

Baptist Press Service, 28 February 1977, p. 3; "Believers in Romania - divided they stand!", *Christianity Today*, 20 May 1977, pp. 18-21.

² Cf. RCL Bibl. RO/1979/BAP/4.

³ Romania still has to apply annually for Most Favoured Nation status with the USA and would like to have this on a permanent basis.

⁴ *The Times*, 22 November 1977, p. 6.

⁵ Cf. "Romanian Baptists and the State" by Alan Scarfe, RCL Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 14-20.

⁶ "Neoprotestants and human rights in Romania," March 1977, available in English translation from Keston College.

⁷ *The Times*, 14 April 1977, p. 7; *ibid.*, 14 May 1977, p. 4.

⁸ Cf. RCL Bibl. RO/1978/BAP/2, 3, in Vol. 6, No. 3, p. 206.

⁹ Cf. document in this issue of RCL, pp. 170-3.

¹⁰ Cf. RCL Bibl. RO/1978/ORT/2, 3, 4, in Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 63.

¹¹ *Le Monde*, 24 November 1978, p. 8. Also, *Romania, the sun, the sea, the sand, the labour camps*, published by Amnesty International, November 1978.

¹² Cf. RCL Bibl. RO/1978/BAP/8, in Vol. 6, No. 3, p. 206.

¹³ Cf. *In drumatoral*, 7-8, 1978, pp. 8-9. Sedinta Extraordinara a comitetului Ununii.

¹⁴ *Le Monde*, 22 March 1979, p. 4.

¹⁵ Cf. appeal from the seminary students, published in *Catacombes*, January-February 1979, p. 10.

¹⁶ Fr Calciu's lenten addresses are available from Keston College.

¹⁷ *Catacombes*, October 1978, p. 10. Also, RCL Bibl. RO/1978/ORT/4, 6, 8, in Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 63.

¹⁸ "To our brother man", by Fr Calciu, available from Keston College; RCL Bibl. RO/1978/ORT/10, 11, in this issue of RCL.

¹⁹ RCL Bibl. RO/1979/ORT/4, in this issue of RCL.

²⁰ *Le Monde*, 7 March 1979; *Daily Telegraph*, 30 April 1979, p. 4.

²¹ *Keston News Service*, No. 72, 10 May 1979, p. 4; *Le Monde*, 12 April 1979.

²² Cf. RCL Bibl. RO/1979/BAP/2; RO/1979/ORT/2, in this issue of RCL.

²³ *Declaration of the formation of the Romanian Workers Free Trade Union*, p. 8; also *Free Trade Union News*, May 1979, publishes the document in full.

NB—On 12 June Keston College received news of the arrest of Dimitrie Ianculovici, and two other ALRC members, Ludovic Osvath and Nicolae Traian Bogdan. Ianculovici has been sentenced to six months imprisonment. The others have received three and two months hard labour respectively. A.S.

Appendix

ALRC's Programme of Demands

In April 1978 the Baptists, Pavel Nicolescu and Dimitrie Ianculovici, formed the Christian Committee for the Defence of Religious Freedom and Freedom of Conscience (ALRC). It addressed the following "Programme of Demands", dated 5 July 1978, to the Romanian State and Communist Party. Although initially the Committee attracted mainly Baptists as members, later a few members of the Romanian Orthodox Church joined.

APPEAL FROM THE ROMANIAN CHRISTIAN
COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENCE OF
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND FREEDOM OF
CONSCIENCE

To The Council of State
Minister of Justice
Department of Cults
Baptist Union

Spokesmen of the above
Committee:

Pavel Nicolescu, Dimitrie Ianculovici

PROGRAMME OF DEMANDS

Modern times are increasingly characterized by the ever greater participation of the masses in problems of everyday life. Every democratic regime ought to recognize and respect public opinion.

On all levels, individual and national, the world's citizens are called upon to defend peace, freedom and justice on earth.

