

Vidas Spengla

The Church, the "Kronika" and the KGB web

КОМИТЕТ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЙ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ
ЛИТОВСКОЙ ССР

СОВ. СЕКРЕТНО
(для информации)

ДЕЛО № 1789

ОПЕРАТИВНОГО НАБЛЮДЕНИЯ
ВНЕШНЕЙ РАЗРАБОТКИ № 242

Terminas duos metus
Nuo 1972 m.

Tuomet patvirtame dviem Kristaus Vardu ir Lietuvos Respublikos
Sąjūdžio grupės narių, pasirašiusių savo prieduotą ir
vėjų atspausdintą ir tapusį oficialiu dokumentu.

LES KRONEK 10.00





The founder and editor of Lietuvos Katalik Bažny ios Kronika
Rev. Sigitas Tamkevi ius SJ in exile in Krivoshein, the Tomsk region. 1988.

Vidas Spengla

The Church, the Kronika,
and the KGB web

KATALIK



AKADEMIJA

Vilnius 2002

UDK 282(474.5)(093)
Sp21

Parts I and III written by
Vidas Spengla

Part II written by
Archbishop Sigitas Tamkevičius
and Bishop Jonas Boruta

Translated into English by
Saulius Girnius

Edited by
Vidas Spengla

The publication of the book was supported by
Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania

INTRODUCTION

This book describes events which took place 10-30 years ago in the Church of the small, little known country of Lithuania. This country, which has shared the tradition of Christian faith with Europe for 600 years, lived in difficult conditions of persecution for 50 years in the twentieth century when every day anyone who treasured the faith had to be on guard and willing to fight if he wanted to preserve this faith in his heart. We clearly felt then that the stern words from the first Epistle of the Apostle Peter - "Your enemy, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings." (1 Pt 5, 8-9) - were not frightening rhetoric written in the spirit of old times, but the painful reality of current life.

The author of the Holy Scripture addressed these words to the persecuted Christians of the first centuries, but also consoled and showed the way for Christians oppressed by the totalitarian anti-Christian dictatorships of the XX century. Putting it in today's language, this text urged us to realize that sharing information about the on-going persecutions and challenges of the faith with people of good will from all over the world was a weapon and support for those persecuted and the defenders of the faith.

From this understanding the idea for the underground publishing of the *Lietuvos Katalik Bažny ios Kronika* arose in 1972.

The *Kronika* wrote about the difficulties experienced by the believers not only in Lithuania but also in other Soviet republics, such as Ukraine, Moldavia, Byelorussia, Kazakhstan, Siberia... Christian brothers and sisters of different nations shared their difficult experiences in defending the faith in the pages of the *Kronika*. They shared them not only with the persecuted but also with the people of the free world. I think that this sharing was useful and beneficial for all. It was not only such in the past, but can also be useful today. In presenting the longer Lithuanian language version of this book to the public, Archbishop of Kaunas Sigitas Tamkevi ius wrote: "I would really like that this book would not only tell the reader about the not so distant past, but also awaken responsibility for today's and tomorrow's Church." I would also like to wish the same to all who will turn the pages of this book. Let the experience of the believers from the small little-known country -

Lithuania - help you not only to understand the origin and current mental features of Lithuanians who are knocking on the doors of the European Union but also let it be a support defending the faith and Christian virtues as are the difficulties endured in the times of persecutions in other ages. I believe that today they are necessary and irreplaceable everywhere.

Bishop Jonas Boruta SJ
Secretary-General of the Conference
of Bishops of Lithuania

16 December 2001, Vilnius

PART I

THE ORIGIN AND AIMS OF THE *LIETUVOS KATALIK BAŽNYIOS KRONIKA*

(The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania)

1. SITUATION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LITHUANIA IN SOVIET TIMES

After the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact by the USSR and Germany on 23 August 1939, Lithuania was assigned to the Soviet sphere of influence and was occupied on 15 June 1940. The USSR, however, did not want to have an official occupational status, and, thus, organized the farce of elections to the Liaudies Seimas (People's parliament) on 14-15 July 1940. During its first session on 21 July 'the elected' Seimas declared Soviet rule in Lithuania and decided to ask for Lithuania's admission into the Soviet Union. On 3 August the delegation of the Seimas brought 'the sun of Stalin' to Lithuania from the session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in Moscow. After registering officially "the voluntary entry of Lithuania into the USSR" on the basis of a juridical farce, the occupants could begin fulfilling more openly and boldly their political, economic, and social goals - to sovietize all spheres of Lithuania's life as quickly as possible according to the USSR model.

The restrictions of the rights and activities of the Church began immediately after the occupation: the decree on separating the Church from state and school was promulgated already on 25 June 1940. Religious classes in schools were abolished; chaplains were expelled from the army, schools, and prisons; the faculty of the Theology-philosophy Department of the University of Vytautas the Great in Kaunas was abolished; all Catholic institutions of teaching and care were closed; religious press was forbidden; mandatory civil registration of marriages was established. On 5 August all the land belonging to the Church was nationalized and at the end of October also all the buildings. The Concordat with the Holy See was broken off.¹

Although the leaders of Lithuania's Catholic Church tried to find a *modus vivendi* in the new occupational conditions, the ever growing restrictions on the activities of the Church and its protests against them made it clear that it would be impossible to reconcile the Communist

¹ Arnas Streikus, "Lietuvos Katalik Bažnyčia 1940-1990," [The Catholic Church in Lithuania 1940-1990], LKMA metraštis [LKMA Chronicle], XII, pp. 39, 40.

authorities and the Church. The Communist authorities were forced to fight against Lithuania's Catholic Church not only for ideological but also for political reasons: they viewed the Church as the main ideological force and leader of the Lithuanian nation not to yield to the occupation and annexation.

In order to break the influence of the Church on the population, the repressive authorities, as was usual in the Soviet Union, began working. Already on 2 October 1940 Secretary of the NKVD* of the LSSR Petr Gladkov ordered all the chairmen of district departments to enter all priests into the strategic register, i.e. to begin observation cases against them.

During the first occupation (in 1940-1941) the Soviet authorities did not hurry to repress many priests. However, during the year until the beginning of the war between Germany and the USSR in Lithuania (including the Lithuanian part of Vilnius diocese) 39 priests were arrested and imprisoned, and 21 priests tortured to death or killed when the Soviet army was retreating from Lithuania.²

With Germany's defeat in the war and the return of the Soviet army in 1944 to Lithuania, many inhabitants of Lithuania repatriated to Poland, Germany, and other Western countries because of the threatening terror, war conditions, or forced by the German army. Until 1958 their number was calculated to be 490 thousand.³ Among them were three bishops - Kaunas Archbishop Metropolitan Juozapas Skvireckas, his assistant Bishop Vincentas Brizgys, and the assistant Bishop of Vilkaiviškis Vincentas Padolskis - who went to the West and Archbishop Romuald Jalbrzykowski who was deported to Poland by the Soviets (in 1945). About 300 priests withdrew to the West. There were 1,579 priests** in Lithuania in 1940 and 1,232 in 1945. So during the first five years of occupation and war Lithuania lost 347 priests, i.e. around 22 percent. Until the middle of 1947 (until the arrest of Archbishop Meislovas Reinys) 110 priests repatriated to Poland from the Vilnius archdiocese. Thus even without counting any repressions until 1948 about 460 (29 percent) priests who had worked in 1940 had been lost.⁴

Although it had lost a great part of the more initiative and active priests, at the beginning of the second Soviet occupation the Catholic

* NKVD (Narodnyi komisariat vnutrennich del) - National Commissariat of Internal Affairs.

² Vytautas S. Vardys, ed. *Krikščionybė Lietuvoje* [Christianity in Lithuania], Chicago, 1997, p. 375.

³ Arvydas Anušauskas, *Lietuvių tautos sovietinis naikinimas 1940-1958 m.* [The Soviet Annihilation of the Lithuanian Nation in 1940-1958], Vilnius, 1996, p. 404.

** According to church Elenchus there were 1,339 priests in the provinces of the Lithuanian Church in 1940 and 173 priests in the Lithuanian part of the Vilnius diocese (1939). So there must have been no less than 1,512 priests in 1940. There may have been even 1,579 priests.

Church did not lack bishops and priests: except for the Kaunas archdiocese, the other 5 dioceses had their own bishops (the Vilnius and Telšiai dioceses even had 2 bishops each) and as mentioned earlier there were 1,232 priests at the beginning of 1945.^{4 5}

After the return of the Soviet army the immediate tasks of the occupational authorities remained the same as they had been in the years of the first occupation (in 1940-1941): to sovietize all spheres of life and to strengthen its rule. However, at that time the war was still continuing in Germany and this took its toll: the occupational authorities declared a mobilization. The men of Lithuania did not obey the unlawful demands of the occupants: they began to hide and withdrew to the forests. The Soviet authorities began very cruel repressions: the NKVD army not only 'cleaned' the forests and caught those hiding, but often shot them even if they were unarmed. This cruelty of the occupants convinced many men to arm and to unite into groups. While the war was still continuing, at the end of 1944 partisan groups functioned in almost all the districts of Lithuania and in the spring of 1945 there were about 30 thousand partisans in the forests.⁶

The Catholic Church in Lithuania could not stay completely aloof from this fight which was marked with the customary brutality and inhumanity of Communist regimes: even the bodies of killed partisans were mutilated in the streets of small towns and later the bodies were thrown into rubbish-heaps, gravel pits or drowned in wells or toilets. During the first post-war decade more than 20 thousand partisans (both men and women) were killed in this unequal fight in Lithuania, 40 thousand people were imprisoned in gulags*, 132 thousand inhabitants were exiled to Siberia and other regions of inclement climate in the Soviet Union. Lithuania lost 1.06 million inhabitants, i.e. more than one third of its population, because of the war, the withdrawal from Lithuania, the terror executed by the occupants, and other reasons in 1941-1958.⁷

In order to implement the policy of the Soviet authorities toward religions in the Soviet Union, while the war was still continuing (in 1943-1944) the Council of Religious Affairs (hence - RKRT)** at the

⁴ The calculation was made on the basis of Lietuvos centrinis valstybės archyvas [Central State Archive of Lithuania] (LCVA). F.R-181, Case of doc. 3, f. 65, sheets 1-50; F. 22, sh. 53-70 and Lietuvos ypatingasis archyvas [Special Archive of Lithuania] (LYA). The documents of criminal case No. P-14999-LI, sh. 67-70.

⁵ LCVA. F.R-181, C. d. 3, f. 22, sh. 53-70.

⁶ Nijolė Gaškaitė, *Pasipriešinimo istorija 1944-1953 metai*, [History of Resistance. The years 1944-1953], Vilnius 1997, pp. 36-38.

* Gulag (Glavnoe upravlenie lagerei) - The head department of camps. It was a section of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR which was in charge of prisons, camps, and places of exile.

⁷ Anušauskas, pp. 403, 404.

** Later it was named the Council for Religious Affairs (RRT)

Council of People's Commissars of the USSR was established. Although its official purpose was to monitor and regulate the relations between all religious institutions existing in the USSR and the state as well as to ensure that the laws concerning the cults were observed, this council and its representatives in the republics were actually the coordinators of the struggle against confessional institutions (even sometimes using them) as well as the creators of the methods and the executors of the measures used in this struggle. The main repressive structure of the USSR - the KGB* - was as active as the council in this (they collaborated tightly although sometimes as rivals). The strategist of anti-religious policy and the approver of all more or less important methods and measures was the Communist Party, i.e. the Central Committees of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and of its republics.

During the whole period of the Soviet occupation (1940-1990) the Lithuanian Communist Party had two goals regarding the Church: 1) to destroy it, 2) while it existed to use it when it was deemed useful for the internal and foreign policy of the USSR. The institution of the representative of RKRT was officially established in Lithuania on 22 December 1944. During the time of occupation, this institution collaborated tightly with the KGB (NKGB, MGB) in fighting against the Church.

Teaching of religion. Immediately after Soviet power was re-established in 1944, chaplains were expelled from the schools again. In order to avoid the great dissatisfaction of the believers it was permitted to teach pupils religion in churches, but this was forbidden after 1946. It was only allowed to catechize children (to prepare them for the sacraments of Confession and First Communion) during the summer school vacation. However, from 1947 it was forbidden to catechize children. Moscow (RKRT Chairman Igor Polianskii) viewed this as a too extreme measure and decided "not to take strict measures for a while and to leave the present practice regarding the catechization of children."⁸

However, the republic authorities (LKP(b) CK**, the Council of Ministers, and the MGB) restored the ban in 1948 and left the right to catechize children only to their parents: a priest could only individually check the knowledge of a child.

Press. Just as during the first occupation, after Soviet power returned, the publication of any religious literature was forbidden, and the

* KGB (Komitet gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti) - The Committee for State Security. Until 1946 this institution was called NKGB - People's Commissariat for State Security, in 1946-1953 the MGB - The Ministry for State Security, and since 1954 - KGB.

⁸ LCVA. F.R-181, C. d. 3, f. 10, sh. 40.

** LKP(b) CK - The Central Committee of Lithuanian Communist (Bolshevik) Party.

Catholic printing houses were taken away. Religious literature (deemed to be nationalist and fascist) was removed not only from public libraries but also from the libraries of the seminaries and churches and destroyed. (A part was transferred to the special funds of state libraries). A few years after the end of the war the believers lacked elementary books, such as catechisms, prayer-books, and the priests lacked liturgical books.

Religious organizations. The destruction of religious organizations was carried out with particular zeal. Before the war several Catholic youth organizations were active in Lithuania: Ateitininkai for school-children and students, Pavasarininkai for youth from the countryside, and Angelai iai (Angelo sargo) for children. There were many organizations for prayer, charity, and cultural activity, such as The Live Rosary, Tretininkai, Vincent de Paul Society, St. Zita Society, the Catholic Activity Center. All Catholic organizations were forbidden and liquidated by the Soviet authorities.

Monasteries. In 1939 there were 42 monasteries and cloisters with more than 1,500 monks and nuns in Lithuania (including the Vilnius region).⁹ On 3 January 1947 the representative of the RKRT suggested to the LKP(b) CK and the Council of Ministers that the Jesuit, Marian Fathers, Franciscan, Salesian monasteries be liquidated and their closing began the same year. In 1947-1948 all the monasteries were closed. In order to bar monks who were priests from priestly activity all the churches belonging to monasteries were closed, and in the 1948/1949 school year all the teachers and students belonging to the monastery orders were expelled from the Kaunas theological seminary. In order to get an appointment as an official diocesan priest, monk-priests had to write applications to the administrators of the dioceses. The authorities hypocritically explained this forced step as their voluntary resignation from the monasteries. Allegedly, they no longer desired to remain monks, after the monastic orders lost their land and wealth. The representative of the RKRT called this destruction of the monastic orders as the 'natural self-elimination of the monasteries'.

Theological seminaries. From the very first days of the occupation special attention was directed to the theological seminaries. In 1940 there were four theological seminaries in Lithuania: in Vilnius, Kaunas, Telsiai, and Vilkaviškis. By decision No. 53 of the Council of People's Commissars of the LSSR, dated 9 February 1945, only the Kaunas Theological Seminary remained open. There were 318 theological students in the seminary in Kaunas during the school year of 1945/1946.¹⁰ The buildings of the seminary were occupied by soldiers, and the theological

⁹ LCVA. F.R-181, C. d. 3, f. 35, sh. 86, 87; Regina Laukaitytė, *Lietuvos vienuolijos: XX a. istorijos bruožai* [Monasteries of Lithuania: Features of Their History in the XXth Century], Vilnius, 1997, p. 89.

¹⁰ *ibid.* F. 9, sh. 27-35.

students were forced to look for shelter in the still functioning monasteries of the Jesuits and Marian Fathers, or in the city.

The church leaders repeatedly requested that the authorities return the buildings, but the latter 'found' another solution: they reduced to 150 the number of students allowed to study in the seminary in the 1946/1947 school year, expelling the rest. In 1949 the leader of Lithuanian Communist Party - LKP(b) CK First Secretary Antanas Snie kus suggested closing the last seminary, but it was decided to cut the number of students in half to 75. The last reduction - down to 30 students - was made in 1961. After that time only 5-6 students were admitted to the first course each year.

In addition to setting limits on the number of students allowed to study in the seminary, the authorities also rudely interfered in the selection of the students as well as of the leaders and teachers of the seminary. In the post-war years (1945-1953) the rector of the seminary, several teachers, and more than ten students were arrested and sentenced, some of them exiled to Siberia. The candidates who were not approved by the representative of the RKRT (in fact by the KGB) could not enter the seminary. The KGB tried to recruit the students (and teachers) by blackmailing them: the KGB made them collaborate, broke their conscience, and interfered with their spiritual education. If in the post-war years such students comprised only 1-3 percent of all the students, then at the beginning of the 1980s they comprised about 20 percent. However, according to the testimony given by the KGB officers, only half of the recruited students collaborated willingly while the others gave no reply or made various excuses, and after they graduated from the seminary some firmly refused to collaborate. This induced the leaders of the KGB of the LSSR to issue in 1988 order No. 6s which obligated the chairmen of all its departments to send "screened agents selected from the non-believing and patriotically disposed youth" to study at the theological seminary. The meddling of the representative of the RKRT and the KGB into the selection of students (some of the young men even tried to enter the seminary 7-10 times) led to the establishment of an underground theological seminary in Lithuania in 1971 in which some of the rejected students and those who had no chance of getting through this 'sieve' could prepare for priesthood. This seminary prepared more than 30 priests for Lithuania (and also for Belarus and Ukraine). Two of them were later ordained bishops: Apostolic Administrator of Kazakhstan and Central Asia John Paul Lenga and Telšiai Bishop Jonas Boruta.¹¹

¹¹ Academician Bishop Jonas Boruta, Algimantas Katilius, "Pogrindin kunig seminarija." [The Underground Theological Seminary], LKMA metraštis [LKMA Chronicle], XII, pp. 217-219.

Closure of Churches. Reducing the number of churches was an important part of the authorities' plans to destroy the Church physically. In the beginning of 1940, there were 732 Catholic churches in Lithuania, and 711 were left in 1945. The pretext to close the churches and to leave priests 'unemployed' was provided by the special top-secret instruction No. 75 received from the RKRT under the LKT* of the USSR (in Moscow) in February 1945. It required in six months the establishment of executive committees ('dvadtsatka' in Russian - the twenties) in all religious communities, which were to manage all the activities of the community (parish) and make the priest only its "hired servant of the cult," and the registration of these communities and priests.¹² This demand, in essence, contradicted the canons of the Church.

The RKRT (in Moscow) made plans to join the Catholic Church in Lithuania to the Russian Orthodox Church, but fearing the mass opposition of the believers and the possible intensification of the partisan fight, both the representative of the RKRT in Lithuania and even the leader of the Lithuanian Communist Party Snie kus opposed this idea. The registration of churches began in 1948. The registration was a very good opportunity to close churches and to get rid of undesirable ('disloyal') priests.

First, the churches and chapels of liquidated monasteries were closed. In 1948 in Vilnius only 10 churches were left whereas 30 were closed. Kaunas was left with 12 churches.¹³ The representative of the RKRT at one time even considered leaving only one church in each district.¹⁴ The closing of churches was carried out until 1966. In 1949 the Vilnius cathedral was closed because 'the believers did not attend it'.

The construction of new churches was not allowed. During the whole period only two new churches were built (in Klaip da and in Šven ion liai), and the former was taken away from the believers even before it was opened. If there were more than 870 churches and chapels in Lithuania (including the Vilnius diocese) in 1940¹⁵ then in 1951 only 670 were open.¹⁶ Until 1966 40 more churches were closed and only 630 functioning churches remained.¹⁷ Subsequently, churches were no longer closed. Thus, during the whole period of occupation (1940-1990)

* LKT - The Council of People's Commissars (later renamed the Council of Ministers).

¹² LCVA. F.K-181, C. d. 3, f. 4, sh. 4.

¹³ *ibid.* F. 13, sh. 29; F. 15, sh. 52.

¹⁴ *ibid.* F. 13, sh. 80.

¹⁵ Calculations made from *Elenchus omnium ecclesiarum et universi cleri provinciae ecclesiasticae Lituanae pro anno Domini 1940* and *Catalogus ecclesiarum et cleri archidioecesis Vilnensis pro anno Domini 1939*. From the personal archive of Rev. Vaclovas Aliulis MIC.

¹⁶ LCVA. F.R-181, C. d. 3, f. 25, sh. 133-135.

¹⁷ *ibid.* F. 116, sh. 1-15.

240 churches and chapels were closed, i.e. 27.6 percent. The closed churches were burglarized and devastated (most of the time turned into warehouses).

The Annihilation of the Living Church. As mentioned earlier, the Soviet authorities considered totally abolishing the Catholic Church in Lithuania by joining it to the Russian Orthodox Church. Another suggestion was to separate it from the Universal (Catholic) Church. For this reason, as in many other Communist countries, they tried more than once to separate the Church in Lithuania from the Vatican in 1945-1951 and to establish a so-called national church. This was to be carried out by priests, ensnared by the MGB, who were to organize first a statement of the priests, and later a congress which would declare its separation. Due to the position of the absolute majority of the priests of the Catholic Church in Lithuania the effort to establish a national church failed.¹⁸

After the death of Stalin (in 1953), all efforts turned not to the juridical, but to the actual separation of the Church from the Vatican by infiltrating deeper into the Church's internal life and rule. From the very beginning of the second occupation the Soviet authorities undertook active measures to force the bishops to obey them. The Soviet authorities (usually the MGB) with deceit and violence tried to make them collaborate: to make them MGB agents and "to reorient Lithuania's Catholic clergy into positions loyal to the Soviet authorities".

The efforts of the KGB to put their people into the posts of the administrators of the dioceses continued during the whole period of occupation. Only a priest who was acceptable to the representative of the RKRT and the KGB could be appointed as the administrator of the diocese. The legal administrators of the dioceses - Bishops Teofilis Matulionis and Pranciškus Ramanauskas both of whom had returned from prison and Bishops Julijonas Steponavius and Vincentas Sladkevius who had not made concessions to the authorities - were not allowed to rule the diocese to which they had been appointed and were even exiled from them.

In order to lessen the influence of the Church on society the authorities devoted special attention to splitting and provoking conflicts between the priests, especially the hierarchs. The representative of the RKRT and the KGB were involved in this work. The unity of the hierarchs was especially feared. After returning from exile, Bishops Matulionis and Ramanauskas tried to unite the hierarchs. Thus, plans were again made for their arrest or exile from Lithuania.

The words of the representative of the RKRT (1957-1973) Justas Rugienis eloquently describe the policy of the Soviet authorities in this

¹⁸ *ibid.* F. 17, sh. 23, 24; F. 18, sh. 27, 28; F. 19, sh. 6; F. 21, sh. 16, 139-144. LYA. F. K-I, C. d. 14, f. 73, sh. 1-16; F 81, sh. 163, 164.

sphere: "In our everyday work with the clergy we have to continue splitting and creating conflicts among the servants of the cult. We have to try to appoint priests loyal to our order to the leading posts in the dioceses, such as administrators, chancellors, deans, or to give them the best parishes. And on the other hand, we must send reactionary priests who break Soviet laws to distant and small parishes through the hands of the administrators of the dioceses (underlined by the author)".¹⁹

Evangelical Activity. In order to lessen the influence of the Church on society the authorities directed special attention to restricting its evangelical activity. The ban on teaching religion to children and youth has already been mentioned. In 1947 it was forbidden to administer the sacraments to the sick in a hospital without the permission of its head physician. In 1949 it was officially forbidden to organize meetings of priests and capitulas of dioceses without the permission of the representative of the RKRT. Among the prohibited activities were: processions in the churchyard; the visiting of parishioners; inviting other priests to Church festivals and celebrations without the permission of the local authorities; the organization of choirs and their rehearsals at the church. It was forbidden for boys less than 16 years old to serve as altar boys during Masses and for girls to strew flowers and to participate in processions; to organize pilgrimages to places of worship, such as the Hill of Crosses, Šiluva, Žemai i Kalvarija, etc. Priests were forbidden to spend time with youth and especially to organize events for them.²⁰ The authorities wanted to isolate the priests from society as much as possible and to make them only the servants of the cult.

Repressions. In fighting against the Church the Soviet authorities used their usual measure - repressions, especially in the post-war years until the death of Stalin.

From the very first days of the second occupation strategic register (observation) cases were renewed or begun against all the bishops and priests: all priests were considered to be potential enemies. After selecting a priest, they, first, tried to recruit him as an agent and if this did not work he was often arrested. They detained Archbishop Meislovas Reinsys for two days in the NKGB prison (Gedimino pr. 40, Vilnius) already in September 1944 and tried to recruit him. In December 1945 Telšiai Bishop Vincentas Borisevičius was kept in NKGB cellars for one week and they also tried to recruit him. Bishop Kazimieras Paltarokas also did not escape recruiting attempts. (It seems that they did not try to recruit only Vilkaviškis Bishop Antanas Karosas who had recently celebrated his 90th birthday and Kaišiadoriai Bishop Teofilis Matulionis who had twice experienced Soviet prisons and gulags).¹⁹

¹⁹ LCVA. F.R-525, C. d. 1, f. 45, sh. 26.

²⁰ LCVA. F.R-181, C. d. 3, f. 14, sh. 35-38.

The first of the hierarchs of Lithuania's Catholic Church to be arrested was Bishop Borisevičius - on 5 February 1946. He was sentenced to death the same year and on the 18 November he was executed in Vilnius (together with Rev. Pranas Gustaitis). His real 'fault' was in refusing to collaborate with the NKGB. On 18 December 1946 Bishops Teofilis Matulionis and Pranciškus Ramanauskas were arrested and the following year they were sentenced to seven and ten years in prison, respectively. On 12 June 1947 Archbishop Meišlovas Reinys was arrested and sentenced to 8 years imprisonment. (He died in the famous Vladimir prison in Russia in 1953). The only bishop who remained in Lithuania was Bishop Kazimieras Paltarokas. (Bishop Karosas died in 1947)

The most intensive years of repressions were the time of Stalin's rule. In the period 1944-1953 362 priests were repressed. The repressions against priests were carried out in this way throughout the years:²¹

Table 1

Year	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952
Number of priests arrested	5	58	57	41	22	91	60	17	6

Because of the repressions Lithuania lost 29 percent of the priests it had in 1945. Only 672 open churches and 731 priests remained in Lithuania in 1953.²² Thus, during the mentioned period (1945-1953) because of repressions, repatriation, and deaths Lithuania lost 500 priests, i.e. 40 percent of the priests in 1945. The loss of the Catholic Church in Lithuania becomes even more eloquent if one counts from the beginning of the occupation in 1940: during the period 1940-1953 Lithuania lost 848 priests (only 731 out of 1,579 remained), i.e. more than half (54 percent). In comparison to the loss of the population (more than one third of the population) the loss of the Church was even greater.

After the death of Stalin (1953) the regime of the Soviet Union grew milder: the prisoners who had remained alive began returning from the gulags and exile. By 1960, 247 priests and two bishops returned.²³ There were 924 priests in Lithuania in 1958.²⁴ According to a report of the chairman of the RKRT, the priests who returned from the gulags comprised 30 percent of the priests in Lithuania and Latvia, 45 percent in Belarus, and even 80 percent in Ukraine.²⁵

²¹ Streikus, p. 50.

²² LCVA. F.R-181, C. d. 3, f. 36, sh. 60-86.

²³ *ibid.* F. 58, sh. 27, 28.

²⁴ *ibid.* F. 50, sh. 35.

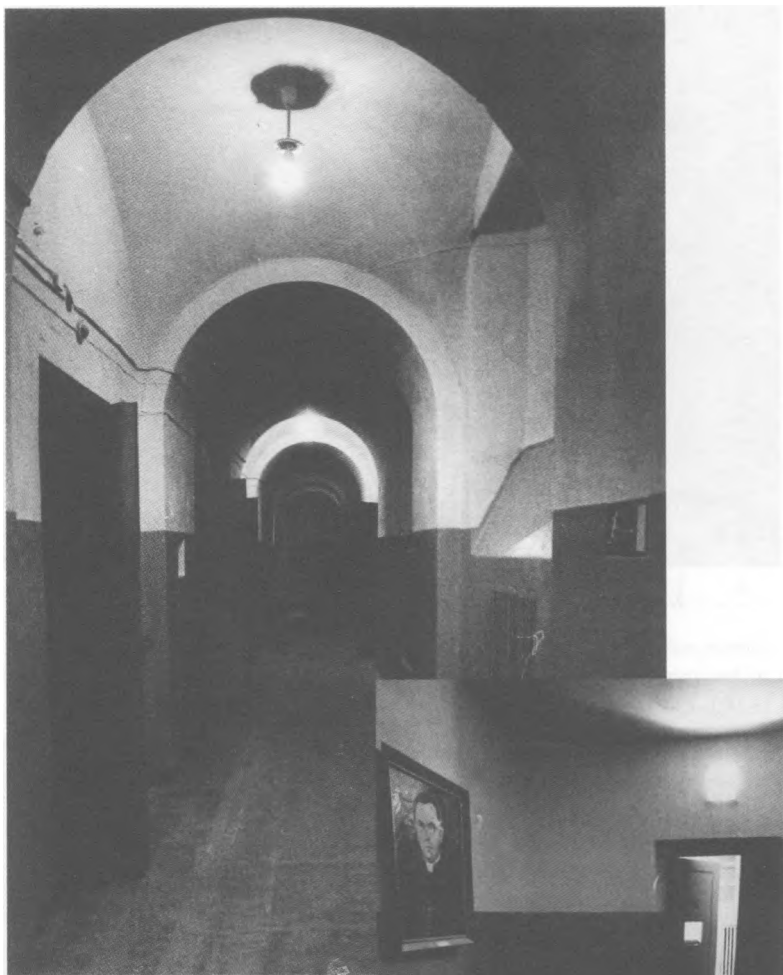
²⁵ *ibid.* F. 56, sh. 103.



