

Translation of:

<http://www.lrytas.lt/-13128604461311096637-lietuvos-neonaciai-dangstosi-pagonybe-dirba-valstybinese-jstajgose-ir-sako-kad-svastika-tera-istorinis-simbolis-nuotraukos.htm>

Lithuanian Neo-Nazis Hide Behind Paganism, Work in Government Institutions and Say the Swastika is Just a Historical Symbol

by Dovilė Tuskenytė

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A girl was sitting on a Vilnius city bus. She wore a shirt with an inscription on the back, “Lithuania for Lithuanians,” and on the front was the number 14 above a fist with an 88 underneath it. A few days later Anders Breivik shot and blew up 76 people. Then more news: it turns out there are men in the Lithuanian military who salute the swastika.

What do the mysterious numbers 14 and 88 mean? Lithuanian Nationalist Center chairman Ričardas Čekutis explained the secret to me, probably without intending to. He explained that philosopher David Lane defined the essence of National Socialism in 14 words [white supremacist leader David Eden Lane wrote “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for White children.” —Trans]. Eight is the eighth letter in the German [sic] alphabet, H. The number 88 encodes the meaning HH, or “Heil Hitler.” Since World War II neo-Nazis usually write these two figures together [sic, but the author means 14 and 88 are written together].

Political scientist Algirdas Davidavičius replaces the term neo-Nazism with Naziophilia: “This is a fascination [the text says literally “enjoyment” —Trans] with Nazi symbols, fascist themes and autocratic models of society. This is a method to provide reality with the features which, neo-Nazis feel, society lacks.”

Lithuanian Nationalist Center chairman Čekutis said at the beginning of the interview that he doesn't personally know any people in Lithuania who are neo-Nazis. Several questions later he admitted he does know several people with Nazi views.

At the conclusion of the interview I showed him a photograph showing a portrait of Adolf Hitler and a Nazi German flag hanging on a wall during a concert by the fascist band Tiesiai Sviesiai. Čekutis admitted that he knew all the people in the photograph, but continued to deny neo-Nazism exists in Lithuania: "For more than 70 years that which history has taught us and our children is a counterfeit covered with a fig leaf. Neither fascism nor Nazism were zoological, animalistic or bestial, as is written everywhere."

An individual has the opportunity ["right"] to speak out, that is assured by the constitution, but it is very important what that person wants to say. Freedom of speech is not absolute, there are certain things which if a person says them, he must be accountable for his words. The first time you hear a statement opposing democratic values, you can argue against it ["polemicize" is the word used for countering Nazi ideology here], the second time you can ignore it, but if someone systematically in one way or another says such things, it means he is propagating that information openly, and that is unacceptable ["intolerable"]; this little moralistic paragraph is not set off from the rest of the "article" in any way —Trans]

Čekutis says that the world visions of the EU and Adolf Hitler are identical. Čekutis agrees with neo-Nazis on another issue: that there was no Holocaust. The Lithuanian Nationalist Center chairman says that the victims from all countries in World War II need to be counted, and that most of them [the countries] lost the same amount of people as the Jews who were murdered. He also explains that the figure of victims in the millions is nothing more than a myth created for contemporary Jews to receive different kinds of compensation from countries.

Davidavičius stresses that modern neo-Nazis actively use Paganism as their own religion. They also attempt to combine [with it] traditional ancient Roman symbols. The latter used the lifting of the right arm to mean greeting and respect. Independent investigator Kasparas Pocius agrees with him, saying neo-Nazis have shown how very capable they are of assuming and using symbols from radically different sources.

Čekutis defends neo-Nazis and says that any symbol only has the meaning assigned to it by the person carrying or recognizing it: “There are those who openly used Nazi German symbols, that is their right and people must respect this choice of theirs. We have often spoken about how if World War II happened now, we would without any doubt all find ourselves on the German side. This is how skins express their position on what is going on here and the falsification of history.”

On Hitler’s 122nd birthday, flags were raised over Lithuania with the inscription “Hitler was right,” a synagogue was vandalized with “Judens raus” graffiti, and the number 88 was written on sidewalks. Davidavičius characterizes this as a provocative testing of power, and says that such actions are anti-democratic and the appropriate Lithuanian institutions should battle against this very clearly [“very publicly” is perhaps the idea here —Trans].

How do people become neo-Nazis? Political scientist Davidavičius thinks people who are searching for themselves often become neo-Nazis. They can’t be blamed for seeking their own identities, but the answers they select can be blamed: “We can judge the answers they chose from the point of view of Lithuanian democracy and as democratic citizens of the EU, because this answer to the question ‘Who am I?’ is destructive [“undermining”] the foundations of the democratic government and contemporary statehood. The fundamental value of the democratic state is the recognition of the difference of another and the recognition of positive values in a person who is different from you.”

