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TESTIMONY OF JONAS JURAŠAS*

TO
THE INTERNATIONAL SAKHAROV HEARING, Copenhagen.
CONCERNING THE QUESTION OF THE PERSECUTION OF THE LITHUANIAN NATION

Today, at the occasion of the Sakharov Hearing, and in a spirit of fairness and equity, let my personal testimony concerning the persecution of an entire nation be placed on the scales of Justice. This deposition contains only a fraction of the whole bitter truth about the decades of continuous destruction, occupation and genocide of a nation of three millions.

The Soviet regime has now during 35 years, with the aid of its powerful propaganda machine, endeavoured to conceal from the conscience of the world the seizure by brute force of the Baltic States, — Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, and the ensuing results of this persecution, which have been a regime of terror, the destruction of the will to freedom and national independence of these nations through force and perfidity. Today, from this chair, from which the voice of truth, let us hope, will not get lost in the wilderness, it is fit to recall that already on 23 August 1939 a grave had been dug for the independence of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. This was the date of the secret agreement between Ribbentrop and Molotov by which the spheres of influence were defined between Nazi-Germany and the U.S.S.R. This agreement immediately broke to pieces the treaty of non-aggression which had been signed between Lithuania and Soviet Russia on 28 October 1926 and which was in force on paper until 1945.

But already in October 1939 Moscow demanded to bring into Lithuania 20.000 of its armed forces and to establish military bases, pretending to protect the country's security.

On 14 June 1940, owing to the fabricated accusation concerning the death of two Soviet soldiers, came Molotov's ultimatum demanding the surrender of the members of the Lithuanian government for trial, the entire reorganization of the government, and the admission of Soviet military units to the most strategic points. But Moscow refused to approve the proposals for candidates for the new government and sent vice-commissar Dekanozov to Lithuania.

On 15 June 1940 twelve divisions, i.e., 250,000 men, crossed the border of Lithuania.

Dekanozov appointed as prime-minister his protege Justas Paleckis, dissolved all political parties, and forbade all newspapers, all cultural, religious and public utility associations. The communist party, which until then had consisted only of less than 700 members (and these being rather of their own than Lithuanian nationality), was henceforth declared to be the only legal party.

On 14 July were carried out the elections for the National Assembly in the manner of the Soviet election farces. Nine days were spent on preparations, there were exactly as many candidates as there were constituencies, and three days before the election there were started mass arrests and deportations of the leading politicians of the nation. A foreign national, Feliksas Baltušis-Že-maitis was appointed Commander-in Chief of the Lithuanian army.

On 21 July 1940 the puppet National Assembly of Lithuania proclaimed the country as a Soviet Socialist Republic, and its decree No. 2 was a petition addressed to Moscow for the integration of Lithuania into the U.S.S.R.

Actions of the same nature were in those days going on in Latvia and Estonia.

Over the whole country there arose a spontaneous will of resistance. Leaflets were distributed urging for a boycott of the elections, etc. In the course of the military actions of the partisan movement there were captured documents from the N.K.V.D. which testified on the nation-wide resistance.

The "Lithuanian Action Front" was established, being an organisation which united all resistance units and which emanated from the two university centers Vilnius and Kaunas.

On 23 June 1941 a nation-wide insurrection broke out, in itself an evidence of the fact that the annexation of Lithuania had been carried out by a mighty power as an act of force and aggression on a peaceful Western neighbour. During the insurrection the State Broadcasting Station was occupied, and the leader of 100.000 soldiers, Leonas Prapuolenis, returned to his country with a proclamation. During this fight for freedom about 4,000 insurgents were killed. The temporary government, headed by Professor Ambrazevičius, succeeded in staying in power for six weeks.

The partisan movement of Lithuania from 1945 to 1952 might serve as an unprecedented example of a struggle for freedom in our own country. The Lithuanians reckon that their losses in this unequal fight amounted to more than 30.000 partisans who gave their lives for the future of their country. There are three periods of this partisan insurrection in Lithuania indicating its dimensions:

1. Until the spring of 1946 took place the mass movements of armed fighting, in which three exceedingly strong underground organizations participated spontaneously. These were "The Iron Wolf", "Kęstutis" and the "Lithuanian Liberation Army".
2. From 1946 to 1949 was the period of the Movement for General Democratic Resistance.
3. From 1949 to 1952 the main activity was exercised by the Lithuanian Movement of Fight for Freedom.

