

# ELTA INFORMATION BULLETIN

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offering information and  
documentation on current  
events and problems con-  
cerning Lithuania.

## LITHUANIA

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**ELTOS INFORMACIJOS**  
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is situated at the southern end of the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea, right at the European continent's geographic center. It emerged as a unified state in the early decades of the 13th century and became internationally recognized as the Kingdom of Lithuania in 1251 A.D.

After centuries of vast expansion eastward and southward, in 1569 Lithuania became a partner in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which lasted till 1795 when it was partitioned between Austria, Prussia and Russia. Lithuania fell under the Russian rule.

Lithuania succeeded in re-establishing its independence in 1918, at the end of World War I, but was occupied again in 1940 by the armed forces of Russia, now known as the Soviet Union. It has been held in Soviet bondage since then.

### Population

as provisionally estimated for January 1,  
1979

3,399,000

as estimated in the same area on January 1,  
1939

3,215,000



### LITHUANIAN PRIEST SENTENCED TO SEVEN YEARS IN PRISON

On May 6, 1983, a Soviet court in Vilnius sentenced the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas to seven years in prison and three years internal exile. A report of the three-day trial released by TASS quoted from the verdict as saying, that "using protection of the right of believers as a cover, A.Svarinskas had systematically in oral and written form, slandered the existing state and social system and called for a struggle against it". In an earlier report on May 5, TASS claimed Svarinskas had admitted passing "printed materials of an anti-state character" to foreign correspondents who "extensively used the materials for smearing the USSR state system in the pages of the foreign press".

The draconic sentence meted out to Svarinskas is part of a larger action, directed primarily against the Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Believers' Rights, of which Svarinskas was a founding member. The Lithuanian priest's trial is also an indication of the specific thrust of Andropov's policies, since Svarinskas is the first Catholic priest to be arrested in Lithuania since 1971.

### FATHER SVARINSKAS' ARREST IGNITES MASS PROTEST

Over 36,000 Lithuanian Catholics signed petitions protesting the arrest of the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas, according to the underground Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania. (No. 57, April 3, 1983). Not a word about them was mentioned in the official press.

The protest of the Catholics of Prienai, which was signed by 1,305 people, reads in part: "In view of this painful fact, we declare that we have defended and that we will go on defending the priests of our nation, asking God to lend them courage, to make them defend the cause of truth, God, Church and our believers. Hands off the Rev. Svarinskas".

In a letter addressed in February, 1983, to the LSSR Ministers' Council and signed by 1222 religious believers of Šiauliai, the action against the Rev. Svarinskas is called a "witch hunt". The writers ask the Ministers' Council to stop the "hand of henchmen that has been raised against the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas and thus to prevent one more shameful page from being inscribed in our nation's history, a page that will be recorded by the court of history tomorrow".

KGB agents intruded into the Church of Griškabūdis, where signatures under a similar protest statement to the LSSR Procurator were being collected. The statement, which already had 200 signatures, characterizes all the official charges against the Rev. Svarinskas a "standard governmental accusation against the entire clergy, and especially those priests who are members of the Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Believers' Rights... a purely propagandistic governmental outcry".

Nine Lithuanians offered themselves as replacements for the Rev. Svarinskas in a prison or in a labor camp. In a statement, addressed to the chief of the Vilnius KGB, they wrote that "Nazi SS-men used to accept hostages for even those prisoners who were condemned to death" and cited the example of Father Maximillian Kolbe who perished in Auschwitz as a hostage for a father of a numerous family who was under a death sentence.

On March 15, 1983, 104 priests of the Diocese of Telšiai addressed a statement to Yuri Andropov. They accused the Communist authorities, the press and the propagandists in Lithuania of slandering Father Svarinskas and prejudging his guilt.



Fourteen Lithuanians, including Jonas Sadūnas and Irena Skuodienė, wrote to the LSSR Procurator that the Rev. Svarinskas merely criticized those Soviet officials who illegally interfered into the internal affairs of the Catholic Church in Lithuania. The writers expressed their astonishment about the fact that it was the Rev. Svarinskas, and not those officials, who was taken to court. "This proves", they say, "that the highest Soviet agencies solve all conflict issues from the position of power".

Liudvikas Simutis, a Lithuanian patriot who spent 22 years in the GULAG camps, presented an impassioned defense of the Rev. Svarinskas in his letter of March 16, 1983, to KGB interrogator, Vidzėnas. Simutis described the imprisoned priest as a man motivated by charity and love of justice. He called the arrest of the Rev. Svarinskas the result of "revenge" by "untrammelled violators" of "humaneness" and one of the "most recent and most terrible errors perpetrated by the chekists".

