

Religion and Nationalism in Lithuania

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In Lithuania, as in neighbouring Poland, the Catholic Church holds a special place in the national consciousness. Lithuania's conversion to Catholicism in the 13th century marked the beginning of its long alliance with Poland: indeed, from 1385 to 1794, the two nations were formally united in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania-Poland, which was the greatest Catholic power in Eastern Europe and at one time stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea. After 1794, when Lithuania and Poland were largely absorbed into the Russian Empire, the Catholic Church in Lithuania found itself in a completely changed situation: from being the state religion, it became the religion of an oppressed non-Russian nation whose rulers elevated their own Russian Orthodox Church to the position of state church. From the beginning of the 19th century, systematic Russification went hand in hand with discrimination against the Catholic Church. In the reign of Nicholas I, most of the lands and monasteries of the Lithuanian Catholic Church were confiscated and handed over to the Russian Orthodox Church. Lithuanian high schools and academies were closed, Lithuanian national law was abolished and the very use of the term "Lithuania" was officially banned.¹ In these circumstances, the Catholic Church came to be seen as a defender of the Lithuanian national heritage. The two great Lithuanian anti-Tsarist revolts of the 19th century – in 1831 and 1863 – had strong links with the Catholic Church. After the revolt of 1831, the theological academy of Vilnius – one of the centres of rebellion – was transferred to St Petersburg and the University of Vilnius itself was closed and used to house political prisoners. The more serious 1863 revolt, which was closely linked with the Polish rebellion at the same time, was in fact led by a Lithuanian priest – Antanas Mackevičius. After the revolt had been crushed by Russian troops, Mackevičius was arrested and executed. In a last declaration to the Tsarist police, he stated that his motive had been love of the Lithuanian people and concern for their rights and freedom.²

The revolt of 1863 is still remembered in Lithuania today; Lithuanian *samizdat* publications, such as the *Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic*

Church (CLCC) and *Aušra* (Dawn), have referred to it on a number of occasions, not surprisingly in connection with Soviet repression in contemporary Lithuania. The famous Hill of Crosses, a shrine at Meškuičiai where Lithuanian believers traditionally erect crosses witnessing to their prayers, had its origins in the aftermath of 1863. Lithuanian revolutionaries, who had gone to pray in a small chapel there, were buried alive by Cossacks who covered the chapel with earth. At first people put up crosses there in honour of the revolutionaries but later they erected them as petitions or acts of thanksgiving to God.³

Official atheist raids on this hill, destroying the hundreds of crosses erected there and cutting down the maple tree at the top, have proved useless. The crosses removed have been replaced by others. CLCC No. 29 comments that “the atheists will not succeed in rooting out the faith from the hearts of the people”.⁴ Part of the felled maple tree has been made into a crucifix: “If the roots remain, the tree will grow again.”⁵ That the roots of the Catholic faith in Lithuania are strongly intertwined with the national heritage is clear from the way in which the crosses surround a stone commemorating the 1863 uprising. *Aušra* No. 7 describes how a cross commemorating two priests shot by the Russian troops in 1863 had been desecrated, while monuments erected to the “liberating” Red Army are compared to those put up in honour of Tsarist soldiers after the suppression of the 1863 rebellion.⁶

The events that followed the 1863 rebellion – the attempted Russification of Lithuania by the Tsarist government – have perhaps left an even stronger impression on the national consciousness. Muravyov, the Governor-general of Lithuania appointed after 1863, forbade the official use of the Lithuanian language and the publication or distribution of books printed in the Latin alphabet. Lithuanian was henceforth to be written in the Cyrillic alphabet (like Russian), in which however only three books were published in 1864 – a grammar, a calendar and a prayer-book. The Lithuanians refused to buy or use these books. Instead, a national book smuggling campaign was organized, largely by the Catholic clergy and the Lithuanian Bishop Motiejus Valančius. Lithuanian works – Bibles, prayer-books and works by Bishop Valančius himself on religious and national themes – were printed in Prussia and secretly smuggled back into Lithuania. The book smugglers – many of them Catholic priests – were often arrested, tortured and deported to Siberia.⁷ In spite of this, by the 1880s the Lithuanian printing presses in Prussia were also producing secret journals for their homeland: the first and most famous of these was *Aušra*, which was to become the organ of Lithuanian national rebirth and was also closely associated with Bishop Valančius. The present-day *samizdat* publication *Aušra* is of course named after this early Lithuanian journal; *Varpas* (*The Bell*), another Lithuanian *samizdat* journal, also had a predecessor in the 1880s. “Unofficial literature” of

this kind is therefore nothing new in Lithuania: it is something of a national tradition.

