

CHRONICLE OF THE
CATHOLIC CHURCH
IN LITHUANIA
No. 34

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A Translation of the Complete Lithuanian Original,
LIETUVOS KATALIKŲ BAŽNYČIOS KRONIKA NO. 34
Documenting the Struggle for Human Rights
In Soviet-Occupied Lithuania Today

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Introduction

In 1940, when the Soviet Union occupied Lithuania by force, 85.5% of the country's more than 3 million inhabitants were Roman Catholic, 4.5% Protestant, 7.3% Jewish, 2.4% Orthodox and 0.2% of other persuasions.

In the two archdioceses and four dioceses were: 708 churches, 314 chapels, 73 monasteries, 85 convents, three archbishops, nine bishops, 1271 diocesan priests, 580 monks, of whom 168 were priests. Four seminaries had 470 students. There were 950 nuns.

Nuns cared for 35 kindergartens, 10 orphanages, 25 homes for the aged, two hospitals, a youth center, and an institute for the deaf-mute.

On June 15, 1940, the Red Army marched into Lithuania; the independent government was replaced by a puppet regime.

On July 14-15 rigged elections were staged. On July 21, with the Red Army surrounding the assembly house, the new People's Diet "unanimously" declared Lithuania a Soviet Socialist Republic.

On June 27, 1940, the Church was declared separate from the state, and the representative of the Holy See was expelled.

Parish lands were confiscated, clergy salaries and pensions were cut off, and their savings confiscated. Churches were deprived of support. Catholic printing plants were confiscated and religious books destroyed.

On June 28, 1940, the teaching of religion and recitation of prayers in schools was forbidden. The University's Department of Theology and Philosophy was abolished, and all private schools were nationalized. The seminaries at Vilkaviškis and Telšiai were closed, and the seminary at Kaunas was permitted to operate on a very limited scale. The clergy were spied upon constantly.

On June 15, 1941, 34,260 Lithuanians were packed off in cattle-cars to undisclosed points in the Soviet Union. After World War II, the mass deportations resumed and continued until 1953.

ecclesiastical forms of administration. In reality, all decisions are made by the state-appointed Deputy for Religious Affairs—an atheist.

It is the story of the struggle between clergy who have decided for one reason or another to cooperate with the regime, and stubborn dissident priests and faithful insisting on rights under the Soviet Constitution, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Natural Law.

It is the record of heroic parents of children, who insist on rearing their offspring in the Catholic Faith, against all efforts by teachers and government youth leaders to dragoon youngsters into various Communist youth organizations.

The *Chronicle* is the record of mere school children risking the wrath of atheistic teachers and even of Security police, to go to church or sing in a choir.

Constantly harassed in one way or another, the religious believers of Lithuania find themselves in the position of second-class citizens.

Denied access to mass media to tell their story, or to religious literature to nourish their faith, the Catholics of Lithuania find it necessary to photo-copy such religious literature as they can lay their hands on.

Ironically, the Soviet constitution, under which the people of Lithuania are forced to live, contains glowing guarantees of freedom of conscience, of assembly, of press, and of speech.

In practice, such constitutional guarantees are over-ridden by unwritten administrative decrees, verbal interpretations, and galling bureaucratic high-handedness, giving atheism the position of the established religion of the Soviet Union and its subject territories.

The message of the *Chronicle*, loud and clear, is that the atheistic government is slowly strangling the Church in Lithuania, while doing its best to make it look like the Church is dying a natural death. The people of Lithuania are risking imprisonment, labor camp, and torture to make sure that we are not deceived.

Rev. Casimir Pugevičius
Translation Editor

Read this and pass it on!
Appearing since 1972.

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Lithuania

August 15, 1978

TO HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL JEAN VILLOT,
VATICAN SECRETARY OF STATE

A radio broadcast at 6:00 P.M. on August 6, 1978 brought to our Fatherland the sad news of Pope Paul VI's death.

Though living behind the Iron Curtain, we, the Catholics of Lithuania, are well acquainted with this great giant of the Christian spirit, this zealous and courageous defender of God's affairs in this stormy era of intellectual and spiritual crisis. The late pope's

Easter greeting in Lithuanian "Su šventomis Velykomis" (A blessed Easter) still rings in our hearts. We are eternally grateful to Paul VI for allowing the Martyrs' Chapel to be established under St. Peter's Basilica and blessing the Blessed Mother's picture. The missals and breviaries given us by Pope Paul VI continually remind us of his fatherly concern.

The Catholics of Lithuania pray for the deceased Vicar of Christ and believe that he will be a zealous advocate of the Church in heaven.

Our message is late in reaching the free world, but through prayer we always share in the Church's misfortunes and joys.

We pray the Almighty that a courageous, determined and holy pope be chosen as the new shepherd of the Church, whose heart will echo our suffering and struggle against our nation's forcible deprivation of faith.

On this special occasion we wish to express the Lithuanian nation's complete loyalty and filial devotion to the Apostles' Throne.

The *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* is asking Lithuanians living abroad to transmit this letter to Cardinal Villot.

TRIAL OF VIKTORAS PETKUS

The trial of Viktoras Petkus began on July 10, 1978. From the very first day of the trial, a painstaking orchestration of the trial spectacle could be sensed. When the indictment was read on July 10th, Estonians and Latvians—i.e., those witnesses who do not know or understand Lithuania—were summoned and allowed into the courtroom. They only saw that Petkus was forcibly dragged by four militiamen into the courtroom, with his arms pinned back. At the trial, he declared his innocence and refused the services of a lawyer. During the rest of the trial, Petkus blatantly ignored the proceedings, refusing to answer any questions, defend himself or explain, and calmly dozing.

The first session of the trial lasted one and a half hours and court was adjourned until July 11th.

On July 11th, a large group of Petkus' friends and supporters came to the Supreme Court in Vilnius, but were not allowed into the courtroom. The security agent stationed at the courtroom door told each individual wishing to attend the trial that "'there was no room."

The first to be admitted into the courtroom were witnesses Rev. K.(arolis) Garuckas, O.(na) Lukauskaitė-Poškienė and R. Ra-gaišis. To their surprise, they saw the courtroom already full of strange characters although the doors had been locked until they were admitted. After glancing around the room, Ms. Lukauskaitė-Poškie-nė (member of the Lithuanian Helsinki Group) loudly asked Father Garuckas (also a member of the Helsinki Group):

"Are they all witnesses? Maybe they're members of the press. Oh no! They are apparently privileged guests."

And in fact they were extras for the trial spectacle, brought into the courtroom through the service doors to fill up the courtroom so that no room would remain for those sympathizers of Petkus who truly wanted to see and hear the trial proceedings.

A large group of those denied admittance into the courtroom sent a protest to the presiding judge of the Supreme Court but he would not speak with the protesters. His secretary merely stated that the trial was closed.

Shortly a sign was posted on the courtroom doors stating that Petkus was being tried in that room and that the trial was "not public." During the first recess, all the strange characters who had entered the room God knows how also left the courtroom.

The main trial witnesses were questioned under articles 68 and 70 of the Criminal Code only late in the evening. Upon entering the courtroom, each greeted Petkus, said several good words of character reference as "good Catholic, a real Lithuanian, decent, cultivated man," and showing their solidarity with Petkus, refused to testify at all.

Upon entering the courtroom, Father Garuckas greeted Petkus in a Catholic manner and conveyed the greetings of all those not admitted into the courtroom. When asked by the judge whether he knows the accused, he replied that he knows him as a good Catholic and real Lithuanian and a member, like him, of that same Lithuanian group monitoring the Helsinki agreements.

"We worked together, so you can place me next to Petkus in the dock. I would consider it an honor to die in labor camp, as my teachers Bishop Reinyš and Father Andriuška died. I refuse to testify any further."

Witness (Mrs.) Jadvyga Petkevičienė handed Petkus a rose which was promptly taken away from him.

"Hail, son of the nation, who sacrificed your freedom for our rights," with these words, Mrs. Petkevičienė expressed the

sentiments of all decent Lithuanians.

Ona Lukauskaitė-Poškienė stated:

"I know Victoras Petkus, a member of the Lithuanian Group Monitoring the Helsinki Agreements, as a decent, cultivated and good man. After his arrest, I gave the prosecutor's office a letter of protest of the arrest of an innocent man. Today, I am still convinced of his innocence, and therefore ask Your Honor to restore justice and dismiss the charges. I have completed my statement and will not reply to any other questions."

On July 12th, there began not a Supreme Court session, but a film farce. Arriving witnesses were not admitted into the courtroom. Two movie studio vehicles were parked by the court building and studio employees busied themselves in the courtroom. We do not know whether Presiding Judge Ignotas and Prosecutor Bakučionis acted only as film directors or as film stars as well. Escorted by uniformed men, the young soldier Civilis—the only compromising witness against Petkus—was led into the courtroom. On the second day of the trial, he had tearfully confided to his young friends that at first the security police had forced him to testify when he was completely drunk and unable in essence to understand anything and had agreed with everything he was told to confirm, and that later he could not deny his original testimony. The poor young man! He had never been sexually assaulted by Petkus, but was certainly morally assaulted by those who forced him to give false testimony. The youths who visited Petkus' apartment and there together studied Šapokas' *History of Lithuania* and religious books have never seen him in Petkus' apartment.

Helsinki Group member E.(itan) Finkelstein submitted a written statement to the Supreme Court:

"I refuse to be a witness at the trial of V.(iktoras) Petkus because, like Petkus, I am a member of the Lithuanian Helsinki Group and together with Petkus take full responsibility for the Group's activity and the documents the Lithuanian Helsinki Group drafted. I can attend the trial proceedings only as an accused."

