



CHRONICLE OF THE
CATHOLIC CHURCH
IN LITHUANIA
No. 16

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**A Translation of Authentic Reports
from Soviet-Occupied Lithuania**

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Introduction

The sixteenth issue of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* opens with a report of the trial of Juozas Gražys, March 11-17, 1975, before the Supreme Court of the Lithuanian SSR for allegedly participating in the production of the *Chronicle*. Gražys is found guilty — his third political conviction.

The wife of Sergei Kovalev, and A. Lavutas are interrogated when they bring packages to the Russian dissident being held incommunicado in Vilnius.

A number of other interrogations is reported, and ethnic heritage researchers are under surveillance and investigation.

Virgilijus Jaugelis, in prison for religious activities, is reported as having been beaten up while at prayer. He has also been diagnosed as suffering from advanced cancer. His mother's written complaint to the Prosecutor General of the Lithuanian SSR is rejected. A deeply religious man, he asks only for prayers.

This issue denies calumnies against the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* disseminated by the KGB.

A number of arrests and interrogations of individuals by the KGB is reported, without giving any specific reasons. In a few instances, there is some indication that individuals are suspected of nationalist activities. Most of the names are new, except for some like that of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius.

Another destruction of religious memorials on the Hill of Crosses at Šiauliai is reported, together with continuing popular resistance there.

The case of Mečislovas Jurevičius is reported: Jurevičius is discharged from work for absenteeism, because he insisted on observing religious holy days, making up the time in other ways. Two fellow workers, J. Šileikis and S. Čilinskas, arouse the ire of their superiors for the same reason. Jurevičius is even interrogated by Security in connection with the case of a (Mrs.)

Pergauskienė, who is apparently being questioned about the dissemination of religious literature.

The vandalizing of the church at Tūbausiai is blamed by the *Chronicle* on the "hate for religion being blindly instilled in schools."

A Communist Party member who dies reconciled with the Church is denied a religious funeral by the Party. A local newspaper refuses to carry a note of condolence to the local priest on the death of his mother. A mailman is forbidden to participate in religious processions. A pastor is prevented from repairing the clock on his church. A cemetery is vandalized, apparently by atheists. Strict rules governing the summoning of clergy to visit the sick are spelled out by hospital authorities. Doctors are admonished by hospital authorities to show more zeal for atheistic propaganda. A religious grave marker in preparation for erection disappears, under circumstances which point to official condonement.

The parish organist of Skrebotiškiiai is reprimanded by local government authorities for allegedly enticing youngsters to come to Church. Priests complain of being maligned with the condonation of the authorities, saying, "Such slanderous discrediting of a priest is a conscious and open battle against religion."

Elsewhere, an organist is fined because school-children sing in the choir. A priest is required to obtain government permission in order to preach in a neighboring parish. Plain-clothes men watch people at prayer in church. Children serving at Mass are interrogated. A pastor is interrogated by police about his Easter sermon. A couple in the Communist Party is persecuted for having its child baptized. A collective farm worker is pressured not to be married in church. A physician who had been a candidate to the Communist Party, although a religious believer, is buried with church ritual and the pastor is harassed as a result.

These and similar incidents reported in the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* No. 16, indicate that government persecution of the Church in Soviet-occupied Lithuania continues unabated. They also indicate the enduring stubbornness of the Lithuanian people in their adherence to the faith of their fathers.

Rev. Casimir Pugevičius
Translation Editor

CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LITHUANIA No. 16

- **The Trial of Juozas Gražys**
- **Interrogations**
- **The Fate of Those Sentenced**
- **Calumnies against the CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
IN LITHUANIA**
- **News from the Dioceses**
- **Statement of Father Laurinavičius**
- **In the Soviet Schools**

THE TRIAL OF JUOZAS GRAŽYS

March 11-17, 1975, the Supreme Court of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Lithuania considered the criminal case of Juozas Gražys. The presiding judge was Jankauskas; prosecutor — Bakučionis; counsel for the defense — Kudaba.

Even though the court session was not closed, it was impossible for members of the public to gain access to it. No one close to Gražys was present at the trial. The following were called into court as witnesses: Povilas Petronis, Jonas Stašaitis, Miss Kazėnaitė, (Mrs.) Martinaitienė, (Mrs.) Žemaitienė ir Šemaška-Šemaškevičius.

Gražys is being tried for the third time .

Gražys was accused of helping to collate the *Chronicle* and of collaboration in gathering news for it. Gražys had allegedly collated a few issues of the first numbers of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* and about twenty copies of Number 7. He had also reproduced by typewriter a few pamphlets: *Between Two Laws*, *Bishop Matulionis*, *Problems of the Lithuanian Character*,

The Trial of Simas Kudirka, Lithuania on the Road to Victory, The Distribution of the National Income (translated by Gražys from the Russian and distributed by him), *To You, Lithuania* (made a summary).

During the trial, Gražys refused to say where he got and to whom he gave the aforementioned publications. He was charged with violating Article 68 of the Criminal Code of the LSSR, Part 1, "Anti-Soviet Agitation and Propaganda, Aimed at Weakening the Soviet Government" ... The prosecutor suggested a sentence of six years of hard labor, but the court ordered only three years of prison. The court decided to confiscate Gražys' typewriter, to destroy three high voltage blocks for the "Era" mimeograph machine found at Gražys' home during the search, and to return his money. Captain of Security Markevičius and other Security agents were constantly seen at the trial.

It was the third conviction for Gražys. The first two times he had also been tried for "politics". While serving his second term Gražys had become ill with an incurable disease of the intestines.

INTERROGATIONS

Kovalev's Wife Interrogated

On February 28, 1975, Major Istominas A.A. interrogated the wife of Sergej Kovalev, L. Boicova, who had brought her husband a parcel. Kovalev is currently being held incommunicado in the headquarters of the Vilnius Security.

A. Lavutas Interrogated

On March 28, 1975, in the quarters of the Vilnius Security, Major Istominas interrogated A. Lavutas, who had brought a parcel for Kovalev. Lavutas refused to cooperate in the interrogations, because, in his words, such interrogation interferes with the free distribution of information. Istominas asked Lavutas whether the 34th number of the *Chronicle of Current Events* had been published, and explained that Kovalev would not be incriminated in Number 34, but only in Number 33.

Gajauskas, (Mrs.) Pašilienė and Petruševičius Interrogated:

On March 4, 1975 Balys Gajauskas, (Mrs.) Birutė Pašilienė and Algis Petruševičius were interrogated.

Gajauskas was asked about a list of prisoners found at his home. He explained that he knows many Lithuanian political prisoners because he had recently returned after serving 25 years.

"I know very well what they are suffering," spoke Gajauskas, "and consider it my duty to help them when they return. I made the list so that I would not forget anyone." To the interrogator's question why he translated *Gulag Archipelago* into Lithuanian, he replied that in his opinion this book would some day be published in the Soviet Union and his translation would be useful. (During a search at the home of Gajauskas, fifty pages of a rough draft of a translation of the *Gulag Archipelago* were taken).

Birutė Pašilienė was again asked how she obtained a copy of the *Gulag Archipelago* and where she had become acquainted with the wife of Kovalev, Boicova. Mrs. Pašilienė said that she had met Boicova at the Vilnius railroad station; she had not known her earlier.

* * *

On March 28, 1975, at Vilnius Security, Bajauskas and Zelinskas were interrogated.

People Concerned with Heritage Studies are Watched

Security constantly watches people who are engaged in heritage studies in Lithuania. At the beginning of 1975, the chairman of the Artists' Association, Stauskas, was called to Security, because at this time the premises of the Artists' Association are used by folk song fans.

Security interrogated (Miss) Didelytė, and librarian (Miss) Kilikevičiūtė and (Miss) Stankevičiūtė.

Inquiries were made at their workplaces about (Miss) Juškaitė, employed at the free city library, and about Veteikis and Adomonis,

working at the Cardiology Institute. Security wanted to know the mood of the heritage researchers after the case of Šarūnas Žukauskas and what their ties are to the Catholic Church. Overtures were made to some researchers to collaborate with Security officials.

In the beginning of April, Šarūnas Žukauskas was brought from the Permė district to the Vilnius Security.

* * *

THE FATE OF THOSE SENTENCED

The beating of Jaugelis

The *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*, No. 15, carried an article concerning the beating of Virgilius Jaugelis at the Pravieniškiai camp. Here is additional information concerning this event: He was set upon while praying. After this serious beating about the head, he spent a week at the Pravieniškiai prison camp without any qualified medical attention, before being taken to the Lukiškiai prison hospital in Vilnius. En route, he was robbed by criminals.

A surgeon from the Vilnius Cancer Polyclinic, Kasparūnas, diagnosed that Jaugelis is suffering from cancer of the intestines (third stage) and that an immediate operation was indicated. When Jaugelis returns from the prison camp to freedom, in a year's time, the operation will be too late. Jaugelis refused the operation in writing.

Protest of (Mrs.) Jaugelienė

To the Prosecutor of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Lithuania
Statement of Monica Jaugelienė, residing in Kaunas, Kalnų g. 7-4:

My son, Virgilijus Jaugelis, was sentenced for production of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*. However, he was imprisoned together with criminals and recently was assaulted.

I protest against my son's imprisonment with criminals and I hold all those who sent him there responsible for all the consequences.

I ask the Prosecutor to arrange that when my son returns from the Vilnius prison hospital he will not be forced to live with murderers, rapists and thieves. If this is not done, I will consider the illegal incarceration of my son with criminals as a deliberate desire of the Prosecutor's office to destroy my son completely by weakening his already poor health or by conspiring to murder him.