#### PARTY DAILY ON SVARINSKAS' TRIAL - ANDROPOV'S DISINFORMATION

On May 7, 1983, one day after the sentencing of the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas, the Lithuanian CP daily Tiesa carried a long article by Algirdas Strumskis, "Sentenced for the violation of the Laws". The article repeats the charges levelled against the priest in the court and presents a long list of ostensible "crimes". The Rev. Svarinskas is charged with organizing a festive welcoming party for L. Simutis, a member of the Lithuanian anti-Soviet freedom fighters, upon his return from the GULAG camps. He is also accused of "extolling" Viktoras Petkus, a member of the Lithuanian Helsinki Group, who is now serving a term in the camps. The author of the article dwells at length on the Rev. Svarinskas' connections with the Lithuanian anti-Soviet guerillas in the immediate postwar period. Svarinskas is said to have furnished the members of these "nationalist gangs" with forged documents and with "anti-Soviet leaflets". Incarcerated in 1948, he was released and then sentenced again in 1958 for "anti-Soviet propaganda". The article goes on to accuse the Rev. Svarinskas for his "slander" of the Lithuanian youth, conducting "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda", drafting and distributing documents of the Catholic Committee. According to the author, the Soviet legal authorities showed considerable "patience", but then reacted to the numerous protests of "indignant" citizens.

#### The Defendant "Transformed" into Caricature

The article is a typical document of disinformation Andropov-style. As it is customary in a totalitarian system, the target of the regime - the Rev. Svarinskas - is transformed into a dreary caricature. This is how Hitler's press used to depict the Jews and this is also how the doomed "enemies of the people" were portrayed in Stalin's newspapers. The Rev. Svarinskas' fellow-sufferers in the GULAG camps, including the Ukrainian Cardinal Slipyj, warmly recall the Lithuanian priest's idealism and self-sacrifice. Meanwhile, the Tiesa article depicts the Rev. Svarinskas as a primitive "egoist", whom the "uncles from the West" generously reward for his "slanderous" services with several automobiles and "other valuables". The Rev. Svarinskas' reasoning is well known from his sermons, from the underground press, and from the documents of the Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Believers' Rights. The article cites a single short sentence of his: "I did not express myself well in this case". The author of the article silences the Rev. Svarinskas, but the world will doubtlessly hear his true words from the Lithuanian underground press.

#### Mock-Trial Paraded as "Justice"

The voice of the Lithuanian people is also missing from the article in the CP daily. The Rev. Svarinskas' peaceful activity for the basic human and religious rights received the public support of thousands of his compatriots. Over 36,000 Lithuanians signed



petitions protesting his arrest by early April of this year, according to The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania (No. 57, April 3, 1983). There is not a word about them in the Tiesa article. Instead, we read about the "indignant Soviet people" flooding government agencies and editorial offices with protests against the priest's activity. Just like in Stalin's times, the official press creates a fantastic world in which the government's crimes are transformed by sleight of hand into a "legal process" and a stage for an Andropov farce is dignified with the name of the LSSR Supreme Court.

The detailed account of the Rev. Svarinskas' connections with the Lithuanian freedom fighters is meant to blacken his reputation. However, such "accusations" ought to lend him distinction in the eyes of Lithuanians and non-Lithuanians alike. Is it a crime to defend one's country against a foreign occupying power, against Stalin's and Beria's legions? This is how young Polish or French priests assisted their compatriots who were fighting against the Nazis. They are remembered as heroes today; this is how the Lithuanian nation will remember the Rev. Svarinskas.

#### Trial of Svarinskas - Warning to West

The trial of Svarinskas is also a warning to the governments of the non-Soviet world, especially those of the West. Can one put any trust in a regime that leads a ceaseless war against the citizens of its occupied nations and that peddles crude lies to them, to itself, and to the whole world? How much worth are treaties, designed to ensure world peace and well-being, if they are concluded with a government of this kind?

#### CATHOLIC COMMITTEE PROTESTS TO ANDROPOV ON THE REV. SVARINSKAS ARREST

##### The Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Believers' Rights

DOCUMENT NO. 53

January 31, 1983

TO : CPSU General Secretary Yuri Andropov

Copy to: LSSR Procurator

On January 26, 1983, the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas, rector of Viduklė, was arrested and the homes of the Rev. Algimantas Keina, rector of Valkininkai, and the Rev. Jonas Kauneckas, vicar of Telšiai, were searched. Since these priests belong to the Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Believers' Rights, this is an indication that an action against the Committee has been initiated.

We protest against this activity of the LSSR Procurator's office, and especially against the arrest of the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas, because there has been nothing anti-state or anti-constitutional in the activity of the Catholic Committee or of the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas.

We reiterate that the purpose of the Catholic Committee is to take care that the religious believers in Lithuania are granted at least as many rights as are enjoyed by Lithuania's atheists who are supported by the government in their fight against the Church. Can this activity be considered anti-constitutional, when the USSR Constitution guarantees equal right to all citizens irrespective of their nationality, race, or religion (Article 34)?

The arrest of the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas has provoked a fervent indignation among the religious believers. The faithful, who constitute the majority of Lithuania's population, are asking: What is the meaning of the fact that the most zealous



priests are being arrested? Could this be a declaration of open war against the Church?

