



EESTI EVANGEELIUMI LUTERI USU KIRIK

ESTNISKIA EVANGELISK-LUTHERSKA KYRKAN · ESTNISCHE EVANGELISCH-LUTHERISCHE KIRCHE
ESTONIAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE HELSINKI DECLARATION

AND THE BALTIC STATES

The Final Act of the Conference on the Security and Co-operation in Europe, adopted in 1975, has as one of its objectives the lessening of tensions in Europe as a whole and, therefore, surely in the section of Europe called the Baltic area. That no formal peace treaty has been concluded after the close of hostilities in 1945 of the Second Great War in Europe has created boundless hardships and suffering to individual human beings, peoples collectively and nation states responsible for the cultural, religious and political self-determination of their citizens. Because of the lack of a real peace treaty no satisfactory or permanent settlement of the territorial affairs of the European states has been carried out. Even though the arms are at rest, there is no peace in Europe. The Baltic area is still under the occupation of her other (one being Nazi Germany) conqueror from the time of the Second Great War, the Soviet Union. This occupier of the Baltic States defines peace according to Lenin. Peace, according to Lenin, was the continuation of war by other means.

The importance of the Helsinki Declaration, in our opinion, lies in it as an objective effort to open up the post-war positions, locked at Potsdam, by peaceful means. Insoluble problems will arise, without doubt, in connection with an undertaking of such magnitude. These should, however, be manageable with good will. The easing of the suffering of human beings is the most

pressing matter in this connection. The follow-up conference in Belgrade will be a time of studying the inventories of the problems which have come up during the two years after Helsinki. In cases where the laws of the participating States become obstacles to the effective solution of these problems, the Declaration itself points toward an appeal to international justice. With good will the principles of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights along with the international conventions should be sufficient grounds for co-operation and the finding of solutions.

General Observations

The Baltic States and peoples were excluded from the deliberations and signing of the Final Act of the Conference at Helsinki. Efforts were, however, made by the representatives of these three European States and nations to have a voice in the Conference. This was denied to them by the organisers of the Conference. In a letter sent out surreptitiously, dated 17th of June, 1975, Tallinn-Riga, and signed by Representatives of the Estonian and Latvian Democrats, addressed to "All Governments Participating in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe", the liberation movements give a serious warning to all men of reason who are striving for a true lessening of tensions and suffering. The quote is from the original text in English:

Up to now a fundamental question has been left open: will détente... be real or illusive, mutual or unilateral, will it have equal effect on all European nations or will it be implemented at the expense of basic rights and liberties of certain smaller members of the European community? It remains also to be decided whether the effects of the hope for security and cooperation will be limited to the relations between governments and official organizations or could détente be based on closer intercourse and wider change of informations between the millions of ordinary Europeans, fostering better mutual understanding and trust.

Some might say that this is more an academic question and not in line with the political realities existing in Europe. However, this question is very real to certain states in Europe. It was very real during the Conference itself as a Swiss commentator writes on the subject of Helsinki:

...All the European States , with the exception of Albania, took part of this Conference brought about at the behest of the Soviet Union. Albania declined to participate. Three member States of the former League of Nations were missing: Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia... Some representatives of these three States, living in exile, asked for a right to speak. They were politely directed to Mr. Gromyko, who at that moment was in the consulate of the DDR. The Russian foreign minister told them that they were entirely out of place there, for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were Union Republics of the USSR (Mr. Gromyko obviously usurped the right to represent these States, our conclusion). After that these "disturbers of peace" were arrested by the Finnish police...

This incident throws a glaring light on the dark chapter that the free nations of the West unfortunately have entirely forgotten: There are people in Europe with their own language , culture and history for whom the right to speak out independently (not to mention human rights) is only a wishful dream.

Hans Rychener "...Und Estland, Lettland, Litauen?", Herbert Lang, Bern und Frankfurt/M, 1975, p.9.

The peoples of Estonia , Latvia and Lithuania carefully note point II of the Helsinki Declaration , concerning the refraining from the threat or use of force. Their daily existence is, however, at the mercy of the threat and force of the Soviet Army garrisoned all over their lands and patrolling all of their foreign borders and the administrative officialdom , political and economic , having complete jurisdiction over the indigenous population.

Before the Second Great War three democratic States - nations, countries , peoples - existed in this area. They were members of the League of Nations. During the war their accredited diplomatic representatives in Allied democracies made efforts to be accepted as signatories of the Atlantic Charter. Its principles were incorporated into the United Nations declaration on war aims in 1942. The countries were, however, occupied by the armed forces of the Soviet Union under the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact secret spheres of interest clause and incorporated into the USSR. This act of international violence has not been recognised by the democratic States of the West, especially the United States, Great Britain and France. The Federal Republic of Germany has not agreed to the annexation of the Baltic States during her rapprochement with the Soviet Union. These Western democracies and others recognise the passports issued by the consulates of the Republic of Estonia and her diplomatic missions.

No formal peace conference has been held to mark the conclusion of the Second Great War in Europe. For this reason the present borders of the Baltic States have been defined unilaterally by the Soviet Union as an occupying power. The borders have been violated by armed penetration. Therefore point III of the Helsinki Declaration, which emphasises the inviolability of frontiers, and point IV, on the territorial integrity of States, require special attention.

The Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church is the legal continuation of the free (self-administrating, independent from State involvement) national church (children counted as members due to the membership of their parents through baptism). We are ever conscious of our oneness with the church membership in our homeland. There the church has been given another name, different statutes and denied the full freedom of expression by the oppressive régime in power. Despite the fact that the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church is functioning outside her own homeland, she has an irreproachable legal right of succession through Bishop Johan Köpp who had been empowered by a special authorisation to continue the legal administration of the church under extraordinary circumstances. This was given by an act of the last legal Ecclesiastical Assembly convened in Estonia before the occupation by the Soviet Union. Through the efforts of Bishop Köpp all the legal organs of the church were reconstituted in the refugee dispersion, according to the Church Statutes originally ratified in 1935. The activity and organisation of the congregations located in Europe, North America and South America as well as Australia is based upon these Statutes of the independent free national church of Estonia.

Naturally point VII, "Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief", warrants special attention in the Baltic area. The signatory States have promised to respect the basic rights and freedoms. The importance of these is further emphasised by defining them as being "derived from the inherent dignity of the human person and are essential to his free and full development". In the following certain points in connection with these rights and freedoms will be considered in the Baltic States.

1. The effective exercise and respect of this national identity are defined as part of the rights and fundamental freedoms of a citizen. A deep sense of Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian national identity can, however, be labelled as a crime against the Soviet Union or made a socially despicable trait by the Soviet authorities in the Baltic nations. The case of the ornithologist Mart Niklus of Tartu, Estonia, is a representative example. Please see the documents on him sent to Amnesty International, etc. in the Addendum. He was made an outcast, deprived of job opportunities, etc. for being, in the words of the Soviet authorities, "an Estonian nationalist". Grievances or criticism of the human rights violations in the Baltic States by the Soviet authorities are labelled as "anti-state acts". Men, as the four who were sentenced in Tallinn in the autumn of 1975, to hard labour, suffer because they express their concern publicly.

2. The Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians are denied the exercise of civil and political rights and freedoms. The case of the four men in Estonia accused and condemned to terms of penal servitude in strict regime slave labour camps in Russia is a case in point. These men were sentenced after the signing of the Helsinki Declaration. They were charged with the "offence" of "having used their natural right to appeal to the United Nations to bring about the realisation of human liberties in Estonia", as on the spot observers are quoted in the letter written by the Estonian and Latvian democrats to the European governments.

3. Economic rights and freedoms are severely restricted if not entirely denied to the Baltic States. The entire economic structure is Moscow-directed and centrally planned by Soviet ministries and bureaucrats who regard the peoples over one thousand kilometers toward the west only as work force in the Soviet super corporation. Mr. Arturs Landsmanis has carried out a study based on original statistics of the economic factors contributing to the Russification of the Baltic area, published in book form Persist or Perish, published by the Latvian National Foundation, Stockholm, 1976.

On data available from Latvia, he estimates that around 80 per cent of the gross industrial production in Latvia came from enterprises subordinated to 26 different ministries in Moscow. He adds that the bulk of the production is consumed outside the territory of the Baltic lands in question. In this study it is shown that Moscow-directed economic production is directed in such a way which necessitates the steady influx of peoples from other areas of the UUSR. The reason being to change the national identity of the peoples living in the area. Over-industrialisation is the primary means of creating a need for bringing in Moscow's "own" people into the area. This is noted also in the memorandum sent out by the Estonian Democratic Movement and Estonian National Front to Dr. Kurt Waldheim. It is stated there, with supporting statistical figures, "... economically groundless boost in of industry serves as a cover for Russification." (Two Memoranda to UNO from Estonia, Estonian Information Centre, Stockholm 1974.) Moscow-controlled economy has made the Baltic States victims of structural violence by relegating them to the position of have-nots as far as their own workforce, industrial development and natural resources are concerned (most new industrial plants of great size require the importing of raw materials from long distances inside the Soviet Union, while finished products are sent back in the opposite direction. Landsmanis).

4. The degree of a person's ideological orthodoxy is the major determining factor of the person's social rights and freedoms in the Soviet Union. Depending on the amount of variance from the accepted Party line, the punishment varies from surveillance to outright imprisonment in a hard labour camp. Death sentences are also possible for anti-state activities. Frequently the initial punishment is the denial of the right to work at his or her chosen profession. The case of Niklus is an example. Openly religious students are continuously hounded by the administrators at institution of higher learning in order to make them give up their course of studies. A recent case is reported from the University of Tartu, where an openly religious medical student was forced to resign and take up manual employment. Another student professing the Christian faith openly was incarcerated in a mental institution.

5. The objective of Soviet Communism is the elimination of the nation as an independent political and cultural entity and the creation of one single Soviet nation with a Marxist-Leninist culture and language. In order to hasten the process of assimilation with greater Russia, the cultural life of the Baltic nations has been forcibly yoked to that of the entire Soviet Union, especially that of the Russian SSR. It is difficult to understand what is always meant by the terms "our land" and "our people" when it appears in publications from Soviet Estonia or are used in broadcasts from Tallinn. By normally accepted standards in the rest of Europe, it is understood to mean the writers or speakers own nation and people as a linguistically, culturally and historically homogenous unit. This is, however, not what is meant by these terms when used in Soviet Estonia, but rather the whole of the USSR and the plethora of nations living under the domination of Moscow. The ruling hierarchy of the Communist Party consider the cultural rights and freedoms of the Baltic nations as insignificant vis-avis the "grandiose tasks of building Communism, as foreseen in the Joint State Plan", as the Secretary of the Latvian CP wrote in "Padomju Latvijas Kommunisti" (Soviet Latvian Communist) as quoted by Landsmanis, op. cit. In order to achieve the grandiose goals, the Secretary writes that the composition of the population in Latvia and other Baltic States must be made more international, and on this basis... borders between them (various Soviet republics) will disappear and their common international characteristics and traditions (sic!) will further develop."