March 7, 1974

M. Jaugelienė

The Prosecutor Ignores the Request of Monika Jaugelienė

I. Shishkov, Assistant Prosecutor of the Lithuanian SSR, overseer of the places of punishment, replied on March 30th that the place and manner of punishment is set by the court and that there is no basis for protest concerning the place and manner of the punishment set for Jaugelis.

Jaugelis Demands the Return of his Scapulars

To: the Prosecutor General of the Lithuanian SSR

From: Citizen V. Jaugelis, son of Vincent, sentenced according to the SSRL Punishment Code 1991, with the denial of freedom for two years in a colony of ordinary punishment.

Complaint:

I, Virgilijus Jaugelis, because of a severe head injury and broken jaw, was taken from oc 12/8 to the Republican Hospital of Vilnius (oc 12/11) on February 16, 1975. At the sentry post before leaving, I was searched and religious items were taken from me (scapulars and their cord).

Even though the Constitution of the Soviet Union guarantees freedom of religion to all the citizens, I and these items were rudely mocked. This took place on February 16, 1975, at 7:30 A.M. in the sentry post of oc 12/8. This event was witnessed by four other convicted men who were being sent to the hospital on the same day.

The items taken are described as follows:

1) scapulars — two pieces of fabric (10 x 15 cm) tied with some thread;

2) a cord—a double piece of string (95 cm) tied with knots.

After the trial, when I was taken from the Security Committee to the prison camp, these items were returned to me as harmless. The administration of the penal colony also allowed me to keep them. The overseers who insulted me and my faith, justified their behavior by declaring that I might use these items to hang myself.

However, there is no logic in this. First of all, my faith does not allow me to do this. Secondly, I was allowed to keep my belt and my shoelaces ... Therefore their logic is more than ridiculous and comic. Only a completely backward person is capable of such thinking, and these were wearing "little stars". [Officers' insignia — Transl. Note].

This was common mockery masquerading under foolish words. Since I take this behavior by uniformed officials to be an insult not only to me and my faith, but also to the Constitution of the USSR — I demand that the items taken from me be returned and that the persons who behaved so boorishly with me be punished so that similar events would not take place in Colony oc 12/8 not only with me, but with other persons.

If no action is taken within a month of my sending this complaint concerning the return of the religious items taken from me, and if I am not transferred to the political prisoners' camp, I will immediately begin a hunger strike and will not work at all. I demand this because I do not consider myself a criminal.

My actions as a free man, for which I was condemned, I do not consider crimes, but on the contrary, the duty of a conscientious and truth-loving Catholic man.

In my homeland as well as in the entire Soviet Union, all leadership positions are occupied by atheists, who use their freedom and power to do wrong to Catholics and citizens loving freedom of conscience and truth. They use physical and moral force in such a way, that my arrest, interrogation and this physical beating is only a common example of the use of atheistic terror against believers. I have sufficient evidence of this. I hope that this my demand will be fulfilled within a month.

Virgilijus Jaugelis

March 28, 1975

Two Months in Transit

At the beginning of April, 1975, it became clear that the sentenced Petras Plumpa (See *Chronicle of the Catholic Church No. 13*) had been taken to his place of imprisonment. His current address is: District of Permė 618263, Cusovoj Kraj., Kuchino, vs 389/36-2. It took two months to bring him to the prison. Security in Lithuania wanted to keep Plumpa in Vilnius for a time as witness at the trial of Gražys; however, since he had nothing to say to the detriment of Gražys he was sent to Kuchino.

Plumpa will be able to receive packages with food products only after four years. He is allowed to write only two letters a month.

Plumpa accepts his imprisonment in a deeply Christian spirit. In his opinion, today's Christians must walk not with the triumphant but the suffering Christ; they must foster magnanimity, forgiving even those who persecute them and betray them. Plumpa asks only for prayers.

CALUMNIES AGAINST THE CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LITHUANIA

In Spite of Evidence to the Contrary, Lies are Repeated.

The *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania No. 15* wrote about dishonorable falsification by the Soviet press — the newspaper *Soviet Teacher* accused Radio Vatican of fabricating "dead souls" (teachers) and slandering them.

Even though Radio Vatican unmasked this falsification, it is repeated. The March 20, 1975 radio broadcast of "Akiratis", and the April 4 issue of the weekly *Kalba Vilnius* announced again that the Vatican radio broadcasts fabricated information. The *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* checked the facts and adds to the material found in No. 15.

Children Warned Not to Go to Church

Teacher Mažeika who worked in High School No. 25 of

Klaipėda, was transferred two years ago to High School No. 18 of Klaipėda. While working at High School No. 5 he mocked students who attended church.

One time before Easter, Mažeika threatened the children; "Don't try to go to church, or I will give you a two in history!" (This is attested by ex-pupils of Mažeika, whose names are known to the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*—Editor).

Students Ordered to Shout "There is no God!"

(Mrs.) Irena Arlauskienė, a teacher at Šilutė Primary School (now the principal of the school), according to one of her students, ordered the students during a lesson to shout loudly three times: "There is no God!"

Some remained silent and others shyly shouted, while Teacher Arlauskienė shouted the loudest.

"Since I did not know anything about God, I was silent. Now I would speak out boldly: "You are wrong, teacher, there is a God!", says a student about her ex-teacher's "instruction".

Those Unwilling to Fill out Questionnaires Had Their Hands Slapped.

The principal of the primary school of Kašučiai, Povilaitis, used to slap the hands of those students who did not want to fill out applications to the Communist Youth Organization. When he met one student in Darbėnai, the principal would start to shout: "You pervert, did you come here to go to church?" The parents could not stand such terrorization by the principal; they complained and a commission came to investigate.

Security Demands Retraction of Stated Facts

The Soviet Teacher (January 24, 1975) stated that the Executive Committee of the Region of Kretinga, County of Darbėnai, attested with its seal and the signatures of the chairman and secretary, dated November 28, 1974, that there were no conflicts or complaints between the principal of the Kašučiai primary school, Povilaitis, and the students or teachers.

What was the occasion for such a statement to be issued by the County of Darbėnai? Meanwhile, the Security Committee, wishing to compromise the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* is collecting similar statements, is interrogating persons written up in the *Chronicle* about why they told of a certain event and coercing them to deny it. At the demand of Security, not only the County of Darbėnai but all the counties of Lithuania would write, if necessary, even a hundred similar statements, just so the *Chronicle* would be discredited and that no newspaper and no radio station would dare to use material gathered by it.

Journalist Mockevičius Gets His News from Security

Journalist Vytautas Mockevičius, author of the articles "That Lying Vatican Mouthpiece" and "That Superstition Should Not Darken Our Youth", judging by given facts, is using material given to him by Security, therefore, the initiator of this falsification is not just some journalist but the Security Committee.

* * *

NEWS FROM THE DIOCESES

(Miss) Elena Šuliauskaitė Interrogated

Vilnius. On January 30, 1975, (Miss) Elena Šuliauskaitė, Chief Editor of the Vilnius Republican Library, was summoned to the Security Committee of Vilnius. The interrogation lasted more than six hours. Two Security officials interrogated her.

The interrogators asked her to tell them how the birthday of (Miss) Teresė Masytė was celebrated on September 30, 1973. The interrogators called this gathering an anti-Soviet political meeting. They said that all who were present at this gathering had already been questioned and that they had told everything. They demanded to know who inspires, organizes and attends the above-mentioned gathering and other meetings.

Miss Šuliauskaitė denied that she had organized the gathering—a name day celebration. Interrogator Rimkus questioned her about

Bishop Steponavičius and the Rev. Sigitas Tamkevičius, who, in the opinion of the interrogator, slandered the Soviet political order and advocated its overthrow, at a gathering in the Dzūkų Street home of Miss Masytė. The Security officials were especially angry at Father Tamkevičius, for allegedly inciting young people, distributing the *Chronicle* and the instruction: *How to Act During Interrogation*. Using various threats, the interrogators tried to obtain statements they needed from the bookkeeper, Miss Šuliauskaitė, but she denied all charges.

On February 20, 1975, Elena Šuliauskaitė was again summoned to the Security Committee. The interrogation took more than six hours. Interrogator Marcinkevičius threatened her with imprisonment for the organizing of meetings, for distributing the *Chronicle* and for the concealment of the "crimes" of Father Tamkevičius. Security officials praised those priests who condemn the *Chronicle*, report its distributors to Security and who do not interfere anywhere. For instance, Father Tunaitis, while being interrogated, told the Security who gave him the *Chronicle* and to whom he returned it. (Miss) Šuliauskaitė was again forced to confess that she organized the meeting. For this crime she would be punished according to the Criminal Code, Art. 68. Interrogator Rimkus rudely attacked Miss Šuliauskaitė for allegedly distributing the *Chronicle*, which slanders the Soviet order. According to Rimkus, the Security Committee checked the facts brought out by the *Chronicle* and found that almost all of them are lies. Even the Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese of Vilnius, Msgr. Č. Krivaitis, during his trip to America told that there is no persecution of believers in our land. When Miss Šuliauskaitė asked to be told the name of the person who said that she organized the meeting, the reply was that the interrogators cannot give out the name of the youth because they do not want the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* to write about him. Major Rimkus tried to convince Miss Šuliauskaitė over and over again to confess, because otherwise she will wind up in the Panevėžys or another prison together with criminals, prostitutes and murderers.

