

BALTIC NEWS

A Newsletter of the Help the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Peoples Association (HELLP) - P.O. Box 272, SANDY BAY, Tas. 7005 (Australia).

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Vol. I, No. 5

July 17, 1975.

BALTS SWAY BASS VOTE?

THE BALTIC TRAGEDY figured prominently in last month's by-election campaign for the Federal seat of Bass (in Northern Tasmania).

During the final fortnight before the election, Tasmania's leading newspapers carried at least twelve news items connected with the "Baltic issue". More than 2,000 Baltic pamphlets (specially produced by HELLP Association) were distributed in the city of Launceston.

Public meetings and street demonstrations- some sponsored by HELLP, some quite spontaneous - were held in the main centres of the electorate (see picture, Page 2).

HELLP Association also asked each of the six candidates, "If elected, what steps will you take in the next 12 months to reverse the Australian Government's recognition of Soviet Russian sovereignty over the Baltic States?" Four of the candidates declared opposition to the Australian Government's current stand in regard to the Baltic States and promised to work for a reversal of last year's "Baltic decision".



"The Age", 1/7/75



The ALP candidate (Mr. J. Macrostie) did not reply to the survey. His silence on the Baltic issue received wide publicity in the media.

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The new M.H.R. for Bass, Mr. Kevin Newman (pictured at left) has promised to raise the Baltic issue in the first sitting of Parliament and to work for a reversal of the Australian Government's de jure recognition of Soviet Russian sovereignty over Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

"The Examiner" photo.

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The Baltic campaign reached its climax on June 26, when the Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam engaged in a heated discussion about Australia's recognition of the Soviet rule in the Baltic States (Full story Pages 4 and 5)

Two days later, the people of Bass cast their votes causing "the greatest anti-Government by-election avalanche in Australian political history" (The Mercury, 30/6/75)

The seat of Bass, a Labor stronghold for the last 21 years, was won by the Liberal candidate, Mr. Kevin Newman (41). His absolute majority in the six-way contest was nearly 9,000.

Even more significant was the public support for the Baltic cause. The four candidates who had committed themselves to the reversal of the "Baltic decision" polled 63.4 % of the total vote.



HELLP members and supporters joined the Launceston Balts in their march through the streets of Launceston on Saturday June 21, after a public meeting in the Trustees Court. Some HELLP members travelled from Hobart and Melbourne to take part. Guest speakers at the public meeting were the successful Liberal candidate for Bass, Mr. K. Newman, Senator Rae, the United Tasmania Group candidate, Dr. Kathleen Petrovsky and the Acting President of the Baltic Council of Australia, Mr. A. Simkus. Photo: by courtesy of "The Mercury".



STILL ALIVE

Inflation and unemployment - though very important in themselves - are not the only issues that worry the Australian voters. The average Australian also cares about moral injustices and does not approve of the Russian colonial rule in the Baltic States.

This became clear in last month's Bass by-election results. Compared to the 1974 election outcome, the Labor vote in Bass dropped by 18%, within the short period of 13 months. Why? Unemployment and inflation were equally rife last year - yet the Labor candidate was re-elected with a clear majority in 1974.

Obviously, there must have been other reasons for the voters' sudden change of heart; Mr Whitlam's ruthless sellout of the defenceless Baltic people to the Russians was one of them!

During the final week before the Bass by-election, Mr Whitlam was reported to have told the Labor candidate, Mr J.T. Macrostie, that the Baltic States issue was a "dead duck", i.e., a non-issue. The public reaction during the days that followed, proved him wrong.

We must remain alert. We must be ready to expose any attempts at falsifying historical facts; we have to counter any moves to discredit our aims. The greatest ally of all - the truth - is on our side!

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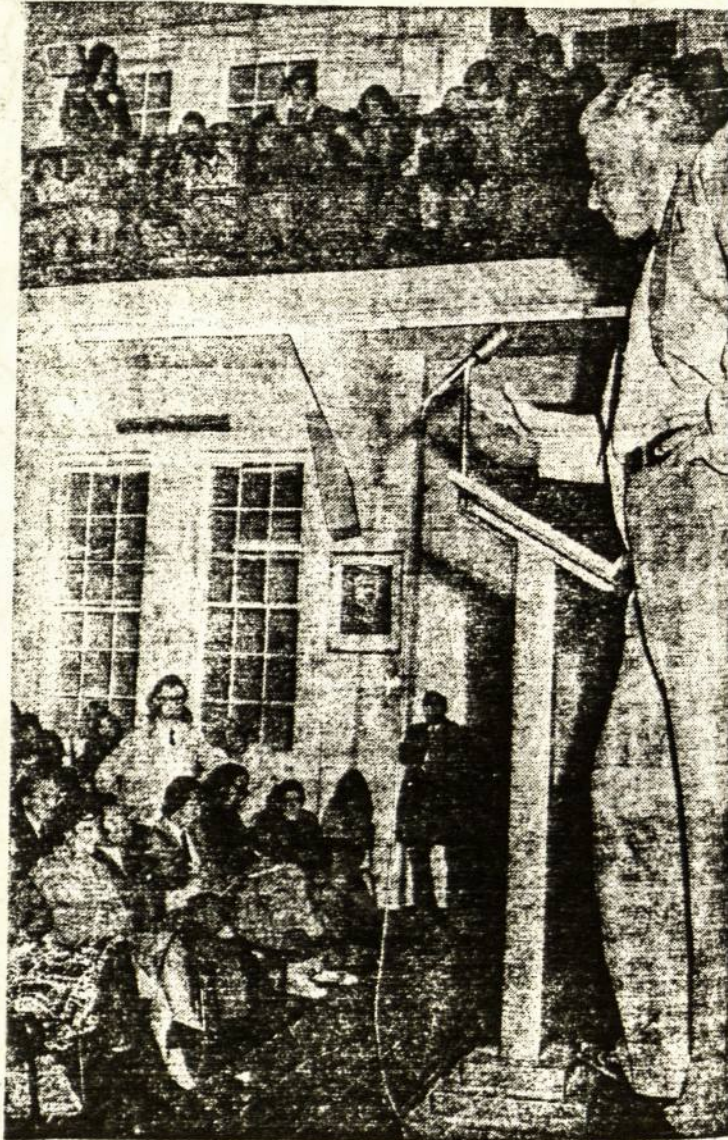
TEACHER, PM CLASH