As loyal citizens, who love their country and nation, and as Christians who obey the words of Christ - "For I was an hungered and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in, naked and ye clothed me. I was sick and ye visited me. I was in prison and ye came unto me." (Matt. 25:35, 36) - we wish to make a modest contribution to the defence of man's basic rights, to the respect for constitutional guarantees, and to the raising of Romania's international prestige.

Romanian society in recent years has seen many changes and innovations. We have witnessed a vast programme of reconstruction in many areas. We welcome the recent reforms proposed by our leaders in the economic field, in legislation and other areas, except in the field of religion where the same methods have been practised for 30 years. This has created tension between Church and State, and leads to permanent suffering among the faithful.

As this situation cannot remain static, affecting as it does not only the work of the Christian Church but also Romania's prestige in the world, we consider a change of attitude to be absolutely essential.

Therefore, we demand from the central organs of the Party and from the State the following:

1. The right of religious associations to exist undisturbed and to be recognized by law. In this connection we demand the right of the Roman Catholic Church to have a recognized juridical statute; the re-establishment of the Greek Catholic Church, which was disbanded by the Romanian State in 1948; the re-integration of the Church of the Reformed Seventh-day Adventists; official recognition of the evangelical movement, "The Lord's

Army" within the framework of the Romanian Orthodox Church; the right of religious associations in Romania to join international religious organizations without official approval.

2. The right to practise religion in church, private homes and in public without official approval, as well as the right to preach, to baptize and to officiate at open-air meetings. The right to carry out pastoral work without restriction, anywhere in our country, especially in hospitals, old people's homes and prisons. The right of priests and pastors to lecture and preach wherever they are invited and by whatever confession

3. The right to make church appointments: to appoint leaders, hierarchs, priests, pastors and theological professors. We demand an end to interference by the Department of Cults in church problems; the end of identity cards and permits for priests and pastors, as well as the annulment of the obligation to be "recognized" or "approved" before taking up a post. The annulment of a "ceiling" for the appointment of clergy, and the right to create new parishes according to the desire of the faithful, without having to gain official approval.

4. The right to build, to buy or hire places of worship without the approval of the Department of Cults. The right to build new local churches etc., the right to repair or rebuild all church property affected by the recent earthquake. The end of pressure on proprietors who wish to sell or let premises to church organizations for religious purposes. The right to own church property, liturgical objects, donations. The right to receive money, donations, material help, cult objects from Christians abroad who send these either to individuals or to religious organizations.

5. The right to express religious opinions in public as does atheist propaganda at present. Free dialogue between Christians and Marxists and on the radio, television and in the press. The right of Christians to reply in the press of the United Socialist Front (the weekly *Magazinul* and the

daily *Romania Libera*) to atheist propaganda and attacks, as all the 14 religious cults are members of this association.

6. The right to print and distribute religious literature without official approval. The right to print religious literature in sufficient quantities or to import it (Bibles, prayer-books, liturgical books, religious calendars, hymn-books, the catechism, commentaries, Biblical concordances, theological manuals, films etc.).

The right to have a free religious press, and an end to censorship by the Department of Cults. The publication of religious magazines, regularly, in quantities necessary to meet the demand. Publicity in the magazines on all aspects of the cult, as well as on cases of religious persecution: e.g. publicity on dismissal or demotion at work, dismissal from school, fines, lawsuits, searches, interrogations etc.; persecution of those who receive religious news from abroad; evangelistic campaigns; theological congresses; new books; ecumenical laws; inter-confessional relations etc. The right to found a press for the printing of Bibles and religious literature in Romania.

The right of any confession to have its own printing press and to own a duplicating machine.

The right to disseminate and sell religious literature and the Bible in Romanian, Hungarian, German, Serbian, English, French through colporteurs, bookshops and kiosks attached to theological colleges, cathedrals, churches, prayer-centres, monasteries etc.

7. The right to give religious instruction to children and young people. The right for priests and pastors to hold catechism classes freely; to hold meetings for prayer and Bible study; to organize excursions. The right to give religious instruction to young Christians in school, just as classes in Marxism are held for non-believers.

The right of parents to give religious instruction to their children and to have a say in the type of cultural activities their children should join. An end to the sabotage of Sundays and Christian feast-days in schools

and institutions. Respect for Sunday as a day of rest.