In the preface of a book of advanced Estonian grammar, the authors speculate concerning the future when national languages will be superseded by one common language of a great Communist state. Looking at the curriculum of the Estonian general secondary schools in 1974/75 (published in English by Periodika, Tallinn 1975: R. Virkus "Education in the Estonian SSR") we find two alarming features:

1) Language instruction is given in three areas: native language, Russian and foreign language, i.e. Russian is not considered as a foreign language to Estonian children;

2) the number of hours per week of instruction in Russian increases steadily while those in the native language of the children decreases steadily with each successive year in school. In the XI year there are no hours of instruction in the native language while Russian is given five hours per week. The total number of hours given to instruction in Russian from year II to XI (there is no instruction in Russian in year I) is in a ratio of nearly 90/100 to native language.

At a time when efforts are made to ease tensions in Europe, it is frightening to see that in general secondary schools in Soviet Estonia military instruction is imposed by the occupying power to children during the last two years of their schooling. This is in addition to physical education, both two hours per week. During the last two years there are more hours of instruction in military science than music or social science. Estonians are known for major song festivals every five years; they are not known as conquerors. In the interests of the Soviet Union and her military might and power in rockets, tanks, battleships and Kalashnikov machine guns the children are constantly fed on pictures and stories of the glories of Soviet arms and war making potential. On the cover of Noorus (Youth) No. 2/1977 there is a recruiting poster type full page four-colour picture of a young soldier holding an automatic weapon with a fixed bayonet in a cradelled ready position; he is crouching in the snow. A text accompanying the picture says: "Service years in the armed forces make a man out of a boy. All boys have to go through it." An article concerning the subject of the picture states, among other things: "The picture on the cover will bring pleasant memories to everyone who has ever worn the uniform of a soldier."

5. Religious freedom will be discussed in greater detail later on in this paper.

Point VIII of the Helsinki Declaration touches upon equal rights and self-determination of peoples. The people of the Baltic area see the powerful overlordship of the Soviet Union as a form of neo-colonialism. The Baltic nations regained, after their Wars of Liberation against Russia in 1918-1920, their independence they had lost several centuries ago. But they were, in 1940, made once more the subjects of the same imperialistic power now known as the Soviet Union.

With the development of analytical methods for the detection of racism of all forms, especially defined in the SPCK , London, publication "Breaking Barriers, Nairobi 1975" institutional racism , it is possible to communicate the problems of small nations being overrun by bigger nations in order to absorb them ethnically. Institutional racism is practiced by the Russian rulers in the Baltic area through a continued pattern of settler colonialism. Racism is the infrastructure for the preservation of the power of Soviet Russia over the Baltic area, viz. the hegemony of the Russian people over the Baltic lands. This is carried out under the pretext of economic and military development and protectionism. A very apt description of the state of affairs is given in the general wording in the WCC Official Report "Breaking Barriers, etc.": "Institutional racism... (is where) the powerful... in secular authority, tend to protect their systems of privileges and to shut out of the decision-making any influence of the weak and the subordinate. Moreover, they tend to overlay their racist privileges all too often with an aura of kindness and service." (pp. 111-112). Even the church leaders from the Baltic area are obligated to give credence to the "aura of kindness and service" by the Soviet Union by speaking in praise of the Soviet system before international gatherings. One senses a modern equivalent of a gladiatorial and not Ignatian salute in the arena.

According to official statistics, at the close of II World War, 3 % of the population living in the Estonian SSR were of non-Estonian origin. Today the official figures indicate something around 40 %. The decrease in rights and freedoms of the people to practice their beliefs, as they were and are expressed in the traditions of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church as a free national church, has been just as dramatic if not more so. More concerning the restrictions on religious freedoms and forms of expression in the following part of this paper.

STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE AGAINST
RELIGION AND THE CHURCH

Basic Attitude of Soviet Government

The official position of the Soviet government concerning religion and its manifestations, the church and the believers, according to statements made in Soviet Estonian press and books on atheism printed there, is that this is a minority phenomenon doomed to extinction in Soviet society. Statements like the following are usual: "As a result of extensive social, economic and cultural reforms, as well as effective ideological education, the vast majority of Soviet people have been freed from religious influences," Rahva Hääl (The Voice of the people), 26th August, 1976, Tallinn, Estonia. In works on sociological and psychological research into the motivation and behaviour of religious people, statements like the following appear: "True, religion acts like opium, and it is very difficult to bring a man back to a true understanding of reality," "Individaalne Lähenemine Ateistlikus Selgitustöös" p. 21 (Individual Contacts in the Dissemination of Atheistic Views), articles chosen and translated from the collection of the Institute for Scientific Atheism of the Academy of Social Sciences of the Central Committee of the CPUSSR, ("Eesti Raamat", 1976 Tallinn).

