

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

connection with paragraphs 68 and 70 of the Criminal Code, were only questioned in the late evening. All of them, on entering the courtroom, greeted V. Petkus, said a few words about his character such as: "a good Catholic, a true Lithuanian, a decent, cultured man" and then, showing their solidarity with V. Petkus, refused to give evidence.

Fr K. Garuckas, having entered the room, greeted Petkus in Catholic fashion [i.e. saying, "May Jesus Christ be praised!" Tr.] and gave him greetings from all those who had not been allowed in. When the judge asked him if he knew the accused, he said that he knew him as a good Catholic, a true Lithuanian and a fellow member of the Lithuanian Group for the Support of the Helsinki Agreements.

"We acted together, so you can seat me next to V. Petkus in the dock. I would regard it as an honour to die in a camp as did my teachers Bishop Reinyš and Fr Andriuška. I refuse to testify any further."

Witness Jadvyga Petkevičiene gave a rose to Petkus but this was soon taken from him.

"We honour you as a son of our nation, who has sacrificed freedom for our rights", with these words J. Petkevičiene expressed the feelings of all decent Lithuanians.

O. Lukauskaite-Poškiene said :

"I know Viktoras Petkus, member of the Lithuanian Group for the Support of the Helsinki Agreements, as a decent, cultured and good person. After his arrest I submitted a protest to the Procurator regarding the arrest of an innocent person and today I am still convinced of his innocence. I therefore ask you, your honour, to reintroduce justice and put an end to this trial. I have finished my statement and will not reply to further questions."

On 12 July there began, not a session of the Supreme Court, but a film tragedy-comedy. Witnesses who came were not allowed into the room. Two cine-studio vehicles stood close to the Supreme Court building while the film crew were busy in the courtroom. It is not known whether court chairman Ignotas and Prosecutor Bakučionis worked only as

film directors or as new film stars. The only witness to compromise V. Petkus, a young soldier named Civilis, was led under the escort of uniformed men. On the second day of the trial, he had already related to other young people that the KGB had – for a start – forced him to give evidence when he was completely drunk, that he had not really understood anything and had agreed with everything they had told him to confirm, and that he had later been unable to refute his testimony*. The poor young man! He had never been raped sexually by Petkus, but morally he had truly been raped by those who had forced him to give false evidence. The young people who used to visit V. Petkus's apartment, and had studied Sapokas's *History of Lithuania* and religious books there, had never seen him in Petkus's flat.

Helsinki group member E. Finkelstein declared in writing to the Supreme Court:

"I refuse to take part in the case of V. Petkus as a witness, because I am a member of the Lithuanian Helsinki Group (LHG), as is Petkus, and I answer fully, together with Petkus, for the group's activity and for those documents which the LHG prepared. I can take part in the trial only as a defendant."

Two landladies from Petkus's apartment were invited to the courtroom. At the courtroom door, before entering, the two witnesses were asked by the security man on guard whether they would give testimony and of what nature. When they replied "Whatever the judge asks, we'll reply to", they were allowed in. Are witnesses to be questioned at the courtroom door! In court the landladies related that Petkus, having lived in their flat for eight years, had never held drunken parties, and that in tidying up his room they had never found a cork, let alone an empty bottle. Young people had gathered at his flat but they had behaved correctly and politely.

* He testified that Petkus had seduced young boys. Four schoolboys refused to give similar false evidence and were expelled from school (KNS No. 55, 1978).

Prosecutor Bakučionis, who had not expected such testimony, spread out his arms and cried in Russian: "Nu vot!" ["Now you've done it!" Tr.]

Evidence from a Latvian, Kalninš, was read out in court. This was about the setting up of a proposed Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Liberation Committee. The evidence, which made V. Petkus's case more serious, had been bought from Kalninš in return for a permit to leave for the West. In fact, even before the trial started, Kalninš and his family were in the West, whereas on the basis of his own evidence he should have been seated alongside Petkus on the defendant's bench. Where is the logic in this? For one organization member – imprisonment – for another – freedom in the West.

Throughout the day of 12 July the proceedings in court were filmed.

On 13 July witnesses were again debarred from the courtroom. Both high and low ranking KGB men fussed around those standing in the ante-room. The demeanour of those waiting was serious and calm. Before the court was declared in session security and militiamen cleared the court and ante-room of all those who had come to see the trial, except for the witnesses. The young people who had assembled left peacefully and stood in a group on the broad steps of the court building. From some unknown source an armful of carnations arrived. They were distributed, one to each of the witnesses and young people present.