An end to enforced indoctrination of children and young people with atheist and materialist ideas.

8. The right to carry out charitable work by collections and subscriptions; the right to found orphanages, old people's homes.

9. The right to found centres for theological instruction at university level for pastors and priests without any interference from the Ministry, and freedom for those who are chosen to be ordained. We demand - in view of the increasing interference of the Ministry in theological training - the cessation of all obstacles to recruitment for the clergy.

10. The right to hold Bible classes, religious gatherings, congresses without the approval of the Ministry. The right to invite foreigners to take part in these. The right to subscribe to foreign reviews.

11. The right for Christians to have access to higher posts in the economy, education, university life, the diplomatic service, etc. The right to be promoted. An end to ideological discrimination and religious persecution which aims to stop the emigration of those people (Christians) who see no hope for their future.

12. The right of Churches and religious associations to have access to television, radio, the press, and to be able to broadcast on Sundays and other religious feast-days.

13. The right of the faithful to warn the authorities about the persecution of those hierarchs who are also Members of Parliament.

14. The right to re-open all closed churches, and the right of all pastors and clergy, who were dismissed arbitrarily, to be reinstated. Reparations for all those who have suffered abuse and for theological students arrested.

15. The right of young Christians in the Army to have a Bible, prayer-book etc.

16. The right of Romanian Christians to refuse to sign an oath of loyalty to the Communist Party, or an oppor-

tunity for those who do sign, not to accept atheist indoctrination.

17. The right to receive Dr Billy Graham and other Christians in Romania.

18. The right to insist on respect for human rights in accordance with international agreements.

19. The right to give material assistance to believers who are persecuted (dismissed, arrested, demoted) for their convictions. The right to receive gifts at home and from abroad to help them.

20. The right to be visited by the clergy and to possess Bibles and religious literature. The right of prisoners to be visited by a priest.

21. The right of churches and gatherings of believers to buy, receive and possess means of transport and to engage a chauffeur.

22. The right to advertise religious events: congresses, Bible studies etc. The right to organize mass gatherings.

23. The right to engage (ordain) priests without state interference; to engage priests for missionary work.

24. The necessity to reform church-state relations. In the last 30 years the Ministry of Cults has been a continuous source of abuses, restrictive measures and psychological pressure on those who serve the Church; their policy of intimidation has created a deep gulf between Christians and the State.

Our ideal is a free Church in a free State which would allow dialogue and co-operation between the two.

Bucharest, 5 July 1978

27 signatures: 25 Baptist, 1 Orthodox, 1 Pentecostal. Document accompanied by a covering letter from Aurel Popescu and Josif Ton, both of whom have suffered much persecution. This confirms their approval of the above association and its aims. At the same time neither of them will join the association as both feel they are fully dedicated to their parishes, but will give every support and encouragement. They quote Proverbs 31:8, 9 and Isaiah 1:17, and Jeremiah 22:3.

Baptist Union Punishes Dissidents

The movement demanding religious rights grew up as a result of the 27th Romanian Baptist Congress held in February 1977. A document, circulated by dissident Baptists immediately after the Congress, demanded an end to discrimination in a number of fields. The ALRC, formed in April 1978, issued its "Programme of Demands" in July 1978 (see above). In September 1978 the following condemnation of ALRC and other Baptist dissidents was formulated by the Romanian Baptist leaders.

TO THE CHURCHES AND AFFILIATIONS OF
THE CHRISTIAN BAPTIST DENOMINATION IN
THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF ROMANIA

"Grace and peace to you from God our
Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ"

In brotherly love we make known to
you the following:

The Committee of the leadership of the
Union of Christian Baptist Associations
in the Romanian Socialist Republic, as-

sembled at a working session on 30
August 1978, guided by its responsibility to preserve intact the principles of the Baptist faith on behalf of all churches and affiliations, has discussed certain violations committed by some members of our denomination against the confession of the Baptist faith and the norms of civil conduct.