Petkus' landladies were summoned to the courtroom. Both witnesses were asked by a security agent before entering the courtroom whether they would testify and what they would say. When they replied that "we will answer what the judge asks," the witnesses were admitted into the courtroom. (Witnesses questioned at the courtroom doors!?) At the trial, the landladies related that there was never any drinking at the apartment of Petkus who had lived

in their apartment eight years, and that they never found an empty bottle, not even a cork, when cleaning his room. Young people used to assemble at Petkus' apartment, but they behaved properly and politely.

Not expecting such testimony, prosecutor Bakučionis merely spread out his hand and shouted in Russian: *Nu, vot!* (There you are!)

Testimony from the Latvian Kalnins was read at the trial on the planned founding of a committee to liberate Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Testimony detrimental to Petkus' case was bought from Kalnins with permission for him to leave for the West. And, in fact, even before the start of the trial, Kalnins and his family were already in the West. But, on the basis of his own testimony, he should have been sitting next to Petkus in the dock. Where is the logic in this? One member of the organization gets prison, the other freedom in the West.

The trial was filmed all throughout July 12th.

On July 13th, the witnesses were again denied entry into the courtroom. High and low ranking security agents constantly buzzed around those standing in the vestibule. The conduct of those waiting was solemn and peaceful. Prior to the trial session, the security police and militia expelled from the courtroom vestibule all who had come to attend the trial, except for the witnesses. The assembled youth calmly left and regrouped on the wide court building steps. An armful of carnations appeared from somewhere and were handed out to the witnesses and the assembled youth.

Holding the carnations, the youths and Petkus' friends congregated on one side of the steps and began to say the rosary in unison. Security agents, militiamen and auxiliary policemen stood nearby, and a militia vehicle waited on hand in the street. A large crowd of Vilnius residents stared at this unusual sight from the windows of the Library of the Republic.

Never before having encountered such a form of protest, the militia and security police became confused and did not know how to act. A film studio cameraman, or perhaps a security agent, came up and began to film the praying people from all sides. One of the witnesses pulled out a camera and began to photograph the cameraman. After finishing their prayers, the youths smiled and thanked the cameraman for his efforts. After a short break, the young people continued to pray the rosary for the accused Viktoras Petkus.

After the lunch recess, the witnesses saw that the courtroom was

already full of people who had assembled through the service doors. The security police admitted only five persons into the courtroom: A.(ntanas) Terleckas, O.(na) Lukauskaitė-Poškienė, Father K.(arolis) Garuckas and Petkus' landladies. The others were savagely shoved away from the doors, and Muscovite T. Velikanova was so brutally pushed by Lieut. Col. Baltinas that she fell to the floor.

The court found Viktoras Petkus to be especially dangerous recidivist and sentenced him to three years in strict regime labor camps and, in addition, five years in exile.

The court also decided to prosecute Ragaišis for refusing to testify at the trial.

And so this cruel courtroom tragi-comedy came to an end.

N.B. The proceedings of Viktoras Petkus' trial are reported on the basis of the written account of a person who attended the trial.

LETTERS FROM THE GULAG

Vladas Lapienis writes:

"With the onset of warm weather, we are annoyingly attacked by hordes of mosquitoes. They attack outdoors, in the barracks, in the messhall; i.e., while we work, rest or eat. As soon as the doors are opened, they unnoticeably enter the building. There are several garden beds near the barracks. One time I saw the prisoner Paulaitis pulling up weeds with a bonfire lit next to him and was surrounded by clouds of drifting smoke. Mosquitoes do not like smoke and in this way we afford ourselves some protection from them . . .

"Good prayer is an extraordinarily powerful weapon, a never exhaustible treasure, the source of all treasure and our best teacher . . .

"Depriving many people of spiritual and physical freedom for the benefit of one or more persons is a great crime against natural law . . ."

"Once one becomes a prisoner (especially during interrogations) it becomes necessary to make quick decisions, there is no possibility to consult, to calmly reflect. There remains but one possibility—to obey the voice of one's conscience. Truly unfortunate later is the man who goes against his conscience under such circumstances.

June 3, 1978."

"While expecting some kind of commission during the early part of June, Major Aleksandrov, warden of the third colony, fifth zone, began such a "clean up" and "order" campaign of the living barracks and sewing factory that the garlic you brought me was confiscated from me, as well as the empty bottle I had bought from the camp store. The warden personally brought letters and magazines from the post office—*Tiesa (Truth)*, *Komjaunimo Tiesa (Truth of the Communist Youth)*, *Czerwony Sztandar (Red Flag)*, *Za ruheiom (Behind the Lines)*—and not more than 40 minutes later personally took from me the unread magazines, carried them to the boiler and burned them . . . Much patience is required in a prisoner's life . . .

"Please don't send me religious pictures to Mordovia. I am a prisoner and searches are conducted. What guarantee is there that that same zone warden will not confiscate and burn religious pictures . . . I would advise against sending typewritten prayers or religious ideas for this produces many new worries and additional work for the security police. During interrogations, I have often heard from the lips of security agents that they already have enough work . . .

"Quotes from the Holy Scriptures, *The Following of Christ* and other religious books are necessary and helpful. I await them eagerly . . .

"While I was free, I saw many physically ill persons. But while in prison and labor camp, I have seen that there are more terrible spiritually sick persons than physical patients: crippled, blind, dumb. And Christ has said that we should fear more those who damage spiritual health . . .
"June 20, 1978."

"On July 5th, I and several other prisoners from the third labor camp, fifth zone, located in the village of Barashev, were taken to the nineteenth labor camp, located in the Village of Liesna, i.e., closer to Potma. This camp is several times larger than the one I was in until July 5th. I have been told that there are fifteen or more Lithuanian prisoners alone here.

"When you come to see me, purchase a ticket from Potma to Yavas, and there transfer to a rail car. If there is none there, you'll have to take a bus. The road is full of pot holes, and some people become carsick on the bus . . .

"Though I came to this colony on July 5th and it is already July 15th, I have not as yet received a single newspaper or letter.

"My learning to sew gloves was all for nothing, because the work is different here . . .

"You should now write letters to this address: Mordovskaya ASSR, st. Potma, p/o Lesnoy, ucr, zch 385/19-3, Lapienis Vldas, Antano.

July 15, 1978."

Nijolė Sadūnaitė writes:

While at the Mordovian labor camp, Nijolė Sadūnaitė used to write short letters to her uncle who lives in the U.S.A. Most of these post card-letters did not reach her uncle. Nijolė also did not receive one of her uncle's letters.

In exile in Siberia Sadūnaitė receives only a small number of the letters, parcels and packages sent her. The letters she writes also often do not reach their destinations.

In a November 14, 1977, letter Nijolė writes: "The first letters written me by Antanas, Stefa and others disappeared . . . I have not received them and probably never will. Much time has elapsed since they were sent."

Somewhat later Sadūnaitė writes: "I don't know why, though I can guess, certain letters from Vilnius remain in Vilnius a long time, and only later are flown to Boguchany. A letter written from Vilnius on November 7th only left Vilnius on November 12th and arrived in Boguchany on November 18th."

On November 29, 1977 Nijolė writes: "My letters (I wrote six) did not reach their destination, only a series of postcards. Strange, who could possibly need those very simple letters?!! They contained nothing interesting or secret. . ."

On April 3, 1978 Sadūnaitė writes: "Th. Sharf from West Germany wrote a letter in Russian to the head of the central post office asking how to send me packages, and what address to use so they will not be returned? She already has the address I wrote out for her, she has made photocopies of it and pastes them on the envelopes of the letters she sent me. Some packages from friends were returned abroad with the inscription "incomplete address" . . . But those packages had already reached Boguchany and the postal employees know me!"

On February 1, 1978 Claudia Damm from West Germany wrote Sadūnaitė: "For the past year and a half I've written you a letter every two weeks . . ." Nijolė has received only three letters from Claudia

Damm. Nijolė wrote Claudia registered letters on February 22, March 11, April 7 and 21, 1978, but Claudia did not receive a single one of Nijole's letters!

"I've written four registered letters to Claudia Damm but she has not received a single one. Wonderful! I wrote again today and enclosed my picture; perhaps she will receive this fifth letter! What censorship! I write no more than a few words on a postcard. Poor security agents . . . They no longer have a grain of shame or scruples. So much for their 'morals' !"

On April 21, 1978 Nijolė wrote: "An inquiry reached the central post office asking the whereabouts of a letter written me on December 10, 1977 from West Germany. The inquiry was written by Benigna Kaiser. I did not receive her letter (registered with proof of delivery). I told the post office that I did not receive that letter and have no idea where it disappeared. I did not receive a single letter from Benigna."

Five months ago a 1978 Lithuanian calendar was sent Nijolė from Israel, but she did not receive it. The calendar was not returned to the sender.

Sadūnaitė receives food parcels from West Germany containing various powdered food products from which labels have been removed—it is unclear how they should be used. The censors even fear labels printed in German. They search for something in the parcels, they even tear off cellophane wrappings, although all the contents can be seen through them.

On December 11, 1977 Erich Weiss wrote Nijolė from West Germany: "My friends have written you many letters. For reasons which we fail to understand, nearly all the letters my friends wrote you were returned to Germany. Dear Nijolė, please don't think we've forgotten you . . ."