The Lithuanians are confident that some day in the future, History's Court of Justice will raise its accusations against the occupants and read aloud the names of the victims, unknown at present, of this civil war who were captured in the forest, shot in the dungeons of the security police, victims of lies, shame, and oblivion. Although 1952 is considered as the final year of the active resistance, it is difficult to assess to what year it continued, because the spirit itself of the resistance changed in character and assumed new forms as it penetrated into ever deeper layers of national life. In 1956 the Soviet authorities proclaimed an amnesty, knowing only too well that the main forces of the movement had been destroyed in this unequal fight through the infiltration of secret agents, informers and traitors. They knew that the nation had grown tired and was deprived of all aid and all hope. The sleepless nights and troubled days, the smoky sites of conflagration, the gunshots in the woods, the corpses lying in the city squares as a warning to those who still refused to be enslaved, all this had its effect. Even when the representatives of the partisan movement broke through to the West in 1948 they did not succeed in causing an awakening of the Western world from the shock created by the victorious U.S.S.R. What, they asked, could possibly be the objective of such a senseless struggle. Better to applaud the strong victorious conqueror, lest he might attack us!

The following occurrence deserves mentioning: In 1970 a unit of the secret police in the township of Šemuoliai, district of Širvintai, discovered Henrikas Kajotas, who had been in hiding for 26 years in a bunker he had constructed himself under his mother's house. This did not happen in the jungle, as had been the case recently with the Japanese soldier, but in the midst of Eastern Europe!

This excursion in my deposition into a recent past has come up for one single objective, which is to testify how, and to what purpose, Lithuania or rather all three Baltic states, were united "voluntarily" with the U.S.S.R. If time allows, I shall try through my by no means exhaustive information to show the other side of the medal which the Soviet propaganda has imposed upon the world. I shall try to convince the all too credulous general public into realizing what bliss has been brought upon my country by socialism smeared with blood.

It would be beyond the powers of one single witness, nay even of an entire team of witnesses if such might arise by a miracle in our divided society, to put together at short notice and on one single sheet of paper, the facts about the crimes perpetrated against a whole nation. With great care our persecutors hide themselves, disguising themselves, and at the very first modest attempt of uncovering a grain of truth under the thick layer of their lies, severe punishments are administered. But, as the Russian literary critic A. Belenkov said, "the mole of history digs with unnoticeable slowness." In Lithuania of our times, the Catholic Church has taken upon itself to act as this mole, and it has done so, aided by its enormous and invincible congregation of believers.

In March of this year, three years have gone since the publication of the first copy of the Lithuanian self-edited periodical "The Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church". This underground publication has now during the three years of its existence become a document of supreme impartiality in respect of contemporary life and gives expression to that spirit of independence and character-building of a nation which was about to be devoured by the ferocious jaws of a totalitarian regime. The "Chronicle" came into existence as a successor of the "Chronicle of Current Events" and after the alarm-tolls for truth had been ringing from the books of A. Solzhenitsyn. Together with these it gives expression to the revival of faith in the final triumph of truth and justice. The "Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church" is published in spite of the efforts on the part of the authorities, which are dominated by collaborationists, to discredit it from within. In the "Chronicle" the naked facts, registered in a dispassionate manner, are the most hope inspiring source of information about the methods through which the fight against the Catholic Church is being conducted, how the freedom of conscience and conviction is growing stronger, how the basic human rights are being crushed, how censorship is harassing the press which has been turned into a State monopoly, and, as a consequence of all this, it shows how the factual genocide of the Lithuanian nation is carried out.

The fifteenth number of the "Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church" contains the following circular:

"The Soviet authorities intend by means of the criminal code and the Committee of Public Safety to destroy not only the 'Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church', but also the Lithuanian Catholic Church itself. We, the Lithuanian Catholics, however, are fully resolved to fight with the Divine help for our rights. We still cherish the hope that the Soviet authorities will understand that they are making a great mistake in supporting atheists who are in minority, while arousing against themselves the Catholic masses. The Catholics of Lithuania beseech our brothers who have emigrated, and all friends of Lithuania all over the world to inform a wide general public as well as governments about the repression of human rights in Lithuania."