The notes of the interrogation were written in question and answer form, and after every answer there was left a blank space. When the accused wanted to cross out the blank spaces, Interrogator

Marcinkevičius would not let her. At that, Miss Šuliauskaitė signed her name under every answer. "What an obnoxious woman!", said the interrogator. "One can see at once that she has read the instructions *How to Act During an Interrogation.*"

Miss Teresė Masytė Interrogated

On January 30, 1975 Teresė Masytė was interrogated and accused that a meeting took place in her home.

The boys who serve at Mass at St. Mikalojus Church were called to the Security Committee. They were asked about the meeting in Dzūkų Street, what the priests discuss in the sacristy, where they get religious books, etc.

Aldona and Regina Bielskutė Interrogated

On January 31, 1975, Student Aldona Bielskutė of Vilnius State University was interrogated at the Security Committee. The interrogators acted very rudely and threatened the student with expulsion from the university. Miss Bielskutė denied that she had attended any meeting.

Her sister Regina was also interrogated.

Searches were made at their home, at the workplace of Aldona's mother and at the house in the collective garden; however, nothing was found.

Both sisters were again interrogated on February 3 and 4. Some time later they were expelled from the university.

Articles Taken During a Search are Returned to Rev. J. Lauriūnas

On April 2, 1975, the Rev. J. Lauriūnas, pastor of the parish of Kabeliai (District of Varėna) was summoned by the Vilnius Security Committee. He was returned almost all of the items taken during a search. The writings of Maceina and Girnius were not returned.

Security officials explained that he would not be punished for the possession of literature, but they would confiscate during the search anything against their ideology. When Father Lauriūnas was asked

how he views the *Chronicle*, he replied: "The *Chronicle* is the cry of persecuted man."

Druskininkai

On March 24, 1975 in Druskininkai, during the Lenten retreat, a woman was selling devotional articles near the church. When the militia noticed this, they took the woman to headquarters.

Kaunas

Reply of the editor of *Tiesa* to V. Vaičiūnas

To Comrade V. Vaičiūnas:

The Constitution of the Soviet Union affirms the equality of all citizens regardless of the color of their skin, their education, sex, or religion. Likewise they are all punished in the same manner if they break the law.

Freedom of religion is not constrained in our country; however, the Church is separated from the state. This is a great achievement of the Soviet government. No laws constrain a person to believe or not to believe, to teach his children prayers or not.

In your letter [see *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania No. 15* — Editor] you are often shallow and self-contradictory. It would be better for you to study Soviet law in depth.

The Executive Committee of the Supreme Soviet notified Vaičiūnas that his letter was sent to the Soviet Deputy for Religious Affairs, who would reply to it.

On March 14, 1975, Vaičiūnas was visited by an assistant of the Soviet Deputy for Religious Affairs. This official told Vaičiūnas that it is not necessary to write such letters. He left after a short conversation, without saying anything concrete.

A Very Artistic Cross Destroyed

Šiauliai. In October, 1975, during the destruction of crosses for the third time on the Hill of Crosses, a highly artistic cross, 4 meters tall, was destroyed together with the others. A large suffering Christ was carved from oak, with this inscription: "In You, O Lord, we placed our hope and we will not be deceived forever."

This beautiful cross costing 800 rubles, delighted visitors only six days. On this occasion, a member of the N. family, who erected the cross wrote:

"Sons of our nation, in whose veins flows the blood of Lithuania, who eat the bread raised in our land, who speak the language fought for with the lives of our parents, how is it that your hands did not tremble as you committed this crime? When news of the destruction of the crosses reached us, we came 200 km to convince ourselves that it was really so. The hill, under which rest the heroes of our nation, looked terrible, robbed and desecrated, kissed only by the wind. Lord, do not punish the evildoers, because they, poor things, are deceived and do not know themselves what they do ..."

Since this destruction, large and small crosses have again been put up on the Hill of Crosses. The faith of a Lithuanian is stronger than the hand of evildoers.

Those Who Refuse to Work on Holy Days are Censured

On December 11, 1974, at the Šiauliai Technological School of the Society of the Blind of Lithuania, a meeting of the professional society took place, during which the alleged violation of work discipline on the part of Worker Mečislovas Jurevičius was discussed. Jurevičius had not come to work on December 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary.

The head of personnel, B. Godliauskas, mentioned that Jurevičius, an employee of the company for 10 years, had no demerits, but he was absent from work on November 10 and December 8 of this year, giving as his reason for absence that he is a practicing Catholic and must observe the holy days. Jurevičius had written a statement before December 8, that he would be absent on that day; however, the company management would not accept the statement and is of the opinion that the absence of Jurevičius from work on December 8 is a deliberate violation of the work discipline and a demonstration. The management asked for a discussion on the conduct of Jurevičius, so that he would not bring shame on the whole company.

The chairman of the professional society, A. Petrauskas, announced that December 8 is declared a workday in the entire

Soviet Union and that the law must be obeyed.

Jurevičius said that he was not the one guilty of misdemeanor, but that those who publish such laws are, since the Constitution does not forbid one to believe.

After a deliberation, it was decided to apply to Jurevičius a means of social influence—a reprimand. On December 19, 1974, J. Šileikis, a worker at the Šiauliai Technological School of the Society of the Blind of Lithuania, handed the authorities of the company a statement that he would be absent from work on Christmas, December 25.

On December 20, a statement of similar content was written by Jurevičius. A little later, worker S. Čilinskas did the same. They all agreed to make up the day on holidays or asked that the day be deducted from their paid holidays. Moreover, Jurevičius and Čilinskas had worked a few extra days in advance.

On December 24, the company management tried to persuade Šileikis and Čilinskas to come to work on Christmas Day. The management compromised to the extent of offering to have them come to work only in the morning, but Šileikis and Čilinskas refused. The head of personnel, Godliauskas, suggested that Čilinskas take off his days worked in advance after Christmas, but the worker refused.

On December 31, 1974, Jurevičius received a notice from the management to explain in writing before January 8, 1975, why he was not at work on December 25.

On January 3, 1975, Šileikis and Čilinskas were also notified that comments were being made because they did not come to work on December 25 without a good excuse.

On January 3, Jurevičius sent the following note to the director of the company:

"I state that January 6th of this year is a holy day of obligation for Catholics—Epiphany, therefore I will not be able to work on that day. I am a practicing Catholic and must observe the holy days. Please deduct this day from my paid vacation. I am willing also to make it up working overtime or on Saturdays. I worked on December 21, 1975, (a Saturday). If this day has not been used to substitute for December 25 (Christmas), please credit it for January 6."

Jurevičius attached the following schedule to this note, stating that in 1975 he would not work on the following days:

Holy days of obligation for Catholics:

Epiphany—January 6

Ascension—May 8

Corpus Christi—May 29

SS. Peter and Paul—June 29

Assumption—August 15

All Saints—November 1

Immaculate Conception—December 8

Christmas—December 25

Jurevičius Discharged for Observance of Holy Days of Obligation

On January 7, 1975, a meeting of the professional society of the Association for the Blind took place. Nine members were present. The meeting discussed a statement from the administration of the society which asked for their consent to fire Jurevičius for unauthorized absences from work.

Jurevičius explained at the meeting that he was absent for four days because they were religious holy days, and that the Constitution of the Soviet Union guarantees freedom of religion to all believers. He had notified the administration about these absences and had promised to make up the days taken off by working at other times.

The chairman of the professional committee, Petrauskas, reproached Jurevičius for applying to himself only those articles of the Constitution useful to him, and not the articles that state that "the church is separated from the state" and that "work is a matter of honor for every citizen." In the opinion of Petrauskas, hundreds of believers work and find time to perform their religious duties.

Cimermanas said that no one persecutes the Catholics, but that they must come to work on working days (even if they happen to be religious feasts).

Mrs. Valiulienė said that this is not a religious matter but a demonstration. All who spoke at this meeting condemned Jurevičius and gave their consent to discharge him.

On January 9, 1975, Jurevičius received the following order:

"M. Jurevičius, renovator of buildings of the Agricultural Dept. is relieved of his duties as of January 10 for absenteeism, in accordance with Article 43, paragraph of the Work Rules Code of the L.S.S.R.

Director."

On February 4, 1975, the Šiauliai newspaper *Red Flag* carried a long article called: "God-Fearing Turncoats". Among other things it states: "Mečislovas Jurevičius would like to appear holier even than the Pope of Rome himself... Jurevičius wishes to merit something like the wreath of martyrdom... Jurevičius has a long-repressed attack of anti-Soviet hate... he tries to hide his actions under the guise of religion. In 1944-45, he, with a gun in his hands, robbed the people, Soviet institutions, ambushed and shot at the soldiers of the Red Army... He was sentenced in 1950 to 25 years imprisonment..."

Čilinskas is a growth from the same anti-Soviet stump as Jurevičius. Even their biographies are remarkably similar... By appealing to the emotions of the believers they are trying to become if not new apostles at least martyrs for the faith. However, it is doubtful whether they will be successful ..."

A. Stanelis, Correspondent
to the *Red Flag*

Jurevičius Interrogated

On August 27, 1974, Jurevičius was called to the personnel department, where a Security official was waiting for him. He took Jurevičius to Security headquarters and asked him whether he knew (Mrs.) Pargauskienė and whether he received from her any prayer books or other religious books. Jurevičius denied everything.

After some time the Security people brought in (Mrs.) Pargauskienė, the secretary of the Children's Polyclinic, and asked him again if he knew the woman. Jurevičius said that he did not know her. With that, the interrogation came to an end.

The Church of Tūbausiai is Vandalized

Kretinga. On the night of February 18, 1975, the church of

Tūbausiai (Region of Kretinga) was vandalized. The culprits broke in through a window, broke open the tabernacle, threw the consecrated hosts on the floor and trampled them, vandalized the sacristy, tore up some banners and smashed a cross. People speak about this with tears in their eyes. Such baseness is the direct result of the hate for religion being blindly instilled in school.