Church Rolls Show Dramatic Decrease in Numbers

The figures given by the representatives of the leadership of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Soviet-occupied Estonia indicate that the number of people on their rolls as members or, in the terminology used officially in Soviet-occupied Estonia, contributors, do not indicate that the minority is all that small. The former archbishop of the Lutheran church in Soviet-occupied Estonia, Jaan Kiivit, stated in 1956, that the number of people associated with the ministrations of the church was 350,000. The official figure given in 1973, up till now, however, was

250,000. There either has been a drastic drop in the number of people partaking of the sacraments and other ministrations of the church, or the figures are guesses. But even guesses have to be based on general trends and known events. A drop of 100,000 is no give or take matter. Furthermore, a general decrease (to be shown subsequently in this paper) in the number of pastoral acts as well in the number of people taking part of such can be shown on the basis of official statistics published in Soviet-occupied Estonia (not by the church) and reviews in newspapers there. Concomitant with such a reduction has been the propagation of secular ceremonies (read: communist ceremonies) with the objective of making pastoral acts superfluous to young people especially. This is a return to the practices during the first years of Soviet rule, as noted in the study "Religion in the U.S.S.R.", The Contemporary Soviet Union Series: Institutions and Policies, edited by Robert Conquest, 1969 Frederick A. Praeger, New York, Washington). This study points out that such a campaign was reintroduced in 1957 but "came into prominence in 1959 with the establishment of the Leningrad "Wedding Palace". The study continues: "Since then a wide variety of civil ceremonies as counterparts to baptism, confirmation and religious marriage and funerals or to obscure religious feastdays, have been inaugurated by "public commissions" attached to the executive committees of local Soviets," p. 53

The statements in the Soviet press show a conflict situation. On the one hand, the number of believers and churchgoers is said to be a minority; on the other, it is shown to be way over the number of communists and candidates for party membership. The party in Soviet-occupied Estonia has a total of 86,000 members and membership candidates while the total of partymembers-Estonians is 49,739 according to the figures in the Eesti Kommunist nr. 9, 1976 p. 72 and nr. 12, 1976 p. 56. This is way below the 250,000 figure given by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Soviet-occupied Estonia for their membership. The objective of the secular ceremonies campaign is to make the religious community a minority vis a vis the communist party: to make reality to conform theory.

Intensification of secular ceremonies campaign after Helsinki Conference

The history and the present state of such anti-religious activity in Estonia has been outlined in a recent article in a well known evening

paper published in Tallinn, the capital, Õhtuleht of 30th November, 1976. A certain Dotsent (i.e., assistant professor or senior lecturer) Inna Baturin, in scientific atheism, we would assume, writes that the 25th Congress of the CPUSSR defined the 10th five-year plan, among other things, as a way station on the road toward deepening the "socialist way of life". According to the author, the socialist way of life "includes a new, developing mode of life (actually a battle between the old and the new in the sphere of customs, habits and traditions). ... As ritual and ceremonies are a special means for the transmission of established ideas, behavioural norms, values and emotional attitudes, they are an integral part of the socialist way of life and the communist educational system... Soviet ceremonies and traditions have proved to be an effective factor in the formations of the personality (especially the social psychology)... The unique quality of the 10th five-year plan is in the ideological work, in satisfying the spiritual needs of the people."

The assistant professor notes that festive ceremonies marking special events in the personal lives of the people were initiated and energetically developed in the middle and the end of the fifties. The first "Summer days" (communist rite de passage) for youth were held in 1957. In the sixties the special secular ceremonies to mark the birth of a child and especially "Name festivals" were begun in Estonia. The writer of the article bewails the fact that though such ceremonies have caught on in the provinces, they have been slow in gaining acceptance in the capital, Tallinn, and have not become regular practices in the everyday life of the citizens. She emphasises the need for an intensification of effort to propagate the use of Soviet ceremonies and traditions. Therefore, a two year review period and a program of heightened effort has been implemented beginning 1st November, 1975 (three months after the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, etc.). Its stated purpose is to "... energise and deepen the atheistic work and special events in the capital for the purpose of satisfying the ethical-esthetic needs of the citizenry, by assisting them in making their important days in life beautiful and memorable, for finding new forms of Soviet ceremonies and rooting them firmly in everyday life."

For this purpose there are plans to form three to five member Committees for Soviet Ceremonies in every institution and enterprise (store, factory, etc.) to act as organiser and the overseer. Up to this time, writes the assistant professor, there has been only one person per employment or work unit, which, she notes, has proven insufficient as shown by experiences in the university city Tartu, Estonia.

In the provinces and rural areas the programmed incultation of atheistic ceremonies into the everyday life of the people has been more successful than in large cities, for in the countryside the authorities have a more immediate control over the people. Everyone living on a collective farm is known to its administration and local party committee. Going to church and receiving pastoral ministrations is known immediately to the authorities. In the cities, as in all cities, anonymity enables the people to avoid fulfilling the obligations required by the communist life style.

The cadre for such work has been trained, for years, at the Atheistic People's University of Tallinn, the School for Atheism of the CP Estonia Central Committee and the Marxist-Leninist University of the city committee of the Party. All these institutions train directors and organisers of Soviet ceremonies. She gives specific instructions on how to apply for any of these courses. The article reads in places like a college prospectus - with one marked difference: there is no mention of tuition or any charge for the courses which last for two years. This program is obviously a state run and supported effort. The local Party committees are given as registration offices, and the assistant professor calls upon the readers to go and sign up.

The Effectiveness of the Soviet Ceremonies

How effective has such a campaign been since the middle of the fifties? At the beginning of this review on the structural violence against religion and the church, figures were given on the number of people desirous of the ministrations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Soviet-occupied Estonia. They showed a dramatic drop of 100,000 during the years following the middle of the fifties. Publications in Soviet-occupied Estonia give specific percentages which can be quoted as proof of the continuous involvement by the State in the religious lives of the citizenry and the internal affairs of the church.

