

23
JPRS: 4611

15 May 1961

SELECTED TRANSLATIONS FROM "NAUKA I RELIGIYA"

(SCIENCE AND RELIGION)

-USSR-

REF ID: A61111

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/This report contains the translations of articles selected from Nauka i Religiya (Science and Religion), No 2, Moscow, February 1961. Additional bibliographic information accompanies each article.]

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THE DOWNFALL OF THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN THE MINERS' LAND

Following is the translation of an article
by S. Stepanov in Nauka i Religiya, No. 2,
Moscow, February 1961, pages 32-34.

Two crowded meetings took place recently in a northern mining town of Inte. One of these meetings at the Central Miner's Club were attended by industrial, office and professional workers of the communal housing department of the "Intaugol" combine, the second meeting was attended by the miners from shaft No. 11/12 at the rayon House of Culture.

Both meetings started with lectures by former leaders of the "Jehovah's Witnesses" sect at Inte -- electrician P. Krivokul'skiy and miner V. Burlaku.

"I am breaking off all contacts with the Jehovah's underground and am ceasing to engage in illegal activities," announced P. Krivokul'skiy. "I recommend this to other "Jehovah's Witnesses" as well, who found themselves in this web; I wish to advise them to send their children to Soviet schools, to listen to the radio, to read newspapers books...."

He was joined by V. Burlaku as well:

"The illegal organization of "Jehovah's Witnesses" is conducting criminal activities against our government, it is in the service of its enemies. I assure the workers of our shaft that in the future I shall never again occupy myself with these activities. I ask you to believe me...."

The path of these two people to the tribune of workers' meetings was a long one, where they are now sincerely renouncing their sectarian past.

In the summer of 1957 the Soviet justice punished the leaders of the Jehovah's underground for their criminal activities in Komi ASSR. Krivokul'skiy and Burlaku at that time escaped the fate of their "brothers". But instead of breaking off with the sect, to renounce further underground activity, they decided to head an Inte "chapter".

Their "work" went far beyond the limits of the Pechorskiy coal kray. They took trips to other cities for meetings with Jehovians, provided illegal literature, published in Brooklyn, demanded that the others send them coded reports.... These reports, along with the illegal literature B. Burlaku hid in the

mine, in a closet, apparently considering it to be the most secure hiding place.

Krivokul'skiy devoted all of his days off to trips through the country with "high ranking" functionaries of the Jehovahian organization. His meetings with them made him waver in his then fanatical convictions....

The enlightenment started during a trip to Siberia -- to the Irkutsk and Tomsk oblasts. There he for the first time became personally convinced that the leading summit of the "Jehovah's Witnesses" is composed of people who viciously fight each other for power and the money collected from the lay sect members. Two Siberian groups "mutinied" against Zyatek -- "a servant of the kray bureau" -- calling him an imposter and swindler. Zyatek, according to them, intended to purchase a light passenger automobile with money from "the fund of good hope"; his closest associates live in a grand style; they drink, carouse and lead a depraved life.

Not wanting to believe these accusations, Krivokul'skiy took a trip to the Ukraine, in order to meet Zyatek and his myrmidons. What he saw and found out there confirmed his worst suspicions.

"I understood that all the work of the leaders of the "kray bureau" does not have a biblical nature" confessed P. Krivokul'skiy, "but is a struggle for power. They are all parasites and live off the money collected from lay 'Jehovah's Witnesses'. Here are the facts. The former proxy servant of the "kray bureau" -- a completely degenerate person. He raped a young woman Jehovah's Witness and after that excluded her from the organization so that she would not be able to expose him before his co-worshippers. Here is another fact. A Jehovah's Witness" Markevich, who came to Inte in the autumn of 1957, presented himself as a courier of the "kray bureau" and demanded money and a report. He turned out to be a swindler and a rapist. Last year he was convicted for the rape of a sixth year school girl.... One of the Jehovah's Witnesses, Mikulyanovich, -- is a plain swindler. In order to evade the payment of bachelor tax, he forged a certificate stating that he supports a wife and children. This "certificate" he presented to his place of employment and even demanded that he be refunded the taxes that he has paid in the past. He was exempted from paying that tax for a period of three years."

These workers' meetings lasted for several hours each. Over twenty persons appeared at these meetings -- miners, and teachers from local schools. The harm of the Jehovah's sect as well as the condemned future of its activities on the Soviet soil were revealed in these -- simple, emotional, angry...heartfelt words.

"They bury a person alive!" stated miner D. Perelygin. The truth of these words are easy to believe, after hearing a

story told by Z. I. Babina, a worker of mine 11/12, about Galia Smirnova, a Jehovah's Witness.

"I worked together with Galia. She would frequently tell other workers that the Armageddon will soon come and that all the "sinners" will perish. Formerly Galia could be seen at the movies and concerts. Now, however, she goes nowhere and does not participate in social life. I would like to talk to Galia Smirnova: Think Galia! Look around yourself and you will see how many remarkable people there are around you, how wonderful life is!...."

More than one broken family and destroyed happiness lies on the conscience of the Jehovah's "servants", who inculcate their devoted followers with an attitude of contempt for non-believers.

"I will tell you how the sect deprived me of my mother," this is how Vasiliy Tkachuk, an electric tractor operator at the shaft, began his talk; "my mother loved me very much, was concerned about me and I was very much attached to her.... Then she married a Jehovah's Witness, Voloshavskiy. My step-father tried to convert me to the "Jehovah's Witnesses"; he gave me the bible to read and the magazine called "Watchtower"; he prohibited me from having komsomol friends. Working at the shaft I found good friends and joined the trade union. Then my mother stopped considering me as her son and I was forced to move to the dormitory. For two years my mother not once came to see me, or showed any interest in my life. And all because I refused to join their sect...."

School children -- children of the fanatical sectarians-- resemble wild wolf cubs. They look at the world with frightened eyes, stay away from their classmates, refuse to sing Soviet songs. The teacher of one of the schools at Inte told the miners about the type of "knowledge" that the "Jehovah's Witnesses" try to pound into the kids' heads. Valia Demkina -- the daughter of an avid sectarian -- announced to her teacher that no artificial satellites revolved around the earth and can not revolve around the earth because god will not allow that. Lyuda Shipunova, the daughter of a Jehovah's Witnesses leader, considers that the atomic icebreaker Lenin moves not on atomic energy but is moved by the devil. Both girls have a completely detached attitude towards the history lessons since the bible explains everything in a completely different way. Questions asked by the teacher are answered in monosyllables, with phrases memorized from the textbook.