Holding the carnations in their hands, the young people and Petkus's friends gathered on one side of the court building steps and began to say the rosary in unison. Security men, militiamen and auxiliary vigilantes (*druzhiniki*) stood nearby, and a prepared militia vehicle

was stationed in the street. A large crowd of Vilnius residents saw this unusual scene through the windows of the Republic Library. The security and militiamen, not having seen this form of protest before, became confused and did not know how to react. A cine-camera operator, perhaps a KGB man, arrived and began to film those praying from all sides. One of the spectators took out a camera and began to take photographs of the cine-camera operator. When they finished praying, the young people smiled and thanked the cine-camera operator for his trouble. After a short interval the young people recommenced their rosary prayer for the accused V. Petkus.

After the lunch break spectators saw that the courtroom was already full of people who had assembled via the staff entrance. Security men allowed only five people to enter: A. Terleckas, O. Lukauskaitė-Poškiene, Fr K. Garuckas and the landladies of Petkus's flat. Others were brutally pushed away from the door, and T. Velinkanova from Moscow was handled so roughly by Baltinis that she fell to the floor.

The court declared that Viktoras Petkus was a particularly dangerous recidivist and sentenced him to three years in prison, seven years in a strict regime labour camp and five years exile.

The court also declared that P. Ragaišis would be subjected to penal proceedings for refusing to give evidence.

Thus the brutal tragi-comedy of this trial came to an end.

N.B. This report on the process of the V. Petkus trial is based on the written account of one of the trial participants.

Committee Founded to Defend Believers

On 22 November 1978 the formation of the Catholic Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights was announced at a press conference in Moscow. The founders of the Committee are all Lithuanian Roman Catholic priests. The aims of the Committee are described in this document, dated 13 November 1978.

Since the Second World War, the Lithuanian bishops, priests and believers have constantly come up against religious discrimination. The other religious believers in the USSR are in a similar position. Believers are deprived of the rights which atheists are granted by the State.

The Soviet Constitution proclaims only the freedom to perform religious cults, but in practice even this form of religious freedom is narrowly limited. Many laws governing the rights of believers are not only unsuited to our circumstances in Lithuania, but also contravene the Soviet Constitution and international agreements signed by the USSR.

Because of this, we Catholics have decided to found a Catholic Committee, the aim of which is to attain equality of rights for believers with atheists in law and in practice. We hope to aid the believers through our activities. The establishing in practice of real and legal equality of believers and atheists will help significantly to strengthen the Soviet Union's authority in the Christian West.

In order to achieve this aim we intend:

- to bring cases of discrimination against the Church and individual believers to the attention of the Soviet government,
- to inform the church hierarchy and, if necessary, other broad sections of society (public opinion) about the position of believers in Lithuania and other republics of the Soviet Union,
- to make sure that Soviet law and its practical application in the sphere of religion are in conformity with the International Declaration of Human Rights,
- to assist in the legal education of priests and believers, by explaining their rights and helping them to defend those rights.

The Catholic Committee will operate legally and has no political aims.

Despite the fact that the Catholic Committee will basically be helping Catholic believers, it will try as far as possible to help all believers who turn to it in need.

The Catholic Committee expresses its solidarity with all defenders of human rights in the USSR and throughout the world, and intends to work together with them in this field. It will cooperate especially closely with the Christian Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights in the USSR, and this cooperation may be considered a modest contribution not only to the cause of human rights, but also to the ecumenical movement.

In the event of any member of the Committee being deprived of the possibility of participating in the work, his place will immediately be taken by a previously nominated candidate.

The Catholic Committee asks those interested to apply to any member of the Committee.

The addresses of the members of the Catholic Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights are as follows:

13 November 1978

FR JONAS KAUNECKAS
235610 Telšiai
Pionieriu g. 51

FR ALFONSAS SVARINSKAS
234422 Raseiniu raj., Vidukle
Saltinio g. 1

FR SIGITAS TAMKEVIČIUS
234290 Vilkaviškio raj.
Kybartai, Darvino g. 12

FR VINCAS VELAVIČIUS
235915 Skaudvile
Taurages g. 17

FR JUOZAS ZDEBSKIS
234560 Lazdiju raj.
Slavantai

Catholic Committee's Letter to the Pope

The founding members of the Catholic Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights wrote to Pope John Paul II on 13 November 1978. They asked for the Pope's blessing on the work of the Committee.

Your Holiness,
For a long time we have been called "the Church of Silence", even when our sorrows were crying out for help, when we were subject to persecution and were struggling against it. We rejoiced

when we heard from your Holiness's own lips that the "Church of Silence" no longer exists and that it will henceforth speak through you.