Meeting of partisan leaders of the Dainava district. 1948.



Mutilated bodies of killed partisans
in the yard of the Lazdijai MGB in 1951.



The NKGB (MGB, KGB)
prison in Vilnius in which
all the arrested bishops and
contributors of the Kronika were
imprisoned.

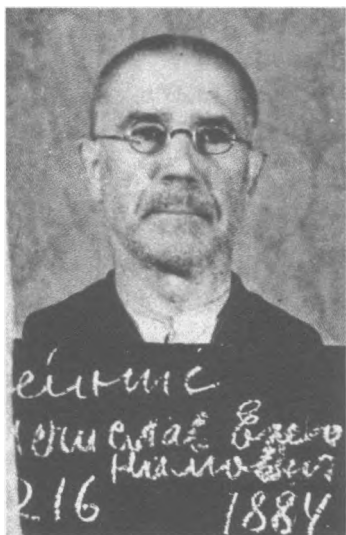


Living zone of the Vorkuta gulag

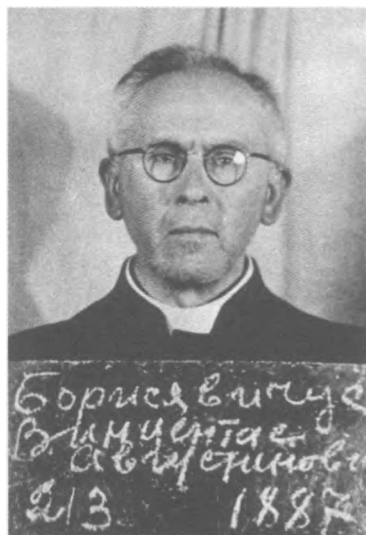


Funeral of a Lithuanian exile in the Irkutsk region. 1953.

Lithuanian Catholic Bishops repressed in 1946-1947



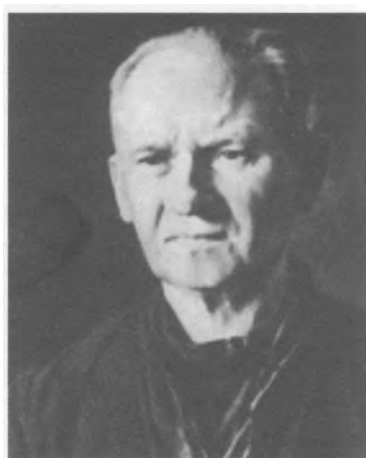
Archbishop Meislovas Reinyšius
(Photo from KGB archive)



Bishop Vincentas Borisevičius
(Photo from KGB archive)



Bishop Teofilis Matulionis
(Photo from the camp)



Bishop Pranciškus Ramanauskas
(Photo from the camp)

(The dynamics of churches, priests and theological students is illustrated in Table 2)

Table 2

Lithuanian Catholic Churches, Priests* and Theological Students in 1940-1988

Year	Churches	Priests	Students	Notes
1940	732	1579	Appr. 450	Appr. 1500 monks and nuns
1945	711	1232	318	
1948	711	1012		
1951	670	750	63	129 parishes had no priest
1953	672	734	72	
1955	663	772		The priests began returning from gulags
1957	663	929	76	
1960	662	922	56	Number of students reduced to 60 in 1959
1963	638	884	31	Number of students reduced to 30 in 1961
1966	630	877	24	
1970	630	815		Number of students increased to 50 in 1969
1975	630	756		61 parishes had no priest
1980	630	704	81	105 parishes had no priest
1986	630	664	131	This year number of priests was smallest
1988	632	678	142	160 parishes had no priest

* Only the officially appointed priests are included; the priests who graduated from the underground seminary and those deprived of the certificate of priest registration were not included in the documents of the representative of the RKRT. The table is made according to the documents from LCVA, F.R-181, C. d. 3, f. 22, 27, 29, 36, 47, 58, 66, 70, 79, 99, 105, 123, 136 and C. d. 1, f. 86, 124.

After the thaw policies (1953-1956) of Nikita Khrushchev ended, the fight against 'nationalism' as well as religion became more severe. In 1957-1958 a new wave of arresting priests arose: 13 priests were arrested on charges of anti-Soviet propaganda, incitement of nationalism, or keeping anti-Soviet literature. For the most part they were the creative and active priests who had returned from the gulags.

The repressions against the priests in the 1980s were connected with the underground press and the fight for the rights and freedoms of believers.

In addition to the priests, hundreds of monks and nuns as well as laymen were repressed during the Soviet era for protecting the rights of the believers, participating in religious activities, publishing religious literature, and fostering the religious upbringing of children and youths. A particularly large number of schoolchildren and students was sentenced for this in the post-war years.

Soviet repressive institutions used methods of unlawful violence against people who were not acceptable to them. Using such measures Rev. Juozas

Zdebskis was chemically burned and barely escaped death on 3 October 1980.²⁶ However, on 5 February 1986 he died in a car accident which, many believe, was organized by the KGB. It is believed that on 2-3 February 1947 the MGB fatally poisoned administrator (vicar capitular) of the Kaunas Archdiocese prelate Stanislovas Jok bauskis. Apparently, he was an obstacle in carrying out the MGB strategic plan to concentrate the management of the whole Catholic Church in Lithuania in the hands of one acceptable person - agent 'Neris'.²⁷ (This plan did not succeed: the Vatican hindered it by not consecrating him as a bishop and Bishop Matulionis returned after being released from prison). It is likely that in December 1948 the MGB liquidated (by shooting him in Laisv s al ja in Kaunas) its own agent 'Kardas' - the Franciscan priest Stasys Martušis²⁸ - who had become dangerous for them and who, among other tasks, was to help separate Lithuania's Catholic Church from the Pope. It can be suspected from the summaries of recordings by the KGB and the acts of KGB officers that on 20 August 1962 they fatally poisoned Bishop Matulionis. It is believed that they murdered the priests Leonas Šapoka (in 1980) and Leonas Mažeika (in 1981) for trying to escape from the KGB web. Some people claim that the well-known fighter for the rights of the believers Rev. Bronius Laurinavi ius was pushed under a truck and killed in Vilnius in 1981.

Demoralization. The demoralization of priests was used as often as repressions. The KGB did not have special goals in demoralizing priests; its aim was to make them subordinate or to recruit them. However, recruitment and break down led the priests not to listen to their conscience, disregard it and finally to the decay of the priestly spirit, which in turn led to hard drinking, debauchery, breaking of celibacy, etc.

As mentioned above, the KGB directed their main attention to the hierarchs and other priests in responsible position. No priest, however, totally escaped the attention of the KGB. The number of priests recruited as agents varied in different periods. This depended not only on the resistance of the priests against recruitment, but also on the needs of the KGB. For example, 77 priests were working in Kaunas in August 1945 and in August 1946 there were 6 priests-agents.²⁹ There were 60 priests and bishops working in the city and district of Kaunas in 1985. Among them at the end of 1989 (before the regaining of independence) there were 18 priests-agents.³⁰

²⁶ Lietuvos ypatingasis archyvas (LYA) [The special archive of Lithuania] - formerly the Archive of the KGB of the LSSR. F.K-1, C. d. 45, f. 504, sh. 102.

²⁷ *ibid.* C. d. 14, f. 59, sh. 17-19 (as well as torn off sheets 15, 16).

²⁸ *ibid.* F. 73, sh. 140-152; f. 81, sh. 163, 164.

²⁹ *ibid.* F. 32, sh. 50; F. 56, sh. 14-31.

³⁰ *ibid.* F. 205, sh. 19-21.

The position of the KGB was much worse in the provinces. Even in the 1980s, the KGB stated that they did not have a single priest-agent in some districts. In 1956 out of 899 priests working at that time there were only 60 priests-agents, or 6.7 percent.³¹ It is likely that this percentage increased during the following decades, but taking into account that there was a KGB officer in every district caring for the clergy and that the KGB tried to recruit every priest (many of them several times) it can be stated that the priests of Lithuania passed this test quite well.

The Attempts of the NKGB (MGB, KGB) to Use the Church. While the Church was alive, while it had some influence on the population, the Soviet authorities wanted to use it to help achieve their political goals. As mentioned earlier, one of the main tasks of the Soviet authorities in Lithuania was to destroy the armed resistance - the partisans. In order to achieve this goal the authorities had also intended to use the institution having the strongest influence in society, the Catholic Church.

Already at the end of 1944 the NKGB began to take measures to force the hierarchs to condemn the partisan fight.

On 15 February 1945, Commissar of the NKVD of the LSSR Juozas Bartaši nas issued a proclamation to the partisans in which he promised freedom and amnesty to those who surrendered. The authorities also wanted the clergy to support this proclamation, and thus in 1945 the pressure on the hierarchs intensified. The bishops were invited to visit the NKGB and were forced to write appeals to the partisans.

On 5 February 1946 all the diocesan administrators were invited to meet Deputy Chairman of the LKT of the LSSR Motiejus Šumauskas. The bishops were scolded for supporting the partisan fight and it was demanded that they write a group appeal urging the end of partisan fight. Two weeks later the bishops presented such an appeal, but the authorities rejected it as being anti-Soviet. In the subsequent year and a half all the bishops (except Paltarokas) were arrested.

Nevertheless, the partisan fight continued and the Soviet authorities continued to make attempts to make the Church obey their wishes. The resolution of the Bureau of LKP(b) CK, dated 12 December 1947, states: "...to use loyal priests in every possible way so that they would speak against bandit activities and the priests who support the bandits."³²

The authorities were able to get a clearer separation of the hierarchs from the partisan fight only after the arrests of the bishops and the appointment in 1947 of canon Juozapas Stankevi ius as the administrator of the Kaunas Archdiocese. From that time the careful, but desired by the authorities, "orientation of the clergy into positions loyal to the authorities" began.

³¹ *ibid.* C. d. 3, f. 532, sh. 91.

³² LYA. The archive of the documents of the Lithuanian Communist Party (further-LYA LKP DS). F. 1771, C. d. 190, f. 5, sh. 179-187.

The MGB, the representative of the RKRT, and the institutions of the local authorities would force the priests to support the various political and economic campaigns of the authorities: 'free' elections, supplying contributions to the state, the establishment of kolkhozes, etc. The local authorities abused their position of power to a great degree, and quite a few priests who did not please them were sent to prisons and exile.

In the beginning of the 1950s the Soviet Union began on an international scale the 'fight for peace' and the 'fight against the instigators of war' (but, in fact, for weakening the positions of the West in the world and strengthening the positions of communism). It was decided to use the support of the Church to gain international favor. At first, canon Stankevičius and later Bishop Paltarokas as well as some other priests participated in these conferences. (Bishop Paltarokas was never considered loyal, but as the only remaining bishop, he was used for his authority. The Bishop understood this and, in turn, used his position for the good of the Church. In 1953 he started demanding that his successors be appointed: he demanded that the bishops imprisoned in the gulags be released, and when this failed he obtained the permission of the Vatican to consecrate two new bishops - Julijonas Steponavičius and Petras Maželis, who were consecrated in 1955).

In later decades when the authorities had 'loyal' priests as the administrators of all the dioceses, they opened for Lithuania's Catholic Church the door to the world and to the Vatican wider. However, this opening benefited the authorities more than the Church. The main task of the priests who went to the so called Berlin conferences was "to demonstrate the freedom of the Church in Lithuania" and to neutralize the hostility to the Soviet Union. The hierarchs who went to the Vatican and their companions (and the priests sent to study there) not only had to collect the information the authorities wanted, but also if they had a chance to influence Vatican policy in a direction useful for the Soviets. This task became even more important after John Paul II became Pope in 1978 and the KGB of the USSR included the KGB of the LSSR in its planned operations. On 17 March 1980 the Lithuanian KGB began the special agent observation case 'Capella'.³³ While fulfilling the tasks assigned by the PGU* of the USSR KGB in this case, the main stress was put on the priests - KGB agents - who were going to the Vatican (or to other Catholic Church organized events). Their task was to diminish anti-Soviet tendencies, to influence the Vatican to support or at least not oppose the political initiatives of the USSR. After the independence movement began in Lithuania in 1988, their task was to influence the Vatican not to support radical forces and to restrain the priests from

³³ LYA. F.K-1, C. d. 49, f. 232, 233.

* PGU (Pervoe glavnoe upravlenie) - the First Main Department, which dealt with foreign spying.

joining this movement so that "it would not harm the democratization policies carried out by Mikhail Gorbachev". The assignments, however, were not limited to only Lithuania. Through the Vatican they even tried to influence U.S. President Ronald Reagan, the fate of the war in Afghanistan, etc.

During the whole Soviet occupation the goals of the authorities concerning the Church did not change: to exterminate it, to eliminate it from life, and to make use of it whenever possible. It was granted as much freedom as was useful for the foreign and internal policies of the USSR. Thus, the clergy faithful to Catholic Church had no other choice but to resist the limitation of the rights and freedoms of members.

2. THE RESISTANCE OF THE CHURCH

In the beginning of the occupation (in 1940) the hierarchs, as was proper, were the first to begin the fight against the restrictions of Church activity.

When the Soviets occupation returned to Lithuania in 1944 the bishops of Lithuania (on the initiative of Bishop Matulionis) gathered in a secret meeting in Ukmergė on 5 September in order to discuss the most urgent problems of the Church, such as religious education, the establishment of the positions of chaplains in the small Lithuanian units of the Soviet army, the operations of the theological seminaries, etc. Learning about this meeting, the KGB broke it off the following day.

The bishops of the Catholic Church in Lithuania understood well the importance of unanimity in resisting the restrictions and the demands of the authorities which were incompatible with Church law and practice.

Seeking to weaken the resistance of the hierarchs, the authorities began the method frequently used by the NKGB - splitting and opposing - but this method was not very successful. Until 1947 they did not have a single diocesan administrator 'loyal' to them ('the loyal' were usually recruited by Soviet security). There was no alternative other than to arrest all the bishops except one, Kazimieras Paltarokas, who seemed to appear more compliant (but he was not 'loyal' and he was never considered as such - author) and to appoint capitular vicars (administrators) in place of the bishops. This was completed by the middle of 1947. However, the new administrators did not turn out to be better, thus in 1949 half of them were arrested and one was exiled from his diocese. With the direct intervention of the representative of the RKRT not fully 'loyal' but at least more loyal administrators were put in their positions.

In 1956 Bishops Matulionis and Ramanauskas returned from the gulags. Seeing the spinelessness of some of the diocesan administrators,

they tried to support Bishop Paltarokas and to unite all the administrators around him so that it would be easier to resist the pressure of the authorities. The authorities, however, resisted these attempts with the help of 'the loyal' administrators and planned to arrest them again or to exile them from Lithuania. (However, they settled for only exiling them to distant parishes in Lithuania and isolation from other administrators).

After the end of the war any meeting of the administrators, diocesan capitulas, or the deans was forbidden without the permission of the representative of the RKRT. The solidarity of the diocesan administrators improved somewhat when the colleges of administrators started functioning after the Second Vatican Council. Although the trips of the hierarchs to the Vatican were controlled very strictly and the authorities tried to get from them as much benefit as possible for the policy of the USSR, the judicial dependence of the Catholic Church on the Pope provided a powerful weapon of motivation to the hierarchs of the Church in Lithuania to resist the anti-canonical demands of the authorities and make more difficult the interference of the authorities into the internal life of the Church.

The resistance against the restrictions of Church activity and the initiatives to fight for the rights and freedoms of the believers usually came from the priests who were appointed to small parishes and to whom "it was more important to listen to God than to people" (St. Peter's words). In the documents of the KGB and the representative of the RKRT they are mentioned as 'religious fanatics', 'extremists,' or 'reactionaries'. Their leaders in the 1960-80s were Bishops Julijonas Steponavius and (promoted to cardinal in 1988) Vincentas Sladkevicius both of whom were in exile. When the movement of national liberation had progressed, Cardinal Sladkevicius declared at a symposium of priests in Kaunas on 3 August 1988 an actual ultimatum to the Soviet authorities: the Church refuses to obey limitations and it will act independently in the future.¹ This was one and a half years before the re-establishment of independence.

The Phases, Methods, and Measures of Resistance. There was opposition to the restrictions of Church activity during the whole period of occupation. As mentioned earlier, the hierarchs led this resistance in the first post-war years. After losing the Church's most persistent leaders and priests through the repressions, the Church in the 1950s did not try so much to resist but to maintain the positions it had. The priests and bishops who survived and returned from prisons and exile in the middle of the decade brought back some revival and courage as did the liberation hopes which became stronger after the death of Stalin not only in the Baltic states but also in the Communist controlled countries of Central Europe. Clearer instances of resistance appeared in the 1960s. A new

¹ LCVA. F.R-181, C. d. 3, f. 135, sh. 5.

generation of priests educated in the post-war years matured. They did not have any personal experience with repressions and thus were more courageous. They quickly found a common language with the courageous priests with unbroken spirit who had returned from the gulags. Around 1966 the more diligent priests began to hold secret meetings which discussed the situation of the Church and guidelines for activity. It was obvious that the door to the Vatican was opened slightly for the hierarchs and the Vatican approval of their rule served more the interests of the authorities than the Church. During one of these meetings the idea to write collective declarations of priests to the hierarchs and the authorities demanding freedom of action for the Church and defending the rights of the believers was born. From 1968 hundreds of such declarations (later laymen also joined this action) were sent not only to the hierarchs of the Church and the authorities but also to international organizations. The idea to publish an underground journal, which became the voice not only of the fighting Church but also of the whole nation, was proposed in one of these meetings. It became the *Lietuvos Katalik Bažny ios Kronika* (hence *Kronika*). At the end of the 1960s the occupation authorities noted that the activity of the Catholic Church in Lithuania increased.

The public Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Rights of Believers (hence - TTGKK), established on 13 November 1978, proclaimed its aims to be to observe that the laws of the USSR concerning matters of the Church and the believers would not contradict the international agreements signed by the USSR, to explain these rights to the believers, and to protect them. The publishing of the *Kronika* and its distribution throughout the world as well as the activity of the TTGKK marked a new phase of Church resistance against the Soviet regime and gave a new impulse to the liberation movement of the Church and the whole nation.

We will briefly discuss a few areas of Church activity, whose restrictions were particularly resisted, and the forms of this resistance.

Religious Education of Youth. After the teaching of religion was removed from the schools in 1940, it was taught in churches. The teaching was organized in the following way: the teaching took place after the end of the school day in churches according to an approved schedule and according to classes. When the Soviets occupied Lithuania again in 1944, the hierarchs learned that it would be impossible to regulate this question with the authorities using civilized measures (submitting memoranda), and returned to this practice independently.

Two years later, in November 1946 the Council of Ministers of the LSSR extended the prohibition of teaching religion to children and youth to churches.

The catechization of children - their preparation for Confession and First Communion - was conducted in the same way as it had been done before the occupation: after the end of the school year priests taught the children in churches for 3-4 weeks. In 1947 the republic authorities decided that this teaching should also be forbidden. The official reports of the authorities state that collective teaching of children and youth in churches ended in 1950,² but many priests consciously ignored this and continued to teach children religion during all the occupation. Other priests sought alternate forms of teaching.

All the priests understood the importance of catechization for the survival of the Church very well and, thus, despite the constant observation, bans, and penalties of the authorities, catechization did not stop during all the occupation: the representative of the RKRT and the so-called Control commissions for observing the law of cults, which functioned in every town and district, wrote many reports about the collective teaching of children. The reports of the representative of RKRT give information about the increase in the number of children who received First Communion. For example, 21,380 children received First Communion in 1975, and 25,034 children in 1978 while the corresponding numbers for the sacrament of Confirmation were 18,690 and 24,438, respectively.³

In 1981 the representative of the RKRT in Lithuania in his report to Moscow, the LKP CK, and the Council of Ministers wrote that almost all the priests were demanding permission to catechize children. Nuns actively helped in this task. He stated that "the Catholic Church considers itself as the only defender of the national and moral traditions of youth".⁴

Organizations. Several organizations were primarily concerned with the religious education of youth before the occupation. After the occupation all of them were closed, and their leaders were watched and repressed. For the first 3-4 years of the second occupation (from 1944) the Ateitininkai organization was quite active as an underground organization in many secondary schools, Kaunas University, the theological seminary, the teacher seminaries, and other schools of higher education.

In 1949 the MGB succeeded in revealing the underground religious-patriotic organization 'Aušros Vart kolegija' (College of the Gates of Dawn) which was active in Vilnius. Most of its members were students of the Vilnius Pedagogical Institute and Vilnius University. The aim of this organization was to educate students in the spirit of the Ateitininkai to be willing to serve God and the Homeland so that after graduating from the universities they would convey this spirit to the youth in the schools.

² *ibid.* F. 35, sh. 18-29.

³ *ibid.* F. 103, sh. 33-36.

⁴ *ibid.* F. 108, sh. 276-282.

During the whole period of occupation the Pioneer and Komsomol organizations were the main tools to make the youth soviet and atheistic. In the post-war (and later) years young people were forced to join these organizations. The hierarchs and many priests spoke more openly or more cautiously against this pressure and the forced atheistic instruction of believing children. On 7 April 1945 Bishop Matulionis wrote an appeal to the Commissar of Public Education of the LSSR protesting against forcing the children of believers to join the atheistic Pioneer and Komsomol organizations.⁵

A religious-patriotic movement of youth became more active at the end of the 1960s. Its start was prompted by the worship of the Holy Sacrament supported by Jesuit Pranciškus Masilionis who in 1947 established the underground Congregation of the Sisters of the Eucharistic Jesus. A Sister of this congregation Gema Jadvyga Stanelyt with the help of diligent priests and other sisters began to unite the more diligent young people into the Friends of the Eucharist movement. This was similar to a renewal of the activity of the Ateitininkai, but in underground conditions.

The movement of the religious-patriotic intelligentsia played a role in religious education. These secret gatherings of students and the intelligentsia held conferences, debates, and meetings with former political prisoners and at times even organized retreats.

Mass Media. Religious education is impossible without the transfer of information. There could not be any talk of using radio and television to fulfill this need because they were controlled by the state and would be used only for anti-religious propaganda. Religious press had been forbidden already in 1940 and the other press was very strictly censored and monitored by the KGB. Thus, only a few years after the end of the war there arose a shortage of literature needed for the religious education of children, and also catechisms. The former pupil of the Salesian Fathers Paulius Petronis tried in 1963 to organize their underground publishing, but failed. However, from 1969 he began quite intense publication. Seeing that the underground began to supply the believers with catechisms and prayer-books, the Soviet authorities at the end of the 1950s and in the 1960s permitted Canon Juozas Stankevičius to publish a few editions of the prayer-book he had prepared. The permission of the Chairman of RKRT (from Moscow) and of the Council of Ministers of the LSSR had to be obtained for every publication of religious literature whose press runs and scope were also severely limited and the publication censored.

During the whole period of occupation the legally published religious literature was limited to prayer-books, books necessary for liturgy,

⁵ *ibid.* F. 4, sh. 20, 21.

the New Testament, the documents of the Second Vatican Council, several editions of catechisms, the almanacs-reference books, and a few leaflets. One should mention that the possibility of publishing a journal for Catholics was discussed on two occasions - in the 1950s and in the 1970s, but the hierarchs understood that the authorities would use this journal to spread Soviet propaganda and lies about the 'freedom of the Church' and refused to publish it.⁶

The authorities had two reasons for allowing the publication (or publishing themselves) religious books: to weaken the influence of the Vatican and the so called 'emigration centers' on the Catholic Church in Lithuania and to refute 'the slanders spread about the limitations and persecutions of the Church and the believers'⁷ by the 'reactionary' priests of Lithuania using the *Kronika*, the *TTGKK*, and other methods.

Philosophical and theological literature needed for religious education, the strengthening the spiritual life of the clergy (priests and underground monks), and sermons was only published underground. Paulius Petronis, Petras Plumpa, Jonas Stašaitis and others were among the most active publishers of underground religious literature. Thousands of Lithuanian Catholics participated in this work. They became the organizational and material basis for publishing the *Kronika*.

Resisting the Destruction of the Church. As mentioned earlier, repressive measures were used very often against the Church during the rule of Stalin (until 1953). Plans for the rapid destruction of the Church were dominant in the anti-church policy of that time. From the beginning of the rule of Nikita Khrushchev (1953), the plan for the rapid destruction of the Church was gradually abandoned and replaced by a long-term plan for its weakening and gradual elimination from life. As relations with the Western world grew, the anti-church policy of the USSR was forced to put more efforts into defending itself from the hostile opinion of the world and to seek even more secret and refined ways of fighting against the Church. The ways and measures of Church resistance also changed.

The Fight for Loyalty to the Universal (Catholic) Church. Moscow (Chairman of the RKRT Igor Polianskii) already on 8 May 1945 demanded the separation of Lithuania's Catholic Church from the Pope. He suggested the establishment of a so-called autocephalous Church and its union with the Orthodox Church. But even the LKP(b) CK opposed this. The problem was that the Catholics and the Orthodox believers in Lithuania (unlike in Western Ukraine or Belarus) were of different nationalities: the former were Lithuanians while the latter were Russians. Moreover, Catholics comprised 80 percent of the population, and there

⁶ *ibid.* F. 44, sh. 12, 16; F. 97, sh. 4.

⁷ *ibid.* F. 105, sh. 2-9.

were only 23,000 Orthodox believers. Furthermore, such a step would be regarded as the Russification of Lithuanians and the priests would have strongly opposed it. The LKP(b) CK suggested splitting the Catholic clergy and using 'loyal' priests to organize a national church.⁸ In 1946-1947 the chairman of the RKRT more than once told his representative in Lithuania that his primary task was to separate Lithuania's Catholic Church from the Pope.⁹

The representative of the RKRT and the MGB were involved in this issue, while the LKP(b) CK approved strategic issues. In 1946-1949 using the 'loyal' priests (MGB agents 'Šimkus', 'Kardas', 'Jurij', 'Tup nas' and others) they more than once tried to organize the separation. However, the attempts kept failing. They clearly did not manage to gather even a minimal group of priests who would dare to talk about this publicly.

After Pope Pius XII issued a decree against Communism on 13 July 1949, the representative of the RKRT Bronius Pušinis prepared the statement "We strictly condemn and voice our protest" and sent it to the chairmen of the executive committees of the districts to collect the signatures of all the priests on it.¹⁰ On the basis of this protest signed by all the priests the separation of Lithuania's Catholic Church from the Pope would have been announced. However, this attempt also failed. The representative of the RKRT complained that the 'progressive priests' (those who signed it) were attacked by the diocesan authorities. He stated "we admit that we lost in this work."¹¹

The KGB always suspected that there were some secret relations with the Holy See and tried to track them down. In 1947 such a channel was established by Rev. Pranas Ra i nas MIC through the French priest Labergue, who worked in the St. Louis Church in Moscow, but the security soon discovered this connection and arrested Ra i nas. They, however, did not succeed in tracking down the suspected channels of connections used by Bishops Paltarokas and Matulionis. In later years they suspected that the relations were kept through the clergy of Poland.

After the death of Stalin, the policy grew milder; they abandoned the idea of establishing a national church and decided to allow the leaders of the Catholic Church in Lithuania to establish very limited relations with the Vatican. The first such action was allowed in 1955 in presenting the candidates for new bishops.

The authorities always interpreted the relations of Lithuania's Catholic Church with the Vatican as an inevitable evil because the Vatican and the so-called Lithuanian 'emigration centers' (especially local priests)

⁸ ibid. F. 4, sh. 23, 24.

⁹ ibid. F. 10, sh. 4-7.

¹⁰ ibid. F. 19, sh. 4, 6.

¹¹ ibid. F. 19, sh. 13-15; F. 21, sh. 40-144.

were considered to be the inspirers and organizers of the fight for the rights of believers in Lithuania. Although this was an exaggerated evaluation (perhaps intended to reduce the value of the resistance inside the country), it was also partly true. According to KGB data there were more than 630 Lithuanian priests in the West (in 1984),¹² while only about 680 priests were left in Lithuania. Msgr. (now Cardinal) Audrys Juozas Ba kis was a secretary assistant of Public affairs in the Vatican in the 1980s. It is understandable that in spite of all the counter-measures taken by the Soviet authorities their influence on the Catholic Church in Lithuania was strong.

The strictly controlled by the authorities relations of Lithuania's Catholic Church with the Vatican and the Church of the free World began to expand in the 1960s. However, the authorities also pursued their aims all the time. Among the aims worth mentioning were: 1) to obtain the Vatican's approval that the policies of Lithuania's Catholic Church correspond to the wishes of the authorities and that the priests nominated for bishops would be acceptable to the authorities; 2) to gather information about the policy of the Vatican and influential Lithuanian priests abroad; 3) to influence the Vatican and Catholic Church in the West so that they would not support the 'reactionary' priests of Lithuania's Catholic Church and their fight for the rights of believers; 4) to spread the propaganda that the priests and the believers of Lithuania enjoyed all freedoms; 5) to influence the leaders of the Vatican so that not only the Vatican but also other countries of the Western world would pursue a foreign policy favorable for the USSR. For these aims the first priests of Lithuania were allowed to study in the Vatican in the end of the 1950s, and the priests selected by the authorities were allowed to participate in the sessions of the II Vatican Council in the 1960s (the hierarchs, invited by the Vatican but not acceptable to the authorities, were not allowed to go).