The "Proclaimers of the Kingdom" in Inte, just as everywhere else, where they managed to take root, recruit new "witnesses" on the basis of the old Jehovah's rule: act boldly, seek out human misery.... M.V. Mamykin, a worker at mine No. 2, told his comrades how the Jehovah's Witnesses drew his son's wife into their web.

Lyuba was a happy woman, full of life. She danced and sang well. She had growing children -- a son and a daughter. And then, suddenly, a terrible misfortune: her husband tragically perished. Jehovah's Witness Shipunov decided to exploit this inconsolable tragedy. He started to impress her with talk that only faith in god Jehovah can help her grief. Shipunov started to frequent Lyuba's home, and then she started to visit secret meetings of the "Jehovah's Witnesses",

"You are involved with an anti-Soviet group," M.V. Mamykin told her, "Think of yourself, your children...."

The lively, sociable woman turned into a somber fanatic. And she is now attempting to inculcate her fanaticism into her young children.

But such "successes" the Jehovah's Witnesses recruiters can, as the saying goes, count on the fingers of one hand. The spiritual infection of the Jehovah's Witnesses is powerless before the miners' nature.

Jehovah's Witness Shipunov was sent to one of the brigades of the electric workshop on assignment. This brigade was struggling for the honored title of -- communist. And the "Jehovah's Witness" in his capacity as an electrician decided to draw it into the "folds of the true faith". He began to preach "the Jehovah's Laws". He was resented from the start. Shipunov got his due at the next brigade meeting. The Jehovah's Witness bit his tongue and ceased his feeble attempts at that.

Joint laughter greeted the story of A.S. Marchenkov, an old miner, about how one of the "proclaimers of the kingdom" was trying to "ensnare" him.

"He started with that Armageddon. I want to save your soul, he said, since all of the leading workers will perish: there will be a flood. I ask: and how will the people save themselves? It seems that their organization is saving an ark."

No, these "proclaimers of the kingdom" will not be able to fill their ranks with the Pechorsk miners. The clime is not right. It is sufficient to say that at the present time there are 38 shops and sections and 102 brigades in the Intinskiy rayon which are struggling for the honored title of collectives of communist labor. They include over three thousand workers.

... Hundreds of people attended these workers' meetings. They included some who broke off with the Jehovah's Witnesses, as well as those who have not yet freed themselves from the spiritual web. Both received considerable benefit from the meetings. The former became still more entrenched in their conviction never to become involved with the Jehovah's Witnesses underground, and the latter were made to seriously weigh their religious convictions and their fate. As far as the bulk of those attending the meetings were concerned -- the Soviet miners, who have never believed in any gods -- they will henceforth more actively conduct educational work regarding the "proclaimers of Jehovah's

kingdom".

The trial of the Jehovah's Witnesses' leaders of the city of Inte took place some time later. Taking into consideration the sincere repentance of P. Krivokul'skiy and V. Burlaku and the statement made by the workers who put up the bail for them, the judges gave both P. Krivokul'skiy and V. Burlaku a suspended sentence.

RELICS OF THE NEARLY EXTINCT SHAMANS

Following is the translation of an article by M. Filippov in Nauka i Religiya, No. 2, Moscow, February 1961, pages 39-42.

A blizzard is blowing over the endless tundra. Its threatening roar is occasionally replaced with a low moan. Snow flurries strike the dwellings -- the yarangs with frenzy. The gale tries to wipe them off the face of the earth. But the blizzard is incapable of destroying that which was created by the capable hands of man. Each yaranga is surrounded by large and heavy rocks. They hold the sloping fur cupola reliably to the ground. Life under the thick reindeer skins is common here.

The large yarang contains several woman with their fur clothing off their shoulders, who are bustling about their work eager to complete it and to go to the sleeping compartment after the men. It looks like a large chest covered with skins. It is close and warm. The men and women have removed almost all of their clothing. Each one is attempting to take up as much space as possible. The people are lying huddled together. They have managed to free a very small spot, which was taken up by the shaman. Because of the heat he, too, was bare to the waist and removed his shoes. The people glance at him with certain fear, but also with hope. The shaman was called to purge the evil spirit from the body of a young man, who is lying next to the shaman on a reindeer skin and is breathing heavily.

"We should start," the head of the household hesitantly addressed the shaman. The latter nodded his head affirmatively.

The small lights were taken out of the compartment -- the only source of light. The ritual must take place in total darkness....

The shaman raised his tambourine and struck the tightly stretched skin with a rattle made of whale bone. The sounds announced the beginning of the ritual.

In the total darkness no one is able to tell where the sounds of the tambourine and the shaman's cries are coming from. It appears that it flies through on the waves of sound through the yarang. The shaman's voice emanates from the front, then from the side, then from behind or over the listeners' heads.

Shaman appeals to the evil spirit and entreats him to leave

the body of the sick one. An unfamiliar muffled voice demands a price amounting to an exorbitant number of driving reindeer. The shaman bargains until an agreement is reached with the spirit for three reindeer.... The people hearing the voice of the mysterious spirit are considerably shaken. The shaman pounds his tambourine for a long time, dashes through the close quarters, frequently appearing in the cold portion of the yarang, which also became filled with spectators.... Finally he collapses unconscious. His lips are covered with foam. He is brought back to consciousness with difficulty. The ritual is over. A lamp is once again brought into the sleeping compartment....

By morning the head of the household gives up the promised payment -- three of his best draught reindeer.

It is, of course, not very hard to guess that the essence of the shaman "miracles" is in many ways related to the measures of the servers of the more "civilized" religions. It is not without reason that K. Marx remarked that the actions of a priest differ little from the shaman manipulations.

* * *

The North rarely favors man with warm rays of sun. A severe winter with a hard frost and with merciless blizzards dominates most of the year. The people are forced to wear thick fur clothing and to hide in dwellings built of hides.

It was very hard for man in the North. He was surrounded with unknown fearsome forces. The principal and almost the only source of food for the inhabitants of the tundra was reindeer meat, for the coastal inhabitants it was -- sea beasts and fish. Some depended on good fortune in the reindeer herd, and others depended on a successful hunting and fishing season.

The inhabitant of the North, who lived in a primitive type of society, did not know the true reasons for the natural phenomena and therefore deified them. It seemed to him that spirits existed everywhere -- both evil and good spirits. There was a considerably greater number of the former ones, however. To ameliorate the evil spirit -- this was what appeared to be of importance to the inhabitants of the North. With certain nationalities, such as the chukchey, this could be done many times by any head of family. The ability of propitiating the spirits passed from generation to generation in the families.

