto supply shop is often a dismal experience.

"They've got plenty of seat covers and floor mats, but not the measly little part that will get the car running again," said a middle-aged man from Dresden, who asked not to be identified because he feared reprisal.

Food stores, unlike those in neighboring Poland, are generally well stocked.

But there are often shortages of fresh fruit, vegetables and specialty foods.

World briefs

Bank says China's violence bad for economy

WASHINGTON (AP) — China's violent crackdown on demonstrators for democracy is sharply cutting tourism and private investment and contributing to troubles that will keep the Chinese from matching last year's 11.2 percent economic growth rate, World Bank officials say.

China, the world's most populous country, will "need to deal with the economic consequences of political problems this (past) summer," the Bank's vice president for Asia, Attila Karaosmanoglu, said.

Three earthquakes rock weekend in Mexico

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Three moderately strong earthquakes followed by small aftershocks rocked the central and southern parts of Mexico on Friday and Saturday, but authorities said they had no reports of damage or injuries.

Two tremors measuring 4.1 on the open-ended Richter scale hit the southern states of Guerrero, Oaxaca and Chiapas at midday

Solidarity logo creator becomes U.S. citizen

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — The creator of the "Solidarnosc" banner of the Polish trade union Solidarity is adopting another flag.

Kazimierz Bascik, 47, is to take the oath of U.S. citizenship Tuesday in a ceremony at the Statehouse in Columbus.

Bascik created the Solidarity logo — the word "Solidarnosc" in red with the white-and-red Polish

"These problems include a sharp downturn in tourism and a significant reduction in private investment," he told reporters at a briefing on the Bank's annual report released Sunday.

China is enjoying a strong year in agriculture, "which will reduce the need for food imports," but the growth rate can be expected to decline as Chinese leaders pursue measures to cool the economy and reduce inflation, Karaosmanoglu said.

Both were also felt in the Mexico City area.

A third quake measuring 5.2 degrees Richter rocked Guerrero, Mexico City, and the central part of Veracruz state on Saturday evening.

Police, fire departments and the Red Cross said they no reports of damage or injuries.

flag flying from it — in 1980, when the organization became the first legalized trade union in the East bloc.

The next year Bascik visited Columbus and Ohio State University, but while he was on his way home, Poland's Communist government imposed martial law. Bascik moved to West Germany, then returned to Columbus.

PRE-LAW SOCIETY

Meeting Mon., Sept. 18
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