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DE-CHOICING OF ELECTIONS: JULY 1940 IN ESTONIA

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Elections without a choice of candidates have been practiced by many regimes, right and left. The Soviet-organized elections in Estonia in July 1940 offer an extra feature of starting out as multi-candidate elections in a polity used to elections with some choice, but ending with only one candidate to choose from by the time the polls opened. The procedure through which the elections were gradually de-choiced was at times quite complex and confused. Democratic traditions yielded to the pressure of overwhelming foreign force peacefully, yet tenaciously defending every step in the electoral procedure. The "supplementary Soviet army contingents" (to use a standard Soviet expression)¹ had entered Estonia on 17 June. During the 14-15 July elections they were guarding the ballot boxes and offering rides in Soviet army trucks to those voters who otherwise felt too sick to go and cast a vote for the single candidate left on the ballot.² The elections in a still formally sovereign and separate state involved outside armed forces as electoral workers.

Documentary evidence regarding the July 1940 elections has been one-sided since the archives have remained under Soviet control.³ Most of the information published in the West has been based on eyewitness and participant accounts⁴ which by no means should be haughtily and pedantically discounted, but which should be complemented with documentary evidence whenever possible. In fact, an important collection of election documents exists, but has largely remained unpublished, untranslated, and unused, with a few exceptions.⁵ It is the purpose of this article to present translations of this collection (in the Appendix), to summarize their content, and to comment briefly on their meaning and on their agreement or disagreement with the Soviet version of history.

How did this collection come about? Soviet control of Estonian archives was interrupted by the German occupation, 1941-1944. Contemptuous of

elections in general, the Nazi occupants had no interest in investigating the 1940 elections, but for the same reason they were not adamantly opposed if someone else wanted to do it. That someone else was a young research assistant at Tartu University, who was later (1959-1979) professor of political science at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. His spontaneous account of the archives project, in a private letter, is worth translating in full.

When I was appointed research assistant at the Sub-Department of Public Law of Tartu University in fall 1943, the issue arose of no one having as yet studied the materials in the State Archives (*Rügiarhiiv*) in Tallinn pertaining to the so-called "red parliament" elections of summer 1940. The initiative came from Professor Nikolai Maim, and he suggested that I do it. (Maybe this was the motive for his picking me as his assistant in the first place.) After consultation with Professor Uluots⁶ (then dean of the Faculty of Law) the University indeed arranged for a permit for my working in the archives in Tallinn. Obtaining the authorization, however, took a long time since it had to come from Riga. (German occupation!) Finally, the permission came in January.

I was in Tallinn from 18 January to 1 February [1944], but then I had to return to Tartu because of mobilization. I got exempt from it, but it took time, and also I was busy with various other things. I was in Tallinn a couple of times in March, but I never made it to the archives again. I was to continue the archives work in April. But then came the arrests by the SD [the German *Sicherheitsdienst*], and I was on the list. The SD did not succeed in arresting me, although searches were carried out in many places. I had to vanish underground, and there I stayed until I left Estonia. Of course, I never saw the archives again. There would be much interesting to tell about those underground days, but this does not belong here.

In February 1944 I presented Professor Maim my report on work in the archives, with an overview of materials to be found there. I added a few typed copies of what I had already retyped in the archives—those items I thought to be the most important. As I fled Estonia, end of September 1944, all my copies remained in Estonia and are most likely destroyed by now. However, Professor Maim had taken with him the copies I presented him and returned them to me after the war, in Hamburg.

The enclosed copies are made [duplicated] from those I received from Professor Maim in 1946.

For my part, I sent copies to Sweden in 1946. How much use they have received there I cannot tell. At least, they were used in *Eesti riik ja rahvas*. When Professor Boris Meissner wrote his dissertation in Hamburg, 1947, he, too, received copies and has made use of them, as can be seen from the enclosed copies of his works.⁷

The present article should not be expected to give a comprehensive account of the events of July 1940. Its only purpose is to comment on the documents copied by Karl Aun and the events directly reflected in those documents. The basic nomenclature and electoral machinery, as stipulated in the *Riigivolikogu* [Chamber of Deputies] Electoral Act, is given in the beginning of the Appendix.⁸ Documents are presented approximately in a chronological order, with some exceptions. They are often written in ponderous and repetitious bureaucratise, probably the more so because the new Soviet-sponsored local functionaries tried to overcompensate for their

lack of experience with that style. Gaps shown are those left by Karl Aun in January 1944. It should be recalled that he could not return to complete the task.

Document 1 (7 July) sets the scene for the hasty parliamentary elections called on 5 July, eighteen days after Soviet military occupation. In violation of the Constitution, many due-process provisions of the electoral law had already been discarded, especially regarding time intervals between calling the elections, nominations deadline, and balloting.⁹ However, the basic format, with choice among multiple candidates, still largely prevailed on 7 July, seven days before the elections. The Central Electoral Committee (CEC) consisted predominantly by this time of pro-occupation quislings and so did the Districts' Committees. (The latter term designated a single committee in charge of several single-seat electoral districts.) Document 1 extends their control down to the local level by ordering changes in the membership of Precinct Commissions, "taking into account the changes that have taken place in the public life of the Republic," a euphemism for foreign occupation. The composition of the CEC will be discussed in a separate section toward the end of this article.

Document 2 (9 July) indicates continuing piecemeal alterations in the electoral rules, such as relaxation of residence requirements, while the electoral campaign has already started.¹⁰ Formally liberal, these changes established a basis for possible ballot-box stuffing by those in control of Precinct Commissions. The continuous changes also introduced an atmosphere in which no previous law could be taken for granted any more although adherence to existing law was proclaimed by the new authorities whenever it suited them.

Document 3 is an undated telegram which apparently was dispatched much later when the elections were already in process (14 or 15 July). It is presented here out of chronological order because it flatly contradicts the earlier instructions in Document 2, regarding the identifying documents needed by voters: it allows "citizens" known to the Precinct Commission members (but not necessarily residents of the Precinct) to vote "without any identifying document." When the occupation authorities realized that not enough citizens went to vote, new ways were designed to augment the number of voters. According to Karl Aun, truckloads of "voters" were occasionally reported moved around, from ballot place to ballot place, to cast several votes. The telegram (Document 3) was sent to formally legalize this procedure for ballot-box stuffing. The form of the telegram suggests that it was not sent to all Districts' Committees.

Document 4 (9 July) reinforces the message of Document 1 while still preserving the basic legal framework. The bland guidelines about convening the Precinct Commission members "to instruct them further on their duties" enabled the new powerholders to pass on sensitive instructions without leaving written records.

The evening of 9 July marks a major shift in methods, from mere biasing of the process in favor of the Soviet-sponsored Estonian Working Peo-

ple's League (EWPL) to outright elimination of any competition. The corresponding order is translated here in full in view of its crucial nature for understanding the Documents 5 to 17 in the Appendix.

Supplementary Order on Riigivolikogu Elections

Issued by the Government of the Republic on 9 July 1940

I.

The Order on Riigivolikogu elections (*Rügi Teataja* 1940,60,566) is supplemented with the following change in the Riigivolikogu Elections Act:

Article 31 of the Riigivolikogu Elections Act is supplemented with the following eighth paragraph:

Art. 31, para. VIII: In order to prevent the use of the Riigivolikogu elections for purposes harmful to the Republic of Estonia and to the Estonian people, the nominators of the candidates must submit the respective candidate's electoral platform to the Districts' Committee by 10 July 1940, 14 o'clock at the latest. In case of nonsubmittal of electoral platform, the candidate's nomination will be disqualified by the Districts' Committee.

II.

This Order is to be implemented by telegraph.

Prime Minister	Minister of Interior	Secretary of State
Joh. Vares	M. Unt	K. Terras ¹¹

Since some previous analyses have been vague on the issue of whether Para. VIII had any precedents in the pre-occupation Elections Act, it should be emphasized that this was definitely not the case.¹² In particular, the *Reich-und-Volk* type ultrapatriotic rationale, with all its fascist implications, was purely an invention of the Soviet-installed government. The pre-occupation Riigivolikogu Elections Act foresaw disqualification of candidates on procedural grounds only (Art. 29 to 35, and 38), such as not meeting the requirements on age, residency, deadline, deposit, or number of sponsoring signatures. The ad hoc nature of the new additions is striking: a general law is supplemented with a specific date and hour.

Document 5 (10 July) describes the implementation of the new Government Order by the Central Electoral Committee. This Order is so sudden and urgent that the Government communicates it directly to the Districts' Committees in the middle of the night (see Document 6), bypassing the CEC, whose staff takes action only by 8 AM (see Document 6). By the time the CEC manages to meet at 8:30 AM (10 July) and adopts a formal directive (first part of Document 5), only five hours are left before the 2 PM deadline by which a detailed and defensible platform is due from the candidates. "If the electoral platform deals in generalities or is obviously meant to deceive the voters," the Districts' Committees are ordered to disqualify the candidate on non-procedural grounds by using arbitrary judgment. In

a highly significant deviation from such a momentous nationwide decision (or at least transmittal of orders), the second half of the CEC meeting addresses a personal detail. The Committee's Secretary-General has been told the very same morning (i.e., at 8 AM or earlier) of his being evicted from his apartment on three-day's notice by the Soviet armed forces. One can sense that this would not be the only instance of high-handed Soviet interference into the elections mechanics and private lives of the sovereign Republic of Estonia.