We have cited here only a small fraction of examples of how censorship deals with Sadūnaitė's letters, parcels and packages. The aim of security police censors is clear: to disrupt correspondence with Nijolė by all means possible. She must not feel the material and moral backing of her supporters.

Postal employees request that Sadūnaitė's address be written in Russian: SSSR Krosnoyarskij kraj, 663430 Boguchany, Partizanskaya 17 kv. 1, Sadūnaitė, Nijolė, Jono.

KGB ATTACKS THE REV. A. SVARINSKAS

The June 28, 1978 issue of *Tiesa (Truth)* printed a long article entitled "Slander from the Pulpit." It accuses the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas, pastor of Viduklė, of slandering schools, the current way of life and harming youth by presenting former "criminals" as heroes.

After this article appeared in print, Fr. Svarinskas preached a sermon at the Viduklė church explaining to the faithful who the real slanderers and criminals are.

Fr. Svarinskas has received many letters written by both KGB collaborators and decent Catholics. It is interesting to note that not a single KGB collaborator had the courage to sign his name to his letter.

We are reprinting below a letter of protest from the faithful of Viduklė:

To: First Secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party,
Petras Griškevičius, in Vilnius.

A Protest from: The Believers of the Viduklė Roman Catholic parish.

Issue No. 149 of *Tiesa* dated June 28, 1978 contained an article entitled "Slander from the Pulpit" by special correspondent Vytautas Žeimantas. This slander against our pastor, the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas, was reprinted by the Raseiniai and Šiauliai *Rayon* newspapers.

We, the Catholics of Lithuania, are accustomed to discrimination and various insults. In the press, on radio and television and by word of mouth we are called backward, ignorant, fanatics, etc., while in the meantime preparations are being made to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the University of Vilnius. This university was founded by the Jesuit Order of the Catholic Church. Streets and middle schools have been named for bishops, priests and believers—authors of classics—and their works have been published. It is doubtful that the godless press and propaganda will ever reach such an intellectual level!

It is more difficult for us to become accustomed to the obstacles we meet in fulfilling our religious obligations. We are forced to work on one of the greatest Church holidays—Christmas. Bus routes are changed to prevent us from going to church, and very few people have their own means of transportation. For instance, since June 1, 1977 most buses no longer stop at Viduklė, although the town has about 2,000 inhabitants and there are always many

passengers. All our complaints and those of school children have thus far produced no results. This year even the routes of local buses to state farms have been changed. It would appear that the atheists consider us believers to be mere second-class citizens!

We will never accept the new atheist attacks against the Catholic Church in Lithuania—discrimination against priests in the eyes of the faithful.

At present, the godless have chosen our pastor the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas as their target; we therefore feel the obligation to defend our spiritual leader, and will defend him now and in the future.

The above-named article is no credit to the Soviet journalist Vytautas Žeimantas or to *Tiesa*. They will not succeed in denigrating a man respected by all, either in the eyes of the Fatherland or those of our countrymen living abroad. On the contrary, this will merely increase the priest's prestige. Most people believe that if the godless attack a priest it means he is good.

From the article, it would appear that the journalist has never been to Viduklė, to say nothing of visiting our pastor, whom he is attempting to destroy in the eyes of the faithful. Vytautas Žeimantas praises Viduklė, while we are convinced that it is the most neglected town. You need only glance at the square by the church.

The article's author relies on the anonymous Norkus who at one time attacked the Soviet scholar Doctor Radavičius. It is time for, the "lovers of truth" to show their true faces and not "shoot" from behind bushes . . . We are quite aware what the testimony of the other three atheists is worth: They do not attend church, and others have never even met the pastor personally.

By clumsily tossing about the word "many", the reporter tries to persuade that the people of Viduklė are astonished and outraged at the pastor's work. But this assertion is absurd from beginning to end.

Why does the author not present a single fact of how, when and whom the pastor slandered. It is quite clear to all of us that the author slandered the pastor by writing without any supporting facts. On the other hand, school displays constantly ridicule the pastor and the faithful. The pastor has informed Religious Affairs Commissioner K. Tumėnas of this.

Only an unscrupulous individual can maintain that the pastor, Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas, praised the Chilean junta against which Chile's bishops and priests are fighting. Atheists want to eliminate

their opponents quickly by labeling them anti-Soviet. We feel this is an old and overused tactic.

Rev. Svarinskas buries our dead without any compensation, and whenever necessary personally accords financial assistance. At the request and demand of our pastor we have achieved an important victory—we bury and remember our dead without alcohol! This is currently a mere dream for Soviet organizations. The pastor has earned the deep respect of believers by his diligent and unselfish work. The pastor greets every visitor with a handshake and inquires after his health. Many could only learn from him! The parishioners see how the pastor daily performs physical work around the church so the faithful will have better conditions to come to church to pray and receive the necessary ministry. And those who have heard the pastor's sermons can say, with their hand over their heart, that Rev. Svarinskas never encouraged students not to study or disobey their teachers. On the contrary, the priest on every occasion stresses their obligation to study diligently, respect their parents, love their country, be decent persons and patriots.

Atheists may not like the fact that our children attend church and respect God. But that is our business as parents! And we guarantee that all the parents whose children hurry to church in the evening are certain that Father Svarinskas will not teach our children evil—on the contrary, he constantly encourages them toward good. Those children who pray today in church with pure voices and consciences will not attack passers-by, will not assault old women, will not steal and will not vandalize churches! And there are many such children in Viduklė. The reporter should rather investigate their actions. Perhaps then we would not have to fear to walk at night down the main street of Viduklė. Unfortunately, even the militia is powerless against these children raised by the atheists! And here we have a paradox: The priest advocates good and is called a slanderer, and meanwhile the hoodlums who constantly terrorize peaceful people are left untouched. They are today's heroes. The priest fights against drunkenness, while the government maintains in the center of town a filthy establishment for drunks, a tavern, which is daily full of people (and young people!) soaked in "ink", who no longer attend church.

It is also a lie that Rev. Algirdas Mocius was ever a pastor of Viduklė. Thirty-three years ago he was assistant pastor of Viduklė. It is also a lie that "even today many people of Viduklė shudder upon hearing the name of A. Mocius." Give us the name of at least one

person who suffered at the hands of Fr. Mocius. We assure you that even today we still love and respect this devoted priest. We also wish to state that a priest's worthiness will be determined by the bishop and the faithful. We do not need the assistance of atheists. They have enough work in dealing with their own.

We, the faithful of Viduklė, have personally been offended by the slanders aimed at our pastor Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas by correspondent Vytautas Žeimantas. We therefore ask that this new atheist attack against our priest and the Church stop. It is time for the godless to cease insulting the faithful, and to see to it that believers have at least as much freedom of conscience as is provided by Soviet law.

Viduklė, July 16, 1978.

This letter of protest was signed by 1,064 believers of the Viduklė parish.

To: Special *Tiesa* Correspondent V. Žeimantas

Many people have read your article "Slander from the Pulpit" in the June 28, 1978 issue of *Tiesa*. I have also read it. And after reading it, I, like many others, did not pause to reflect on it, but became outraged because I live in Viduklė, I attend church and hear the sermons of the pastor Rev. Svarinskas. In fact, Father Svarinskas speaks in his sermons quite the opposite to what you have written in your article. He speaks of a peaceful dialogue between believers and non-believers, he urges atheists to hear the voice of believers without dangling the sword of Damocles over them and to defend their ideology with sincere and convincing words, justice, decent living, good attractive examples. Not only I, but no one else either has ever happened to hear of any agitation and slander. Unless some dolt were to view as agitation such sermons by the priest in which he speaks of resisting anyone who were to order to commit sins. But Fr. Svarinskas is not alone in saying this; it is the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. The Bible states that whoever loves his father and mother more than Christ will not be worthy of Him. This means that anyone who, loving the person dearest to himself, follows his will in doing evil, is unworthy of God.

It is the duty of a believing person to fight against sin—against evil. And the duty of the clergy is to arouse, "agitate" them to this fight. To the gratification of our believers, Father Svarinskas is performing this duty with great zeal and dedication.

Undoubtedly, as people say, the word of truth stabs the ears of many. It is therefore quite understandable that, upon hearing their vices made public, people feel "slandered," "insulted" and driven by blind hatred, hiding behind pseudonyms such as "Norkus" or "A Woman from Viduklė", sound the alarm to the press and elsewhere about the so-called unrest produced by the priest's actions. You hear that the pastor is slandering us, the pastor is denigrating our way of life, the pastor is attracting the young generation, etc. etc.; in other words, let's run, the sky is falling.

But neither the sky nor anything else is falling because of the priest's actions. If something is falling it is merely due to the slipping morality of many people—sin. And morality, as we all know, is uplifted not by violence and the sword, but only by the voice of truth. This voice is spread throughout the world by all people of good will and especially by those who belong to the Church. Among them the Rev. Svarinskas, pastor of Viduklė.

It would thus appear from your article, my dear Mr. Žeimantas, that you needlessly walked all kinds of Ways of the Cross in Viduklė and elsewhere seeking advisers to confirm the bad behavior of Fr. Svarinskas toward believers and non-believers. For if you had found such individuals, you would have "dared" visit that same so-called terrible slanderer and investigate the matter openly with both sides participating. For if people are slandered, it is essential to know how they are being slandered. And you should have done all this (of course, if you were interested in justice) when preparing material for the press. Perhaps then readers would not have considered that article to be a mere collage of fabricated slanders.