In 1874, Friedrich Engels called open war against religion stupidity and said that this was the best way of reviving interest in religion. His thinking received praise from Lenin... The judicial persecution of the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas confirms these thoughts by Engels and Lenin, just as they were confirmed by the trials of three priests - Juozas Zdebskis, Prosperas Bubnys and Antanas Šeškevičius - eleven years ago. It was then that the awakening of the Catholic Church in Lithuania began.

Signed by the members of the Catholic Committee:

Vytautas SKUODIS (in camp); Priests: Alfonsas SVARINSKAS (in prison),  
Leonas KALINAUSKAS, Jonas KAUNECKAS,  
Algimantas KEINA, Vaclovas STAKENAS,  
Sigitas TAMKEVIČIUS, Vincas VĖLAVIČIUS,  
Kazimieras ŽILYS.

(From The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania, No. 57, April 3, 1983)

#### EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT CONDEMNS ARREST OF REV. SVARINSKAS

A motion for a resolution on the arrest of the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas was tabled at the European Parliament on February 11, 1983. The text follows:

##### The European Parliament,

- A - whereas the imprisonment of the Lithuanian Father Alfonsas Svarinskas by the Soviet authorities is a blatant violation of human rights, and especially of religious freedom,
- B - whereas the accusation of anti-State activity is unfounded in that Father Svarinskas had simply been active on the Christian Committee for the defence of the rights of Catholic Christians in the USSR,
- C - having regard to the special responsibility of the European Community towards the repressed Baltic peoples,
  - 1. Condemns the imprisonment of Father Svarinskas;
  - 2. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission, in order that this case might be jointly condemned by the European Institutions;
  - 3. Calls upon the Government of the USSR to release Father Alfonsas Svarinskas immediately.

(Document 1-1272/82)

#### CARDINAL BERNARDIN URGES PROTESTS AGAINST SVARINSKAS' ARREST

##### Compares Lithuanian Priest With Lech Walesa

Cardinal Bernardin's article, "The Flight of Father Svarinskas", was published in The Chicago Catholic, on April 22, 1983. Excerpts follow:

"... Recently, when Yuri Andropov came to power, there was great speculation on about how religious and civil rights would be dealt with by the new regime... Some



suggested that his awareness of Western sensitivities regarding human rights would cause him to deal with religious and human rights issues with a softer hand. Such speculation and hope have proved to be wrong. The former director of the KGB has sent a strong signal to the growing religious and human rights movement in Lithuania by having Father Alfonsas Svarinskas, one of the movement's leaders, arrested and imprisoned in KGB's headquarters in Vilnius...

"... As Lech Walesa symbolizes the aspirations of the Polish worker, so Father Svarinskas has become the leader and focal point of the Lithuanian religious movement. And it is for this that he now languishes in prison. The Soviet authorities dread what he represents - a faithful priest who inspires faith in his people...

"Lithuanians here in our own diocese and in other communities encourage the writing of letters to the Soviet embassy, protesting the denial of religious and human rights in Lithuania and particularly the arrest and imprisonment of Father Svarinskas.

"Our brothers and sisters in the faith deserve our prayers and support in this endeavor. Let us join them. For further information contact Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, 351 Highland Boulevard, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11207".

#### WESTERN COMMENTS ON SVARINSKAS' ARREST AND TRIAL

"The trial of Svarinskas indicates Soviet concern over what is believed to be the growing strength of the Catholic Church in Lithuania, which borders heavily Roman Catholic Poland". (Associated Press, May 4, 1983)

"Are the moves against the priests just a tightening of Soviet law on religion, or "a simple general recrudescence affecting the liberty of opinion?"

(L'Osservatore Romano, The Vatican, May 10, 1983)

"The upheavals in Poland have in some way indirectly benefitted the Catholic Church in Lithuania, where the majority of the population are believers. After years of difficulty, pressure on religious activities has begun to relax... However, those hopes for a more liberal policy have been squashed by the recent arrest of Father Svarinskas".

(Help and Action Newsletter, Héricy, France, February, 1983)

"... In view of the fact that the Rev. Svarinskas is a member of the Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Believers' Rights, a courageous and tireless defender of religious freedom and human rights, and a zealous priest, his arrest is regarded both in Lithuania and abroad as a reprisal against a person who is awkward for the authorities. Nobody regards accusations against him as serious or true. Accusations against Svarinskas are in reality aimed at the fighting Lithuanian Church, at the Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Believer's Rights, at Lithuanian believers and at all those who courageously and openly fight to preserve religious freedom and other basic human rights. With their spirit and solidarity they are together today with the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas".

(From a Vatican Radio Lithuanian-language broadcast, May 5, 1983).