The "Chronicle" publishes letters from its readers. One of the letters contains the following account:

"Recently we learned through the 'Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church' about the arrest of the Doctor of biology Sergei Kovalyov. We the Lithuanian Catholics pray to God that He will endow this scientist with all spiritual and physical strength. What the world needs most urgently today is love. Jesus Christ said: "There is no greater love than in giving one's life for one's friends." We are confident that the sacrifice of Sergei Kovalyov and others will not be in vain.

We bow in reverence before Andrei Sakharov, this brave champion for human rights in the U.S.S.R., and doing so we revere all Russian intellectuals of good will. By their daring and their spirit of self-sacrifice they have anew caused us Lithuanian Catholics to look to the Russian people. Their self-sacrifice is necessary to all Russians who are persecuted, — it is also necessary to the Catholics of Lithuania.

We are deeply ingratiated to the great Russian writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn for his warm words addressed to the Lithuanians and in defense of their country. Thousands of us, especially former prisoners of Archipelago GULAG, pray to the Almighty on his behalf."

The "Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church" constantly publishes lists of the victims of persecution, of persons interrogated, not only for their religious conviction, by the K.G.B. The Catholic Church has by means of its underground periodical become the only reliable source of information available. It is therefore only natural that the K.G.B. is trying with such desperate hate to destroy the "Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church" and stamp it out to the roots. The waves of arrests, the almost epidemic actions with the aim of breaking up this form of resistance from within by means of collaborationists and informers, and the draconic punishments for distributing the periodical, all these measures are put into effect. But so far, fortunately, without any noticeable results. It may be hard to understand the reasons for this success, but the obvious reasons are above all truthfulness and faith.

The "Chronicle" collects testimonies from the most remote corners of Lithuania and informs its readers about unjust perpetrations committed by certain authorities, defining the limits of the authorities' right in a spirit of legality and acting in this respect strictly in accordance with the rights guaranteed by Soviet legislation and the Soviet Constitution.

The "Chronicle" has bravely acted in defense of the Roman-Catholic priests A. Šeškevičius, J. Zdebskis, and P. Bubnis, who were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment for having provided religious education for children and for their catechization. But in the eyes of the general public it was not the servants of religion, as the authorities wished, but rather the brutal persecutors of the Church, who were guilty, since these priests had been constrained to commit these "perpetrations" owing to the laws of their cons-sciences and the entreaties of parents.

In Lithuania priests are forbidden to exercise their most urgent duties, which are the instruction of children, their catechization, to attend to the sick and the dying, and to administer funerals. All these duties are severely prohibited for them, and in actual fact that freedom of conscience which is guaranteed by the Constitution, compels them to carry out these duties as underground activities. Thus the Lithuanian Roman-Catholic Church, the traditional bulwark of national identity, is reduced to the same state as were the first Christians, who had to assemble in the Catacombs. Our persecutors do not realize that in this country faith is irradicable, and persecution will only strengthen it.

In Lithuania it is not possible to enter a clerical seminary without the approbation and consent of the Communist Party and the K.G.B. A testimony of this was made in the speech of Virgilius Jaugelis during his trial in case No. 345. Among other things V. Jaugelis in his defiant address to the court, pleading not guilty to the indictment, confirmed his strong faith which he had nurtured already from his early youth. He was confined to a forced labour camp together with hardened criminals who beat him into a state of contusion. He fell seriously ill, contracting cancer, but still refused to allow the prison doctors to carry out a complicated operation on him. Rumors from the camp say that V. Jaugelis will not live until the end of his term of imprisonment in 1976.

In Lithuania it is prohibited to publish, print or distribute books, booklets or newspapers dealing with religious matters. The few official publications with a ridiculously small circulation can in no way satisfy the needs of the believers. A large part of the prints of the Holy Scripture and of the Prayer-Book is sent to the West for propaganda purposes. Some believers, trying to make amends for this shortage by taking matters into their own hands, were severely punished. On 3 September 1974 sentence was passed in case No. 345 on persons who had prepared and distributed Prayer Books and religious literature. P. Plumpa - Pluiras was sentenced to 8 years, P. Petronis to 4 years, V. Jaugelis to 2 years, and I. Stašaitis to one year of imprisonment. I was myself a witness to people being fired from their jobs by a telephone call from the K.G.B., who did not even attempt to prove these persons' guilt, — that of having prepared photostat copies of an old Prayer-Book.