Your purpose is not clear. What was your aim in reminding all the republic's inhabitants not only of Father Svarinskas' present, but of his past also, painted in the blackest colors. Could you possibly hope that the believers of Lithuania will blindly believe the printed words about the priest's alleged immorality and stone him? But you yourself write that the laws of our country forbid stirring up discord among the citizens. Then do not these laws apply to those who sit in the government?

And to condemn people because they once opposed the Stalinist regime would, I think, not only be shameful, but forbidden by law. If Stalin, the dictator of evil, was condemned not only by all the world's people of good will but also by the officials of that self-same Communist country, then why condemn and denigrate those who opposed his tyranny? And in general, is there a nation,

which being an independent state, does not have its heroes, its patriots, its loyal citizens? If a nation does not have all this, it is condemned to decay and disappear. But if a nation is a healthy organism it cannot remain indifferent to the invasion of foreign bodies.

You can say what you will, but this is a fact of life and nothing can change it! Lithuania was a healthy nation if it succeeded in heroically opposing the power of the giants Stalin and Hitler. It is therefore very painful that today, after so much past bitterness, our nation's body contains, figuratively speaking, cancer cells which while seeking to extend the existence of the malignant growth, destroy the healthy cells. This is something which is truly worthy of concern, for everyone knows where this leads.

So, you also, fellow Lithuanian V. Žeimantas, will you and your fellow-thinkers not reflect some day on what you have become and what you contribute to your nation and humanity in general with your goals and actions?

7/6/78

Wishing you success,
Stasė Navardauskaitė

NEW CAMPAIGN IN LITHUANIA TO DEPRIVE CHILDREN OF THEIR FAITH AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

1) Thoughts from the Fourth LSSR Teachers Convention.

In a speech delivered on June 7, 1978 at the Fourth LSSR Teachers Convention, held in Vilnius, LSSR Education Minister A. Rimkus spoke of instilling the "noble sentiments of Soviet patriotism, friendship of nations and proletarian internationalism" in Lithuania's School children and rejoiced that "we already have 98 mixed schools which educate 53,500 students, or one tenth of the students who attend general education schools." The speaker further noted that "a significant influence in educating the school population in the spirit of the friendship of nations and Soviet patriotism is exerted by the socialist competition of Lithuania and Soviet Belorussia.

If we are to recall how Lithuanian children have been treated for the past 34 years in Belorussia, not even allowed to learn their native

Lithuanian language in grade schools, if we were to count over that long period how many new people there are in Belorussia who no longer know their native Lithuanian language and if we were to consider all of this, in Rimkus' words, "a significant influence", it is not difficult to understand what is hidden behind the ringing words of Soviet patriotism, friendship of nations and proletarian internationalism, and is brutally infiltrating the souls, hearts and minds of Lithuanian children.

Further in his speech, Rimkus, attributed certain current achievements in Lithuania's economy and culture not to the diligent and conscientious nature of the Lithuanian nation, but stressed that this is "primarily the result of the unselfish (? — author) support of the great (? — author) Russian nation." For this "support" A. Rimkus made the following commitment on behalf of all Lithuanian educators: "in the future we will continue doing our utmost to educate our students to be ardent patriots of their Fatherland (USSR — author), meticulous internationalists (ignorant of Lithuania's nation and her culture — author), so that no student's conscience will provide fertile ground for the seed of nationalistic isolationism, limitation and exclusiveness." From this it is clear why Lithuania's Education Minister rejoices over the fact that the number of purely Lithuanian schools is dropping, and that of mixed schools rising.

Somewhat earlier in that same talk, recalling the recently adopted decision of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau regarding the teaching of Russian in Lithuania, Rimkus stated: "New editions of textbooks and teaching material must ensure that all students thoroughly learn Russian while still in middle school." Once this is "insured", it naturally follows—though the education minister did not say so—that one day it will be decided it is unnecessary to teach in two languages in those mixed Lithuanian schools. Russian alone will suffice then, because it will even further ensure the ruinous goals of "Soviet patriotism, friendship of nations and proletarian internationalism" in Lithuania. The Lithuanian nation can be russified simply through her schools!

After his commitment to turn all Lithuania's children into internationalists and on the basis of another decision of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau, dated April 11, 1977 "Regarding the work of the Pabiržė Middle School in instilling a scientific atheist outlook", Rimkus noted: "On the basis of this document, it is essential to establish a sound and effective system of atheist education in every school. (It would appear that

this system has not yet been perfected! — author) It is necessary to devote much careful attention to those students who have not as yet completely extricated themselves from religious influence. We must help every child to attain a strong materialistic outlook while still in school, to understand thoroughly the harm of religion and become an active atheist." This is the kind of system to which Lithuanian parents are forced to give their children to be reared and educated!

Why did the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee choose Pabiržė as its victim and not some other Lithuanian school? It was undoubtedly linked to the fact that shortly thereafter exiled Bishop Vincentas Sladkevičius was transferred to Pabiržė from his exile in Nemunėlio Radviliškė.

2) Intensified Persecution of Believing Children

Those who think that the atheist government has made certain concessions to believers are mistaken. That many difficult trials await Lithuania's believers is evidenced not only by the above-mentioned speech by Education Minister Rimkus, but by the following party and official documents which are more widely known only to employees of the educational system.

Lithuanian SSR Education Ministry

Decision of the Governing Body, 5/27/77, No. 89, Vilnius

The Governing Body of the Lithuanian SSR Education Ministry has decided:

1) To endorse the measures adopted by the Lithuanian SSR Education Ministry to improve the atheist upbringing of students, in implementing the April 11, 1977 decision of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau "Regarding the work of the Pabiržė Middle School in instilling an atheist outlook in students."

2) To charge Education Ministry administrations and departments, agencies under the jurisdiction of the Ministry, *Rayon* and city people's education departments:

a) to see to it that the prospective measures are implemented at the appropriate time;

b) to strengthen atheist upbringing within the framework of general education schools, after-school and preschool children's agencies.

Chairman of the Governing Body
Education Minister A. Rimkus.

Measures adopted by the Lithuanian SSR Education Ministry to improve the atheist upbringing of students, in implementing the decision of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau, "Regarding the work of the Pabiržė Middle School in instilling an atheist outlook in students":

1) Systematically and effectively implement the decision of the 25th USSR Congress, as well as those of the 17th Lithuanian Communist Party Congress, in the field of people's education.

In improving the atheist upbringing of students, perfecting the forms and methods of scientific atheist propaganda, closely adhere to the decision of the Third Plenary Meeting of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee (1976), "Regarding the work of the Pabiržė Middle School in instilling a scientific atheist outlook in students."

Continually: Administration of Schools, after-school and after-class activities departments, *Rayon* and city people's education departments.

2) Strive that the entire process of education and after-class activity be used to form the materialistic outlook of students by giving students an atheist upbringing, so that upon graduating from middle school, they become militant atheists.

Continually: (to the aforesaid)

3) Examine the atheist educational system and methodology of teaching staffs, grant them full assistance in subject matter and methods.

Continually: (to the aforesaid)

4) Systematically review matters relating to the atheist upbringing of students in faculty councils, conferences of school administrators and education councils.

Continually: *Rayon* and city people's education departments.

5) Ensure that during class—the basic form of education-upbringing—students acquire a strong body of scientific atheist information, a materialistic understanding of the principles of nature and the development of society. Strengthen the interrelationship of subjects, ensure the principle of assimilation. In each class, the teacher's principled atheist position must be evident. Foster the capability of students to defend their data independently, to orient themselves in the field of scientific and political information.

Continually—Administration of Schools, *Rayon* and city people's education departments.

6) Review the work done by one *Rayon* and one city general

education school in implementing the decision of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau "Regarding the work of the Pabiržė Middle School in instilling a scientific atheist outlook in students."

1978—Administration of Schools, after-school and after-class activities departments.

7) Examine how nature, mathematics and the humanities and the after-class activities related to them are used to raise the students' scientific materialistic outlook, by giving students an atheist upbringing.

1978—(to the aforesaid)

8) Review in two cities and two *rayons* how atheist propaganda literature is being accumulated and propagated in the libraries of general education schools.

1978-1979—Republican Library for Schools.

9) Improve the atheist upbringing system used by the teaching staffs of general education schools and preschool children's agencies, in exerting a continual influence on students, combining various forms and directions of teaching as well as after-class activities, fostering the atheist beliefs of students, as well as the best moral qualities of the Soviet person, resistance to bourgeois ideology and the influence of religion.

Continually: Administration of Schools, after-school and after-class activities departments, preschool education department, *rayon* and city people's education departments.

10) Systematically control the after-class and after-school activities of general education schools and after-school children's agencies, analyze the effectiveness of organized programs and their influence on the atheist upbringing of students.

Continually: After-school and after-class activities departments, Republican after-school children's agencies, *Rayon* and city people's education departments.

11) During after-class activities effectively inculcate a materialistic outlook, based on the subjects taught. Every school club, especially the atheist club, must propagate scientific atheist information, unmask the role of reactionary religion in the historical evolution of science, reveal the meaning of a materialistic understanding of the world for the benefit of society.

Continually: After-school and after-class activities departments, *Rayon* and city people's education departments.

12) Strive that general education schools closely work with the parents of students. Systematically examine families, the influence of their upbringing on children. Great attention must be devoted to individual work with the believing parents of children. At education schools, the parents of students are to research the problems of forming a scientific atheist outlook in students.

Continually: *Rayon* and city people's education departments.

13) Strengthen the ideological-political effectiveness of textbooks, improve their scientific and methodology quality, emphasize the scientific atheist accents of their contents, which would form the basis for raising the materialistic outlook of students in every class subject.