In the Church, the voices of our bishops, the heirs of the apostles, should be heard above all, but in the conditions brought about by militant atheism that voice is often completely stifled. So, realizing our responsibility before God and the Church, and knowing that objective information does not always reach the Apostolic Throne, we priests of Lithuania have decided to speak up and to defend the sacred rights of the Church and the believers, as our silence and inaction provide the atheists with the best

conditions for destroying the Church from without and demoralizing it from within. We have therefore decided to found a Catholic Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights.

In expressing our filial love and unconditional loyalty to the Apostolic Throne, we ask Your Holiness to bless our intention and our work.

Members of the Catholic Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights :

13 November 1978

FRS JONAS KAUNECKAS, ALFONSAS SVARINSKAS, SIGITAS TAMKEVIČIUS, VINCAS VELAVIČIUS and JUOZAS ZDEBSKIS.

Bishops, Priests and Laity Criticize Constitution

In March 1978 a decree of the Presidium of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet invited comments on the draft of a new Constitution for Lithuania. The Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church (CLCC) No. 33 (31 May 1978) included a number of documents which criticized the USSR draft Constitution and the proposed Lithuanian version (see also "Christian Critique of Soviet Draft Constitution", RCL Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 34-40 and "Kuroedov Praises Constitution", RCL Vol. 6, No. 4, pp. 259-62).

The following document was signed by the six officially-approved leaders of the Lithuanian Catholic Church, who until now have not chosen to publicize their views in a samizdat journal. The articles referred to are taken from the USSR draft Constitution and read as follows:

Art. 36. Soviet citizens of different nationalities and races shall have equal rights. The exercise of these rights shall be ensured by the policy of all-round development and drawing together of all nations and nationalities of the USSR, education of citizens in the spirit of Soviet patriotism and socialist internationalism, and the opportunity for using the mother tongue and the languages of the other people of the USSR. Any and all direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or the establishment of direct or indirect privileges for citizens on grounds of

race or nationality, and likewise any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness, hostility or contempt, shall be punishable by law.

Art. 52. Freedom of conscience, that is, the right to profess any religion and perform religious rites or not profess any religion, and to conduct atheist propaganda, shall be recognized for all citizens of the USSR. Incitement of hostility and hatred on religious grounds shall be prohibited.

Art. 50. In conformity with the interests of the working people and for the purpose of strengthening the socialist system, citizens of the USSR shall be guaranteed freedom of speech, press, assembly, meetings, street processions and demonstrations. Exercise of these political freedoms shall be ensured by putting at the disposal of the working people and their organizations public buildings, streets and squares, by broad dissemination of information, and the opportunity for using the press, television and radio.

TO THE PRESIDUM OF THE
SUPREME SOVIET OF THE USSR

At this time when the draft Constitution is being discussed among all the people, we - the bishops and diocesan administrators of the Lithuanian SSR - have also received comments from ordinary believers and priests expressing

their opinion of the draft Constitution. They ask the bishops and administrators to write to you setting out their views and comments. So we, the undersigned, have here submitted a few of our ideas.

The draft Constitution of the USSR interests us and gives cause for optimism by guaranteeing citizens freedom of personal growth and development, equality before the law, the extension of rights, freedom of conscience, the right to submit proposals to the government organs etc. We respectfully also call to mind that the people as a whole have been invited to discuss the draft that all might express their opinion to the Constitutional Commission and offer suggestions for desirable amendments and additions.

We should like to call the attention of the Constitutional Commission to Arts. 36, 50 and 52 in the draft Constitution, which in our opinion need more concrete definition guaranteeing religious believers fuller freedom and civil rights.

Art. 36

Differences in religion and world outlook are no less substantial or profound than those of race and nationality, so the article guaranteeing all citizens freedom of all-round development and equal rights, without regard to "nationality or race" should be formulated to include the words "religion and world outlook". As experience has shown, so far religious believers have not felt themselves fully equal in rights, although freedom of conscience and equality of civil rights were guaranteed by the previous Constitution.

Art. 36, introducing our proposed amendment, would then read: "Soviet citizens have equal rights, regardless of nationality, race, religion or world outlook. The exercise of these rights shall be guaranteed to all nationalities of the USSR by the following: freedom of religion and world outlook, every possibility of political association, education of citizens in the spirit of Soviet patriotism and socialist internationalism, the free choice of using either their native language or other language of the USSR, the freedom to communicate with their fellow nationals, fellow believers and those who think like them throughout the world, the freedom to exchange

information and spiritual values with them.

Any direct or indirect infringement of citizens' rights, any established direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of race, nationality or world outlook, as well as . . . any hostile propaganda on those grounds will be punished according to law."