In Lithuania it is not permitted to repair Roman-Catholic churches, nor to build new ones. Many of those built long ago are closed, or are used as storage halls, museums of atheism or as "palace of culture". In the town of Klaipėda it was decided by Moscow, after many years of efforts from the believers, to build a church an funds collected from the parishioners. The church, having been built at the price of incredible efforts, was appropriated by the municipal authorities on the day before

its consecration and turned into a concert-hall. The population of the town has until this very day refused to enter this "Cultural institution". From the actual proceeds, unreasonably large excises are charged. Thus, for example, there is a double charge for the use of electricity.

Monuments and national relics of religious character are being systematically destroyed in Lithuania, even those of an artistic value. In the past the country contained an immense number of carved crosses decorated with sculpture of a unique character. Out of the Lithuanian national popular sculpture there grew a distinct school of professional plastic art. But the organized campaigns of the Komsomol have wiped away from the face of the earth this glory of many generations. A few specimens are locked up in quite un-accessible museums or have been handed over to the unbelievers to ridicule. The story of the Hill of Crosses near Šiauliai is remarkable. After the insurrection against the tsarist regime from 1861 to 1964, the Cossacks in this place drove the insurgents into a chapel and buried them alive by covering the chapel with earth. To this Hill the people have since then for a century been carrying beautiful crosses, indicating in this way one bloodstained path in their country's history.

In the summer of 1961 Soviet soldiers who had arrived recently destroyed a few thousand crosses during one night. The orders for this destruction were given by the representative of the Minister of the Supreme Soviet, comrade Diržinskaitė-Pyliušenko. But after every destruction new crosses were erected in the place of those destroyed, and every year the Hill is laid waste again. During this year the people have brought new crosses to the Hill three times to replace those that had been destroyed.

A recent event, horrifying to all who have lost entirely their human feeling of compassion, was the suicide of Romas Kalanta, who burnt himself to death in Kaunas in 1972. This tragedy also touched upon my personal life, but in the consciousness of everybody it created either unrest, or faith, or fear. The funeral of Kalanta took place in secret outside the city, but this cruelty on the part of the authorities, indeed worthy of a tyrant like Creon in Sophocles' tragedy, served as a signal to what almost amounted to a revolt. To crush it, strong detachments of shock troops from the regular army as well as units from the K.G.B. and the regular police were employed. All these forces were directed against the unarmed crowds. The city was for one week cut off from the world, and came to look most of all like a besieged fortress. There followed a wave of secret prosecutions lasting for several years, and the ensuing punitive actions which were carried out in the open, affected all spheres of everyday life in Lithuania, especially the cultural life. Even today the young people of Lithuania are prosecuted for having taken part in that peaceful demonstration. In this way the Soviet authorities have shown once more what liberties they have given to the Lithuanian people, having brought to them the "sun" of Stalinist Constitution on the points of their bayonets.

In the frosty light of this sun one should see also the Lithuanian barracks of the universal Soviet GULAG camp. Eduard Kuznetsov in his "Diaries" has established a document which is horrifying in its intensity and strength, a letter from the political prisoner Liu-das Simutis. After it there follow some naked figures: Seven Lithuanians in their camps amount to appr. 6 per cent of all prisoners. Against this stands the figure of Lithuanians among the whole population of the U.S.S.R., which is 1 per cent out of a population of 240 million. The seven prisoners are altogether serving sentences amounting to 182 years, which gives 26 years to each, and of these years each one of the prisoners has served 18 years in average. Their average age is 46 years. They are all Catholics. "The impression is created" - - Eduard Kuznetsov writes — "that in relation to the citizens from the Baltic states and Western Ukraine — and surely it is in these regions that the Soviets most openly demonstrate their true character — the Soviets are acting most harshly in keeping with their merciless and revengeful laws, which prescribe that anyone who is not prepared to creep on his knees, will end up in prison. Correspondingly harsh will be the laws of hatred on those who have caused these dire sufferings."

The term of 25 years imprisonment has in Lithuania until now been called among the people: "the Lithuanian term".

On this day in the Archipelago of the wide country of the Soviets hundreds of guiltless Lithuanian citizens have been for their refusal to lie down on their knees before the occupants. The lists presented to the Hearing of 243 political prisoners are by no means complete.