Bishop Valančius himself is often referred to in the "unofficial" Lithuanian press of today, as an example to be followed. In criticizing certain members of the Lithuanian Catholic hierarchy who give way to the demands of the atheist authorities, *CLCC* No. 31 compares them to Valančius's rival, Prelate P. Zilinskas, who was nominated as administrator of Vilnius diocese by the Tsarist government and made himself rich, also allowing the Russian language to be used in Lithuanian churches, while Bishop Valančius used his savings to defend the Lithuanian language, to help the poor and priests repressed by the government. "Which member of the hierarchy should the priests and believers of that period have supported?" asks the *Chronicle*.⁸ It is of course understood by the reader that this question is not concerned so much with the past as with the present hierarchy. *Tiesos Kelias* (*Way of Truth*), a Lithuanian *samizdat* journal intended for priests, praises the efforts of Bishop Valančius to make sure that Lithuanian children were brought up as Catholics, although the Tsarist government was trying to put pressure on them to become Orthodox. Again, the reference is really to present-day pressure from the Soviet government on children to abandon their Catholic faith in favour of officially-approved atheism. *Tiesos Kelias* reports that a religious youth group of 150 children has been formed "in the spirit of Valančius".⁹

During the brief period of Lithuanian national independence, from 1918 to 1940, the Catholic Church became the leading religious organization in the country. Eighty five per cent of the population were Catholics in 1940. The Church had 73 monasteries and 85 convents, four seminaries and a plethora of Catholic societies and charitable organizations.¹⁰ With the Soviet invasion of June 1940 and Lithuania's subsequent incorporation into the USSR, the Lithuanian Catholic Church became subject to Soviet laws on the "separation" of Church and State. All Catholic monastic establishments were abolished, as were all societies, organizations and publications connected with the Catholic Church. In the years 1940-41 and 1944-53, 342 priests (about 30 per cent of the clergy), almost all monks and nuns, and four bishops were deported to camps in Siberia and central Asia, together with over 200,000 Lithuanians.¹¹

In the Soviet press of today, it is customary to libel these imprisoned priests by alleging that they collaborated with the Nazis in the years 1941-44, and took part in post-war armed resistance to the Soviet authorities.¹² As in every country invaded by the Nazis, some people were found willing to assist the German SD forces in exterminating local Jews and in deporting people to Germany. (Such "nationalists" were strongly condemned by Petras Plumpa at his trial in 1974.¹³) However, the Roman Catholic hierarchy consistently opposed the German policies and tried

to save the lives of local Jews. At the post-war Soviet trial of Bishop Borisevičius for "bourgeois nationalism", several Jewish witnesses whose lives the bishop had saved testified in his defence, but he was nevertheless condemned to death.¹⁴ In CLCC No. 16, Fr Antanas Ylius spoke for many other priests when he protested to the Prosecutor of the Lithuanian SSR about the allegations in a Soviet film and in Vilnius Museum of Atheism that he had murdered children and beheaded people during the war.¹⁵ It seems clear from the statements of another priest, Fr Zigmantas Nečiunskas, that the Catholic clergy were certainly not opposed to the post-war partisan movement, knew a great deal about it and held services for the partisans, but as priests they would not have taken up arms themselves.