Gradually, as the primitive form of society degenerated, people appeared who have made contact with the spirits their profession. With the aid of singing, dancing, playing of the tambourine and unusual bodily contortions they worked themselves into a state of ecstasy. And people thought that contact between the shaman and the forces of the other world took place at

that time. The retarded peoples believed that the shaman is able to struggle against the evil spirits -- the devourers of human souls, by offering them bloody sacrifices.

The shaman is a specially trained person, who frequently undergoes corresponding training since his early years. Some of them tried to have an external appearance that was different from that of their kinsmen at all times, while others tried to look different only during the ritual ceremonies. Every shaman had his compulsory ritualistic instrument -- a tambourine with a rattle. The shamans of certain nationalities wore an intricate headpiece, special clothing, covered with all types of magical gadgets: metal pendants, and a fringe.

The shoal of the Yakutsk shaman is particularly characteristic. This is a type of jacket, made of reindeer chamois. The hem is covered with braid with blue beads, and a fringe is sewn to the rear seams of the sleeves. It symbolizes feathers from the birds' wings and tails.

Metal pendants are sewn to the back along with metal figurines. The chest under the neck is covered with metal figures, below that are images of birds on both sides of which are human figures made of red copper -- the spirits. In front and over the heart there is a metal plate -- a special symbol of shaman rank. Below that are two convex circles of metal symbolizing the sun and the moon. The entire shawl is covered with many other metallic strips, circles, rings and various figurines. All this is necessary to the shaman in order to be able to "travel" through the imaginary worlds, but in reality to create the necessary impression on the viewers. These same shawls were worn by the Tungus and Dolgan shamans. According to them, the shawls serve as a special type of shield that serves as protection against unfriendly spirits. If we dwell on the ritual peculiarities of the festive habits of the orthodox and catholic church, they will appear just as incongruent as the shaman's clothing.

The shamans of the various nationalities are distinguished by the different cut of their clothing, amulets and type of tambourine. But their avocation is the same -- that of communicating with the spirits. According to the belief, the spirit becomes one with the shaman during the ritual.

In all difficult situations -- famine, an epidemic among the reindeer, occasional sickness -- the shaman is invited. As a representative of any religion swindling the believers, the shaman accomplishes this in a very clever manner. At the time of the ritual he, as if from the name of his spirit, frequently demands a bloody sacrifice, and explains that otherwise the rite will not be effective. The spirit "establishes" the nature of the sacrifice. Draught animals were frequently offered as sacrifices. On the Chukotk coast dogs were the objects of sacrifices, where a shortage of these animals was generally felt. It has happened that after a rite some hunter, having offered a

sacrifice, became a pauper. Many shamans were quite adept at various tricks. Some of them, for example, after a prolonged period of training, became capable ventriloquists; others pierced themselves with knives. To the amazement of uninformed spectators, blood appeared on the wound. But after the shaman seance there was no wound. The matter boiled down to a commonplace trick with the knife and the smearing of previously collected blood. An expert on the Chukchey, Professor V.G. Bogoraz-Tan, describes how the shamans, during their rituals, disappeared in full view of the audience and then reappeared again. "A trip with the spirits" -- was the shaman's explanation to the shocked spectators. Bogoraz-Tan told of these "marvelous" disappearances and said that he himself saw underground passages, that led from the shaman's quarters to the home of certain rich members of the local community.

Usually the shamans were in complete accord with the local authorities and with the passing merchants. After the Great October Socialist Revolution, they openly appeared against the Soviet Government. During the Kolchak-Semenov reactionary period in Siberia, the evenkeyskiy shaman Shagdurov worked in the white counter-intelligence as a detective. He was given an officer's rank of the white army. The Buriat shamans -- Makarov, Yambarov and others -- were active participants in the kulak anti-Soviet mutiny in the Irkutsk oblast during 1920.

When the Soviet Government won through and became consolidated, when the predominant majority of the population gathered at its side, the shamans resigned themselves to the existing order. Many of them, however, began conducting a hidden struggle against the power of the people. They operated together with the kulaks, who sometimes even paid taxes for the shamans.

The cultural revolution which was brought to the tundra by the Soviet Government was a deathly blow to the shamans. Cultural bases were being created in the farthest points of the Far North, scientists visited there, along with doctors. They had to spend much time in struggling against the shamans, and managed to crumble the wall of prejudice, behind which the Northern people lived for centuries. Hospitals were opened in the tundras, which were visited from the most distant settlements by people. Faith in the shamans was deteriorating and their well-being along with it.

However, neither the shamans nor the old time kulks intended to give up their positions without a battle. They caused harm to the Soviet Government wherever possible. Sometimes they destroyed the activists. During the rites, the shamans attempted to blacken the Soviet Government, frequently identifying the Soviet workers with evil spirits. But despite everything they were unable to inculcate a sense of animosity towards the new government into their countrymen.

In 1930 a boarding school was established at Chukotka.

At first its organizers had a difficult time. The teachers travelled through many settlements, and with the aid of local activists convinced the parents to send their children to the boarding school. When the students finally arrived -- the shamans became excited. They began to scare the parents with evil spirits, which were to have brought all sorts of ills. And the shamans got what they wanted. All the students suddenly left the boarding school; even those who were in the hospital hurried to return home. Naturally, the komsomol members and the communists were soon able to convince the parents to return the children to the school, and to resume treatment for the sick at the hospital.

The chairman of the settlement council at the Ymylin settlement acted energetically against the kulaks, and against harmful traditions. Kagle, the local shaman, came to him "in the name of the spirits" and demanded that he stop working in the Council. The chairman sent the shaman away. Then Kagle, without relying on the spirits, killed the chairman. The shaman undertook to poison the teacher, Ettuge, who was tirelessly exposing his plots, and was now demanding his punishment for the murder of the chairman of the Council. Kagle killed the teacher, and then treacherously stabbed the deputy of the extraordinary rayon conference of Chugnek. Without waiting for justice to take its course, the indignant inhabitants took care of the shaman Kagle themselves. These facts were reported in 1938 by the newspaper called "The Godless".

Some interesting material was published in Ulan Ude several years ago. When the kolkhozes were first organized in the Buriat republic, the shamans of the Kabanskiy and the Baikalo-Kudarinskiy ayms began to zealously prompt the people to slaughter the cattle. They told the population that the spirits were allegedly prohibiting the people from joining the kolkhoz. The shamans were persuading the people to offer the cattle as sacrifices to the spirits.