Document 6 (July 10) presents a vivid picture of the chaotic implementation of what looks reasonably tidy in the preceding minutes of the Central Electoral Committee. The Districts' Committee for Võrumaa has just completed a midnight meeting (9 to 10 July). To judge from the format of the next meeting to follow, the meeting probably came to order on 9 July, had an intermission at midnight (which was the deadline for nomination of candidates), and then proceeded to inspect the nominations. It apparently accepted all nominations as procedurally sound. At most five hours later, the Committee has to convene again, at 5:30 AM, after receiving notification directly from the Government (not from CEC) that yet another addition has been made to the Elections Act: "the nominators are required to submit the candidates' election platforms to the Districts' Committees not later than 14:00 today." The Committee's first reaction is a decent one: notify the nominators at once about the new indecently hurried requirement. Then further instructions arrive by 8 AM: candidates of the Soviet-organized EWPL are exempt from the platform requirement. Someone in Tallinn apparently noticed that in hurried response to Soviet instructions the Government's newest tampering with law risked eliminating their own EWPL candidates, too. Estonia now had an electoral law paragraph that was applied to some candidates but not to others. The next instruction introduces Estonia to the Soviet notion of non-published legislation: the nominators of non-EWPL candidates are not to be informed of the new rule. A euphemism is used: the Committee is "not obliged" to notify the nominators, but the Committee seems to know very well indeed that it means "you are not allowed to," since they hurriedly try to recall the information already sent out. This latest trick is too much even for the CEC, upon reflection, and the information ban is countermanded by 10 AM (with the receipt of the directive included in Document 5). Of the fourteen nominations previously accepted by the Võrumaa committee as conforming to law, seven belong to the EWPL slate and are accepted without platform submittal. Another three are invalidated because no platforms were presented by the 2 PM deadline. Regarding the remaining four, who made the platform deadline, the CEC instructions (Document 5) have to be invoked: their platforms are declared "vague" (the key term could also be translated as "dealing in generalities") and "drawn up to mislead the voters," in the subjective opinion of the Committee majority. One committee member, a lawyer by profession and a judge of the District Court, dissents.

The confusion and contradictory orders from Tallinn on 9-10 July strongly suggest that the platform disqualification strategem came as a surprise to every Estonian, including the CEC and the "Government." At first the platform requirement is issued and only then is it realized that it could eliminate the EWPL candidates as well unless they get special dispensation. The CEC (or some other authorities pulling its strings) vacillates on whether to notify the nominators of the candidates. The events do not fit a scenario of a government unveiling on 9 July a long-prepared plan, nor of a government suddenly going through a brainstorming. However, the pieces fit together, if one assumes an outside force (Soviet emissary Andrei A. Zhdanov, for instance), ignorant and contemptuous of the local civic culture, suddenly dropping a new broad instruction on short notice, leaving it up to the flabbergasted quislings to wiggle their way through the details.

This orders-from-abroad scenario becomes even more compelling when one notes that on the very evening of 9 July, when the platform decree was issued, several major quisling leaders still were making campaign speeches showing that they expected to have opposition candidates competing for votes. In particular, at a meeting in the Uus Turg square in Tallinn, ECP Secretary Johannes Lauristin declared:

If those gentlemen are with us, then why do they agree to be nominated, nominated in opposition to the policy of the working people and the government of the republic? But if they are against the working people, then they are enemies of the working people, who should be treated as such and should be left without a voice. *Not a single vote for the adversaries of the platform of the Estonian Working People's League!*¹³ [My emphasis—R.T.]

The exile author thus quoting Lauristin in 1957 unfortunately fails to indicate his source, but Panksejev and Pesti take care of the matter by presenting the same quote in their ECP history of 1963; however, they omit the telltale last sentence.¹⁴

Document 7 (10 July) records arbitrary disqualifications of non-EWPL candidates in another province, Virumaa. In addition to the standard charges of generality and deceptiveness, a few more imaginative shenanigans are thrown in. A platform, which includes freedom of speech, press and assembly, is disqualified on these very grounds! It is namely argued that claiming these rights "for all citizens implies that this demand also applies to the enemies of the state and the people." Two candidates are disqualified because they handed in their platforms personally and not through their nominators—and such legal nitpicking is carried out by a regime which totally altered the rules of the game less than twenty-four hours earlier.

Document 8 (10 July) presents a more complicated situation in Viljandimaa. Five non-EWPL candidates are made to withdraw through arguments unspecified in the document.¹⁵ But the Districts' Committee

does validate the remaining six non-EWPL candidates (Vain, Murd, Mankin, Pauri, Kint, Piip) although it voices severe reservations regarding former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ants Piip. The Committee considers itself limited in matters of substance, despite contrary instructions in Document 5, probably because of ingrained adherence to the general norms of Estonia's political culture. One could well imagine somewhat analogous attitudes on the part of the previous rightist-dominated electoral committees, with the roles reversed: misgivings about the political orientation of leftist candidates, but grudging respect for legal procedure and willingness to leave the ultimate decision to the voters. But now this degree of tolerance is no longer tolerated by the outside forces in control, as will be seen in the next documents.

Document 9 (10 July) shows the Viljandimaa list of candidates as received by the CEC on 11 July. The aforementioned six non-EWPL candidates are on the list. Yet the same evening the Viljandimaa Districts' Committee reconvenes with the same members present and amends its decisions made twenty-five hours earlier, as seen in the next document.

Document 10 (11 July) shows the Viljandimaa Districts' Committee disqualifying all six remaining non-EWPL candidates. Four of the nominations are "declared withdrawn," with no indication about who was doing the withdrawing and why. In the case of the remaining two non-EWPL candidates the Committee applies the familiar vagueness-and-deception line on the basis of "clarifying information" received from sources unspecified. Presumably the earlier validation list was rejected upon receipt by the CEC, which dispatched "clarifying information" on how the law must be twisted. The purged list is transmitted to them no longer by letter but by telegraph.

Document 11 (10 July) is the electoral platform of the prominent statesman Jaan Tõnisson, the main center of democratic opposition to President Päts. Its briefness is understandable given the time constraints and is compensated for by referral to much more detailed documents. It is reminiscent of the Finnish expressions of support for the Paasikivi-Kekkonen line (named for two statesmen who in 1940 were, if anything, to the right of Tõnisson): support for the Republic's Constitution and for the defense pact with the Soviet Union. Tõnisson further voices support for a declaration by the Soviet-imposed government which gave assurances regarding Estonia's independence.

Document 12 (10 July) shows the fate of Tõnisson's platform in the hands of the Tartu Districts' Committee. In blatant disregard for facts, Tõnisson is presented as a supporter of the governments appointed by Päts (who in fact sequestered Tõnisson's newspaper). A crime is actually made out of Tõnisson's declaration of support for the new government's declared policy: the similarity of Tõnisson's platform to that of the Soviet-organized EWPL is construed as "an attempt to split the organized working people." One is back to the savage logic of the burners of the Alexandria library: if you disagree with us, you are an enemy, and if you agree with us, you

are superfluous. Among the other disqualified candidates Kerem and Põld had presented platforms identical to Tõnisson's, according to Karl Aun.

Document 13 (10 July) adds to the by now monotonous show a rerun in the Tallinn and Nõmme districts, with all non-EWPL candidates again disqualified.

Document 14 is the electoral platform of the only non-EWPL candidate who was not disqualified: Jüri-Rajur Liivak. He was allowed to remain on the ballot and was declared defeated by the EWPL candidate.¹⁶ Without any previous political affiliation, and apparently with a past of forgery, Liivak may have seemed a safe adversary to the EWPL—an isolated swindler against an organized mafia. By maintaining one non-EWPL candidate after directly disqualifying fifty-seven others,¹⁷ the occupation regime could later claim, without technically lying, that the EWPL candidates obtained many more votes than did other candidates on the ballot. But one may also wonder whether Liivak's platform contained ingredients which saved it from invalidation. Could Tõnisson, for instance, have escaped the charge of vagueness if he had presented Liivak's seven-point program? The answer seems to be "no." Liivak's platform points largely overlapped with those of the EWPL and therefore could lead to charges of redundancy similar to those against Tõnisson.¹⁸ Liivak also could have been disqualified for his plank on maintenance of religious freedom, given that candidates in Document 7 were disqualified merely on grounds of proposing freedom of speech and assembly. The simplest explanation of Liivak's validation is his obvious lack of political support.

Document 15 (11 July) shows the ballot as distributed to eligible voters prior to elections, according to the existing electoral practice, in a district including Otepää in Tartumaa province. It still included sections for two candidates other than the EWPL candidate.

Document 16 (12 July) is a terse order not to distribute the three-candidate ballot (Document 15), to retrieve any ballots already distributed, and to come to Tartu for new ballots. Veiled threats are made regarding incomplete or slow execution of the order, and it is stated that "this order must not be announced to the public." The self-styled "People's Government" was determined to keep its doings secret from the people.

Document 17 (12 July) indicates that the recall of multi-candidate ballots (such as Document 15) came too late in many places: those ballots had already been distributed.

Document 18 (15 July) extends the practice of centralization to central monopoly of information on elections results to the extent that no results may be released to the people on precinct or even province levels: "The Districts' Committee must instruct the Precinct Commissions that they can release election results only to the Districts' Committee. The latter will transmit election results only to the Central Electoral Committee." The only reason for such secrecy would be to facilitate falsification of results. A regime expecting to win genuinely in all (or most) districts would be proud to show its triumph in as much detail as possible. However, falsified results

released on a precinct or even a district basis could lead to more disbelief and passive challenge since people had a sense of how their neighbors would vote and could see how many people went to the polling places. Low turnout in the face of invalidation of acceptable candidates remained a problem, despite open threats against nonvoters in the press.¹⁹ While intimidation, ballot-box stuffing, and falsification on the centralized level was extensively practiced,²⁰ last minute attempts were also made to support the claim of a record turnout. As part of such efforts, the first part of Document 18 orders Districts' Committees to "speedily establish local Mobile Electoral Precincts," i.e., motorized polling stations to tour hospitals and old-age homes in order to "make all citizens in those institutions vote," or "enable" them to vote (both translations are possible for the expression used: "ja laseksid hääletada kõigil neis asutistes elunevatel kodanikel"). The undated order does not directly indicate whether this instruction was issued before or during elections. The issue is clarified in the next document.