1977 - 1980—Teaching Methodology Department, PMTI (Institute for the Scientific Research of Education).

14) Prepare and publish educational-methodology publications on atheist themes:

D. Poneris, D. Krotova: *Scientific Atheist Upbringing While Teaching Physics*; J. Kundrotas *Revelation*; A. Chertkov, V. Komarov *Conversation on Religion and Atheism*; I. Zekas *Who Created World Order*; V. Pechayeva, T. Markova *Methodology of Moral Upbringing of Nursery School Children*; H. Tidikis *Methodology of Atheist Influence*; V. Gladutis *From the Work Experience of a Home-room Teacher*; Z. Bajorūnas *Rearing Children in the Family*; A. Urbonas *Science About Man*.

1977 - 1980 —Teaching Methodology Department.

15) Draft a methodology letter on current-day conditions of providing students with an atheist upbringing.

1978—PMTI.

16) Organize a scientific practical conference on the questions of providing students with a materialistic outlook and atheist upbringing.

1979—PMTI, RMTI (State Institute for the Further Education of Teachers).

17) When organizing state-wide education symposiums, plan reports on the subject of Marxist-Leninist philosophy and atheist upbringing of students.

1978—(the same—author)

18) At courses given to raise the qualifications of the Republic's teachers, seminar leaders of group discussions on subject methodology are to more widely discuss the possibilities of forming a materialistic outlook, providing atheist education and atheist up-

bringing, while instructing teaching methods.

Every year—RMTI.

19) Organize a seminar on the questions of formation of materialistic philosophy and atheist upbringing for the leaders of clubs of young nature, chemistry, physics and other students.

1979—RMTI.

20) At city and *Rayon* centers, set up long-running exhibits of atheist literature, for the purpose of propagating scientific atheist literature.

1978 - 1979—Republican Library for Schools.

21) The publishers of *Soviet Teacher*, *Soviet School*, *Student* and *Family* are to feature more widely questions of atheist upbringing in schools and families. Print a series of articles on the formation of a scientific outlook and atheist belief during Lithuanian literature, Russian literature, History, Social Studies, Biology, Chemistry, Physics and other subject classes. Report on the system of after-class activities in schools in developing a scientific atheist outlook in students. Make available to teachers a series of theory and methodology articles on questions of scientific outlook in youth, as well as of formation of atheist beliefs.

1977 - 1980—Publishers of *Soviet Teacher*, *Soviet School*, *Family* and *Student*

Administration of Schools

3) Denationalization Program for Schools

Decree No. 88 of the Governing Body of the Lithuanian SSR Education Ministry dated May 27, 1977 confirmed "the plan of prospective measures to further improve the internationalist and patriotic upbringing of students in general education schools and other educational agencies." We are reprinting below this plan to denationalize Lithuanian children, with certain small abbreviations:

1. The Work of Teaching and Education.

1) The most important task of general education schools, pre-school and after-school agencies is to maintain the upbringing of the younger generation in the spirit of proletarian, socialist internationalism, Soviet patriotism and intra-nationalistic pride, in accordance with the decision of the 25th Congress of the Soviet Union Communist Party. Thereby assure a sound, effective and unified system of patriotic and internationalist upbringing of students relating it to the overall process of ideological, political,

esthetical, ethical and atheistic upbringing.

Continually: Administrations and Departments of the Ministry, Agencies under the Republic's Jurisdiction, *Rayon* and City People's Education Departments.

2) The teaching staffs of schools and other educational agencies are to use educational material much more effectively toward the goal of upbringing. Use the teaching process in all subjects, especially the humanities, to bolster the explanation of Marxist-Leninist theories on national and ethnic relationships, on the successes of the USSR's nationalist policies (for instance, in denationalizing Lithuanians living in Belorussia and other USSR Republics, exerting every effort that the inhabitants of the Vilnius area, the denationalized decendants of that area's Lithuanians, not regain their Lithuanian identity—author). It is especially important to explain the concept of the new historical unity of peoples (with no national identity—author), the concept of Soviet peoples, explaining the objective principles of the process of the further internationalization of Soviet society, the overall development of our Country's socialist ethnic groups and nationalities and gradual rapprochement (denationalization, i.e. russification—author).

Continually: Administration of Schools, *Rayon* and City People's Education Departments.

3) Strengthen the influence of the subjects taught on upbringing, in forming the atheist outlook of students: more convincingly explain the reactionary essence of religion and the parallels existing between religious philosophy and the interests of the exploiting classes. Make a timely and effective rebuttal to the various attacks of the reactionary clergy, unmask their intentions to spread bourgeois nationalistic ideology among the youth.

Continually: (the same—author).

II. After-class and after-school activities.

I) Give, through the curricular activities of educational agencies, practical emphasis to the internationalist relationship among students. For this purpose, stimulate the activities of school internationalist friendship clubs, more frequently hold general programs in schools, during which a different language is taught, organize clubs, trade and other student groups with contingents of children of different nationalities. Actively involve students in practical work, by organizing proletarian solidarity programs, as for instance planning for the National Youth and Student Festival in Havana, the

International Children's Festival in the Soviet Union, the Republic's "Planet of the Small" contest and others.

Continually: After-school and after-class Activities Departments, Administration of Schools, Preschool Education Department, *Rayon* and City People's Education Departments.

2) Strengthen the military-patriotic upbringing of students. Ensure that they actively participate in programs held by the mass production sector: hold more frequent endurance classes in schools, three generational conventions, military preparedness contests, campaigns on revolution, struggle and work virtues, military sports games *Žaibas* (Lightning), *Ereliukas* (Little Eagle), as well as ensure participation in the communist youth-youth relay race along the entire USSR national border. Stimulate the activities of SDAALR. Further strengthen the ties of students to Soviet Army soldiers, implement the systematic professional guidance of upper-grade students, stressing military professions. Strive that students have strong and accurate information on early military training.

Continually: Early Military Training Department, *Rayon* and City People's Education Departments.

3) Improve the leadership and control of national heritage and tourist activities. Guide young national heritage scholars to investigate the history of the workers revolutionary movement, its international-its impact; immortalize the memory of communist, communist youths, first activists of the Soviet government who perished at the hands of bourgeois nationalists; investigate the history of collective farms, Soviet farms and industry, stressing the internationalist nature of their activity and work. Prevent the idealization of the past, a privileged class outlook, by evaluating the historical events of the pre-Soviet era. Publicize more widely the achievements of Soviet Lithuanian socialist political development, stressing that all is the result of the unity, assembly and mutual assistance of all Soviet nations.

Continually: After-school and After-class Activities Department, *Rayon* and City people's education departments.

4) Strive that physical education teachers in general education schools and sports schools for children and youths improve the internationalist content of sports programs organized in conjunction with the students of brother republics . . .

5) Assure that mass media is widely used when organizing internationalist and patriotic upbringing activities with students . . .

III. Educational-Methodology activity and its control.

1) ... When preparing new textbooks and teaching material, improve their internationalist and patriotic content. . .

2) Include in improvement courses for teaching personnel, subjects on the theory and practice of the nationalist policies of the Soviet Union Communist Party, on the internationalist and patriotic upbringing of students in light of the decisions of the 25th Congress of the Soviet Union Communist Party. By giving advice on methodology, organizing seminars and conferences, spreading good experience, help educators to theoretically comprehend factual material, better put into practice the methodology of internationalist and patriotic work.

Continually: RMTI, RPR, *Rayon* and City People's Education departments.

3) More widely publicize in the press the practical experience of giving students an internationalist and patriotic upbringing, publish articles on the Leninist nationalist policy of the Soviet Union Communist Party, examples of Soviet life, the friendship of Soviet nations. Strengthen cultural ties with the editors and educational publishing firms of Belorussia, Latvia, the RSFSR and other brother Soviet republics. More frequently exchange information on the international work experience of educational agencies.

Continually: Publishers of *Soviet Teacher*, *Soviet School*, *Student* and *Family*.

4) Examine the practical experience of internationalist and patriotic work in general education schools and employ means to further improve this work, by increasing the personal responsibility of the head of every educational agency and of every teacher for the of upbringing, for the healthy current moral-political situation, by according maximum attention and sensitivity to multinationalist groups.

Examine this question in every faculty of people's education agencies, plan for ways and means to improve internationalist and patriotic work, improve its planning and coordination, strengthen its control.

1977-1978—*Rayon* and City People's Education Departments.

5) Systematically analyze the work of People's Education Departments and education agencies, in organizing the internationalist and patriotic upbringing of school and preschool children.

1978-1980—Administrations and Departments of the Ministry.
Administration of Schools

NEWS FROM THE DIOCESES

Šiauliai

The *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* has reported that, while still studying at the Seminary, the Rev. J. Alesius had no peace while on vacation in the *Rayon* of Lazdijai because he was continually harassed by KGB employees—Lazdijai KGB Chief Žemaitis and a security agent from Vilnius.

While serving as assistant pastor at the Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Šiauliai, Rev. Alesius was summoned on January 11, 1978 to the Šiauliai Military Commissariat, supposedly to verify his military status. A security agent waited for him at the Commissariat and introduced himself as Romas Pietaris:

"Greetings from Šiaudinis from Vilnius."

"I know no Šiaudinis."

"You spoke with him in Lazdijai, he is from the Vilnius Security Police. We will now begin meeting again. We will indicate to you what you must report to us."

"No, I don't intend meeting with you, because I don't get involved in politics."

"The Rev. Svarinskas also claims he does not get involved . . ."