Such factors prompted an intensified struggle against the shamans. It included the participation of the local population as well, which was rapidly freeing itself from the ways of prejudice and fear of nature. Many shamans themselves renounced their profession and joined in productive labor at the kolkhozes. But certain shamans stubbornly refused to abandon their occupation and attempted to interfere with socialist construction. In the distant settlement of Seshan in 1937, the local shaman was literally stalking the teacher, Anoso, and Komo, the chairman of the settlement Council. The inhabitants brought this matter to an end with their combined efforts, exposed and banished the shaman from the settlement.

During the period of the Five Year Plans, a time of tumultuous building of socialism, extensive creative work developed in the farthest corners of the North. The peoples who were only a short time ago entangled in the strong webs of

superstition and prejudice, obtained a proper place in the ranks of the builders of the communist society. A certain form of technology penetrated into every settlement, which considerably facilitated the life of the people. Many capable representatives of national minorities, which never had their own written language, became engineers, technicians, physicians, teachers, scientific workers and writers. Epidemics and famine were forgotten in the distant settlements. Under the influence of education, technology, an improvement in the means of communication, the peoples' fear of the previously unexplainable natural phenomena gradually passed, which now became clear and understandable.

The people of Eastern Siberia and of the North did not have their own written language, or a state system, Therefore, their religion did not have an opportunity to become a stable organization -- the church (except for the Buriat) -- the vestiges of a primitive society have passed, superstitions have disappeared, the need for a type of religion such as the shamans was no longer eminent. The belief in spirits (animism) was lost by the majority of the population.

This, however, by no means signifies that the struggle against the remnants of prejudices, with the last believers -- those last, single shamans, who still attempt to use their authority to illuminate the old, the archaic and the unnecessary -- is over. There are still people in the North who grasp at religion on a basis of the old tradition. This is what F. Engels wrote: "Religion is a strong brake, it is the force of inertia in history. But it is only passive and must therefore perish."

THE NEW TRIUMPHS

Following is a translation of an article
by K. Umarov in Nauka i Religiya, No. 2,
Moscow, February 1961, pages 43-47.

At the tashauzskiy oblast court I was told that in 1959 there were nine cases of forced marriages of underage girls.

"Nine cases -- that is a lot," I said, "and this year?"

"This year there is a considerably greater number of such cases," said the judge, "there were already five cases in just the last five months. Don't be surprised, comrade reporter. I did not say that the sale of girls has increased. I said recorded cases; in other words, the number of resultant legal processes. This does not mean that such sales are more numerous at the present time than they were before. This merely means that we are now exposing such transactions more frequently and that we became more attentive."

I familiarize myself with the evidence. Kolkhoz member Seydzhhan Aradzhyanov bought himself an underage wife for 20,000 rubles. This happened in the Kunya-Urgenchskiy rayon. Mele Babayev married a fifth year student, fourteen year old Ogul'dzhan Areyeva. This took place at the Takhtinskiy rayon.

I have in front of me the matter regarding kalyma -- regarding the sale of young women. The parents of the bride are accusing the groom's relatives of not paying the agreed price. It appears that someone said in jest: "Cases of kalyma are becoming more frequent, because the general welfare level is rising. Consider the price for an average bride. Not less than 10,000, in addition to the goats, calves and the coats. Beside that, the brides are different now. All the young women are healthy and literate."

This was a poor joke, a bitter one.

The court makes a decision, the guilty ones are punished, the prosecution attentively studies every fact of the feudal attitude towards the woman. Everything is proper. But something remains questionable. The court, the prosecution, the procedural organs...is that all? It seems like there is something missing.

The parents giving their underage daughter in marriage are in the prosecutor's section, who, not without pride, state that

their wedding was attended by esteemed people: the brigadier and the kolkhoz accountant.

-- And was the mullah there?

-- Yes, he was there. It is a shame to be without the mullah. If the village soviet will not register the act, then it is necessary for the mullah to do his duty.

The relatives stubbornly refuse to reveal the mullah's name. The Tashauzskaya oblast prosecutor slaps the desk with the palm of his hand in exasperation.

"You see!" he addresses me, "We are establishing a question regarding the crime, but the accomplices to the crime remain unknown. Not one of these weddings, where the marriage can not be registered at the village soviet, occurs without the participation of the clergy. The parents suppose that some kind of formal procedure is always necessary. We are able to hold the workers of registry office and of the village soviets responsible when they enter into transactions of that sort, but we do not hold the mullahs responsible for that. Why? There is no such precedent. You must know what legal precedent is. Until the higher courts give their interpretation, nothing will change. And the party responsible?" continues the prosecutor, "I don't know a single case when the communists present at such marriages were held responsible for them. This is also complicity. A wedding at the kolkhoz is a significant occasion, it is impossible for the chairman or the party organization and many of the rank communists not to know about it. Why not hold them responsible, or more likely, how can they be held responsible?"

In order to successfully struggle against the vestiges of religion and feudalism, it is very important to have the participation of the social, party, trade union and komsomol organizations, but it turns out that this problem primarily occupies the procedural and court organs."

A republican women's congress took place recently at the Turkmen republic. The successes attained by the Turkmen women in the building of communism is truly great, and displays of old, obsolete morals are particularly unseemingly against such a background.

The participants of the congress talked sharply and with conviction about the need to eliminate the feudal remnants. The retarded people refer to traditions and old customs in vain.

At Tadzikistan, for instance, there is still the opinion that young people must receive a blessing from their relatives -- the oldsters -- before getting married. We are not against respect for the parents, to seniors. Such respect is part of the nature of every nationality, and it is especially vividly expressed in the East. But by inculcating the young people with respect for the people of the older generation, we very frequently place our young men and women, that were brought up in the new society and with new traditions, into dependence with the old,

obsolete moral system. How many lives were broken by this moral system in the past? It has perceptible harm today, as well.

Unfortunately, certain local propagandists in talking of surmounting the remnants of the past become too involved with historical comparisons and applications. Their heads are turned with the successes attained by our republics over the four decades of the Soviet Government. It is undoubtedly necessary to talk of the unprecedented progress, of the great achievements.

But today, when the building of communism became a realistic and a daily task, we must promote new requirements. Can we talk of the overall victory of the new, communist morale, while the feudal remnants, which dominated Central Asia for centuries are still alive?