Document 19 (15 or 16 July) shows that the preceding order (Document 18) was sent by telegram, and the mobile station was formed by 4:30 PM on 15 July, the second day of balloting in the District concerned. Since the order required the local officials to act "speedily," it may be presumed that the order was dispatched only a few hours earlier, around noon on 15 July. With more than three quarters of the polling time already used up, the degree of turnout must have been visible by that time. The most important statement in Document 19 is the following: "The means of transport used [by the mobile station] was a car belonging to the Army of the USSR, which had been requested to transport citizens to the polls." As a rule, the task of the Soviet occupation army was implemented through oral instructions and notes to be immediately destroyed, so as to leave no tell-tale traces in the archives. This document, however, shows a foreign army in the thick of the action during the elections of a supposedly sovereign country. People unwilling to go to the polling station by their usual means would find a truck with foreign soldiers at their doorsteps, offering transport. The element of coercion by non-domestic forces becomes palpable. The fact that the foreign army supplied not only hardware but also personnel is clearly documented in the next item.

Document 20 (15 or 16 July) states repeatedly that Soviet soldiers were on guard duty outside the polling stations during the night of 14-15 July. The army of the neighboring state, which had entered Estonia in mass less than a month before, is seen to play a definite role in the electoral process. This interference (which has not been admitted by Soviet versions of history) adds credibility to eyewitness accounts of Soviet soldiers and political officers (*politruks*) being present during polling.²¹

It remains to compare the information in these documents to the Soviet version of the events. Five post-Stalin Soviet publications are examined in detail, with publication dates ranging from 1960 to 1980.²² There are some differences in these treatments. The *Encyclopedia* incorrectly maintains that the July elections were carried out "on the basis of the existing

Constitution,"²³ while some changes in the existing electoral law are described by *Dokumente*, by Panksejev and Pesti, and by Kuuli, without discussing their unconstitutional nature. Panksejev and Pesti state that elections were intended to show the degree of acceptance of communist ideas, "and, on the other hand, the extent of the remaining bourgeois influence on the masses" (p. 372), but a few pages later (p. 377) they acknowledge the lack of any such test of competitive relative strength since the "bourgeoisie had been effectively deprived of passive electoral rights" (i.e., the right to stand for elections). Kuuli agrees (p. 138) and elaborates:

The parliamentary road [to power] means struggle between classes and parties for parliamentary seats This presupposes that both the proletariat and the bourgeoisie (and other social classes and layers) are able to participate in the electoral campaign As we have seen earlier [in this book], the Estonian bourgeoisie no longer had any realistic possibility to have its representatives elected to Riigivolikogu in July 1940.²⁴

This latest Soviet evaluation agrees more than do previous ones with the documentation translated in the present article.

The disqualification of non-Soviet-sponsored candidates is not mentioned in the Encyclopedia, which leaves the impression that the EWPL won big against competition, but the other Soviet sources do acknowledge that the new decree on platform requirement was issued, with the explicit objective to eliminate the non-EWPL candidates or, in Sovietese, "to foil the scheming by the reaction."²⁵ Maamägi fails to mention the vagueness-and-deception clause and engages in outright falsification by stating that all candidates disqualified met this fate because they did not produce a platform: "Since the bourgeois parliamentary candidates did not dare to propose publicly an anti-people program, many of them gave up of their own accord on being on the ballot, while the rest were disqualified by the districts' electoral commissions for failing to present an electoral platform."²⁶

Dokumente (p. 180) reproduces a major part of the CEC directive (Document 5 in our Appendix), including the vagueness-and-deception clause, without commenting on its use. Panksejev and Pesti acknowledge the existence of the vagueness-and-deception clause and its use in some cases (p. 376), but Kuuli is the only Soviet source to clearly enunciate that "The majority of the bourgeois public figures did present their platform by the deadline stipulated," and that their candidacies were invalidated nonetheless.²⁷ Kuuli approvingly quotes an EWPL candidate's characterization of the atmosphere during the electoral campaign: "I encountered not a single person who would complain about illegalities in the elections" ²⁸ In view of the obviously controversial and debatable disqualifications, one would reasonably expect quite a few complaints, and the lack of any open expression of such complaints is further evidence of the rapidly increasing atmosphere of terror. On 9 July many people still dare to nominate and be candidates, but by 11 July no one any longer dares

even to complain.²⁹

In sum, there is some evidence of a slight shift in the Soviet version of the events concerned. Kuuli's version is comparatively the most informative, and this is not due merely to its relative length. There is more willingness to face the facts, compared to the almost equally extensive coverage by Panksejev and Pesti in 1963. Shorter versions tend to be more misleading in their selectiveness.

The documents translated in the present article disagree directly with the Soviet version mainly in reporting electoral involvement by the occupation army. Besides acknowledging the "arrival of supplementary Soviet army units," most Soviet sources do not mention anything about their role or even presence in the country after the day of occupation (17 June). Kuuli's recent book is an exception. Kuuli acknowledges not only that "the presence of the troops of the first socialist state on Estonian territory, of course, contributed in an essential way to the revolution's victory" by intimidating the Estonian authorities, but also, more specifically, that "In some cities Soviet army representatives were among the speakers at the meetings." However, Kuuli also asserts that the Red Army did not intervene "in the execution of political and social changes."³⁰ He may be technically right in the word-splitting manner the Soviets frequently practice. The term he uses (*vahele segama*) is translated in a Soviet Estonian dictionary as "interfere, intervene, meddle, interrupt,"³¹ and the Soviet army certainly did not interrupt the execution of changes. But it accompanied the local henchmen closely, ever ready to intervene against any Estonian authorities who might dare to oppose the changes. The use of Soviet army trucks and guards during the elections (Documents 19 and 20 in the Appendix) certainly represented interference into purely Estonian matters defined a bit more broadly than "changes" instigated by the Soviets themselves. Kuuli calls it "falsification and distortion" to present the Soviet army as the "executor of the change" in 1940,³² and again he might seem technically correct to those who would seriously argue that it is the knife and not the person holding it who is carrying out the murder. Some other people might wish to reverse the charge of falsification and distortion. But one should give Kuuli credit for being the first Soviet historian to start even arguing about the issue of the Soviet army role rather than continuing to sweep it under the rug.

In general, Documents 1 and 4 in the Appendix do not disagree with the Soviet version, but they add detail regarding the rapid increase in central control under the guise of democratization compared to the law and practice under the previous-rule by President Päts (whom the Soviet occupation reduced to a temporary figurehead). Relaxation of voting procedure (Document 3) serves not so much the democratic goal of "one person, one vote," as the dictatorial one of "one supporter, many votes."

Documents 5 to 17 on elimination of non-EWPL candidates also basically do not disagree with the Soviet version, in particular Kuuli's with its new details. However, the Soviet scenario of Estonian communist initiative is

severely tested by the picture of confusion surrounding the proclamation and implementation of the request for electoral platforms (Documents 5 and 6). The fact that platforms were demanded on less than 36-hours notice is acknowledged by Kuuli (pp. 138-39), but Document 6 shows the actual response time to be eight hours at the very most. The petty attempt to eliminate candidates through time squeeze (quite possibly including cases where candidates heard of the deadline only after it was past) is at variance with Soviet statements that candidates who did not submit platforms did so because they purposely desisted. The Soviet picture of lofty revolutionary process is marred further by other invalidation pretexts ranging from petty, such as a candidate handing in his platform personally rather than through a nominator, to revoltingly reactionary, such as invalidation for proposing universal freedom of speech, press, and assembly (Document 7). The Soviet picture of revolutionary unity of action is marred by central crushing of an attempt at electoral decency on the part of a provincial committee (Documents 8 to 10). The reasonableness and moderation of the non-EWPL platforms is highlighted in all its Paasikivi-Kekkonen type quality (Document 11), contrary to the impressions conveyed by Soviet versions.

More than earlier Soviet authors, Kuuli seems ill at ease with the elimination of non-EWPL candidates and tries to justify it on a tit-for-tat basis:

Estonian reactionary émigré public figures have later expressed their indignation regarding violation of democracy during the *Riigivolikogu* elections of summer 1940. While so doing, those gentlemen are forgetting how the credentials of the working people's representatives were repeatedly voided in bourgeois Estonia (both prior to and after elections), how the worker delegates of the *Riigikogu* were packed to jail. Such was the bourgeois democracy for the working people. It was quite natural that the proletariat after achieving power in 1940 did not give the bourgeoisie full political freedom of action.³³

Leaving aside the issue of who had gained power—Estonian workers or the Russian army—and granting that democratic practices in independent Estonia at times suffered lapses, Kuuli's claim of symmetry does not hold. The previous *Riigivolikogu* included centrist opponents to President Päts, Social Democrats, and even extreme leftists who later collaborated with the Soviet occupation forces. By Kuuli's own account (p. 142), six EWPL members of the July 1940 *Riigivolikogu* had been members of the preceding one. They (and other extreme leftists who lost elections) were allowed to be on the ballot, and symmetry with July 1940 ends right there. In July 1940 it was not a question of refusing the "bourgeoisie" (however defined) "full political freedom of action," but denying any non-EWPL parties (including Social Democrats) even the least scrap of political freedom of action. As for jailing of Communists, Estonia had at the time of Soviet invasion a total of forty-three prisoners considered political by Kuuli (p. 80), who further indicates that only three of them were Communist Party members (p. 47). In contrast, within twelve months of the July 1940 elections, the Soviet regime had arrested and deported over 10,000 Estonians,

at the very least. An imperfectly democratic regime had been replaced by total repression of democracy and human rights by external forces.

In his final analysis, Kuuli becomes quite cynical in asserting that adherents of the true religion have the moral right to indulge in any kind of deception. He notes that the existing Constitution and laws were applied whenever it suited the new regime:

This helped bring nearer to the new regime those petty bourgeois layers, who at first harbored a certain distrust toward the socialist revolution, but who believed in bourgeois "legality." At the same time it helped disorient a certain part of the class enemy, the bourgeoisie. . . . In reality, of course, the activities of the Estonian Communist Party and the popular government were not based on bourgeois legislation, but on the interests of the revolutionary development, on the revolutionary sense of law by the proletariat.³⁴

In this sense, the documents presented here agree with the Soviet view, and only illustrate some details of the deception tactics: use of foreign troops (Documents 19 and 20), keeping major decisions secret from the public (Document 16), and prohibiting announcement of local elections results (Document 18).