At the Congress of the Christian Baptist denomination, which took place in February 1977, all delegates present condemned a method used to resolve problems within the denomination: the sending of open letters and memoranda by persons who are not trusted within the denomination. Such documents produced much disturbance among our brethren before the Congress and for this reason the method was condemned and a demand was made that such practices cease. Nevertheless, it has been established that some persons, infringing the decision of the Congress, have continued to send similar letters and mem-

oranda within the country and also abroad, which have denigrated the leadership of the denomination and the state authorities.

To this has been added another negative manifestation which has culminated in the formation of a group - members of our denomination - which has called itself "The Romanian Christian Committee for the Defence of Religious Freedom and Freedom of Conscience". Thus an illegal group has been created which has launched a political manifesto directly attacking the denomination's leadership and the state authorities.

These facts are particularly dangerous because they contravene our principles of faith, and our spirit as Baptist Christians who consider ourselves an integral part of the greater national community of the Romanian people, and who contribute fully to its unity, independence and sovereignty.

The Committee of the Union, after studying the situation, has agreed that by their conduct these elements could place our denomination in an unfavourable position *vis-à-vis* the state authorities and other denominations in our country, thus seriously injuring the prestige of the Baptist denomination and the trust which it must enjoy before the State.

The Union Committee, concerned to prevent such grave consequences for the entire denomination (on the basis of Hebrews 13:17, Romans 16:17-18, Numbers 12:7-10, Romans 12:10, Romans 13:1-2, and 1 Thess. 5:12-13) in conformity with Art. 60, para. G of the denomination's statutes, has decided the following:

1. The exclusion from the denomination of Pavel Nicolescu of Bucharest, Nicolae Traian Bogdan, Emeric Iuhasz, Ioan Brisc, Dimitrie Ianculovici and Ion Moldovan of Timisoara, Petru Cocirteu and Nicolae Radoi of Caransebes, and Ludovic Osvath of Zalau, because they formed an illegal group, of a political nature, which joined a non-Baptist international organization, thus breaking the evangelical and doctrinal principles of the Baptist denomination (Romans 13:1-2).

2. The exclusion from the denomination, at the suggestion of the leader-

ship of the Association of Christian Baptists in Timisoara, and at the suggestion of all pastors and deacons within this Association, the exclusion of Viorel Vuc, Ion Teleaga, Martin Mihut and Gheorghe Munteanu of Caransebes, for violating Baptist doctrine and disobeying the decisions taken by the Committee Association of the Christian Baptist Churches in Timisoara (Art. 60, para. G of the statutes).

3. The exclusion from the denomination of Aurel Popescu of Bucharest for denigrating and slandering verbally and in writing over a number of years the leadership of the denomination and the state authorities, for disobeying the decisions of the Committee of the Union, and for breaking his oath, taken before the pastors and deacons of the Association of Christian Baptists in Bucharest, that he would only preach in the church of which he was a member (Romans 13:1-2; Art. 60, para. G of the statutes).

In making known to you these decisions of the Committee of our Union, we strongly advise you to take all necessary measures to see that, in future, these persons be treated as excluded, and that they be prohibited from participating in any kind of activity in the churches and affiliations of the Baptist denomination. At the same time, we feel it our duty to tell our brother pastors and deacons and members of church committees that such events must not happen again in future. Only letters from the Union or from the respective Association to which the local church belongs, will be read in Baptist churches.

The Committee of the Union expresses its conviction that the measures taken will contribute to preserving intact the principles of the Baptist faith in the churches and affiliations of our denomination, and will also contribute towards maintaining order, knowing that Holy Scripture says, "our God is a God of order".

With brotherly greetings, your brothers in the service of the Lord.

Bucharest, 6 September 1978

CORNEL MARA, President

PAVEL BARBATEI, General Secretary

Letter from Romanian Orthodox Priests

Fr Gheorghe Calciu Dumitreasa was arrested on 10 March 1979. He had taught at the Orthodox seminary in Bucharest and was popular among the students. In the autumn of 1977 he had protested about the demolition of a church and in early 1978 he attacked atheism in a sermon at the Patriarchal Cathedral. After being expelled from the seminary, he began a seminar at which aspects of religious life in Romania were discussed. Five Romanian Orthodox priests have written the following letter in English and have addressed it to RCL. It was posted from Bucharest on 16 April 1979.