The traditions and customs of the past are manifestations of the morale of the old society. It is undoubtedly true that the people have preserved quite a number of remarkable traditions and customs, that are contrary to the despotic customs, traditions of collectivism, that are peculiar to working people during all stages of history. But many customs and traditions are associated with religion. Many of them even reach down to paganism and fire worship. A decisive struggle against them is necessary.

Unfortunately, our propagandists frequently substitute fruitless discussions on the origin of certain rituals for a lively, realistic matter of surmounting the remnants of religious morale. They, for instance, refer to the savage ritual of self-cremation, cases of which are still encountered in Central Asia -- as not a Moslem ritual. They conduct numerous excursions into the history of the circumcision rite. They prove that circumcision is not a religious ritual, but a hygienic operation. From such a supposition, it is but a step to the supposition that christening is simply a bath without soap. Of course, the history of rituals and customs is an important task for historians and ethnographers. But the basic level of measure in the solution of this problem must be the interrelationship between the old traditions with the new morale, with the demands of the new life.

The feast that takes place after the circumcision ceremony places a heavy material burden on the family. I know people who are completely free of religious remnants, who observe this ritual. "Do you understand?" -- a driver I knew was justifying himself, "I was saving money for a whole year and saved enough to buy myself a 'Moskvich', but spent the whole amount on the circumcision feast. I felt sorry for my son. The kid was suffering. I could not get by without a circumcision; the whole block would have despised me, they would have ridiculed my son. There is nothing that can be done; that is the custom. Everyone in our block has circumcision ceremonies. Doctors and teachers. And who am I -- a plain driver."

I would not cite this conversation if it was not a typical one. Unusually contradictory deliberations may be heard when the young people are asked about the new komsomol-youth weddings. This problem is not as pressing anywhere else as in the republics of Central Asia. No matter what the defenders of the old ways say -- the customs of fancy weddings and the mandatory blessing of the oldsters are very harmful customs.

The traditional fancy weddings are a heavy material burden for the young couple. The weddings are judged on the basis of how many thous and rubles were spent by both parties, how many goats were slaughtered, how much was paid to the hired musicians, etc. Nowhere in our country are weddings as expensive as in Central Asia. There are cases where even the communists and intellectuals consider it a matter of family honor to have a fancy wedding. They don't simply say "my son got married," but "I married off my son."

Many of those accused of kalyma (in most cases the parents), refer to the wedding expenses. Twenty thousand rubles and five goats -- in their opinion is not an excessive expense for a wedding. Is this not a feudal type of relationship; is this not a form of sale and purchase of a woman? Let them not require kalymas, let the expenses not force the family to refuse themselves the most essential necessities of life. It is not every young man who can get enough money for such a wedding, but to have a wedding with a hundred or so guests, without a feast -- that is shameful. "Is that a wedding?" the people will say. "When the chairman got married -- now there was a wedding! Do you remember the wedding that the store director had for his son last year? After that there was an inventory at the store -- he got five years."

This is the conflict of the old and the new morale. Steal, get into debt, but have a wedding in the style advised by the oldsters. The oldsters not only give advice on how to conduct the wedding; they will also select the bride, and will invite the mullah, if the young people are dependent on them. And the dependence is simple. Where can the young people get the money? They just completed their education, and are working for just a year or two. Without the oldsters, a "respectable" wedding is impossible.

Recently the newspapers of the Central Asian republics carried reports of youth-komsomol weddings with increasing frequency. It is true, these are merely early experiments, but even they convince one that the new is gaining ground in its conflict with the old ways, what appears as the firmly entrenched customs. An example is important in this case. The role of an example is particularly important if it is set by leading people, intelligent people, leading workers. It must begin with them! The demands must be levelled against them at the beginning. This is talked about frequently, but they have not learned how

to really demand. The warm approval with which the Turkmen women met the call of the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkmenia, B. Ovezov, is quite understandable, the call to "demand an answer from every husband: why his wife is wearing a "veil of silence" -- the yashmak, why religious and feudal remnants are still alive in the family, why the men sit in the festive rooms during celebrations, separately from the women, why many, what appear to be, leading people, allow themselves to visit clubs and movies without their wives, why religious rites are conducted in the families, and etc?

The Central Committee CPSU in its resolution regarding "The Tasks of Party propaganda Under Current Conditions" stresses that the political-educational work must be organized in a spirit of irreconcilability with the remnants, with the restoration and artificial cultivation of backward reactionary traditions under the name of "national traditions".

The republics of Central Asia along with the entire Soviet people, having completed the building of socialism, is victoriously proceeding towards the bright future of mankind -- towards communism. The old, reactionary ideology is condemned to death, and it is dying. But our successes in the building of the new life will be still more complete if we liquidate all the remnants of the past, if we will be irreconcilable with every manifestation of the old moral, even in isolated cases.

There can be no doubt about the fact that the new moral and the new customs will win over all the old and harmful ones. But the struggle against the old ways must be conducted not only with lectures about the fact that the earth is round. It is necessary to actively penetrate into life, live examples of the new traditions are needed. It is necessary to struggle for their victory everywhere, stubbornly and without compromise.

THE GENERAL IN THE CARDINAL'S MANTLE

Following is the translation of an article by M. Mikhaylov in Nauka i Religiya, No. 2, Moscow, February 1961, page 57.

The announcement of the Conference of the Representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties, that took place in November of 1960, points out that "militarism was revived in West Germany, the restoration of a regular mass army under the command of Hitlerite generals is being forcibly conducted, which is armed with nuclear rockets and other latest means of mass destruction provided by the American imperialists...."

At the same time, along with the arming of the West German Army, an intensive spiritual conditioning of the population and of the soldiers of the Bonn army is being conducted in the Federal Republic of Germany designed to train the obedient and unthinking executors of the criminal plans of the imperialists and the revenge seekers. Extensive militaristic-chauvinistic propaganda is conducted among the soldiers and the population in the same spirit as the propaganda that was formerly carried out by Wilhelm II and by the raving Hitler.

The higher catholic and protestant clergy take an active part in this propaganda.

The high level catholic clergy, the jesuits, and the military clergy of the Bonn army devote their utmost energies in attempting to justify the atomic armament of the Bundeswehr along with an atomic war. The bishops and priests keep reiterating that the atomic bomb is god's will from the pulpits, the pages of church publications and from the lecture stages of various meetings of revenge seekers. They try to impress the believers with the thought that an atomic war, which is being preached by the aggressive forces of imperialism -- is "god's scourge", and is designated by god as punishment and to instill fear in him.