Art. 52

This article, in our opinion, is an insufficient guarantee of believers' rights. It identifies religious faith with performing religious services. It says that unbelievers have the right to carry on atheist propaganda, but it says nothing about believers' rights to teach and be taught religion. Both the right of unbelievers to carry on atheist propaganda and that of believers to teach and be taught religion is basically the right to an informed opinion. This is essential to both believers and unbelievers. It must be clearly declared in the Constitution. Every conscious member of a religious community, who practises his religion, is at the same time interested in religious learning, in other words, in obtaining at least elementary religious knowledge. But where will he obtain that knowledge, if none of the citizens is allowed to give out religious information or to teach religion? For example, on Lenin's initiative, in the Decree on Separation of Church and State, the rights of believers were clearly expressed: "Citizens have the right to teach or be taught religion privately". In Lenin's 1918 Constitution believers and unbelievers were clearly given equal right to exchange information: "Freedom of religious and anti-religious propaganda is guaranteed to all citizens". The same equal rights for believers and unbelievers should be clearly expressed in the new Constitution.

The 1936 Constitution declared that believers had the freedom of performing a religious cult, and unbelievers had freedom of atheist propaganda. In all aspects of our country's public life, freedom of atheist propaganda prevailed, using state institutions (schools, press, radio, etc.) while freedom of religious information was limited to the premises of cult buildings. The situation was thus created where religion and worship became a subject of which citizens had to be ashamed in public. This deeply of-

fends the moral feelings of believers and also means believers are discriminated against in favour of unbelievers.

If the right to teach and be taught religion is not concretely declared in the Constitution, then as the experience of the past shows, this right can be understood in various ways: some officials adhere to Lenin's Decree and do not hinder private religious teaching in church, but others consider this private religious education violates the basic law and they take measures against it. Because of this situation, believers with tender consciences are worried because they cannot "teach the ignorant", and priests on the one hand hear the command of Christ "Go and teach", and on the other hand they are forbidden to teach. In this way a permanent conflict in the conscience goes on: a man with a sensitive soul suffers, not knowing how to behave, in order to be right with God and also in accordance with the country's law! It is unbelievable that the people in charge of the State do not wish to arrange matters so as to find a solution which would help believers to avoid conflicts of conscience and misunderstandings with officials. Such a solution would be beneficial to both sides.

Art. 52, in our opinion, could be reformulated as follows: "Soviet citizens are granted freedom of conscience, that is all citizens have an equal right to profess any religion, to behave in accordance with its requirements, to teach and be taught their religion, to exchange information with their fellow believers or those of other beliefs, in the same way as they have the right not to profess any religion and to exchange information about their atheist convictions".

The right to exchange information about one's convictions should be declared clearly in this article of the Constitution, without obscure or vague conditions, such as "in accordance with the interests of the working people and with the aim of strengthening the socialist system". Such vague conditions can conceal legal discrimination and some groups of citizens will be legally favoured and privileged.

Art. 50

In our opinion, this article concerning

a citizen's freedom of speech, press, assembly, meeting, demonstrations and street processions, could be reformulated as follows: "To promote the exchange of opinion and information, to satisfy individual and collective aspirations, all Soviet citizens are guaranteed freedom of speech, press, assembly, meeting, street processions and demonstrations. For abuse of these freedoms and for acting against the interests of all citizens of the State, citizens are liable to prosecution. State officials can be sued in court for putting restrictions on these rightful freedoms.

In exercising these political freedoms, the citizens and their organizations are guaranteed provision of access to buildings, streets and squares, wide dissemination of information, access to the press, television and radio - in an unbiased manner, and in proportion to the numerical membership of the particular organization."

BISHOP J. MATULAITIS-LABUKAS,
Apostolic Administrator of Kaunas
Archdiocese and Vilkaviškis Diocese

BISHOP R. KRIKŠČIUNAS, Apostolic
Administrator of Panevezys Diocese

BISHOP L. POVILONIS, Co-adjutor to the
Apostolic Administrator of Kaunas
Archdiocese and Vilkaviškis Diocese

MGR. Č. KRIVAITIS, Administrator of
Vilnius Archdiocese

CAN. J. ANDRIKONIS, Administrator of
Kaišiadorys Diocese

FR A. VAIČIUS, Administrator of
Telšiai Diocese and Klaipėda Parish

Fifty six Lithuanian Catholic priests of the Kaunas Archdiocese (Lithuanian SSR) signed the following Declaration criticizing the draft Lithuanian Constitution. This Declaration is dated 10 April 1978 and was published in CLCC No. 33. A further 20 priests from the Telšiai Diocese added their signatures to the document.