People of dubious repute participate in the March 11th march every year [the author is talking about the skinhead/neo-Nazi march through Vilnius on Lithuanian Independence Day, “traditional” for three years now —Trans]. For example, Benas Murma. When he was 14, he murdered a homeless man, went to prison, and then stole armor from a branch of the Lithuanian National Museum. Fascist skinheads Vitalijus Kersis and Mantas Janusonis. This year German nationalist Mike Mueller arrived for the march. Čekutis says that a person who has been punished and imprisoned although probably innocent can call himself a patriot. Skinheads, he says, are good and moral people: “They act as they think, they show it and don’t try to hide behind masks with double meanings.” Čekutis says sympathy for cosmopolitans is the greatest evil [the author doesn’t explain the usage of “cosmopolitan” by

Lithuanian neo-Nazis, it is already the mainstream meaning in Lithuania, taken directly from Nazi usage —Trans].

Virgis Nargela grabbed attention when he posted a picture of himself on Facebook with his right arm raised. One of his daughters, Migle Nargelaite, is a journalism student and has achieved a reputation among her fellow students for her very provocative and outspoken views on homosexuals.

She was chosen as a commentator for radical-right points of view on the Vilnius University webpage, where students are allowed to post their work, and she was asked to express her opinion on people of different [sexual] orientation. Nargelaite called them “pederasts” [a slightly more pejorative slang form, same meaning —Trans], and asked the author of the article [where her views were included] not to replace this word with another. The young woman also wears different pins [or “medals,” “badges”] decorated with swastikas and inscriptions such as “Whites are better,” “Everyone’s equal, whites are the most equal.” [this is the adjectival plural form of *baltas* and cannot be confused with “Balts” or “Baltic”; she means “white” —Trans]. Davidavičius says that a lack of standards in our academic system is responsible for Lithuanian universities not taking any measures against people who loudly express these kinds of attitudes.

People who call themselves anti-fascists often make public different photos of neo-Nazis and filmed material. It was an antifascist website’s publication of photographs that led to the investigation of the existence of neo-Nazis in the [Lithuanian] military. Čekutis says that anti-fascists are just tools of the globalists and cosmopolitans who earn a living with money from EU funds. He says money from these funds led to the creation in Lithuania of more than a dozen human rights institutes: “Their main activity, milking EU funds, has nothing in common with fascism or anti-fascism. These are purely mercantile interests, small business. Just as the Holocaust is also a small business to some Alperoviches [Alperovich is the 82 year old elected chairman of the Lithuanian Jewish Community —Trans]. Even those sexual deviants who organize parades here, they [antifascist organizations?] cannot defend them and do not, because they don’t have any authorization and powers [“forces,” they don’t have the strength] for that.”

Assaults on people based on race are nothing new in Lithuania. In 1996 and 1997 foreign diplomats were beaten up in Lithuania, the representatives of Kazakhstan and Japan.

Davidavičius thinks that dialogue is needed on the limits of acceptable public expression for both sides on norms and their common values. Many countries have tried to hold negotiations with European Muslims in order to make them feel more accepted, so that they'd feel at home while not losing their Islamic identities [the author seems to be talking about integration initiatives —Trans]. “This decade is very important for a democratic culture of Lithuania to appear. The day is coming when we will have to determine how and how much we can be democratic, how much we can compromise with different [kinds of] people, how much we can accept them. Neo-Nazis just show that this topic is becoming ever more significant and people, society will have to determine what it means to live in a contemporary democracy: multiethnic or multicultural,” he said.

Čekutis objects to Davidavičius and says such a dialogue is impossible because neither the Lithuanian government nor the EU would be interested in it. He says the nationalists might be interested in such a dialogue, but their conditions would be categorical: a portion of an ethnic group living in a foreign state must unconditionally obey [or “belong to”] the state where they live. He said it's most often the case that foreigners themselves provoke violence: “What's better to do? Wait till you are punched, or begin first, if you see that the conflict would resolve itself in another way? Clearly, it is better to begin first.”

On May 2 this year the Artoteka creative workshop [in Vilnius] held a screening of an anti-fascist film that was halted when smoke bombs were thrown into the building. Čekutis rejects that this could have been done by skinheads and wants proof of that. “In any event, evidence can be fabricated. I repeat, if these accusations continue, all of that will begin.” Member of parliament Emanuelis Zingeris said of the incident: “It is possible several people threw smoke bombs into the building, but only an organization could have initiated and organized this, and that is even worse.”