### FATHER SIGITAS TAMKEVIČIUS ALSO FACES TRIAL

The Rev. Sigitas Tamkevičius, a parish priest in Kybartai, is also facing trial in Lithuania, TASS reported on May 7, 1983. The decision to try the priest is said to have been taken by the judges in Vilnius on May 6, immediately after they jailed the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas for seven years. TASS said that trial witnesses had exposed Tamkevičius as a "close accomplice" of Svarinskas. Tamkevičius was allegedly found to have "slandered the existing system and incited young people to participate in anti-social actions and to struggle against Soviet power and disobey its laws". TASS claims that witnesses and evidence "convincingly showed the involvement of Tamkevičius in the fabrication and distribution of documents with slanderous and anti-state contents". The Soviet news agency further insisted that "during the court proceedings Svarinskas did not conceal that Tamkevičius had identical views and was his closest ally with whom he had fabricated and handed over to some Western correspondents information hostile to the Soviet State which was later used widely by the foreign press".

The Rev. Tamkevičius, like the Rev. Svarinskas, is a member of the Lithuanian Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Believers' Rights. He is suspected by the KGB of being one of the editors of the underground journal, The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania.

### LITHUANIAN WOMAN JAILED FOR TEACHING RELIGION TO CHILDREN

Mrs. Jadvyga Bieliauskienė has been sentenced to 4 years deprivation of freedom and 3 years internal exile, according to a Reuters report of May 24. She was accused of conducting religious activities with children, an offense under Soviet law. The LSSR Supreme Court in Vilnius charged her with "anti-Soviet education and propaganda" (art.68 of the Penal Code).

Sovietskaya Litva, a Russian-language daily published in Vilnius, said that Bieliauskienė tried to teach children "false ideas of honor and duty" and attempted to "poison them with nationalism". The underground Lithuanian Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania reported she was arrested last October 29 for organizing a religious group among high school students in Garliava, Lithuania, collecting signatures under believers' petitions, and writing a complaint to the Kaunas Prosecutor about the harassment and illegal interrogation of children following a search of her home. Her apartment in Garliava was searched on October 1, 1982, many books, personal notes and documents were seized. Pupils at the Garliava I-st Secondary School were interrogated about her and threatened with lower grades, torture and imprisonment.

During the Stalin era, Mrs. Bieliauskienė was sentenced to ten years prison for "treason". According to Agence France Presse, she was imprisoned for eight years, from 1948 to 1956. The main charge against her was participation in the Lithuanian guerrilla struggle against Soviet occupation.

### JONAS SADŪNAS SENTENCED

Jonas Sadūnas was sentenced on May 24th to 18 months of "deprivation of freedom". He is the brother of Nijolė Sadūnaitė, one of the best known Lithuanian human rights activists.

Reliable sources report that Sadūnas was convicted for "personal libel" under para. 132 of the Criminal Code.

Soviet authorities intensified the persecution of Jonas Sadūnas following his sister's return to Lithuania after serving 3 years in a labor camp and 3 years of internal exile. She took up residence in his home.



Last November Sadūnas was forcibly interned in the Naujoji Vilnia psychiatric hospital for two weeks. According to the Lithuanian Chronicle (No. 57, April 3, 1983) on March 1 Sadūnas was formally charged with having "slandered" Petras Dūkšas, a communist official. (See also ELTA Bulletin, May 1983).

#### EUROPEAN COMMUNITY FOREIGN MINISTERS AND THE BALTIC CASE

On May 20, 1983, the daily Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung published the following article:

##### 'No Initiative by the European Community in Favor of the Balts

The foreign ministers of the ten-member nations of the European Community have not complied with the wish of the European Parliament to submit the matter of the Baltic States - in 1940 they were forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union - to the United Nations Decolonization subcommittee; at the present time it is not planned to take such action.

This statement was made by Mr. Genscher, German foreign minister, during the question and answer period of the European Parliament. In his capacity as chairman of the Council of Ministers of the European Community, he answered the question by Otto von Habsburg, a representative of the Christian Democrat Union, who also is a member of the group of the European Peoples Party.

Mr. Genscher stressed specifically that the presidency is aware of the difficult fate of the Baltic nations; and he justified the attitude of the Council of Ministers by stating that, when one takes a "realistic political" view of the situation, the formal submission of this matter to the United Nations or one of their subdivisions would not meet with any success. On the contrary - a negative result of such a submission could do harm to the cause of the Baltic peoples.

In the beginning of January, the European Parliament had adopted a resolution by a large majority, urging the foreign ministers to declare themselves in favor of the right to self-determination of the Baltic nations of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and, in support of this proposition to submit the question of these countries to the United Nations Decolonization Subcommittee, and also in the negotiations of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe meetings.

Mr. von Habsburg expressed his disappointment regarding the stand of the foreign ministers. He stated that to punish the little ones because they are not to be feared, but at the same time not to do anything against the big ones, since there is no hope for a realization of such intentions, represents a 'contempt of the moral principles', which allegedly have been made the basis of decolonization.