A Party Member for Twenty Years Dies as a Catholic

Plungė. In February 1975, at the "Four Communists" Collective Farm in the Rayon of Plungė, (Miss) Lučinskaitė, an old Party member, and ex-atheist, died. Before her death, she called for a priest, received the sacraments and died as a Catholic. When the Party representative of the collective farm found out about this he verbally attacked the daughter of the deceased, the director of the hall of culture, for allowing her mother, who had been a Party member for twenty years, to call a priest.

"This is unheard of—it's an insult to the Party!" screamed the activists.

The daughter explained that her mother had decided for herself how to act before her death and that she did not ask her daughter's advice.

The Party activists of the collective farm nevertheless buried Lučinskaitė without the benefit of the Church.

A Hammer Blow on the Head for the Pastor, but No Sympathy

In the Fall of 1974 the mother of Father Ivanauskas, pastor of the Parish of Kuliai, died. The parishioners wanted to place a notice of condolences to the pastor in the *rayon* newspaper. Editorial workers refused to put a notice of condolences to the pastor in the newspaper.

"We can knock him on the head with a hammer, but not express our condolences to a pastor. There is no place for priests in the Soviet press."

"How strange!" said the believers, "to slander a priest whole pages are available, but to express condolences they fear to publish even a few lines."

A Mailman May Not Carry a Cross

Šilalė. The letter carrier of this town, Stasys Jakštas, carried the cross a few times during funerals. The secretary of the Communist Party of Šilalė, Bertašius, ordered the postmaster Kubeckas, to forbid the mailman to carry the cross. Kubeckas immediately carried out the order.

Forbidden to Repair the Church Clock

The vice - chairman of the Executive Committee of Šilalė, Jankus, forbade the pastor of Šilalė, Father Valaitis, to repair the church clock. The church clock must not strike the hours or show the time ... On March 23, 1975, the director of atheistic propaganda, Širvydas, even climbed up the church tower to make sure that the clock was not planning to start keeping time. That could after all hurt atheistic propaganda ...

Changing Church Wiring to Cable is not Allowed

In April of this year, the parish council of Šilalė switched the electric wiring of the church to a cable running from the street into the churchyard. Immediately the zealot Širvydas showed up and forbade the cable to be connected.

Old Town Cemetery Vandalized

Panevėžys. On March 28, 1975 (Good Friday) unknown culprits viciously vandalized the old town cemetery of Panevėžys. Twenty-eight crosses were overturned. Among them lay a beautiful, tall sculpture of the Blessed Virgin Mary, pushed from its pedestal. Heavy stone crosses bore witness that they were overturned and pulled out by not just one pair of hands.

The people believe that this was the work not of hooligans, but of organized atheists. Only atheists could think up the desecration of crosses on the day of Christ's Passion and of the veneration of the cross—Good Friday.

Utena

Order of the Chief Physician of the Rayon of
Utena, No. 5
Utena, January 24, 1975

Procedure for Summoning Ministers of Cult at the Request of Patients

Sometimes it happens that the established order of the central hospital of the Rayon of Utena is disturbed by calling in ministers of cult at the request of patients. Ministers of cult visit the hospital without permission of the hospital administration.

To establish a procedure for summoning ministers of cult at the request of patients, I order the following:

1. Ministers of cult are to be allowed in to see a patients only at the request of the patient. Department heads or relatives shall inform the chief physician or his assistants, who will then issue written permission for the ministers of cult to come to the hospital.

2. It should be arranged, that when the minister of cult arrives, the patient is alone in the room. If it is impossible to separate the patient from other patients, a screen should be placed around his bed. Always ask the other patients in the room if they are not against the visit. If they agree, ambulatory patients should be asked to leave the room until the religious ceremonies are completed.

3. Control must be exercised that hospital employees do not invite ministers of cult on their own and that they do not take part in the performance of the religious ceremonies.

4. All heads of departments should by February 15 of this year acquaint employees of departments with this order and with Article 124 of the Constitution of the Soviet Union.

5. I myself will monitor the execution of this order.

Chief Physician of the Rayon of Utena

G. Lazdauskas

Physicians Do Not Show Enough Zeal for Atheistic Propaganda

Excerpt from the bulletin of the central hospital of the Rayon of Utena, *Tiesos Žodis (Word of Truth)*, 1975:

"There are 90 physicians employed in the Rayon of Utena, 79 of these in the central hospital of the Rayon, along with 310 other medical personnel.

The work of the medical personnel of Utena in fostering the scientific materialistic viewpoint has been evaluated as satisfactory. The Atheistic Propaganda Commission of the central hospital of the rayon did not develop a more active program for the year 1974.

Medical personnel are often in contact with the sick—people in difficult situations in their lives: in illness, pain, and suffering. In such situations one thinks more, and looks at things from a different viewpoint. Unfortunately, these situations are rarely used to foster the socialistic ideology. We still do not put enough emphasis on individual effort.

Individual atheistic work must be conducted with attention to the believers' age, state of health, and must not harm professional objectives. Our physicians are still very timid in carrying out individual atheistic work. This work should also be done by the middle workers in the medical profession. To date, many of the personnel still think primitively about religion; there is a lack of knowledge about the materialistic viewpoint. The Commission for Atheistic Propaganda—the Atheistic Soviet—should acquaint physicians and the middle medical personnel with the methodology of atheistic work. Most medical personnel can and must join in the propagation of the materialistic viewpoint...

Chairman of the Atheistic Soviet
G. Lazdauskas

The Cross of (Miss) P. Grigaliūnaite is Cut Down and Removed

On June 18, 1972, (Miss) Paulina Grigaliūnaite, a resident of the village of Vilkablauzdė (Rayon of Utena) erected a 5-meter high, wooden ornamented cross near her home. The leadership of the rayon ordered her to remove the cross. Grigaliūnaite did not obey.

During the night of August 7-8, 1972 the cross was cut down and taken away. At this time it is whispered that this was the work of local Party activists. In order that no one would hear the cutting noise, the motor of a tractor was left on.

Unfinished Memorial of (Mrs.) S. Ladygienė Removed

Anykščiai. At the death of (Mrs.) Stefanija Ladygienė, wife of the Lithuanian general, Ladyga, who himself had died in Siberia, her son Algis Ladyga decided to erect a stone monument. The architect of Anykščiai pointed out a gravel pit outside the town where the drainage work foreman had worked on an artistic cross for his mother. This year (1975) is the third year that this work continues. The memorial began to take shape, the idea of the sculptor began to unfold, the words "She will live" appeared. Perhaps these words, or perhaps the rumor circulating in the rayon that Ladyga is sculpturing a memorial to dead partisans, forced the government of the Rayon of Anykščiai to take action.

Before Easter, as many as five cars visited the famous gravel pit where the unfinished memorial was standing. People were saying that these places were the burying grounds probably of Germans, or perhaps of partisans shot after the war; but Algis Ladyba replied to all that the memorial was intended for his mother Stefanija Ladygienė, who is buried in Vilnius, in the cemetery of Viršuliškės. The government of Anykščiai, was even sent an approved plan of the monument with the names of the designer, A. Ladyga, and of the consultant, sculptor Vladas Vildžiūnas. However, before Easter, on the night of Good Friday to Holy Saturday (that is March 27-28) the monument disappeared. People spoke of seeing a block and tackle, a crane, and a truck. There were tracks of these vehicles, but the militia was not interested in them. To date, neither the verbal report of this by members of the Ladyga family to the Security Committee, nor the official written document sent to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania, has helped.

Organist Kinskaitė Not Allowed to Dress Children for a Procession

Skrebotiškis. After the Solemnity of the Nativity of Mary, on September 8, 1969, at Skrebotiškis, the organist of the Skrebotiškis parish, (Miss) Emilija Kinskaitė, was summoned before the vice chairman of the Executive Committee of the District of Pasvalys, Stapulionis. Since many students participated in the religious procession on that feastday, Vice Chairman Stapulionis ordered the organist to explain who organized the students and dressed them for the procession.

When Emilija Kinskaitė told him that the parents brought the children, and at their request she had dressed them in the processional garments, Vice Chairman Stapulionis explained that the organist had committed a misdemeanor and ordered her to keep her hands off the children and not to go around visiting people.

The principal, (Mrs.) Povilanskienė, called five girls to the teachers' office where Vice Chairman Stapulionis was already waiting for them. The girls, questioned whether they visited Miss Kinskaitė, did not deny it. Stapulionis questioned further whether the organist invites the girls to attend church. They replied that their parents take them to the services.

"But you should not listen to them. Say that you have a headache and don't go", the district official instructed them. Asked who taught them catechism and hymn singing, the girls were silent. Then Stapulionis threatened to take them away to Pasvalis and not allow them to return home. The smaller girls started to weep and one explained: "I will tell you what we do there: We watch how the candles are made, and we are allowed to play the piano."

The next day, the organist of Skrebotiškis, Miss Kinskaitė, was called to Pasvalis to see Vice Chairman Stapulionis. He called the organist a parasite and sent her to the prosecutor. This guardian of Soviet law told her that there remained very little evidence to gather, before a criminal case could be brought against her for leading children astray. Finishing his interrogation, the prosecutor sent the organist back to Stapulionis who, ordered her not to let the children come into her room and not even to talk to them when she meets them in the street.

