

BALTIC NEWS

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A Newsletter of the Help the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Peoples Association (HELP) - P.O. Box 272, Sandy Bay, Tas. 7005 (Australia).

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Vol. I, No. 2.

April 5, 1975.

Don't miss...

PUBLIC LECTURE

on

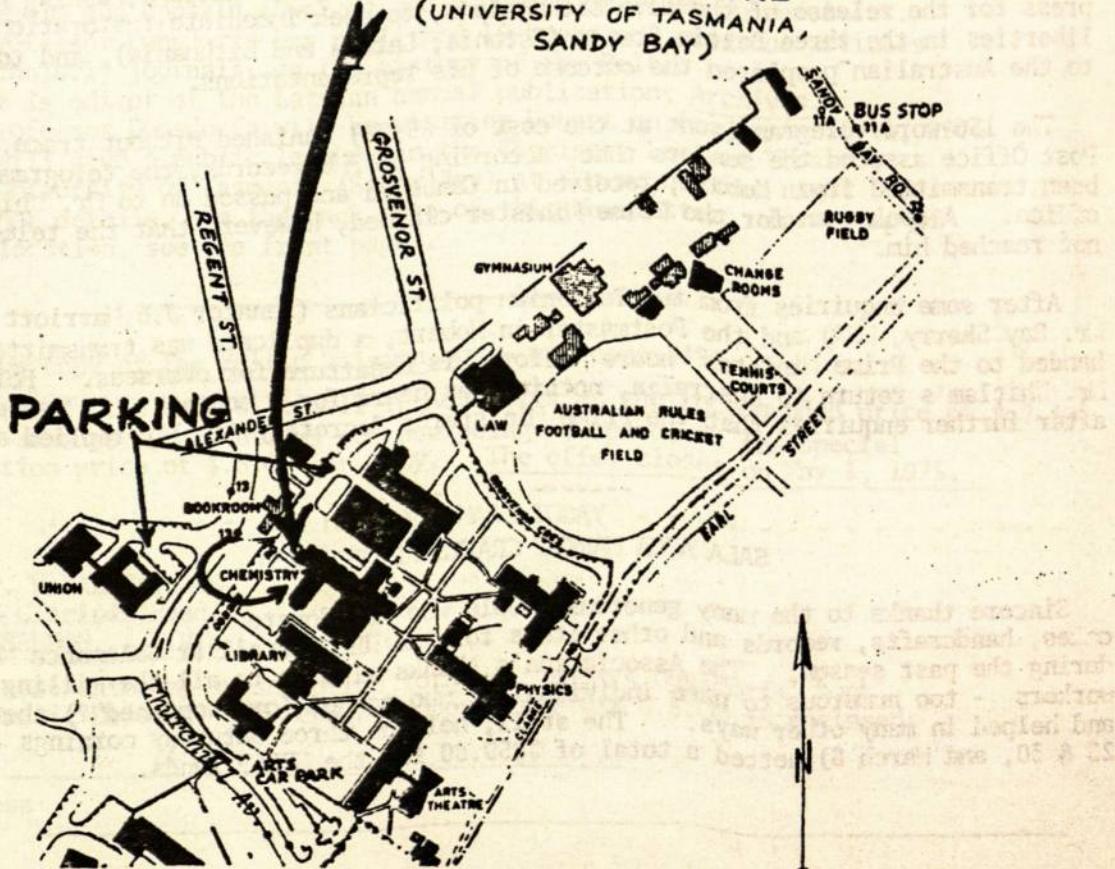
"The Baltic Dilemma"

at the University of Tasmania, Sandy Bay,
next Friday April 11, 1975, at 8 p.m.

The map below shows the location of the Chemistry Lecture Theatre in which the lecture will be held, and adjacent parking areas.

For further information see the back page of this issue.

CHEMISTRY LECTURE THEATRE (UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA, SANDY BAY)



Local News**AUSTRALIA'S PRIME MINISTER UNABLE TO HELP**

Mr. Whitlam's Private Secretary has informed the Chairman of HELP Association that "the Prime Minister did not have the opportunity to make specific representations to the Soviet Government about imprisoned Lithuanians during his recent visit to Europe".