The hierarchs (or other priests) in addition to their direct aims of discussing issues concerning the internal life of the Church (it was usually coordinated with the authorities after long and boring discussions) had to perform some other of the just mentioned tasks. Thus, during the Soviet period the evaluation of the relations of the hierarchs of Lithuania's Catholic Church with the Vatican can not have one evaluation and it will remain controversial. However, generally evaluating the value of these relations, they have to be admitted as positive: the preserved loyalty of Lithuania's Catholic Church to the Holy See left in the hands of the hierarchs a powerful weapon of juridical motivation to resist the pressure of the authorities on the grounds of necessity to follow the law of the Church. A word should be said on behalf of the hierarchs terror-

¹² LYA. F.K-1, C. d. 49, f. 499, sh. 10.

ized by the authorities: even the weakest, even those hierarchs who were caught in the snare of the occupants did not destroy the Church maliciously. The deepest respect goes to the leaders of the fighting Church (the exiled Bishops Steponavius, Sladkevius, the editors of the *Kronika*, the Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Rights of Believers) who, although sometimes openly reminding the hierarchs about their responsibilities and urging them to execute them, while receiving undeserved punishments and reproaches in return, did not condemn and judge the hierarchs in public. This in part can explain why there was no division between the fighting and subservient parts of Lithuania's Catholic Church and why today there is no great conflict between the representatives of these parts which is quite visible in some other former Communist countries.

The Fight for Preserving Churches, Monasteries, and Priests. One of the measures the Soviet authorities used to try to take the management of the Church into their hands was the registration of religious societies, cult buildings, and priests.

From the very beginning the hierarchs of the Catholic Church in Lithuania severely resisted these demands of the authorities. Archbishop Reinys, Bishops Matulionis and Paltarokas were considered to be the leaders of the resistance among the hierarchs. Capitular vicars prelate Bernardas Sužiedėlis and canon Vincentas Vizgirda supported them. One of the reasons for the fierce resistance of the hierarchs, according to the representative of the RKRT, was the unwillingness of the hierarchs to lose control in appointing priests (because the approval of the representative of the RKRT would also be needed after registration).¹³

The registration of churches began only in the middle of 1948 after the arrest of almost all the leaders of the hierarchy resistance: Archbishop Reinys and Bishops Borisevius, Matulionis, Ramanauskas. The authorities undertook the most brutal measures: the officials of the Vilnius archdiocese and the Telšiai diocese were thrown out of their premises in 24 hours, churches were sealed, priests were thrown into the streets, declaring that they were not registered and were working illegally while parishioners were also threatened and blackmailed.¹⁴ In the atmosphere of such political and economic terror, threats, and repressions the authorities succeeded in breaking down the resistance and the registration of churches was begun. On 1 January 1949, 677 out of the 711 churches which functioned earlier were registered and 34 were closed.¹⁵

The new representative of the RKRT Bronius Pušinis declared joyfully to Moscow that the priests already knew that "the diocesan office only presents their candidacies for assignment (to parishes) while the

¹³ LCVA. F.R-181, C. d. 3, f. 9, sh. 53-59.

¹⁴ *ibid.* F. 13, sh. 53.

¹⁵ *ibid.* F. 17, sh. 5.

Representative appoints them” (Moscow scolded him for talking publicly about this).¹⁶

During the whole period of the Soviet occupation the authorities tried to strengthen the influence of the church committees on the work of priests in order to limit their spiritual work and leadership in the parish. The authorities, however, did not succeed in making the church committees tools of anti-church policy. As a rule, the committees either supported the pastor or did not interfere with his activity.

The registration of churches and priests was not only a measure which helped the authorities to meddle in and influence the internal life of the Church, but also provided an excellent opportunity to close churches, and not to allow unacceptable priests to work officially as priests.

The first places of worship to be closed were the churches and chapels of monasteries and cloisters, especially those which had no permanently residing priest. In May 1945 the chairman of the RKRT demanded information about the most influential monasteries: the Jesuits, Marian Fathers, Salesians, Franciscans and cloisters: the Sisters of St. Benedict, of St. Casimir, of St. Catherine, of St. Elizabeth, and the Sacred Heart of Jesus.¹⁷ The start of the registration of religious societies in 1948 gave the authorities a good chance to destroy the monasteries and cloisters. They were simply not registered, the monks and nuns were evicted from their premises and their churches closed. All monks who were priests were also not registered, the representative of the RKRT considered them as unemployed and an indication that there was an excess number of priests in Lithuania. He regarded the loss (the nationalization) of the land and the buildings of the monasteries and the transfer of monk priests to work in parishes as the reasons for the ‘self-liquidation’ of the monasteries.¹⁸

It was impossible to resist the liquidation of the monasteries (the deprivation of land, buildings, churches, and all property). The claims of the representative of RKRT about the ‘self-liquidation’ of the monasteries were, however, total lies because the monasteries did not liquidate themselves, but went underground. During the years of the occupation the Jesuits, Marian Fathers, Franciscans, and many orders of nuns not only did not simply disappear, but fostered many holy personalities and developed a deep vein of evangelization not only in Lithuania but also in vast expanses of the Soviet Union. According to KGB data in the 1980s there were 1,300-1,400 monks and nuns in Lithuania. In Kaunas alone (in 1985) there were 350 nuns and 160 youths in their promoted Friends of the Eucharist. In that year one KGB officer fol-

¹⁶ *ibid.* F. 14, sh. 35-38, 98-100.

¹⁷ *ibid.* F. 4, sh. 19.

¹⁸ *ibid.* F. 19, sh. 20-24.

lowed the activities of the 60 priests and the 117 seminarians in Kaunas, but three KGB officers watched the nuns and Friends of the Eucharist.¹⁹

'Priests and the Theological Seminary. As was mentioned earlier, the authorities had two aims concerning the priests: to reduce their number (by repressing them, not allowing them to work, and not allowing new ones to be prepared) and to eliminate them from active life (to limit their activities, to demoralize and isolate them from society).

During the campaigns for closing churches (especially in 1948-1949) the representative of the RKRT at one time proposed to leave only one priest in every church and on another occasion to allow only one church in a district. However, these outlandish proposals receive no support in Moscow (they were afraid of the discontent of the population).

In the post-war years the number of priests was reduced mostly using repressions: arrests and exiles. The hierarchs could not oppose this.

In 1951 representative of the RKRT Pušinis in a letter to Chairman of the RKRT Polianskii wrote that the number of priests was mostly reduced by arresting them. This, however, did not reduce the piety of the people - and it could happen as it did in Western Belarus where the believers regard the rarely met priest as a savior - and he is saying that he is going to appeal to Antanas Snie kus to stop the arrests.²⁰

Another way to reduce the number of priests was by lowering the number of students admitted to the only seminary in Kaunas. In the 1945/1946 school year there were 318 theological students. In 1946 the limit was reduced to 150 and in 1949 down to 75 because of the 'excess and unemployment' of priests. In 1959 the number of students was reduced to 60, and from the 1961/1962 school year not more than 5 youths could be admitted to the first course. In 1965 the seminary reached its minimum: only 24 students.²¹

As mentioned earlier, the secret meetings of diligent priests began in 1966. One of the most urgent subjects discussed at the meetings was the physical extermination of the Church carried out by the authorities. After collecting the signatures of priests from the Vilkaviškis diocese, Tamkevi ius, Zdebskis, and other priests appealed several times in 1968-1969 to the administrators of all the dioceses and the Soviet authorities concerning the fate of the theological seminary. In 1969 the limit on the number of students was slightly increased - up to 50 - and the limit on the number of admissions to the first course up to 10 students.²² It was clear that the increase was pure political cosmetics and could not solve the problem when 20-30 priests died every year.

¹⁹ LYA. F.K-I, C. d. 14, f. 205, sh. 19-36.

²⁰ LCVA. F.R-181, C. d. 3, f. 27, sh. 5.

²¹ *ibid.* F. 70, sh. 30.

²² *ibid.* F. 79, sh. 152.

In 1971 Rev. Zdebskis organized an underground theological seminary where those not admitted by the authorities to the official seminary could study. After a while the strongest religious orders in Lithuania, the Jesuits and Marian Fathers, took over control of the underground theological seminary. Not only Lithuanians but also Ukrainians, Byelorussians and candidates from other republics studied there. Although the authorities did not allow the graduates to serve officially as priests, nevertheless they found ways to be apostles not only in Lithuania but also in other regions of the Soviet Union.

In 1977 the authorities raised the annual limit of new admissions to 20 and doubled (up to 100) the overall limit for the seminary. In 1981 this limit increased to 140 and in 1988 up to 150 students.²³

Even though the limit was increased from 1969, the number of new priests could not compensate the number of deaths until 1987. In 1945 there were 1,232 priests in Lithuania, but because of repatriation (to Poland), repressions, and deaths only 734 were left in 1953.

Out of the 362 priests repressed only 249 priests in 1955-1957 returned to Lithuania alive and increased slightly the number of the priests in the country to 929 in 1957. However, in the following years their number decreased constantly and in 1986 only 664 priests were left. From 1987 this number began increasing very slightly. Thus, in comparison with 1945, during 40 years the Soviet authorities managed to reduce the number of the priests almost by half.

Another aspect of the annihilation of the Church was the physical destruction of places at which the faithful worshipped. Among such places in Lithuania were Šiluva, Žemai i Kalvarija, Vilniaus Kalvarija, Vepri Kalvarija, Aušros Vartai (the Gates of Dawn) in Vilnius and the Hill of Crosses. The Soviet authorities considered such places as 'centers of religious fanaticism' and planned to destroy them.

In 1962 many of the chapels at the Vepri Kalvarija were destroyed.²⁴ The same year, according to resolution No. 889 of the Council of Ministers of the LSSR, all the chapels of Žemai i Kalvarija were closed and handed over to the local authorities, but the people opened them independently and conducted processions during the time of the usual Church festivals there.²⁵ In 1962-1963 most of the chapels in the Vilniaus Kalvarija were destroyed. However, this did not discourage the believers and in 1969 the representative of the RKRT stated that the number of pilgrims increased in Šiluva, Žemai i Kalvarija, and Vepriai.²⁶

In 1971 the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union passed the resolution 'On the Intensification of Atheistic

²³ *ibid.* F. 108, sh. 259.

²⁴ *ibid.* F. 84, sh. 68-72.

²⁵ *ibid.* F. 64, sh. 47, 48.

Education of the Population' in which great attention was given to the struggle against the visiting of 'holy places'.²⁷

However, neither this nor other secret resolutions of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party and the Council of Ministers on how to halt the visiting of places of worship helped, but on the contrary - the visiting intensified. Mass processions were organized to Šiluva and other places of worship.

The Fight against Restrictions on Priests. The Soviet authorities tried to weaken the influence of the clergy on society by using different measures, starting with bans and limitations and ending with repressions.

In order to isolate the priest from society, the authorities introduced many limitations on priestly work. For example, it was forbidden for children to participate actively in liturgical rituals, such as serving as altar boys during Masses, taking part or strewing flowers in processions, singing in church choirs. In 1949 processions were forbidden (except during funerals), including the traditional processions to cemeteries on All Saints Day and to the places of worship (Šiluva, Kalvarijos, etc.). The same year the meetings of priests and of the diocesan capitula were forbidden without the permission of the representative of the RKRT.²⁸ In 1950 priests were forbidden (without the permission of the local executive committees) to conduct any liturgical rituals beyond the borders of their parishes.²⁹

Already in 1947 priests were forbidden to administer the sacraments to the sick in hospitals without the permission of the head physician, and if allowed they had to be administered in a separate room and not in the ward.³⁰ Thus, the priests usually gave the last rites secretly even though this was often very inconvenient for the dying patients. Nuns who worked as nurses and hospital attendants at the hospitals helped make this possible. However, more than one patient died without receiving the last rites because of this ban. The Kronika wrote about such cases quite often.

The first prohibitions of ringing church bells were issued around 1952-1953, but the official prohibition of ringing church bells was made in decision No. 28 of the Council of Ministers, dated 10 January 1967.³¹

In order to suppress even more the impressive influence of church services on believers, the activity of church choirs was restricted; it was forbidden to organize choir rehearsals outside church walls (in winter it was cold to rehearse in the churches) and the choirs were permitted to

²⁶ *ibid.* F. 79, sh. 110.

²⁷ *ibid.* F. 84, sh. 54.

²⁸ *ibid.* F. 18, sh. 10.

²⁹ *ibid.* F. 24, sh. 16.

³⁰ *ibid.* F. 11, sh. 30.

³¹ *ibid.* F. 136, sh. 12-16.

sing only in their own churches. In 1956 it was forbidden to install radios in the churches and churchyards.³²

In secret instruction No. 4-69s the chairman of the RKRT obligated his representative in Lithuania, Justas Rugienis, to forbid priests to make traditional visits to parishioners, and the official document banning this practice in Lithuania was passed on 16 June 1962.³³

In spite of the bans and threats, priests took risks to fulfill their priestly duties. They were especially watched and punished for the catechization of children and work with youth. In those days the most often imposed punishment was taking away the priest's certificate of registration. If they were deprived of the certificate, the priests had to find employment as ordinary workers. In 1962 six priests were deprived of their certificates, and in 1963 - 14 (that year only 13 new priests graduated from the theological seminary). A milder punishment was to transfer such a priest to some remote place.

The representative of the RKRT took away the registration certificate of a priest for the first time in 1949, but the practice became much more frequent in the 1960s. In 1969-1970 Zdebskis and Tamkevičius were deprived of their certificates. While working as workers in a land-reclamation organization, they developed underground apostolic activity (which reached also other regions of the USSR) on such a scale that the representative of the RKRT and the KGB (with the help of agents) even tried to convince them to ask to be returned to the previous office. The representative of the RKRT and the KGB also experienced much hardship and unpleasantness concerning Albinas Dumbliauskas SJ (the KGB gave him the pseudonym 'Gastrolior') who after losing his registration certificate became involved in missionary work. The KGB and the representatives of the RKRT in Kazakhstan and regions of Russia sent many complaints to them concerning the activity of Dumbliauskas.³⁴ Apparently, these cases persuaded the KGB and the representative of the RKRT to change punishments; the taking away of certificates became less frequent, but the transfers of the 'criminals' to small parishes and fines became more frequent, and those who could not be tamed were imprisoned.

In 1970-1971 Antanas Šeškevičius SJ, Prosperas Bubnys, and Juozas Zdebskis (for the second time) were imprisoned for this reason.

The restrictions on administering the sacrament of Confirmation should be also mentioned. Representative of the RKRT Rugienis suggested to Lithuanian Communist Party First Secretary Sniekus that permission to administer Confirmation should be granted only once a

³² *ibid.* F. 44, sh. 68; F. 59, sh. 3.

³³ *ibid.* F 50, sh. 48,49; F. 59, sh. 114, 115; F. 66, sh. 135-137.

³⁴ *ibid.* F.R-181, C. d. 7, f. 1, p. 1-19.

year and only in the parish in which the diocese had its administration.³⁵

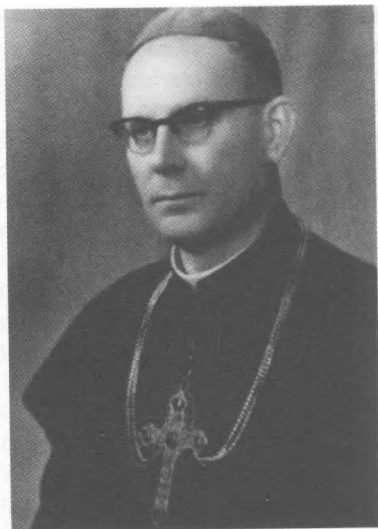
In 1971 a memorandum of the Catholics of Lithuania to First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR Leonid Brezhnev was prepared. It protested the restrictions, persecutions, and repressions of the rights of believers and the arbitrary actions of the authorities and demanded the freedoms of conscience, speech, and action guaranteed by the Constitution. This memorandum was signed by more than 17,000 believers in Lithuania. Petras Plumpa who had been imprisoned in Soviet gulags copied these documents and took them to dissidents in Moscow who sent them to the United Nations. (If these documents had been sent directly to Brezhnev, they would have gone to the KGB and would have remained unknown to the world).

Many documents of local executive committees, the representative of the RKRT, and the KGB provide testimony about the resistance of the priests of Lithuania to the restrictions on their work as pastors, and about the faithful fulfillment of their duties, in spite of risks and dangers.

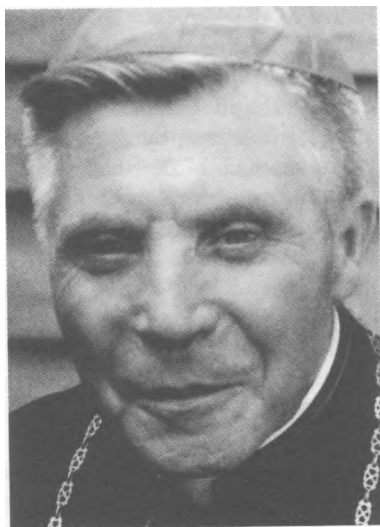
Feeling that their attempts to knock on the doors of the hierarchs of that time and the Soviet authorities were equal to 'a voice in the wilderness' (except for the documents which managed to reach the West), the diligent priests came to the conclusion that they needed an underground publication which would present not only all the problems of the Catholic Church in Lithuania - the terror, violence, restrictions of the rights and freedoms of the believers, lies and demagoguery by the authorities - but also the loyalty of the believers to God and the Church, and their fight for the rights and freedoms for themselves and their children. This publication, moreover, had to reach the West (because only then could they hope for some effect; the policy of the Soviet Union could be influenced only by world opinion). The participants at the meetings of the diligent priests of Vilkauskis diocese, especially Zdebskis and Ra i nas MIC, agreed with this idea. The oppression of the Church and its resistance caused the appearance of The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania. In strict conspiracy (only the most reliable priests and friends knew who published it) Sigita s Tamkevi ius (now the Archbishop Metropolitan of Kaunas) implemented this idea and its first issue was published in the Simnas parish in the Alytus district on 19 March 1972. The Kronika started a new phase of resistance in the life of Lithuania's Catholic Church (and of all Lithuania fighting against the occupation) by making known to the world the violation of the human rights and freedoms in Lithuania. It assembled honest people of the whole world to fight against communism. Lithuanians abroad were that invaluable assistant who spread the word of the Kronika all over the world.

³⁵ *ibid.* C. d. 3, f. 66, sh. 87, 88.

The leaders of the fighting Catholic Church in Lithuania - exiled Bishops



Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius.



Bishop (from 1988 Cardinal)
Vincentas Sladkevičius.



Founders of TTGKK: from left - Rev. Vincentas Vlavius, Alfonsas Svarinskas, Sigitas Tamkevičius, Juozas Zdebskis, Jonas Kauneckas. 1978.



The Founder, Editor and
Publisher of the Kronika
Rev. Sigitas Tamkevičius. 1962.



The Editor of the Kronika
in 1983-1989
Rev. Jonas Boruta.



The interdiocesan Theological Seminary in Kaunas. 1957.

On 13 November 1978 another no less dangerous enemy appeared. It was the Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Rights of Believers (TTGKK). It was founded by priests Alfonsas Svarinskas, Sigitas Tamkevičius, Juozas Zdebskis, Jonas Kauneckas (now a bishop), and Vincentas Vlavicius. The Committee declared itself as a public institution to which not only Catholics but also all believers from the whole Soviet Union could appeal for restrictions of the freedoms of faith.

The authorities pressed the hierarchs to curb the publishers of the *Kronika* and the members of TTGKK. In 1980 the authorities reproached the administrators that 'extremists' and members of TTGKK, on the pretext that the administrators "collaborate with the authorities and refuse to protect the interests of the Church," started establishing priest councils in dioceses in 1979. (This was done according to the resolutions of the II Vatican Council). The authorities were sure that the TTGKK wanted to take control of the dioceses into its hands through these 'extremist councils'. The fear of the authorities was clearly felt here because the representative of RKRT and the KGB would not be able to have control over the administrators.³⁶ Time was coming to finish the *Kronika* and TTGKK once and for all.

The resistance of the Church for many years to the terror and restraints of the occupational authorities, and the search for new effective forms of resistance gave birth to the *Kronika* and the TTGKK both of which became the leaders of this fight from the 1970s. The Catholic Church in Lithuania, in spite of the great physical and moral losses suffered during the years of occupation, managed to secure the same positions in the national fight against the occupation. The positions of it were described in top secret resolution of the Bureau of the LKP(b) CK dated 15 July 1948: "the Bureau of the LKP(b) CK notes that (...) in fierce resistance to the building of socialism (...) the reactionary part of the Catholic clergy is the inspirer and sometimes the organizer of this resistance."³⁷ The reactionary priests were those who were faithful to the Church but not to them.

³⁶ *ibid.* F. 105, sh. 159-163.

³⁷ *ibid.* F. 15, sh. 66.

PART II

EDITORS OF 'THE CHRONICLE OF
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LITHUANIA'
ABOUT PUBLISHING AND STAFF

ARCHBISHOP SIGITAS TAMKEVI IUS SJ

1. THE CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LITHUANIA



I entered the Kaunas diocesan seminary still during the times of Khrushchev, in 1955. Probably, I was lucky since no one tried to recruit me to be a spy, no one threatened me with anything for which I could have been expelled from the seminary if I did not do. In the third year of my studies, I was called to serve in the army and upon returning encountered a different situation: both the administration of the seminary itself and its spirit had changed. The former rector of the seminary Kazimieras Žitkus (Vincas Stonis) was replaced by Rev. Alfonsas Lapinskas. I was unpleasantly surprised by some seminarians who agitated for elimi-

nating prayer. When in the summer of 1961 I was called to the Lazdijai district passport division, from which I was delivered to the KGB department where the officer Jonas insistently urged me to "be a friend." I understood who had mixed up the seminary's spirit. Although the bloody period of Stalin was fading, ever denser clouds were gathering over the Homeland and the Church. The 'always correct and never misleading' communist party was planning 'a bright future' for us, which nationalism and religion could hinder. The Council for Religious Affairs diligently implemented the party's program - to destroy religious belief. Not only were the activities of the seminary restricted, but attempts were made to isolate the priests in their parish houses behind a barbed wire of laws and instructions. Punishments ranging from a ban to carry out the duties of a priest to imprisonment threatened those who did not obey them. There was a lack of necessary

articles for believers: catechisms, prayer books, and even rosary beads. Under such circumstances one had to decide whom to obey: God or a man? The first opposition steps that led to the origin of the Kronika were made at this time.

Like-minded priests from time to time met to discuss current events and questions concerning priest affairs. The vague future was one of the greatest problems: scores of priests passed away every year, while the seminary admitted only five students each year, leaving other candidates behind the seminary's gates. The plan of the Soviet authorities was clear: to reduce the number of priests to a minimum as quickly as possible, to lock up those working in their parish houses, and make some of the priests their agents. In this way, the Church will be fatally injured - after losing its pastors, it will lie still in agony.

What to Do?

This question made everyone who cared for Church affairs feel uneasy. In 1968 while discussing Church problems, the idea arose to demand the abolishment of the limit on the number of students admitted to the seminary and to try to notify the free world about the persecution of the Church.

The first petitions, which frightened both the communist party and state security, were begun in the dioceses of Telšiai and Vilkaviškis and some of the priests who signed them were scolded and others were forbidden to carry out their priestly duties. It was a very difficult, but possible, task to pass through the iron curtain at that time. We began by typing with a typewriter some information on a white fabric which was then sewn into a dress of a woman traveling to the U.S.A. Later we succeeded in establishing ties with Moscow dissidents. Arimantas Raškinis, who was studying in Moscow, got acquainted with Sergei Kovalev, who became a great friend of Lithuanians.

In 1969 I was deprived of the right to work as a priest and had to find other employment. That summer together with another priest sharing the same fate, Juozas Zdebskis, I worked at the Prienai Melioration Works. We were hired by the superintendent, engineer Jurgis Brilius. He helped us to leave the melioration work and do church work. During that year I gained new acquaintances and acquired experience in working under underground conditions. That year was a real favor of God - it gave me that which I had not acquired in the seminary. It became clear to me and other priests that the Soviet registration certificate which granted the right to work as a priest was not salvation. The most important thing, as exiled Bishop Vincentas Sladkevicius said at that time, was to have God's registration certificate.

In Simnas

My appointment to Simnas as a vicar was another favor of God because I had a good pastor Juozas Matulevičius and enough spare time. In meetings with other priests we started discussing the press question: a publication which would awaken national and especially religious consciousness and would reflect the problems of Catholic life was very necessary. The necessity to issue such a publication was supported by the majority of zealous priests, especially Juozas Zdebskis. At that time Zdebskis, Antanas Šeškevičius SJ, and Prosperas Bubnys MIC had been sentenced for teaching children.

With the assistance of Petras Plumpa, I prepared the first issue of the publication. We chose the name *Vivos voco* [I call the living] for the publication and wanting the Church to bless it, I visited exiled Bishop Sladkevičius and showed him the prepared material. On the bishop's desk I saw the Polish newspaper 'Chronicle', and the 'Chronicle of Current Events' was very popular in Moscow. The bishop looked through the material, thought a little, praised the idea of issuing a publication, even if it was modest, and suggested the name *Kronika*. The Bishop expressed his opinion: "Would it not be good if the publication would describe some event and then add a brief commentary? Would not such a publication be the most necessary?" There was nothing to do except support the good idea. In this way Cardinal Vincentas Sladkevičius became the godfather of the *Lietuvos Katalikų Bažnyčios Kronika* (The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania). Having received the approval of the bishop, I brought the completed publication to Jonas Danyla SJ because the approval of my direct superior (at that time he was the Provincial superior of Lithuania's Jesuits) was necessary for such an important step. Danyla doubted that I would be able to find material, but approved the proposal.

Petras Plumpa corrected and rewrote the first issue. Some articles were rewritten by the sister of the Congregation of the Holy Family Genovaitė Navickaitė, and I finished the remaining part which after binding I gave to acquaintances. In this way in the first half of March 1972, the first issue of the *Kronika* appeared in a small room in the Simnas parish house*. Honoring Juozas Zdebskis who was imprisoned in the Praveniškis camp at that time, I wrote the date - the 19th of March. Plumpa promised to make about 100 copies of each issue of the *Kronika*. He had lots of experience in this field since he had published several religious books using an ERA copying machine located in the attic of a house on Kalniečių Street in Kaunas.

* Kreivoji St. 3, Simnas, Alytus district.

Gathering Information

When I began publishing the Kronika, I did not think of its periodicity. We would prepare an issue when a sufficient number of articles was collected. Actually, it turned out that collecting enough material was quite difficult. We could not place an ad in the main republican daily newspaper Tiesa (Truth)* stating that an underground publication wanted to receive stories about the crimes of Soviet authorities, violations of human rights. Fortunately, I had a large group of priests, nuns, and laymen whom I could trust, who would not betray me and knew how to keep silent. Their justice, honesty, and desire to help were guaranteed. They were very concerned about the affairs of the Church, but perhaps lacked experience.

Not all people easily told or wrote about their troubles especially if they knew that their stories would be published in the Kronika. Often even very good people preferred to be unknown - they did not want to attract the attention of the KGB and maybe even face interrogation. Nevertheless, there were priests and laymen who very bravely supplied the material they had. One of them was the Rev. Bronius Laurinavičius.

At first everyone did not understand why it was necessary to register and publicize the facts of persecution. Those who did not want to write about some event would make the excuse: "Everyone already knows what the Soviet authorities are doing!" But we wanted to present as many facts of brave opposition as possible so that other people could learn from them. Such articles in the Kronika especially helped people to overcome fear and decide to oppose evil.

Hiding

Some of the articles we received were written with a typewriter; people more aware of the situation would send the fourth or fifth copy. Nevertheless, the majority of the information was written by hand. There was a real danger that the KGB would find the original texts during a search and then be able to identify without great difficulty their authors. So, one of the major concerns was to hide the hand written texts very well and to rewrite them with a typewriter as quickly as possible. I examined my room scores of times and considered all possibilities, but failed to find a suitable hiding place. I did not dare to share my problems with the other good people living in the parish house and load them with such a problem. Perhaps, without reason? It was quite inconvenient and risky to give material to other people for concealment. I rejected this thought at least initially. Seeking a solution to the problem, I went to the Simnas church, where I walked from corner to corner,

* Tiesa - the newspaper of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party.

examining attics, looking and looking... A hiding place had to be both secure and easily accessible. Thus, for several years the Lord hid a large number of hand written articles in the Simnas church. Upon receiving an article or a short news items, I would immediately wrap and place it in the most secure (as it seemed to me) place. After a while it would occur to me that the hiding place was not safe and I would look for a new place in which they would be safe from rats and evil people.

The typewriter on my desk was like a time bomb - it could be confiscated and examined at any moment. Where could I hide it so that it would not be a danger in the months when articles were being collected? It was quite large and could not be hidden in a crack. I had the idea to obtain another set of letters for the typewriter so that I could use one set for the Kronika and the other - for official correspondence even to the KGB. I succeeded in buying several sets of typewriter levers in a shop in Pushkin Street in Moscow. We replaced the Russian alphabet with a Lithuanian alphabet, and the dangerous typewriter was on the desk only when an issue of the Kronika was being typed. It took about 20 minutes for the 'operation' after which a totally innocent object for the KGB remained on the desk. My colleagues also easily mastered this operation. The removed letters fit in the palm of a hand and could be easily placed in a pocket and taken away for concealment.

To diminish further the incriminating evidence I sometimes also changed the dangerous alphabet. I would alter some letters using a soldering iron or pliers and readjust the knocking position of some letters. Later, during various interrogations, I learned that these operations had perfectly misled experts seeking to determine the 'guilty' typewriter.