Mr. Pearce, a British Conservative and a member of the delegation of the European Democrats, asked Mr. Genscher whether in his opinion a refusal to act in this situation does not amount to an approval of the wrong done by the Soviet Union to these countries. Mr. Pearce also asked whether in the long run Mr. Genscher would not find it helpful and useful to make a clear and equivocal statement in the United Nations concerning the respective principles, particularly that colonization committed by the Soviet Union should be subject to criticism just as in the case of other countries.

Eight of the ten States of the European Community have not, up to this day, recognized the incorporation of the Baltic States into the Soviet Union".



Commentary From Dr. Otto von Habsburg's Office:

"My dear Baltic friends,

"I am using this circular in order to inform you, briefly and informally, about two things:

"1. During the plenary session of the European Parliament, between May 16 and 20, a confrontation took place between Otto von Habsburg and Mr. Genscher, foreign minister of Germany and member of the European Community council of ministers. Mr. Genscher refused to bring the matter of the Baltic nations before the United Nations because the reaction would be negative anyhow.

"Thereupon Otto von Habsburg attacked Mr. Genscher, during the parliament session as well as in several press articles, pointing out that it is a case of intolerable double morality if Mr. Genscher wants to decolonize the whole world but refuses to do so in the case of the Soviet Union, since it is a superpower.

"The media response was favorable. Efforts are being continued.

"2. During the July session of the European Parliament the enclosed inquiry will be submitted to the foreign ministers.

"I am available for inquiries.

With friendly greetings",

(signed) Bernd Posselt

Personal Assistant

Inquiry by Otto von Habsburg to the Foreign Ministers in the European Community,  
Concerning the Situation in the Baltic States

"Have the foreign ministers been informed about the fact that recently the general human rights situation in the Baltic States has deteriorated noticeably as, among others, the Swedish foreign minister, Lennart Bodström had to state?

"Are the ministers aware of the fact that three members of the Estonian Helsinki group have been sentenced? (This question requires some further clarification, since a Helsinki Group has existed only in Lithuania, but not yet in Estonia or Latvia. Ed.).

"Do the ministers share the view that the E.E.C., as a co-signer of the Helsinki Final Act has the duty to act within the meaning of the resolution of 13 January 1983 by the representatives of the European people ?"

WEST GERMANY DOES NOT RECOGNIZE SOVIET ANNEXATION OF BALTIC STATES

The Federal Republic of Germany has reiterated its position toward the Baltic States. In a letter to Dr.K. Bobelis, Chairman of the Baltic World Conference, the German Foreign Ministry stated on April 21, 1983, that "the Federal Government has frequently, openly and unequivocally expressed its stand concerning the annexation of the Baltic States by the Soviet Union: The Federal Republic of Germany has not recognized this annexation since the very beginning and has no intention to do so".

The letter was signed by Councillor Dr. Alexander Arnot.



"... The most conspicuous imperialism in the world is in Afghanistan, where Soviet forces are still trying to subdue the population; Poland, where the government leans on its own citizens to further the Soviet way of life; Lithuania, governed from Moscow rather than Vilnius".

The Chicago Catholic, April 22, 1983

#### SWEDISH GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL RAISED BALTIC QUESTION IN MOSCOW

##### Baltic States Debated in Swedish Parliament

The situation in the Baltic Republics was brought up by the Swedish Under-Secretary of State during his visit to Moscow in January, 1983. This was revealed by Sweden's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Nennart Bodström, on April 18, 1983, in the Swedish Parliament. He spoke in reply to an interpellation by Ms. Margaretha af Ugglas, member of the opposition Moderate Party.

##### Soviet Goal - Destruction of Baltic Distinctness

Speaking in the Parliament, Ms. Margaretha af Ugglas said that during the postwar period debates in Sweden about the situation in the Baltic States were dominated by an "awkward silence". She charged that for too long passivity, if not timid apathy, colored Swedish attitudes toward the Baltic States. The Soviet goal, she said, is to russify the Baltic countries and to destroy the Baltic national and cultural distinctness. Therefore, the Baltic nations face a greater danger than the other East European countries which retained their statehood. The speaker added that very few Swedes were acquainted with the actual situation of the Baltic people.

Ms. Margaretha af Ugglas then directed the following questions to the Swedish Foreign Minister: 1. What information has the Government received concerning developments in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania? 2. Has the Government taken any action in view of reports of a new wave of arrests including members of an action group for the implementation of the Helsinki treaty? 3. Was the situation in the Baltic Republics referred to during the visit to Moscow by the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs? 4. Is the Government prepared to bring the violations of human rights in the Baltic Republics before the U.N. Commission for Human Rights?

##### Swedish Foreign Minister - "Tension and Uncertainty" in Baltic

In his answer, the Swedish Foreign Minister described the situation in the Baltic Republics at present as "one of tension and uncertainty, and therefore providing cause for concern". He said that it was "unclear whether this marks the beginning of a permanent deterioration in the already existing grave situation concerning human rights and the political situation in the Baltic Republics, or whether it is just a passing phase". He mentioned several recently received reports which pointed to a "general intensification of controls in the Baltic Republics".