A spokesman for HELP said today, this reply will disappoint more than 100 Hobartians from all walks of life, who had especially asked Mr. Whitlam to intercede on behalf of five Lithuanian prisoners of conscience.

The plight of the five men (S. Zukauskas, A. Sakalauskas, V. Povilonis, I. Rudaitis and A. Blacevicius) was first reported in "SEF" (Saturday Evening Mercury) on November 9, 1974.

Some four weeks later, on December 5, 1974, over 100 people gathered in Franklin Square, Hobart, to hear the then Minister for Tourism and Immigration (Mr. B. Miller) call for public action over the imprisonments.

Mr. Miller said, public action could result in the release of the five Lithuanians who were imprisoned by men whose political philosophies differed from ours, but who were receptive to world opinion.

Mr. Miller described the trial of the men as a purely political trial that was "almost unbelievable". He said, it was time the Australian public sought the application of the precepts of the United Nations Charter of Rights.

The meeting sent a telegram to the Prime Minister (Mr. Whitlam), asking him to press for the release of the five Lithuanians, to seek immediate restoration of civil liberties in the three Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), and to report to the Australian people on the outcome of his representations.

The 156-word telegram (sent at the cost of \$0.36) vanished without trace. The Post Office assured the senders that, according to P.O. records, the telegram had been transmitted from Hobart, received in Canberra and passed on to Mr. Whitlam's office. A spokesman for the Prime Minister claimed, however, that the telegram had not reached him.

After some enquiries from two Tasmanian politicians (Senator J.E. Marriott and Mr. Ray Sherry, MHR) and the Postmaster in Hobart, a duplicate was transmitted and handed to the Prime Minister hours before his departure for overseas. Following Mr. Whitlam's return to Australia, nothing was heard for 3 months. It was only after further enquiries that the Prime Minister's Secretary finally replied as above.

SALARANCA MARKET CRAFTS APPRECIATED

Sincere thanks to the many generous people who had donated cakes, handcrafts, records and other items for the HELP stall at Salaranca Market, during the past season! The Association's thanks also go to all the willing workers - too numerous to name individually, who manned (or "womennéd"?) the stall and helped in many other ways. The stall, held on three Saturday mornings (November 23 & 30, and March 3) netted a total of \$250.80 for the HELP funds.

A New Book about Australia and the Baltic States:

ORDER NOW AND SAVE 33% !

Australia was the first major Western nation to recognize, de jure, the incorporation of the Baltic States into the Soviet Union. Professor Edgars Dunsdorfs has written a 320 page book about this event, under the title of The Baltic Dilemma. The book will be published shortly by Speller and Sons, in New York, and is expected to be released in Australia in August/September, 1975.

The Baltic Dilemma will be divided into eight chapters:

1. The Baltic people's move to Australia.
2. Australia grants de jure recognition to the incorporation of the Baltic States into the Soviet Union.
3. The Australian Government's justification.
4. The Baltic question in the Australian Parliament.
5. The censure motion against the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs.
6. The Minister for Foreign Affairs is censured by the Australian Senate.
7. The news media and the Baltic case.
8. Can the decision be reversed?

This book is not a mere chronicle, but a thorough and critical analysis of an event that is unique in modern international relations.

About the Author:

Dr. Edgars Dunsdorfs is Emeritus Professor of Economic History, at the University of Melbourne.

He was formerly Professor of Economic History at the University of Latvia (Riga) and one of the Rectors of the Baltic University in Pinneberg (Western Germany). He was also a visiting Professor at the University of California (Berkeley campus, USA), the Universities of Stockholm and Uppsala (Sweden) and a number of other Universities.

Professor Dunsdorfs has published 19 books and numerous articles in scholarly journals, on the history of the Baltic region.

He is editor of the Latvian annual publication, Archives.

Professor Dunsdorfs will be visiting Hobart on Friday April 11, 1975 and will give a public lecture in the Chemistry Lecture Theatre, The University of Tasmania (Sandy Bay) at 8.p.m. on that night (For further details, see the back page of this Newsletter; for a map of the location, see the front page).