As a postscript, the composition of the Central Electoral Committee, which played a pivotal role in executing the de-choicing process, is of some interest. Who were these people, and what became of them? Several CEC members later became unmentionable in Soviet texts. Kuuli avoids mentioning any names: "On 5 July the people's government appointed the new members of the Central Electoral Committee: Minister of Justice (as chairman), Deputy Minister of Interior, a representative of the Central Bureau of Statistics, and four representatives of workers' organizations."³⁵ A comparison with Document 2 indicates that the new Deputy Director of Police Administration, Andrei Murro, is considered "representative of workers' organizations," and so is Edgar Petre, who is the only CEC member listed without any official title or function in all documents where his name appears (Documents 2, 5, and 17). According to private communication by Karl Aun, Petre was at that time reputed to be the special watchdog within the CEC for Andrei Zhdanov, the Soviet plenipotentiary, who arrived in Estonia on 19 June³⁶ (two days after military occupation), and who effectively was running the whole show from behind the scene.³⁷

Panksejev and Pesti (pp. 374-75) do mention some names: the seven-member CEC "included ECP and government representatives H. Haberman and A. Murro, Trade Union Federation representative A. Pirson, and others." Those three members are, indeed, the only ones on whom I have been able to find any information in any post-Stalin Soviet publication.³⁸ Andrei Murro (1903-29 August 1941), ECP member since 1922, was imprisoned from 1924 to 1938, later became ESSR Commissar of the Interior (March 1941), and died during the Soviet retreat from Estonia.³⁹ Harald Haberman (born 1904), ECP member since 1939 only, returned to relatively scholarly pursuits in 1947, as Director of the Zoology and Botany

Institute,⁴⁰ a step which may have saved him during Stalin's 1950 purge of the ECP leadership. Aleksander Pirson (1904-1942?), a leftwing trade unionist who apparently joined the ECP only after the Soviet invasion, later became the head of the Estonian Central Federation of Sports and died a victim of German occupation, exact date unknown.⁴¹ Among the four CEC members not mentioned in Soviet texts, Hugo Reiman was a non-political professional statistician, employed by the Central Government Statistics Office since 1923 or earlier. Trade unionist Evald Priks does not figure in the index of any of the Soviet sources listed in Notes 1 and 3, nor does Zhdanov's man Edgar Petre, who may have been purged after his patron's untimely death. The most conspicuous Soviet omission is that of Friedrich Niggol, in view of his prominent position as Minister of Justice and CEC chairman. The only Soviet mention of Niggol is by Kuuli (p. 200), who indicates that Niggol became Minister of Justice on 5 July (the same day he became chairman of the CEC). Niggol's subsequent fate remains unknown.

In addition to the seven voting members, the CEC deliberations were attended by its ex officio Secretary-General, Artur Mägi, a university law lecturer by profession, who had been Secretary-General of the *Riigivolikogu* since the pre-occupation period. His CEC duties were secretarial and administrative without any decision-making powers. Artur Mägi sought refuge in Sweden in 1944 and is the author of the legal analysis of the 1940 events listed in Note 4.

The fate of the non-EWPL candidates is also of some interest, especially in view of Kuuli's assertion (p. 119) that "The resolute pruning of the bourgeoisie's political freedom of action in Summer 1940 was not, as a rule, connected with major repression." Repression, indeed, tended to come much later, when the need for it should have been over, in view of peaceful Sovietization through the presence of the Red Army. Among all the non-EWPL candidates, I have fairly complete information only on those eliminated by the Tartu Districts' Committee (Document 12).

Arnold-Aleksander Kerem (1883-1942?), Lutheran pastor at Palamuse and, from November 1940 on, at Tartu's Jaani congregation, was arrested on 23 June 1941 and died next winter in a convict camp 400 km north of Gorki. Agu Põld (1910?-1966), a high school history teacher of liberal orientation, resigned after the Soviet takeover and avoided Tartu. He was sought but not found during the June 1941 deportation and much later became a Lutheran clergyman. Jaan Väin (1886-1943), Social Democrat member of the pre-occupation *Riigivolikogu*, was also on the deportations list, but escaped by moving into the countryside. Jaan Tõnisson (1868-19??), former Head of State (1927-28 and 1933), and one of two or three most prominent Estonian statesmen, has eighteen lines in the *Estonian Soviet Encyclopedia*, with the following ending: "He was leading the bourgeois opposition against the dictatorship of Päts, 1934-1940. He was expelled from the ESSR after the reestablishment of Soviet power." If Päts, with appreciable elected opposition seated in the parliament, was a "dictator," then which stronger

term should one use toward those who arrested his main opponent on 13 December 1940? Tõnisson vanished so completely that the aforementioned Soviet encyclopedia article has to say: "Year of death unknown."

In a radio speech on 6 July 1940, the Soviet-imposed Prime Minister Johannes Vares justified the hastily called elections by the need to have "true people's representation": "We are not afraid of elections, like the previous governments; instead, we long and yearn for them. . . . The people know who is their friend, and who is their enemy. The people will decide."⁴² Three days later the powers behind Vares were very much afraid of leaving the Estonian people any choice of candidates.⁴³

NOTES

- 1 Repetition of this liturgic formula, without ever specifying the number of troops involved, ranges from *Izvestiia*, 17 June 1940 (the day of Soviet invasion), to Olaf Kuuli, *Revolutsioon Eestis 1940* [Revolution in Estonia, 1940] (Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1980), 68-70.
- 2 See Documents 19 and 20 in the Appendix.
- 3 The only major Soviet-published document collection on the elections consists of a dozen documents (pp. 171-92) in *1940. aasta sotsialistlik revolutsioon Eestis: Dokumente ja materjale* [The Socialist Revolution of 1940 in Estonia: Documents and materials] (Tallinn: Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus, 1960), hereafter referred to as *Dokumente*. Authoritative Soviet accounts on the elections include Kuuli (see Note 1), 134-40; A. Panksejev and M. Pesti (eds.), *Ülevaade Eestimaa Kommunistliku Partei ajaloost* [An Overview of the History of Estonia's Communist Party], II (Tallinn: Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus, 1963), 372-77; V. Maamägi (chief ed.), *Eesti NSV ajalugu* [History of the Estonian SSR], III (Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1971), 494-96; and G. Naan (chief ed.), *Eesti Nõukogude Entsüklopeedia* [Estonian Soviet Encyclopedia], 8 vols. (Tallinn: Valgus, 1968-1976), articles on Estonian history (II, 82), Estonian Working People's League (II, 167), and "Socialist Revolution in Estonia" (VII, 244-45).
- 4 E.g., Ants Oras, *Baltic Eclipse* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1948), 73; A. Soom, "Seadusevastased valimised," [Unlawful Elections], in Richard Maasing, et al. (eds.), *Eesti riik ja rahvas Teises maailmasõjas* [The Estonian State and People in World War II], 10 vols. (Stockholm: EMP, 1954-1962), III, 38-43; E. Kuik, "Valimisvõltsimine Viljandimaal" [Electoral Fraud in Viljandi Province], *Ibid.*, 44-48; and H. Mark, "Juulivalimised 1940 ja rahvusliku vastasrinna organiseerimine" [The Elections of July 1940 and Organization of the National Resistance], *Ibid.*, V, 188-98. Legal aspects of the July elections have been analyzed by A. Mägi, "Eesti õiguskorra hävitamine" [Destruction of Estonia's Rule of Law], *Ibid.*, III, 49-62 (esp. p. 54); Boris Meissner, "Die kommunistische Machtübernahme in den baltischen Staaten," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 2:1 (January 1954), 95-114; and B. Meissner, *Die Sowjetunion, die baltischen Staaten und das Völkerrecht* (Cologne: Verlag für Politik und Wirtschaft, 1956), 83-87.
- 5 Documents 5 to 8 and 10 to 13 in the Appendix of the present article have been published in Estonian, in *Eesti riik ja rahvas*, III, 46-47, and V, 193-98. German translations of Documents 1, 4, 5 (partly), 7, 8 (partly), and 10 to 12 have been published in Meissner 1954; Documents 11 and 12 are also translated in Meissner, *Die Sowjetunion*. English translations of major parts of Documents 2, 5, and 18 are given in the Third Interim Report of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression (U.S. House of Representatives, 1954), as reproduced in Igor I. Kavass and Adolfs Sprudz (eds.), *Interna-*