Discharged from Work by Use of Threats and Bribes

In September of 1970, Organist E. Kinskaitė was called to the County of Tetervinai (Rayon of Pasvalis). Present were Rayon Vice Chairman Stapulionis and the parish council of the church of Skrebotiškis.

Stapulionis announced that organist Kinskaitė was disturbing the peace of the parish and therefore she might not decorate the altar nor play the organ. He, the vice chairman, was discharging Miss Kinskaitė from her duties.

The organist replied that she had been hired by the parish council and therefore only it could fire her if she was guilty of anything. Infuriated, Vice Chairman Stapulionis accused her of leading children astray, of disobeying his orders (the organist was allowed by Stapulionis to walk back and forth from her home to the church), and writing complaints, and taking them to Vilnius. The organist replied that Stapulionis was lying and that she had not written any complaints nor had she taken them to Vilnius.

The parish council said that as far as they were concerned, the organist was not guilty of anything and that they would not discharge her from her position. Stapulionis threatened that if the organist was not fired, then the rayon office would not confirm the new parish council; but if she was fired, they would be allowed to paint the church roof and make a cement path from the church door into the church yard ...

The parish council was called several more times to the Rayon Executive Committee. Stapulionis himself wrote a draft statement that the organist was discharged from her position for misdemeanors. The parish council could not withstand the pressure of the *rayon* officials and discharged Kinskaitė.

Šiupyliai

To the Prosecutor of the L S S R.

Statement of Rev. Antanas Ylius, Pastor of Šiupyliai

In 1945 I was tried according to article 58, parts 1a and 10. The court did not prove any terrorist or criminal action on my part. I was sentenced to ten years for trying, in organized fashion, to make Lithuania free, democratic, Lithuanian and independent. I served the entire sentence. In 1956 I returned to Lithuania. This is the 18th year that I am living in my homeland.

Anti-religious propaganda accuses me of completely different crimes, which I did not commit nor even thought of committing. During the German occupation, I helped the Jews at the risk of my own life. Surely I would not kill my brothers when the Germans withdrew? That would be sheer nonsense. Thank God, no one suffered from me or through me. When a soldier commits a crime, the guilty soldier, not the commander of the army, is punished. In my case, propaganda does the exact opposite.

Anti-religious propaganda produced the film *7n the Shadow of the Cross*, throughout which I am slandered. It depicts the cellar of the church of Skardupiai as containing many weapons and so-called bandits. I myself built the church of Skardupiai. There is no cellar under its floor. Someone shouts in the film that I took children from their mothers and killed them. I was filmed in the Ariogala forest of Brisėnai, stretching a high voltage line. There I was pruning a tree and singing "An Oak Grew in the Forest." In the film, however, I am portrayed as beheading people. Is not that the the most disgusting distortion of the truth?

One of the exhibits at the atheistic museum of Vilnius is arranged to make me appear as a real murderer. Such a conclusion was drawn by (Mrs.) Danguolė Repšienė in the January 12, 1974, issue of *Tiesa*. Newspapers and magazines often attribute to me things that I never did and have not even dreamed of doing. They are all silent about what I tried to do but did not have time to do.

Some time ago, "the stamp" was attributed to me. ["The stamp" was designed to brand a five-cornered star on the skin of a Communist—Editor]. Now it is attributed to Father Lelešius. The Communists know very well who is the originator of that stamp. Why do they not threaten him? It seems he is an agronomist—it does not suit our purpose to threaten him.

I was silent for a long time—thinking it would get tiresome to calumniate me. But they interpreted my silence as guilt, so that according to the principle "ab uno disce omnes" they could accuse all priests. *Now I see that the silence must be broken.*

Such slanderous discrediting of a priest is a conscious and open battle against religion. Such methods of warfare do no honor to those using them. Fighting should be done with honorable weapons, not with lies and slander in order to mislead society.

I ask the honorable prosecutor to order an embargo of the above-mentioned film, to rearrange the exhibit, and to curb the propaganda, so that it would not distort the truth in such an obvious manner.

Šiupyliai, February 2, 1974

Rev. Antanas Ylius

[The statement is condensed—Editor]

Organist Fined for Students' Hymn-singing

Prienai. In the Fall of 1974, the Administrative Commission of the Executive Committee of the Rayon of Prienai fined the organist of the parish of Prienai, Gaučys, 50 rubles because students were singing in the church choir.

Permission Needed to Preach Lenten Sermons

On March 26, 1975, Vice Chairman of the Executive Committee of the District of Prienai, Morkvėnas, called in the pastor of Pakuonys (Rayon of Prienai), Pranas Lingys, and berated him for inviting the Rev. Sigitas Tamkevičius to conduct a Lenten retreat. In the future, the pastor should note that in order for Father Tamkevičius to preach in the Rayon of Prienai, he must first obtain permission from the Executive Committee of the Rayon of Alytus, and then the

permission of the government of Prienai.

Vice-Chairman Morkvėnas also ordered Father Lingys to remove national decorations—the columns of Gediminas—from the inner walls of the church.

At Easter, 1975, large crowds of people attended the church of Prienai. Government officials took down the license numbers of private cars.

Detectives Watch People Praying in Church

Simnas. At Easter, 1975, the church of Simnas was overcrowded with praying people. Such a sight can be seen in almost all the churches of Lithuania. However, not all persons came to pray. In church there was no shortage of government officials—detectives who came to listen to the Easter sermon and to note how many people gathered, how many school children, etc. Among the anonymous spies in the church was the principal of the middle school of Simnas, Guževičienė, and the director of the people's educational department of the Rayon of Alytus, V. Valeika.

Children who Serve at Mass are Interrogated

On April 1, head of the education department V. Valeika came to the middle school of Simnas and started an interrogation. Two children who serve at Mass: R. Juknelis and Vasiliauskas, were summoned to the office of Principal Guževičienė. Juknelis was asked who prepared him for his first Holy Communion, who asked him to serve at Mass, why he does not join the Pioneers, etc. Vasiliauskas was asked which of the school children took part in the Easter procession. It appears that the head of the educational department wanted to get the children to tell him that they are organized to serve Mass by Father Tamkevičius.

Pastor Interrogated Because of His Easter Sermon

On April 2, the pastor of the parish of Simnas, the Rev. J. Matulevičius, was summoned before the vice-chairman of the Executive Committee of the Rayon of Alytus, Jančiauskas. The vice-chairman

reproached the pastor of Simnas for inviting the Rev. Juozas Zdebskis to conduct a retreat without permission from the Rayon office. Later, the vice-chairman sent the pastor to the Security Committee of Alytus, where he was awaited by Captain Marcinkevičius, an interrogator of the Vilnius Security Committee. The interrogation took about three hours.

Captain Marcinkevičius asked about the sermon preached at the Resurrection Mass by Father Tamkevičius. Security was especially concerned with the fact mentioned in the sermon, that the government is sending priests abroad to proclaim untruths, as if there were freedom of religion in Lithuania. Father Matulevičius said that he was busy during Easter and did not hear the sermon, but generally his assistant does not speak about worldly but about religious topics. (The interrogator wanted badly for Father Matulevičius to testify that Father Tamkevičius speaks about "worldly" subjects in his sermons.)

Activity When Party Members Baptized their Child

Bagaslaviškis. In August, 1974, someone wrote a complaint to the Party Committee of Vilnius that the driver at the collective farm of Bagaslaviškis, Jonas Chatkevičius and his wife, a bookkeeper at the farm, had their child baptized in church. The officials of the Rayon of Širvintai went into motion and started to drive repeatedly to Bagaslaviškis—How could parents who are Party members baptize their child? To gather news about the "crime" even the vice-chairman of the District Executive Committee presented himself. The harassment went on for two months. The parents were forced even to confirm in writing that they really did not baptize their child.

Married in Church Despite Threats

A driver at the collective farm of Bagaslaviškis, Romualdas Šarmavičius, was preparing to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony in the church of Gelvoniai on September 9, 1974. Discovering this, Jonas Vasiliauskas, Secretary of the Party organization of the collective farm came to see Šarmavičius, demanding that he marry without the blessing of the church. In spite of all the threats and promises, Šarmavičius was married in church.

Threats Because of a Church Burial

Pivašiūnai. In November, 1974, a native of Pivašiūnai, Veterinary Doctor Vaclovas Paliokas, a 29-year old candidate to the Communist Party, died in Alytus. Since the doctor was a believing man, his parents decided to bury him with church ritual.

A representative regional of the Party, together with the chairman of the Mikalavas Collective Farm called on the pastor of Pivašiūnai, A. Alkovikas, and demanded that the pastor refuse to bury Paliokas. The pastor explained that the deceased attended church, received the sacraments, including the Sacrament of Matrimony on July 2, 1974, therefore he could not deny him Catholic burial. When the pastor refused at first to be persuaded, they came back repeatedly and forbade him to accompany the body to church and from the church to the cemetery.

A few days after the funeral, the pastor of Pivašiūnai was visited by some "guests" from the rayon. The officials blamed the pastor for the funeral, found fault with the renovation of the church and threatened him in various ways.

STATEMENT OF FR. B. LAURINAVIČIUS To Deputy for Religious Affairs, Kazimieras Tumėnas

S T A T E M E N T

On August 31, 1974, you told parishioners of Adutiškis: P. Burokas, V. Trečiokas, (Mrs.) C. Burokienė and (Mrs.) B. Steponienė: "Re-educate your pastor. In other words, influence him so that he will not obey the Church or his own conscience but only the atheists. If you advised average workers at the collective farm of Adutiškis to re-educate me, please let me ask you, can you be re-educated by the sweeper of your street or the cleaning woman of your office?"