But having suffered their terms during years of astronomic length the former prisoners are refused the return to their country. In January 1971 there was published a secret ordinance of the Supreme Soviet of Lithuania on the non-registration in the Lithuania territory of persons having served sentences, as well as of all persons who might be termed as "bourgeois nationalists", soldiers of the Liberation Movement or members of the Lithuanian Government. All these were compelled to find a place of residence outside their country. I know for certain about some of the forty similar cases of gross injustice: Balys Gajauskas, a former inmate of the prison camps of Kazakhstan and Mordovia for 25 years, may not at present be registered in Lithuania, and therefore he cannot live nor work there legally. Povilas Pečiulis, Leonas Laurinskas and many others are doomed to perpetual vagrancy and the risk of prosecution by K.G.B. Persons belonging to this category of outcasts not even have the elementary right to emigrate from the U.S.S.R. I know of cases where persons on the most tentative expression of such a desire have been quietly and unnoticeably confined to the psychiatric hospitals of the K.G.B. My personal friend Kęstutis Jokubinas having served two sentences of 10 years each and endlessly haunted by interrogations, domiciliary visits and threats, applied for a permit to emigrate from the U.S.S.R., but received in July this year a refusal in which no reason for the decision was given.

At present the K.G.B. is searching all over Lithuania for evidence in case No. 345. Criminal cases have been brought up against the following persons who were sentenced to various terms of confinement in prison-camps: P. Plumpa-Pluira, P. Petronis, I. Stašaitis, V. Jaugelis, J. Gražys, B. Kulikauskas, I. Ivanauskas. The poet Mindaugas Tamonis was forcibly confined to the psychiatric hospital in Vasara Street in Vilnius, where the white-coated torturers subjected him to experiments which broke down his health.

Case No. 345 assumed all-union dimensions, the investigations and interrogations being undertaken with the aim of destroying the "Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church". It is especially disquieting that the K.G.B. without any evidence in this case are prosecuting persons who have no doing whatever in this matter. Sergei Kovalyov has already for half a year been interrogated in his solitary confinement by the K.G.B. in Vilnius. Other prosecuted persons are his wife L. Boitsova, Andrei Tvyordoklebov, A. Plyusin, Galya Solova, Malvina Land, Irina Korsunskaya. Their participation in the "Chronicle" has not been proven. The best evidence of this is the fact that new editions of the "Chronicle" keep appearing in Lithuania and in the West even after their arrest. Not long ago the 16th issue appeared. Moreover the Catholics of Lithuania are convinced that the case is unlawful even by the standards of Soviet legislation and the Constitution. Hence strictly, the "Chronicle" is operating within the limits even of Soviet law. It does not print any unconfirmed information, and it defends the freedom of conscience which is guaranteed by that Constitution.

The "Chronicle" questions the way in which the law has been applied concerning the separation of the Church from the State and the instances of circumstantial and biased application of ordinance No. 143 of the Lithuanian S.S.R.

In the light of this problem, and conceived within the framework of laws of the separately occupied countries, the following open letter from engineer V. Vaičiūnas addressed to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Lithuania and to the editors of newspapers is instructive. The heading of the letter is "The Law and the Conscience of a Believer". In the letter he states:

"The believers of Lithuania are nearing the crossroad on which the signposts indicate" To the right: Area of the Law, to the left: Christian conscience. It is necessary to make a choice. Direct your attention to the tragedy of those compatriots who have come here. The question which I am afraid of asking is: Will the historians arriving one day in the future to this place set up a third signpost: Tomb of Lithuanian Morale?

This is by no means a purely academic question, since the burning moral problem penetrates all sectors of society: either to swim with the current in the foul gutter of immoral laws which have been imposed on us by force, or to live in accordance with the eternal laws of Conscience, of Morality, of Good?

We apply this question not only in the spiritual life of society, where it is at its most sensitive, but also in economic, scientific and other creative activity, in fact wherever the striving for progress collides with the deaf walls of insensitive laws, deceit, injustice and force.