### Sweden Expressed Concern to USSR

Mr. Bodström went on to say that on various occasions, both internationally and in direct representations to the representatives of the Soviet Government, the Swedish Government has expressed "its profound concern regarding the position of civil rights campaigners in the Soviet Union". He stated that the Helsinki Groups in the Soviet Union were now finding it "almost impossible" to engage in activity of any kind, owing to active intervention by the Soviet authorities. "Clearly", Mr. Bodström said, "we have no less reason for condemning the recent persecutions of civil rights activists in the Baltic republics. We must continue demanding full liberty for groups and individuals to comment on the way in which the provisions of the (Helsinki) Final Act are implemented by their government".

### Sweden to Work for "Closer Links with Baltic Republics"

Concerning the Swedish Government's willingness to bring the violations of the human rights in the Baltic republics before the U.N. Commission for Human Rights, Mr. Bodström stated that his Government was "prepared to draw attention to violations of human rights whenever they occur, the Baltic republics included". He cautioned, however, that Swedish possibilities of taking an initiative in the U.N. Commission on Human Rights were limited, because Sweden only has an observer status in that body. The Swedish Foreign Minister added that his Government was also prepared "to work for closer direct links with the Baltic republics above all in the contexts of trade and cultural relations".

### Baltic Countries Are Being Russified - Foreign Minister

Mr. Bodström also acknowledged that the Baltic countries are being russified: Russians are being settled there, the Russian language is given a preferential treatment. On the other hand, he said, the process of Russification has not suppressed the Baltic culture and language, which have preserved an astonishing vital force.

In the parliamentary debate on the Baltic states, Ms. Margaretha af Ugglas demanded an end to the "awkward silence" on the Baltic states and called for a wider discussion of the present situation there. She said: "The Balts are threatened with the disappearance of their national distinctness. What we need is not an antiquated crusade, but ideas, cooperation and solidarity with the Balts who are taking the path of the cross".

Sture Korpos, a representative of the Center Party, welcomed the Foreign Minister's assurance that the Swedish Government was closely observing the developments in the Baltic countries and wanted to expand direct links. "The Baltic Sea", he said, "was always a chain in the links between East and West. Europe does not end with the Iron Curtain".

Britta Hammarbacken, representing the same Center Party, emphasized that the Balts were experiencing with a special painfulness their separation from the world that surrounds them. According to her, cultural links could be of great significance to our "forgotten neighbors". Ms. Hammarbacken added: "We have condemned violence in very distant countries, but not right next to us. The Soviet leaders and the people of the Baltic countries should have no doubt that the Balts are very close to us".

The discussion in the Swedish Parliament represents a positive change in the official Swedish attitude toward the Baltic States. In welcoming it, one also looks forward to a debate on the illegality of Soviet Russian presence in Estonia, Latvia and



and Lithuania - the cove of the Baltic question. Also, the Swedish Government and the parliamentarians seem to be much better informed about Estonia and Latvia than Lithuania, a situation that could be easily remedied.

The parliamentary debate on the Baltic States was welcomed by the Swedish press. In an editorial entitled "The Baltic Countries and We", Dagens Nyheter (April 19, 1983) wrote that the debate bore witness of the awakening interest in "our neighbors across the Baltic". The liberal daily Uppsala Nya Tidning wrote on the following day: "The Swedish public opinion has been silent for decades about the occupied neighboring countries of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, because it really did not know their fate, was indifferent to it, or simply did not want to think about it in a state of shameful resignation. This attitude is no more possible today even among the leading shapers of the foreign policy".

The same Uppsala daily wrote in an earlier edition (April 13): "The low pressure over Lithuania is now affecting Sweden's weather. This is nothing unusual. But we take joy in remarking that in yesterday's weather report, Lithuania was called Lithuania, and not "Western Russia" or somewhat differently, as it used to be customary for the Swedish radio. This is a significant change, that even (Swedish) radio and television already do acknowledge that our neighboring countries across the Baltic do exist, although under foreign occupation".

#### POPE INVITED TO VISIT LITHUANIA NEXT YEAR

##### John Paul II Urges Soviets to Grant Lithuanians "Full Freedom of Conscience"

Lithuanian bishops visiting in the Vatican have invited Pope John Paul II to visit Lithuania next year. The four bishops stayed in Rome from April 6 to April 24 - the first time that the Soviet Government has allowed them to come to the Vatican to report on the status of their dioceses.

Bishop Liudas Povilonis, administrator of the Lithuanian Bishop's Conference, expressed hopes on April 22 that the Pope could visit Lithuania in 1984, the 500th anniversary of the death of St. Casimir, patron saint of Lithuania. "We ardently hope that the Holy Father may be given the opportunity to visit our country", he said. "We believe that this visit could serve as a significant stimulus to the spiritual edification of Lithuanians".