Rev. Alesius frankly told the security agent that the KGB has become a nuisance. They wanted to force him while still in the Seminary to work as a security police collaborator. They even forced a pencil into his hand. They threatened that if he refuses to sign he will not complete the Seminary.

"It's too bad that you blabbed this to everyone."

"From childhood, my parents have taught me to be honest. When I was taken to Lazdijai and was absent from home all day, I had to tell my family where I had been because they had been very worried. Besides, the security agents themselves acted very foolishly—they spoke with me at the Lazdijai Soviet Building. Everyone saw us, and many of my friends work there."

"Yes, we made a mistake," admitted the security agent. "But we will still meet again. We will keep it a secret. We can summon you by telephone."

"No, I won't come. I will not serve two masters. I categorically refuse. Unless you come take me by force."

Before allowing him to go home, the security agent warned Rev. Alesius not to touch on the subject of abortion in his sermons: let everyone who wishes have abortions.

It appears that the KGB is interested in having as many Lithuanians as possible have abortions. The fewer Lithuanians there are, the more foreigners will come to Lithuania and the faster will Lithuania be russified.

The *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* is asking all priests whom the KGB recruits to work as collaborators to report this most inhuman KGB activity—compelling a man to act against the Church, his Motherland and himself—in this publication. The more that society and the world openly speak of the KGB's crimes, the fewer such crimes will be committed. Black deeds fear the light of day.

Telšiai

In 1977 and the beginning of 1978, the believers Šeduikis and Dargužaitė sent the Telšiai Executive Committee, the party committee and the Republic's agencies various statements regarding the construction of wayside shrines. The government agencies made no reply to most of the statements. Instead, the Telšiai *Rayon* government demolished Šeduikis' wayside shrine on April 24, 1978. A group of the faithful addressed the following protest to the highest USSR government:

To: Secretary General of the Communist Party Central Committee, L. Brezhnev.

Copies to: Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee;
Telšiai *Rayon* Executive Committee.

A Letter of Protest from: Catholics of the city of Telšiai. May 1978

We, the undersigned residents of Telšiai, are extremely distressed at the behavior of the Telšiai *Rayon* officials. They act in the name of the entire Soviet government, as well as yours, Comrade Brezhnev, and shame the Soviet government with their actions.

The new LSSR Constitution was adopted and became effective on April 20th of this year. It stresses the equal rights of all citizens, and of course, the equality of believers and non-believers as well. Only a few days later, on April 24th, as though offering a rebuttal to these guarantees, the Telšiai *Rayon* government demolished an artistic wayside shrine erected near a home in which a priest and an organist reside. In issue No. 12 of Švyturys (Beacon), the writer Petkevičius calls the demolition of crosses and wayside shrines valdalism, hooliganism. We obviously cannot understand how such

deeds can be performed by the highest *Rayon* government—representatives of the Soviet government. The *Rayon* Executive Committee has adopted a resolution to demolish a similar wayside shrine in the cemetery, erected by citizen Dargužaitė on her family plot.

The Telšiai *Rayon* government is even using clearly discriminatory measures against believers. To prevent the faithful from purchasing Christmas trees for Christmas, the Telšiai *Rayon* Executive Committee allows them to be sold only beginning December 26th. Such an unusual practice was criticized in 1977 in issue No. 10 of *Švyturys (Beacon)* and on December 25, 1977 by the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee organ *Tiesa (Truth)*. After completing their day's work, the faithful of Telšiai travel to other *Rayons* to purchase Christmas trees (in other *Rayons*, for instance in Šiauliai, Christmas trees are sold beginning December 19th). The faithful waste a great deal of time and incur great expense.

We support all the administrative agencies of the Soviet government with our diligent work and they in turn cause us needless expense, trouble and waste our precious time with their directives.

Students who attend church are interrogated en masse at the Telšiai schools. During December 12-16, 1977, believing students were interrogated at the Third and Fourth Middle Schools, they were even summoned from classes. During those days, certain classes were cut short or cancelled.

Currently, even state security organs are summoning believing students and choir members for interrogation. This is done on such a scale, that the entire city is talking of it. In view of all these facts, we feel completely without any rights.

Is it possible that, under the new Constitution, believers are considered criminals, and more restrictions are placed on the rights of believers? No, we cannot even admit the thought that all this is occurring with your consent. We ask that steps be quickly taken, we call on your humaneness—for you so often speak out for the rights of those workers who are exploited in other countries. Defend our rights, as Soviet citizens, too!

The Cathedral organist has written the Telšiai Executive Committee and the Commissioner for Religious Affairs. Although every Soviet agency is obliged to reply to statements from citizens within 30 days, the faithful do not receive replies from the above-named agencies. The Religious Affairs Commissioner also does not defend the rights of believers—after repeated statements, he replied that he does not have the right to change the decision of the

Rayon Executive Committee.

We therefore turn to you. We ask that you direct the Telšiai *Rayon* government to rebuild the cross which was destroyed, to prevent the faithful being wronged and debased, to prevent the graves of believers being vandalized, to educate all government officials in the spirit of communism, because they shame the Soviet Union by abusing their Soviet position.

The Protest was signed by 130 Believers of the City of Telšiai.

To: Religious Affairs Commissioner, Comrade Tumėnas.

Copies to: Telšiai *Rayon* Executive Committee and Telšiai *Rayon* Party Commētee.

A statement from: (Miss) Daugužaitė, Danutė, daughter of Juozapas, residing in Telšiai, Pionierių g. 13/1.

I ask you, Comrade Commissioner, to defend the monument I have erected as a believer, because the Constitution guarantees us rights and freedoms. Now, as you will read in the directive, I am being ordered to demolish the monument. I refuse to do so. As you can see from directive No. 325, I erected it for my deceased family members and had permission to do so. Being a believer, I placed symbols of the faith on the monument to my deceased believers: a cross and statuettes. It appears that that same monument without symbols of faith is acceptable and can be approved, but with symbols of faith, it no longer can, as stated in the directive which crudely affronts the approved project. How should we understand this? Priests do not bless monuments without religious symbols, therefore why is it forbidden in this case?

The Telšiai Chancery Office issued memorandum No. 577 for the faithful on October 11, 1954: "Crosses may be erected not only in churchyards, but also in the yards of the faithful." The Chancery Office reiterated this in its order No. 227 dated October 7, 1972. These memoranda to the faithful have not been rescinded. They apply to my monument as well because it has a cross. In the meantime, wayside shrines without religious symbols have been erected in Telšiai near the museum, the forestry building, the Džiugas Hill and elsewhere. Non-believers are allowed to do this, but believers are not. In other words, the rights of believers are not equal to those of non-believers.

I therefore appeal to you and ask that you reprimand the Telšiai *Rayon* officials for their arbitrary actions. If I receive no help from

you, I will be forced to appeal to the USSR Council for Religious Affairs. I await a reply from you personally.

December 23, 1977

(Miss) Dargužaitė

Pociūnėliai (Rayon of Radviliškis)

On February 6, 1978, V. Vaišutis, head of the finance department of the *Rayon* of Radviliškis stated the following to the Rev. A. Jokūbauskas: "We used taxes to bring down the exploiters, we have driven the population to collective farms, we will also handle you with taxes." He did as he promised—in 1978 the taxes of Rev. Jokūbauskas tripled over the previous year to a total of 812 rubles.

On May 26, 1978, at the order of the *Rayon* government, Skėmiai district chairman Nenertavičius summoned to the Pociūnėliai state farm office representatives of the Pociūnėliai parish—the parish council—and demanded that they sign an agreement with the district to dismiss Rev. Jokūbauskas from his position as chairman of the church committee. The faithful refused to sign a new agreement with the district and as for re-electing a new chairman, they stated: We have elected a chairman who shows the most concern for the church and will not elect another."

The *Rayon* government is very displeased that the faithful have replaced the parish chairman who resigned by electing the pastor to this position. It appears that, to date, this is the first such occurrence in Lithuania.

Klaipėda

The faithful of Klaipėda have often appealed to the Telšiai Diocesan Chancery Office, asking that they be assigned another pastor who would show more concern for the material and spiritual affairs of the parish. The current pastor Dean Jonas Baikauskas caters to the atheist government and does not want youngsters to participate in processions or sing in the choir.

The *Chronicle* notes that there are quite a few such pastors in Lithuania. They think it is better for gray-haired old men to serve at the altar, so long as good relations are maintained with the atheist government. How unfortunate is the impact of fear in the lives of priests!

The Telšiai Diocesan Chancery Office claims it is unable to trans-

fer from parishes pastors who have the backing of the civil government.

Pavandenė

On July 8, 1978 unknown vandals shattered the panes and broke the frames of the 14 Stations of the Cross located in the Pavandenė churchyard.

Kuršėnai

Vice-Chairman Beržinis of the Šiauliai *Rayon* Executive Committee came to see assistant pastor R. Žuipas on May 26, 1978 and forbade him to instruct children and preach sermons which displease the atheist government, or face the consequences.

In Kuršėnai, Dean Stanislovas Ilinčius does not permit children at the altar. He even chases away the altar boys who have been taught by the assistant pastor. He is thereby not building the living Church, but destroying it.

Šaukėnai (Rayon of Kelmė)

The people of Šaukėnai complain that the solemn and peaceful atmosphere of the Šaukėnai cemetery is constantly being disrupted. A communal bathhouse was built next to the cemetery. After it was closed down, a firing range was set up near the cemetery. Shots are constantly ringing out and people jump at the noise at the graves of their loved ones.

