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Subject: Trip of Rev. Vasyl Tyndalo
of Chumiana, near Torino to
the Ukraine in Sept. 1964

Source: K

Date: 31 Oct. 1964

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Father T. is a professor at the agricultural college in Chumiana. He is a graduate of Torino ~~univ~~ University in agriculture. Now lives at the college, where he is teaching --in a Selesian monastery.

Last September he visited the village Mervyshchiv, county (rayon) Zolochiv in Lvivska Oblast. His mother, sisters and brother with his family live there. Mervyshchiv is Father T's native village.

Border crossing.

Father T crossed the border ~~by train~~ into Ukraine by train. At Chop the customs officials did not check his bags too thoroughly because he gave some money to one of the officials who entered the train before the crossing. That official escorted the priest through the checking room, and even simplified for him the procedure of changing foreign currency into rubles.

From Chop he went to Lviv, and reported to the police. The police were courteous to him. Insted of waiting for the bus, Father T took a taxi to his village.

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The Church

During a visit to Lviv, Father T met two Catholic priests, of the Ukrainian Rite. Both are working as laborers. He would not

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disclose their names, saying that he intends to talk to Metropolitan Josef Slipy about them.

He did say that the two priests told him about rumours to the effect that the Moscow Patriarch plans to allow the re-establishment of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. Against this plan are said to be the former Ukr. Cath. priests who have switched to the Orthodox faith. They are said to be worried about their own status, if the Ukr. Cath. Church is re-established. Father T. said he was unable to find out who or what was the cause of these rumours.

Father T said that in his village the church is open, but few people attend it. While he was there he said Mass daily in his mother's house, with his mother and sister assisting.

The village.

His relatives told him that everyone was frightened when his taxi pulled up to the house. Usually only policemen coming to arrest someone arrive by cab, they told him.

Of the relatives, the mother, who is 77, takes care of the house. The sister works as a milkmaid in the kolhosp, the brother also works at the kolhosp, and his ^{brother's} son is studying at the university in Lviv. They all live in poverty; the only one who enjoys a better standard of living is the priest's nephew, because he is on scholarship and has opportunities to go away for the summer. Last summer he was at a resort in Odessa.

Father T's sister has to get up at 4 am to tend the cows. They are her full responsibility. In order to get more milk out of the cows, they have to be fed well, but there is problem of feed: the milkmaids tend to steal from each other feed assigned to them.

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Generally speaking stealing seems to be the accepted practice, because it is impossible to subsist on what is leagally available. Sometimes persons get caught. This year, a combine operator who was caught stealing 40 kgs. of wheat was exiled to Asia.

The household plots are saving the people from starvation. They usually grow potatoes on the plots, and keep a cow, a pig and a few hens. Father T's mother takes care of the household plot and takes the cow to pasture.

A few years ago high stubble used to be left on the fields. The people used to cut it for feed. Now the kolhosp chairman orders ~~to have~~ the stubble burned so that the people won't be using it. A ditty was current in the village when Father T was there:

Vstan Volodya podyvysya
Choho Khrushchov dorobyvsya
Ni korovy ni byka
Dity plachut: Moloka

(Arise Volodya and take a look
What that Khrushchev has done *checked*
There's not a cow, nor a bull
And the children cry: Give us milk.)

Father T's estimation of Soviet agriculture is "complete carelessness". He saw piles of cut wheat lying out in the open for weeks, rotting in the rain. The quality of the grain is also poor, because it is not properly attended to in the spring. Nobody seems to care about it, though.

The chairman of the kolhosp is "some stranger". He lives in a villa outside the village. The chairman asked Father T to visit him, but Father T refused. The immediate supervisor in the village is a local man, who is hated because "your own

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kind in authority are worse than Russians."

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The schools

There are 18 teachers in the village school. Some of them are Russians, and they teach in Russian. It is generally assumed that most of the teachers are KGB agents. Even little children know this and one little boy told Father T that his teacher is an agent.

Kiev and Kaniv

Father T noted that only Russian was spoken in Kiev when he visited there, while only Ukrainian in Kaniv, in and around the Taras Shevchenko museum. Hotel service in Kiev was adequate, he said. On a visit to some famous churches of Kiev (now converted to museums), Father T saw a number of historic church objects on display, all properly labelled and dated. He noted that some icons were being removed and taken somewhere. On a visit to a historic Monastery (the Lavra), the guides constantly repeated that the monks who lived there were just lazy persons, and some were insane.

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