- tional Military Law and History Reprint Series*, IV (Buffalo: Hein, 1972), 399-405.
- 6 Professor Jüri Üluots was the last pre-occupation Prime Minister of Estonia. The Germans alternately ignored and tried to co-opt him. He reconstituted the Government of the Republic of Estonia in Tallinn, September 1944, and later in Scandinavia.
 - 7 Letter by Karl Aun, 13 August 1980. For use of the documents by Meissner and others, see Note 5.
 - 8 *Riigi Teataja* (1937), No. 71, Art. 592; also *Seaduste kogu*, I (Tallinn: Kohtuministeerium, 1938), 70-94. Partial English translation in Kavass and Sprudz, 400-04.
 - 9 The changes in the electoral law were carried out by Government decrees formally authorized by the figurehead President on 5 July. The relevant documents in the *State Gazette* (*Riigi Teataja* [1940], No. 60, Articles 565 to 567) have been translated into German by Meissner in his "Die kommunistische Machtübernahme," and into English (Articles 565 and 566) in Kavass and Sprudz, 394-97. Both Mägi and Meissner (see Note 4) point out that alteration of the electoral law by the President or the Government was clearly unconstitutional: the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia specifically stipulated that only the Parliament could modify the electoral law.
 - 10 Some further piecemeal alterations of electoral procedures are recorded in *Riigi Teataja* (1940), No. 61, 577 to 579; No. 62, 587 to 590; No. 64, 627. Article 627 is translated in Kavass and Sprudz, 399.
 - 11 Translated from *Riigi Teataja* (1940), No. 64, Article 628. For a different translation, see Kavass and Sprudz, 399. Mark (see Note 4) who himself stood as candidate in the Antsla electoral district in Võrumaa, reports that Harald Raesaar, Districts' Committee Chairman for Tallinn-Nõmme (cf. Document 13) later told Mark that in Raesaar's opinion the demand for eliminating the non-EWPL candidates came from the representatives of the Soviet Union. Andrei Zhdanov, member of Soviet Politburo, resided in the Soviet Embassy in Tallinn since 19 June (cf. Kuuli, 79). Of the signers of the order, Maksim Unt was executed by the Soviets in summer 1941 and Johannes Vares committed NKVD-assisted suicide in 1946.
 - 12 E.g., Soom, 39.
 - 13 Mark, 192.
 - 14 *Rahva Hääl*, 10 July 1940, as quoted by Panksejev and Pesti, 376. The theme "Not a single vote for the adversaries" also occurs in the EWPL platform (*Pravda*, 7 July 1940), and even in the EWPL slogans published in Moscow several days after the elimination of non-EWPL candidates (*Pravda*, 12 July 1940). English translations from *Pravda* in Kavass and Sprudz, 397-99 and 405-07.
 - 15 According to Article 36 of the Elections Act, which had not been formally revoked, nominations once handed in could not be withdrawn. Mark, 191, reports receiving a phone call from Valga on 10 July, 8 AM, announcing that the local Communist Party representative and militia forced their way into the apartments of two non-EWPL candidates, G. and T., during the preceding night. The candidates were taken away and were coerced under armed threat into signing candidacy withdrawal statements. When the democratic leader Jaan Tõnisson protested to the new Minister of Interior, Maksim Unt, the latter replied: "The Valga incident is of course unlawful and impermissible. However, Mr. Tõnisson, you should nonetheless understand that this is not a reasonable time to organize an opposition."
 - 16 Kuuli, footnotes in pp. 138 and 140. Kuuli says the EWPL candidates achieved "a clear victory" over Liivak, but does not specify the respective number of votes obtained. Given the way the campaign was run, and the way Kuuli reports it, it cannot be taken for granted that being declared "a clear winner" is the same as "receiving more votes than the other candidate." If Liivak received more votes than the EWPL candidate, that could have been taken as "proof" of deceptive platform (by those professing to believe that non-deceived people by definition would vote EWPL), leading

- to Liivak's postelectoral disqualification and thus a "clear victory" for the EWPL candidate.
- 17 Mark, 190, and Kuuli, 137, agree that 78 non-EWPL candidates were nominated in 66 out of the total of 80 electoral districts. Kuuli says (p. 138) 20 withdrew, and 57 were disqualified, leaving only Liivak.
 - 18 An incomplete text of the EWPL platform is given in *Dokumente*, 176. Complete text (from *Pravda*, 7 July 1940) translated in Kavass and Sprudz, 397-99.
 - 19 According to Soom, 41, the main Communist daily, *Rahva Hääl*, warned on 14 July: "It would be extremely unwise to shirk voting. In today's situation a citizen's passivity must be regarded as a challenge to the masses of working people. Only people's enemies stay home on election day."
 - 20 Oras (see Note 4) describes how the precinct official held the sealed envelopes of Professor Oras and his spouse up against the light in order to try to check on their content. Kuik, 48, reports that he and other voters in the Imavere precinct in Viljandimaa were required to hand their open and unfolded ballot to precinct official Eduard Riik. Kuik further reports he was present at the ballot counting: "When all voting results had been compiled for the Imavere municipality, it turned out that about 60% of citizens entitled to vote had cast their vote, under threat, and using the aforementioned procedure. Upon learning about that result Mart Terien [a Precinct Commission member] said such a percentage was too low. Then he took a handful of unused ballots from a heap on the table, the ones not handed out to the voters, and threw them amongst the already counted ballots, saying: 'Let's add a little bit from here.' The pile of ballots was then recounted, and the result was 115%, compared to the total number entitled to vote. Thereupon Karl Kinksep [another Precinct Commission member] opined that one cannot report over 100% since in that case there would be more ballots than voters. Then Karl Kinksep calculated on paper the number of votes that would be needed to achieve an electoral participation of 99.6%. Karl Kinksep then counted out the needed number of ballots, making use, among others, of most of those added by Terien. The result of 99.6% was recorded in the minutes and was also announced to the Districts' Committee in Viljandi." For further examples of fraud see Soom, 43.
 - 21 Oras, 73, for Tartu; Soom, 42, for Narva.
 - 22 See Notes 1 and 3.
 - 23 *Eesti Nõukogude Entsüklopeedia*, VII, 244. Alteration of electoral law by the executive branch was clearly unconstitutional (see Note 9).
 - 24 Kuuli, 185.
 - 25 Maamägi, 496.
 - 26 Maamägi, 496.
 - 27 Kuuli, 138.
 - 28 Kuuli, 139.
 - 29 In fact, legal avenues for complaints were eliminated already by the 5 July changes in the Elections Act. The long Article 16 on appeal procedures was replaced by a very brief one: "Art. 16. The Central Electoral Committee decisions are final and not subject to appeal" (*Riigi Teataja* [1940], No. 60, 566).
 - 30 Kuuli, 87-88.
 - 31 J. Silvet, *Estonian-English Dictionary* (Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1965), 432.
 - 32 Kuuli, 87.
 - 33 Kuuli, 139.
 - 34 Kuuli, 191.
 - 35 Kuuli, 135.
 - 36 Kuuli, 79.
 - 37 At the quisling government meeting of 9 July, Prime Minister Johannes Vares apparently showed a note from Zhdanov, ordering elimination of the non-EWPL can-

- didates. See Seppo Myllyniemi, *Die baltische Krise, 1938-1941*. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1979), 133.
- 38 The index of *Dokumente* includes no names of CEC members, apart from Haberman, who is mentioned in contexts other than CEC. This index even manages to omit the Soviet plenipotentiary in Estonia, Zhdanov, as well as Karl Säre, the ECP First Secretary (whom the Soviets later came to consider a traitor).
- 39 *Eesti Nõukogude Entsüklopeedia*, V, 253.
- 40 *Ibid.*, II, 490.
- 41 Maamägi, 613 and 730; Panksejev and Pesti, 297 and 313.
- 42 *Dokumente*, 175-76.
- 43 I would like to thank Dr. Vello Salo, the Tartu Institute, and the Estonian Central Archive in Canada for the use of *Dokumente*, *Rüigi Teataja*, and *Seaduste kogu*.

APPENDIX

[Notes on Electoral Machinery by Karl Aun. Documents translated from Estonian by Karl Aun, Toivo Miljan, and Tiina-Kai Taagepera. Notes to documents by Karl Aun and Rein Taagepera.]

NOTES ON ELECTORAL MACHINERY AND PROCEDURE (as regulated by the Riigivolikogu Elections Act of 1937), AND TERMINOLOGY USED

1. All eighty members of the *Rüigivolikogu* (Chamber of the Deputies), the Lower House of the *Rüigikogu* (National Assembly, literally the State Assembly, the Parliament of the Republic), were elected from single-member Electoral Districts. Thus the territory of the Republic was divided into eighty Electoral Districts which were numbered.
2. The electoral machinery consisted of a Central Electoral Committee, Districts' Committees, and Precinct Commissions.
3. The Central Electoral Committee (*Valimiste Peakomitee*, literally Main Committee of Elections) consisted of five *ex officio* members plus one member appointed by the Ministry of the Interior. After Soviet occupation, the Government decree of 5 July 1940 made all members appointable by the Government of the Republic.
4. Districts' Committees (*Ringkondade-komitee*, literally Committee of [electoral] Districts) were established in each of the eleven provinces (*maakonnad*) and the two cities of Tallinn and Tartu. The committee members were nominated by the Central Electoral Committee.
5. In each of the Electoral Districts there were several electoral commissions (*jaoskonnakomisjon*, literally commission of a division, precinct, or a poll), here translated as Precinct Commissions. The members of those were nominated by local (city and municipality) self-governments and endorsed by the Districts' Committee.
6. There was no electoral committee or commission covering the whole of an Electoral District. Nominations of candidates were received by the Central Electoral Committee. This was amended by the Government Decree of 5 July 1940 by transferring the receiving of and decisions on the candidacies to the Districts' Committees.
7. The local (city and rural municipality) self-governments assisted the Precinct Commissions by compiling lists of the eligible voters, distributing the ballots (printed by the Districts' Committees) to the voters before the election, and by providing the polling facilities and technical/secretarial services to the Precinct Commissions.
8. The Central Electoral Committee decision concerning invalidation of candidacy or

establishment of election results could be appealed to the Administrative Section of the Supreme Court (*Riigikohus*, literally the State Court, the highest court of the country). This was amended by the Government Decree of 5 July 1940 by making the Central Electoral Committee decisions final.

9. A *vald*, here translated as municipality, was a local rural government unit of historic origin. The local self-government units in each province were these rural municipalities and cities or towns. Tallinn and Tartu, the two largest cities of the Republic, were exceptions; they enjoyed equal standing with the provinces.

10. RT (*Rüigi Teataja*), translated as the *State Gazette*, was the official journal of the Government of the Republic for publication of legislative acts and government decrees and orders. The numbers cited refer to the year of publication, the issue number, and the sequence number of the item.

DOCUMENT 1

Minutes No. 4. Central Electoral Committee meeting held on 7 July 1940 at 22:30 in the office of the Minister of Justice.

Present: Minister of Justice F. Niggol, Deputy Minister of Interior H. Haberman, Deputy Director of Police Administration A. Murro, Edgar Petre, representatives of the Estonian Federation of Trade Unions, Aleksander Pirson and Evald Priks.

Central Committee Chairman F. Niggol presided.

Secretary-General A. Mägi recorded the minutes.

I. Directive to Districts' Committee

It is decided that the following directive be sent to all Districts' Committees:

.....

Par. 15: The Districts' Committees shall ensure that the personal composition of Precinct Commissions be settled in time [while] taking into account the changes that have taken place in the public life of the Republic.¹

If necessary present members are to be replaced with new members in accordance with Article 19 of the Riigivolikogu Elections Act.²

.....

/F. Niggol/
Chairman of the Central Committee

/Artur Mägi/
Secretary-General

1 Literally "life of the State."

2 Article 19 stipulates that Precinct Commission members are nominated by municipal authorities, subject to approval by the Districts' Committee.