I was taught and educated by highly moral and cultured teachers and professors. In forming my viewpoint they allowed and sometimes even ordered me to get to know the ideas of the Marxists-Communists. My viewpoint was formed not by compulsion but freely.

I had the opportunity also to read the publications of free-thinkers. However, is there an opportunity today to read the books of people of non-Communist thinking for those forming their viewpoints?

In 1966 I asked for a copy of the Bible at a bookstore in Moscow. The salesman told me frankly: "We never carried the Bible. If you wish to read the Bible you must go to the library, but even there you can get it only with special permission."

If the Holy Bible is available in the library only with special permission, there can be no thought of obtaining and reading the works by those thinking differently than the Communists. However, everyone forming his viewpoints must get to know those with differing ideas. Molotov stated truly: "The truth is found only between two opposite opinions."

In the distant past I liked the Communist idea and slogans, but life convinced me that all that they say and write is only a dead letter, while life itself takes the opposite direction.

1.

In Belorussia, Neither the White Russian nor the Lithuanian Language May be Used in the Schools.

During the Polish occupation, when Lithuanian schools were being closed, when the periodical press was being confiscated, we looked with joy towards a nation in which national minorities had their own press, schools where the children were taught in their native language. Times were hard, but we had our Lithuanian press. When the periodical press was liquidated, occasional publications were published. When we lost our Lithuanian schools, we were taught our native language privately; besides this, libraries were available.

And how are things now in my native village of Geliūnai (Rayon of Astravas, SSR of White Russia) which is populated solely by Lithuanians? There, children who have never heard either the White Russian or the Russian language, are forced to learn White Russian and Russian in the school. Even during the recesses they are forbidden to converse in Lithuanian.

Impossible to Pray Peacefully when Being Spied Upon

Article 124 of the Constitution of the Soviet Union guarantees the freedom to practice religious cults. But can priest and faithful pray freely if they are spied on by disguised spies and others who think they have the right to do so? On January 19 of this year, (1976) Laurinavičius, chairman of the district of Adutiškis, J. Navikas, principal of the Lithuanian middle school of Adutiškis, and A. Baužys, a teacher, came to church and classified believers into those who have the right to pray and those who do not. I, as the pastor of the parish, protest against such rude and insulting interference, and ask, that such a thing would not happen again.

Article 125 of the Constitution guarantees the freedom of the press. If this freedom were real, then believers in Lithuania today would not offer 60 rubles for a prayerbook ["Maldynas"—Editor].

Religious centers left open only for the benefit of the tourists from abroad

Those who do not know the true condition of the Lithuanian Church were enchanted by your speech televised on Vilnius TV on August 28, 1974, and the thoughts contained in your article "Freedom of Conscience and Soviet Law" (*Tiesa*, No. 273). You write: "Religious centers, such as the chanceries of Catholic bishops, are active in Lithuania."

What will their fate be? They are vegetating only to the extent that they are necessary for the Soviet organs. It is known to all that the priests of the Chanceries were under your jurisdiction, that you delegated this authority to the assistant chairpersons of the district executive committees, and they did likewise to the chairpersons of the counties. On January 25, 1973, the Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee of the District of Švenčionys ordered Laurinavičius: "You must check on the activities of the pastor!"

The pastoral work of the priest, his peace, and church renovations depend on the assistant chairmen of the districts and on the chairmen of the counties, while the so-called religious centers are left only to receive foreign tourists, to grant them interviews, to show off to them their villas... The religious

centers pay substantial sums into the "peace" fund, send representatives, like actors, to conferences which have nothing to do with the Church, and, at the Commissioner's request, they remove priests from their duties without any reason whatsoever.

You write: "Every priest must work in the religious community where he is registered." According to what law do you narrow and deny the rights of the priests? If you acknowledge the religious center you must also acknowledge its directives. Article 390 of the Synod of the Archdiocese of Vilnius states that every priest has a right to offer Mass, preach sermons, and hear confessions throughout the diocese.

In your article you write: "The State does not interfere in the internal activities of religious communities..." But a little further on you state, "Every priest works in the religious community where he is registered . . ."

What a great contradiction! If the government does not interfere in internal activities, why are "coordinations with the local government organs" necessary? Life has proven that these organs only dictate. Today's believers watch with sorrow and sadness the rudest interference in the internal affairs of the Church by Soviet officials, while future generations will laugh at the tragi-comedies of these times, which are produced by the atheists, just as we laugh at King Joseph II of Austria, who dictated to pastors even the number of candles they should light during Mass.

Facts bear witness to the rude interference of the local government in the internal affairs of the Church. On October 3, 1974, the chairman of the county of Adutiškis wrote out a summons against me because on September 28 to 29 there were other priests at the parish to hear confessions.

The greatest disaster is that he delegated "the care and coordination" to the local organs of the government, who conduct themselves according to the dictum "I like it that way", and are not responsible for even their most foolish coordinations.

Only Very Steadfast Youths Enter the Seminary

On October 30, 1974 you said to Mrs. Skyrelienė: "The pastor pushed it." [that her son enter the Seminary—Editor].

Skyrelis understands very well that to be a priest today is not a "bed of roses". It is well known to all, including youngsters, that the priest is downgraded in many ways by the atheists: "churchmouse", his passport is marked "servant of cult". Fanatical atheists dare to mock the defenseless priest; they write complaints and statements against him because they know that for this they will be praised and rise on the ladder of their career.

If a youth, seeing the unpleasantness perpetrated on priests, is trying since 1970 to enter the seminary, he does not need any kind of agitation. At the youth's request, I wrote the required statement, but you found "impediments" and did not let him enter the seminary. In 1973 you promised the youth's mother to accept him in 1974, but you did not fulfill the promise.

The parishioners of Adutiškis asked me why this young man is not accepted. They have the right to inquire, because each year they send their offerings for the maintenance of the seminary. Not knowing what to answer the people, I advised them to go to you and ask for themselves.

If There Were No Interference, the Seminary Would be Full

We hear that some are rejoicing that there are no more candidates for the Seminary. That is not true. There would be enough to assist the old pastors and fill the openings available, but you stand in the way of many of those. The decision concerning a young man's vocation is made not by those who should make it, but by the atheists. Just as we priests have no right to recommend candidates to the Communist Youth, or to the Communist Party, you have no right to decide whether a young man is fit to become a priest. It is unknown in the history of the Church that atheists should make the decisions about the candidates' fitness to be priests.

You replied to the people of Adutiškis, "The young man knows

why he is not accepted." You are not giving a clear answer, therefore, it is understood that you are hiding something.

On November 27, 1974, a representative of the seminary explained to the people of Adutiškis that the young man is not accepted into the seminary because after finishing the agricultural school of technology he did not work the required two years for the government, he fought with the agricultural directors, quarreled with his superiors, and besides this, he demanded to be allowed to travel abroad.

The seminary administrator cannot make a fair judgment without checking out the slander, and hearing the other side of the story. Christian morality obliges me to defend the injured party.

The young man was willing and able to work those two years, but he was fired from work because he attended church. When he was discharged as an agronomist, the young man went to the collective farm "Liudas Gira" and was determined to repay his debt to the government by working as an ordinary laborer. However, some official came from the district office and ordered that he be fired.

Released from Work Because he Attended Church

The directors of the collective farm were constantly angry; they mocked him and reproached him: "What kind of an example do you give to the school children, if being an agronomist you go to church?" J. Aničas and J. Rimaitis in their article "Soviet Laws Regarding Religious Cults" (V.1970, p. 31) write, "Everyone is responsible for refusing to hire citizens for work ... for firing from work ... in connection with his religious views."

The young man was discharged solely because he attended church. But the young man was faulted, and not the directors of the collective farm for his illegal firing. Then why are these beautiful laws written? They are written not to protect those unjustly injured, but for propaganda purposes: "See how beautiful our laws are—even the rights of the believers are protected by law!" This is only a mockery of the believers.

The youth is accused of quarreling with his superiors. Wanting the young man to lose his vocation, they determined to make him a group leader. The young man refused because he was convinced that he would be admitted to the seminary in 1974. His refusal to attend

the leadership course was not an avoidance of civic duty, because everyone may freely choose his field of work.

The young man is accused that "he demanded to be allowed to go abroad". This is slander—he never even mentioned going abroad. The representative of the seminary advised him to go away somewhere, maybe to Latvia, and wait there at least three years. He has been waiting since 1970, and it is still unknown how long he must wait! What will remain for the young man after waiting so many years? The slander will not fade! The young man is out of favor and has felt the anger even of those who believe in forgiveness, but kick their enemy until he is destroyed—they are bent on destruction. The aim of the enemies of the Church is clearly understood—they want only the old and the sickly to complete the seminary.

You said: "The pastor has agitated!" And how is one to understand your suggestion to the youth's mother that the young man should enter medical studies? You are not concerned with those wishing to enter the field of medicine, but only with a young man who is determined to be a priest. By not accepting him for such a long time, you want to cool his vocation and to win his "obedience". What are these demands for? They have nothing to do with the calling to be a priest and are not even compatible with the conscience of a decent man.

3.

It is not Possible Freely to Renovate Churches

It is said and written that churches can be restored freely. That is false. Only Tarasov, who came from Moscow, dared to tell the truth: On July 16, 1973, he stated: "You do not have the right even to drive in a nail in church without permission from the government."

In 1973, the people of Adutiškis bought discarded heating components consigned to scrap metal, and repaired them. On September 16, 1973, the parish council of Adutiškis asked the Executive Committee of the *Rayon* of Švenčioniai for permission to install heating in the church; however, they received no reply. On November 1, 1973, the people of Adutiškis turned to you. On

November 21, your representative came to Adutiškis and said, "Only those churches are heated which contain valuable works of art".