Order your copy of The Baltic Dilemma now - and save 33%!

Once released, the book will sell in Australia at the recommended price of \$7.50. However, advance subscriptions are now being accepted, at the special pre-publication price of \$5.00 per copy. The offer closes on May 1, 1975.

----- CUT HERE AND MAIL TODAY -----

To: Mr. V. ALISAUSKAS,
27 Clarinda Road,
ESSENDON.....Vic. 3040.

Please enter my subscription for Prof. Edgars Dunsdorfs' book, The Baltic Dilemma. My cheque/money order for \$5.00 is enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

Estonia

S.O.S. FROM THE ESTONIAN UNDERGROUND

Estonians are fast becoming a minority group in their own country. Their place is taken by ever-increasing numbers of Russian migrants, who are offered better jobs and preferential housing in the Soviet-sponsored programme of 'Baltic re-settlement'.

This is the key message conveyed in a letter in October 1972, which was smuggled out of Russian-occupied Estonia, and which took two years to reach its addressee, the Secretary-General of the United Nations (Mr. Kurt Waldheim).

The six-page letter and a number of supporting documents have been prepared by the Estonian Democratic Movement and the Estonian National Front, two underground organisations still active in Estonia today.

The authors of the letter to the United Nations quote some alarming statistics for ethnic Estonia (i.e. pre-war Estonia - with the exception of Petseri and Narva district which have had predominantly Russian population for some time). The figures show that during the 30 years of Russian domination, the percentage of Estonians in Estonia has plunged from 92.1% to 68.2% - while the Russian population has risen from 6.5% to 28.1%. The remainder consists of "other nationalities, now mostly Russianized".

The life in present-day Estonia is described as being under the shadow of "constant intimidation and oppression". "Dictatorship and terror", coupled with a "lack of spiritual and political freedom", have left the local people terrified and insecure.

The Estonians are facing Hobson's choice: (a) if they do not resist, they will be "Russianised" (i.e. assimilated with the ruling Russians) - slowly but surely; (b) if they do offer active resistance, "the whole nation will be dealt with quickly and brutally: the (Estonian) intellectuals and other active elements of the nation will be jailed and deported, the rest of the population subjected to intense 'Russification' and repression".

The letter concludes with an appeal to the United Nations to honour the Allies' World War II promises and restore freedom in Estonia -

"The UNO is helping to national independence, many nations who have never had such independence in the modern sense of the word. Even the smallest nations and territories (e.g. Maldives, Nauru etc.) have been ... (given) the right to be independent states. On 29th August, 1972, the UNO recognized Puerto Rico as a territory with an inalienable right to self-determination and independence, despite the fact that the Puerto-Ricans have had several occasions to express freely their will - occasions which the Estonians have never had under the Soviet colonial rule".

The full text of the letter is available. For your free copy, please send a large stamped, self-addressed envelope to to HELLP Association, P.O. Box 272, Sandy Bay, Tasmania, 7005.

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF H.E.L.L.P. ASSOCIATION?

If not, would you like to join us? A membership application card (yellow) is inside this Newsletter.

If you are a member, please pass the card on to your friends and ask them to join!

Latvia**Illegal Bible Printers Silenced**

An illegal printing shop with 15,000 Bibles, 16 tons of paper and printing equipment was recently discovered in Riga, the capital city of Russian-occupied Latvia.

200 KGB men (Russian secret police) took part in the raid. Nine persons were arrested. The location of the printing shop was traced only after a reward of 50,000 roubles (\$51,023 Australian) was offered by the Russian authorities. According to a report in the Copenhagen Berlingske Tidende, the arrests took place on October 24, 1974.

The printing machinery had been dismantled into small parts and smuggled into Riga. The shop was run by an underground Evangelical parish, under the leadership of Genadi Krushkov who had been sought by the KGB for several years. The nine men arrested belonged to the printing shop personnel. For two years they had worked there in shifts and without leaving the premises, so that the location would not be betrayed. It must have taken a long time for the members of the parish to collect the paper needed for the Bibles, because paper is heavily rationed in the Soviet Union.