Commenting on this invitation, Heinz-Joachim Fischer wrote in the German daily Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung on April 27: "There is a fitting occasion (for this invitation). March 4 next year marks the 500th anniversary of St. Casimir... the son of the Polish King Casimir IV (1447-1492), who also ruled as the Grand Duke of Lithuania... In addition to his saintly life, the anniversary will provide an opportunity to ponder about the complex history of Lithuania and about the role of the Catholic Church as the guarantor of its uniqueness vis-a-vis the Prussians (who turned Protestant shortly afterwards) and the Orthodox Russians. That a Polish Pope might be present on this occasion is something that stirs political imagination, irrespective of the chances of this actually coming true. John Paul II in the Soviet Union, a Slav, even more - a Pole, in the power sphere of Soviet Communism - this thought alone will keep the Soviet Government busy".

Meanwhile, on April 22, Pope John Paul II praised the "admirable vitality" of the Lithuanian Catholic Church and urged the Soviet Union to give its members "full freedom of conscience and of religion". The Pope told the Lithuanian bishops:



"How ardently I desire that this living faith of the people of God may find the necessary atmosphere to be able to manifest itself in all its richness, both in the lives of individuals and that of families and of the church itself, with full freedom of conscience and of religion, in all the individual and communitarian aspects which that liberty involves".

"... The Communist Party of the Soviet Union sees in Lithuania's two million Christians... a dangerous potential for protest. As in neighboring Poland, deep faith is coupled with a fervent national spirit - against the Russians".

Der Spiegel, West Germany, April 18, 1983

ISSUE NO. 57 OF LITHUANIAN "CHRONICLE" RECEIVED

The 57th issue of The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania is dated April 3, 1983, and focuses on the public outcry in Lithuania against the arrest of the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas. There is an extensive survey of house-searches and interrogations, many of them in connection with the case of the Rev. Svarinskas. Persecution of Catholic students, KGB interference in the internal affairs of the Kaunas Theological Seminary, and protests against the discriminatory policies are also discussed.

NEW ISSUE OF UNDERGROUND "AUŠRA" (NO. 34)

The 34th issue of the Lithuanian underground journal "Aušra" (The Dawn) is dated December, 1982. The dangers of Russification and of Lithuania's inundation in the "Slavic Sea" are discussed in the lead article "The Greatest Danger - Inability To See the Danger". A Vatican Radio broadcast on the Lithuanian poet Maironis is re-printed. "All-Union Corruption and All-People's Apathy" is the title of an article on the all-pervading hypocrisy under the Soviet system. The persecution of Valeriy Smolkin in Vilnius for his participation in the Solzhenitsyn Fund for Political Prisoners is described. Aušra also writes that Mr. and Mrs. Abrutis, residents of Vilnius, are harassed for their desire to emigrate; in December, 1982, Mrs. Abrutis was arrested and will be tried for "slander". The writer, Justinas Marcinkevičius and the propagandist Albertas Laurinčiukas are criticized for their "distortions". An article entitled "Intensification of Spiritual Genocide" claims that the personnel of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences will be sharply reduced, thus endangering the studies of Lithuanian language, literature and history. The endemic shortages are described in an item on "The Forms of Contemporary Trade". A new scandal, revealing bribery in Lithuanian universities and hospitals, is discussed. The first part of an article entitled "Forty Years" covers Lithuania's history from 1904 to 1944.



# ACADEMIC BRIBERY LEADS TO ARRESTS AND DEATH

A mysterious death and arrests of several prominent members of the Lithuanian "New Class" are reported in the Lithuanian unofficial journal Aušra (The Dawn, No. 34, December, 1982). In an article entitled "Parting the Veil of Free (Education and Medicine)", R. Žvilgys (pseud.) relates the new scandal to the widespread practice of bribery among the Lithuanian university professors.

The bribery racket in this case was uncovered quite accidentally. Several Georgians were detained in the marketplace of Vilnius for speculation. When the militiamen searched their suitcases, they discovered Vilnius' university study books and graduation diplomas. The interrogation revealed that they had never attended the university. The thread of investigation led to the office of professor Bronius Sudavičius, the vice-president for educational affairs at the Vilnius University. What made the whole matter even spicier was the common knowledge that Sudavičius owed his rise in the ranks not to his intellectual powers, but to his services as a high-ranking KGB official. He had received his degree in medicine, but soon he went to the greener pastures of Marxism-Leninism and taught dialectical materialism and CP history.

It appears that Sudavičius serviced not only visiting Georgians. Each year deans and chairmen of commissions for entry exams at Vilnius University received from his office a list of candidates who had to receive "good" or "excellent" grades for their oral or written tests. There were rumors in the spring of 1982, that Sudavičius was under house arrest and that his considerable fortune had been confiscated. But the house arrest did not last long - his state security connections assured his "acquittal".