The recently deceased Archbishop of Munich, cardinal Wendel, was an especially active proponent of the militaristic plans of the West German revenge seekers -- he was the head of the catholic military clergy. This "cardinal-general" made a very rapid and significant political-ecclesiastical career for himself due to the fact that while he was the bishop of Schpeyer, he decisively supported the West German militarists in the

problems of religious (more precisely -- the religious-political) education of the Bundeswehr soldiers. For that he was appointed the archbishop of Munich, a senior chaplain of the Bonn army, received the title of a cardinal from the pope, was rewarded with the highest military and civil decorations of the Federal Republic of Germany and with Vatican decorations.

Cardinal Wendel represented that part of the catholic clergy, which became very close with the ruling monopolistic bourgeoisie of the Federal Republic of Germany, and which blesses its plans with the god's name in its hate of the world.

The general-superintendent, bishop Dibelius, is the head of the German evangelical church. A book that was recently published entitled "Dibelius Speaks" contains excerpts from the speeches of this church functionary, from 1914 until the present time.

The First World War. Dibelius in his sermons announces that Germany is fighting a war for a "holy" cause. Dibelius was among those who right after the collapse of the Kaiser's Germany began to preach a war of revenge. The report that he delivered in 1918 developed plans for the occupation of Belgium, France and the enslavement of the Soviet people and the acquisition of colonial property by the German imperialists.

It is not surprising that this general-superintendent of the evangelical church is today one of the most malicious slanderers of the German Democratic Republic -- and is in the ranks of the revenge seekers.

The common nature of the anti-national political goals, animosity towards the socialist countries, a fear of the peaceful development of Germany and the devotion to the German reaction -- all this brought the leaders of the two religious denominations in the Federal Republic of Germany -- the catholic and protestant, of those who were represented by the general vicar, cardinal Wendel, and of those who are being represented by general-superintendent, bishop Dibelius.

The broad masses of the workers in Germany, not only in the German Democratic Republic, but those in the Federal Republic of Germany as well, are opponents of the revenge seekers.

The leading group of workers -- the communists -- defended and are defending the unity of all the workers in the combined struggle for peace, for an improvement in the living conditions. The announcement made by the Conference of the Representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties states: "No differences in the political, religious or other issues must serve as obstacles to the amalgamation of all the forces of the working class against the military danger. The hour has come to counteract the forces of war with the powerful will and unified actions of all the sections and organizations of the international proletariat, to unify all of its forces in the name of preventing war and the preservation of peace!"

THUS DECIDE THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES

Following is the translation of an article
by M. Makhmudov in Nauka i Religiya, No. 2,
Moscow, February 1961, pages 78-79.

A new form of antireligious work received widespread impetus in Karchayevo-Cherkesiya -- people's rural gatherings. In appearing at them, the mountain folk unanimously demand the destruction of the remnants of such ugly religious customs as the deur, khalifasha, nisatin, nachikhitkh, the payment of kalyma and others.

T. Talimanov, an inhabitant of the Novo-Khumarinskiy aul, announced at the gathering that "over the past two years I married off two of my sons, and I must confess that I am almost completely ruined."

All the participants of the gathering at the Khabez aul talked of a necessity to end with the kalyma, the payment of which actually amounts to the sale of the bride.

Religious customs that bring discord into the young family are still in existence.

R. Dagova, from the Abazakt aul stated at the gathering that "We still have a harmful custom called nachikhitkh, which is the establishment of relationship. It consists of a visit by 10-15 djigits, representatives of the bride, who come to the house of the groom's parents and carouse there through the night. It is time that this be brought to an end.

The customs that ruin the relatives of the bride were given the same combined disapproval. One of these customs, khalifasha, consists of a visit of the bride's home by a dozen women with gifts: bread, khalva and other items. In return, the bride's parents must present each visitor with an expensive piece of material for a dress. Having gathered for the meeting, the inhabitants of the Novo-Khumarinskiy aul called this custom a plain "clipping" and adopted a resolution not to engage in it.

Here is another custom -- nisatin. After the wedding the guests are given all of the bride's personal property and clothing. After the guests leave, the young woman must go from home to home and ask for her property to be returned.

Khasin Aliyevich Papushov lived in this world for 75 years. How can one fail to listen to his opinion, which he

expressed at a gathering of the inhabitants of the Adyge-Khal'skiy rural soviet:

"I am an old man. I have lived through much and I must honestly state that all religions oppress man. I advise the youth present here not to believe in religious fairy tales. The uraza should not be conducted or other religious demands fulfilled. We should have ceased the custom of paying the efendi for funerals and weddings a long time ago. It is time to end with these remnants."

The gatherings do not pass without a trace. Their participants introduce written resolutions condemning religious rites. The workers, employees, housewives and the pensioners of the Besleney aul resolved: to condemn such harmful remnants as weddings by the effendi, bypassing the legal registration of the marriage at the rural soviet or the registry office, and the payment of the kalyma. The resolution points out that all this has nothing in common withour customs of our Cherkess people and is incompatible with the rules of the socialist community.

Naturally, the gatherings are not the sole means of struggling against the religious remnants. But the power of the society -- is a great power. And if the people themselves demand the elimination of the incongruent old rituals, there can be no doubt that they will end.

APPROACH EVERY BELIEVER

Following is the translation of an article
by A. Avksent'yev in Nauka i Religiya, No. 2,
Moscow, February 1961, pages 79-80.

Experience in atheistic propaganda indicates that the mass cultural-educational work, which is conducted in our cities and villages, frequently bypasses the believers, who rarely visit the clubs, Houses of Culture and do not attend anti-religious lectures and evenings. Therefore individual work with the believers is a very effective form of scientific-atheistic propaganda.

One of the most important elements of such individual work is the ability to find an approach to the believer. Here is an example which shows how a sensitive approach to a person frequently assures success.