And what of the graves desecrated throughout Lithuania? Crosses are knocked down and broken. You need only visit the old Kelmė cemetery. And what has become of the Šaukėnai Jewish Cemetery? At one time, gravel containing skulls was taken from the cemetery and dumped on the highway.

Viduklė

The Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas, pastor of Viduklė, sent the following telegram of condolence to the Vatican at the death of Pope Paul VI:

"To His Eminence, Cardinal J. Slipij:

"At the death of the great Pope Paul VI, who is rightfully called the apostle of peace and the conscience of the world, we extend through Your Eminence our deepest condolences to the Apostolic See.

"Catholic Lithuania is on her knees praying for the soul of the

deceased Pontiff and asks God to choose a courageous and holy Head of the Church of Christ."

IN THE SOVIET SCHOOL

In April 1977, Kuršėnai Middle School 11th-grade student Petras Vozbutas died in the village of Šilkalniai. The parents decided to bury their son with church rites. The colleagues of the deceased's mother—teacher Vanda Vozbutienė—began to stir, to react:

"What are you doing? You are shaming the Varputėnai school. . ."

Principal Juozas Baraška was furious, head of academics, Vanda Grybauskienė, was even more upset. They said:

"We won't forgive you for this!"

Teacher Vozbutienė was in fact terrorized in various ways, threatened and left the school after she became unable to bear the aggressive behavior of her colleagues.

It should be noted that in similar instances, not only do fanatical teachers display hostility, but so do others who fear to incur the displeasure of the education department and the party committee.

Šaukėnai (Rayon of Kelmė)

Teacher Dana Oškėlienė teaches history at the Šaukėnai Middle School. During one class, as the teacher explained that the world appeared from matter, the following discussion took place between her and student Linas Milius:

"Teacher, if the world appeared from matter, where did the matter come from?"

"That's none of your business."

"Then who can explain it?"

"Sit down, you idiot!"

"If I'm an idiot, please send me to the doctor."

"Get out!"

The student was ousted from the classroom.

(

Antašava (Rayon of Kupiškis)

During the summer of 1977, the sound of children singing was heard in the Antašava parish church. The children joyfully gathered to sing and asked the organist (Miss) P. Bieliauskaitė to teach them new hymns

Once the school year began, teachers began to demand that children not sing in church. The children did not obey. The teachers then began to ask which children go sing and demanded written statements about whether or not they sing in the choir.

When the children assembled at the home of Jonas Šimonis on March 19, 1978 to learn Easter hymns, Vice-Chairman Astikas of the Kupiškis *Rayon* Executive Committee suddenly came into the room, as did Antašava district chairman J. Nakas and Antašava school principal Valda Sanvaitienė. The visitors began to question the organist about what she was doing here:

"We are learning to sing," replied the organist.

"Don't you know that you are breaking the law? Only parents have the right to teach children, but you do not have that right," stated *Rayon* Vice-Chairman Astikas.

"I know that under the new Constitution, no limits are placed on the freedom of conscience and it is forbidden to persecute believers."

The committee interrogated the organist as to where she lives, what kind of work she does, wrote down the names of all the children and drafted a report on the crime committed. As they were leaving they hurled threats, saying that they will meet again.

Several weeks later, Astikas came to the middle school and tried to persuade the children not to go sing in church. They were again ordered to write down which children go sing and were threatened that those who do sing would be given poor references and would not be admitted to any school of higher education.

Teachers Irena Kluckienė and Vale Martinkienė went to see the students' parents and pleaded with them not to allow their children to join the church choir.

Later, at a parents' meeting, principal Sanvaitienė explained that Jonas Šimonis had committed a serious crime by allowing children to learn to sing in his room and the organist also committed a serious offense and would suffer the consequences if she did not stop teaching the children.

Tauragė

On April 13, 1976, 11a grade homeroom teacher K. Pušinskas of the Second Middle School of Tauragė made plans for his students to pay their respects to the deceased grandfather of their classmate Kisielius, but principal Jurgis Jankauskas forbade the students to go to church, threatening to give unsatisfactory department grades to those who disobey. Despite the principal's ban, 14 11th-grade

students attended the funeral.

At the April 19th meeting of the faculty council, the students, who attended the funeral were warned never again to behave this way.

Pikeliai (R a y o n of Mažeikiai)

Roma Jasmentaitė, (sic — translator) leader of the Pioneers, decided to enroll Laima Bružokaitė into the Pioneers. She advised the girl not to tell her parents what was happening in school. Upon learning that her daughter had been enrolled in the pioneers, Laima's mother ordered her to go withdraw from the organization, which is what the girl did.

After Easter, when teacher Jasmentaitienė (sic — translator) learned that Laima attended church, she intimidated the girl in various ways, driving her to tears.

Who will remind teacher Jasmentaitienė (sic — translator) not to act as a party inquisitor in school and not to interfere in students' matters of conscience?

Šiauliai

On February 24, 1978, Principal Snieškus of the Fourth Middle School in Šiauliai asked the following of Grade 9M: "Why are ten students in this class still not Communist Youth members? It came out that some of the students—Virginija Viducirytė, Alma Šileikaitė, Gitana Tamošiunaitė and Dalia Judikaviciūtė—did not join the Communist Youth League because of their religious beliefs. The principal insulted these girls as having poor personalities and threatened that those who do not join the Communist Youth will be expelled from the mathematics class.

Principal Snieškus has called on the assistance of instructors at the teacher's institute to re-educate the believing girls. On February 13th, one such "educator" attempted to persuade Dalia Judikaviciūtė to join the Communist Youth League and not practice her faith.

COMMUNIST MORALITY IN PRACTICE

On July 18, 1978 employees of the Lithuanian SSR Ministry of Culture noticed long-time ministry employee Henrikas Lanzbergas pacing nervously. No one could guess the reason. Only when the director of the science-methology office arrived at the ministry,

did the employees learn of the terrible event: an employee of that same department, 21-year-old Renata Gavrilienkaite had hung herself at the door of her lover Henrikas Landzbergas. The lover, it seems, did not even dare remove the rope for fear of leaving his fingerprints. And shortly ministry employees found a suicide letter in the deceased's office . . .

Landzbergas has lived in the Ministry of Culture building for many years. And this was not the first year that the shrieks of women were heard coming from his room. Rumors about the personal "escapades" of this dissolute man spread beyond the ministry, but this did not disturb even the office's management.

Perhaps it is useless to talk about the morals of Landzbergas, but let us see who his latest (and perhaps not last?) victim was.

Let the deceased speak for herself. In her suicide letter Renata writes that "the eyes of the murdered infant" would give her no peace . . . In other words, the murder of infants legalized by Soviet morality had not yet succeeded in completely silencing the voice of conscience in the young woman. She had worked too short a time at the Ministry of Culture where such thorough efforts are made to instill atheist morality and fight against "religious superstition" . . .

Let us glance more closely at Renata's life. Her father, a Soviet official, ended his fatherly obligation to his three children by giving them life . . . The mother, whose sole aim in life was alcohol, carried the greater burden—giving birth. But this is where her "motherhood" came to an end.

The Soviet writer N. Sluckis once praised (in the novel *Good Home*) the Soviet homes for children. Unfortunately, reality is completely different. In our concrete example, this "good home" only succeeded in instilling Communist morality in the girl and speak of a "bright future." And later, the Molėtai Boarding School continued this task. Renata learned there that Christian morality and the murder of unborn children is the invention of ignorant priests, a means of making fools of people, that women have been liberated from bourgeois and religious superstitions. The boarding school until recently still provided such information to the deceased's sister, Eugenija.

Moreover, one homeroom teacher who came to the funeral remarked that she had foreseen Renata's future path, but "there was nothing she could do" . . . We believe it; the Soviet school has no means or reason to fight against moral downfall.

This is how Renata made her debut: She worked at the office

of tin- Writers Society. Perhaps here, coming into contact with writers, she was able to pause a little and view more critically the morals instilled in her. Who if not writers must be the first to uplift man? Unfortunately, Renata did little direct work. Her most important duties were to take home drunk "engineers of the soul" and sleep with them. And the final stage was the Ministry of Culture. There she was confronted with the brothel established within the ministry building itself by the former Culture Minister, and now tolerated by Lithuanian SSR Communist Party Central Committee Secretary L. Scpcis. (Though, not too long ago, we all had occasion to read the lengthy articles by Šepečis on moral upbringing!*) Nothing changed even with a change in the office management. So, the first thing new employee Renata came into contact with was Landzbergas "apartment."

Renata's tragedy evolved gradually. Sensing that his new victim still had an understanding of real love, her depraved "lover" forced her, like others before, to shriek in the night. When he no longer needed her, he often pushed her out the door in the middle of the night. (Renata did not have her own room, although her relatives had no complaints in that department.) There is serious reason to believe that this is what happened on that fateful night . . .

Renata was pregnant. A rather large group of "advisers" immediately came forward at the Ministry urging her to get rid of the "inconvenience." There were some voices who pointed her in the right direction, but their words remained unheard. The murder of the unborn child was finally sanctioned by the "lover" who made it understood that the birth would destroy their "love."

This is not surprising—who, in such an office, could have strongly and authoritatively, honestly and courageously stated that abortion is actually murder, when Soviet laws legalize such a thing?

Renata was buried in the Rokantiškis cemetery. Someone remarked that one of the reasons for the tragedy was Renata's lack of ideals. That is true, but no one discussed why. Hardly anyone was distressed by her confession that she had murdered her child. And the ministry's main concern at this moment is to somehow cover up this incident. Of course, it is doubtful whether the ministry would have given it any attention, had it been possible to hide everything, as hundreds of similar incidents are hidden.