The partisans themselves are mentioned with respect by the Lithuanian *Chronicle* and *Aušra* as brave men who tried to defend their homeland and save their national culture. Many of them, such as Petras Paulaitis, fought against both German and Soviet troops. Fifty thousand of them lost their lives in this hopeless struggle. Some of the older Lithuanian dissidents such as Gajauskas are themselves former partisans and have served 25 year sentences in camps. The main crime for which Gajauskas received an additional ten year sentence in April 1978 was his collection of archive materials for a history of the Lithuanian partisan movement.¹⁶

By their sufferings in the Soviet camps, the Lithuanian clergy continued to identify themselves with the fate of their nation and were respected for this by the people. In an appeal to seminary students by Lithuanian priests in 1977 the seminarians were urged to "stand out boldly against falsehood, violence, hatred and the spirit of slavery", taking as their example the priests who were tortured to death in the Gulag Archipelago for their loyalty to their Church and country, and Bishop Matulionis, "who three times trod a path of torment in communist camps but never offended against his conscience".¹⁷ The names of the bishops who died in Soviet prisons are mentioned with reverence by the Lithuanian *Chronicle*:

We remember the death in the camps of Bishops Reinys and Borisevičius and many priests. We honour the holy martyrs who have adorned the history of the Church. We should bow our heads before their resolution, bravery and sacrifice; we should learn from this and imitate it. We bow our heads too before the brave ones of our own time.¹⁸

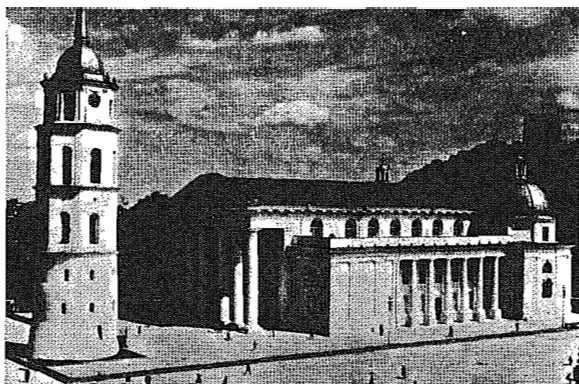
With such memories of the wartime Soviet massacres and deportations, it is hardly surprising that Lithuanian believers are deeply insulted at the official position held by Rašlanas, a former NKVD man who murdered and tortured 73 political prisoners in 1941 and is now a Representative of the Council for Religious Affairs in Telšiai. CLCC No. 33 calls for him to be tried as a criminal "like the German criminals at Nuremberg". Instead Rašlanas has now been entrusted with furthering the atheist campaign in schools.¹⁹

In the years after Stalin's death, it became clear that the Catholic Church was the one Lithuanian institution which could not be assimilated into the Soviet ideological structure. Attempts were made to split up the synthesis between Church and nationality in Lithuania by emphasizing class links with the "brotherly" Russian nation and propagating the concept of a "new Soviet nation", but these attempts have so far failed. An analysis of *samizdat* documents from the Soviet Union for 1976 showed that a quarter were from national groups dissatisfied with the regime's attempts at russification, while a third were from religious groups protesting against government persecution.²⁰ Lithuania thus combines the two strongest trends in the human rights movement in the USSR.

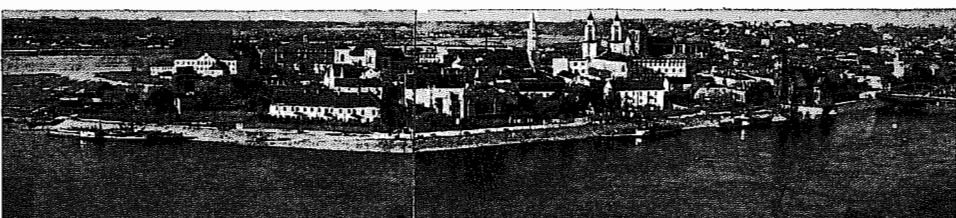
It is this synthesis that gives the *Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church* its authoritative position. It probably derived its inspiration from the Russian human rights publication in Moscow, *the Chronicle of Current Events*, which preceded it by three years, but the Lithuanian journal immediately made clear, in its chosen title, the difference between its own point of view and that of the Russian *Chronicle*. The Russian journal emphasizes human rights in general, with religious liberty and national rights taking their natural place within this framework. The Lithuanian *Chronicle* puts the emphasis first on the Catholic Church's rights, then on Lithuanian national issues and human rights in general. In its rare ventures into issues outside Lithuania, it speaks for persecuted Catholics in other parts of the USSR – in Moldavia or Belorussia. In the same way, the Lithuanian parallel group to the Russian "Christian Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights" is the "Catholic Committee" (see documents pp. 87–9), run by five Catholic priests.