I have myself by my personal example been compelled to come to a decision in this dilemma. Having reached the summit of my creative progress in my career, and perhaps even of my mastery, I could no longer make any compromise with my conscience and bargain for my own soul at the price of so-called inevitable concessions which annihilate the character of the individual, rendering me entitled to mere crumbs of the genuine manifestations of the soul and to live a kind of double life. Even if such had been the dictates of lofty ideals, whose aims were nothing less than rescuing the dying culture of one's nation, there would at times, through the stream of lies, be a whispering of truth, half-truth, quarter truth, thus gradually crumbling to in-identifiable grains of dust which, mingled with yet more mendacity, become transformed into the basest of substances.

Thirty years of Soviet occupation have conferred upon the people of Lithuania unrecoverable damage. Tens of thousands led to deportation, pining in the Soviet forced-labor camps the "building sites of socialism", the destruction of the traditional Lithuanian agriculture by means of a senseless forced collectivisation of the soil, the establishing of industrialization which, is quite unequal to the natural resources and its only objective being the assimilation into the unlimited waste-lands of the Soviet empire, turning Lithuania into its colony in which the basic rights of man are trodden under heel: freedom of information, of mobility, of the press, of elections, of conscience, and many others. This is a list by far not complete, which ought to be transmitted to the occupation authorities of Lithuania, or rather of all the Baltic states.

The horrible consequences of the occupation are that today my people of three millions is broken up into three bleeding factions: the first living in a voluntary or imposed exile, waiting for the hour to freedom, the second, by far the largest, leading an existence of abject slavery in their own country, bereft of hope and faith in the justice of the world. The third are already in the void of silence, their bones resting in the unknown far-away quarters of the enormous archipelago of suffering, and their most real prospects of being reunited with their brothers and sisters are on the other side of our existence.

Lithuania has been shattered from within owing to the efforts of the occupiers during the three decades during which they have changed the very essence of Lithuanian identity into an utterly false concept of the "Homo Sovieticus". Formerly, in Stalin's days, they acted more directly, by destroying lives. As present they destroy the spiritual concept of national identity. This concept, as we understand it in the genuine sense, has been changed by the horror-phantom of class struggle.

The occupation has brought damage not only upon the Lithuanian people, but also upon minorities of other nationalities which until 1940 had lived peacefully in Lithuania, where there had been no internal strife, no pogroms had taken place, and no nazi ideology had been in existence. Even during the Nazi-German occupation Lithuania was the only one of the occupied countries where no SS-legion had been set up, because the Nazis did not dare to attempt to smear our hands with blood. The Soviet oppressors were more successful in this respect, as they did not even need the assistance of Lithuanian traitors, having disciplined their units into the stature of those who are able to hold the noose tightly round the nation's neck.

But there are people who love their homeland more than their lives. The following are at present real martyrs for freedom:

Petras Paulaitis, who has been suffering the "Lithuanian term of imprisonment" since 1947.

Petras Paltarokas, suffering the same term since 1950.

Klemensas Širvys, — since 1952,

Liudvikas Simutis, — since 1955.

The biography of each one of these might serve as an example of a literary, moral or political analysis. Take the example of Liudvikas Simutis, a member of the national underground movement, who as a mere boy participated in the unit of the "Forest brothers". Confined to his bed during a serious illness, (tuberculosis of the spinal column) he was brought to a hospital. Here he was arrested and indicted before a court. During a special deliberation he was sentenced to death. This sentence was then commuted to 25 years of imprisonment in a camp. In 1958 a medical commission established that his illness was incurable, and proposed that he should be set free at once. Nevertheless he is a prisoner this very day. There are still six years left until he has served his sentence. He is an invalid, and yet the administration forces him to work.

Petras Paulaitis, born 1904, received his education in philosophy in Italy, worked in Germany and Portugal until 1938. Back in Lithuania he taught Latin. In 1940, at the arrival of the Reds he went to Germany and returned 1941 to Lithuania then occupied by the Germans, and joined the underground anti-nazi movement. He participated in the editing of the illegal newspaper "For Freedom", wrote articles against the crimes perpetrated by the nazi administration. For this he was arrested by the Gestapo, but managed to escape during a transportation and went into hiding. After 1944 when Lithuania came into the hands of Soviet administration, Paulaitis stayed on in the national underground movement and edited the newspaper "The Voice of Freedom". 1947 he fell into the hands of the Secret Police. The investigations against him lasted for nine months, during which lieutenant-Colonel Za-kharov used his basic persuasive powers: torture. There followed the traditional sentence, that of 25 years. And just recently they have brought him back to the 19th district for strict regimentation. In 1963 a certain major Svyatkin of the M.V.D. proposed to Paulaitis to write an article in a paper on "The Resistance against the Liars from the South", upon which he would be granted a reprieve. When Paulaitis refused, Svyatkin declared: "You'll rot in this place. You'll never gain your freedom, you just believe me!" The prisoner is now 70 and he has nine years left of his term. Certainly Major Svyatkin can be believed.