On 19 March 1978 a decree of the Presidium of the LSSR Supreme Soviet was publicized with regard to the consideration of the draft for a new LSSR Constitution. The USSR draft Constitution had been considered earlier and Lithuanian clergy and laity sent their requests to

Moscow. We submit below some further documents in which the will of the believing Lithuanian people is expressed, and to which the Soviet government paid not the slightest heed.

To the Presidium of the Lithuanian
SSR Supreme Soviet

From priests of the Kaunas Archdiocese
with regard to the new draft
Constitution

DECLARATION

The very limited period allowed for consideration of the projected new Constitution compels us to be hurried in our expression of a few comments with regard to this new document which is fated to become basic law for many years.

Many priests have already written their requests and comments in connection with the all-union project. Alas, their requests met with no response. It is evident that the voice of Lithuanian believers carries no weight in Moscow and no need is seen to listen to it. Things should be very different in Lithuania where the great majority are believers and Catholics. We trust that here it will not be a matter of voices crying in the wilderness. That is why we are writing.

The present draft for the new Constitution does not satisfy the believers of Lithuania, for many of the articles which affect us personally are formulated indistinctly and unclearly and, in fact, do not differ much from the old, except in their numbering. The present variant on the Constitution, if it is not altered, will only satisfy a small section of the Lithuanian population – the atheists.

We therefore wish to draw your attention to certain articles which, in our opinion, require more precise definition so that painful misunderstandings may be avoided in the future.

Art. 32 states that, "the citizens of the Lithuanian SSR are equal before the law irrespective of origin, social and property status, nationality or race, sex, education, language, religious affiliation, type and nature of occupation and other particulars."

Hitherto Catholics and believers have been second-class citizens according to the currently effective Constitution:

1. They have been unable to occupy responsible positions in state or educational offices.
2. In everyday life and in the press they have been constantly mocked, denigrated, called "obscurantists", "backward people", "disseminators of superstitions" and the like, although preparations are being made to celebrate the founding of Vilnius University by the Jesuits.
3. They cannot avail themselves of equal rights with atheists in the spheres of culture and art.

We, therefore, propose that the words "religious affiliation", which convey nothing, be replaced by "irrespective of religious and philosophical differences".

Art. 39. "Citizens of the Lithuanian SSR have the right to rest. This right is guaranteed by the introduction of a 41-hour working week for workers and employees, a shortened working day for some professions and trades; shortened night shifts; annual paid holidays, the granting of rest days each week . . ."

"The period of work and length of rest periods for *kolkhoz* workers is regulated by the *kolkhozy* [collective farms]."

Almost half the population still lives in the farming villages of Lithuania, and the majority of them are collective farm workers. They earn the bread which is the basis of all spiritual creativity and stimulus for progress. It is no secret that in summer the collective farm employees work seven days in the week and are completely dependent on the whims of the collective farm chiefs. There are not yet all that many good collective farms in Lithuania. The collective farm workers cannot therefore fulfil their most elementary requirements as humans and believers.

We therefore ask that in Art. 39 there be inserted: "Citizens of the Lithuanian SSR have the right to rest. This right is guaranteed by the introduction of a 41-hour week for workers, employees and *kolkhoz* workers . . ." That the words "The period of work and the length of rest periods is regulated by *kolkhozy*" be completely erased. If this is not done the *kolkhoz* workers will continue to be without rights. To keep the *kolkhoz* workers outside the basic law is incorrect and harmful!

Art. 50 asserts that: "Citizens of the Lithuanian SSR are guaranteed freedom of conscience, i.e. the right to profess any religion or not to profess any, to perform religious cults or to conduct anti-religious propaganda. Incitement of hostility and hatred on religious grounds is prohibited. The Lithuanian SSR separates the church from the state and the school from the church."

This article differs from the one in the old Constitution only in its numbering! In this case the situation of the believers is like that of the *kolkhoz* workers - only duties but no rights. They are handed over to the will of executive committees of local *soviets* at different levels:

1. We are not allowed to have any religious literature. Not a single Catechism has been published in Soviet Lithuania and the future remains without promise! On a few occasions a very limited number of prayer books have been issued, but this fails completely to meet the requirements of believers. We do not have one single Catholic newspaper, journal, almanac or religious book. Only priests received the decisions of Vatican II while each parish received only a few copies of the New Testament. The missals printed on newsprint are by now in tatters. On the other hand the atheists publish literature in tens of thousands of copies, and have radio and television programmes provided at government expense - in other words, provided with the believers' money since they pay the taxes.