First Colleagues

When I began editing the Kronika, I recognized the need to find colleagues as I did not trust my literary talents. While working in Vilkaviškis, I became acquainted with the brother of my pastor Konstantinas Ambrasas - the Lithuanian linguist Kazimieras Ambrasas. I found him in Leipalingis in his brother's home and told him about my concern. I was very happy that Kazimieras did not hesitate to help. We would agree beforehand when he would visit his brother and after preparing the next issue, I would hide it under my shirt and travel to Leipalingis. I did not inform Konstantinas about this so that he would be worried. A few days later I would travel again to Leipalingis and bring back the corrected text to Simnas. After making the operation on the typewriter - replacing the alphabet - I would retype the issue in a few days. Kazimieras made all the corrections by hand and thus the risk was very great. The KGB could have confiscated the texts on my trips

or during the retyping and easily identified who had assisted me. I think that Kazimieras also understood this, but he worked and did not show any fear. I only saw the great desire to help. Of course, this could not last long, especially after the KGB started making searches on a mass scale and started case no. 345.

The work with the Kronika became much easier when Sister Elena Šuliauskaitė began to help. For several long years the major portion of the work was loaded on her shoulders. I knew what dangers threatened her. She was also aware of them, but we trusted in God and continued working.

Friends of Lithuania

The editing of an issue of the Kronika was only half the work. Everyone with whom I discussed the matter agreed that the Kronika would only fulfill its role when the information it contained was distributed not only in Lithuania but also the free world. At that time we did not have the capabilities to make and disseminate many copies of the underground publication because only typewriters were available and other more efficient methods of copying were strictly controlled. After a lot of hard work, Vytautas Vaitėnas managed to assemble an ERA copying machine which enabled us, always risking arrest, to make several hundred copies and to distribute them in Lithuania.

The most difficult task arose: "How to send the Kronika to the West?" At the time we started publishing the Kronika only a very small number of tourists from the West visited our country and they could not deviate from the established route, let alone travel from Vilnius to rural areas. Moreover, any passed on issues could always be discovered during searches at the customs department.

Our attention again turned to Moscow. We restored our ties with Sergei Kovalev and received his permission to bring him the latest issue of the Kronika. And from there friends of Lithuania in Moscow helped to send the issue to the West. Sometimes we waited for a very long period until 'Radio Liberty' or 'Vatican Radio' announced that a new issue of the Kronika had reached the West. We were very happy to hear this news. We realized later that we should bring two copies of the issue to Moscow and not one - one copy was necessary for the editors of The Chronicle of Current Events who would translate suitable material into Russian and place it in their publication while the other copy could be handed over immediately to Western correspondents.

With great gratitude and honor I mention Lithuania's friends in Moscow: the calm Sergei Kovalev, the always smiling Aleksandr Lavut, the very practical Tatyana Velikanova, the seething with energy priest Gleb Yakunin, etc. All of us, people of very different nationalities, religions, and social groups, were united by the joint task to inform the world

how human rights were being violated in the Soviet Union. We were convinced that this information was the most important weapon fighting against the slavery being implemented by the totalitarian system.

Trips to Moscow were very dangerous - one could attract the attention of the KGB anywhere and be detained. Thus, after they introduced passport check at airports, it was no longer sensible to use air planes. To obtain a seat for the Moscow train in Vilnius or Kaunas was also a risky enterprise because railway stations were one of the most watched places. There was an alternative - to get a seat in the Moscow train at a station not in Lithuania.

The trips to Moscow were usually very romantic. Some friend, for instance Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas, would drive me to some place in Byelorussia from where I would hitch-hike to Minsk. I would buy a ticket there, and by taking the train around 20:00 would arrive in Moscow early in the morning. This route seemed to be quite safe. When I lived in Kybartai, I would travel to Chernyakhovsk to buy tickets.

Often I traveled to Moscow alone, although sometimes I had a companion who would protect me by carrying the dangerous material. May the Lord reward those (the nuns Nijol Sad nait , Bron Vazgelevi i t , and others) who risked their freedom so that the Kronika would be safe.

After arriving in Moscow it was very risky to go to the apartment of any dissident and we therefore always agreed in advance where we would meet the next time. The Moscow residents would give a specific address, and we would agree on the date and time of the meeting. I was amazed by their punctuality and sense of responsibility - for a long period there was not a single instance when they did not arrive at the agreed time (except several times when they were a little late for serious reasons). They would take the Kronika from us, and later also Aušra and in return give us The Chronicle of Current Events and very often something from the current samizdat publications, such as The Gulag Archipelago. After exchanging the publications and discussing the latest events, we separated - they returned to their working places, while I would wait for the train to Vilnius.

To Whom to Send?

At the beginning it was not even clear to whom to send the Kronika in the West. I knew that there was a Catholic daily newspaper Draugas ('Friend'). So, after finding the address of its editorial staff, I wrote this address on the cover sheet of our publication and sent it. We were convinced that it did not matter to whom our publication was sent as long as it did not get into the hands of the communists. Later I became acquainted with Rož Šomkait from the U.S.A., who told me about Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, Inc., about its director Rev. Kazimieras

Pugevi ius, and about their efforts to help Lithuania. Afterwards I would write to this address. Today I think that the Lord sent needed people when they were needed the most. Such people were Šomkait , Pugevi ius, later the nuns from Putnam (Connecticut, U.S.A.), and other people.

The KGB undoubtedly understood in what ways the samizdat was reaching the West and tried to block them. The most active dissidents were detained one after the other: Kovalev, Velikanova, Lavut, Yakunin, and others. With time, the road of the Kronika through Moscow became more difficult. However, at that time tourists from the U.S.A. began to arrive more and more frequently. It would have been very easy way to give the issue of the Kronika to some tourist from the West asking him to sent it to the indicated address, but the issue could not only be confiscated at the customs but also make many difficulties for to the tourist. What should be done?

While I was serving in the Soviet army, I took a large number of photographs and thus decided to make microfilms and hide them in a souvenir, which would be given to a tourist from a western country. This method served successfully for a long period of time. I would photograph the just completed issue of the Kronika. The full issue would fit in a very small package that could be easily hidden. Then, I had to only pray and wait for a guest from the West who would have the desire and sufficient courage to take a little risk. Maybe it was a happy coincidence, but from numerous cases only one guest refused to take the microfilm and to stop me from crying gave me a pack of cigarettes ... I now understand that one can not demand from anyone more than he is able to give. I am amazed how very much the tourists loved Lithuania if after a brief explanation they would immediately say: "Good. I will take it."

When I was a guest in the U.S.A., I visited Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid and examined the Kronika issues and microfilms, which had arrived from Lithuania. I did not find everything that was sent; some issues disappeared in Moscow during searches and others some where on their way to the West. However, I was very happy to find more than one issue of the Kronika which SOMEONE had sent to the West. Thank God, that at that difficult time there were many who cared for the affairs of the Church and their Homeland.

Kronika in the hands of the KGB

On 23 June 1972 during a search carried out at the home of Sister Jadvyga Stanelyt the KGB found the first issue of the Kronika and on 5 July 1972 began the criminal case No. 345. The KGB watched all suspected persons for more than a year and on 20 November 1973 made a large number of searches. The greatest loss was the arrest of Petras

Plumpa, a talented, hardworking, and fearless personality - such workers are rare. The KGB rejoiced in triumph that the Kronika was destroyed, but on 12 December issue no. 8 appeared in which there was a lot of information about the searches and arrests.

During the publication of the Kronika, there was everything - romanticism and painful experiences. The arrests of close people were always very painful. Very close, necessary people whom I had drawn into dangerous work! This was like a heavy stone hanging on my neck, which I had to carry for a long time.

Virgilijus Jaugelis volunteered to make copies of issue no. 6 with a rotary press and the stencils were found during a search. He was tried along with Plumpa. There are very few such idealists like Virgutis (that was what we used to call him). For God, for the Homeland he was willing to go not only to a labor camp but also into a fire. Imprisonment was very difficult for him because he was seriously ill and when he came back, people could hardly recognize him. He sacrificed so very much for the Kronika.

Nijol Sad nait already knew the paths leading to Moscow and could assist a lot both in distributing and editing the Kronika. Unfortunately, she was also arrested and sentenced to a long 6 year punishment.

Juozas Gražys, Vladas Lapienis, Povilas Buzas, Anastazas Janulis, nuns Ona Vitkauskait, Genovait Navickait, Ona Pranck nait, Nijol Sad nait, Bernadeta Mališkait, Ona Kavaliauskait, and Birut Brili t - they were all idealists, who were very concerned with serving the Church and their Homeland anyway they could. When I was arrested in 1983, one KGB officer - captain Raimondas Rainys called me a happy adventurer and when asked explained: "You were able to choose good colleagues." Indeed, both those selected and those who volunteered for the collective work were valiant workers, noble personalities.

I was very sorry for arrested colleagues Sergei Kovalev and Aleksandr Lavut with whom I had the opportunity to cooperate for a long time. They always met me with briefcases full of samizdat publications, they always were businesslike and pleasant people.

The arrested Petras Plumpa, Povilas Petronis, Virgilijus Jaugelis, and Jonas Stašaitis were still being interrogated in the Vilnius KGB, when the lens of the KGB turned to Simnas. In the early morning of 14 March 1974 I took home two copies of the Kronika after mass and was preparing to go to Kaunas after breakfast. KGB captain Vytautas Pilelis accompanied by three KGB arrived and thoroughly searched my room and the garage. Except for the two copies of the Kronika, they did not find anything interesting. After finding in the course of search a sheet of paper with the handwriting of a pupil, they cried: "Is this the latest material for the Kronika?" I understood what concerned them the most and that I had to be more cautious.

Virgilijus Jaugelis was arrested on 9 April 1974. A week later I also received a subpoena for interrogation in the Vilnius KGB. I did not anticipate any major danger, but knew not to expect anything good from the KGB. The first interrogation was not difficult. They asked me what I knew about the 'Kronika and from where had I received the two copies of the Kronika found during the search. Captain Pilelis was also interested in the underground seminary for priests. He remained very dissatisfied when he did not learn anything useful.

The month of December 1974 was very hard for underground publishers. The court proceedings against Petras Plumpa, Povilas Petronis, Virgilijus Jaugelis, and Jonas Stašaitis lasted almost the full month and an especially heavy cross was placed on the first worker of the Kronika, Petras Plumpa. He received an eight year sentence for his fight for the future of the Church and the Nation. Perhaps the communist party and KGB officers tried by this show trial to intimidate those who dared to speak the truth, but the effect was opposite - repressions fostered the determination to fight.

Right away after the completion of this trial, on 27 December Sergei Kovalev, a great friend of Lithuanians (a former deputy of the Duma of the Russian Federation), was arrested. He was one of the first people with whom we established contacts and who without personal interest helped Lithuania for a long time. His interrogation in the Vilnius KGB lasted for almost for a year, and afterwards he spent ten years in the camps of Perm and exile in Siberia.

Great danger

On 27 August 1974 Sister Nijol Sad nait was arrested for making copies of the Kronika. No information about the course of the interrogation seeped out of the dungeons of the KGB. On 11 February 1975 quite unexpectedly I received a subpoena for questioning in the Vilnius KGB. For two days captain Pilelis interrogated me and everything was directed around Nijol . He wanted me to admit that I had given Nijol an issue of the Kronika to copy. I was accused of publishing the Kronika. He was assisted by the head of the interrogation section - captain Antanas Rimkus. They wanted me to admit at least that I had given Nijol the Kronika to read and explained that then Nijol would be freed. When they did not receive this admission from me, they were very disappointed and lieutenant-colonel Kolgov tried to humiliate me, calling me a coward and a heartless person, who knew how to involve an innocent woman, while trying to avoid any personal responsibility. The angry KGB veteran said: "This coward is abiding by the principle 'you can't make an omelet without breaking the eggs'."

In September 1974 an anonymous letter appeared in Lithuania signed in the name of a group of priests of the Vilkaviškis diocese. It was sent to all the heads of the dioceses and severely condemned priests who did not obey the Soviet authorities. These priests were accused of destroying the unity of the priests and the desire to be famous abroad. Bishop Juozapas Labukas was urged to condemn "the fighters who wanted to turn back the wheel of history" when he visited the Vatican. It was very clear who was the author of this letter. While the *Kronika* was being issued, such anonymous letters quite often tried to form negative opinions against priests who were not loyal to the authorities and the *Kronika*. Not being able to destroy them physically, they tried with these methods to silence them.

However, they were not silenced. In April 1975 five priests of the Vilkaviškis diocese wrote a protest statement in defense of the people sentenced for the underground press. Academician Andrei Sakharov read this letter to foreign journalists but did not mention the surnames of the priests who had signed it. However, in the course of a search the KGB found the statement and sent it to Vilnius to establish if it has been really signed by us (or perhaps they wanted us to renounce our signatures). At this time we were inspired by the recently completed Helsinki conference, and the Final Act signed here. When I was called to the KGB, I briefly explained that I had signed the statement. I think that for the KGB this was another piece of evidence proving my contacts with Moscow's dissidents.

In Kybartai

Two months later the representative for Religious Affairs ordered Bishop Juozapas Labukas to transfer me from Simnas to some other place where I would have more work or otherwise I would be arrested. On 15 October issue no. 19 of the *Kronika* was completed and I was appointed the pastor in Kybartai. Everything was completely strange since up to that time no disobedient priest had been transferred to a larger parish. I unwillingly started thinking that the transfer was made so that it would be easier to arrest me in the place... What will be the fate of the *Kronika* in a new place? I did not have an answer to this question. The only person who already had experience in editing the *Kronika* was sister Elena Šuliauskaitė. I knew that like-minded priests would help collect information and care for the future fate of the *Kronika*.

Some priests would give good advice, but it was difficult to fulfill it. One of the suggestions was to form in Lithuania three or four editorial staffs of the *Kronika*, which would take turns in publishing it. In truth, there were frequent moments, when I wanted to live calmly for at least several months, without feeling the danger hanging over my

head, particularly at the moments when KGB cars appeared in Kybartai which for a while would accompany me everywhere, even on visits to an ill person, and then for some unknown reason suddenly disappear. I was never able to realize the advice to establish several editorial staffs. One of reasons was that my closest friends had their own important tasks to do, whereas the work of creating a new network of correspondents and the necessary conditions for publishing was very difficult. (Perhaps, I should have paid more attention to this matter for then after my arrest fewer problems would have arisen in publishing the Kronika...).

In Kybartai, the conditions for editing were very unfavorable. For half a year I had to live in a rented room since the parish house was occupied. In addition, I had a lot of work. There were no problems in gathering the material. When the time came to release an issue, Šuliauskait would come to Kybartai and we would select the material and determine the full issue. I would then drive her with all the articles for the future issue to Simnas to a remote house in which its two good residents Julija Juškauskait and Eugenija Dainauskait allowed her to live. Here the issue was finally rewritten and at least 20 copies of it were typed. Sister of the Eucharistic Jesus Congregation Monika Gav nait helped us to retype the new issue. Juškauskait would bring some issues to me from Simnas, while other issues were taken by the women who retyped them so that they could make more copies. I was surprised by the bravery and dedication of Julija. She would be on watch for several weeks in a row to make sure that no one would come unexpected. For weeks she had to withstand great pressure, but she never complained and was always ready to help. Thank God for such people.

Assistants

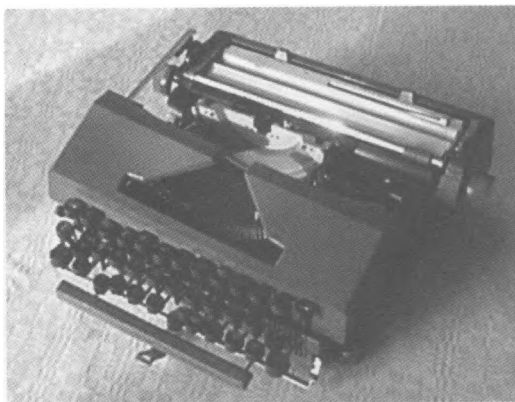
Shortly after I began to publish the Kronika I became acquainted with Vilnius resident Vladas Lapienis who without any urging became one of the most diligent supporters and distributors of the Kronika. He knew several women typists who would make more copies of the publications he brought them. Moreover, he would provide information for new issues. Vladas enthralled me not only with his assistance but also his spiritual life, which many priests could envy. To my great sorrow, he was arrested with Jonas Kastytis Matulionis on 19 October 1976. Somewhat later Congregation of the Holy Family Sister Ona Pranck nait , who with great sacrifice made copies of the Kronika and other religious literature, was also arrested. After each arrest all the more frequently would arise the idea that it would have been better if they had arrested me. Under calm contemplation, it seems, one can understand that in any fight victims are inevitable, but to lead one good person after the other to agony is somewhat more difficult than personally to accept their fate.



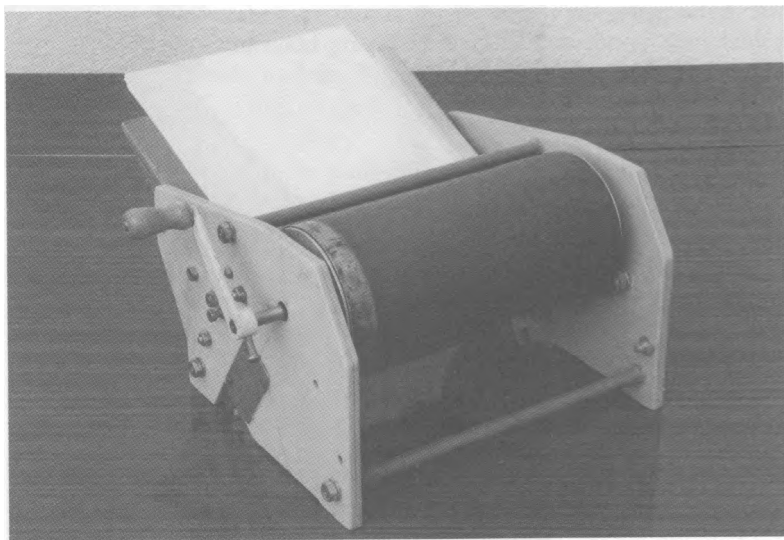
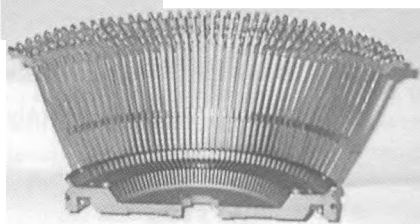
Simnas church (Alytus district)



Kybartai church
(Vilkaviškis
district)



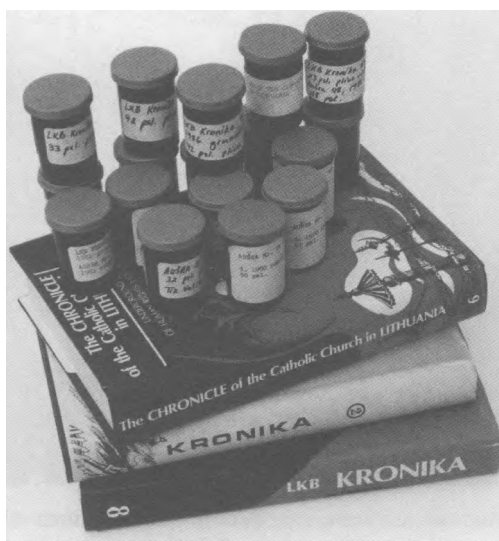
Typewriter and a set of changeable alphabet - the main publishing means.



Home-made rotating printer (made in Kybartai) on which a lot of issues of the Kronika were printed.



Hiding place in printed matter in which a microfilm of the Kronika was sent.



The USA archive of kept microfilms of the Kronika



Altar of St. Vincent de Paul in Simnas church where
the typescripts of the Kronika were hidden.

Aušra (Dawn)

The contents of the *Kronika* changed more than once. At first, it seemed that the wisest policy would be to register only facts, disclosing only the persecution of the Church. This approach was approved by almost all the people who knew about the issuing of the *Kronika*. However, there was no other publication which would awaken the consciousness of the nation and register the facts of the forced denationalization at those times. The *Kronika* was criticized that it cared only for the interests of the Church. Although it was evident that by defending the faith we also defended the nation, we, nevertheless, wanted to describe everything that happened in the enslaved country. For this reason, gradually other facts bearing testimony about the violations of human rights in various spheres of life began to appear in the *Kronika*.

During a meeting of like-minded priests of the Vilkaviškis diocese, Rev. Pranciškus Raikinas MIC suggested resuming the publication of *Aušra**. Everyone approved of this idea and one had only to find someone to complete it. Raikinas himself wrote the introduction, and the editorial staff of the *Kronika* had to help it make its first steps. Probably after about six issues, I asked Rev. Lionginas Kunevičius to be its editor and he kindly agreed. With God's blessing *Aušra* was not detected by the KGB until the Atgimimas (National Reawakening).

Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Rights of Believers

In 1978 the Orthodox priest Gleb Yakunin with two friends visited me in Kybartai. They said that they had established in Moscow the Christian Committee for the Defense of the Rights of Believers and suggested that we join them. I told the priests Alfonsas Svarinskas and Juozas Zdebskis about this idea. Both of them gladly approved. Later the priests from Telšiai Vincentas Vlavičius and Jonas Kauneckas agreed to join us. All of us had individually to find the correct decision: to be or not to be a member of the being established Committee? Its existence at that time was very necessary, but this would further intensify the attention of the KGB. If I do not join the Committee, will the KGB officers not begin to wonder why did I remain aloof? What am I doing? I thought, prayed, asked for advice, and, nevertheless, decided to join the Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Rights of Believers (hence TTGKK). Collecting material for the *Kronika* became much easier. All of us understood that the taken step was correct in all aspects, although risky.

* *Aušra* - a journal promoting national reawakening during the period of the prohibition of the publication of anything in the Lithuanian language with Latin letters. It was issued in 1883 - 1886 by Jonas Basanavičius, Jonas Šliupas, Martynas Jankus, and others.

We wrote and distributed 20 documents of the Catholic Committee and did not received a single reply - as if our cry for help had fallen into a well. Only five years later did I learn that the KGB scrupulously collected all these documents, - and were even very concerned that they did not have document no. 46. The Soviet authorities were particularly annoyed by documents no. 18 on the Violation of Rights of Children in Lithuania and no. 5 on the Regulations for Religious Societies, which 520 priests and the two exiled bishops supported. While they could have endured the pain of the contents of the documents, the KGB could not tolerate that these documents reached the West.

On 29 August 1979 I was summoned to the Republic Prosecutor's Office where the prosecutor read an official warning that if I continued to carry out anti-state activities I faced punishment in accordance with Art. 68 of the Penal Code. After being warned by the republic prosecutor, prosecutor Jurgis Baku ionis, who supervised KGB cases, led me to his office and began to explain that the Kronika is a publication of the Catholic Committee and we have to stop publishing it. The next day Svarinskas also received a warning at the Prosecutor's Office. The danger was evidently increasing and I had to decide either to stop my activities in the Committee or ignore the warning. Without any doubt we chose the second option.

At the beginning of 1980 two diligent distributors of the Kronika, Povilas Buzas and Anastazas Janulis, were arrested in Lithuania. The latter not paying attention to his age was a man of inexhaustible energy and diligence. God give us a larger number of such Jesuits! And in Moscow the secretary of the Christian Committee Viktor Kapitanchyuk was arrested. We seriously pondered that if the KGB undertook to liquidate the Christian Committee in Moscow, our time would also come soon.

Searches and Arrests

On 17 April 1980 while returning from church I saw a group of people. Their leader greeted me by saying: 'Glory to Jesus Christ!' I thought that maybe some pastor had come with a group of tourists... Unfortunately, my "tourists" were prepared to search through everything even a dog house. They thoroughly searched not only my rooms, but also those of my housekeeper, of the deceased Rev. Virgilijus Jaugelis, and of Ona Kavaliauskait . Thank God they failed to find any of the hiding places and took away only what was on the desk and in the bookcases.

The very same day a search was also carried out at the home of Petrikien in Kybartai, where Congregation of the Holy Family Sister Genovait Navickait was making copies of the Kronika. After the search, she was arrested. The next day the Sister of the same Congregation Onut Vitkauskait was also arrested. This was a very painful loss for

both the Congregation and the Kronika. However, a little while later Sister Bernadeta Mališkaitė, who became one of the most important workers, joined the editorial staff of the Kronika.

After the search, I was not summoned for interrogation for a long while and this made me anxious. Only two months later I received a subpoena to go for interrogation in Moscow, but I decided not to go. A week later a repeat subpoena arrived. I prepared the Catholic Committee's document on the freedom of religion and began waiting for being arrested. But everything gradually calmed down. In July my mood improved because Sadnaitė was released. When one worker after the other departs, it becomes truly difficult, but when they begin to return the world becomes brighter.

On 12 August 1980 the house of the sisters of Eucharistic Jesus (Donelaių St. 36, Kaunas) was searched. Thank God, the KGB officers failed to find anything dangerous there although they could have. During the whole period of publishing the Kronika a great deal of materials passed through the house. There was one hiding place protected by Providence, which, fortunately, the searchers did not find. Friends of the Eucharist, nuns, and priests would bring a lot of information there. Sometimes I did, but more often one of the sisters would deliver the material to Kybartai. Very often material was delivered by the hardworking Sister of the Congregation of the Holy Family Donata Meškauskaitė.

By this time Sister Jadvyga Stanelytė had already been arrested and was awaiting the trial in the Lukiškės prison. Gleb Yakunin was sentenced in Moscow in August. All signs were pointing that the end of the underground work was approaching. The year 1980 was a very difficult period since the oppression machine of the communist party and KGB was pitilessly devouring all the fighters for human rights.

In January at the offices of the Council for Religious Affairs the administrators of the dioceses were 'taught' how to obey the soviet authorities. The distributors and supporters of the Kronika Janulis, Buzas, Vitkauskaitė, and Navickaitė were arrested while Stanelytė and assistant professor Vytautas Skuodis, who during the time of court proceedings was accepted into the Catholic Committee, were sentenced. Juozas Zdebskis (one of the most active supporters of the Kronika) was severely burned by chemical substances spilled on the seat of his car in an unknown way. Vytautas Vaišinas, who was with him in the car, was injured in a lesser degree. Nevertheless, the persecution not only did not frighten us, but on the contrary, it prepared us for a more active fight - the priests Algimantas Keina, Vaclovas Staknas, and Leonas Kalinauskas joined the Catholic Committee. I received various kinds of assistance from everywhere: those who could not or did not know how to help

directly, provided material support - they would put a few hundreds rubles in my pocket and only said: "You'll know where to spend it."

Our Support

During the whole life of the Kronika one could only trust in God. Everyone who collected information, articles, assisted in editing, distributing, and sending issues to the West lacked everything: experience, knowledge, and organizational ability. In general, there were few priests and laymen who wanted to place their heads in the lion's jaws. Often I had to rely on my Guardian Angel, often I repeated the prayer: "Lord, you know that I am working for You. If this work is necessary, care for me, if not - let it end". And God cared for me in a wonderful way. It seems to me that everything on which the Kronika reported and was distributed all over the world is only one side, and the other side was no less important - all of us became a little braver, became more conscious, began to understand that the legs of the Godless idol are made of clay, and what is the most important - we comprehended that we should not sit with our hands folded, but work and fight, for then God would help us.

I can hardly imagine the publication of the Kronika if there had not been beside us like-minded priests Alfonsas Svarinskas, Juozas Zdebskis, Jonas Kauneckas, Jonas Lauri nas, Bronius Antanaitis, Pranciškus Ra i nas, Kazimieras Žem nas, and others with whom whenever there was a need it was always possible to discuss everything. We would discuss more difficult questions with the exiled bishops, and talk about other problems at the meetings of priests. When we were talking, we often did not even mention the name of the Kronika. And there was no shortage of problems. Frequently, questions would arise how to behave in one or another case (for example, whether to write in the Kronika only about the arbitrary actions of the atheists or also about priests who were not working for the Church.). I thank God for the bishops, priests, nuns, and laymen who were always beside me and on whom I could always rely.

The publication and distribution of the Kronika demanded a lot of time, sometimes I had to travel to Moscow. Priests from neighboring parishes always willingly helped me when needed and especially the pastor of Alvit as Boleslovas Ražukas. But the underground priest Petras Našl nas was the most diligent helper. I would travel to Kaunas say: "Rev. Petras, I need your help for three days" and with the punctuality of a clock he would arrive and help. Without this help I would have been powerless. Rev. Jaugelis assisted me for a short time, and in the last years before his arrest - Rev. Kastytis Matulionis and Jonas Boruta. More and more frequently, I began to think to whom should I entrust the Kronika if I was arrested.

Tenth Anniversary of the Kronika

The supporters of the Kronika wanted to mark somehow the tenth anniversary of the publication. The sculptor Jakštas from the Vilnius region was asked to carve something out of oak for this occasion. One dark night he brought a huge sculpture which a large group of men were barely able to unload from the car. The sculpture depicted the book - the Kronika from which were growing thorns - the agonies of the nation; above them a heart - perhaps that of the Lord or a Lithuanian who loves God and his Homeland; and from the sides - hands clasped in prayer (only on those clasped hands did the Kronika did the survive for 10 years). When I blessed this monument, I only explained to the parishioners that this book symbolizes the history of the tortures of the nation.

In my heart I carried a great deal of gratitude to God for protecting me ten years. When I started publishing the Kronika, I expected that this work would last some three years - at that time the thought did not enter my mind to keep the publication for 10 years... What is not allowed for man, God can do everything.