According to the most recent statistical data there are at present 3.3 million inhabitants in Lithuania.

If there had been no genocide, the population in 1959 would have been 5.5 million inhabitants, not including the natural growth.

As a result of the genocide, the population of Lithuania has become halved.

In a period of 20 years Lithuania has been bereft of 1,239,000 citizens.

During the period of the Soviet occupation from 1941 to 1959 alone the losses amount to 1,090,000.

Out of these:

1941. Deportations to the Soviet Union	5,000
1941. Evacuated to the Soviet Union	1,200
1941. Killed by the Soviets	1,200
1941 to 1945. Killed during the war	25,000
1945 to 1958. Deportations to the Soviet Union	260,000
1944 to 1953. Partisans killed fighting the Soviets	30-40,000
1945 to 1959. Transferred to other republics	30,000

Altogether 400,000 Lithuanians were brought to Russia during 1948 to 1949. In Germany, having lost the war, the increase of the population from 1939 to 1959 has been 4.3 per cent, in the Netherlands 29.9 per cent, in the U.S.S.R. 10.1 per cent. In Lithuania it not only did not increase, but actually decreased by 13.7 per cent!

The bloodshed and sacrifices of human lives for the inextinguishable idea of freedom have been enormous. My strangulated homeland does not entertain any hope of help from outside, nor even of the most basic attention of compassion from the outside world. Our hope lies in our young people, in the maturing spirit of freedom, in the unification of all oppressed nations, including the Russian people.

After the long years of darkness and, as it seems, of shameful subservience, the nearly quenched flame of freedom is of a sudden blazing with an unexpected strength. Through the dark night of despair there of a sudden shone the torch which is Romas Kalanta. He burned himself, his 19 year old life, in order to light up the way for his young contemporaries who were born under the conditions of serfdom. Crowds of thousands of young demonstrators during the spring of 1972, surrounded by soldiers who were beating them with batons, shouted the slogan "Freedom for Lithuania".

During the seventies a new epoch of Lithuanian resistance has begun. Its banners were Dignity and Faith.

During 1971 speech to the court pronounced by the sailor Simas Kudirka was transmitted from mouth to mouth, like an overwhelming vision. In his speech, which has attained the force of an indictment against the regime, he refuted the accusation of having betrayed his country, because his country was Lithuania. The Soviet Socialist Republic, like the creation of a guilty empire, was a lie and an injustice. The fate of this daring man became known in the whole world. waves of self-burnings. In all these cases the conclusion was the stereotype "Psychic illness", and the funerals were effected in absolute secrecy.

In 1973 the organs of the K.G.B. brought up for trial the Lithuanian society of Local Lore Students, a trial which by its dimensions was comparable to the prosecution of the "Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church". On 27 March 1973, at eight o'clock in the morning, more than 100 persons were arrested in the three towns of Vilnius, Kaunas and Riga, all members of the Society of Local Lore Students. After the investigations had dragged on for 11 months, as a result of which the whole Society was destroyed, five persons were sentenced to various terms. These were:

S. Žukauskas, Born 1950, a former student of the sixth course of the Faculty of Medicine, six years in a severe penal camp,

A. Sakalauskas, born 1938, a teacher at the Polytechnic Institute, 5 years,

V. Povilonis, born 1947, a technical engineer, to two years in a severe penal camp.

A. Mackevičius, born, 1949, a student of the Institute of the Communist Party, to two years in a prison camp.

I. Rudaitis, born 1911, a physician, member of the underground anti-nazi movement, who has saved hundreds of Jewish children in his clinic during the German occupation and had provided medicines and other medical aid to Soviet soldiers, to 3 years in a strict prison camp.

The place of confinement is Solikamsk in the district of Perm.