S., a young woman, is working in one of the studios in the city of Stavropol'. During the Great Patriotic War she was a medical nurse on the Stalingrad front. Before the war she was a non-believer. But during the heavy and bloody battles, when it seemed that death is unavoidable, she swore to devote herself to god if she did not die. S. did not die; she was not even wounded. She then decided that god helped her. She started living in a secluded manner, to observe the writings of the orthodox religion, fasted and strictly observed all religious holidays, refusing to go to work on those days. When she was reprimanded for absenteeism, she submitted her resignation. Her resignation may have been honored and the problem would have been formally resolved -- a violator of labor discipline is discharged. The secretary of the party organization of the studio where S. worked, comrade Tarnopol'skaya, opposed such a disposition. After a number of conversations she managed to have S. talk with frankness. S. explained why she considers it impossible to work on religious holidays. At the same time S. stated that she respects Soviet laws and does not want to leave her job. The party organization and the enterprise administration decided that S. should not be discharged under any circumstances. They based themselves on the fact that the staff is obligated to do everything possible to re-educate S. Without expecting prompt success, the communists began to converse frequently with the believer, striving to have her realize the error

of her viewpoints herself. At the present time S. works during the religious holidays just as her comrades, she became more sociable and fulfills social commitments. The hour when the religious fog before her eyes will vanish completely is not far off.

School teachers conduct extensive individual work among the population. This numerous group of the Soviet intelligentsia is closely associated with the population, especially the village population. The teachers frequently meet parents of their pupils and know them well. They are always welcome guests in any home, and in the informal atmosphere of the home they discuss not only scholastic but other problems as well, including religious issues.

The parents of school children of the Razvil'nyy khutor of the Trunovskiy rayon consider T.F. Pertsyukova, the local school teacher, a most welcome guest. Not infrequently after a cup of tea she conducts popular scientific-atheistic talks in some home. She does that so simply and unobtrusively that even the believers willingly listen to her.

At the present time, reality itself, the outstanding achievements of science and technology make many believers think about many problems, which formerly escaped their attention. A significant blow to religious beliefs were the Soviet artificial satellites and cosmic rockets. In talking with the believers about these scientific achievements, the propogandists-teachers attempt to help them to get rid of false viewpoints.

Here is what caused Buzair Hamidovich Makov and Kerim Tembotovich Lafishev, inhabitants of the Kaydan settlement of the Ust'-Dzhegutinskiy rayon, to abandon their religious viewpoints. B. K. Markov worked for many years at a sheep breeding farm. He saw how the zootechnicians and the chabans improved the breed of animals, with the aid of scientists, that according to islam were created by allah himself. Makov discovered the power of new drugs, which prevented an epidemic among the cattle, and his faith in science gradually increased. At the same time his doubts of the truth of the "holy scriptures" were also increasing.

The old man's faith in god was completely broken by his son Lev -- a geography teacher in the local school. He frequently told his father and his friend Kerim Lefish about the structure of the earth and the universe.

Once Lev Buzairovich showed the old men a photograph of the surface of the moon.

"If man found out what is on the moon, that means that it is not god who gave reason to man," -- concluded the senior Makov. "Formerly even the efendi did not know what transpired on the moon, today even my son's students know that. The people themselves seek truth and find out what is in the heavens."

Soon the old man became completely indifferent to religion.

Here is another example. The child of Ya., an inhabitant of the Kevsala village in the Platovskiy rayon, took sick. She decided to take the child to a quack. After finding out about it the teacher, Yu. Gladkov, immediately had a talk with the mother. He reminded her how as a result of the "treatment" received by a child of another inhabitant of the Krivoportnoy vilage, the infant died. Then the teacher assisted in obtaining a horse in the kolkhoz and drove the mother with the child to a doctor. But this was just the beginning. After the child recovered Gladkov continued to visit the family. He spoke of the achievements made by Soviet science, read newspapers and excerpts from atheistic books and brochures and finally attained a complete severance of the family from religion.

In their talks on anti-religious themes, the propagandists frequently successfully utilize classic literature and modern artistic literature.

Here is an example that indicates what a magnificent tool a book can be in individual work with the believers.

A number of questions were asked of a member of the Society, Yefimenko, by one of his listeners by the nature of which it was possible to judge that the one posing the questions has read a considerable amount of religious literature. The lecturer requested the questioner to remain after the talk. Taking into consideration that person's love of reading, he gave him a number of books and brochures from his library. After that over ten meetings took place between the believer Korenev and Yefimenko. In the end Korenev announced: "I am still not clear on many points, but I feel ashamed of myself, for through ignorance I formerly tried to hide behind my faith in god. This is now over. I can see that man's strength is knowledge and not in blind faith."

It is best of all when the reason for discussions are local facts. During spring of last year an inhabitant of the Zolotarevka village in the Ipatovskiy rayon, Aleksey Khudoy, called one of the women a "witch" and stated that she "spoiled" his cow. On the request of the leaders of the local agitators' staff and the staff of the local radio-newspaper, zootechnician Grigorenko and an assistant veterinarian, Bezbodova, found out why the cow started to yield less milk. It turned out that its owner was not feeding it properly and did not take proper care of his animals in general. This incident helped the village agitators to conduct a talk on the subject of "Do not believe in superstitions."

I.O. Rudenko, a graduate student of the Stavropol'skiy Pedagogical Institute, and the chairman of the board of the Society and of the scientific-atheistic section, devotes considerable attention to individual work with the believers. He went to Kislovodsk tens of times for talks with A. Yas'ko, a Jehovah's Witnesses sectarian. She finally broke off with

religion and published some of her views in the press. Similar results were obtained by I.O. Rudenko by talking with a student of the Starvopol'skaya Seminary, V. Ostapenko. At the present time the former believers -- Ostapenko and Yas'ko -- became members of the Society and are conducting active scientific-atheistic propaganda among their former colleagues.

V. Ostapenko's appearance in the press brought confusion to the ranks of the church functionaries. Several more people left the Seminary. Their renouncement of religion finally undermined belief in god for a number of those who were undecided. An inhabitant of Cherkasska, Ye. Rogozina, wrote the editor of the oblast newspaper "The Lenin Banner"--

"After reading A. Yas'ko's article in the newspaper I can no longer remain indifferent to the questions that were brought up. They interested me not only by their content, sincerity and directness, but also by the fact that the story of my life is essentially similar to that of Anna Afans'yevna Yas'ko."

Individual work is an almost mandatory condition for bringing about a break of the believers with ecclesiastical-sectarian influence and their introduction to atheistic propaganda, as well as for the development of a materialistic viewpoint.

If every confirmed atheist would conduct such work, it would be of great aid to the matter of communist education of the masses.

GUIDEBOOK FOR THE ATHEIST

Following is the translation of an article
by V. Titov in Nauka i Religiya, No. 2,
Moscow, February 1961, pages 95-96.

Our propagandists have been waiting for a long time for the appearance of a training aid on the bases of scientific atheism. The need for such a publication was obvious. The pre-war antireligious textbooks were quite outdated and became a bibliographical rarity. The book entitled "A Guidebook of the Atheist" which appeared on the library shelves could serve as a satisfactory reference book, but it was unsuitable for use as a training aid.