It seemed that the anniversary issue of the Kronika would never be issued. On 27 February 1982 KGB cars with eight people arrived in Kybartai. It was not clear what they were doing and why they had come. Parishioners mentioned that the license plates of the vehicles were changed. I noticed that some vehicles accompanied me even when I was visiting a sick person. This shadowing lasted until 17 March. Under these conditions the 51st issue was prepared. On the first sheet we wrote the date of 19 March. (Here, I would like to note that the date marked on the cover sheet of the Kronika often did not always correspond to the real date of issue - we had no desire to help the KGB learn the real date of issuing numbers of the Kronika). A week later the 52nd issue was issued. The KGB authorities could be 'satisfied' by having spent a month in Kybartai, while for the publishers this resulted in greater worries. But even at the most difficult moment the work did not stop.

The year 1982 was quite difficult. Probably, the work under greater tensions had an effect - I had to be admitted to a hospital in order to 'repair' my shattered health to some degree. The thought would haunt me: what will I do with such health in a KGB prison or labor camp? There was only one solution: "It will be as God determines." At the beginning of 1983 I went to Druskininkai for medical treatment. It was very good to forget everything - the KGB authorities, the Kronika, and other problems - for several weeks.

Who Will Continue the Work?

On 26 January 1983 two Sisters came to Druskininkai from Kybartai to tell me that Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas was arrested and searches were

conducted at the homes of Kauneckas and Keina. Very anxious days followed. Many people were summoned for interrogations, among them the members of the Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Rights of Believers. On 28 February I received a subpoena for interrogation. For two days Captain Pilelis questioned me about Svarinskas, about my acquaintances with Moscow dissidents Gleb Yakunin, Viktor Kapitanchuk, Dmitrii Dudko, and others. The interrogation clearly showed, that my days of freedom, were, probably, already numbered.

For many years Sister Elena Šuliauskait assisted me steadfastly. She would prepare the greater part of the manuscripts. I saw how much the week of intense work until the issue of the *Kronika* was fully prepared and its 8 copies were sent in various directions cost her health. She worked and never complained although I clearly saw that more assistants were needed. After her return from the labor camp Sister Nijol Sad nait diligently helped. It seemed that God had created her especially for this work. Sisters of the Congregation of the Holy Family joined in the work: Bernadeta Mališkait was able to edit, Ona Kavaliauskait - to collect and rewrite material, Birut Brili t - to edit a youth publication, and was learning to take photographs and make copies of texts. I needed to find several priests who in the event of my arrest could lead the operation. Rev. Kauneckas willingly agreed to help and even visited me several times to learn how to edit an issue, but he was watched by the KGB no less attentively than I was. Before my arrest, when I was leaving for Vilnius I asked Rev. Boruta: "If there will be a need, help!"

The Clock Stopped

During the trial of Svarinskas, one KGB officer promised that my case would have 25 volumes. Although the faithful were not admitted into the courtroom, Kauneckas and I were allowed to enter it for the reading of the verdict. The verdict ended with the unexpected court decision: "to initiate criminal proceedings against Rev. S. Tamkevi ius for anti-Soviet propaganda." A KGB officer who was standing next to me immediately ordered me to go with him to the room for witnesses and after the people departed, I was taken to the KGB dungeons. They stripped me of my clothes, made a thorough search, gave me an aluminum cup, a spoon, and a banged up bowl for porridge - my clock stopped. It was very strange, but the frequently felt anxiety about who would publish the *Kronika* disappeared? "If necessary, Lord, take care of it!"

Kronika Is Alive

In the spring of 1984 my interrogator Vytautas Urbonas traveled to Perm camp no. 37 and invited me for a talk. After several general questions he fixed his eyes on me and said:

“You were the editor of the Kronika”? Most likely, he expected that now that I had been sentenced, I would acknowledge this.

“Has the publication of the Kronika stopped?” - I asked.

“It is still going. ” - I heard the reply that was as dear to my heart as bread is for a prisoner. “It is still going,” - for a long time this phrase resounded like music in my ears.

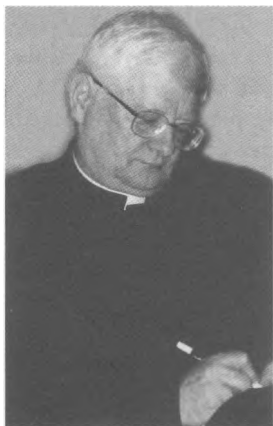
After this I did not hear anything about the Kronika until 1988 when still being in Siberia I learned that even in the most difficult years of KGB fury several Sisters and Jonas Boruta S] kept the Kronika alive.

The KGB was not able to destroy the Kronika for 17 years! This is a real miracle, knowing how many permanent employees and informers this repressive machine had. This miracle was possible only because in Lithuania there were people whom I could characterize by the same word: Miracle. After so many decades of darkness and violence there were people who could sacrifice everything for God and Homeland, for truth and goodness. I mentioned only some of them though I should mention many more of them. Can one forget Sister Tekl Steponavi i t from Klaip da who provided a great deal of material for the Kronika or Sister Janina Judikevi i t from Marijampol , who was ready to help always and everywhere? Indeed, the Lord gives everyone a different charisma: Sister Julija Kuodyt knew how to encourage others, many could obtain support from her assistance; the elderly Sister Ona Dranginyt could keep watch like a Guardian Angel and care for our working conditions.

Thank God for those times and people who did not expect honors, but took their position with the undefeatable idea: “For God and the Homeland!”

BISHOP JONAS BORUTA SJ

2. LORD, WHAT A BLESSING THAT YOU ALLOWED...



I learned about The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania in the first year of its issuance. Encouraged by Rev. Jonas Lauri nas SJ, I began to write news items for the Kronika in 1973. Usually, they concerned university life. Afterwards, asked by Lauri nas, I began to translate into Lithuanian news items received from Russia and Ukraine.

While working at the Institute of Physics of the Lithuanian Academy of Science and being a post-graduate student preparing a dissertation, from 1973 I began to study at the underground seminary for priests. I had to pass examinations given by Lauri nas and the Jesuit Provincial superior Jonas Danyla. They

would also sent me to Rev. Vaclovas Aliulis MIC and the Marian Provincial superior Pranciškus Ra i nas probably with the intention that they would be better acquainted with the candidates seeking priesthood in the underground seminary.

In August 1982 I was ordained a priest and in November of the same year I traveled to Ukraine hoping to be employed there as a priest (as another graduate of the underground seminary Vytautas Merkys SJ had done). Unfortunately, after a month the local KGB ordered me to leave Ukraine within 24 hours.

I came back to Lithuania at the beginning of January 1983. Soon afterwards the repressions against the members of the TTGKK and the publishers of the Kronika began. On 26 January 1983 Alfonsas Svarinskas was arrested and in May - Sigitas Tamkevi ius. I had been keeping close ties with Tamkevi ius since my ordination as a priest. He had asked Bishop Julijonas Steponavi ius to ordain me in the small church of Skaistgiris, to which he accompanied me along with Rev. Leonardas Jagminas SJ. They were the only witnesses to my ordination. After returning from Ukraine, I would often visit him and help him in priestly work.

During the trial of Svarinskas to which he had to travel, Tamkevi ius invited me to stand as his replacement in the parish. Before departing to the courtroom, he took a sheet of paper and a pen (which usually helped

us 'to talk' so that the 'listening walls' would not hear us) and wrote: "If necessary, take care of the Kronika."

I understood those words as a thoughtful insurance if anything happened to him. I was convinced that for that work in the Kronika there were better prepared people - the members of the Catholic Committee - who could accomplish it better. But, if no one else were available. "O.K. if necessary I'll help," - I wrote in response.

Work in the Kronika

I intuitively felt that the publishing center of the Kronika was in Kybartai, but we had never talked about it. When Tamkevičius was arrested, there was no publishing crisis for the Kronika. He had organized everything so well that the information for the next issue had been collected, its technical base had been prepared, and the sisters-nuns were able and willing to continue the work. I felt somehow calm that there were other people besides me who would take over the work. However, at the end of August during a retreat for the sisters, the head sister of the Congregation of the Eucharist Jesus appealed to me to help issue the Kronika.

I had already been acquainted with Sister Gerarda Elena Šuliauskaitė who was one of the main assistants of Tamkevičius in publishing the Kronika. I had a talk with Sisters Gerarda and Pija Bronytė Vazgelevičienė during which we talked about how to collect and distribute the received material (which material is suitable for the Kronika, and which for Aušra), how to prepare it and obtain the Church approval of exiled Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius (in Žagarė) for each issue. Since I was not connected with any parish (the RRT representative did not grant the 'servant of the cult' registration certificate without which one was not allowed to carry out the duties of a priest to the graduates of the underground seminary) and traveled all around Lithuania, every few months I would visit Žagarė with the materials for the new issue of the Kronika. Sometimes the Sisters would make this trip. The most important thing was to coordinate the material which mentioned the undue concessions of some priest to the authorities. We had to know the opinion of the bishop and receive his approval before issuing the material. No light-minded decision could be taken here.

The bishop would read the brought articles silently, but when he would reach anything that interested or intrigued him he would unwittingly begin to comment loudly. At such moments I would put my finger to my lips and warn him: "Your Excellency, Your Excellency..." He would smile, increase the volume of the turned on radio so that the unseen ears would not hear his words, and continue reading.

The opinion of Bishop Steponavičius was very valuable. He did not want anonymous information to be published for which no one would

be responsible. For example, one young priest wrote a good article about the commemoration of the anniversary of Saint Kazimieras. Bishop Steponavičius read the article and said: "If it were signed by believers and sent to the authorities, it would have a totally different value." After publishing 2 or 3 other issues, it, nevertheless, was included. The bishop smiled and said: "One such article is OK, but let us make sure that the Kronika does not become a place for anonymous advertisements."

Another important problem which I had to resolve with Bishop Steponavičius was the fate of the TTGKK and its relationship with the Kronika. After the arrests of Svarinskas and Tamkevičius, other members of the TTGKK were also persecuted and they began to declare that they were ending their activities. Juozas Zdebskis then began to restore the Committee, now as an underground committee. However, it was not convenient for him to do this because with the assistance of KGB falsification, already in 1980 he had been excused from the Committee. At the time when the other members announced that they were ending their activities, it was not suitable for him to do this independently. However, Zdebskis was agitated. He was convinced that the Committee must exist and act.

When I began to care for the Kronika and it continued to be published, Zdebskis was again worried about who was leading it now. He tried to learn this for a whole year and we knew that. In the spring of the next year, after the arrests during a retreat the senior Sister of the Congregation of Eucharist Jesus Ksavera Julija Kuodytė came up to me and said: "I can no longer not tell Zdebskis who is now caring for the Kronika."

Establishment of the Underground TTGKK

When I met Zdebskis afterwards, our conversations became very practical - we tried to resolve the problem of the relationship between the underground Committee and the Kronika. A little while later we traveled together (with Saulius Kelpša driving) to visit Bishop Steponavičius. Taking him along we traveled to a forest in Latvia and discussed the matter there. We decided that the underground TTGKK would continue its activities, but its documents would be announced in the Kronika in an informational form, i.e. the original texts would not be given, but their contents would be presented in other words.

I would meet with the members of the underground TTGKK from time to time to discuss the problems of publishing the Kronika, its delivery to the West, and other Church matters. If we had to make a more firm statement on some question, we would prepare it and sent it to the authorities in the name of the underground TTGKK. These meetings of the Committee were attended by Juozas Zdebskis, canon Gvidonas

Dovidaitis, Petras Dumbliauskas SDB, Antanas Gražulis SJ, Lionginas Kunevičius, and me. We would usually meet in Tabariškiai (near Kaunas) at the home of Dumbliauskas or at the home of Dovidaitis in Pilviškiai.

Difficulties in Preparing the Kronika

After the arrest of Tamkevičius, unforeseen problems arose in the issuance of the Kronika. The first number issued after the arrest was not distributed quickly. In October we issued the second number. In November during the Merciful Mother of the Gates of Dawn festivities, we learned that someone has issued a completely different version of the first post-arrest issue, which contained not current information, but articles about events in the previous century such as the Kražiai slaughter, etc. This news caused anxiety since I happened to hear that the KGB had told the witnesses being interrogated in the Tamkevičius case that the themes and style of articles in the Kronika had changed completely after the arrest of Tamkevičius. This raised anxiety because the KGB officers wanted to use this to prove that Tamkevičius was the editor of the Kronika.

Perhaps persons with good intentions had done this, wanting that the issuance of the Kronika would not be broken... But this raised a very great anxiety for us, especially as this new edition, issued by who knows who, reached the West with suspicious speed (even though our real edition had already been received). We began to seek ways how to mark the real Kronika which was being sent to the West.

Someone could sense who was doing the most important work in the issuing of the Kronika and eyes turned to Kybartai. Efforts were being made and pressure was being applied to replace the Sisters who were the main publishers of the Kronika and assistants in its transmission to the West. Such desires were even expressed in the congregations of the sisters. Undoubtedly, such 'reorganizations' would have very seriously hurt the harmony of the established ties of the publishers, the work itself, and its sending to the West. Bishop Steponavičius did not approve of this and postponed such initiatives. I also had the opportunity to participate in deciding these questions in my capacity as the spiritual father of the congregations. It is difficult to say whether this was inspired by the KGB to make the publication more difficult or by someone's sincere wish to help. All these events caused a lot nervous tension and worries. Those were the most difficult days in those times.

Due to my travels all around Lithuania the geography of information was extended. This made it more difficult for the KGB to find the sources of the information in the Kronika and its publication. On the other hand, there were also problems connected with articles received from other sources. We would receive super patriotic articles and poetry.

Sometimes the information was very distorted. We feared that this could be the work of the KGB and that the paper of these articles could be marked by chemical or radioactive substances. Suspicions increased when somebody broke into the churches of Šiluva and Josvainiai where these articles had been hidden. We had to check and screen information. Bishop Steponavičius did not like the inclusion of poetry; he would say: "Facts, only facts!" But poetry was also needed. After reading the poetry, Bishop Steponavičius would say: "But make sure that there will not be too much or too frequent poetry."

My duties were to determine the order of the articles and to write the lead article. Sometimes I did not have the time or adequate conditions to write. In the year commemorating the Baptism of Lithuania, the KGB increased their work. In one issue of the *Kronika* instead of the lead article we placed the sermon 'Broken Crosses' by Jonas Laurinas, which many priests already knew well and had even used. We knew that this would not expose the author to any danger - in the event of interrogation he could explain that this sermon was already well known by many priests. We added our own addition to the conclusion of the sermon. Father Laurinas SJ in a half-joking, half-serious manner commented afterwards that we had stuck some patriotic sentences onto his sermon and a totally extremist ending.

The publishing of the 73rd issue was a dramatic event. All the material collected for this issue was buried in an underground hiding place in Kazl Rūda. The KGB was already treading on our toes there: from November 1986 until the beginning of January 1987 a car was parked through both night and day with watchers who were replaced every few hours near the house. It was quite impossible to take the material since the ground was already frozen and any digging would be heard. At long last, after the weather became a little warmer, Sister Pija (Bron Vazgelevičienė) decided to bring the material to us. Probably, some sheets of the articles had been marked by the KGB and she was followed. (Incidentally, when the material was removed from Kazl Rūda, the car with the officers also disappeared). It was not possible to take the material to Kybartai so she brought it to Vilnius. However, using a typewriter in an apartment in a multi-story apartment buildings was also not safe. Then two copies of this issue were written by hand in part at my apartment and the other part at the apartment of the Sisters. It was decided to take one copy to the dissidents in Moscow for sending to the West (because it was impossible to photograph it) and to try to send the other copy through tourists. Sister Sadnaitė volunteered to take the copy to Moscow.

However, both copies fell into the hands of the KGB during a search. (One copy torn up by Sadnaitė and thrown into the toilet was pulled

and pieced together by the KGB. It is in the KGB archive.) Sad nait was detained, and the apartment of Sisters Vazgelevi i t and Šuliauskait was searched and they were interrogated, but... Later that very evening Sad nait was released from the KGB prison. Gorbachev's perestrojka had already started and, apparently, permission for arresting her was not given by Moscow.

In order to issue number no. 73 and send it to the West, we had to recreate it immediately. We had to restore it from our memory since all rough copies had already been destroyed. (We usually burned them in the bathtub and then threw the ashes into the toilet). We recreated the issue from memory and it reached the West. Vatican and other radio stations began broadcasting information from this issue. However, in recreating the issue from memory, several news items were not included.

Now when the doors of the KGB archives are open, we can see the shorthand notes on the margins of the texts from radio broadcasts: 'Why has this news item been left out?' (One of the news items was about the commemoration of Prof. Pranas Dovydaitis in the church in Pilviškiai). They compared the news items from the recordings of foreign radio broadcasts with the news items in the glued-up version and full copy taken from Vazgelevi i t and ... did not understand that they already had in their hands the original edition of the Kronika. They thought that it had to be somewhere else and that there were copies of the 73rd issue in addition to those they had seized. The fate of the Kronika was on the verge of disaster...

After this event KGB attention was directed to Kybartai. Searches were conducted at the home of the Sisters almost every week. Some important incriminating things were found, but they were not arrested. It was not clear what they were seeking? Maybe they wanted to intimidate and stop the activities without arrests? But even in such conditions of frequent searches and watching, the sisters from Kybartai worked, edited, typed, and the issues of the Kronika came out one after the other. This shows the great heroism of the Sisters: Bernadeta, Birut , Onut , and Virginija. They had to have not only courage but also the strong inner spiritual peace, which only faith and prayer can provide.

Assistance of Friends from the West

To publish the Kronika we needed not only dedicated people but also financial funds. For we had to have typewriters, at least several sets of typewriter letters (so that they would not have the same letters with which the very first issues had been typed), photographic equipment, and etc. We needed to send packages to those imprisoned for the Kronika and to support materially the members of their families. Lithuanian Americans helped us both in delivering the news of the Kronika to the

world and in providing the just mentioned financial support. When I was editing the Kronika, Rev. Antanas Saulaitis SJ from the U.S. or other visiting Jesuits usually provided us with the photographic equipment. When they could not (or did not know what) to bring from there, they would purchase here in the special foreign currency shop. Unfortunately, we could not accompany them to this shop because the KGB would have immediately understood for whom and for what purpose the photographic equipment was being purchased. Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid from the U.S.A. purchased 2 or 3 automobiles for the people who had contributed the most to the copying and technical maintenance of the Kronika. When I was editor, Rev. Antanas Gražulis SJ was the major supplier and supervisor of this equipment. He would care for the purchasing of typewriters and the replacement sets of letters and their conversion as well with preparing souvenirs in which to hide the photographic negatives for sending to the West.

Gint Damušyt who at time worked for the Religious Aid (New York) showed a great deal of courage. The Soviet authorities would at times not allow her to visit Lithuania and she had to stay in Moscow. Gražulis would then travel to meet her. If there had not been people like her, if there had not been people dedicated to the Church and Lithuania there, we would not have been able to accomplish much. We thank them!

The Kronika stopped its publication when the Cathedral of Vilnius was returned, when Bishop Steponavičius came back from exile and Tamkevičius from a labor camp, and when it was possible to write the truth in the SJ dis press which did obey Soviet censorship. The Kronika fulfilled its pledge that it will cease publication only when persecution is terminated and the Church regains freedom. Together with the return of the Vilnius Cathedral, the journal Katalik pasaulis (The World of Catholics) began publication. Today we have the following other Catholic publications: Bažnyčios žinios (The Church News), XXI amžius (The XXI Century), Dienovidis (The Midday), Sandora (Concord), and Naujasis Židinys-Aidai (The New Hearth - Echoes).

Lord, what a blessing it is that you allowed us to contribute to this! Our greatest reward is that You chose us, that You allowed us to mediate when through Your church You extended Your sacrifice on the cross in our land. I wish also today that all of us would work in accordance with the old principle of those days: to work without looking at what other people are doing and to do everything that I can do here, now, in the place where God has placed me and allowed me to work for His greater glory. For the greater glory of the One who loves all of us.

PART III

KGB STRUGGLE AGAINST KRONIKA IN LITHUANIA AND IN THE WEST

1. WATCHING THE KRONIKA

(The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania)

As was mentioned earlier, at the end of the 1960s (1968-1970) diligent priests began writing declarations to Church and civil authorities demanding liberties for the Church and believers. The first priests to attract the KGB's attention were those who submitted or sent declarations as well as those who gathered the signatures of their colleagues. The priests of the Vilkaviškis diocese Sigitas Tamkevičius, Juozas Zdebskis, Pranas Raišas, Alfonsas Svarinskas, Petras Dumbliauskas, Lionginas Kunevičius, and Gvidonas Dovidaitis comprised one of the most active groups. The KGB wanted to find out who were the organizers and authors of these declarations and how the documents managed to reach Western countries. For this purpose the KGB used the agents it had among the priests, especially those working in the offices of dioceses. With the appearance of a new declaration all the agents who had possible access to the information were called to action.¹ Other operative measures were also employed.

In 1969 the representative of the Council for Religious Affairs deprived Tamkevičius and Zdebskis of their priest registration certificates because of their active priest activities and refusal to obey Soviet prohibitions (by catechizing children, collecting signatures for collective priest declarations). In 1970 after their certificates were returned, Zdebskis became the vicar in Prienai while Tamkevičius was appointed to Simnas, but the two priests continued to maintain relations. In 1971 secret listening equipment was installed in Zdebskis's apartment. The KGB more than once recorded parts of the conversations between Zdebskis and Tamkevičius who sometimes visited Zdebskis (they were very cautious and avoided talking loudly on important issues) from which the KGB surmised that materials were being gathered for some publication.² This increased the suspicions of the KGB who devoted even greater attention to the priests.

¹ LYA. F. K-I, C. d. 45, f. 500, sh. 96, 100, 105, 119, 124.

² *ibid.* F 501, sh. 51-76.

Because underground publications in the 1970s were not limited to only religious literature (catechisms, prayer-books) but also included philosophical works from a Christian point of view, the first persons to receive attention from the KGB were the publishers of this sort of literature: Petras Plumpa, Povilas Petronis, Jonas Stašaitis, and Juozas Zdebskis.³ After the appearance of the LKB Kronika (henceforth simply Kronika), many publishers of underground religious literature also became involved in its issuance. The publishing equipment, experience, and contacts which these people possessed comprised the material and organizational basis for publishing the Kronika.

As Archbishop Tamkevičius noted in his recollections, in the first years of its issuance Petras Plumpa (up to his arrest on 20 November 1973) was his irreplaceable assistant.⁴ The relations of these people with Moscow dissidents were helpful in establishing the Kronika's first bridges to the West.

After the first issue of Kronika was published, during a search in the flat of the medicine institute administrator and nun Gema Jadvyga Stanelytė in Kaunas on 23 June 1972 the KGB found the first issue of the Kronika (as well as its translation into Russian). On 5 July 1972 Prosecutor General of the Lithuanian SSR (LSSR) Alfonsas Kairelis signed a decision for starting criminal case No. 345 on the Kronika and charged the KGB with carrying out a preliminary investigation.⁵

On 11 August 1972 "The Plan for Interrogation Acts and Secret Service and Strategic Measures for Criminal Case No. 345," prepared by the Fifth and Investigation divisions and Kaunas City Department of the Lithuanian KGB, was approved.⁶ As one can learn from the plan, the KGB had already gathered some information regarding the Kronika in April. This information, however, was still chaotic and the main attention was directed at publishers of underground religious literature who were not directly connected with the Kronika. Among the people to be observed were Petronis, Stašaitis, the priests Jonas Laurinas, Juozas Zdebskis, Prosperas Bubnys, Antanas Šeškevičius, the Sisters Antanina Poškaitė, Jadvyga Stanelytė, Nijolė Cicėkaitė, Julija Kuodytė as well as many other people who had incidentally attracted their attention. The real editor of the Kronika Tamkevičius is not yet mentioned. The last (34th) point of the plan includes the measure: after learning the identities of the publishers of the Kronika and their assistants, carry out searches in their homes at the same time, question them and decide whether or not to bring criminal charges against them.⁷

³ *ibid.* Sh. 2-8. Plan of secret service-strategic measures. 17 May 1971.

⁴ Archbishop Tamkevičius. LKB Kronika. Volume XI. 1997, pp. 348-349.

⁵ LYA. Criminal Case No. 47706/3. Volume 4, sh. 11.

⁶ *ibid.* F.K-1, C. d. 8, f. 201, sh. 89-103.

⁷ *ibid.* Sh. 102-103.

The appearance of the *Kronika* attracted the attention of the highest authorities of Soviet Lithuania: at the 11th plenum of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party [CC LCP] (on 22 November 1972) after noting that the clergy had recently become more active and tried to influence the youth, Second Secretary Valerii Kharazov informed the plenum's participants that "together with nationalistic elements they (the clergy - author) had started publishing the slanderous publication *Lietuvos Katalik Bažny ios kronika* (The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania)." ⁸

Kronika in the World and the Aims of KGB Observation

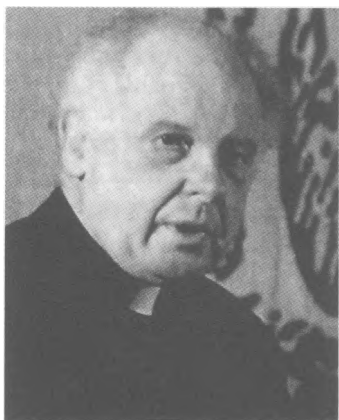
From its first to last issue the *Kronika* was sent to the West. The first issue reached the newspaper *Draugas* (Friend) published by Lithuanians in the United States three months after its appearance in Lithuania.

Through the efforts of U.S. resident Rev. Kazimieras Pugevi ius 1,000 copies of the *Kronika* were printed and sent to Lithuanian communities in the U.S.A., Canada, Europe, England, South America, and Australia. The Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid Auxiliary, which was established in the U.S., began publishing the *Kronika* in multi-issue volumes from 1974. The information from the *Kronika* was published not only in *Draugas*, but also in other Lithuanian newspapers in the free world: *Darbininkas* (Worker), *T višk s žiburiai* (Lights of the Homeland), etc. Through the efforts of Msgr. Vincentas Mincevi ius (in Rome) the *Kronika* was translated into Italian and information from it was presented to the Vatican. Through the efforts of the Rev. Kazimieras Kuzminskas the *Kronika* was translated into other Western languages, such as English, Spanish, German, French, and sent to the libraries of colleges and universities, to the press, radio and TV stations, to Catholic bishops and bishops of other faiths, news agencies, various institutes, influential organizations, officials, parliament deputies, diplomats, and international organizations. Vatican Radio broadcast news items from the *Kronika*. Moreover, every month the Lithuanian language broadcast service of Vatican Radio (chief editor - Msgr. Vytautas Kazlauskas) distributed the *Elta-Press* bulletin prepared by Mincevi ius with an Italian language translation of the latest issue of *Kronika* to the Central office of Vatican Radio as well as its more than 30 editorial offices of other languages. This information was broadcast not only on Vatican Radio but also on other radio stations, such as Voice of America, BBC, Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, *Nemeckaja volna*, and Radio Svoboda. ⁹

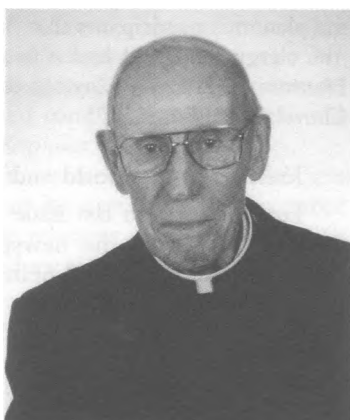
⁸ LYA. LKP DS. F. 1771, C. d. 248, f. 15, sh. 15-17.

⁹ Vidas Spengla, *Lietuvos Katalik Bažny ios Kronika*. XI, pp. 56-68, 182-184.

The main publishers and propagators
of the Kronika in the world



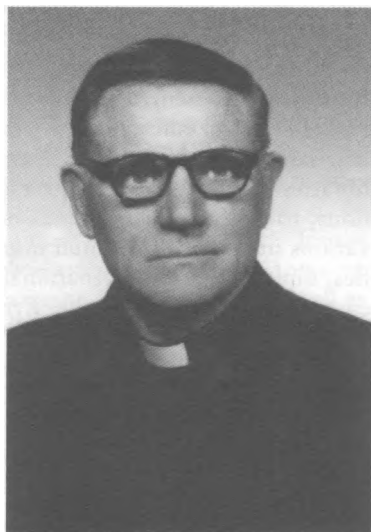
Rev. Kazimieras Pugevičius



Rev. Kazimieras Kuzminskas



Msgr. Vincentas Mincevičius



Msgr. Vytautas Kazlauskas

Due to the efforts of Lithuanians living abroad, the voice of the *Kronika* spread widely not only in the free world but also reached the people living behind the Iron Curtain through radio broadcasts. The restrictions of religious freedom and on all the people in the USSR as well as the persecution and repression against fighters for this liberty became known. This was a very damaging thing not only for the internal policy but also for the foreign policy of the USSR. If the decision of the first criminal case (No. 345) concerning the *Kronika* mentioned only the "malicious distortions lowering the dignity of the Soviet state and social order"¹⁰ its political danger was later (in 1978) perceived much more seriously. On 28 February 1978 in report No. 5/2654 Lithuanian KGB Chairman Juozas Petkevicius wrote: "The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania does great political damage to our country. After being sent abroad our enemy uses this material widely in provocative radio programs against the republic and in organizing anti-Soviet slanderous campaigns against the USSR. Therefore, the halting of the publication and distribution of inimical publications is one of the most important tasks of all security authorities in the republic."¹¹

The main aim of observing the *Kronika* was to find its publishers, to repress them and to stop its publication. The second, so called alibi, aim was to at least discover the channels through which the publication was sent to the West and to sever them. The broadcasting of information from the *Kronika* only in Lithuania was not as dangerous for Soviet policy as was its dissemination in the free world. The disclosure of the true policies of the USSR lowered its prestige and weakened its influence in the world. This was the essential danger of the *Kronika*.

