

the State-recognized Baptist Church. Edik Kuznetsov, like Jan Palach in Czechoslovakia, deliberately sacrificed himself in order that his friends might be free. In this case free "Next year in Jerusalem".

KATHLEEN MATCHETT

*Sergei* by Sergei Kourdakov. Oliphants, London, 1973. 205 pp. £2.50.

This dramatized autobiography is written by a youth who led numerous attacks on Russian believers as a member of the Soviet auxiliary police. It does not cover his short sensational career in the West under the sponsorship of *Underground Evangelism*. The book, based on tapes, is expertly written by a ghostwriter and made even more attractive through sixteen pages of photographs, most of which Sergei brought with him when he jumped ship off the western Canadian coast.

Written as a story of human interest, it was not intended to be a factual document. The informative materials must therefore be treated with care. Sergei gives specific information about the religious situation around Petropavlovsk in Kamchatka. Although this information agrees essentially with what is already known, no other documents have appeared which confirm the existence of believers in this region. The book itself acknowledges that there are no churches in Kamchatka, just believers meeting illegally. Since the book concerns persecution during 1969 and 1970 when the reform Baptists' Council of Prisoners' Relatives was already well organized, it is surprising not to find references to this region in the *samizdat* which has reached the West.

It should be kept in mind that this is the story of a young man, barely 22 when he died. His life was full of traumatic events which he was not yet experienced enough to understand from any but the personal perspective. The most useful parts of the book are his description of life in a State orphanage, his education as a future leader in the Party, and his own growing disillusionment with communist practice.

Sergei's career as a Christian was brief and hectic. He shot himself on 1 January, 1973 in somewhat sordid circumstances. The book, however, does not mention his death except for a publisher's note, which still gives the misleading impression that the Soviet authorities were behind it, although it was made to appear as an accident.

WALTER SAWATSKY