2. Many churches of artistic value (particularly in Vilnius) have been closed and converted into concert halls (Vilnius Cathedral, the masterpiece of Stuoka-Gucevičius), or atheist museums (St Casimir's Church in Vilnius), or music halls (the Church of Mary, Queen of Peace in Klaipeda) or have simply been made into storehouses. The capital of Catholic Lithuania, Vilnius, has neither a cathedral nor a bishop! This is a mockery of religion, of the feelings of believers and, finally, of art itself. What in these circumstances can then be said about the need to build new churches in Elektrenai, Naujoji Akmene and the micro-districts of the larger towns.

After all, many believers also live and work in those places.

3. Two bishops - Julijonas Steponavičius and Vincentas Sladkevičius - have been banished from their dioceses, and for 17 years now have not been allowed to fulfil their duties, with no indication as to who gave these orders, why and for what period. The solitary Kaunas seminary (the others have been closed since 1946) is restricted and the bishops are not allowed to select candidates for the priesthood at their own discretion. Because of this atheist arbitrariness the number of priests has declined considerably, and the remaining ones are well advanced in years and are therefore unable to serve the believers adequately (one priest often has to serve two or three parishes).

4. We Catholics are not allowed to have links with our compatriots, or with those who have similar religious views and convictions to ourselves in other parts of the world. We are not given the opportunity to exchange religious information and spiritual values, whereas the atheists are able in their brochures and propaganda to cite freely from Vatican publications (often in a tendentious form by taking quotations out of context) and from world Catholic and émigré Lithuanian works.

5. We are not allowed to have our children taught religion even through private lessons. Priests are punished for doing this by imprisonment or by fines. Leninist principles are stressed everywhere: why then is Lenin's decree about religion and the first Constitution, which permitted the private teaching and study of religion, not adhered to? Hitherto the children of believers have been forcibly taught atheism in schools; for going to church their behaviour marks have been always merely "satisfactory"; and they have been constantly mocked and denigrated in front of the whole class. "Akiratis" and other atheist programmes mock and denigrate believers and do not abide by historical and scientific truth.

6. Believers are also discriminated against in everyday life. For example, the churches pay 25 kopecks for a kilowatt of electricity, whereas the in-

dividual pays four kopecks and collective farms even less. Believers are therefore frequently unable to light their churches properly. After all, believers are workers and collective farmers, who work conscientiously for the State each day.

In accordance with USSR LSS decree of 3 February 1938, village churches pay very high insurance premiums on the grounds that there are no fire stations in the villages. Life has changed in 40 years. There are now fire stations and firemen in every collective farm, which means that they are also in every village with a church. The time has come for a review of out-of-date laws, so that the heavy burden of taxes and payments placed on workers and collective farmers for their churches may be lightened.

Mention of equality between atheists and believers has until now been interpreted as no more than a cynical joke.

We therefore ask that, if the new Constitution is to be acceptable to all, the words "perform religious cults and conduct anti-religious propaganda" be replaced by "conduct religious and anti-religious propaganda". And in place of "incitement of hostility and hatred on religious grounds", which will again be an atheist whip to use against believers, there be written "Any form of discrimination on religious or philosophical grounds is forbidden by law".

Art. 51: "The State defends the family . . ." Our families, formed on atheist foundations, have been greatly crippled. Almost a third of all the families formed each year break up. As shown by unofficial statistics (for some reason no official statistics are issued), more babies are killed than born. In the villages in recent years not only have individual classes been closed, but also secondary schools and even eight-year schools - there are no children!

We therefore request that all possible means be used to help the family. We are convinced that this is inconceivable without religious education. The atheist experiment, to put it mildly, has not justified itself. We also ask that abortion be forbidden in the Constitution. Abortion can be forbidden by West Germany, Romania, Israel so why cannot we forbid it? Shame on that community or State which is incapable of protect-

ing its unborn citizens! Whilst unborn babies continue to be murdered, any mention of culture will remain no more than a soap bubble.

Art. 56: "Citizens of the Lithuanian SSR have the right to lodge complaints against actions of officials in state organs and public organizations. Complaints have to be studied in the manner and within terms defined by the law." Alas, the complaints of believers are hardly ever answered, or the CRA representative only calls them "slander". In the event of conflict, all the state organs stand on the atheist side. In accordance with unwritten law, which has now become effective, a priest or believer cannot win against state officials or atheists. This article should therefore be formulated precisely, and all malpractices in this connection should be rooted out.

Art. 108 is not explained sufficiently clearly. Art. 4 points out that the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet checks on the observance of the Lithuanian SSR Constitution. A separate organ is needed to provide authentic interpretations of the Constitution itself. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet cannot do this, for it issues laws itself which are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Constitution (cf. the decree of the Presidium of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet of 20 July 1976).

We ask that our comments be considered and that the proposed new Constitution be supplemented.