Jonas Dobrovolskis was less fortunate. After sending his wife off to Spain with a group of tourists, he jumped out of the window. The reasons for his "suicide" are unknown, but some people maintain that he was actually pushed.

The medical profession in Lithuania also had its casualties. Eager to show that physicians, too, are being punished for taking bribes, the authorities entrapped Algis Kriščiūnas, a doctor at the Vilnius oncological institute. He was punished with eight years of prison and camps, his property was confiscated. The reason why Kriščiūnas was selected as a scapegoat from a host of similar bribe-takers may have to do with his efforts to emigrate to West Germany, where his in-laws reside.

The milieu in which such corruption thrives is described in another article in the same issue of Aušra, "All-Union Corruption and All-People's Apathy": "The entire country leads a double life: one is official, external, hedged with norms, regulated, the other - the real one - proceeds backstage, is masked, hidden, veiled. Nobody believes the official accounts and official data... The people respond to the duplicity, fraud, disarray... with APATHY... Material corruption is followed by moral corruption..."

## PEČELIŪNAS AND TERLECKAS MOVED TO INTERNAL EXILE

The Lithuanian underground Chronicle (No. 57, April 3, 1983) reports that two Lithuanian political prisoners have completed their terms in the camps and have been transferred to internal exile.

Povilas Pečeliūnas has been moved to the Far North. His present address is: 626806, Tiumentskaja obl., Berezovskij raion, pos. Igrim, ul. Entuziastov, d.16, kv.13.

Since December 19, 1982, Antanas Terleckas has been serving his term of exile in the Far East. His address: 686419 Magadan, Omsukšan, pos. Industrialnij, Omsukčanskogo r-na, ul. Sportivnaja 5-17.



Pečeliūnas was sentenced on December 22, 1980, to three years in strict-regime camps and five years of exile for alleged involvement in the publication of the underground journal Perspektyvos. Terleckas was sentenced in September, 1980, to three years in labor camps and five years in exile for alleged "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda". According to underground Aušra (June 1982), while in the camp, KGB officials have been trying to break down Terleckas by offering him speedy release if he expressed "penitence". In November, 1981, he was warned that his life would be made "very difficult" and that after five years in exile he would return home with his health permanently impaired. Last year Terleckas was one of the ten political prisoners in Camp No. 36, Perm' area, who signed a letter to President Reagan, asking him to help form an international commission to inspect Soviet labor camps. They said that Soviet abuses of political prisoners are "so widespread that it is no longer merely a question of violations of human rights, but of premeditated inhumanity of physical and psychological torture, of terrorizing the spirit and exhibiting moral contempt for culture". The full text of the letter was published in the March 20 issue of the Ukrainian Weekly, published in the U.S.

#### SENATOR PERCY ASKS GROMYKO TO RELEASE SKUODIS

In March, 1983, a member of Charles H. Percy's U.S. Senate Foreign Relations staff delivered the Senator's letter to Soviet Deputy Prime Minister, Andrey Gromyko on the case of Vytautas Skuodis (Benedict Scott). In that letter, Senator Percy urged Gromyko to initiate a reconsideration of the Skuodis case and to allow him to emigrate. Percy stressed that Skuodis was born in Chicago, Illinois, and thus was of great personal interest to him. The U.S. Senator also let Gromyko know that the Soviet Union suffers in its relations with the United States because its human rights practices are unacceptable.

Skuodis was sentenced on December 22, 1980, to seven years in strict-regime camps and five years of exile. The 51-year old geologist was charged with publishing two underground journals and writing a statistical study of atheist propaganda in Lithuania. Skuodis remains a member of the Lithuanian Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Believers' Rights, which is now under frontal attack by the Soviet authorities.

#### CONGRESSMAN URGES MADRID MEETING TO REMEMBER ARRESTED HELSINKI MONITORS Resolution on "Helsinki Human Rights Day" Introduced

"There are 52 imprisoned Helsinki monitors from the USSR and Lithuania" seven years after the signing of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, according to Rep. Dante B. Fascell. The Florida Democrat, who heads the Congressional Committee on Security and Cooperation in Europe, spoke at the House of Representatives on May 17, 1983. Describing the plight of those in the Soviet Union who acted in faith of the human rights pledges, Fascell included the Lithuanian Helsinki Group, the Lithuanian Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Believers' Rights, and the recent trial of the Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas. "It is all these Helsinki prisoners who have tried to make the Helsinki Final Act a living document", Fascell said. "It is all these Helsinki prisoners who must be remembered as the Madrid CSCE meeting goes into its final deliberations".

On May 5, 1983, Representative De Concini introduced a joint resolution that authorizes and requests the U.S. President to designate August 1, 1983, as "Helsinki Human Rights Day". The Resolution (S.J. Res.96) states that the "denial of fundamental rights by the Soviet Government is a threat to peace throughout the world". The President is requested to continue his efforts to achieve full implementation of the human rights and humanitarian provisions of the Helsinki Accords.