At first, the Lithuanian *Chronicle* confined its reports to religious matters and petitions addressed to the Soviet authorities, like the Memorandum signed by 17,000 Lithuanian Catholics, calling for an end to anti-religious harassment and discrimination.²¹ However, even in the first issues, Lithuanian national and moral ties with the Catholic Church were emphasized: at the trial of Fr Zdebskis for teaching children the catechism, which was reported in the first Lithuanian *Chronicle*, the priest stated that one of his motives in teaching the children to obey Christ's commandments had been love of his country: "The nation of the Nemunas river is dear to me . . . I know quite well it will not continue to exist if its children do not have the strength to obey . . . If the courts fail to judge us priests now, then our nation will judge us!"²² In later issues of the *Chronicle*, national questions are further discussed.

The position of the Lithuanian language, in a country where Russian is the language of the occupying power, is often referred to. Russians living in Lithuania hardly ever learn Lithuanian. A young Russian, whom Fr Laurinavičius met in Vilnius, told him Lithuanian was only spoken by "prayer-reciters and bandits".²³ This is an interesting remark in that it



Left The Cathedral of Vilnius, capital of the Lithuanian SSR. This cathedral has been turned into an art gallery. © Keston College.



Below View of Kaunas where Lithuania's only Roman Catholic seminary is to be found. Lithuanian Catholics have protested about the small number whom the Soviet authorities permit to train there (See "Religion and Nationalism in Lithuania", pp. 76-85 © Keston College.

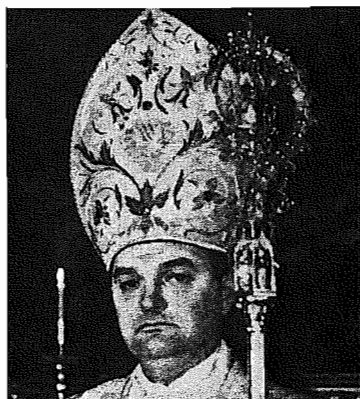


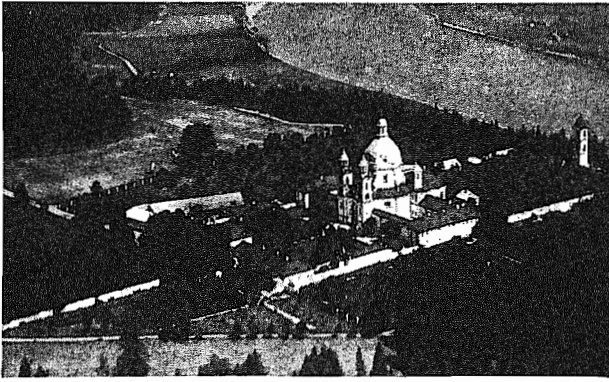
Left Bishop Povilonis of the Lithuanian Catholic Church (front row, third from right) conducting a confirmation service in Dotnuva (Lithuania) on 14 July 1974. He is one of the signatories of a document (see pp. 89-91) which criticizes the draft of the new Soviet Constitution and which was sent to the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet. © Keston College.



Above The consecration of Bishop Povilonis and Bishop Krikščiunas in Kaunas Cathedral in 1969. © Keston College.

Below Bishop Romualdas Krikščiunas, Apostolic Administrator of the Panevezys diocese (Lithuania) since 1973. He also signed the document (see pp. 89-91) which criticizes the draft of the new Soviet Constitution © Keston College.