Kaunas Archdiocese,

10 April 1978

Signed by the following 56 priests (a proportion were not made acquainted with the draft Constitution due to technical obstacles):

A. SVARINSKAS	L. VAIČIULIONIS
L. KALINAUSKAS	Z. GRINEVIČIUS
K. DAKNEVIČIUS	V. RAMANAUSKAS
L. JAGMINAS	J. POVILAITIS
A. JOKUBAUSKAS	P. ŠČEPAVIČIUS
S. DOBROVOLSKIS	V. POLIKAITIS
A. IMBRAS	J. SURVILA
V. BRUSOKAS	R. MIZARAS
J. BIRBILAS	J. AUGUSTAUSKAS
S. PILKA	P. BUBNYS
J. UZUSIENIS	A. KAZLAUSKAS
V. PESLIAKAS	M. BUCZIUS
E. SEMAŠKA	V. ŠAUKLYS

J. VAIČELIUNAS	A. MOCIUS
P. LIUBONAS	P. BASTYS
A. PERMINAS	P. TUMINAS
J. VOVERIS	J. FABIJANSKAS
K. VALANČIUS	V. GRINEVIČIUS
P. MEILUS	J. INDRIUNAS
G. DUNDA	A. GRAUZINIS
A. DANYLA	I. BUTKUS
P. MATULAITIS	J. ZELVYS
J. VAICEKAUSKAS	A. ZALKAUSKAS
J. BABONAS	R. LIUKAS
J. DOBILAITIS	A. LAPE
G. GUDANAVIČIUS	K. STATKEVIČIUS
BP. J. STEPONAVIČIUS	J. RAČAITIS
P. LAZINSKAS	I. ČECHAVIČIUS

A further two Declarations criticizing the draft Constitution appeared in CLCC No. 33. The first was signed by 780 Catholics from the Telšiai Diocese and the second by 975 Catholics from the Kybartai parish.

DECLARATION
BY
BELIEVERS OF LITHUANIA

Having made ourselves acquainted with the projected LSSR Constitution which was submitted for public consideration, we the undersigned believers of Lithuania propose that:

1. The equality of rights between believers and non-believers be emphatically guaranteed. Hitherto this equality has not been made effective in Lithuania – believers are not allowed to work as teachers, heads of institutions or as other responsible functionaries. Absolute equality must be guaranteed in the new Constitution – dismissal from work for religious beliefs must be forbidden by law.
2. To ensure the maintenance of equality between believers and non-believers a free religious press is essential. When there is only freedom for atheist propaganda, the rights of believers are frequently infringed; they are libelled and insulted in the press and called obscurantists. Without a religious press there is no possibility of replying to unjust libels and insults. The Soviet press has never yet criticized the infringement of laws with respect to believers. Because of this, Soviet citizens – believers – are

forced to turn to international organizations, committees for the defence of human rights etc.

3. The Declaration on Human Rights emphasizes the right of parents to bring up their children in accordance with their own philosophies, to have them taught in schools in accordance with their own religious beliefs. There should therefore also be provision in the new Constitution for the freedom of religious teaching.
4. Guarantee the right to life for unborn children. Forbid abortions because this is a crime against humanity.

Strengthen the solidarity of families. Only permit divorces in special cases and through the Supreme Court. Catholic families in Lithuania are durable only because the Church does not permit divorce.

In our opinion these measures will raise the prestige of the USSR in the international sphere. It will be a clear demonstration that the government cares for equality of rights between all classes. Multifaceted equality is the basis of democracy. The granting of press, employment and study rights to believers will particularly strengthen the democratic prestige of the Soviet State. Since such laws were not incorporated into the USSR Constitution, their incorporation into the Lithuanian SSR Constitution would provide evidence to the whole world that the Lithuanian SSR is sovereign in issuing its own laws.

Telšiai Diocese,
April 1978

N.B. Signed by 780 persons, about a third of the signatures are readable. Sent to the addressee from Plunge on 11 April 1978 by registered letter, receipt No. 456.

* * * *

To P. Griškevičius, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party, Chairman of the Constitutional Commission.

DECLARATION
BY THE BELIEVERS OF KYBARTAI PARISH

Believing persons constitute the greater part of the nation in Lithuania, and

therefore their rights under the new Constitution cannot be less than those of atheists. Art. 50 of the draft LSSR Constitution makes us, believers, unequal in rights with atheists, and it is therefore essential that it be re-formulated. The following version of Art. 50 would be acceptable to the Catholics of Lithuania:

"Citizens of the Lithuanian SSR are guaranteed freedom of conscience, i.e. the right to profess any religion or not to profess any, to perform religious cults or not to perform them, to conduct religious or atheist propaganda. The incitement of hostility or hatred on religious grounds is prohibited.