The Encyclopedic Reference Work of Soviet-occupied Estonia, "Nõukogude Eesti, entsüklopeediline teatmeteos," Tallinn 1975, gives the percentages of ceremonies performed by the church from 1957 to 1974 on page 187 as follows:

Percentages of Pastoral Acts

	Newborns baptised	Weddings solemnised	Burials by church
1957	58.8	29.8	64.5
1968	12.5	2.6	46.0
1974	10.4	2.9	38.6

The percentage of youth eighteen years or older being confirmed shows a dramatic drop after 1957, as well:

Percentage of youths confirmed

1957	49.0
1960	20.9
1967	2.2

A booklet entitled "Ateism, religioon, sotsioloogia" (Atheism, Religion, Sociology), "Eesti Raamat", Tallinn 1970, provides extensive statistics and graphs on religious life in Estonia. An article written by the same Inna Baturin contains a graph showing, according to the title of the article the "Dynamics of the spread of "Summer Days for Youth" during 1957-1965". A copy of the graph is included in the addendum. It shows the dramatic rise in the percentages of youth taking part in the "Summer days" as compared to the dramatic fall for those taking part in confirmation. The slope of the curves show a strong inverse ratio between the two. She identifies the continued propagation of "youth traditions" as the means of influencing families and the rest of society and as an important activity in the continuing fight against religion. She does not see any end to the

practice of the ceremonies before "religion is completely eradicated from the consciousness and the living habits of the people," p. 32. The last statement confirms again that the purpose of the secular ceremonies is the eradication of pastoral acts, with the possibility that they will be discontinued once there is no more church and her ministrations.

A well documented study on the effect of antireligious rites in Estonia has been prepared by the catholic scholar Vello Salo ("Anti-religiöse Riten in Estland", Acta Baltica 1973, p. 40-52, Institutum Balticum, Königstein/Taunus). In this study Salo shows in a composite table the changes in the numbers of youth participating in confirmation and "Summer days" between the years 1953 to 1971. In 1953 the number of youths attending confirmation was 3500, naught for "Summer days". The following years, up to 1959, show a significant increase in the numbers being confirmed, with a high of 9200 in 1957! 1957 is, however, the first year showing any participants in the "Summer days" atheistic program. The initial number is 39! But from 1957 on, there is a steady decrease in the numbers participating in confirmations and an increase in the "Summer days" program year by year. In 1958, the confirmation number is 8400 and the atheistic ceremony 2200, but in 1959, the figures stand at 6200 and 6300 respectively. In 1971, the figures stand 500 for confirmation and 10,000 for the atheistic State sponsored program, p. 44.

The Official Objective of the Soviet State

Graphs like the one from Soviet-occupied Estonia showing the "Dynamics of "Youth Summer Days" 1957-1965" are drawn by the Party cadre to show that in less than ten years time, attendance of confirmation has dropped from 100 % of the country's youth to around five percent, and that attendance of "Summer days" increased from naught to sixty percent. The percentages and the graph surely are a means toward an end by the instructors and professors of atheism, an end which is defined by the Communist Party, which rules the land and wants to rule the hearts and minds of the people as well. Graphs similar to this can be drawn to show the steady attrition in the numbers of newborn being baptised and marriages being solemnised by the church.

In the case of the Lutheran Church in Soviet-occupied Estonia, the anti-religious programs, rites of the Soviet state have achieved a breakthrough in the area of pastoral acts and ministrations of the church marking important events in the lives of the people. Recent statistics from Soviet-occupied Estonia, showing the number of baptisms, marriages, those confirmed and burials in over twenty congregations, for 1974/75, show the same trends. The pressure to keep people away from their pastor and his ministrations for the consecration and solemnisation of important events in their lives is continuing.

Atheistic ceremonies have been organised by the Party, and the State apparatus under her control, for the purpose of excluding the knowledge and effective ministration of baptism, confirmation, solemnisation of marriages and burials. This is done with the full co-operation of all institutions of the Soviet society. The breakthrough came before the Helsinki Declaration was signed, but during the period following August 1st, 1975, date of its signing, the Soviet authorities in Estonia have widened the gap and consolidated their gains against the church and her ministrations. (Please refer back to quotes from the newspaper article written by the atheistic senior lecturer Inna Baturin, earlier in this paper.)

The Omniscience of the State

Every birth, marriage, death, etc. is known to the State authorities. It is known whether a young person took part of a "Summer days" program or not. He or she need a domestic passport for identification. This gives the Party an opportunity of keeping an eye on the private lives of the people from the cradle to the grave. A persons religious views and acts are not private, for they are considered an offence to the ideology of the Party, which rules the state. The private lives and homes of the people are violated. Especially the young people are confronted with a dilemma: to act according to his or her Christian conscience and partake of the pastoral acts of the church, or to say that the Party is their conscience (for, according to Lenin, the Party is the conscience of society and all its members). When the young person attends confirmation and not "Summer days" program, he or she is in danger of losing the chances for higher education and employment befitting his or her talents with good income. But if he or she does as the Party dictates, the good life and opportunities are made

available, according to the standards of the Soviet society. The seeming omniscience and omnipotence of the Communist Party creates a secretive state of mind in people. People are religious and prayerful in the utmost secret. Even pastors admit, somewhat hesitantly, that their children have not been confirmed and that they try and keep a distance between them and religion and church in order not to jeopardise their careers as engineers, etc. It seems that the atheistic authorities will permit the son of a pastor to study anything he likes as long as he does not practice the religion of his father. Sometimes demands are made on the children to condemn the religion of their fathers in order to be given the right to continue their studies in institutions of higher learning.