Dear Sir,

We are informed by some foreign press or foreign radio stations that one make a case out of the former Seminary professor, the priest Gheorghe Calciu Dumitreasa.

Since we, the priests of the Romanian Orthodox Church, among 10,000 priests serve our Church, and live in Romania today we considered that it is good and also our duty to say what we think, because the above-mentioned priest has also implicated us through letters sent to some foreign radio stations.

The Romanian Orthodox Church, during the years after the war, through her Bishops and in good understanding with us all, the priests of the Church, has found a proper way of exercising our priestly mission in the conditions of life here, a way which enables us to have a true Christian mission, in accordance with the teachings of our Lord and with the needs of our faithful.

The 10,000 priests fulfil their sacramental and pastoral duties all over the country, enjoying full understanding and support from our state authorities. About 3,500 theological students and seminarians are trained for the priesthood in two University Theological Institutes and six Theological Seminaries.

In the monasteries, religious life continues on the basis of our ancient traditional rules. Hundreds of thousands of visitors and pilgrims come annually to enjoy the sources of our Christian Orthodox Romanian spirituality and art.

We are happy to confess openly that in the past three decades, a great num-

ber of churches have been restored through the technical and financial assistance of the State. Everybody speaks today of Voronet, Sucevita, Moldovita, Putna, Neamt, Agapia, Dragomirnei and almost everyone has seen Cozia, Horezu, Tismana, Tirgoviste, Suzana, Zamfira, Cernica, Pasarea, Rohia in the north of Transylvania, Rimeti, Simbata etc.

The printing houses of our Diocesan Centres print ten periodical publications, liturgical books, theological books, church music and Christian art books, calendars etc.

Our Church today does not have a shortage of priestly vocations. Every year in the theological schools there are more candidates for the entrance examination than available places.

There are, in general, more and more foreign visitors who come to our country, and who admire the good organization and functioning of our Church.

On an international level, the Romanian Orthodox Church enjoys, in full freedom, fruitful activity in serving the great ideals of peace and understanding between peoples, in participating, with the other Churches and Christian denominations in Romania, in various bilateral activities with sister Churches and in the framework of the international religious organizations. In this context one should see also the visit of His Beatitude Justin Moisescu, the Patriarch of our Church, to the USA and Canada.

That is why we are surprised and profoundly indignant at what we hear on some radio stations and read in some foreign press concerning religious life in our country. Is there any institution where one could not find some inadequate elements? Which institution can tolerate in its midst factors of disorder? Which responsible authority can leave the education of children and the education of its future priests in the hands of some professors who pursue interests entirely against the Church? We regret being in the situation of not being able to say words of praise for our brother in faith, the priest-professor Gheorghe Calciu. In fact he is now very well known. Some press, which is hostile to our Church, as well as some radio sta-

tions, although presenting his portrait, have not deepened his moral profile. Ever since his childhood he was the victim of an organization with unhealthy principles. He was a member of the "Iron Guard - fascist organization" of the Grammar School in Tulcea. As a student at the Faculty of Medicine in Bucharest, as from 1946, he was a member of the subversive and fascist student group. In 1949 he was condemned to eight years in prison for terrorist-fascist activity, and even in prison, due to the terror he was exerting on other prisoners, he was condemned to another 15 years in prison, a punishment which he suffered almost entirely.

In 1963, after his liberation, he was given the possibility to study at the University and to have an activity according to his own training. After his graduation from the Faculty of Philology, he was appointed professor of French to the Secondary School No. 144 in Bucharest. Realizing that he was not able here to put into practice his fascist ideas, which he had never given up, he entered the Faculty of Theology, from which he graduated in 1972. In 1973 as professor at the Theological Seminary in Bucharest, he asked to be ordained priest at the age of 48. His activity as Seminary professor was short, because he has unmasked himself as a promoter of the neo-fascist ideology, urging the seminarians to disobey the church and state authority. The academic board, after warning him repeatedly, in its meeting of May 1978 excluded him from the academic staff. That decision was approved by the Metropolitan Synod.