The owner of the apartment where the Bibles were printed, was stopped in the street and accused of stealing a bicycle. The house was then surrounded and searched. The large number of KGB men taking part indicates that the raid had been planned well in advance.

The printing shop escaped detection for so long, because it had been set up in the same building as a city police department. The parish supporting the clandestine printing shop was also banned by the Russian authorities and its members had been sought by the KGB for a long time. The KGB had even resorted to the use of hidden microphones (made in USA) to eavesdrop on the members of the underground.

Four days later, on October 28, 1974, another printing shop with Bibles and New Testaments was found by the Soviet authorities in a basement in Ligatne, 40 miles from Riga. Six persons were arrested, one by the name of Bauer.

Lithuania**NEW WAVE OF MASS ARRESTS**

Since Australia's recognition of Russian sovereignty over the Baltic States last year, a new wave of arrests has swept across Lithuania. The KGB (Russian Secret Police) has spread a dragnet encompassing the major centres in Lithuania, as well as Moscow and Leningrad. The purpose of the new assault is to silence the underground "Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church" and several other clandestine publications, most of them of religious character.

Four Lithuanians were sentenced in December, 1974, to labour camp terms ranging from one to eight years. They had been charged with "illegal copying and distribution of publications" that were alleged to spread "fabricated provocative rumours and slanderous attacks on the Soviet state and social system".

More Arrests in Lithuania (continued from Page 5)

New trials are likely, since some arrestees are still being interrogated. One of the best known among them is Sergei Kovalev, a noted Russian dissenter, who was arrested in Moscow. Issues of the 'Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church' were found in his Moscow apartment.

The peak of the KGB assault took place during the night of December 26 - 27, 1974. The security agents descended on the homes of suspected Lithuanians in Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipeda, Siauliai, Panevezys, Ukmerge, Utena, Alytus and other places. The campaign was led by special KGB officials from Moscow.

Informants from Lithuania say that physicians, clergymen, students and other intellectuals were among those arrested. The Lithuanian people are said to be gravely concerned about the recent repressions. They fear that 'Stalin's times' might be back again.

The new attack of the Russian security against the Lithuanian dissenters is accompanied by an increase in anti-religious propaganda in the official press of Lithuania. In a recent statement published in Tiesa (Vilnius, November 22, 1974), the Lithuanian Commissioner of the Council for Religious Affairs, Kazimieras Tumenas, made it clear that the authorities would not grant even minor concessions to the Lithuanian Catholics. Instead, he pledged tighter controls and called for the creation of an 'atmosphere of social condemnation of the conscious violators of the laws (on religion), especially their organisers'. He also announced the establishment of 'permanent State commissions for the control of compliance with these laws'.

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REUNION OF BALTIC FAMILIES

At a recent press conference in Stockholm, Alexander Solzhenitsyn criticized certain Governments' attitude to the reunion of Baltic families. He was probably referring to Senator Willesee's statement made in the Australian Senate on 13/8/1974. Senator Willesee had claimed that the Australian recognition of the incorporation of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union would 'facilitate the carrying out of certain consular activities, including matters relating to reunion of families and settlement of estates'.

Solzhenitsyn said, 'Let us consider, what meaning is there in a campaign in favour of the Baltic right to emigrate? This is a false understanding of the right to emigration. What joy can there be in emigrating from one's home? How can one conceive that, only in abandoning one's home, a man finds freedom? Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians who are abroad now, must live to see the opportunity when they will be able to return home. They want to have their freedom at home. The solution of the problem of emigration will not help them at all.'

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GREAT DEMAND FOR THE 'BALTIC NEWS'

The demand for the first issue of this Newsletter (published last month) exceeded all expectations. As a result, a 'second edition' had to be printed. The requests for extra copies came from as far afield as Western Australia, Queensland and Darwin.

Although primarily designed for distribution to HELP members, the 'Baltic News' is also made available (while stocks last) to the media, students and the public.

BOOKS ABOUT THE BALTIC STATES.

Most of the books listed below are now available, or are about to be released, on the Australian market. If unable to buy from your nearest stockist, please write to: HELLP Association, P.O. Box 272, Sandy Bay, Tasmania, 7005.