The authorities can permit church services to be held regularly, for they have adopted another mode of attack, a steady reduction in the numbers of pastoral acts by creating atheistic acts with ritual, romance, and counterfeit spirituality. We will discuss the means used for contacting people and "winning them over" to the Party's way further on in this paper. The Party has adopted a long range plan - even longer than the well known five-year plan, for eventually emptying the churches. The results can be seen in the statistics and numbers of people associated with the church between 1957 and 1973: from 350,000 to 250,000. The Party has been able to cause a drop of 100,000 souls in the rolls of the church in less than twenty years time. The efforts at making the whole society atheistic Marxist-Leninist whose conscience in the Party is continuing today.

All in the Service of Atheist Propaganda

In the pamphlet cited earlier "Individual Contacts in the Dissemination of Atheistic Information", a number of institutions and professions in Soviet society are described in some detail as servants of atheism. In an article entitled "Drawing Believers into the Life and Work of the Society", two basic premises are given: 1) that believers are socially estranged, inactive misfits (unworthy of socialist society) and 2) through social activities, work projects, clubs, cinema, theatre, libraries believers can be made to give up their allegiance to God. The principle is stated by a teacher named G. Jermejev: "The drawing of believers into socially useful activity... is the unerslying prerequisite for their conversion

(winning his mind over)" viz., to atheism, p. 17. Social gospel and engagement in social activities is made a means for the destruction of faith. What in the West would be a broadening of the vistas and activities of the church, is in Soviet-occupied Estonia just the opposite. It means opening the church to destruction, for all activities outside the church are for the purpose of doing away with pastoral acts and to be replaced by Marxist acts.

The following activities in Soviet lands are considered as being in the service of atheism and sometimes organised by the committee for atheism in a factory, for instance: the festive sending off of youths going into the Soviet Army, receiving new workers coming to the plant, honouring veteran workers, and the visiting of waiting mothers. The object of such visits is to make sure the child is "given a name" at the local "palace for the newborn". Aid to those in some kind of need is emphasised as the duty of the collective, p. 17.

The church is denied such access to her own members, not to mention non-members. The church is denied by law the right to aid those in need, even her own members.

Doctors, it is pointed out in the article, are very well suited for atheistic work, for they are received with trust in the homes of believers and are considered as figures of authority, p. 18. The schools are said to have a major role in educating the youngsters into atheism. The article says, "The teachers can make unlimited use of all the tools available in the school's arsenal in order to influence the minds of the believers," p. 18. By drawing the parents into social activities in the school it is hoped that "the school can influence the world view of believing parents, thereby weakening or even excluding their religious influence on their children," pp. 18-19. The church is forbidden by law to give regular instruction to children.

Libraries and librarians are described as effective purveyors of atheism. The church is denied by law to have public libraries or reading rooms. Atheistic social clubs, discussion evenings and cinema, etc. are all suggested and shown to work in "converting" believers to Leninism. The church

cannot hold any other kind of meetings except services. The church in Soviet-occupied Estonia is denied any activities which can be described as hobby, welfare, service, youth, childrens, golden age club, etc. They are given the right to say that all the social activities of the State are good, but not that the State is trying to steal the children from Jesus. The church is denied the right to act usefully in the society; the church is denied the right to become actively engaged in the social lives of their people. The church can only praise the Soviet system.

The campaign against the large religious body of people in Estonia is going on day by day. The Helsinki Declaration brought no change or easing of the pressure. The objective of the authorities is to make it a non-existent minority. The State has no interest in protecting or guaranteeing their right to exist. The atheistic communist ceremony for important occasions in their personal lives is a means toward the end, which is the complete destruction of people's faith in God. The whole society is forced to serve this end. It stands as living proof to Paul's words to Titus 1:15: "... but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure."

. CO-OPERATION IN HUMANITARIAN AND OTHER FIELDS

On the basis of the foresaid, it is quite obvious that, for instance, for the believers, there is a great danger in co-operating with the authorities. Even on the humanitarian and on social levels, co-operation is fraught with danger to the Christian conscience of the believers. They can make the appropriate noises on official levels in support of Soviet foreign policies and in praise of the social services of the state, but such declarations have the sound of a gladiatorial shout in the arena.

Their contacts with churches outside the Soviet Union is under careful and constant surveillance and must serve the ends of the USSR. Those coming out as representatives are instructed before leaving and must make reports on all that transpired during the trip abroad. There are no signs of any easing in these matters.

Information coming out through unofficial channels is therefore more reliable than official statements. The official atheist propaganda and statements in the press and literature also give an idea of the trends and objectives of the State.

Co-operation on Whose Terms?

Matter of independent importance is the question of citizenship. This has not been clarified in the Final Act of the Conference. The problem lies in the fact that the USSR considers all refugees from her original and conquered areas, including the children born to refugee parents in their new countries of residence, as citizens of the Soviet Union. They can be treated as her own citizens whenever she considers needful to do so. There are a number of instances where people have not been allowed to leave the Sovietized homeland after having come there for a visit. This aspect of terror through the wilful acts of the Soviet State creates special difficulties for people from the Baltic States. The official *laissez faire* attitude of the Western democracies is that they do not wish to challenge the Soviets claim in case such arise.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

Some Western commentators and diplomats, champions of *détente*, urge us to desist from criticising the violations occurring in the Soviet Union. Their argument is that the Soviet understanding and jurisprudence is completely different from our's. We can criticise Chile and Spain, etc., for they are Western, but not the Communist lands, for they are quite another world of values and laws. If this argument is to be accepted as valid, what is the reason or meaning for any agreements and conferences with the Soviet Union. Why have any follow-ups at all? In that case there is no need to tell the Soviet Union about violations in other lands, for she could not understand or be competent to make any valid comments on anything beyond her own borders.