Left The Marian Sanctuary and Monastery of the Sisters of St Casimir (Pazaislis, near Kaunas, Lithuania) which has been turned into a labour camp.
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Below Petras Plumpa (b. 1939) and his wife. Plumpa was tried with four other Lithuanian Catholics in December 1974 (see "Lithuanian Catholics on Trial", *RCL* Vol. 3, 1975, Nos. 4-5, pp. 11-13) for helping to produce and distribute the *Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church*. He was sentenced to eight years in a strict regime camp. © Keston College.



Above Viktoras Petkus (b. 1919) who was sentenced in July 1978 to ten years' imprisonment followed by five years' exile (see the transcript of his trial pp. 85-7) for his activities in the Lithuanian Catholic movement. © Keston College.



Above Balys Gajauskas (b. 1927) who was tried on 12-14 April 1978 for his involvement in the Lithuanian Catholic movement, and sentenced to ten years in a special regime camp followed by five years' exile. This photograph was taken in 1964 when he was serving a previous sentence in a labour camp.
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Below Fr Alfonsas Svarinskas, a Lithuanian Catholic priest who is a founding member of the Catholic Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights (see document pp. 87-9).
© Keston College.

agrees with Lithuanian popular nationalism in identifying Russian as the language of atheism. It is in fact difficult to obtain Lithuanian grammars and elementary teaching books as the Lithuanian *Chronicle* points out. Even classical works of Lithuanian literature are hard to obtain: because of their religious content, they are often printed in small editions or not at all. Meanwhile, *Tales of Hares*, a book of atheist anecdotes, is printed in editions of 50,000 copies.²⁴ The fact that many Lithuanian classical authors were priests is, of course, embarrassing to the atheist authorities. In the house-museum of the poet Maironis, all references to his religious office – his cross and a picture of him in priestly vestments – have been removed.²⁵ CLCC No. 34 severely criticizes a speech made by A. Rimkus, LSSR Minister of Education, to the Fourth LSSR Teachers Congress calling it “a new campaign to make atheists of and to denationalize Lithuanian schoolchildren”. The number of schools teaching in Lithuanian has been reduced and schools teaching in both Russian and Lithuanian have replaced them. This was praised by A. Rimkus as a contribution to education of schoolchildren as fervent patriots to their Fatherland (the USSR) and “devoted internationalists” (a phrase the author interprets as “ignoramuses regarding Lithuanian national culture”). The increased teaching of Russian in Lithuanian schools is linked by Rimkus with a call for coordinated teaching of scientific materialism and active atheism.

Over and over again, the Lithuanian believers link their refusal to give up the Catholic faith with the survival of their national culture as such. Juozas Šileikis, who stoutly defended his children's right to go to church and not to join the Komsomol, was asked by the exasperated atheist headmistress why he had such strong convictions. He replied, “Because of my religion . . . Lithuania has been criss-crossed by many invaders and if Lithuanians could have been easily influenced as down blown by the wind, it is doubtful whether we would today be speaking Lithuanian.”²⁶ An old teacher, formerly an atheist, wrote to the Lithuanian *Chronicle* that, since the Soviet invasion, he had realized the first step towards denationalization of Lithuanian children was removal of the influence of the Catholic Church (as the Tsarist government had stated long ago). “A Lithuanian who fights against the Church is digging the grave of his own nation, for the Church is the sole institution fighting for the preservation of Lithuanian traditions . . . and almost the only teacher of ethics.”²⁷ Children are seen as a national treasure, preserving in themselves the religion, traditions and language of Lithuania. Soviet government demands that children be banned from communion and altar-serving must be resisted – “otherwise, what will become of our nation?”²⁸

It is paradoxical that two of the figures whose memories are most revered by the Lithuanian *Chronicle*, as a Catholic journal, were suicides: Romas Kalanta, who burnt himself to death in May 1972 in a protest against the continued occupation of his country, and Mindaugas Tamonis,

who threw himself under a train after being “treated” in a psychiatric hospital for refusing to restore a monument to the Red Army and for writing a letter to the Central Committee of the CPSU, calling for national independence and religious freedom. Tamonis in fact emphasized that this would aid socialism, as religion and socialism were not antagonistic; the return of national sovereignty to the Baltic republics would also strengthen socialism. It was the “abnormal, anti-democratic, one-party system” that must be abolished. He called for a referendum to re-establish the Lithuanian national State, where Christians would be able to vote for a party representing their interests. The death of Tamonis and the “flame of Romas Kalanta” are described by the *Chronicle* as “the cry of our generation”, a heroic death “lighting the path for the children of the future”. “Each generation”, writes the *Chronicle*, “should have its heroes. Otherwise it is valueless.”²⁹