***(For copies of 'Baltic News' write to the above address, sending stamped self-addressed envelope).

ARIONAS, Barbara, Leave your Tears in Moscow. Philadelphia and New York: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1961.

The Baltic States, 1940 - 1972. Stockholm: The Baltic Committee in Scandinavia, 1972.

DUNSDORFS, Edgars, The Baltic Dilemma. New York: Hobart Speller and Sons, 1975. - \$7.50. *

EHRET, Joseph, The Forgotten Balts. Chicago, Ill.: Lithuanian American Council Inc., 1974.

GIBUTAS, M., The Balts. London: Thames and Hudson, 1963.

SAVASIS, Dr. J., The War against God in Lithuania. New York: Manylands Books, Inc., 1966. - \$5.15 (hard cover edition) *

SVABE, Arveds, Genocide in the Baltic States. Stockholm: The Latvian National Fund in the Scandinavian Countries, 1952. - \$0.75. *

TAUTVAISA, H. The Cemetery of Nations in the Siberian Tundra. London: The Lithuanian Social Democratic Union of America, 1968.

VAITIEKUNAS, Vytautas, Lithuania. New York: The Lithuanian National Foundation, 1968.

VARDYS, V. Stanley (ed.), Lithuania under the Soviets: Portrait of a Nation 1940 - 1965. New York, Frederick A. Praeger, 1965.

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SOVIET DISCRIMINATION TO BE AIRED
IN DANISH PARLIAMENT

The Danish Parliament will be the scene of a hearing 'to examine and elucidate the continued and persistent discrimination in the political, religious and cultural life in the Soviet Union'. The hearing is expected to start some time in the (European) spring of 1975.

The setting up of an international tribunal to examine these questions was originally proposed by the Russian human rights champion, Andrei Sakharov, early last year.

The Common Committee of East Exiles in Denmark has been instrumental in organising the hearing. The Committee invites all 'Russian and East European exile organisations, human rights committees and information centres to make contact with us, to publish the plans for the hearing in the press, and to give us your full moral and political support by nominating trustworthy witnesses, submitting important information, and if possible, by financial contributions.'

The invitation is signed by Ernö Eszterhaz, President; and Øjvind Andersen, Vice President. The Committee's address is: Postbox 1035, DK-1007, COPENHAGEN K, Denmark.

* * * COMING EVENTS. * * *

All members and friends of HELLP Association are asked to support, and participate in, the following events:

Friday 11th April, 1975, 8.0 p.m.:

PUBLIC LECTURE

Dr. Edgars Dunsdorfs, Emeritus Professor of Economic History, University of Melbourne, will give a public lecture on

" THE BALTIC DILEMMA ",

in the Chemistry Lecture Theatre, University of Tasmania (opposite Bus Stop 13, Churchill Avenue, Sandy Bay), on Friday 11/4/75, at 8.p.m.

Professor Dunsdorfs will speak on the problems arising from the incorporation into the Soviet Union of the three Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania); and the Australian Government's de jure recognition of the Russian sovereignty over those countries.

The meeting will be chaired by Professor C.H. Miller, of the University of Tasmania.

Admission free. - All welcome.

(For a map, showing the location of Chemistry Lecture Theatre, see the front page of this Newsletter. - More information on Professor Dunsdorfs and his latest book, The Baltic Dilemma, is on Page 3).

Friday 25th April, 1975:

ANZAC DAY CEREMONIES

This is the day to remember, with gratitude, those fine men and women who have fought for the freedom of all nations.

May/June, 1975 (date to be announced later):

PUBLIC MEETING

The Committee has invited a well-known speaker to address HELLP members and supporters. If at all possible, attempts will be made to arrange this meeting on a date close to the anniversary of Romas Kalanta's tragic death (perhaps Sunday night 11th May, 1975?)

Further details will be announced, as soon as the arrangements have been finalised.

Saturday 14th June, 1975:

34th ANNIVERSARY OF BALTIC DEPORTATIONS

Australia-wide demonstrations are being planned, to mark the 34th anniversary of the first mass deportations from the Baltic States.

For further information, please watch the press and the forthcoming editions of this Newsletter.