We must decide, is the Church in Soviet and Soviet-occupied lands the same Church of Christ as in the West. Does she have the same rights and obligations to go out and make disciples of all nations by baptising and teaching them "to observe all things" whatsoever Christ has commanded us? We therefore have a valid comment to make concerning all

lands and nations where there is an ecclesia militans.

Stockholm, March , 1977

K. Veem

Konrad Veem

Archbishop

amnesty international

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Ants Kippar
Fyrverkarbacken 38
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22 December 1976

Dear Mr Kippar,


The Swedish section of Amnesty International has passed on to us your statement on Mart Niklus, currently under arrest in Tallinn. We are most grateful for this material, and we have adopted Mr Niklus as a prisoner of conscience.

If you receive any new information on Mr Niklus we would be grateful if you would share it with us so that Amnesty International can be more effective in its efforts.

Three adoption groups of Amnesty International will be working for Mr Niklus. Could you kindly let us know whether we may give them your name and address so that they can be in contact with you?

Thank you again.

Yours sincerely,



Clayton Yeo
Research Department

NIKLUS, Mart

Place and year of birth: 1932, in Tartu, Estonia
Civil status: Single
Profession: Ornithologist, teacher, translator
Parents: Father - Julius Niklus (teacher)
Mother - Elfriede Niklus
Home address: Vikerkaare 25, Tartu, Estonia
Present address: Central Prison, "Isolation Ward 1"
Tallinn, Estonia

First sentence in 1959: 10 years hard labor for 15 photographs

In 1959 Soviet Supreme Court in Tallinn sentenced ornithologist Mart Niklus to 10 years hard labor for "dissemination of hostile and false information".

In January 1956 Mart Niklus visited Leningrad, where he worked as an interpreter at an ornithologists' convention, to which foreign scientists had also been invited. At the convention he made the acquaintance of a Finnish professor, Jukko Koskimies, and gave him some snapshots. The photos had been taken in the vicinity of Tartu and showed unsatisfactory Soviet social conditions. In October of the same year some Finnish students visited Tartu's university and Mart Niklus served as their guide. He invited the leader of the student group Ben Schnitt to his home and gave him some photographs to be sent to the Voice of America. The following year (1957) some athletes from Finnish universities visited Tartu and again Mart Niklus was their guide. One of the students, Kyösti Laaksonen, brought with him greetings from Professor Jukko Koskimies and also received a few snapshots from Mart Niklus.

Only 15 of Mart Niklus' photographs reached the west. They were never published by the Voice of America and were not considered especially noteworthy. The Soviet press itself occasionally prints pictures of social shortcomings in Estonia which are far more revealing than the small snapshots made by Mart Niklus. The latter appeared only in two Estonian refugee papers in 1957 and 1958.

Mart Niklus served his sentence in various GULAG labor camps in Siberia. On pages 262 and 263 of his book MY TESTIMONY (published in a Swedish translation in 1970), Anatolij Martjenko describes a meeting with Mart Niklus in Siberian Camp Nr. 3 in 1965.

New arrest on October 8, 1976, for "resisting the police"

Ornithologist Mart Niklus was arrested on October 8, 1976, in Tartu, Estonia, for "resisting the police" on September 30, 1976.

After serving his sentence and returning from Siberia, Mart Niklus lived with his parents at their home in Tartu, Estonia. Because Soviet authorities had politically branded him "an Estonian nationalist", he could not get work in his own profession but had to make do with temporary part-time jobs as substitute teacher.

On September 30, 1976, Mart Niklus was teaching at the Seventh High School in Tartu. He was called out of his classroom. Several policemen were waiting for him in the hall. One of them by the name of Vavrenjuk flashed a search warrant. Mart Niklus pointed out that the warrant was not properly authorized by the chief of the police and was therefore invalid. Mart Niklus left the school in order to protest at the office of the public prosecutor. He had walked only a few blocks when several policemen forced him into a police car. Mart Niklus did not resist. He was held at the police station until evening.

While Mart Niklus was being held in custody, the police searched his residence at Vikerkaare 25 in Tartu, where he lived with his mother Elfriede and father Julius Niklus. Among his possessions the police found and confiscated: 1) a paper signed by Solzhenitsyn, 2) Mart Niklus' autobiography, 3) a children's book in French, and 4) an Estonian translation of the musical "Jesus Christ Superstar". Type samples were also taken on Mart Niklus' typewriter. It was stated that the search was made on suspicion that Mart Niklus had used his typewriter to duplicate illegal literature.

After he was released on the evening of September 30, 1976, Mart Niklus resumed his temporary part-time work at the Seventh High School in Tartu. On Friday, October 8, 1976, Mart Niklus was arrested in the school. He was abarged for violation of the Article 182 of the Estonian S.S.R. Criminal Code, by "resisting the police" on September 30, 1976.

In connection with the arrest, Mart Niklus tore up his Soviet passport and declared that he wished to renounce his Soviet citizenship.