All were angered by this answer: There is more concern with works of art than with the people, even though the radio and press constantly repeat that "all is for the good of man" in the Soviet Union. By your answer you insulted the collective farmers who have heard that in some places even the barns are heated. They see that the house of culture is heated day and night.

On December 9, 1973, the people of Adutiškis approached the Council of Ministers of the Lithuanian SSR. On February 3, 1974, they wrote again but did not receive a reply. On March 14, 1974, they approached the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Lithuanian SSR, and the first secretary of the Communist Party's Central Committee of the LSSR, but the people of Adutiškis did not receive a reply from any of them

Interrogation Concerning the Heating of the Church

The people of Adutiškis, concluded that neither the Soviet Ministry, nor the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet nor the Central Committee, fully understanding the decree separating the Church from the state, wish to have anything to do with believers, and therefore did not reply to their requests. The people started the work of heating the church with a clear conscience.

As the work drew to an end, an audit was begun. In July, some official from the fire Inspector checked what was bought where. On July 23, P. Burokas and V. Trečiokas, members of the parish council, were called for interrogation. The interrogator demanded to be told where everything was bought. He carefully wrote everything down and demanded that they sign the memorandum, but the parish council members refused because they could not remember the facts clearly. They were placed under guard until they signed.

Did the interrogator have to act this way? Do the auditors demand that bookkeepers and directors recite facts from memory? Later, P. Avinas, the treasurer of the parish council, was called for interrogation. After him, A. Bučelis, ex-secretary of the parish council, was also interrogated. Lastly, the chairman of the County of Adutiškis and representatives of the militia questioned me where we

got the kerosene tanks.

When the interrogator did not find any cause to incriminate the people of Adutiškis, the *rayon* demanded that the parish council bring them the heating plan blueprints.

Representatives of the parish council, P. Burokas and V. Trečiokas asked *Rayon* Architect Jakučionis to draw up the necessary blueprints. The architect absolutely refused to do it, and sent the people to the Collective Farm Designing Institute of Kaunas. On August 11 the people of Adutiškis sought out the Kaunas address. The officials of the institute in Kaunas were very much surprised that Architect Jakučionis, knowing very well that the District of Švenčionys belongs to the zone of Vilnius, sent the people to Kaunas instead. In Vilnius the people were told that without the consent of the Deputy for Religious Affairs, the churches may not undertake any kind of project.

On August 28, the people of Adutiškis heard your speech on television that the believers may freely and without any kind of harassment renovate the churches. On August 30, they went to see you, and you, after advising them to reeducate their pastor, sent people to the *rayon* requesting that they be allowed to draw up the project. On September 24, the *rayon* sent us the following statement: "Until documentation is completed, no further work must be done." The *rayon* demands that a blueprint be presented to it, but refuses permission to have it made.

An episode from the times of the Polish occupation comes to mind. There was a Lithuanian high school in Vilnius. The Polish nobility determined to liquidate it and demanded that those entering the high school present an affidavit that their parents are Lithuanian. The high school had no right to admit students without such an affidavit; however, such affidavits were not issued by anybody. . . Now we are returning to the trail blazed by the nobility.

On October 23, the architect-inspector of the *Rayon* of Švenčionys, Jakštas, and Land Administration Engineer V. Graužinis told P. Burokas and V. Trečiokas, "Go to the Project Institute and it will make you a project blueprint. *The district is already in agreement with the institute.* The representatives of the *rayon* wanted to get from them the promise that the work would not be continued without the documentation.

The people of Adutiškis went to the Institute, and became convinced that no one from the *rayon* office discussed the heating of the Adutiškis church. Did the *rayon* officials have the right to deceive the representatives of the parish council in this way?

It is said that the law forbids the priests to belong to the "twenty" of the parish, and that priests may not be elected as members of the parish council. I am convinced that not only priests but also more intelligent parishioners may not belong to the "twenty". For instance, the following persons were removed from the list of the "twenty" sent for confirmation to the *rayon*: Mykolas Raginis, Edmundas Vaitekėnas and (Mrs.) Ciprijona Burokienė.

Civil Rights of Priests Restricted

If Article 135 of the Constitution of the USSR states, "Every citizen of the Soviet Union may be elected a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the SSRL...", then why cannot a priest be elected a member of the parish council?

Vilnius Radio has explained: "Priests may not belong to the parish council so that they would not use material goods belonging to the parish council." Why such disgusting suspicions? — To turn the public against priests. Why are the chairmen of collective farms and farm administrators not suspected? They all belong to farm administrations. The priests and more clever parishioners may not belong to the "twenty" nor to the parish council, not because they would use the material goods (after all there is an auditing commission in every parish council!) but so that it would be easier to deceive the parish council. For instance, the *rayon* officials said: "Go to Vilnius and you will get the project blueprint!" The priest and more educated members of the parish council would have refused on the grounds that a project is not made sight unseen, but after the inspection of the site. After they went to the institute, members of the parish council became convinced that they are being deceived. You, Deputy, agreed that the institute prepare the church heating project; however, this was not a cause of rejoicing for long. The engineer of the institute, Rozentalis, referred the people of Adutiškis to the district surveyor so that he would

make a plan of the churchyard: however Architect Jakučionis stated proudly: "We son't do it even if we get paid for it. . ."

4.

In your article (*Tiesa* 11/22/74) you write: "The materialistic viewpoint has been established in a large segment of the population."

Only a Minority has Adopted the Materialistic Viewpoint

It must be noted that the materialistic viewpoint has established itself only in a minority of the population; and this, only for certain reasons. Those who praise it and advertise it often speak contrary to their conscience. You are watching the establishment of the materialistic viewpoint from afar, while we see it from close up. You base your conclusions on fictitious statistics, while we base ours on reality. If someone out of fear says that he does not believe in God, that does not mean that he is godless. If he were godless, he would not receive the Sacrament of Matrimony, baptize his children and go to confession. So, there is no cause to rejoice in the number of the godless. Who can count the families, which, not wishing to go to church, pray at home?

Neither the family nor society is pleased with fanatical materialists. Some time ago, J. Galvydis was employed at the collective farm of Jakeliai. As administrator, he cared little for the affairs of the farm, but wasted all his energy on the war against religion. He was determined to turn the whole population godless. He mocked the believers on the honor roll, and did not pay premiums to the workers who earned them, for example to P. Burokas.

On July 20, 1971 Albinas Bučelis, born in 1894, died while working in the potato field of the collective farm. The administrator would not even issue a vehicle to bring the coffin from the store. Galvydis came to the collective farm with few belongings like an orphan. After a few years, he left Jakeliai with a dowry, like that of a prince going to his wedding. Farm workers who labored at the collective farm and Soviet farm for many years did not earn anywhere close to the amount earned by Administrator Galvydis in only four years.

Only the Praying and Bandits speak Lithuanian

It is often said and written that the Church was the cause of the disputes of the nationalists, but now the young generation is educated in the spirit of internationalism and nationalistic hatred is foreign to it. This year, while walking on Diržinskis street in Vilnius, I asked a teenager where Giedraičių Street was located.

He answered in Russian: "I don't understand."

"What does that mean? After all, you live in Lithuania. Doesn't your school teach the Lithuanian language?"—I asked.

"Only the praying ones and bandits speak Lithuanian", replied the teenager. Such are the fruits of materialistic education! Who turned the teenager against the Lithuanian language?

On December 4, 1974 Vilnius Radio discussed the case of some family which asked, before the war, that its children would be released from religious instruction by the Minister of Education. The commentator angrily underlined that the request was not granted. What would the Minister of Education reply today if some family would dare to request that its children would not be crippled by the atheistic spirit? If someone condemns the faults of the past, he should make sure that he is not committing them himself.

Atheism Now Forced on Everyone

It is true, religion was taught in the past, but it was not taught by force as is today's atheism. Religious truths were taught only during religion lessons, while today, every teacher must foster atheistic ideas in his lessons. Previously, religion was taught only in grammar schools and high schools, but today atheism begins to be instilled even in kindergarten, while it is forcibly inflicted in the high schools, technical schools, universities and workplaces. Not even the retired are left in peace.

What kind of freedom is it, if only atheism is drilled, and one must listen only to atheistic ideas? Is that the freedom described by article 124 of the Constitution of the USSR? Rosa Luxemburg spoke about freedom correctly when she said: "Freedom only for yourself is not freedom. True freedom includes also the freedom of those who think differently."

Like every decent citizen, you, should be concerned that all live decently. Therefore, please recommend not the reeducation of the priests but of those who trample underfoot all that is decent and beautiful. Since you hold the position of a minister, you can bring up many beautiful ideas, only you must have a citizen's courage to say what you see and hear to those who do not see and hear because all their energy is expended in the meaningless fight against God and the Church.

Adutiškis, 1975.1.25

Rev. B. Laurinavičius

(The statement is condensed—Editor)

IN THE SOVIET SCHOOLS

From the Dean of the State Pedagogic Institute of Vilnius
Order No. 20

Vilnius

February 14, 1975

Responsibility of Instructors Organizing and Conducting Student
Excursions

Various excursions, art groups, athletic groups and other types of student travel within the republic or outside of its boundaries, as outlined in the curriculum plan have great educational merit in preparing future teachers. The aim is that the students on these excursions, pedagogical practice, work and rest camps, helping agricultural workers, would in their work and conduct live up to the honorable name of a Soviet student, future teacher, Communist youth, and citizen of the L.S.S.R.

