

Moscow Helsinki Group Documents (1976-1982)
1976

31. On the exclusion of seven students from the Vienuolis middle school (Vilnius)

Document No 15

From the beginning of the 1976-1977 school year, seven upper class students of the Vienuolis middle school (Vilnius) were not allowed to attend classes: Vytautas Bogusis, Vytautas Bidlauskas, Algirdas Masyulenis, Julius Sasnauskas, Kestutis Subachus, Regimantas Palenis and Dainius Shaputis. They and their parents and were told that they have been excluded from the school by the decision of a staff council which took place on June 17, 1976, but none of them received the opportunity to look at the record of this council, or even to verify the motivations for their exclusion.

The academic director of the Dobinas school and its teachers gave confused and contradictory explanations to the students' parents and to aid group member Lyudmila Alexeyeva, sent by the group to Vilnius to obtain information on this subject. A. Rimkus, minister of education of the Lithuanian SSR, declared to L. Alexeyeva and Lithuanian human rights activist Thomas Ventslov, that all of these boys are excluded for behavior unworthy of a Soviet school child, but was unable to specify what specific wrongs each of them committed.

There are grounds to believe that these exclusions were carried out under orders from the organs of state security.

Over the course of the previous year these students were summoned to the police and to the KGB, where they were asked more or less the same questions: do they go to church and do they listen to programs of the radio station "Vatican," as well as to explain why they visit Victoras Petkus (Petkus—a well-known public and catholic figure in Lithuania, spent 14 years in camps and prisons for political matters. Currently he is one of the founding members of the Lithuanian Public Group to Promote Fulfillment of the Helsinki Accords).

They attempted to get the boys to "admit" that Petkus would treat them to wine and cigarettes, give them money for "typewritten literature," and even informed them that Petkus was a homosexual.

At the police station captain Semenov yelled at the kids and sprinkled his speech with obscenities; at the KGB senior lieutenant Verbitskas was polite, but both threatened that if the boys did not confirm the slanders against Petkus, they would not attend University, while Bogusis was even threatened with juvenile prison. The boys' refusal to give false witness is the only reason for their exclusion from school.

Their persecution has not stopped. In the middle of November Julius Sasnauskas was taken to the regional police department, where he was beaten by the criminal search inspector, major Matsulevich. Nor are the others left in peace.

All of this constitutes a clear violation of basic human rights, made more outrageous by the fact those concerned are practically children.

Liudmila Alexeyeva, Thomas Ventslov (from the Lithuanian Public Group to Promote Fulfillment of the Helsinki Accords)

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[Translated by Anya Grenier for the National Security Archive]