By removing him as professor at the Seminary in Bucharest, the church authority has taken measures to protect his pupils from fascist influences. The Church did not intend in any case to deprive Professor Calciu of a means of living. On the contrary, in spite of his acts of indiscipline and attempts to poison the souls of the seminarians with fascist ideas, the church authority summoned him three times in writing, aiming to offer him a post in the church administration or as a parish priest in

Bucharest, whatever church he would choose. He refused categorically. Once his existence was secured by the salary of his wife and by some translations for a State Editorial House, the priest Calciu began to wander throughout the country, seeking to make agitation and noise around him, claiming to be a great defender of religious freedom and human rights. But which liberty and which rights? He was removed as professor and he declares himself persecuted for his religious faith! We are surprised that some radio stations and organizations from abroad believe and are deceived consciously by an unbalanced man and a megalomaniac. How can a man be characterized who, in letters sent to foreign radio stations, in the name of some imaginary associations, speaks of himself as "the most eminent professor", "the most learned and most beloved priest", "the greatest theologian", "the perfect preacher" etc., etc.?

We, the priests know ourselves very well. Learning for years and years our Orthodox Church, we know what all the Romanian priests think. We know what Fascism was for our country and the whole world. We are disappointed that from our midst such recrudescence rises again which we had believed dead for ever. Being aware of the responsibility which the clergy of the Church, and, in general, of other religious denominations, have before God and men, we shall never allow in our midst to grow any action which will do harm to our priestly service and to the harmony established in our country between Church and State, between clergy and our faithful.

This is why we believe that the dissension which the priest Calciu tried to do, belongs entirely to him, and by that he excluded himself from our midst. We wish that what we have said above be regarded as an expression of the convictions of all the priests in our country.

1. FR PROFESSOR DUMITRU POPESCU
2. FR NICOLAE NICOLA
3. FR CONSTANTIN RUSE
4. FR CORNEL SAVA
5. FR ALEXANDER MUNTEANU

Fr Calciu Defended

After Fr Calciu began to be harassed by the Romanian authorities, a Committee was formed to defend him. The following news release was issued in Bucharest on 16 March 1979.

THE COMMITTEE OF CHRISTIAN BELIEVERS
FOR THE SALVATION OF
FATHER GHEORGHE CALCIU

informs you of the following :

The priest and former professor at the Theological Seminary in Bucharest, Gheorghe Calciu Dumitreasa (52), was arrested on 10 March 1979. Dumitreasa has already spent a total of 16 years in Romanian prisons and detention centres during the post-war Stalinist regime. His present arrest came after he was suspended for ten months from his duties as professor at the Theological Seminary, Radu-Voda, by the Archi-episcopal Secretariat of the Romanian capital. During these ten months, Dumitreasa was the victim of incessant persecution, threats and telephone surveillance.

In February, a nation-wide campaign of interrogations of former political prisoners began in Romania. The questions posed by the officials of the security organs were the usual ones: "What kind of friendships did you take up after

your release from prison? What sort of things are discussed among your circle of acquaintances? Do your relations know of your conviction and imprisonment?" During these interrogations, Professor Dumitreasa became one of the most important persons in the eyes of the security officials: his name was mentioned time and again, and was cited by officials of the Court of Inquiry in connection with imminent legal proceedings.

In the course of the last eight months, the "Committee of Christian Believers for the Salvation of Father Gheorghe Calciu" has addressed three appeals to the Patriarch of Romania, Justin Moisescu, and to the Head of State, Ceausescu. The arrest of Professor Gheorghe Calciu Dumitreasa has alarmed many circles throughout the country. The Committee has now appealed for help to the World Council of Churches, to Pope John Paul, to America, to committees for the protection of human rights in Romania in New York and Washington, to Amnesty International, to President Giscard d'Estaing, to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Coggan, to the Patriarch of Constantinople, to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth of England, and to all well-meaning and faithful people.