Church and atheist propaganda is separated by the Lithuanian SSR from the State, and schools from the Church and atheist propaganda. It is forbidden to educate children in schools in a manner contrary to the convictions of the parents."

March-April 1978

Signed by 975 Kybartai believers. The declaration was submitted to the LSSR Central Committee on the morning of 17 April.

A similar declaration was submitted to the Central Committee by parishioners of Vištyčiai.

CRA Circular to Local Soviets

The Council for Religious Affairs (CRA) according to its Statute (see RCL Vol. 4, No. 4, pp. 31-4) has extensive powers. It can decide whether to grant registration, to open or close a church. It has to ensure that religious associations are observing the law, it can recommend changes in legislation, and can deliver official explanations on religious affairs to the government (see Walter Sawatsky "Secret Soviet Lawbook on Religion", RCL Vol. 4, No. 4, pp. 27-8). The CRA Representative in Lithuania sent out the following circular to all Lithuanian district soviets. The text was included in CLCC No. 33.

From the Representative of the Council for Religious Affairs (CRA), attached to the USSR Council of Ministers, in the Lithuanian SSR.

To the Chairman of . . . District Soviet Executive Committee

I request that by 15 January 1978 you submit information regarding the position of the religious communities of all confessions and the religious situation in your district in the year 1977.

It is desired that in your report light be thrown on the following questions:

1. The religious situation in the district, town, describing the activity of religious communities, the meth-

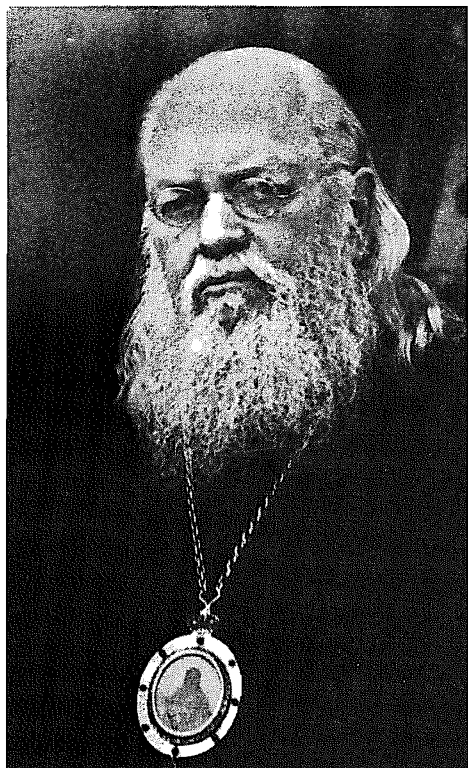
ods used by the clergy to make religious life more active, the contents of sermons (enclosing any copies of sermons that have been recorded), attendance at churches and other prayer houses; congregation numbers and serving personnel (in accordance with the attached pro-forma); birth, wedding and death statistics for the district, town.

2. The overall financial management activity of religious communities (in accordance with the attached pro-forma).
3. The organization of monitoring the observance of cult laws; the activity of commissions for monitoring this activity; analysis of infringements of cult laws and measures taken in relation to the offenders.
4. Complaints and declarations on religious matters received; their themes and the results of their examination.

In your information light can also be thrown on other questions which you consider worthy of interest, as well as on your suggestions as to improvements in this work.

11 November 1977

K. TUMENAS
Representative of the CRA



Left Archbishop Luka (1877-1961) who was a leading surgeon in the Soviet Union as well as a bishop and later archbishop of the Russian Orthodox Church (see pp. 97-105). © Mark Popovsky.

Below Exarch Stefan I (far left) who became head of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church in 1945, in exile in the village of Banya (near Karlovo, Bulgaria) where he was sent in 1952. He is the author of the "Message to the Bulgarian People", printed on pp. 111-13. © Keston College.



Below The Bulgarian Exarch Stefan I (second from right, sitting) on an official visit to the Moscow Patriarchate in 1945 after the schism between Constantinople and the Bulgarian Exarchate had been lifted. Patriarch Alexi, head of the Russian Orthodox Church at the time, is seated on Exarch Stefan's left. © Keston College.





Left Cardinal Wyszynski, head of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, is greeted by Pope John Paul II, formerly Cardinal Wojtyła of Cracow. © Mari-Osservatore Romano.

Below Cardinal Wyszynski (left) seated next to Professor Kakol, Poland's Minister for Religious Affairs. In June 1978 Cardinal Wyszynski wrote to Professor Kakol about some of the causes of friction between Church and State (see letter on pp. 117-20). © *Spotkania*.