The heroes of the Lithuanian Catholic movement – Ona Pranskunaite, Virgilijus Jaugelis, Balys Gajauskas, Viktoras Petkus (see document pp. 85–7) – who have been sentenced to long terms in prison camps for producing and distributing the Lithuanian *Chronicle*, almost all seem as fervently devoted to their nation as they are to the Catholic faith. Virgilijus Jaugelis, at his trial in 1974, proclaimed his own commitment to the truth preached by Christ and to the ideals of freedom and justice, but ended his defence speech with a deeply-felt poem about his martyred country, in the style of the old national anthem (now forbidden):

Lithuania, our homeland, our birthplace,
 How often have the feet of foreigners trampled on you,
 How many times have you been washed in blood?
 Yet you never lacked noble hearts to weep for you.
 They did not fear suffering or death for your sake.
 And even now such hearts will be found.³⁰

Viktoras Petkus, sentenced to ten years imprisonment in July 1978 (see document pp. 85–7), was involved in Lithuanian Catholic activity on almost every level: he was a member of the Lithuanian Helsinki Group, was connected with the Lithuanian *Chronicle*, had taught both religion and Lithuanian history to young people and had even founded a Baltic National Committee to fight for the national rights of Latvians and Estonians as well as Lithuanians.³¹ CLCC No. 34 describes him as an honoured “son of the nation”. One of the witnesses called at his trial was a fellow-member of the Lithuanian Helsinki Group, Fr Karolis Garuckas, who asked the judge to put him in the defendant’s box beside Petkus, as they had acted together. “I would consider it an honour to die in a camp, as my teachers Bishop Reinyš and Fr Andriuška did.”³² Petkus was supported throughout the trial by a group of young Lithuanians who stood outside the courtroom, openly praying the rosary, in spite of KGB

attempts to take films of them. Once again, this demonstrates the closely-interwoven nature of the religious, national and human-rights movements in Lithuania, whereas in Russia itself the various branches of religious and human rights activity are much more self-contained.

It must not be thought that the nationalism of the Catholic movement in Lithuania is mere anti-Russian feeling or instinctive chauvinism. *CLCC* No. 15 makes it clear that this is due in no small measure to the activities of the Russian human-rights activists and the sacrifices made by Russian dissidents such as Sergei Kovalyov, Andrei Sakharov and Alexander Solzhenitsyn. The editors of the *Chronicle* express their gratitude to these Russian intellectuals and pray to the Almighty to bless them: "By their courage and sacrifice they have forced us, Catholics of Lithuania, to take a new look at the Russian nation."³³ Kovalyov was probably the first to establish links between the Lithuanian Catholic movement and the Russian dissidents. Reports from Lithuania now feature regularly in the Russian *Chronicle of Current Events*. Sakharov's visit to Vilnius during Kovalyov's trial in December 1975 established closer personal links with the Lithuanians. Balys Gajauskas was the Lithuanian representative of Solzhenitsyn's fund for political prisoners and their families. The Catholics of Lithuania have also expressed their support and admiration for the Russian Orthodox priests Dimitri Dudko and Gleb Yakunin, whose pastoral zeal and courage in speaking the truth publicly are described by *Aušra* as "a fine example" and instructive for "some Lithuanian priests who attempt to serve both God and the atheists".³⁴

The Lithuanian *Chronicle* is not slow to condemn nationalist publications, such as the *samizdat* journal *Dievas ir Tėvyne (God and Fatherland)**, if their tone is "offensive and abusive". The intolerant and insulting tone in which this journal treats the opinions of those who think differently does it no honour. "Let us respect others if we also wish to be respected."³⁵ The *Chronicle* also emphasizes in every issue that information sent in to the journal must be honest and accurate.