The Main Directions of Observation

In order to track down the organizers and publishers of the *Kronika*, the KGB diligently examined every copy they obtained, followed every person who copied or distributed it, tried to figure out who was the supplier of the published information so as to learn who were the organizers of the publication and its editors.

There were two main ways how the *Kronika* got into the hands of the KGB: agents-deliverers and searches in the homes of suspected publishing assistants. Other instances, such as copies accidentally found by people and given to the KGB or copies taken from tourists returning to the West, were very rare. The main suppliers of the *Kronika* to the KGB were agents fulfilling their tasks, i.e. to get a new copy of the *Kronika* and deliver it to the KGB. If an agent had to return the copy to the person from whom he had acquired it, the KGB would photograph it

¹⁰ LYA. Criminal case No. 47706/3. V. 4, sh. 11.

¹¹ *ibid.* F. K-l. C. d. 8, f. 210, sh. 200-201.

and return it to the person (so that the agent would not give himself away). When there was no need to return the copy, the KGB, nevertheless, retained it. From the 126 copies of the Kronika found in the repositories of the KGB more than 80 were given by agents. There were even 4-5 different copies of some issues, indicating that the Kronika was copied not in one but in many different places.

The KGB examined thoroughly the copies it received. A note was first attached to every copy indicating when and what agent had delivered it, as well as to which KGB division or subdivision the agent belonged and from whom the copy had been acquired. If a copy had to be returned to an agent, the KGB operation technical section first analyzed the copy searching for any traces of the so called 'MT' substance. (The KGB began to treat carbon-paper with a chemical substance which was given the code name 'MT'. Later they also treated paper with the same substance, and tried through their agents to give this treated paper to people who were suspected of being involved in the publication of the Kronika). When the KGB found traces of the 'MT' substance in an acquired copy, they knew the source of the printing. After detecting the printing sources they only had to establish which of them was the first, believing that the place where the initial copies were printed would help them find the editors.

As can be seen from the notes attached to the issues, many agents were, in fact, constant suppliers often receiving different issues of the Kronika from the same person. By tracking such a person, the KGB could effectively follow that person and find out where he/she had obtained the copy and thus draw closer to the primary source - the editorial office.

It was more difficult to do this with issues of the Kronika confiscated during a search. The records of interrogations indicate that the publishing assistants and distributors of the Kronika knew how to react to questioning: they would say that they had found the publication in their post-boxes or that some unfamiliar woman had given it to them in the church and so on. The chain was thus broken.

The distributors of the Kronika knew that if copying equipment and copies were found in their premises they could not escape responsibility. Nevertheless, even then the search for the initial source of the Kronika would usually be broken off, the real client was not betrayed.

Another matter which interested the KGB was the source of the information published in the Kronika. The KGB would check some of the facts mentioned in the Kronika. The official purpose of the checking was to establish if such an event had really taken place. A copy of the Kronika item was sent to the KGB city department or district subdivision where the event described in the Kronika had taken place and the KGB authorities were asked to check the objectivity of the described

event. Local KGB officers (and sometimes KGB officers from Vilnius) invited the people mentioned in the item and officially interrogated them. It can be seen from the interrogation records, though, that the officers had an obvious tendency to question the witnesses in such a manner that they would testify that the account was untrue and slanderous. Later these records were used to start criminal cases against the assistants of the Kronika and served as proof that by assisting the Kronika they "slandered the Soviet state and social order". The information, broadcast by foreign radio stations, was examined especially thoroughly. Using this evidence, the KGB asserted that Western radio stations were conducting anti-Soviet slanderous propaganda. The instructions to verify the validity of facts always included the demand to find out who had supplied the information to the Kronika.¹² This demand, however, was usually not fulfilled because the described event was usually known to more than one person and it was impossible to establish who had supplied the information. Understandably, the security bodies tried to track down the informer because this might help them find the editorial office.

It was just as important to track down the channels through which the Kronika was sent to the West and to block them. These channels were most often established through Moscow. In the beginning Tamkevi ius, Zdebskis, Plumpa, and others gave the Kronika to Moscow dissidents. Later, the number of couriers increased. At the end of 1974 after the arrests and interrogations of Sergei Kovalev and later Gleb Yakunin, Tatyana Velikanova, Viktor Kapitanchyuk, Lev Regelson, Dmitrii Dudko, the KGB learned about some of the channels but was unable to sever them because replacements were found for those arrested. (For example, the wife and son of Kovalev replaced him). It should be noted that none of the arrested publishers of the Kronika disclosed these channels.

Later more tourists from Western countries visited the USSR and Lithuania. Often tourists from the U.S. took the Kronika in microfilms home as a souvenir.

Lithuanian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary from Putnam (U.S.A) were involved in this operation several times. As Archbishop Tamkevi ius testified, when visiting the U.S. in the archive where issues of the Kronika were stored he saw not only the issues which he had sent but also issues sent by somebody else. In other words, the publishers of the Kronika were not the only people who were interested in sending copies to the West.¹³ The KGB watched very closely the tourists who came to Lithuania, and sometimes managed with the assistance of customs officials to search a tourist and confiscate a copy of the

¹² LYA. Criminal case No. P-14308-LI. V. 3, sh. 41-139.

¹³ Archbishop Tamkevi ius. Opus quotation, p. 336.

Kronika. The KGB acquired issues Nos. 12, 13, and 14 this way. When this method was not successful, the issues of the Kronika reached the West in other ways.

Methods and Measures of Spying on the Kronika

The same institution - the KGB - observed the Kronika and organized the fight against it. The plans of the secret service-strategic measures provided not only for revealing its publishers and organizers but also for stopping its issuance or at least diminishing its influence.

Because the former KGB archive no longer holds the strategic cases against the Kronika and its publishers (except for strategic investigation case No. 242 involving Zdebskis), the methods for spying and the measures used in the fight can only be reconstructed with the help of this case and the remaining strategic and criminal material found in some other KGB divisions (but not the Fifth Service which dealt with this job directly because it succeeded in erasing its footsteps completely).

We can learn from the case against Zdebskis that group strategic investigation cases (DGOR in Russian), such as 'Izdateli', 'Mrakobesi', 'Fanaticiki', and others, were established against the publishers of underground religious literature. At first, the publishers of the Kronika were included among the publishers of such religious literature. A separate case was begun for every person more or less seriously suspected of being involved in such publishing activities. Tamkevi ius had the pseudonym 'Tomov', the editor of Aušra Lioginas Kunevi ius - 'Mistik', Svarinskas - 'Neispravymij', Zdebskis - 'Naglets', Plumpa - 'Chameleon', Stašaitis - 'Seminarian', Vai i nas - 'Fanatic' and so on. In other words, special investigative cases were begun against all of them. It is known that the group DOR case No. 22 under the name 'Pautina' (Web) included the main suspected publishers of the Kronika and the members of the Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Rights of Believers (TTGKK).¹⁴ It can be seen from the investigation case against Zdebskis that every year a plan of secret service-strategic measures was made against him (and possibly for other suspected publishers of the Kronika who were in the strategic list). Initially, depending on what the watched person was suspected, a list of the measures which would help disclose his criminal activity was prepared. These plans were made by the KGB division or subdivision of the area in which the watched person lived and confirmed by section 3 (which was dealing with spying on clergy) of the Fifth Service of the Lithuanian KGB.¹⁵

The second source, which helps explain the methods used to watch the persons suspected of being involved in publishing the Kronika and

¹⁴ LYA. F. K-1, C. d. 45, f. 499, sh. 4-7.

¹⁵ *ibid.* F. 500. sh. 24, 74-77; f. 501. sh. 2-8, 111-115; f. 502. sh. 11-14.

to fight against them, is the plans of the investigative actions and secret service-strategic measures used to 'investigate' specific persons before their arrest or immediately afterwards. The latter plans were made by the Fifth Service of the KGB of the LSSR together with the interrogation department and approved by the KGB chief or his deputy.¹⁶ The analysis of these plans helps one to understand better the methods and measures used to watching and combat the Kronika.

Agents. At first agents were collected to help in spying. The plan of secret service-strategic measures mentioned the agents (using pseudonyms) assigned to inform about a watched person. The KGB was interested in any information concerning the suspected publishers of the Kronika; where and when do they travel, who and when visits them, with whom do they maintain close relations (who are their 'contacts'), do they distribute the Kronika or keep a copy of it, etc. The KGB was especially interested in the typewriters which the watched people had. Agents were ordered to ascertain their brand, number and to obtain an example of their type.¹⁷ Upon acquiring a new issue of the Kronika, the KGB would first ascertain if it was typed with one of the typewriters held by suspects. Then, they would investigate whether the new issue of the Kronika was printed with a typewriter, whose type they had registered earlier. If the Kronika was typed with this typewriter for the first time, they made an expert analysis of its type and added the typewriter to the strategic list. This work was done by the strategic technical department (OTO in Russian) of the KGB and sometimes (during the investigations of criminal cases) by court experts. A register was made of which issues of the Kronika (and Aušra) were typed with the same typewriter. For example, one of the notes attached to an issue of the Kronika states that issues Nos. 36, 66, 67, 68, and 69 were typed with the same typewriter. These issues were brought to KGB by agents 'Petras', 'Žilvinas', and 'Arvydas' from Kaunas.¹⁸ The same procedure was followed in regard to issues copied electrographically: they were sent to town or district subdivisions of the KGB with the order to discover whether there were any Eros apparatus in their territory with such (given) typical typing signs.¹⁹

The KGB tried to use the information about the source of issues and the typewriters used to print them, along with other secret service and strategic means, such as spies, semi-agents, secret microphones, external observations, secret searches, to help disclose the channels used for distributing the Kronika and thus reveal the location of its publishing

¹⁶ *ibid.* C. d. 8, f. 201, sh. 89-103, 104-136; f. 207, sh. 37-51; f. 233, sh. 206-219.

¹⁷ *ibid.* C. d. 45, f. 502, sh. 246, 247, 253-255.

¹⁸ LGAM (Lithuania's museum for the victims of the genocide). LKB Kronika documents.

¹⁹ LYA. F. K-1, C. d. 15, f. 4359/3, sh. 1.

center - the editorial office. The KGB even drew maps of the possible locations of the Kronika's publishing centers, but one can declare that their maps were inaccurate because the Kronika was edited elsewhere.

Fixed or temporary observation posts were used to watch the movements of people under observation. Agents worked in fixed observation posts while KGB officers (from section 7) usually used temporary observation posts. They would list when a watched person departed and returned and who (car registration number, make) and when visited him. For example, two agents in Šlavantai (Lazdijai district) constantly watched Zdebskis. So called 'reliable people' (semi-agents) were at times also assigned to assist the task.

A few or even more agents were assigned to keep track of every suspected publisher of the Kronika. Because it was clear to everybody that the Kronika was published by believers, most likely priests and nuns, the KGB tried to utilize as many agents as possible from its priests and 'monk elements' (KGB expression - author) to watch over the publishers.

In preparing the first measure to liquidate the Kronika, on 30 October 1973 the Fifth Section and the investigation department of the KGB of the LSSR prepared and Lithuanian KGB Chief Petkevičius approved the "Plan of Secret Service and Strategic Means and Investigation Acts to Halt the Organized Hostile Activity of the Group of People Publishing the Kronika and Other Religious and Ideologically Harmful Literature". Fifteen such people were named. Among the first mentioned were the priests Zdebskis, Tamkevičius, Jonas Buliauskas, Jonas Laurinas, Algimantas Keina. Judging from the information presented about the suspects and the homes which it was planned to search (a total of 28) as well as those to be interrogated (a total of 33), it is clear that many agents were involved in the observations and they had gathered a lot of information.²⁰ It should be noted that many of the people mentioned in this plan were really involved in the preparation of the Kronika.

In 1974-1975 the KGB considered the priests Zdebskis, Tamkevičius, Raikšas, and Dumbliauskas to be the organizers of the Kronika. Some of them were not directly involved in publishing the Kronika. Later the circle of suspects, nevertheless, became tighter. In the report of the Fifth Section, dated 26 January 1976, the priests Zdebskis, Tamkevičius, Dumbliauskas, and Pranas Adomaitis were still named as the publishers of the Kronika.²¹ However, three months later an agent report stated that "with the help a lot of people and very cautiously Tamkevičius is leading the publishing of the Kronika."²² In 1978 the KGB almost clearly knew who were the main publishers of the Kronika. The plan of secret service and strategic means prepared in September 1978 states:

²⁰ *ibid.* C. d. 8, f. 201, sh. 104-136.

²¹ *ibid.* C. d. 45, f. 502, sh. 87-89.

²² *ibid.* P. III, 112. Report by agent 'Lilija', 14 April 1976.

“While investigating ‘Neispravimiy’ (Svarinskas), Tomov’ (Tamkevi ius), and ‘Naglets’ (Zdebskis) and after analysis of the information provided by agents, it is clear that they are among the main inspirers of the Kronika and used their contacts to distribute it in the republic and very probably are involved with the sending of material from the Kronika abroad.”²³

As one can see, the KGB had little doubt, but lacked undeniable evidence and certainty, that their arrests would result in the liquidation of the Kronika and thus continued to weave its web further.

Secret Microphones (Measure ‘T’). In order to collect more information about the suspected publishers of the Kronika, secret microphones were widely placed in the apartments of the suspects or their ‘connections’ (telephone conversations were monitored less frequently). This was called measure ‘T’. Such equipment was installed in the apartments of Zdebskis in Prienai, of Vytautas Vai i nas in Kaunas, of nuns in Kaunas, and of Jonas Kastytis Matulionis in Vilnius. In preparing secret service-strategic plans, the KGB would designate the homes of suspects in which secret microphones were to be placed.

Prior to the first attempt to destroy the Kronika, i.e. before the arrests on 20-21 November 1973, the KGB placed many secret microphones in the apartments of suspects. The secret service-strategic measures and investigation acts plan, dated 30 October 1973, notes that the secret microphones helped explain many interesting matters. For example, on 13 September 1972 from the secret microphone in the apartment of Bishop Julijonas Steponavi ius, exiled to Žagar , they learned that Keina contributed to the Kronika because the person under observation ‘Farizey’ (Pharisee, i.e. Steponavi ius) asked Keina to write about the conversation which the Rev. Laurinavi ius had in the executive committee of the Šven ionys district and the threats against Bishop Vincentas Sladkevi ius for the catechization of children and, indeed, this information was published in the Kronika. Moreover, it became clear from this conversation that Keina knew about the possibilities to make copies of the Kronika using an Eros apparatus and that the bishop suggested that this new technology should be used as much as possible.²⁴ The conversation between Steponavi ius and the Rev. Jonas Buliauskas in which the latter said that he had an Eros apparatus (not mentioning its location) and that he was in contact with Keina, Petronis, and Plumpa in publication matters was also monitored. Moreover, it also became clear that he had actively participated in collecting signatures for the memorandum of Lithuanian Catholics and its shipment to the West.²⁵

²³ *ibid.* C. d. 45, f. 503, sh. 123.

²⁴ *ibid.* C. d. 8, f. 201, sh. 108.

²⁵ *ibid.* Sh. 109.

While preparing for the first arrests and searches, using secret microphones, it was ascertained that Petronis had an Eros apparatus in Kaunas and that he was collaborating with the Kronika's initiator Zdebskis and its 'administrator' Buliauskas. It was also determined that there was an underground 'publishing location' in Titnago street in Kaunas in the cellar of Jonas Veprauskas's house. A very good source of information was the microphone in the apartment of Vai i nas. The KGB learned that following Petronis's instructions, Vai i nas had purchased parts of an obsolete Eros apparatus, which he had hidden and planned to use to make a new apparatus. The KGB also discovered that Petronis had used his Eros apparatus not only to copy some underground religious literature but also the Kronika. The KGB also learned that there were two Eros apparatuses about whose existence Virgilijus Jaugelis knew.

Through the secret microphones the KGB also obtained information not only about the publication but also the binding of underground publications. During one monitoring in Vai i nas's apartment the KGB heard Petronis call Zdebskis general and this raised the suspicion that Zdebskis was the main organizer of the publishing activities. Most of the information about the activities of Zdebskis (in the period 1973-1980) was collected from the microphone in Vai i nas's apartment and stored in volume 6 of his case.²⁶

Information about other persons including Jonas Kastytis Matulionis²⁷, the 'contacts' of Anastazas Janulis and Povilas Buzas²⁸, the congregation sisters in Kaunas of the arrested Sisters Genovait Navickait and Ona Vitkauskait²⁹, the nuns Veronika Beišyt and Julija Rutelionyt in Marijampol³⁰, Kurtinaityt, ekanauskait, Ma iokait, Paliauskait (in Kaunas and the districts of Telšiai, Mažeikiai, Akmen)³¹ were also collected using the same means. All of them were suspected of participating in the publication of the Kronika.

Secret microphones (measure 'T') were sometimes installed in prison cells. For example, in 1982 Jadvyga Bieliauskien was arrested for collaborating in the publishing of the Kronika, educating youth 'in religious and nationalistic spirit', collecting signatures for 'a slanderous, anti-Soviet document' (the letter written by Svarinskas to First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party Petras Griškevi ius). The KGB first decided 'to reform' her by using other prisoner agents. In order to improve the organization of the work

²⁶ *ibid.* C. d. 45, f. 504, sh. 1-219.

²⁷ *ibid.* C. d. 8, f. 207, sh. 37-51.

²⁸ *ibid.* C. d. 8, f. 233, sh. 206-219.

²⁹ *ibid.* Sh. 192-205.

³⁰ *ibid.* C. d. 8, f. 216, sh. 32-40.

³¹ *ibid.* Sh. 32-40.

of the agents the KGB decided to install measure 'T' (a secret microphone).³²

This measure was also used to check the reliability of agents. During the collection of strategic information prior to the second arrest of Lapienis for participating in the publication of the *Kronika*, the newly recruited agent 'Irena' whom Lapienis trusted very much was sent to watch him. Such an agent, of course, could obtain much valuable information. 'Irena' had, however, collaborated recently in the publishing the *Kronika* and had been caught in the KGB web due to her fear that she would be imprisoned again. Apparently for this reason, the KGB decided to monitor their conversations when she visited Lapienis in his apartment in which a secret microphone had been installed.³³

As long as the publishers of the *Kronika* were not aware of this method or did not realize its danger, the KGB learned a lot of information using secret microphones. When they became aware of this monitoring method, the publishers of the *Kronika* learned how to protect themselves: they would hold conversations by writing or outdoors or by speaking softly while loud music drowned their words.

External Watching (Measure 'NN'). While observing the suspected publishers of the *Kronika*, external watching - measure 'NN' - was used to determine the connections of the suspects, the locations where the *Kronika* was printed, copied, and bound, and the ways it was sent to Moscow.

The KGB usually conducted external watching by following a suspect in a car and registering the locations of all his visits as well as his meetings with people. Watched people were sometimes also secretly photographed.

Being a suspected publisher of the *Kronika*, Zdebskis was also often watched externally. He was a devoted worshipper of the Virgin Mary. During his visits to Vilnius he always tried to visit the Gates of Dawn and to hold a Mass or at least pray there. Being aware of his piety, the KGB gave agent 'Gerardas,' who worked there, the task of informing them when Zdebskis appeared. The KGB would begin watching him externally (measure 'NN') after they received this message.³⁴ This way many of his connections (367 people) were ascertained in Kaunas, Vilnius, and other places in Lithuania and the USSR.³⁵

Seeking to ascertain how and to whom the *Kronika* was sent to Moscow, on 9 October 1978 the KGB started watching externally Zdebskis and the wife of Lapienis who were going to the Dubrava camp

³² *ibid.* Sh. 12-23; f. 242, sh. 3-5.

³³ *ibid.* C. d. 8, f. 247, sh. 133, 144. Plan of main investigation acts and secret service-strategic measures dated 16 March 1984 in criminal case of Lapienis No. 10-2-016.

³⁴ *ibid.* C.d. 45, f. 502, sh. 241. A report of agent 'Gerardas', 17 December 1973.

³⁵ *ibid.* F. 505, sh. 81-132. Zdebskis's list of 'connections'.

to visit Lapienis who was imprisoned there. The following day the travelers were in Moscow. They were watched there by the Moscow KGB who ascertained that Zdebskis visited Aleksandr Lavut in his apartment. It said in the note that Zdebskis was periodically going to Moscow secretly probably to deliver the Kronika to dissidents there for shipment abroad. The KGB of the LSSR asked its USSR counterparts for help in clearing up the question and blocking these channels.³⁶

The KGB especially intensified external watching before arresting the publishers of the Kronika. At that time it was watching where and to whom the suspects were going, what packages they were carrying and where they were leaving them and so on. Relying on the collected information, the KGB decided where to make searches. Such measures were carried out before the first attempt to destroy the Kronika (in 1973) as well as while preparing to arrest Anastazas Janulis, Povilas Buzas, Genovait Navickait , Ona Vitkauskait , and other assistants of the Kronika.³⁷

People were watched externally with the intention of catching them with incriminating evidence. Before the arrest of Buzas (in Birštonas) agent 'Antanas' informed the KGB that Prienai vicar Antanas Gražulis SJ had the latest issue of the Kronika. From external watching the KGB ascertained that the priest visited Buzas on 26 January 1980 probably with the intention to give him the Kronika for duplication. On 31 January the KGB seized Buzas while he was duplicating with an Eros apparatus the following underground literature: more than 100 copies of the latest issue of the Kronika, 50 copies of R pintoj lis, and 2 copies of Aušra. On 16 February 1980 Gražulis's car was stopped and searched, and some typographic type was found. In order to confirm his participation in underground publishing, agents 'Vygantas', 'Ramun ' and 'Antanas' were sent to watch him.³⁸

External observations were conducted on an especially large scale when the KGB wanted to ascertain the locations of the Kronika's publication. For example, the KGB even used three cars with night duties on 2-6 October 1980 to observe Zdebskis and engineer Vai i nas in the environs of Šlavantai in the Lazdijai district where they suspected a new printing 'point' was being established.³⁹

Contributors to the Kronika often noticed that they were watched from cars which followed them or from cars parked close to their homes or from windows of neighboring houses (sometimes for weeks). Such long-term external observations were carried out especially after the arrest of Tamkevi ius when the KGB's hopes that the publication of the

³⁶ *ibid.* F. 499, sh. 39, 40. Letter of chief of the KGB of the LSSR to section 5 of KGB of the USSR 23 November 1978.

³⁷ *ibid.* C. d. 8, f. 201, sh. 104-136; f. 233, sh. 221, 222, 206-219, 192-205.

³⁸ *ibid.* F. 233, sh. 206-219.

³⁹ *ibid.* C. d. 45, f. 504, sh. 85-87. *Myl ti artim* . Vilnius, 1998, pp. 88-89.

Kronika would thus be stopped were not fulfilled. Because the Kronika continued to be issued, the KGB made every effort (in 1984-1987) to ascertain the location where the first copies were printed. A house in Kybartai, where nuns suspected of being involved in the publishing of the Kronika lived, was watched from cars and fixed observation posts for a long time. In order to avoid the danger of being arrested, the nuns transferred the publication of the Kronika to Kazl R da, but KGB cars with agents also followed them there.⁴⁰ With the KGB almost on their heels, only two copies of issue No. 73 of the Kronika were prepared in 1987 (these copies were hand-written by Sad nait) so that there would be something to send to the West, but on 1 April 1987 the KGB arrested her in Vilnius and confiscated a torn-up copy of issue No. 73. The second copy was taken from Sister Bron Vazgelevi i t who came to visit Sad nait while the KGB was searching her apartment. In order to continue the publishing of the Kronika and conceal that the confiscated copies had been the only ones, current Bishop Jonas Boruta (after the arrest of Tamkevi ius he had become the editor of the Kronika) and the Sisters Elena Šuliauskait SJE, Birut Brili t SJE and others re-created the issue and defiantly at great risk published it again in Kybartai. While arresting Sad nait the KGB also used external watching: just after they entered her apartment, they asked: "And where is your visitor?"⁴¹

As some of the people who were being observed constantly testified, sometimes the cars used during the operations had antennae of previously unseen construction. Maybe these were the measures carried out under the code names 'Stiklas' (Glass), 'Veidrodis' (Mirror) or 'Transit' which were mentioned in the Zdebskis files.

External observations were also carried out while executing special operations. Attempting to eliminate Zdebskis from the TTGKK and publishing the Kronika and to discredit him, the KGB of the LSSR with the help of experts from the KGB of the USSR burned him with chemicals on 3 October 1980. (It may have even been an attempt to murder him because he barely survived). Before this operation and after its completion, on 2-6 October he was externally watched twenty-four hours a day, and his recovery after the scorching and the consequences of the campaign to discredit him were followed using secret microphones (measure 'T') in the apartment of Vai i nas who was the main publisher of underground printing-houses and who was in the car with Zdebskis. Vai i nas was also scorched (though to a lesser degree).⁴²

⁴⁰ Sister G. E. Šuliauskait , „LKB Kronikos kryžiaus kelyje“. LKB Kronika. XI, 1997, pp. 374-387.

⁴¹ LYA. E K-I, C. d. 45, f. 523, sh. 3-7; Nijol Sad nait . Skub kime daryti gera, Vilnius, 1998, pp. 190-199.

⁴² LYA. F. K-I, C. d. 45, f. 504, sh. 85-87, 102, 112-123.

Secret Searches (Measure 'D'). While investigating the publishing of the *Kronika* and organizing the struggle against it, the KGB used secret searches widely, i.e. when people were not at home, KGB agents would visit their apartments or other quarters to search and ascertain if the *Kronika* or some other underground literature was published, duplicated, or kept there. If the searched places turned out to be the right ones, the KGB decided what to do next: to watch further using some measures or to make an official search and arrest the suspects. Such measures were applied from the very beginning of watching the *Kronika*. Already in May-August, 1972 in the apartment of Janina Lumbien who distributed *Kronika*, KGB made a secret search and found a copy of the *Kronika* which had been given to agent 'Edmundas' and later returned to her. It seemed that such a search was also made in the apartment of Stanelyt in Kaunas.⁴³

Before the first attempt to end the *Kronika* in 1973, secret searches are mentioned among many other strategic measures ('T', 'NN', 'PK') in a plan of secret service-strategic measures. Due to these measures the KGB ascertained that Rev. Bukauskas kept printed underground literature at the homes of Kriau i nait in Panev žys and Ratkevi ius in Pasvalys.⁴⁴

On 14 and 15 March 1976, after Lapienis, who was being watched due to the *Kronika*, visited Albertas Dilys in his apartment in Vilnius and stayed there for quite a long time (this was ascertained using measure 'NN'), the KGB decided to make a secret search in Dilys's apartment.⁴⁵

After arresting Anastazas Janulis in 1980 for participation in the publication of the *Kronika*, an agent was as usual placed in his prison cell. Janulis blurted out to the agent that he was worried about Biekša who lived in Kaunas and who could suffer for him. The KGB suspected that Biekša was also involved in publishing *Kronika* and therefore decided to make a secret search in his apartment.⁴⁶

While preparing to arrest Jadvyga Bieliauskien for assisting the publication of the *Kronika* and for patriotic and religious education of youth, a plan of secret service-strategic measures and investigation acts was made on 20 April 1980. Many nuns in Kaunas, Marijampol , and Žemaitija (Samogitia) were suspected of duplicating the *Kronika*. In order to prove these suspicions, the KGB decided to make secret searches in the apartments of the Sisters ekanavi i t in Kaunas and Beišyt and Rutelionyt in Marijampol .⁴⁷

⁴³ *ibid.* C. d. 8, f. 201. sh. 89, 90. Plan of secret service-strategic measures and investigation acts in criminal case No. 345, 11 August, 1972.

⁴⁴ *ibid.* Sh. 109-124.

⁴⁵ *ibid.* F. 207, sh. 37-51.

⁴⁶ *ibid.* F. 233, sh. 206-219.

⁴⁷ *ibid.* F. 216, sh. 32-40.

Sometimes instead of secret searches agents or militiamen were sent to examine the rooms and other quarters of the watched people (if there were any typewriters, printers or simply suspicious people).

After arresting Lapienis and Jonas Kastytis Matulionis in 1976 for publishing the *Kronika*, the KGB decided to check if there were any typewriters in the apartment in Vilnius of their close connections Bron and Ona Šostakait (whose apartment Lapienis would visit frequently with unfinished issues of the *Kronika*). For this reason agent 'Rubinas' pretending to be a plumber was sent to their apartment to examine all the rooms, but the sisters did not let him enter one of the rooms.⁴⁸ On 17 April 1973 Rev. Boleslovas Babrauskas visited agent 'Putinas' and went to town to buy some food leaving his briefcase. The agent examined the briefcase and found 10-15 copies of issue No. 5 of the *Kronika* and some other underground literature. The KGB found out that Babrauskas was carrying and distributing the *Kronika*.⁴⁹ Agent 'Gediminas' would examine the typewriters at the home of Zdebskis in Šlavantai after agent 'Svetlana' who was on holiday there reported that some people had used them. Agent 'Mykolas' was responsible for looking for hiding-places for secret literature in the local church and several times found issues of the *Kronika*, Aušra and spare parts for duplicating equipment. With his assistance the keys from Zdebskis's house were made so that KGB officers could make a secret search there. On the pretext of checking documents an authorized militiaman would at times visit him, examine the rooms, and identify people who were on holiday there and inform the KGB about them.⁵⁰

When the *Kronika* continued to be published after the arrests of Svarinskas and Tamkevičius in 1983, the attention of the KGB became fixed on Zdebskis who was considered to be the very cunning and conspiring publisher of the *Kronika*. When Zdebskis was preparing to go to Klaipėda for a meeting with his classmates on 23-25 September 1985, the KGB decided to make a secret search in the Rudamina church (Lazdijai district, where Zdebskis was the pastor at that time). The purpose was to find underground anti-Soviet literature. In the night of 23-24 September with the assistance of an agent they entered the church and made a search, but did not find any incriminating material.⁵¹

Secret searches were made in the homes of many suspected supporters of the *Kronika*. They were made in the apartments of Rev. Kazimieras Vasiliauskas (in St. Rapolas Church in Vilnius), in the apartments of editor of *Aušra* Rev. Lionginas Kunevičius, worker of underground press Jonas Stašaitis, Sister Loreta Paulavičiūtė and many others.