DOCUMENT 2

Minutes No. 6. Central Electoral Committee meeting held on 9 July 1940 at 17:00 in the office of the Minister of Justice.

Present: Minister of Justice F. Niggol, Deputy Minister of Interior H. Haberman, Deputy Director of Police Administration A. Murro, Edgar Petre, representatives of the Estonian Federation of Trade Unions, Aleksander Pirson and Evald Priks, and representative of the Central Bureau of Statistics H. Reiman.

Central Committee Chairman F. Niggol presided.

Secretary-General A. Mägi recorded the minutes.

I. *Identification of Voters*

It is decided: (1) Precinct Commissions must demand verification of identity from citizens who come to vote, either in the form of a passport or some other officially identifying document. Citizens must bring along a passport or other officially identifying document when they go to vote.

(2) This decision is to be published in the *State Gazette*.¹

II. *Revision of Lists of Eligible Voters after 9 July 1940*

It is decided: (1) Eligible citizens whose names for some reason have been omitted from the list of eligible voters when these lists were compiled and corrected will be included in the eligible voters list after 9 July 1940 when they prove that they resided in that particular precinct at the time when the lists were compiled and corrected. Residence may also be verified by two witnesses.

Local governments which list eligible citizens following the procedure above shall give to those citizens certification thereof. When he goes to vote, the citizen must take this certification with him and must present it to the Precinct Commission.

(2) The above order is to be published in the *State Gazette*.²

/F. Niggol/

Chairman of the Central Committee

/Artur Mägi/
Secretary-General

1 Published on 12 July, RT(1940), No. 65, 641.

2 Published on 12 July, RT(1940), No. 65, 640.

DOCUMENT 3

Telegram. To _____ Districts' Committee for transmission to Precinct Commissions. Clarification by the Central Electoral Committee.

As a supplement to the Central Electoral Committee's Directive of 9 July 1940 (*State Gazette* [1940], No. 65, 641) the Central Electoral Committee orders that when a citizen appears at a poll without any identifying document but is personally known to the members of the Precinct Commission, then this citizen must be permitted to vote.

/F. Niggol/

Chairman of the Central
Electoral Committee

/Artur Mägi/
Secretary-General of
the Central Committee

DOCUMENT 4

Circular letter.

To All Municipal¹ and City Governments of Harjumaa.

According to Article 19 of the Riigivolikogu Elections Act the Chairmen of the Precinct Commissions are to be endorsed by the Districts' Committee.

In accordance with the changes that have taken place in our public life² the memberships of the Precinct Commissions must be changed.

Therefore, the new memberships of the Precinct Commissions (Chairman, members and alternates) must be presented immediately to the Districts' Committee for confirmation by forwarding the respective nominations to the Districts' Committee already

by 10 July.

Should the need arise, the persons belonging to the Precinct Commission must be convened before the elections to further instruct them on their duties.

Tallinn, 9 July 1940.

/V. Lüüs/

Riigivolikogu Elections Harjumaa
Districts' Committee Chairman

/L. Kahkra/

Secretary of the Committee

1 "Vald"—rural municipality, township.

2 Literally "life of our State."

DOCUMENT 5

Minutes No. 7. Central Electoral Committee meeting held on 10 July 1940 at 8:30 in the office of the Minister of Justice.

Present: Minister of Justice F. Niggol, Deputy Minister of Interior H. Haberman, Edgar Petre, representatives of the Estonian Federation of Trade Unions, Aleksander Pirson and Evald Priks.

Central Committee Chairman F. Niggol presided.

Secretary-General A. Mägi recorded the minutes.

I. *Directive to the Districts' Committees.*¹

It is decided that the following directive be sent to all Districts' Committees:

1. The Districts' Committees shall take all steps necessary to make known to the nominators of candidates the decree of the Government of the Republic of 9 July 1940, concerning electoral platforms, without delay.
2. If, as a consequence of the aforementioned decree of the Government of the Republic, a candidate wishes to decline his candidacy, he may withdraw his nomination papers; in such a case his deposit of 250 krooni will be refunded.
3. If the electoral platform is [merely] vague or is obviously meant to deceive the voters, the Districts' Committee shall make a decision concerning the nomination by taking into account its content. (See Riigivolikogu Elections Act, Article 31, par. VIII, Articles 38 and 39).²
4. The Central Electoral Committee also calls the attention of the Districts' Committees to its directive of 7 July 1940 (par. 4, 6 and 8).

II. *Moving Costs of the Central Electoral Committee's Secretary-General*

It is decided: (1) To acknowledge the Secretary-General's notification that he has been served an order this morning to vacate his apartment at the latest by 18:00 on 12 July 1940, because the building where his apartment is located will be requisitioned for the use of the Soviet armed forces.

(2) Taking into account that the work for the elections of the Riigivolikogu does not permit the Secretary-General to be absent at present, and that therefore he has no time to look for another apartment, and because this will require him to move twice, the Central Electoral Committee will carry Secretary-General A. Mägi's moving costs.

/F. Niggol/

Central Committee Chairmen

/A. Mägi/

Secretary-General

1 The following items 1 to 3 are also reproduced in *Dokumente*, 180.

2 Art. 39 is purely procedural. Art. 38 says the CEC will disqualify nominations not conforming to Art. 28 to 37. The newly added Art. 31, par. VIII requires platforms, but does not address the issue of their contents.

DOCUMENT 6

Minutes No. 4. Riiigivolikogu Elections Võrumaa Districts' Committee meeting held at the Provincial Government offices, 12 Jüri Street, on 10 July 1940.

Present: Committee Chairman August Kuhlberg, Deputy Chairman Kaarel Hommik, members Priit Suit and Konstantin Hiiob.¹

The meeting came to order at 5:30 [AM, sic!].

Today's urgent early morning meeting is necessary because of the addition of Paragraph 8 to Article 31 of the Riiigivolikogu Elections Act, of which the Committee was informed early this morning by a telegram from the Government of the Republic, and according to which the nominators are required to submit the candidates' election platforms to the Districts' Committees not later than 14:00 today.

Since the addition of Paragraph 8 to Article 31 of the Riiigivolikogu Election Act has established a new requirement regarding nomination papers, of which neither the nominators nor the Committee had knowledge during the Committee's meeting of 9/10 July, when the nomination papers submitted to it were considered and decisions were made either to accept or reject them, the Committee finds that the decisions of the 9/10 July meeting either to accept or reject the nominations cannot be implemented; instead the Committee must immediately inform the nominators by telephone through municipal and city governments about the addition of Paragraph 8 to Article 31 of the Riiigivolikogu Elections Act, and after 14:00 today review the fourteen nomination papers submitted to it and determine their acceptance or rejection irrespective of the decisions made earlier at the 9/10 July meeting of the Committee.

Therefore, the Districts' Committee unanimously *resolved*: to inform all the nominators by telephoned telegram through the municipal and city governments of the telegram received during the night from the Government of the Republic about the additional Paragraph 8 of Article 31 of the Riiigivolikogu Elections Act; and today after 14:00 review the fourteen nominations submitted to the Committee and to determine their acceptance or rejection irrespective of the decisions made earlier at the 9/10 July meeting of the Committee.

After adopting this resolution Committee members took turns on duty in the Committee room.

After a short time the Committee Chairman announced that he had been notified by telephone by the Central Electoral Committee that the nominators of the candidates of the League of the Working People do not need to submit election platforms since these have already been officially published in newspapers and elsewhere.

.....

Around 8:00 Mr. Kadak of the Central Electoral Committee informed [us] that it was not the Committee's obligation to inform the nominators of the aforementioned telegraphic order by the Government of the Republic about the addition to Article 31 of the Riiigivolikogu Elections Act. On the basis of this the Chairman of the Committee ordered the clerk to immediately telephone the municipal governments not to transmit to the nominators the telephoned telegram about the government order that they received early this morning.

Later it became known that the municipal governments had already managed to transmit to most of the nominators the telephoned telegram about the telegraphed order of the Government of the Republic on the addition to Article 31 of the Riiigivolikogu Election Act.

At 10:07 a directive to the Districts' Committees from the Central Electoral Committee arrived by telegraph which demanded that the nominators be informed without delay of the order of the Government of the Republic of 9 July 1940 in the matter of the electoral platforms of the candidates, and in which directives were given about the refunding of deposits as well as the examination of the electoral platforms submitted.

The text of this directive together with the text of the order of the Government of the Republic of 9 July 1940 was delivered by letter to all nominators.

In the meantime, the Committee members on duty in the Committee rooms accepted, up to 14:00, statements and electoral platforms from the nominators.

At 14:15 the Districts' Committee resumed its meeting with full attendance as recorded above at the beginning of the minutes, and proceeded to examine [both] the nomination papers for the Riigivolikogu elections submitted by 24:00 of 9 July, and the electoral platforms submitted as supplements by the nominators to the Committee up to 14:00 today, 10 July 1940, wherein the Committee found the following:

.....

[The nominations of]

.....

(2) Eduard Peedosk, candidate in the 78th Electoral District, nomination received in sequence as No. 2,

(3) Karl Puusemp, candidate in the 75th Electoral District, nomination received in sequence as No. 3,

(4) Ludvig Leis, candidate in the 80th Electoral District, nomination received in sequence as No. 7,

(6) Vilhelm-Rudolf Raudsepp, candidate in the 79th Electoral District, nomination received in sequence as No. 11,

are to be disqualified, in the opinion of the Committee Chairman A. Kuhlberg and K. Hommik, because the electoral platforms of the candidates attached to the nomination papers are vague and [because] the candidates' previous political activities do not lead to the belief that they would in future act with integrity on all points in their platforms. Consequently, it must be concluded that the platforms were drawn up to mislead the voters. In the opinion of Committee member P. Suit, [they are to be disqualified] only because the platforms are vague. However, Committee member K. Hiiob finds that the platforms submitted are not vague since there are references in them to the Constitution and to the Declaration of the Government of the Republic in which the policies of the State are treated in detail, and there is no [factual] data, nor circumstantial evidence, that the platforms have been drawn up for [the sake of] appearance and in order to deceive the voters; therefore, in the opinion of K. Hiiob, the nominations, not having any shortcomings, should be accepted.