On these excursions much time is devoted to academic pursuits and rest. A great deal of funds is also involved. Their success in forming a young specialist depends on the leaders of the collectives, and instructors, who should be properly prepared on their own time

for these excursions and who should maintain discipline with the cooperation of the student activist. It is imperative to discuss the results of the excursions in the departments and collectives, to inform the deans about them, and if need be, even the rector's office. Recently, when even the most ordinary organizing and conducting demands of the students' excursions were ignored there were instances of negative influence on the ideological education of the students and on the formation of their Marxist viewpoint.

From June 29 to July 12, 1975 a group of fourteen students of the History faculty headed by instructor R. Šalūga conducted a field trip a part of their studies in archeology, ethnic and folklore in the districts of Joniškis, Akmenė and Mažeikiai. While in the district of Akmenė, this group humbled itself to the church-supporters, asked themselves into the wooden church of Klykoliiai, as if into an architectural monument, listened to the anti-scientific comments of the local pastor (The pastor of the parish of Klykoliiai is Jonas Paliukas—a graduate of the Seminary of Kaunas in 1969—Editor), viewed films and slides made by him, some of them even on religious themes. It is understood that the plan of this excursion did not include all this. Šalūga has been relieved of his duties as allegedly untrustworthy and he is not working at the institute any more. The student head of the group has also been relieved of his duties. The necessary discussions were held with the student group.

On October 27, 1974 a group of the students of Course II of the same faculty, under the direction of asst. prof. A. Gaigalaitė, organized a one-day introductory excursion including the following places: Pilaitė, Kernavė, Musninkai, Čiobiškis, Žasliai, Elektrėnai, Vievis, Lentvaris. In Kernavė, while the asst. prof. did not notice, the students on their own went in to look at the church, in which it seems an antiscientific, antihistorical museum is found. When the asst. prof. found out about it, she immediately took the student out of the church and held an explanatory discussion. However, when they returned she did not inform the faculty dean of this event.

From September 4 to October 3, 1974, a group of students from the filology-geography faculty, headed by acting asst. prof. J. Tomkus worked at the "Oaths of Lenin" Collective Fram in the *Rayon* of

Šalčininkai. In spite of strict directiveness to the leaders of the work and because of the lenience of instructors J. Tomkus, an end-of-the-harvest feast with alcoholic beverages was organized. That type of feasting and the conduct of some of the students during the feast lowered the dignity of the students and their leader.

Some time earlier, July 16-21, while engaged in practical studies near the lake of Drūkšiai, Instructor J. Tomkus in the presence of students quarreled with tourists from more distant places at the camp fire site. This less than tactful conflict on the part of the lecturer even though unwillingly, developed a nationalistic character.

Such and similar negative events should call forth strict reactions and every department and teacher must draw from them the necessary conclusions.

In connection with the above, I order:

1. To issue a reprimand to the acting asst. prof. Juozas Tomkus for a grave violation of the discipline of the students' aid to an agriculture group and for unfitting conduct with outsiders during the students practical studies.

2. To issue a warning to the Lecturer in the Department of History of the USSR, (Miss) Aldona Gaigalaitė, for not reporting the unseemly conduct of some of the students during an excursion.

3. Within ten days, the heads of the departments should acquaint all the members of their departments with this order, and should return it to the chancellery with their suggestions.

Rector of the State Pedagogic
Institute of Vilnius
asst. prof. V. Uogintas

Assistant Professor at the Agricultural Academy Terrorizes Students

Kaunas. On February 11, 1975, a group of veterinary students on their way to Kurtuvėnai, visited Šiluva and Tytuvėnai. On February 13, 1975, an asst. prof. of the Marxism faculty, Bagackas, started to badger, one by one, all the students who took part in the excursion, wanting to know why they went to Šiluva. Those who took part in the pre-lenten festivities in Kurtuvėnai were threatened with dismissal from the Academy by the assistant professor. The head of the

economic department of the Academy who provided a bus for the students was dismissed from his job.

Incorrect Information to Students by Deputy K. Tumėnas

In the Fall of 1974, at the Polytechnic Institute of Kaunas, a meeting of the students with the Deputy for Religious Affairs, K. Tumėnas was arranged. Students who had to write a paper were herded into a hall to listen to this lecture. Tumėnas told about various religious communities in Lithuania. According to him, half of the population of Lithuania are practicing Catholics, while many more people take part in the celebration of the holy days. According to official documents, 45% of the newborn are christened, 25% of those marrying do so in church, 51% are buried with the ceremonies of the Church. [These statistics are lowered to a great extent—Editor]. Tumėnas mentioned the fact that reactionary priests published several numbers of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* which are meant to be sent abroad.

Students Refuse to Write Down a Sermon

Šiauliai. On December 25, 1974, Christmas Day, many students of the II course of the Pedagogic Institute of Šiauliai came to class dressed in festive clothes. At least in such a way they demonstrated their viewpoints. After a few days, this group was told to go to church, listen to the sermon, and write it down. They should then give those notes to the Communist Youth Organization. The students refused on the grounds that this is not part of the duties of the students.

Security and the Administration of the Polytechnic Institute Discriminate Against Believing Students)

The 8th and 10th issue of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* carried an article about the persecution of Zenonas Mištautas because in 1973 he carried a cross to the top of the castle hill of Meškučiai (the Hill of Crosses). His conduct mark was lowered, he was not allowed to defend his thesis and therefore he was quickly conscripted. One employee of the Security of Šiauliai privately told

some of the teachers at the Polytechnic Institute, that Security is aware that Zenonas is an orderly, gifted, and good student; however he intends to enter the seminary, therefore, he cannot allow him to graduate from the Polytechnic Institute, so that he would not have a higher education. [The names of the above mentioned Security agent and the teachers are known—Editor].

In 1974, the brother of Zenonas Mištautas also tried to enter the Polytechnic Institute of Šiauliai. During the entrance examinations he was called by J. Raudys, assistant principal for teaching requirements, who explained to him that if he wished to study here he must promise not to go to church, to join the Communist Youth Organization, and not to follow the example of his brother. After this conversation, the young man immediately withdrew his application.

Teachers Mock and Insult a Religious Invalid student

Utena. Jonas Baronas, 20 years old, is an invalid residing in the old age home and is studying in the Tilvytis adult education high school, grade VIb. The teachers demanded that he write an article against the Church and the priests. Baronas firmly refused. After school he was questioned in the teachers' lounge about his faith.

"I am not a little child and you have no right to force me to write anti-religious articles," the student replied.

The teacher could not control himself:

'Paragon of piety, ass, lowbrow, etc.," the student was mocked in all kinds of words. The most insulting was the teacher (Miss) Skvaržinskaitė. From that time on Baronas was insulted every day.

On January 15, 1975, Jonas Baronas went to the Ministry of Education and complained. He was then transferred to the school in Ukmergė and the above mentioned facts were investigated. It became clear that Teacher Skvaržinskaitė was inspired by the director of curriculum, Teacher Trumpickas. Teacher Skvaržinskaitė was reprimanded for her conduct, and teacher Trumpickas was supposed to be discharged on April 1, 1975.

On March 4, 1975, Baronas met teacher Trumpickas in the street, and the teacher in the presence of students Grigonis and Liuima called the invalid student a dog.

Teacher Finds Out By a Questionnaire the Religious Views of the Students and Mocks Those Who Believe

Klaipėda. The students of High School I of Klaipėda, VI Grade, were ordered to answer such questions on a questionnaire: Do you believe in God? Do you attend church? Do you know the prayers? Who prepared you for First Communion? Who in your family is a believer and attends church?

The students replied variously: "What concern is it of yours, teacher?—This is my personal affair." "I believe in God, I go to church, I know my prayers, my mother prepared me for my First Holy Communion", etc. The students had to sign the questionnaire. Home room teacher Saveckas mocked the believing students: "Well, paragon of piety, maybe you come to school wearing a cross today?" he sneered at a believing girl.

Teacher Glinskienė Mocks Religious Students

Palanga. Atheist teacher (Mrs.) Glinskienė, working at the resort's high school mocks religious students during the lessons. Before Easter, 1975, she spoke to pupil (Miss) Atkočiūnaitė:

"You run to church a little too often, like a real paragon of piety. I am sure that you are the only such backward one in the whole class."

"I am not going to church all that often — only on Sundays", replied the girl quietly, "and no one will prevent me from doing so."

"Teacher, she is not the only one," said pupil (Miss) Šileikytė. "I also attend church. I will watch at the tomb of Christ all Easter night. If you don't believe me, come and see for yourself."

The students started to laugh, and the teacher left the classroom.

An Atheistic Play With Believing Players

Kudirkos Naumiestis. On Christmas eve, 1974, after school was over, an atheistic evening was to take place in Kudirkos Naumiestis high school. The home room teacher of the VII class, Algis Domijonaitis, chose the following religious students to be the

"actors": Gintas Venckus, Raimundas Žibąs and Aldona Stebulytė. Venckus had to act the part of the pastor, and the others had to mock believing people receiving the sacraments.

Other members of the class were told to laugh loudly during the performance. The home room teacher told the children not to say anything about this play to their parents—most likely he feared that the performance might not take place. However, the children told their parents. Mrs. Žibienė called up the home room teacher and declared: "Do not trample our convictions. Choose children who do not attend church to perform in the play; we will not let ours do it. Other mothers also did not allow their children to take part in the play. The atheistic evening fell apart. However, the children had to explain in class why they did not take part in the play.

* * *

INFORMATION

The *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* welcomes concrete and complete information about the discrimination against the believers of Lithuania and about their stand against assimilation and godlessness.

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