The scientific-atheistic editorial section of the State Publishing House for Political Literature completed work on a training aid entitled: "The Bases of Scientific Atheism" /See Note/. At the present time this book, that was prepared by the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences USSR, has been published. Some of the more important questions are illuminated in it, which every propagandist of scientific atheism must be capable of handling.

/Note/ Osnovy Nauchnogo Ateizma (The Bases of Scientific Atheism), State Publishing House for Political Literature, 1961, 455 pages.

The book consists of three sections: "Religion, Atheism, Science"; "The Origin and Development of Religion. A Critique of Religious Teachings"; "The Building of Communism in the USSR and the Surmounting of Religious Remnants".

The first section contains two chapters: "The Origin and Development of Atheism", and "The Struggle of Science and Religion". The first chapter indicates that atheism as a system of viewpoints that refutes the belief in god (or gods), in supernatural force, opposes any religion, and is inseparably associated with the development of scientific knowledge, and a materialistic philosophy. The nature of atheistic viewpoints was moulded by concrete social-economic conditions. This is what explains the inevitably limited nature of the outlooks by ancient thinkers, of the free-thinking scientists of the feudal epoch, of the bourgeois educators and revolutionary democrats. Only the Marxist-Leninist teachings leave no gaps for the papacy and all sorts

of mysticism in the understanding of nature and society.

The second chapter reveals the irreconcilable contradiction between science and religion. The history of our knowledge about the world that surrounds us is permeated with a constant struggle between advanced thinking and the solidified dogmas, between knowledge and superstition. Tortures, burning at the stake and damnations served as the tested instruments of the clergy in this struggle. Relying on the support of the exploiting state, the church for many centuries was attempting to halt the progress of culture and science. The servers of cults are still up in arms. This is evidenced by the interesting and meaningful material which may be found in the paragraphs entitled "the contemporary stage of the struggle of science against religion" and in "the contradiction among the scientific and the religious understanding of the communal life."

Successful atheistic work is impossible without a profound knowledge of the basic positions held by religion, and without a concrete critique of their dogmas. All of these questions are discussed in the second part of the book. For instance, the chapter "The Occurrence of Religion" indicates how various faiths occurred under the influence of the conditions of communal life. The reader will find a specific characterization of the various forms of primitive religions which occurred in the far distant epoch of primitive society and has a complex history. Many features and forms of the ancient faiths have changed under the influence of social relationships, but have been preserved right up to our time and became a component part of present day religion.

The central portion of the second section includes a critical analysis of judaism, christianity (special chapters are devoted to orthodoxy, catholicism, protestantism and to christian sectarianism in the USSR), to islam and to buddhism. Much attention is devoted here to the characterization of the present day state of religion, and to the methods used by the preachers in their struggle for the preservation of the rapidly thinning congregations, the attempts of the church functionaries to reconcile communism and the church are exposed. The authors of the training aid point out how an inexorable course of forces the church functionaries to readjust themselves, but they are undergoing one defeat after another.

In reading the chapters contained in this section, one is involuntarily reminded of an old legend. During the distant past, on the territory of the Roman Empire, there was a widespread religion of mitraism. The mitraist priests underwent seven stages of initiation. In every stage some new sacrament was revealed to the priest, and at the same time it was stressed that in the future, beyond the seventh stage of the initiation, he will be led into the "holy of holies" (the altar) of the temple and there he will discover the most sacred, and will

partake of the supreme wisdom. And finally the priest, already in his declining years, with trepidation enters the seventh stage and entered into the "holy of holies"; he stopped short, astonished: the altar was empty; the supreme sacrament was nothing. The critical analysis of all religious teachings also inevitably leads to the conclusion that beyond the altar there is nothing except emptiness.

The concluding section of the training aid is composed of three chapters: "The Relationship of the CPSU and of the Soviet Government with Religion and Church," and "Religious Remnants in the USSR and Methods of Overcoming Them". This section lists various programs of the Communist Party with regard to religion and church and the direct association of all work in the atheistic education of the working masses with those tasks which are set and resolved by the party. V.I. Lenin stressed that "A Marxist must be a materialist, i.e. an enemy of religion, but a dialectic materialist, i.e. one who places the matter of struggling with religion not in an abstract sense; not on a foundation of an abstract, purely theoretical nature, but on a concrete basis of the class struggle which is occurring in the course of the education of the masses most of all and best of all." [See Note.]

[Note] Lenin, V.I., Works, Vol. 15, page 376.

The present day church functionaries, having experienced a crushing defeat in their struggle with science, are aspiring to preserve their religious positions and for that purpose they call on the problems of man's moral behaviour more and more. The propounders of religion are attempting to convince the believers in the fact that morality in man depends on god's will, that the norms of behaviour are dictated to man by god himself. These teachings of the pastors are disputed in a concrete manner and on a broad basis in the chapter entitled "The Religious Moral and Communism".

The main sense of the religious moral is the justification of all types of oppression, and in defense of the social structure based on the exploitation of man by man. Therefore, the religious moral is antagonistic to the moral of the communist society. The religious remnants strengthen moral qualities in people which do not help, but obstruct the solution of daily problems in the building of communism.

The most important features that characterize the moral demeanor of the workers in the epoch of the building of communism, are the aspirations to resolve the problems promulgated by life in a creative manner, an attraction to knowledge to culture. These are the qualities of the best people of our time that religion labels as the most sinful. Quite recently, one of the greatest proponents of orthodoxy called on the believers to follow the god's fool, who refused to conduct themselves wisely and renounced a "worldly position".

The last chapter of the training guide reveals the reasons

for the preservation of religious remnants in the USSR and concrete measures for their elimination are pointed out. Much attention is devoted to the content, forms and methods of atheistic propaganda. The authors of this training aid stress that the atheistic propaganda must be scientific, i.e. it must reveal the bases of the materialistic viewpoint that are supported by the entire wealth of knowledge of nature and society, in a profound and an argumentative manner; in a popular way, i.e. one that is understandable and clear to the masses, by using live, vivid and engrossing forms; in a systematic manner, i.e. by a daily campaign and not one that is conducted from time to time.

The training guide, "The Bases of Scientific Atheism", is primarily designed for the students and teachers of the higher educational institutions. However, the relatively short book and its popular style place it within reach of the broadest circles of propagandists and agitators.