Lithuanian *samizdat* has by now established itself as the chief source of information in both the Catholic Church and the national movement in Lithuania. It has made quite clear to foreign observers both the strength of the Catholic movement and the continuing desire of Lithuanians for national self-determination. The two main journals, *Aušra* and the *CLCC*, seem to have grown closer. *Aušra* has incorporated more Catholic material and the *Chronicle* has become more openly nationalist, even calling on the Soviet government to give Lithuania its freedom, as it has taken no notice of believers' complaints about anti-religious discrimination and seems incapable of granting freedom of religion.³⁶ At

* A recent issue of *Dievas ir Tėvyne* received by Keston College, shows that this journal has now abandoned its aggressive tone and is publishing more objective information.

the same time, the *Chronicle* has obviously acquired more support from the official Catholic hierarchy in Lithuania: at first they kept well clear of the journal, but their suggestions (see document pp. 89–91) about changes in the Soviet Constitution to guarantee equality for religious citizens have now been openly published in *CLCC* No. 33.³⁷ This combined with the strong grass-roots support for the Catholic Church among the laity and clergy and the extremely outspoken nature and variety of Lithuanian *samizdat*, shows the strength of the united religious and national movement in Lithuania today. Even the savage sentences recently passed on Lithuanian dissidents Petkus and Gajauskas merely indicate that the Soviet authorities have come to the same conclusion and seem to be at a loss for effective remedies.

¹ A. Gerutis (ed.), *Lithuania 700 years*, New York, 1969, p. 123.

² *Ibid.*, p. 129.

³ *Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church*, (hereafter *CLCC*) No. 12, Lithuanian Roman Catholic Priests' League of America, New York, 1975, p. 30 (English); *Lietuvos Kataliku Baznycios Kronika*, Chicago, 1975, Vol. 2, p. 243 (Lithuanian).

⁴ *CLCC* No. 29, Chicago, 1978, Vol. 4, p. 361 (Lithuanian).

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Aušra* 7, p. 47 (manuscript).

⁷ A. Gerutis (ed.), *Lithuania 700 years*, New York, 1969, pp. 129–32.

⁸ *CLCC* No. 31, p. 24 (MS).

⁹ *Tiesos Kelias*, pp. 49–51 (MS).

¹⁰ J. Savasis, *The War Against God in Lithuania*, New York, 1966, p. 13.

¹¹ J. Savasis, *op. cit.*, p. 18; M. Raišupis, *Dabarties Kankiniai* (Chicago, Illinois, 1972) p. 393. S. Vardys, *Lithuania under the Soviets*, New York, 1965, pp. 240–1.

¹² *Tiesa*, 12 January 1974, Vilnius.

¹³ *CLCC* No. 13, New York 1975, pp. 17–18 (English); Chicago 1975, Vol. 2, p. 265 (Lithuanian).

¹⁴ Savasis, *op. cit.*, p. 26; *Lithuanian Bulletin*, Vol. 1, No. 5, July 1943, pp. 5–7.

¹⁵ *CLCC* No. 16, New York 1978, pp. 26–7 (English); Chicago, 1976, Vol. 3, pp. 33–5 (Lithuanian).

¹⁶ *CLCC* No. 33, pp. 18–19 (MS).

¹⁷ *CLCC* No. 26, Chicago, 1978, Vol. 4, pp. 167–78 (Lithuanian).

¹⁸ *CLCC* No. 14, New York 1977, p. 35 (English); Chicago, 1975, Vol. 2, pp. 342–3 (Lithuanian).

¹⁹ *CLCC* No. 33, pp. 31–5 (MS).

²⁰ *Russkaya Mysl*, Paris, 27 January 1977, p. 5.

²¹ *CLCC* No. 2, Chicago, 1974, Vol. 1, pp. 75–8 (Lithuanian).

²² *CLCC* No. 1, Chicago, 1974, Vol. 1, p. 50 (Lithuanian).

²³ *CLCC* No. 16, New York, 1978, p. 41 (English); Chicago, 1976, Vol. 3, p. 49 (Lithuanian).