Some more typical details from the funeral:

The funeral was attended by Renata's "father", E. Gavrilenko and her "mother", as well as Henrikas Landzbergas. It is doubtful

that those who did not know them would have suspected that these individuals had anything in common with the deceased: it is impossible to even imagine more indifferent people attending a funeral. The "father" only noted the order and medal ribbons, while the lover with his camera acted as an ordinary photographer. Well, that is a common trait of the Soviet way of life . . .

There remains Renata's sister Eugenija . . . There remains thousands of Renatas and Eugenijas . . . There remains upbringing based on Communist morality in children's homes and schools. There remains the Landzbergas', Šepečis' and Gavrilencos produced by the Soviet way of life . . . Isn't it time to draw some serious conclusions?

CATHOLICS IN THE SOVIET UNION

Kishinev

The Kishinev chapel is tiny and the only haven for Catholics in Moldavia. On Sundays and holidays it overflows with people who faint from the poor ventilation and crush. First aid must often be summoned. However after coming several times, it refused to render assistance. One time, when called, it replied as follows:

"You pray to God, let God heal you!"

People from all over Moldavia gather there to pray. People travel by bus with transfers for 100-200 kms. (60-120 miles) and upon arriving cannot make their confession because one priest is not capable of ministering to all the Catholics of Moldavia. The faithful have often appealed to Religious Affairs Commissioner Vikonski asking permission for at least one more Catholic priest to work in Moldavia. The Commissioner did not even want to hear of it, for supposedly the Soviet government has a great deal of trouble with that one priest. What would happen if Moldavia had two priests?

There are approximately 40,000 Catholics in Moldavia. Most of them have forgotten religious practice due to the shortage of priests, although they proudly consider themselves Catholics.

In 1978, at the request of the faithful, Father V. Zavalniuk appealed to the bishop of Riga, asking him to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to the Catholics of Moldavia. Moldavia's Commissioner Vikonski consented to allow the bishop to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation, if there were no opposition from Moscow. It was decided to hold the ceremony on June 4th. All the Catholics joyfully prepared to greet their shepherd. Father

Zavalniuk flew to Riga to escort the bishop to Kishinev, but it turned out that the Riga Religious Affairs Commissioner "knew nothing about this. After a call was placed to Moscow, Vice-Commissioner for Religious Affairs Tarasov replied that Moscow did not decide such matters.

When Chairman Faiclevich of the Kishinev church committee again sent to see Vikonskis for an explanation, the latter stated that he did not want to see any bishop and would not grant him permission to come. Vikonski repeated the same to the faithful who assailed the commissioner's office in groups. It would appear that representatives of the Soviet government are capable of doing well only one type of work: lie and deceive.

On June 27, 1978 (Feast of St. Vladislav) several priests came to congratulate Father Zavalniuk, as did many faithful hoping to make their confession since there were more priests available. Unfortunately, government representatives forbade the visiting priests to say Mass publicly in the chapel or to hear confessions. Secretary Trofanova of the Lenin *Rayon* committee observed the services and later berated representatives of the church committee for the fact that many children attended the services and young teenagers served at Mass.

In the Soviet Union young people are permitted to watch immoral movies from the age of 16, but to serve at Mass one has to be 18!

Slaboda-Rashkovo

The Catholics of Rashkov are continually sending telegram after telegram to Kishinev asking for a priest, but the government strictly refuses to issue permission. But that is not all. The atheists of Rashkov are persecuting the faithful in various ways, for the purpose of breaking them of the habit of religious practice. Children suffer the most. After being chased from one room where they prayed, the children began to assemble in the cemetery. KGB agents chased them from there also. After finding in the woods a fragment of a wall from the destroyed church, the children set up a modest altar on that spot and gathered there every evening to pray. The atheists found the children there also and destroyed the altar. Then the children began to assemble together with adults in a small room in the yard of the former church. Farm council chairman Bugarosh came the evening of May 29th and shouting obsceni-

ties dragged the children by the collar from the room of prayer. Such attacks against children are common-place occurrences in Rashkov.

Children fight for their faith not only through prayer, but also through sacrifice. They give up their childish pleasures, candy, in order to have Holy Masses said with the money saved, begging God for Freedom of belief and perseverance in good.

The Catholics of Rashkov travel to Moscow nearly every other week demanding a priest. Moscow is using blackmail to rid itself of the unpleasant visits by the Catholics. The faithful were told that the priest is allowed to travel to Rashkov, but that he himself does not wish to do so. Secretary Kozhuk of the *Rayon* of Kamenka stated: "So long as I am here, you will see the priest about as much as you see your ears without a mirror."

The Catholics of Rashkov tirelessly ask the government to register the church committee, but the latter uses various measures to avoid doing so and does not register the committee.

NEW UNDERGROUND PUBLICATIONS

Aušra (The Dawn) No. 11/51. This issue contains a detailed account of the kangaroo trial of Balys Gajauskas in Vilnius. It contains much information of the 30-year suffering of political prisoner P. Paulaitis in the Gulag. The issue is dedicated to Gajauskas and Paulaitis.

Dievas ir Tėvynė (God and Country) No. 8. This issue contains several articles which are truly worthy of attention: "Betrayal" and "Soviet Constitution—Shame of the Era."

The article "Betrayal" writes: "It is suggested that all betrayer-priests who have not yet lost their faith, send forthwith statements to the security police categorically refusing such collaboration."

FELLOW LITHUANIANS, DON'T FORGET!

P. (etras) Plumpa, N.(ijolė) Sadūnaitė, S.(ergei) Kovalev, O.(na) Pranskūnaitė, V.(ladas) Lapietis, B.(alys) Gajauskas, V.(iktoras) Petkus and others who bear the shackles of prison so that you might freely live and believe!

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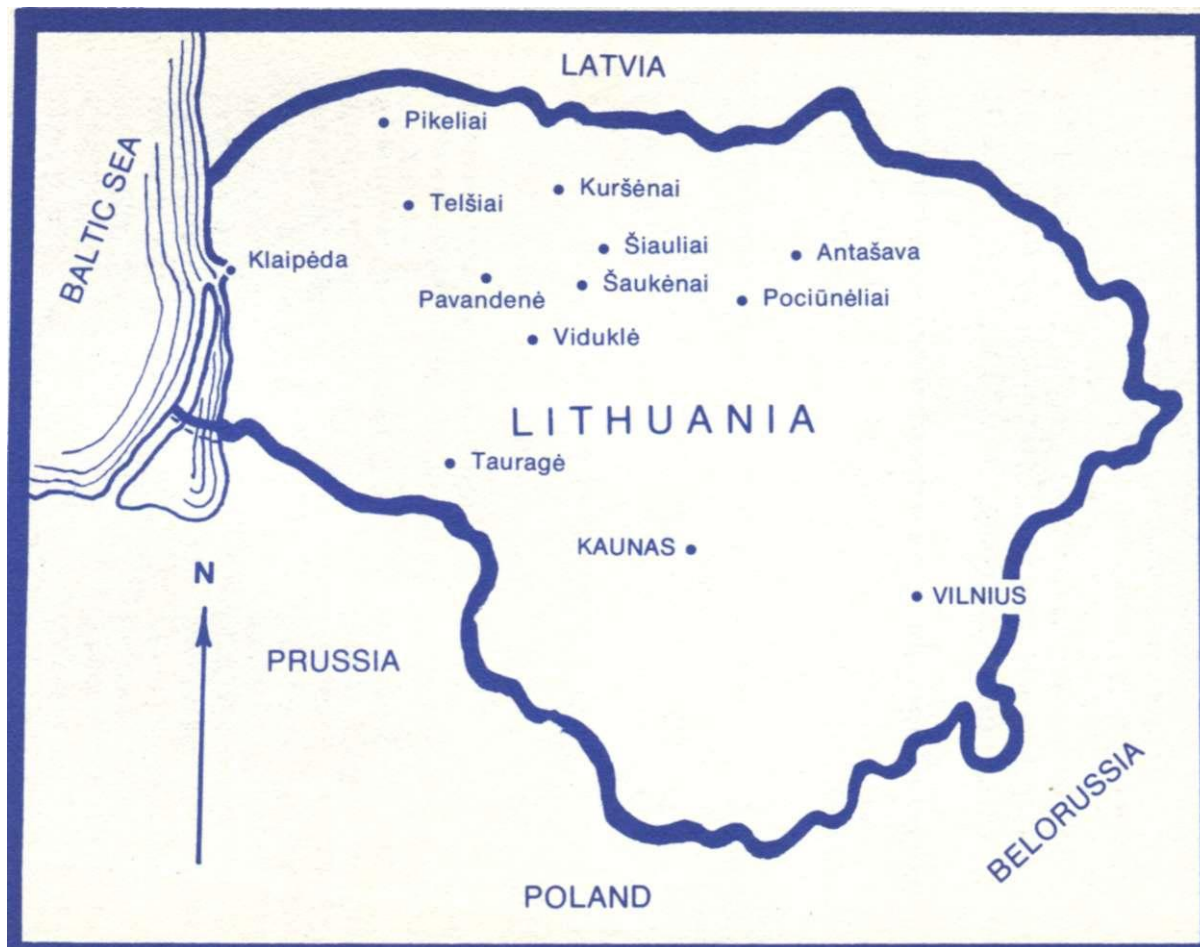
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