During his trial Žukauskas also made a speech similar to the one made by Simas Kudirka. He explained to the adamant court the history and the origins of the colonization of Lithuania and declared that Russia still to this very day remains a prison of nations. Žukauskas said that all nations fight for their freedom and that all progressive forces of the world support them. In which way, he asked, are we Lithuanians worse than others? He characterized the trial as a farce and concluded with the poet's words: "The enemy forces us with iron hands, but there is no dearer word than Freedom!-".

According to the unofficial sources it was established that on the 14 May 1972 a Latvian and an Estonian intended to take their own lives together with Romas Kalanta, but they were arrested on the train on the way to Kaunas.

In the summer of 1972 after Kalanta had burned himself to death, another 10 Lithuanians of various ages killed themselves in the same manner. The objective of such self-sacrifice was to direct the attention of the world's conscience to the oppression against the Lithuanian people. The sources of this information are unofficial, since they are hidden carefully, but they were affirmed to me by an official at the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic who was dealing with the inquiries of the waves of self-burnings. In all these cases the conclusion was the stereotype "Psychic illness", and the funerals were effected in absolute secrecy.

In the autumn of 1972 an ideological commission came to Lithuania. The commission demanded the strengthening of ideological work and the replacement of the chief officials in the domains of cultural life and ideology. Amongst others I myself was removed from the post of chief director of Kaunas Dramatic Theatre and was deprived of the right of working with any Soviet cultural institution. The formal pretext for this measure was my letter of protest which had gained a wide circulation through the samizdat.

On 19 March 1972 appeared the first issue of the self-published periodical "The Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church".

This year which had been so full of events, was not uneventful for the enemies of the Lithuanian nation. The case No. 345, which had such an enormous impact, was started. Four trials were arranged:

In March 1974 — 5 persons were tried.

In May 1974 — 3 persons were tried.

In December 1974 a third trial took place, in which the following four persons were sentenced: P. Plumpa, V. Jaugelis, P. Petronis and I. Stašaitis.

In March 1975 — the trial of Gražys.

Nijolė Sadūnaitė is confined to prison, and the cases against Kovolyov and Tvyordokhlebova are being prepared.

In the psychiatric hospital of Tschernyakovsk the student Petras Sindzikas from Vilnius State University is being harassed. The former political prisoner B. Gajauskas affirms that P. Sindzikas at one time was kept there together with General Grigo-renko. His health is endangered.

We, the representatives of that part of the Lithuanian nation which the occupants have not succeeded in subjugating neither with their whips, nor with sweetmeats into collaborating with the enemy, wish to express our most sincere gratitude and acknowledgement to those prominent sons and daughters of the Russian people who through the cobwebs of lies, infamies and hatred, through the iron bars of tyranny and oppression, are stretching out to us a helping hand. These hands are indeed those of people endowed with great minds. They have given to their nation great honour and strength. Today they give dignity to their homeland. But the watchdogs of the totalitarian regime are biting these hands, in which we perceive the symbols of our hope, freedom and justice.

The Lithuanians are uniting their not always very loud, but sincere voice with the voices of all nations of good will, of those who are not indifferent to good or evil, righteousness or injustice, freedom or slavery. We beseech you to intercede with all available means in favor of Sergei Kovalyov and Andrei Tverdokleb. Having done so, we beg you to intercede in favour of us, the oppressed, and perhaps even for yourself. Because that terrible phantom, which was sent into this world a century ago by irresponsible minds, and which has become a perfidious seducement for credulous minds, still in our own days hovers over Europe.

Munich, 1 August 1975

EDITORIAL NOTE

Jonas Jurašas was born in Lithuania in 1936. From 1967 to 1972 he was the director of the State Drama Theater in Kaunas, Lithuania. After the tragic events of 1972 Jurašas was dismissed from his post and was not allowed to work in the theater or at any other job. His wife, Aušra-Marija Jurašas, a literary critic and essayist, was blacklisted by the authorities and none of her writings could be published (See her article "The Problem of Creative Artistic Expression in Contemporary Lithuania, Lituanus, Vol. 22, No. 3). Jurašas, his wife and son were able to leave the Soviet Union in 1974. They came to the United States in 1976. The document reproduced here is the text of Juraša's testimony at the 1975 International Sakharov Hearings held in Copenhagen. The document is reprinted with minor editorial corrections.