²⁴ *CLCC* No. 32, p. 17 (MS).

²⁵ *Aušra* 7, p. 6 (MS).

²⁶ *CLCC* No. 9 New York, 1975, pp. 31–2 (English); Chicago, 1975, Vol. 2, p. 96 (Lithuanian).

²⁷ *CLCC* No. 17, Chicago, 1976, Vol. 3, p. 109 (Lithuanian).

²⁸ *CLCC* No. 28, Chicago 1978, Vol. 4, p. 300 (Lithuanian).

²⁹ *CLCC* No. 20, New York, 1978, p. 7 (English); Chicago, 1976, Vol. 3, p. 218 (Lithuanian).

³⁰ *CLCC* No. 13, New York, 1975, p. 45 (English); Chicago, 1975, Vol. 2, p. 300 (Lithuanian).

³¹ *CLCC* No. 34, p. 3 (MS).

³² CLCC No. 34, p. 3 (MS).

³³ CLCC No. 15, New York 1977, p. 5 (English); Chicago, 1976, Vol. 2, p. 357 (Lithuanian).

³⁴ *Aušra* 2, pp. 56-7 (MS).

³⁵ CLCC No. 24, Chicago, 1978, Vol. 4, p. 114 (Lithuanian).

³⁶ CLCC No. 33, p. 17 (MS).

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-17 (MS).

Appendix

Trial of Petkus

Viktoras Petkus (b. 1919) is one of the heroes of the Lithuanian Catholic movement. He was first arrested in 1947 and given a ten year sentence for his activities in the Catholic youth movement. After six years he was released, but he was arrested again in 1957. In 1963, when he was free once more, he worked as a church sexton and in a hospital in Vilnius. He was a member of the Lithuanian Helsinki Monitoring Group and announced its formation to a press conference on 18 November 1976. In August 1977 he was arrested again and tried from 10-13 July 1978. The transcript of his trial is printed below. He was charged with anti-soviet agitation and propaganda (Art. 68 of the Lithuanian Criminal Code).

The trial of V. Petkus began on 10 July 1978. From the first day it could be sensed that the trial spectacle was carefully staged. On 10 July when the charges against the accused were being read out, Estonians and Latvians (i.e. those witnesses who do not know or understand Lithuanian) were summoned and allowed into the court room. They only saw that V. Petkus was dragged in forcibly by four militiamen with arms locked in a grip behind his back. In court he pleaded "not guilty" and refused the services of a defence lawyer. Throughout the remaining period V. Petkus demonstratively ignored the court, refused to answer any questions, neither defending nor explaining himself, and snoozing peacefully.

The first court session lasted 1½ hours and the trial was deferred to 11 July.

On 11 July a large group of V. Petkus's friends and like-minded persons arrived

at the Supreme Court, but they were not allowed into the courtroom. The secret policeman on duty at the courtroom door told everyone who wanted to see the trial that there was "no room".

First to be allowed into the courtroom were witnesses K. Garuckas, O. Lukauskaite-Poškiene and R. Ragaišis. To their surprise they saw that, although the courtroom doors had been locked until they were allowed in, the place was full of suspicious-looking characters. After looking around the room O. Lukauskaite-Poškiene (a member of the Lithuanian Helsinki Group) loudly asked Fr K. Garuckas (also a Helsinki group member):

"Are these all witnesses? Perhaps they are press representatives. Oh, no! They are obviously privileged guests."

In fact, they were people nominated to attend the trial spectacle, and were allowed into the room through the staff door so that the courtroom would be filled, and so that no room would be left for those sympathetic to V. Petkus, who really wanted to see and hear the trial.

A large group of those who had not been able to get in protested to the chairman of the Supreme Court, who would not deign to speak to those who had come to him. His secretary merely stated that the trial was a closed one. Soon after this a notice was put on the courtroom door stating that in this room V. Petkus was being tried and that the trial was "not public". During the first interval the suspicious characters, who had found their way into the room by means unknown, left the courtroom.

The material witnesses at the trial in