Čekutis says the scandalous March 11 marches are dedicated to showing that this day is the Independence holiday, it is a sign of respect to the signatories [to the March 11, 1990 Lithuanian re-declaration of independence], and the procession itself is meant to show that participants speak in favor of a free Lithuania without any unions [national and trans-national, not “labor unions” —Trans]. The head of the Lithuanian Nationalist Center [Čekutis] says the ... controversial ... phrase “Lithuania for Lithuanians” is really just an

abbreviation of “Lithuania for Lithuanians, and Lithuanians for Lithuania.” Davidavičius says that this is just an attempt to wiggle out of it: “If you want to defend yourself, you can always find arguments, but however much they defend this march, what it says and what we can see from viewing it is anti-democratic.”

German nationalist Mike Mueller who speaks out against the dictate of the EU took part in the March 11 march this year — at least that’s how Čekutis characterizes him. Čekutis says they intend to invite Nazis from other countries next year, including Swedes, Finns, Estonians, Latvians, Germans — who have already agreed — , French and Austrians [Lithuanian neo-Nazi websites actually claimed “patriotic” representatives from most of these countries attended the March 11 rally this year, 2011 –Trans]. “Our geography is expanding and that makes us happy. So much so that our tolerast [this current neo-Nazi term comes from “tolerant”+”pederast”, —Trans] leaders will be able to weep that the nationalists of all Europe are uniting in Vilnius. Sooner or later that is what will happen, of course,” Čekutis said.

Čekutis was terminated as advisor to [former Genocide Center director] Liberal Union MP Dalia Kuodytė when [his] party Young Lithuania made him candidate for the Vilnius City Council and [he] received attention for the [campaign] slogan “For a Lithuania without gays, blacks, reds and the Gypsy caravan.” Čekutis says he was let go before this slogan was created.

The dates say otherwise: the campaign slogan appeared in public in February, while Čekutis was fired in March. MP Kuodytė wouldn’t answer her telephone and didn’t answer questions sent by email.

Čekutis explained his campaign slogan like this: “Without gays means without exaltation of and propaganda for all sorts of sexual deviations dictated by the European Union. Without blacks means without the black money of the Žuokas campaign, without scammers and thieves, as we know, in Lithuanian folklore thieves were called black, but not mystical negroes. Without reds means without Communists and their past. Without the Gypsy caravan, the Gypsy caravan is officially recognized as a criminal organization. We don’t say ‘without the Gypsy nation,’ we say ‘without the caravan.’ The caravan is a criminal organization trafficking narcotics which must be destroyed. I have said and will say that there is only one solution: to turn onto the path of unity of the ethnic state [or “nation-state”], for all

ethnic [or “patriotic”], universal [?] organizations to join up in a broad alliance, a broad coalition to fight for political power while at the same time putting into practice our program [“party platform”],” Čekutis said. [I recall a fellow member of Čekutis’s neo-Nazi party named Marius Kundrotas wrote the same explanation of their campaign slogan, almost verbatim, but perhaps they co-authored it —Trans]

They are planning to join up. With [MPs] Gintaras Songaila, Kazimieras Uoka, Marius Kundrotas and others they are planning to re-establish the Lithuanian Nationalist Party. “We still don’t know what the name will be, that has to be decided by the congress, not by some initiative group. The pace of work isn’t bad, it seems the congress will happen at the end of autumn, and I think a broad patriotic [“ethnic”] coalition will form based on this party, and as chairman of the Lithuanian Nationalist Center I see the center’s mission in the unification of political and patriotic [“ethnic”] forces into one alliance, which is also stated in the articles of incorporation of the Lithuanian Nationalist Center,” Čekutis said.

Čekutis thinks the slogan should ring out [“be used,” meaning the slogan about Lithuanian without gays, etc.] and if anyone is interested he can read the electoral program [party platform]. It was someone who signed off as White Nation 88 who commented on the electoral program [webpage?], saying he would only vote for this party. Knowing the meaning of the number, this person naturally appears to be one holding National Socialist views. Čekutis disagreed, saying there are bureaucrats who come to work, have nothing to do, and write the exact same comment under every text they read on the internet all day long.

Davidavičius said the slogan of the Young Lithuania party is anti-constitutional and illegal: “To say that a registered, legally operation political organization is seeking that Lithuania or part of it, for example, Vilnius, should be ‘without’ these groups of citizens is discrimination. This simply violated the second section of the Lithuanian constitution and the European Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Basic Freedoms.”

Fascist bands in Lithuania call themselves patriotic rock groups. Diktature, Tiesiai Sviesiai, these are the groups at whose concerts skinheads assemble and raise their right arms [“siege heil”] during songs. Čekutis says they have the right to express their views: “It is not written anywhere in the

constitution that National Socialist views, and that is namely the declaration of such views, violates the Lithuanian constitution. Their music is usually played in closed clubs where only people with those views attend. I myself have been to several of these kinds of concerts. However strange it sounds, it is very calm there. There are no fights, you can sit calmly, discuss various future activities there with people,” Čekutis said.