⁴⁸ *ibid.* F. 207, sh. 37-51.

⁴⁹ *ibid.* F. 201, sh. 124.

⁵⁰ *ibid.* C. d. 45, f. 499-506.

⁵¹ *ibid.* F. 506, sh. 126-131, 209.

Control of Mail (Measure 'PK'). Control of mail served not so much to determine the participation of the watched people in publishing the Kronika, but to ascertain their relations more exactly. Letters which interested the KGB were photographed (There was no xerography at that time). The mail of many suspects was sequestered and their letters detained. Nijol Sad nait , Robertas Grigas, Rokas Puzonas, Algirdas Statkevi ius, and others were among such people in 1987-1988.⁵² Such measures were usually applied to the people who were going to be repressed.

2. METHODS AND MEASURES FOR FIGHTING AGAINST THE KRONIKA

The struggle against the Kronika was conducted on two fronts: within the country and abroad. There were also two methods of struggle: propagandistic and repressive. Propaganda against the Kronika was conducted not only within the country but also in the West. For the propaganda against the Kronika within the country, the press, radio, television, 'explaining work' organized by the KGB, party officials and agents were used. Especially great attention was granted to the agents operating in diocesan offices and among influential priests. In the West the struggle against the Kronika was conducted by trying to discredit the Kronika and its publishers and to lessen the influence of its publishers and persons who distributed information from it.

The repressive method can be divided into two forms: suppression and repression of publishers. Suppression was conducted using a variety of measures: using agents to spread slander about its publishers or to discredit them, creating the opinion that the publication of the Kronika harmed the interests of the Church, limiting them through the hands of the hierarchs and Soviet authorities, compromising and threatening them. Repression - open or secret - was taken only when other measures did not work. We will treat each method and measure separately.

There was no open and annoying propaganda against the Kronika in the press of Lithuania as there was no desire to note in public that such an underground publication existed. Propaganda was usually carried out only if any fact mentioned in the Kronika became public or some of its publishers were repressed. Most often such a campaign was carried on in local and regional press in order to depreciate the significance of the event and to minimize the spread of information.

Paragraph 12 of the plan of the secret service-strategic measures and investigation acts, dated 30 October 1973 and made before the first attack on the Kronika, said: "The implementation of the mentioned measures can cause opposition and protests by reactionary clergy and

⁵² *ibid.* F. 524, sh. 216-230.

clerical nationalistic elements in the republic as well as intensify anti-Soviet propaganda abroad by hostile Lithuanian emigrants.

In order to weaken the unwanted reaction, an article had to be prepared in time and published in the republican press and in the newspaper *Gimtasis kraštas*, which was published for Lithuanian emigrants. The article would expose the examined objects (i.e. the repressed persons-author) as profiteers who taking advantage of the feelings of believers sought personal benefit.

At the same time agents infiltrated among the leaders of the church and parish priests would carry out appropriate work among believers.

After completing the cases, an appeal would be made to the CC LCP to instruct party institutions to carry out explanatory work among the people".⁵³

The speech of First Secretary Antanas Sniekus at the 11th plenary session (22 November 1973) testified that the CC LCP was also interested in the liquidation of the *Kronika*. After criticizing anti-religious work "as a result of which all kinds of 'chronicles of the catholic church' appeared", he rejoiced that "these days the state security authorities with the approval of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania carried out measures to stop the criminal acts of the clericals. After searches, six centers where hostile religious literature was printed were liquidated as well as several points where it was bound". He also threatened that "criminals will get what they deserve".⁵⁴

The Lithuanian KGB planned to arrest Tamkevičius, Svarinskas, and Kauneckas on 26 January 1983. (Only Svarinskas was arrested then). The plan of secret service-strategic measures and investigation acts prepared for this case foresaw that the press would present the public prosecutor's information about the reasons for the arrests and this information would be transmitted abroad through TASS-ELTA channels. If the Vatican complained about the arrests, the KGB would inform Western society through APN that "relying on human considerations Pope John Paul II was personally informed through appropriate channels about the anti-state activity carried out by the mentioned priests and that an offer was made to deport them from the USSR as an alternative to arrest, but the Vatican did not react". This was only a propagandistic lie; none of this was ever done. The secretaries of the party committees of the Vilkaviškis, Raseiniai, and Telšiai districts (where these priests worked) were provided with material to carry out 'explanatory work' about the arrest of these priests, and "to expose the reactionary character of Catholicism and religious extremism" in the republican and local press, in the radio programs and television programs 'Akirašiai' and 'Argumentai'.⁵⁵

⁵³ *ibid.* C. d. 8, f. 201, sh. 135, 136.

⁵⁴ LYA LKP DS. F. 1771, C. d. 248, f. 20, sh. 275.

⁵⁵ LYA. F. K-1, C. d. 8, f. 216, sh. 149, 150.

The agents, assigned to watch the suspected publishers of the *Kronika*, were also charged with the task of creating a negative attitude among the clergy and believers about the reasons why the *Kronika* was published. They alleged that the clergy in general lived quite well, and the *Kronika* only spoiled the relations between Church and state, provoked stricter demands by the state, and only hurt the Church.⁵⁶ With such an explanation the KGB sought to achieve two goals: to diminish the meaning of the *Kronika* and to incite believers (and especially the priests) against the publishers of the *Kronika*. An especially large role in forming this opinion was assigned to the agents infiltrated in the diocesan offices: not only because they had more frequent meetings with priests but also because their word had greater influence on the average priest. The KGB would order them to use their authority and power to discourage the priests suspected of being publishers of the *Kronika* from this activity.

The plan of 14 February 1979 prepared to fight the members of the TTGKK stated: "To give agents ('Daktaras'), 'Algis', 'Jonas', 'Švyturys', 'Vytautas', 'Valdas', 'Gintautas', 'Juozapas' who are among the leaders of the Catholic Church the assignment to deter the above mentioned people from extremist activities, not allow them to meddle in diocesan administrative matters, and to condemn their provocative actions as disruptive activity which can lead to sectarianism and the destruction of church from within."⁵⁷ The same was stated in the plan of investigating the case 'Voratinklis' (Spider web) in 1983, but other agents were mentioned.⁵⁸

The suppression of the suspected publishers of the *Kronika* was carried out through the hands of Church hierarchs, but under the instructions of the KGB and the Council of Religious Affairs (RKRT) representative. On 22 September 1970 Lazdijai vicar Dovidaitis presented to Bishop Juozas Matulaitis-Labukas a declaration, signed by the priests of the Vilkaviškis diocese, addressed to all the administrators of the Lithuanian dioceses, noting the inadequate concern for the Church, the theological seminary, and the priests, i.e. they do not defend the interests of the Church but make concessions to the authorities. For this action Bishop Labukas transferred Dovidaitis and his pastor Vaclovas Degutis from the district center to parishes in small towns.⁵⁹

When Zdebskis was arrested for the second time in 1971 for catechizing children, signatures were collected in the Prienai and Kaunas churches for an appeal asking for his release. An especially active signa-

⁵⁶ *ibid.* C. d. 45, f. 501, sh. 274. Task to agent written in a strategic report of agent 'Gediminas', 20 August 1974.

⁵⁷ *ibid.* F. 503, sh. 148-151.

⁵⁸ *ibid.* C. d. 8, f. 216, sh. 150.

⁵⁹ *ibid.* C. d. 45, f. 500, sh. 100. Strategic report of agent 'Daktaras', 22 September 1970.

ture collector was Vilijampol church employee Virgilijus Jaugelis (he later graduated from the underground theological seminary, was imprisoned and died at a young age). As a punishment for allowing such activity, the KGB decided to send from Kaunas the Vilijampol church pastor Jonas Girdzevičius and vicar Jonas Babonas.⁶⁰

Zdebskis was involved in a wide range of activities: he contributed to the underground religious press, did missionary work in remote regions of the USSR, directed secret retreats and conferences for the intelligentsia and youth. For this reason he often had to leave his parish. Being aware of his activities and wanting to halt them, the KGB decided to restrict him through the hands of the bishop: on 2 September 1970 Bishop Labukas ordered Zdebskis not to leave his parish and the pastor to inform him on what days Zdebskis was away. (His case file includes lists of the days when he was away from his parish as reported by agents). On 15 January 1971 the bishop repeated the same instruction, but this time threatened Zdebskis with canonical punishment. This was equivalent to the KGB imposing house arrest but through the hands of the bishop.⁶¹

In 1968 Labukas (undoubtedly, under directions of the KGB and RKRT representative) forbade Tamkevičius to deliver sermons. On 19 December 1970 Rev. Antanas Jokbauskas was ordered not to leave his parish. On 7 July 1970 Msgr. Bronius Antanaitis was deprived of jurisdiction (the right provided by the Church to carry out priest duties). The KGB had placed all of the above mentioned people in the category of the so-called 'priests-reactionaries'. However, everything was done through the hands of the bishop. Therefore, Tamkevičius wrote in a letter to Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese of Kaunas and the Diocese of Vilkauskis Bishop Labukas on 1 February 1971: "When Rugienis (the authorized representative of RKRT - author) or other government bodies scolded me for something, I always wanted to meet in the diocesan office a father who would advise, encourage, or bless. Unfortunately, if I always could leave the office of Rugienis uncrushed because I knew with whom I was dealing, the opposite would occur in the diocesan office".⁶² It is not clear why, but in February 1971 Bishop Labukas changed his decision: he allowed the priests to travel and act freely. There were rumors that RKRT representative Rugienis had told someone that the bishop would have to take care of them. That was why the bishop said in the diocesan office: "I shall not touch them anymore. They are demanding free catechization of children and an increase in the number of students in the theological seminary. All these

⁶⁰ *ibid.* F. 501, sh. 94. Measures written in a strategic report of agent 'Vytautas' to KGB.

⁶¹ Zdebskis personal archive. Letters from office of Kaunas archdiocese and Vilkauskis diocese dated 2 September 1970 No. 412 and 15 January 1971 No. 6.

⁶² Zdebskis personal archive.

demands are correct. For what do I have to punish them?"⁶³ All the previous prohibitions were the direct or indirect orders of the KGB "to keep the mentioned people from extremist activities."

A negative and hostile opinion about the *Kronika* was also being formed among ordinary believers (especially among those who were suspected of helping and distributing the *Kronika*). Both clergy (priests, monks) and lay agents were used. This work was especially intensified after the arrest of some well known active individual. For example, after the expected arrests of Tamkevičius, Svarinskas, and Kauneckas on 26 January 1983, the KGB planned to direct the agents among the leaders of Church ('Germantas', 'Gintautas', 'Algis', 'Valdas', 'Jonas', 'Petras' and 'Sigitas') to quell the dissatisfaction reaction among the clergy and the mostly lay agents ('Suvalkietis', 'Ratas', 'Norkus', 'Vabalas', 'Dalia', 'Grażina', 'Petraitis', 'Julija', 'Biul', 'Margarita', 'Jurga', 'Jurgita') and other reliable people to 'investigate' the mood of the parishioners in Viduklė and Telšiai and 'to carry out explanatory work' in a direction favorable to KGB.⁶⁴

Discreditation

One of the measures of struggle against the publishers of the *Kronika* was to discredit them. Slandering campaigns, anonymous letters and special operations were organized against them. Section 3 of the Fifth Service of the Lithuanian KGB with the assistance of agents was also in charge of all this work. Using these measures the KGB wanted to undermine faith in the publishers, the *Kronika* (and the TTGKK) and to crush them morally and force them to be silent.

The plan to discredit the 'priests-reactionaries' of 14 August 1974, signed by Lithuanian KGB chief Petkevičius, stated that the direct organizers of the *Kronika* were Tamkevičius, Zdebskis, Svarinskas, and Raikšas. KGB subdivisions were obligated to collect material discrediting them in the eyes of priests and believers and to send letters signed by 'a group of priests' condemning their activities.⁶⁵ All sorts of slanders about Zdebskis were spread for this purpose: for example, that he was an immoral priest who has mistresses and even a son whom he is raising. (Even employees of the diocesan office spread these rumors). Even his Christian assistance to the poor was explained as immoral behavior with the help of KGB agents among parishioners: when he supported financially a worker of the Morkava state collective farm, a single mother of four, the KGB spread slander about him and, as they put it, even the

⁶³ LYA. C. d. 45, f. 500, sh. 194. Strategic report of agent 'Sigitas', 24 February 1971.

⁶⁴ *ibid.* C. d. 8, f. 216, sh. 150.

⁶⁵ *ibid.* C. d. 45, f. 501, sh. 273.

⁶⁶ *ibid.* F. 502, sh. 132. Strategic report of agent 'Ieva', 17 August 1976.

most pious women became indignant at him.⁶⁶ Several times the KGB organized complaints to the bishop concerning him: the subdivision of the KGB of Lazdijai district first coordinated the text of the complaint with section 3 of the Fifth service of the Lithuanian KGB and only then writing in the Dz kai dialect would sent it to the bishop.⁶⁷

Tamkevi ius received such anonymous letters signed by Kybartai parishioners, while the wife of Vytautas Vai i nas, who helped much in publishing the Kronika, received letters that her husband kept company with the 'pervert priest Zdebskis', exiled (in Žagar) Bishop Steponavi ius also received such letters from 'a priest from Panev žys' and others also received such letters.⁶⁸

In the plan (14 February 1979) of discrediting the TTGKK it was openly stated: "To charge agent 'Gladiola' with the task of preparing a project for a collective priest letter in which the disruptive activity of the extremists would be condemned and after coordinating with us (...) to send the letter to the leaders of church as well as to the Vatican and the centers of priests in emigration. Moreover, such letters, signed in the name of priests and believers, which would criticize their behavior as priests and demand that they stop their instigating activities, were to be sent periodically to the members of 'the committee' and diocesan offices."⁶⁹

Together with the moral pressure the suspects also suffered financial pressure, constant warnings, insinuation, and problems with courts. In addition to attempts to put pressure on them with enormous income taxes (up to 50% for priests), their every step was followed waiting for the opportunity to find any fault: they were often punished with administrative fines for Easter processions, Zdebskis was deprived of his driving license for driving 'drunk' (although everyone knew that he totally abstained from alcohol), and Tamkevi ius was dragged through the courts for a long time for an accident for which he was not guilty. (In the beginning the plaintiff admitted this, but later evidently persuaded or bribed by the KGB he began to claim that he was the victim.)

The KGB sometimes had to make a great effort when they wanted to discredit one or another suspected publisher of the Kronika. The KGB distributed the slanders about the 'depravity' of Zdebskis persistently and insidiously for many years. Agents, anonymous letters, complaints, and even easily convinced believers were used for this purpose. The culmination was reached in the middle of 1980. The KGB decided to attack Zdebskis. On 19 June 1980 LSSR KGB chief Petkevi ius wrote in the letter "On Discrediting Rev. Zdebskis" to chief of division 5 of the USSR KGB Lieutenant-general Bobkov that Zdebskis was disposed

⁶⁷ *ibid.* F. 502, sh. 134, 134a; f. 499, sh. 56.

⁶⁸ *ibid.* F. 499, sh. 56, 138, 140, 141; Criminal case No. P-16577-LI. V. 1, sh. 340-345.

⁶⁹ *ibid.* C.d. 45, f. 503, sh. 148-151.

in an anti-Soviet manner, was implanting anti-Soviet and nationalistic views among the believers, was a member of the TTGKK, and actively participated in publishing and sending the *Kronika* abroad. Petkevičius also stated in his letter that the preventive and criminal-administrative measures applied against Zdebskis had been of no use. The efforts to discredit him through letters, complaints, and slanders organized by the KGB also did not help, that was why "for his further discrediting a special measure has to be used against him. We ask for your support in fulfilling the specified operation".⁷⁰

The special operation was carried out on 3 October 1980. The KGB poured some substance on the driver's seat in Zdebskis's car (some of the substance accidentally was also spilt on the passenger seat). The substance chemically scorched not only the outer skin of his lower body but also deeper tissues. (Vai i nas, who sat in the passenger seat, was scorched to a significantly lesser degree). Prior to this operation and before Zdebskis was delivered to a hospital, the KGB kept watching him from cars (measure 'NN'). When Zdebskis was admitted to the burn section of the Kaunas clinical hospital, the KGB directed the blood analysis laboratory to report that he had venereal disease. (For similar, but not as deep, sores appear on persons with chronic syphilis). One of the doctors told Zdebskis about the instruction he had received. Zdebskis was then secretly taken from the hospital and treated privately in secrecy. The patient was close to death for a while. If the KGB had managed to carry out its scheme and 'diagnose' Zdebskis with venereal disease, a strong blow would have been struck against the TTGKK and the *Kronika* because not only the KGB, but also people abroad knew about his involvement in the activities of the Committee and the publication of the *Kronika*. On 20 August 1981 the KGB of the LSSR informed the KGB of the USSR about the carried out operation.⁷¹

In addition to the just mentioned secret measures, the KGB also took public and official measures against the publishers of the *Kronika*. They were frequently invited to meet with the deputy chairman (who was responsible for the work of clergy in the district) of the district executive committee as well as with administrative commissions and the authorized representative of the RKRT, who would warn, scold, or punish them. Of course, they were not blamed for publishing the *Kronika* (because the authorities could not declare this officially) but the officially specified reasons were just quibbles.

The culmination of all the preventive measures was the official warning by the Prosecutor General of the republic for anti-Soviet pro-

⁷⁰ *ibid.* F. 499, sh. 133, 134.

⁷¹ *ibid.* F. 504, sh. 102. Coded telegram No. 5861 of deputy chairman of KGB of LSSR Zvezdenkov to chief of OTU of KGB of the USSR Diomin dated 20 August 1981.

paganda and agitation. On 29 August 1979 Tamkevičius, on 3 September Svarinskas, in December 1983 Rev. Leonas Kalinauskas and others received such warnings. They were warned for their work in the TTGKK.

Repression

Repression was the last measure which, it has to be admitted, the KGB did not undertake very willingly because the arrests of political dissidents always resulted in an undesirable response in the West. That was why the KGB tried to describe the arrested in the media as criminals involved in illegal affairs and so on. The approval of the CC LCP was usually obtained for the arrest of the publishers of the *Kronika*. The permission of the CC LCP was obtained for the first attempt to take care of the *Kronika* - the searches and arrests on 19 November 1973.⁷² The arrest of Tamkevičius, Svarinskas, and Kauneckas which was planned for 26 January 1983 was also coordinated with the CC LCP.⁷³ The KGB would also inform the CC LCP about the trials of persons of this category.⁷⁴

The campaigns carried out against the publishers of the *Kronika* were usually conducted on a mass scale: searches were made in many parts of Lithuania at the same time. During the first attempt to take care of the *Kronika* (in 1973) 51 searches were made in less than a month, 2 Eros apparatuses, 4 home-made linotype printing machines, 15 typewriters, about 600 kg of linotype print, 300 kg of paper, 6 binding presses and a great quantity of printed religious literature as well as different issues of the *Kronika* were confiscated.⁷⁵ This campaign continued until the middle of the following year, with more searches made and arrests of other persons. In this the first case (No. 345) brought against the *Kronika*, the first persons to be criminally charged were Povilas Petronis, Petras Plumpa, Jonas Stašaitis, Adolfas Patriubavičius, Algimantas Razbickas, Boleslovas Kulikauskas, and Jonas Ivanauskas. A few months later Juozas Gražys and Virgilijus Jaugelis were also arrested as part of this case. Petronis, Plumpa, Stašaitis, Jaugelis, and Gražys were charged with publishing and distributing the *Kronika*, i.e. with article 68 part 1 of the Criminal Code of the LSSR. Almost all the persons convicted for the *Kronika* were charged with „slandering the state and social order, inciting a fight against this order and lowering the international prestige of the USSR in order to weaken Soviet power“.⁷⁶

⁷² *ibid.* C. d. 10, f. 388, sh. 149-155. Letter of the investigation department of the KGB of the LSSR to the investigation department of the KGB of the USSR dated 14 December 1973.

⁷³ *ibid.* C. d. 8, f. 216, sh. 146.

⁷⁴ *ibid.* F. 242, sh. 3-5.

⁷⁵ *ibid.* C. d. 10, f. 388, sh. 149-155.

⁷⁶ *ibid.* Criminal case No. P-14241-LI. V. 17, sh. 142-211.

In order to substantiate these charges, as was previously mentioned, the KGB would organize 'an examination' of the facts published in the *Kronika*: the people who were mentioned there or who were involved in the described events were questioned, the interrogation records were made official and, as a rule, it was 'proved' that the information was incorrect and slanderous. The anti-Soviet content of the issues of the *Kronika*, for whose publication and distribution the arrested were charged, was ascertained by KGB invited experts. Relying on the conclusions of these experts and the investigation records the previously mentioned crimes were determined.

The first persons to be convicted for the *Kronika* (on 24 December 1974) were Petronis (4 years imprisonment in a high security camp), Plumpa (8 years imprisonment in a high security camp), Stašaitis (1 year imprisonment), Jaugelis (2 years imprisonment in general regime labor camp) and Patriubavičius (1 year and 1 month of imprisonment).⁷⁷ Plumpa received the longest sentence not only because of his activities but also for his behavior during the investigation: he refused to present any evidence about the others.

Sadnaitis was arrested on the ground of duplicating and distributing the *Kronika* on 27 August 1974 and on 17 June 1975 sentenced to 3 years imprisonment in a high security camp and 3 years exile.⁷⁸

The well-known dissident Sergei Kovalev was arrested in Moscow on 27 December 1974. In addition to his diversified fight for human rights, he was accused of distributing the information published in the *Kronika*. He was transferred to the KGB of the LSSR to reduce the possibility for foreign journalists to observe his case. On 12 December 1975 the Supreme Court of the LSSR sentenced him to 7 years imprisonment in a high security camp and 3 years exile.⁷⁹

Vladas Lapienis and Jonas Kastytis Matulionis were arrested in Vilnius on 19 October 1976. The KGB caught them in the act of typing issue No. 24 of the *Kronika*. The same day a search was also made in the apartment of Ona Pranckaitė in Panevėžys and she was also arrested on 17 January 1977. On 25 July 1977 all of them were sentenced. Lapienis was sentenced for the longest period - 3 years in a high security camp and 2 years exile - not only for publishing the *Kronika* but also for the many statements which were published in it and for his firm attitude during the investigations. Matulionis received a 2 year suspended sentence, and Pranckaitė was sentenced to 2 years in a labor camp.⁸⁰ Vladas Lapienis was already over 70 years old at that time.

⁷⁷ *ibid.* Criminal case No. 47706/3. V. 16, sh. 46-206.

⁷⁸ *ibid.* Criminal case No. P-14308-LI. Watching case, sh. 36-41.

⁷⁹ *ibid.* Criminal case No. P-16577-LI. V. 9, sh. 214-234.

⁸⁰ *ibid.* Criminal case No. 47707/3. V. 9, sh. 74, 75, 83, 90, 198, 199.

The year 1980 was also rich in the repressions of the publishers of the *Kronika*. Anastazas Janulis was arrested on 28 January 1980 and Povilas Buzas on 31 January. Many searches were made in different parts of Lithuania on 17 and 18 April. Sister Genovait Navickait was arrested in Kybartai while Sister Ona Vitkauskait was arrested in Bagotoji. The Supreme Court in its session in Kaišiadorys sentenced Janulis to three and a half years in a high security camp and Buzas to one and a half years in a high security camp for duplicating and distributing the *Kronika*, Aušra, R pintoj lis, and Lietuvos archyvas. At the same time Navickait and Vitkauskait were on trial in Vilnius for duplicating and distributing the *Kronika* and received sentences of two years and one and a half year imprisonment, respectively.⁸¹

Using secret service-strategic measures the KGB found out that some people were participating in publishing, distributing, and sending the *Kronika* abroad. Later the KGB charged them with other crimes against Soviet laws such as organizing forbidden religious processions, instructing youth in a religious and national spirit, protection of human rights, and so on. It is difficult to determine why there were no attempts to publicize the trials of the publishers of the *Kronika*. Perhaps they did not want to show the world their significance or maybe there were some other reasons, but it is clear that this was only a change in the tactics of the KGB and not its purposes. That was why Stanelyt , Me islovas Jurevi ius, Vai i nas, and Bieliauskien were sentenced for such ‘crimes’ in the beginning of the 1980s.⁸²

On 26 January 1983 TTGKK member Alfonsas Svarinskas was arrested. Although he was not directly charged with publishing the *Kronika*, this was one of the main reasons for arresting him (this was his third arrest). Officially he was accused of signing ‘the slanderous documents’ of the TTGKK, of sermons in which he “slandered the Soviet system and reality” and of founding the TTGKK on 13 November 1978. By the way, one of the main charges incriminating him, Tamkevi ius, and other priests whom it was planned to arrest was their ‘slanderous sermons.’ For several years before their arrests agents and reliable people were sent to churches to record their sermons with small tape recorders which the KGB gave them. The recordings were given to the KGB where they were printed and stored. Moreover, ‘the listeners’ had to present a written report about the contents of the sermon or the KGB did the same in an investigation record. Usually not one, but 2-3 ‘listeners’ would listen to the same sermon and all of them had to make reports. Quite a large number (from more than 10 to scores) of sermons by priests, who were to be arrested, were documented in this way.

⁸¹ Lietuvos Katalik Bažny ios *Kronika*. Chicago. VI, p. 341.

⁸² Vidas Spengla, *LKB Kronika*, XI. 1997, p. 325.



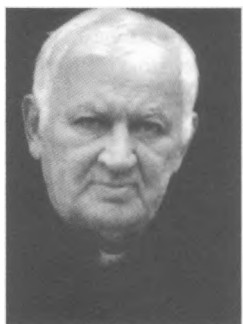
Rev. Juozas Zdebskis.



Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas.
(Photo from KGB
archive)



Rev. Jonas Laurinas SJ.



Rev. Pranas Raikis
MIC.



Editor of the Aušra
Rev. Lionginas
Kunevicius.



Rev. Kazimieras
Ambrasas SJ



Vladas Lapienis.



Virgilijus Jaugelis.
(Photo from KGB
archive)



Sergei Kovalev.



Vytautas Vaišnas.



Petras Plumpa. 1973.
(Photo from KGB
archive)



Anastazas Janulis SJ.



Sister Elena
Šuliauskaitė .



Sister Nijolė Sadlaitė .
(Photo from KGB
archive)



Sister Birutė Briliūtė .



Sister Bernadeta
Mališkaitė .



Sister Ona
Šarakauskaitė .



Sister Virginija
Kavaliauskaitė

The Supreme Court sentenced Svarinskas on 3-6 May 1983 to 7 years in a high security camp and 3 years exile.⁸³ Svarinskas spent a total of 22 years in Soviet camps.

The court made a separate decision to arrest Tamkevičius who was arrested in the court room (he was a witness) on 6 May 1983. Tamkevičius was also accused of slandering state policy toward the Church and believers, the state, and social order as well as urging a struggle against this order and lowering the international prestige of the USSR (by publishing the *Kronika*, working in the TTGKK, etc.). Sermons, a Christmas tree in a churchyard, and other accusations were only pretexts: the main purpose was to liquidate the *Kronika* because KGB had no doubts that he was one of its publishers. On 2 December 1983 the Supreme Court of the LSSR sentenced Tamkevičius to 6 years in a high security camp and 4 years exile.⁸⁴

However, the *Kronika* was still published and the KGB continued its repressions. On 18 January 1985 officially for Easter procession (but really for supporting the *Kronika*) Matulionis was sentenced (for the second time) to three years imprisonment and Romas Žemaitis, a young man who had served in the Kybartai church, was sentenced to two years imprisonment.⁸⁵

On 28 March 1985 the Supreme Court of the LSSR for the second time sentenced 79 year old Vladas Lapienis to four years in camp and two years exile for publishing and distributing the *Kronika*.⁸⁶

There were no more judicial actions against the publishers of the *Kronika* because perestroika came to the Soviet Union. However, the KGB continued to watch the suspects, to collect discrediting information about them, to conduct searches, question them, and prepare for new arrests. Sisters Elena Šuliauskaitė, Nijolė Sadnaitė, Birutė Brilė, Bernadeta Mališkaitė, Ona Kavaliauskaitė, Ona Šarakauskaitė, priests Robertas Grigas, Rokas Puzonas, Antanas Gražulis SJ, brothers Gintas and Vytautas Sakavičiai and other suspects were on 'the black list'. The last investigated (working) case. No. 09-2-008-87, concerning the *Kronika* was dismissed on 29 June 1988 because "due to the changing circumstances the publication lost its characterization of being dangerous to society".⁸⁷

One of the first paragraphs of the secret service-strategic measures and investigation acts plan stated that after arresting a suspected publisher or assistant of the *Kronika* one of the first tasks for the investigator was with the help of prison ward agents to break down the

⁸³ LYA. Criminal case No. P-14241-LI. V. 17, sh. 249-324.