.....

(b) With three votes for and one (K. Hiiob) against it is *resolved* to invalidate the following seven nominations . . .²

/signature/
Districts' Committee Chairman

/signature/
Deputy Chairman

/signatures/
Members

/signature/
Clerk

1 Spellings in RT(1940), No. 62, 586: Frits Suit, K. Hiiob.

2 Nominations of the other three candidates were invalidated because they did not present their platforms by the deadline of 14:00 (2 PM), 10 July 1940.

DOCUMENT 7

Minutes No. 6 of Riigivolikogu Elections Virumaa Districts' Committee meeting held on 10 July 1940 at 15:30 in Rakvere in the offices of the Virumaa Provincial Government.

Present: Chairman Villem Soo, Deputy Chairman Voldemar Luksepp and member Harri Raag.¹

.....

[The nominations of]

4. Leps, August—candidate in the 68th Electoral District,
 13. Köster, Oskar—candidate in the 69th Electoral District,
 14. Luiga, Oskar—candidate in the 74th Electoral District,
 15. Penno, Rudolf—candidate in the 67th Electoral District,
 18. Triefeldt, Jaak—candidate in the 70th Electoral District,
 to be declared not in accordance with the requirements of the law and to be invalidated for the following reasons.

1. The candidate's electoral platform attached to the nomination papers is too vague and it is apparent that it is obviously meant to mislead the voters.

2. In point 3 of the electoral platform freedom of speech, press, assembly, etc. is demanded for all citizens, from which must be concluded that this demand also applies to the enemies of the state and people and is therefore contrary to Article 31, Paragraph 8 of the Riigivolikogu Elections Act, which does not permit the elections to be used for purposes harmful to the Republic of Estonia and the Estonian people.

3. The deposit paid, (Kr. 250) [two hundred fifty], not to be refunded but to be declared forfeit to the state, according to the Riigivolikogu Elections Act (*State Gazette* 1937, 71, 592) Article 37.

[The nominations of]

16. Tartum,² Mart—candidate in the 72nd Electoral District,
 17. Meremaa, August— candidate in the 71st Electoral District,
 to be declared not in accordance with the requirements of the law and to be invalidated because [the candidates] have presented their electoral platforms personally and not through representatives as required by the supplement to Article 31 of the Riigivolikogu Elections Act.

The meeting adjourned at 17:00.

/signature/
 Districts' Committee Chairman

/signature/
 Deputy Chairman of Committee

/signature/
 Member

/signature/
 Clerk.

1 Spelling in RT(1940), No. 62, 586: Luksep, Harry Raad.

2 Should be "Tarum." His elimination for presenting his own platform personally was confirmed by a telephone interview with Mart Tarum (by R. Taagepera, Toronto, 26 June 1982).

DOCUMENT 8

Minutes of the Riigivolikogu Elections Viljandimaa Districts' Committee meeting held on 10 July 1940 at the offices of the Provincial Government.

Present: Committee Chairman P. Puis, Deputy Chairman E. Elbrecht, members V. Malin and Mihkel Tamm, and alternate member Voldemar Mölder.

The meeting came to order at 14:15 and adjourned at 17:30.

Item 1

In accordance with the Riigivolikogu Elections Act Article 18, Section 3, Articles 38 and 39, the Districts' Committee took the following positions on the nomination papers of the candidates submitted to the Committee up to 24:00 on 9 July 1940.

Order	(Electoral) District	Name of Candidate	Decision
1.	64	Veske, Johannes	Declared withdrawn 10 July 1940. Deposit to be refunded.
2.	62	Veimer, Arnold	Declared valid.
3.	59	Abori, Oskar	Declared valid.
4.	61	Sepre, Oskar	Declared valid.
5.	60	Põder, Jaan	Declared valid.
6.	64	Anilane, Jaan	Declared valid.
7.	63	Laosson, Max	Declared valid.
8.	61	Vain, Jüri	Declared valid.
9.	62	Pauri, Johann	Declared valid.
10.	61	Ott, Johannes	Declared withdrawn 10 July 1940. Deposit to be refunded.
11.	61	Kint, Tõnis	Declared valid.
12.	60	Murd, Johannes	Declared valid.
13.	64	Arusalu, Johannes	Declared withdrawn 10 July 1940. Deposit to be refunded.
14.	64	Piip, Ants	The Commission [sic!] unanimously takes the position that the candidate's previous activity as Minister of Foreign Affairs has been harmful to the interests of the Estonian people and deserves condemnation. However, since the powers of the Committee are limited in matters of substance, it declares the nomination valid pending the settling of the question by the Central Committee upon receipt of the election materials. ¹
15.	59	Looga, Armil-Johannes	Nomination declared withdrawn 10 July 1940. Deposit to be refunded.
16.	63	Mankin, Johannes	Declared valid.
17.	60	Vatter, Karl	Nomination declared withdrawn. Deposit to be refunded.

.....

Committee Chairman: /signature/

Members: /signatures/

1 See the List of Candidates received by the Central Electoral Committee on 11 July: Document 9.

DOCUMENT 9

Received by the Central Electoral Committee 11 July 1940 as Document No. 28.
To the Central Electoral Committee for information.

List of candidates in Viljandimaa Electoral Districts for Riigivolikogu Elections on 14 and 15 July 1940.

Electoral District No.	Surname and Name	Age	Residence ¹
59	Abori, Oskar	33	Viljandi, Leola 42a-1
60	Murd, Johannes	26	Põltsamaa v., Viruvere k.
60	Põder, Jaan	45	Viljandi, Posti 14
61	Kint, Tõnis	43	Tallinn, Jakobsoni 48-1
61	Sepre, Oskar	40	Tallinn, Paldiski mt. 23a-3
61	Vain, Jüri	58	Kõo v., Jaaguanso t.
62	Pauri, Johan	32	Kõpu v., Tõrva t.
62	Veimer, Arnold	37	Tallinn, Katusepapi 27-2
63	Laosson, Max	35	Tartu, Lepiku 7-10
63	Mankin, Johann	46	Viljandi v., Piima t.
64	Piip, Ants	56	Tartu, Katoliku 1
64	Änilane, Jaan	36	Holstre v., Sepa t.

Viljandi, 10 July 1940.
Riigivolikogu Elections Viljandimaa Districts'
Committee Chairman /signature/

Members /signatures/

Secretary /signature/

1 Abbreviations mean the following:

v.—vald (rural township, municipality)

k.—küla (village)

t.—talu (farm)

For city addresses the name of the street and house number are given.

DOCUMENT 10

Minutes of the Riigivolikogu Elections Viljandimaa Districts' Committee meeting held on 11 July 1940 at the offices of the Provincial Government.

Present: Committee Chairman P. Puis, Deputy Chairman E. Elbrecht, members V. Malin and Mihkel Tamm, and alternate member Voldemar Mölder.

The meeting came to order at 18:00 and adjourned at 22:00.

Item 1

Since some candidates have withdrawn their nomination papers on 11 July 1940 and since additional information has been received about other candidates, the Committee

decided to partially amend its decisions of 10 July 1940 (Item 1) and to declare the nominations of candidates Jüri Vain (61), Johannes Murd (60), Johann Mankin (63) and Johan Pauri (62) withdrawn and to refund their deposits.

The nominations of Tõnis Kint (61) and Ants Piip (64) are invalidated because the election platforms submitted by them, according to the clarifying information, are vague [generally worded] and aimed at using the elections for purposes harmful to the Estonian people (Riigivolikogu Elections Act, Article 31, paragraph II [sic]). The above is to be communicated to the Central Committee by telegraph.

.....

Committee Chairman /signature/
Members /signatures/

DOCUMENT 11

Electoral Platform of

TONISSON, Jaan, candidate for the Riigivolikogu in the 45th Electoral District.

1. Support for the constitutional system of the Republic of Estonia.
2. Honest and exact implementation [of the provisions] of the Mutual Assistance Pact between Estonia and the Soviet Union.
3. Support for the policy of the Government of the Republic according to its Declaration.¹

Tartu, 10 July 1940.

/J. Tonisson/
Signature of the candidate

- 1 Declaration of the Government of Prime Minister Johannes Vares, *Rahva Hääl*, 22 June 1940; also in *Dokumente*, 148-49. It considered condemnation of the previous regime and support for the Soviet Union as "the only basis on which it is possible to establish Estonia's independence and defense." An English translation (based on *Izvestiia*, 23 June 1940) is given in Kavass and Sprudz, 393-94.

DOCUMENT 12

Minutes No. 3. Tartu Districts' Committee meeting held on 10 July 1940 in the City Hall.

The meeting comes to order at 18:00.

Present: Chairman of the Committee Ilmar Kruus, Deputy Chairman Viktor Kosenkranius, members Eduard Fuchs and Paul Hubel, alternate member Jaan Kilk.¹

.....

- I. Certification of the nominations of Riigivolikogu candidates.

.....

2. Nominations of the candidates for the Riigivolikogu elections, Arnold-Aleksander Kerem, Jaan Tõnisson, Agu Põld, and Jaan Vain certified not valid [not legal] and therefore to be rejected on the following grounds:

(1) The platforms presented by J. Tõnisson, A. Kerem, and A. Põld are too broadly worded. The ways, methods, and means whereby it is intended to implement these platforms are not made clear.

(2) The activities of J. Tõnisson, J. Vain, A. Kerem, and A. Põld have in general tended to be hostile to the Soviet Union. Their negative attitude towards the Pact between Estonia and the USSR is clearly proven by many sources. The abovenamed persons have maintained solidarity with the calamitous orientation of the foreign policy of the Uluots-Piip government.² In domestic politics until recently J. Tõnisson and J. Vain maintained solidarity with the repressions carried out by the now removed Minister of Interior Jürima in Tartu and elsewhere against the Estonian workers' movement and against those persons who demanded the sincere implementation of the Pact between Estonia and the Soviet Union.