According to information received, Mart Niklus has been transferred from Tartu to the Central Prison in Tallinn, where he is awaiting trial in "Isolation Ward 1".

Allegedly, Soviet authorities are planning to subject Mart Niklus to a psychiatric examination. This means that Mart Niklus may be sent to an infamous KGB "psychiatric institution".

Mart Niklus' case is being handled by Assistant Prosecutor Kiis. According to Article 182 of the Estonian S.S.R. Criminal Code, the maximum punishment for "resisting the police" is five years imprisonment.

APPEAL SIGNED

BY 19 POLITICAL PRISONERS

The following appeal from prisoners in the Soviet Union is included with our paper as a follow up on the fate of the four Estonian democrats, Sergei Soldatov, Kalju Mättik, Artjom Juskevitsš and Mati Kiirend, who were arrested and sentenced (after the signing of the Helsinki Final Act) for allegedly having sent memoranda to the UN organisation on behalf of the human rights and basic liberties of people living in Estonia. The memoranda as well as a review of their trial were sent to you with our earlier material. The new appeal signed by nineteen prisoners, including these four Estonians, is presented here for your serious consideration.

Appeal of political prisoners to the whole world, to all men of good will, to all who hold dear the principles of democracy, freedom and human rights!

We, the undersigned, have been branded as highly dangerous criminals. We have read literature forbidden in the Soviet Union, defended beliefs and views, informed our friends of them and, in addition to that, taken the liberty of planning our own course for the future in a manner different from that prescribed by others.

In other words, we have been condemned for that which in truly democratic lands is part of the normal way of life. We are accused of making calumny, of reading and collecting slanderous literature. As regarding this material, they do not dare, for fear of unmasking themselves, either during the preparatory investigations or during the trial, allow an elementary conscientious review or scientific examination to be made of this, viz., the literature being used as burden of proof against us.

The investigators, prosecutor, defence and judiciary, all, work together for a common end. All of these persons play their learned roles, making entrances and exits; in other words, it gives them opportunity of appearing under various guises against the background of deceptive justice.

We have been kept in prisons, concentration camps, psychiatric institutions - total isolation from the outside world. We are forced to work for more than forty-eight hours a week for rations of minimal nutritional value and practically no pay. We are forced to attend weekly political "cultivation" sessions. For the most minor infractions we are punished and humiliated by all means possible and tortured with cold and hunger.

We entreat you to become involved on behalf of our rights and to demand that the functionaries of the CPUSSR, as the governing and directing powers in our land, become beholden to the contents of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe at Helsinki, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international agreements on the political rights of citizens.

In addition to that, as a sign of the adherence to and actualisation of the contents of the above agreements, to demand our release, along with the cessation of political persecution, discrimination and the return of political exiles.

(Translated from the German version published in "Glaube in der 2. Welt Nr. 12, 1976, Küssnacht/Zurich, Switzerland)

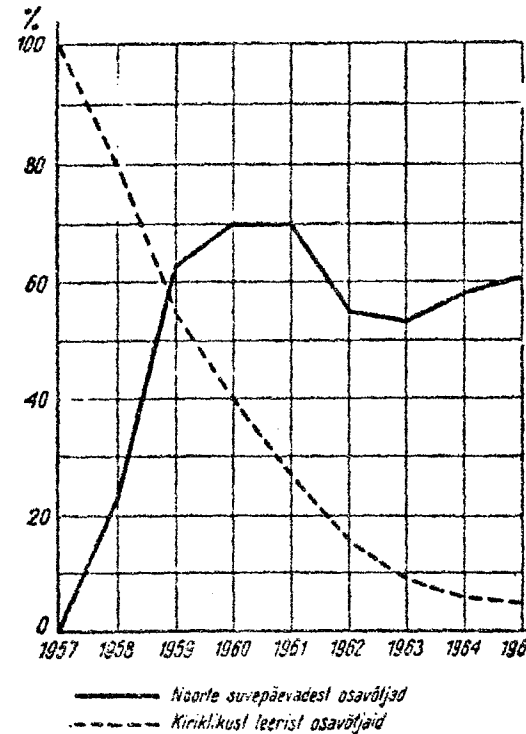
ATEISM, RELIGIOON, SOTSIOLOOGIA

A graph showing the declining participation in confirmation and increasing participation in "Summer days" programs. See, in particular, pp. 14-15 in the text.



KIRJASTUS «EESTI RAAMAT» · TALLINN 1970

NOORTE SUVEPÄEVADE LEVIKU DÜNAAMIKA AASTAIL 1957—1965



saamade ja tõekspidamistega ning sellest võeti sageli osa vaid kombe pärast.

Diagrammist nähtub ka noorte suvepäevadest osavõtjate arvu teatav vähenemine 1962. aastast alates. Seda on põhjustanud mitmed asjaolud. Esmalt — noorte suvepäevade korraldamise esimestel aastatel võis neist osa võtta kogu komsomoliealine noorsugu (s. o. kuni 28 eluaastani), hiljem osavõtjate vanust pidevalt piirati. Teiseks — Tallinnas ja Tartus lakati noorte suvepäevadele kutsumast abituriente ega leitud noorte suvepäevade läbiviimiseks mooduseid, mis oleksid soodustanud kõigi soovijate osavõttu noorte suvepäevadest. Arvestada tuleb ka seda, et aastail 1961—1964 oli 18-aastasi noori tunduvalt vähem, sest siis