⁸⁴ *ibid.* Criminal case No. P-16557-LI. Watching case, sh. 104-123.

⁸⁵ Spengla, pp. 325, 326.

⁸⁶ LYA. Criminal case No. 47707/3. V. 9, sh. 1-24.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* C. d. 45, f. 525, sh. 329.

arrested and to make him condemn publicly his former activities. However, during the 17 years of publishing the *Kronika* there was not a single person who condemned his activities. This fact is worth attention because it says much about the strength of the beliefs the people who were doing this work had.

Prison ward agents were sent to everybody but except for a few small details they did not manage to find out anything more serious.

The punishment for cooperating with the *Kronika* was not as severe as it was in post-war times, but it was quite large for more important personalities: 3, 4, 6-8 years in high security camps followed by 3-4 years exile. One can be amazed by the strength of spirit of those who were sent to the Gulags for the second or third time.

More persons were repressed for the *Kronika* than for any other underground (excluding post-war times) publication in Soviet Lithuania: 22! Two of them (Vladas Lapienis and Rev. Jonas Kastytis Matulionis) were sentenced twice for the *Kronika*. In spite of total watching, discrediting, repressions, the *Kronika* survived up to Lithuania's *Atgimimas* (Revival): the last issue - No. 81 - is dated 19 March 1989. The reason for the survival was not only the strength of the spirit of its publishers and contributors but also the support of Lithuanians from Western countries who spread its word throughout the world.

3. STRUGGLE AGAINST KRONIKA IN THE WEST

Understanding the significant role of Catholic Lithuanians living in the West (especially in the U.S.A.) in spreading the information of the *Kronika* in the world and the harm done to the prestige of the USSR in the world by making known its policy concerning the rights of believers and human freedoms, the KGB of the LSSR devoted considerable effort to the fight against the *Kronika* and its publishers in the West. This work was carried out on several fronts.

First, the KGB diligently collected all the articles published in the press of Lithuanians in the West in which information from the *Kronika* was published (along with all other anti-Soviet articles published there). Moreover, the information which was published in the *Kronika* and later broadcast by Western radio programs was also collected and stored (acquired even from the KGB of the USSR).⁸⁸ This information was analyzed and the orders were given to the KGB divisions in towns and its subdivisions in districts (where the events published in the *Kronika* had occurred) to investigate the 'correctness' of the facts and to refute the Western radio stations in the local and regional press. On 25 June 1978 Vatican Radio broadcast information about the events in the Lazdijai district from issues Nos. 25, 26, 30, and 33 of the *Kronika*, and the

⁸⁸ *ibid.* C. d. 46, f. 1656; LGAM. LKB *Kronika* documents.

chief of section 5 of the KGB Colonel Edmundas Baltinas ordered the KGB subdivision of the Lazdijai district to prepare and send condemning letters to Vatican Radio and to the leaders of the Lithuanian Catholic Church after coordinating the contents of these letters with them (section 5 of the KGB).⁸⁹ The order was carried out.

On 29 June 1981 Baltinas wrote another letter to the chief of the KGB subdivision of the Lazdijai district concerning the information from issues Nos. 46 and 47 of *Kronika* broadcast by Vatican Radio. He wrote: "letters to the Vatican have to be organized".⁹⁰

The KGB tried to discredit the *Kronika* and Vatican radio with such letters and by accusing them of spreading slander to quiet them. These measures organized by the KGB were not successful because everybody understood who were the real organizers and writers of these letters.

Another way the KGB fought against the *Kronika* in the West was by attempting to discredit the publishers of the *Kronika* and at the same time destroy the faith in the objectivity of its information. In order to achieve these goals the KGB tried to use the people whom in its opinion the Vatican might trust: by discrediting the publishers of the *Kronika*, the KGB expected that the publishing of the *Kronika* would stop. A typical example of KGB insidiousness even reaching the Vatican can be seen by the visit of Bishop Juozas Labukas to the Vatican in 1978. Labukas described the priests Zdebskis, Svarinskas, and Jok bauskas to the influential Lithuanian priests in Rome Ladas Tulaba, Paulius Jatulis, and Rapolas Krasauskas in such a manner that the latter were even surprised: "We considered Zdebskis, Svarinskas, and Jok bauskas to be the leaders of defending Church! But if they behave as you say, they might be serving the authorities?" Bishop Labukas answered: "Make your own judgments..." In a note attached to the agent report the KGB wrote that "Using 'Daktaras' (an agent infiltrated in the diocesan office - author) Labukas was given the task of discrediting them in the eyes of the emigrants".⁹¹

It would have been an impressive victory for the KGB over the Vatican and all the supporters of the TTGKK and the *Kronika* if after carrying out the special measure against Zdebskis - by chemically scorching him - the KGB had managed to fabricate (to enter in official medical records) that he was suffering from venereal disease. They would have then been able to proclaim: "Such immoral priests publish the *Kronika* and you trust it!" That would have been a strong blow because it would not have been easy to prove the truth.

⁸⁹ LYA. C. d. 45, f. 503, sh. 153, 154, 159.

⁹⁰ *ibid.* Sh. 275

⁹¹ *ibid.* F. 499, sh. 24. Strategic report of agent 'Daktaras', 19 June 1978.

ЛҮА-КОРІЈА

2

9.01.1989 г. 1/1-21

Начальнику 3 отдела Управления
"РТ" ЦГУ КГБ СССР
полковнику г. Марееву В.С.
г. Москва

О проведенном активном мероприятии
в отношении редакции "Радио Ватикана".

По согласованию с Центром, в течение последних двух лет I отдел Комитета принимал участие в совместном активном мероприятии КГБ Литовской ССР по смещению прелата В.Казлаускаса, яркого антисоветчика, с должности заведующего литовской секции Ватиканского радио. Во время направления агентуры в Ватикан, а также через приезжающих в Литовскую ССР представителей римской курии, до папы Иоанна Павла II и его ближайшего окружения регулярно доводилась информация о недовольстве рядовых верующих и католического духовенства Литвы содержанием передач на Литву. Активное участие в этом приняли также агенты I отдела. Результатом общих усилий Комитета явилось увольнение прелата В.Казлаускаса с должности заведующего литовской секцией Ватиканского радио. В недавней беседе

Top secret
No. of copy 2

09 01 1989

1/1-21 To chairman of section 3 of Office PGU ,RT"
of USSR KGB colonel comrade V. S. Mareyev
Moscow

On the active measure carried out
concerning the editorial staff of 'Vatican Radio'

After coordination with the Center, during the last two years section 1 of the Committee participated in carrying out the joint active measure of the Lithuanian SSR KGB to dismiss the fierce anti-Soviet prelate V. Kazlauskas from the post of the head of the Lithuanian section of Vatican Radio. By sending agents to the Vatican as well as using the representatives of Rome's curia who came to the Lithuanian SSR, a constant flow of information was presented to Pope John Paul II and his immediate advisors about the dissatisfaction of ordinary believers and Catholic priests of Lithuania in the contents of the programs for Lithuania. Agents from section 1 took an active part in this work. By the joint efforts of the Committee prelate V. Kazlauskas was dismissed from the post of the head of the Lithuanian section of Vatican Radio. <...>

Facsimile of the report of section 1 of KGB of Lithuanian SSR to the Center (KGB of the USSR) concerning the dismissal of Msgr. V. Kazlauskas from his work in Vatican Radio. (LYA. F.K-1, Case of doc. 49, f. 233, sh. 99)

АГЕНТУРНОЕ СООБЩЕНИЕ

Исходный агент "Дактарас"

Принял Вайтаускас и Радаявичюс

Личное дело №21937

(должность, звание, фамилия обработчика)

« 19 » ИЮНЯ 1978 г.

Источник сообщает, что во время пребывания епископа Лабукаса в Риме в 1978 г. он имел встречу с литовскими эмигрантами ксендзами Тулабой, Ятулисом Казлаускасом и Красаускасом, которые зачитали ему письмо якобы от ксендзов Вилкавишской и Каунасской епархии адресованное Лабукасу. В этом письме делается много упреков в адрес Лабукаса и других управляющих, что они идут на поводу властям, не заботятся о делах католической церкви. Лабукас усмехнулся и рассказал канцлеру этого письма. Что это письмо в курию принес ксендз Здебскис, однако лично вручить епископу Лабукасу не смел, а передал канцлерам. Лабукас узнав, что в курию был Здебскис и не захотел встретиться с епископом, велел не отпечатанное письмо вложить в другой конверт и направить обратно Здебскису. Через некоторое время Здебскис опять появился с этим письмом у канцлеров курии и заявил: "По-видимому вышла ошибка. Получил это письмо не отпечатанное, по-видимому вами посланное вместо другого документа". Канцлера пояснили, что ошибки здесь нет, а если хочет, то пусть лично заносит его епископу он его ожидает. Здебскис смутился, но к епископу не зашел. Лабукас ожидал Здебскиса и был готов с ним побеседовать примерно в таком плане: "Вы занимаетесь вопросами епископов, обсуждаете соответствующи ли они занимаемым должностям, заботитесь о делах в целом всей всей католической церкви. Но что вы сделали в своем приходе. На вас полно жалоб, что верующие Вашего прихода вынуждены обращаться за религиозными услугами к ксендзам других приходов, так как вы редко дома бываете. Имеются данные, что ваш сын хочет поступить на учебу в духовную семинарию. Если это через некоторое время случится и придется вашего сына назначить в один приход с вами вынужены?".

-Что тогда скажут люди? Не опозорите ли тогда лицем церковь? Так что сидите и занимайтесь делом которое Вам поручено?" Далее источник добавил, что такие ксендзы делают много шумихи, но сами они не порядочные.

Кроме того Лабукас Тулаба и другим присутствующим рассказал, о выступлении ксендза Сваринскаса в присутствии епископа Повилониса на похоронах ксендза Алекси в Табаринскес, где Лабукас так же подвергся к необоснованной критике. Эмигранты Тулаба, Ятулис и Красаускас высказали своё удивление, что так нетактично поступают ксендзы к своему духовному руководству. Эмигрант Казлаускас спросил: "У нас Здебскиса Сваринскаса, Иокубаускаса считали передовиками в делах церкви, но если они себя так ведут, неслужат ли они властям?..." Лабукас на это ответил: "Судите сами..."

Справка: Здебскис, Сваринскас и Иокубаускас ксендзы экстремисты. Через "Дактараса" Лабукасу было дано задание скомпрометировать их в глазах эмигрантов.

НАЧАЛЬНИК 4 ОТДЕЛЕНИЯ 5 ОТДЕЛА КГБ при СМ ЛИТОВСКОЙ ССР - майор

РАДЯВИЧЮС

THE COMMITTEE FOR STATE SECURITY WITH THE COUNCIL OF
MINISTERS OF THE LITHUANIAN SSR

Section 5

AGENT'S REPORT

Agent pseudonym: 'Daktaras'
Personal case No. 21937

Accepted by: Vaigauskas and Radzevičius
19 June 1978

The source informs that while visiting Rome in 1978 Bishop Labukas met emigre Lithuanians priests Tulaba, Jatulis, Kazlauskas, and Krasauskas who read a letter to Labukas, which the priests of the Vilkaviškis and Kaunas dioceses were said to have addressed to him. The letter contained many criticisms of Labukas and the other administrators (of dioceses) for following the wishes of the authorities and not caring for the matters of Catholic Church. Labukas laughed and told the prehistory of this letter. This letter was brought to the diocesan office by Rev. Zdebskis, who did not dare to give it to the bishop personally and only left it at the chancellery. After finding out that Zdebskis had been in the diocesan office and did not want to meet the bishop, Labukas ordered that the sealed letter be put in another envelope and be sent back to Zdebskis. A little while later Zdebskis appeared with this letter at the office again and said: "There was probably some mistake. I received this letter sealed, probably sent by you instead of some other document." The chancellors explained that there had not been any mistake and told him that if he desired he could hand the letter in person to the bishop who was waiting for him. Zdebskis got confused but did not go to the bishop. Labukas was waiting for Zdebskis and was ready to talk to him like this: "You are concerned with the affairs of bishops and consider if they are suitable for working as bishops and you are concerned about the affairs of the whole Catholic Church. But what have you done in your parish? There are many complaints lodged against you on the grounds that the believers of your parish are forced to appeal to the priests from other parishes for religious services because you are rarely at home. It is known that your son wants to enter the theological seminary. What is going to happen if after a while he enters the theological seminary and we shall have to appoint your son as a vicar in the same parish with you?

What will the people say then? Won't you then be bringing shame on the whole Church? So, sit and do what you have to do." The source added further that such priests make a lot of noise but are not decent themselves.

Moreover, Labukas told Tulaba and the others present about the speech Rev. Svarinskas made at the funeral of Rev. Aleksa in Tabariškiai in the presence of Bishop Povilonis in which Labukas was groundlessly criticized. The emigres Tulaba, Jatulis, and Krasauskas were greatly surprised that priests would act so tactlessly with their spiritual leaders. Emigre Kazlauskas said: "We considered Zdebskis, Svarinskas, and Jok bauskas to be among the most knowledgeable in church matters, but if they behave in this way, aren't they serving the authorities?" Labukas answered: "Make your own decisions..."

Note: Zdebskis, Svarinskas, and Jok bauskas are extremist priests. Labukas was given the task from agent 'Daktaras' to discredit them in the eyes of emigres.

Head of subdivision 4; section 5 of KGB with
Council of Ministers of Lithuanian SSR Major Radzevičius

Using its emissaries abroad - the KGB had them among local Lithuanians (as shown by KGB documents) - the KGB tried to sow distrust in the *Kronika* and to suppress its local supporters and distributors. During a Lithuanian meeting in the U.S.A local Lithuanian intellectuals came up to Rev. Kazimieras Kuzminskas, the chairman of the Lithuanian Union of the Chronicle which published volumes of the *Kronika*, and asked sarcastically: "Is it really true, dear priest, that people in Lithuania are so unhappy?"⁹² The KGB tentacles reached further than just the direct publishers and distributors of the *Kronika* in Lithuania whom the KGB with the help of its agents and letters by 'a group of priests' accused of splitting the Church, slander, disobeying their hierarchs, lack of love, and other sins. The KGB reached beyond the USSR border. Local 'intellectuals' influenced by KGB emissaries could consciously or subconsciously carry out KGB tasks: to discredit the publishers of the *Kronika*, its translators and especially the leaders of Union of the Chronicle and thus suppress the voice of the *Kronika*.

Not all the attempts of the KGB were in vain. For diplomatic reasons the editors of the Lithuanian program of Vatican Radio could not announce the information of the *Kronika* directly, but only from the foreign press and finally in 1988, not without the efforts of the KGB of the LSSR, the chief editor of this office for many years, 'ardent anti-Soviet' Msgr. Vytautas Kazlauskas was dismissed.⁹³

As was mentioned earlier, 22 people in Lithuania were sentenced for assisting the publication of the *Kronika* (however some of them were charged with other 'crimes'). They received sentences totaling 79 years (54 years imprisonment in high security camps) and 20 years exile. Knowing the inhuman conditions of imprisonment in Soviet camps we can understand the greatness of the sacrifice these people made for the Church and Nation. The contribution of the countrymen taken by the storms of war to the West cannot be underestimated because they also assisted with prayers and work at times even taking risks so that the voice of the *Kronika* would be heard in the world and that Lithuania and its Church would be free again. Glory and gratitude to them!

⁹² Arvydas Žygas, "LKB Kronikos pamokos" [Lessons of the LKB Chronicle], *Naujasis dienovidis*, No. 13, 27 March - 3 April 1992.

⁹³ LYA. F. K-1, C. d. 49, f. 233, sh. 99.

NAME LIST

Aliulis Vaclovas, Rev. 13, 66
 Ambrasas Konstantinas, Msgr. 47
 Ambrasas Kazimieras, Rev. 47, 48, 100
 Antanaitis Bronius, Canon 62, 93
 Anušauskas Arvydas 8,9

Babonas Jonas, Rev. 93
 Babrauskas Boleslovas, Rev. 89
 Bakšys Audrys Juozas, Cardinal 32
 Bakšys Jurgis 60
 Baltinas Edmundas 104
 Bartas Juozas 23
 Basanavičius Jonas 59
 Beišytė Veronika, Sister 84, 88
 Biekša 88
 Bieliauskienė Jadvyga 84, 88, 99
 Bobkov F. 95
 Borisevičius Vincentas, Bishop 15, 16, 20, 33
 Boruta Jonas, Bishop 4, 6, 12, 41, 62, 64, 65, 66, 87
 Brezhnev Leonid 39
 Briliūnas Jurgis 44
 Briliūnaitė Birutė, Sister 51, 4, 71, 87, 101, 102
 Brizgys Vincentas, Bishop 8
 Bubnys Prosperas, Rev. 38, 45, 74
 Bukauskas Jonas, Rev. 82, 83, 84, 88
 Buzas Povilas 51, 60, 61, 84, 86, 99

Čekanauskaitė, Sister 84
 Čekanauskaitė, Sister 88
 Cicilijaitė Nijolė, Sister 74

Dainauskaitė Eugenija 54
 Damušytė (Damušis) Gintautas 72
 Danyla Jonas, Rev. 45, 66
 Degutis Vaclovas, Rev. 92
 Dilys Albertas 88
 Dovidaitis Gvidonas, Canon 68, 73, 92
 Dovydaitis Pranas 71
 Dudko Dmitrii 64, 79
 Dranginytė Ona, Sister 65
 Dumbliauskas Albinas, Rev. 38
 Dumbliauskas Petras, Rev. 69, 73, 82

Gaškaitė Nijolė 9
 Gavičiūtė Monika, Sister 54
 Girdzevičius Jonas, Rev. 93
 Girnius Saulius 4
 Gladkov Petr 8
 Gorbachev Mikhail 25, 71
 Gražulis Antanas, Rev. 69, 72, 86, 102
 Gražys Juozas 51, 97
 Grigas Robertas, Rev. 90, 102
 Griškevičius Petras 84
 Gustaitis Pranas, Rev. 16

Ivanauskas Jonas 97

Jagminas Leonardas, Rev. 66
 Jakštas 63
 Jalbrzykowski Romuald, Archbishop 8
 Jankus Martynas 59
 Janulis Anastazas 51, 60, 61, 84, 86, 88, 99, 101
 Jatulis Paulius, Rev. 104, 107
 Jaugelis Virgilijus, Rev. 60, 62, 84, 93, 97, 98, 100
 John Paul II, Pope 24, 91, 105
 Jukauskas Antanas, Rev. 93, 104, 107
 Jukauskis Stanislovas, Msgr. 22
 Judikevičienė Janina, Sister 65
 Jurevičius Marius 99
 Juškauskaitė Julija 54

Kairėlis Alfonsas 74
 Kalinauskas Leonas, Msgr. 61, 97
 Kapitančyuk Viktor 60, 64, 79
 Karosas Antanas, Bishop 15, 16
 Katilius Algimantas 12
 Kauneckas Jonas, Bishop 40, 42, 59, 62, 64, 91, 94, 97
 Kavaliauskaitė Ona Virginija, Sister 51, 60, 64, 71, 101, 102
 Kazlauskas Vytautas, Msgr. 75, 76, 105, 107, 108
 Keina Algimantas, Rev. 61, 64, 82, 83
 Kelpša Saulius 68
 Kharazov Valerii 75
 Khrushchev Nikita 21, 30, 43
 Kolgov 52
 Kovalev Sergei 44, 48, 50, 51, 52, 79, 98, 100
 Krasauskas Rapolas, Rev. 104, 107
 Kriaučiūnaitė 88
 Kulikauskas Boleslovas 97
 Kunevičius Lionginas, Rev. 59, 69, 73, 80, 89, 100
 Kuodytė Julija, Sister 65, 68, 74
 Kurtinaitytė, Sister 84
 Kuzminskas Kazimieras, Rev. 75, 76, 108

Labergue, Rev. 31
 Labukas Juozapas, Bishop 52, 53, 92, 93, 104, 107
 Lapinskas Alfonsas, Rev. 43
 Lapienis Vladas 51, 54, 85, 86, 88, 89, 98, 100, 102, 103
 Laukaitytė Regina 11
 Laurinavičius Bronius, Rev. 22, 46, 83
 Laurinaitis Jonas, Rev. 62, 66, 70, 74, 82, 100
 Lavut Aleksandr 48, 50, 51, 86
 Lenga Paul, Bishop 12
 Louis St. 31
 Lumbienė Janina 88

Mačiukaitė, Sister 84
 Mališkaitė Bernadeta, Sister 51, 60, 64, 71, 101, 102
 Mareyev V. 105

- Martušis Stasys, Rev. 22
 Masilionis Pranciškus, Rev. 29
 Matulevičius Juozas, Rev. 45
 Matulionis Jonas Kastytis, Rev. 54, 62, 83, 84, 89, 98, 102, 103
 Matulionis Teofilis, Archbishop 14, 15, 16, 20, 22, 25, 29, 31, 33
 Mažeika Leonas, Rev. 22
 Maželis Petras, Bishop 24
 Merkys Vytautas, Rev. 66
 Meškauskaitė Donata, Sister 61
 Mincevičius Vincentas, Msgr. 75, 76
 Molotov Vjačeslav 7

 Našlas Petras, Rev. 62
 Navickaitė Genovaitė, Sister 45, 51, 61, 84, 86, 99

 Padolskis Vincentas, Bishop 8
 Paliauskaitė, Sister 84
 Paltarokas Kazimieras, Bishop 15, 16, 23, 24, 25, 26, 31, 33
 Patriubavičius Adolfas 97, 98
 Paulavičius Loreta, Sister 89
 Peter, St., Apostle 5, 26
 Petkevičius Juozas 77, 82, 94, 95, 96
 Petronis Paulius 29, 30, 51, 52, 74, 83, 84, 97, 98
 Pilelis Vytautas 51, 52, 64
 Pius XII, Pope 31
 Plumpa Petras 30, 39, 45, 51, 52, 74, 79, 80, 83, 97, 98, 101
 Polianskii Igor 10, 30, 35
 Pošinaitė Antanina, Sister 74
 Pugevicius Kazimieras, Rev. 50, 75, 76
 Pušinis Bronius 31, 33, 35

 Raimonas Pranas, Rev. 31, 39, 59, 62, 66, 73, 82, 94, 100
 Radzevičius Juozas 107
 Rainys Raimondas 51
 Ramanauskas Pranciškus, Bishop 14, 16, 20, 25, 33
 Raškinis Arimantas 44
 Ratkevičius 88
 Razbickas Algimantas 97
 Ražukas Boleslovas, Rev. 62
 Reagan Ronald, President 25
 Ribbentrop Joachim 7
 Rimkus Antanas 52
 Rugienis Justas 14, 38, 93
 Rutelionytė Julija, Sister 84, 88

 Sadaitė Nijolė, Sister 49, 51, 52, 61, 64, 70, 71, 87, 90, 98, 101, 102
 Sakavičius Gintas, Rev. 102
 Sakavičius Vytautas, Rev. 102
 Sakharov Andrei, Academician 53
 Šapoka Leonas, Rev. 22
 Šarakauskaitė Ona, Sister 71, 101, 102
 Saulaitis Antanas, Rev. 72
 Šeškevičius Antanas, Rev. 38, 45, 74
 Skuodis Vytautas 61

 Skvireckas Juozapas, Archbishop 8
 Sladkevičius Vincentas, Cardinal 14, 26, 33, 40, 44, 45, 83
 Šliupas Jonas 59
 Sniekuš Antanas 12, 13, 35, 38, 91
 Šomkaitė Rožė 49, 50
 Šostakaitė Bronė 89
 Šostakaitė Ona 89
 Spengla Vidas 3, 4, 99
 Staknas Vaclovas, Rev. 61
 Stalin (Džiugašvili) Josif 30, 31, 43
 Stanelytė Gema Jadvyga, Sister 29, 50, 61, 74, 88, 99
 Stankevičius Juozapas, Canon 23, 24, 29
 Stašaitis Jonas 30, 51, 52, 74, 80, 89, 97, 98
 Statkevičius Algirdas 90
 Steponavičius Julijonas, Archbishop 14, 24, 26, 33, 40, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 72, 83, 95
 Steponavičius Teklė, Sister 65
 Streikus Arnas 7
 Šuliauskaitė Elena, Sister 48, 53, 54, 64, 67, 71, 87, 101, 102
 Šumauskas Motiejus 23
 Sužiedėlis Bernardas, Msgr. 33
 Svarinskas Alfonsas, Msgr. 40, 42, 49, 59, 62, 63, 64, 66, 68, 73, 80, 83, 84, 89, 91, 94, 97, 99, 100, 102, 104, 107

 Tamkevičius Sigitas, Archbishop 2, 4, 5, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 64, 66, 67, 68, 69, 72, 73, 74, 79, 80, 82, 83, 86, 87, 89, 91, 93, 94, 95, 97, 99, 102
 Tulaba Ladas, Msgr. 104, 107

 Urbonas Vytautas 64

 Vaišinas Vytautas, 48, 61, 80, 83, 84, 86, 87, 95, 96, 99, 101
 Vaigauskas Henrikas 107
 Vardys Vytautas S. 8
 Vasiliauskas Kazimieras, Msgr. 89
 Vazgelevičius Bronius, Sister 49, 67, 70, 71, 87
 Vailiūnas Vincentas, Msgr. 40, 42, 59
 Velikanova Tatjana 48, 50, 79
 Veprauskas Jonas 84
 Vitkauskaitė Ona, Sister 51, 60, 61, 84, 86, 99
 Vizgirda Vincentas, Canon 33

 Yakunin Gleb 48, 50, 59, 61, 64, 79

 Zdebskis Juozas, Rev. 22, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 42, 44, 45, 59, 61, 62, 68, 73, 74, 79, 80, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 89, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 100, 104, 107
 Zvezdenkov V. 96
 Žemaitis Romas 102
 Žemnas Kazimieras, Rev. 62
 Žilinskas Algimantas 4
 Žitkus Kazimieras (pseudonym - Stonis Vincas), Msgr. 43
 Žygas Arvydas, Rev. 108

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION (Bishop Jonas Boruta SJ).....	5
--	---

Part I

THE ORIGIN AND THE AIMS OF THE LIETUVOS KATALIK BAŽNY IOS KRONIKA (The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania)

1. Situation of the Catholic Church in Lithuania in Soviet Times.....	7
2. The Resistance of the Church.....	25

Part II

EDITORS OF “THE CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LITHUANIA” ABOUT PUBLISHING AND STAFF

1. Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania (Archbishop Sigitas Tamkevi ius SJ).....	43
2. Lord, What a Blessing That You Allowed (Bishop Jonas Boruta SJ).....	66

Part III

KGB STRUGGLE AGAINST KRONIKA IN LITHUANIA AND IN THE WEST

1. Watching the Kronika.....	73
Kronika in the World and Aims of KGB Observation.....	75
The Main Directions of Observation.....	77
Methods and Measures of Spying on the Kronika.....	80
2. Methods and Measures for Fighting against Kronika.....	90
Discreditation.....	94
Repression.....	97
3. Struggle against Kronika in the West.....	103
Name list.....	109

Spengla, Vidas
Kr343 The Church, the "Kronika" and the KGB web. Introduction, pp. 5-6, by
Bishop Jonas Boruta. - Vilnius: Publishing house KATALIK AKADEMIJA.
2002. - 112 p., illustrations.

ISBN 9986-592-35-6

Relying on documents from archives and the recollections of the editors of the Kronika, the book reveals many facts about the difficult situation of the Catholic Church in Lithuania in the years of Soviet oppression and about the opposition to the persecution of Communist Party and Soviet Security Committee. It discusses the Catholic opposition movement and especially difficult and dangerous work of the organizers and distributors of the underground periodical "The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania", which made an important contribution to the emancipation of the nation from Communism.

UDK 282(474.5)(093)

Sp21

Editor

dr. Saulius Girnius

Layout

Giedrius Kubilius

Artist

Audron Martinaityt

Printed in Lithuania by

AB „VILSPA“, Viršuliški skg. 80, 2056 Vilnius



Algimantas Žilinskas

(pseudonym of Vidas Spengla)

was born in 1934 and received university degrees in engineering and philosophy-theology. In his spare time in the 1980-1990s he

also studied the history of technology in Lithuania, writing several books on the subject. In the last decade he also investigated the situation of the Catholic Church in Lithuania in the period of Soviet rule: its persecution and fight for the rights and freedoms of believers. On this subject he has written the books: “Akislauskas”. KGB kovė prieš Bažnyčią” (“Scoundrel”. The KGB Fight against the Church”) (1996) about Rev. Juozas Zdebskis, “Atlikę pareigas” (Having Fulfilled Their Duties) (1997) about the repressed Catholic bishops of Lithuania, “LKB Kronika XI” (1997) about “The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania”, and “Bažnyčia, “Kronika” ir KGB voratinklis” [The Church, the “Kronika” and the KGB Spider's Web”] (2001). He also contributed to books about other defenders of the Church: writing about Sister Nijolė Sadūnaitė in her book “Skubėkime daryti gera” [Let Us Hurry to Do Good], “Mylėti artimą” [Love Your Neighbor] etc. Many of his articles have been published in the press of Lithuania as well as in publications in Poland. This is his first work in English.

It nt worth

The new,
press ot the tree
stationv T<u«t
Union ajunt
whole troth al
The RGftdof
“Kronika* k
downfall of ts*

from coon
whole "ml e
for human ns