(3) According to the explanations of the representatives of J. Tõnisson, J. Vain, A. Kerem, and A. Põld the electoral platforms of their candidates agree with that of the League of the Working People. In fact, A. Kerem, J. Tõnisson, A. Põld, and J. Vain have neither attempted to establish nor established any contact with either Tartu or all-Estonian workers' organizations. Consequently, these candidates present themselves without authorization under the label of defending the interests of the working people, without regard for the prevailing notions of discipline and solidarity of the working people's organizations. Such a stand by the aforementioned candidates becomes an attempt to split the organized working people as the main guarantor of domestic peace, and at the same time impedes the implementation of reforms by the League of the Working People and the Government of the Republic. Thus in the present case it is pure demagoguery and an attempt at deception to appear, without the trust of the organizations of the workers, as defender of the platform of the League of the Working People.

(4) Item 10 in J. Vain's electoral platform demands that the line of thought that some individuals or groups of citizens are enemies of the state and the people must not be forced on the youths called into military service. In essence this means prohibition of exposing the activity of Jürima, Piip, Eenpalu³ and other plutocratic enemies of the people and is contrary to the principle of political education of the armed forces approved by the Government of our Republic and the working people.

.....

Chairman of the Tartu Districts' Committee: /signature/

Members: /signatures/

1 Spelling in RT (1940), No. 62, 586: Fuks, Ubel.

2 Professors Uluots and Piip were members of the Delegation which signed the Mutual Assistance Pact between Estonia and the Soviet Union on 28 September 1939. The government of K. Eenpalu, in which A. Jürima was Minister of Interior, was replaced by the government of Professor J. Uluots in October 1939 in which Professor A. Piip was Minister of Foreign Affairs.

3 Professor A. Piip stood for elections in Viljandimaa, but his candidacy was invalidated. See Documents 9, 10, and 11.

DOCUMENT 13

Minutes No. 7. Meeting of the Riigivolikogu Elections Tallinn-Nõmme Districts' Committee held on 10 July 1940 at 18:50 in the offices of the City Bureau of Statistics, 6 Pikk Street, Tallinn.

Present: Chairman of the Committee H. Raesaar, Deputy Chairman E. Hiiemets, members M. Lunt and A. Jaanus.

.....

II

.....

Committee member Mr. Jaanus asserts that a number of candidates do not qualify under the requirements which have been established by the Central Electoral Committee. Their platforms are aimed at deceiving the voters, since they are copied from the platform of the League of the Working People although it is known that these persons have actively participated in organizations pursuing diametrically opposite aims.

In compliance with the Central Electoral Committee's instruction of 10 July, which prohibits platforms that are vague or meant to deceive the voters, and [in reference to] paragraph 8 of Article 31, which specifies that Riigivolikogu elections cannot be used for purposes harmful to the Republic of Estonia and the Estonian people; and bearing in mind that in considering the question in substance, it became clear that a number of candidates have actively participated in organizations hostile to the people, such as the League of Veterans of the War of Independence, the Patriotic (Fatherland) League, etc.; and that they have repeatedly acted contrary to the interests of the workers' movement and the people; and have publicly presented themselves as enemies of friendship between Estonia and the Soviet Union, it is decided to invalidate the nominations of the following candidates:

1st District	Teodor Tallmeister
2nd "	Mihkel Tasur
3rd "	Arnold Õunapuu
4th "	Heinrich Tann
5th "	Raoul Saue
5th "	Leida Ant
6th "	Oskar Lõvi
8th "	Arvo Taioste
9th "	Anton-Alfred Rei
10th "	Jüri Keerig
11th "	Valdar Tamera
12th "	Tõnis Kalbus

.....

Chairman /signature/

Deputy Chairman /signature/

Members /signatures/

Secretary /signature/

DOCUMENT 14

To the Riigivolikogu Elections Harjumaa Districts' Committee.

Electoral platform of JÜRI-RAJUR LIIVAK, candidate in the Riigivolikogu elections 18th (eighteenth) Electoral District for the Riigivolikogu elections on 14 and 15 July 1940.

1. Close and loyal cooperation with the Soviet Union.
2. Improvement of the living standard of small farmers and the guaranteeing of prices of agricultural products according to their production cost.
3. Increasing productivity in agriculture and in industry, and improvement of the material standard of all levels of the working people.
4. State control of private entrepreneurship.
5. Raising the standards of education and culture, and making these available to the rural population.

6. Social legislation to conform with current standards.
7. Maintenance of religious freedom.

Presenter of J. R. Liivak's nomination:

J. Eerand
/Signature/

DOCUMENT 15

Ballot of Riigivolikogu 54th Electoral District for Riigivolikogu elections on 14 and 15 July 1940.¹

Ballot of 54th Electoral District	Ballot of 54th Electoral District	Ballot of 54th Electoral District
Candidate of the League of the Working People	Candidate	Candidate
Hirsch, Osvald, age 33 res. Tartu, Eha nr. 25	Liin, Karl, age 39 res. Rõngu v.	Orn, Arvo, age 35 res. Otepää, Pühajärve tee nr. 8

- 1 The electoral practice was that the voter cut out the ballot of the candidate for whom he voted and handed it in a sealed envelope to a Precinct official who would drop it into the ballot box (Riigivolikogu Elections Act, Art. 59).

DOCUMENT 16

To the Government of the Otepää Municipality.

The ballots which were received yesterday are not to be distributed; ballots distributed already are to be retrieved.¹ Come without delay to the Provincial Government to receive new ballots. New ballots are to be distributed to the people today.

The leading members of the local government are responsible for the immediate and exact execution of this order. This order must not be announced to the public. [Sic]

P. Tänav²

Chairman of the Riigivolikogu

Tartumaa District [sic] Electoral Committee.

Forwarded: Hiir

Received: Kask Received 12 July 1940 at 12:15.

- 1 According to the minutes of the meeting of the Tartumaa Districts' Committee held on 12 July at 14:45 Liin and Orn had withdrawn their nominations (Information by Karl Aun). The electoral practice was that the ballots were distributed by the local governments to the eligible voters before the elections.

- 2 Spelling in RT 1940, No. 62, 586: Priidu Tänav.

DOCUMENT 17

Minutes No. 8. Central Electoral Committee meeting held on 12 July 1940 at 12:00 in the office of the Minister of Justice.

Present: Minister of Justice F. Niggol, Deputy Minister of Interior H. Haberman, Edgar Petre, Aleksander Pirson and Evald Priks, and H. Reiman.

Chairman of the Central Committee F. Niggol presided.

Secretary-General A. Mägi recorded the minutes.

.....

II. *Directive to the Districts' Committees*

It is decided that the Districts' Committees be informed that, in order to avoid confusion, in cases when further nominations of candidates have been invalidated by the Districts' Committee after the ballots have been printed and distributed to citizens, announcements be posted in prominent places at the polls showing who are still candidates and who are not.¹

.....

/F. Niggol/
Central Committee Chairman

/Artur Mägi/
Secretary-General

1 See Documents 15 and 16.

DOCUMENT 18

To All Districts' Committees

Order of the Central Electoral Committee.¹

Districts' Committees must speedily establish local Mobile Electoral Precincts [polling stations] which shall visit all clinics and hospitals (except hospitals for infectious diseases) and old age homes in the Districts' Committee area, and make it possible for all citizens in those institutions to vote. If these citizens are not on the election lists, the Commission shall enter them on a supplementary list. It is the responsibility of the Districts' Committee to find ways and means to carry out this order.

Similarly, ways and means must be found to enable those citizens to vote who are at home because they are sick or invalids and cannot participate in the elections.

The Districts' Committees must instruct the Precinct Commissions that they can release election results only to the Districts' Committees. The latter will transmit election results only to the Central Electoral Committee.

/F. Niggol/
Central Electoral Committee Chairman

/Artur Mägi/
Central Committee Secretary-General

1 The order is undated; the most likely date is 14 July, or even the following morning. See also Document 19.

DOCUMENT 19

The 80th Electoral District.

Municipality of Laheda. Mobile Electoral Commission.

Minutes of the Mobile Electoral Commission.

The Commission was formed in accord with the telegram of the Central Electoral Committee by Karl Asi, the secretary of the municipality, on behalf of the Chairman of the municipality as follows: Chairman Karl Asi, Secretary Artur Tumm; [the Commission] began to act immediately after its formation, i.e., 15 July 1940 at 16:30. A car belonging to the Army of the USSR was used for transport; it had been requested to transport citizens to the polls.

Eighteen citizens (sick and old people) voted in the Mobile Electoral Commission.

After the elections were closed the ballots were removed from the ballot box and counted without opening the envelopes; there were 18 [ballots].

This number agrees with the number of citizens who voted in the Mobile Electoral Commission.

I. Valid Ballots (Votes).

The Commission declared 18 ballots (votes) valid.

II. Invalid Ballots (Votes).

There were no invalid ballots.

The following citizens voted in the Mobile Electoral Commission:

{The list of names, ages, and addresses}

/Signatures/

DOCUMENT 20

Statement

I. Artur Tire, member of the Järvamaa Districts' Committee, authorized by the Järvamaa Districts' Committee to inspect the conduct of elections in the Järvamaa precincts of the Riigivolikogu elections on 14 and 15 July 1940, carried out spot checks at the precincts of the 22nd Electoral District. Departure from Paide on Provincial Government truck J-291, with driver Otto Heinaste, on 14 July at 22:30; driver was ordered for 22:00, returned to Paide 8:00 on 15 July 1940.

While inspecting the precincts I found the following:

1. 14 July 1940 at 23:30 I found everything normal at the Türi City precinct, Türi, Kiriku tn. 4. The door to the balloting room was sealed. Inside two members were on duty. Outside the Red Army on guard duty.

.....

5. 15 July 1940 at 12:45 at the 2nd precinct [poll] in the rural municipality of Säreveere, at Nilson's house in the Laupa settlement. Door to the ballot room sealed. Outside the Red Army on guard duty.

A. Tire /signature/

Deputy Chairman of the Järvamaa Districts' Committee