On June 17 a pre-trial investigation was initiated at the Lithuanian Criminal Police Bureau on incitement to violence against groups of people based on their ethnicity and ethnic membership based on the lyrics of the Diktatura song in Salcininkai Region posted on the internet.

Material has been passed to prosecutors and the Vilnius City District Prosecutor is carrying out the investigation. The complaint was filed by [MP] Emanuelis Zingeris and Jaroslavas Narkevičius.

“This is not funny and these are not isolated signs of evil. We must recognize them and ruthlessly remove them from social life, so that the youth would not be infected by primitive and easily accessible patriotic slogans which quickly cross over from patriotism into hate. There must be a reaction by political parties and people to such songs and the statements of Čekutis, despite the fact that these are rather rare],” [MP] Zingeris said [Such statements by Čekutis and others are not rare at all —Trans]

Davidavičius says the text of the song is clearly criminal. Pocius says one cannot even ask the question of whether such texts are to be shown tolerance; instead, one must raise the question of how they come about, what the reasons behind them are. Čekutis suggests politicians think about other things: “It would be better for Zingeris to pay more attention to the biography of his closest relatives, including his father [a Soviet army veteran who fought in World War II against Hitler —Trans], than to the work of youth bands. All the more since the current Diktatura doesn’t have anything in common with the text or the song.” He also said the current line-up of the group has completely changed, although the group’s official internet page says the founder of the group is still performing with the group.

Čekutis, known for his radical statements, works as a senior specialist in the legal analysis and consultation group of the Special Investigations Department of the Center for the Study of the Genocide and Resistance of Lithuanian Residents [where MP Kuodytė was director until being elected

to parliament, where she hired Čekutis as her advisor, after whose firing he went back to the Genocide Center —Trans].

In one of his conversations on Facebook with Šiauliai-based attorney Nerijus Ulcinas, Čekutis called for checks [on the ethnicity of] political party [candidates] going back three generations. Ulcinas, who defended the [female neo-Nazi] attacker who attacked the singer Berneen [of African origin] and known for his nationalistic views and justification of the behavior of Norwegian butcher Anders Breivik, called the politician [MEP and professor] Leonidas Donskis a “half-Jew.”

Čekutis, asked to comment on this [Facebook entry] conversation, defended himself saying they were just joking around: “Well he is half-Jewish, is that slander? We were telling jokes to each other, the context was humorous with all sorts of historical inclusions [sic], recalling the greatest nonsenses of the 20th century that existed. And among them is the murder of the Jews.”

One begins to see a pattern: when neo-Nazis are accused of [making] intolerable statements, they defend themselves by saying they were only joking.

[MP] Zingeris says the neo-Nazis in Lithuania are much more dangerous than people think: “There’s the suspicion that these people are not poorly organized, that they have separate organizations which communicate with one another, and I would suggest that law enforcement view them as belonging to organized groups, which is correspondingly defined in the constitution. The network of these organizations will attempt to co-opt the dissatisfaction of the people, to monopolize it and direct it to a water course useful for their mills of hatred.”

For some, being a patriot means being a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania and adhering to the constitution. For some people this is equal to treason against the state. Čekutis says that ethnic minorities and homosexuals have to realize they are living in the state of Lithuania where power [or “government”] belongs to Lithuanians and that they must first take care of their own welfare [or “must primarily worry about creating their own prosperity”]: “It is not we who must adapt to all minorities, but the minorities [who must adapt] to us, it is not we who must integrate in our own lands, as [MP] Waldemar Tomaszewski said, but is they who must integrate. No one is driving anyone out here, but they must recognize the

principle of the superiority of Lithuanian national rights before all offices above the state [i.e., transnational organizations], including the EU. We aren't preparing to discriminate against sexual deviants, we are speaking out against the propaganda which operates as a factor de-motivating the nation [the "people" in the ethnic sense –Trans]. We aren't planning to allow a parade of deviants as the largest parade in our state. No matter what the globalists try to do, they will certainly succeed in nothing, as long as we are alive."

Davidavičius believes a patriot is anyone who pledges [to uphold] the constitution and laws, accepts citizenship, is a responsible citizen or [who] knows the Lithuanian language sufficiently: "Civic, democratic patriotism is not devotion to tribal traditions or narrow, closed 'blood' or 'soil' communities [or "associations], but rather the Republic, being crafted through constant dialogue, joint effort and a common pledge undertaken by the citizens."