During the Bass election campaign one particular event over-shadowed all others. This was the well publicised dispute between the Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam, and a geography teacher, Mr. Tom McGlynn (34) at the Launceston Matriculation College. Mr. Whitlam was speaking to fifth and sixth form students, many of whom are 18 and were entitled to vote for the first time.

Baltic States Question Raised

Answering a question from a student John Horak about the recognition of Soviet control over the Baltic States, the Prime Minister said that those who knew their history would know that the three states were independent only for 20 years between 1919 and 1939. He said: "For all the previous centuries these states have been part of Sweden, or Russia or Poland" Mr. McGlynn then intervened to say that this had been so, but 'involuntarily'. Mr. Whitlam went on to say: "In 1930 they were all fascists" Mr. McGlynn: "They were not." Mr. Whitlam: "They had a fascist Government then, as you know perfectly well." Mr. McGlynn: "Your history is all wrong." Mr. Whitlam replied (heatedly): "I presume you are a teacher and I don't believe you should mislead your pupils." Mr. McGlynn: "I am a geography teacher." Mr. Whitlam: "You are a disgrace to your profession."

Continued on the next Page →



A HEATED MOMENT between Mr. Whitlam and Mr. McGlynn, who is standing with his hands on his hips at the Launceston Matriculation College.

("The Examiner" photo).

Heated row on Baltic states

... Continued from Page 4

Mr. Whitlam then continued to give the students a lesson on the history of the Baltic States after which he again said: "They (The Baltic States) were as much a democracy as Hitler's Germany."

Mr. Whitlam went on to say that the only way Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania could again become sovereign states was in a world war in which the U.S. defeated Russia.

He said, he did not believe people ought to stir up this community over an historic wrangle 12,000 miles away, and that the rest of the world accepted the fact that the Baltic States were part of the Soviet Union.

Apology Refused.

as reported
Mr. McGlynn later demanded an apology from Mr. Whitlam for his reference to Mr. McGlynn as being a disgrace to his profession. When Mr. Whitlam *allegedly* refused to apologise, Mr. McGlynn took out a Court writ against Mr. Whitlam.

BALTIC VIGIL

The mass deportations in the Baltic States on 13th-14th June 1941, were commemorated last month with a 26 hour vigil held in Hobart's Franklin square. Senator Marriot and Mr. M. Hodgman spoke at the start of the vigil on Friday, 13th June. HELLP members and their many supporters then continuously manned the vigil until 6.00 pm. Saturday, distributing leaflets and answering queries from passers-by.

At the end of the vigil more than 100 people took part in a candlelight procession to St. Mary's Cathedral where a service was conducted Fr. Jarrett.

This event gained wide publicity on television and in the press, with front page illustrated reports.

HELLP Association is grateful to all those who helped to make this memorable occasion such a success.

BALTIC TRAGEDY

HELLP Association has produced an illustrated 8-page pamphlet, The Tragedy of the Baltic States. It is available, free of charge, to all who ask for it.

For your free copy, please send a large stamped, addressed envelope to:

H.E.L.L.P., P.O. Box 272,
SANDY BAY, Tasmania. 7005.

Pst... Got any Petrodollars to lend?...



Historical Notes (2)

LITHUANIA:

A LONG HISTORY OF FREEDOM.

Some important facts of Lithuania's history are shown on the chart, at right. After the unification of the Lithuanian principalities in 1219, Lithuania became not only a sovereign state, but a major European power. At one time, its territories stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

In 1386, Jogaila (the eldest son of King Algirdas of Lithuania) was elected King of Poland and ruled under the name of Vladislav II.

In 1569, this personal union was transformed into the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania. Both countries retained their separate governments, separate armed forces, separate treasuries and separate law courts. Documents of state were not valid, unless both great seals of state (i.e., those of Lithuania and Poland) were affixed. All these are external features of sovereignty.

After 556 years of independence, Lithuania lost it temporarily in 1795, during the third division of the Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth amongst Russia, Prussia and Austria.

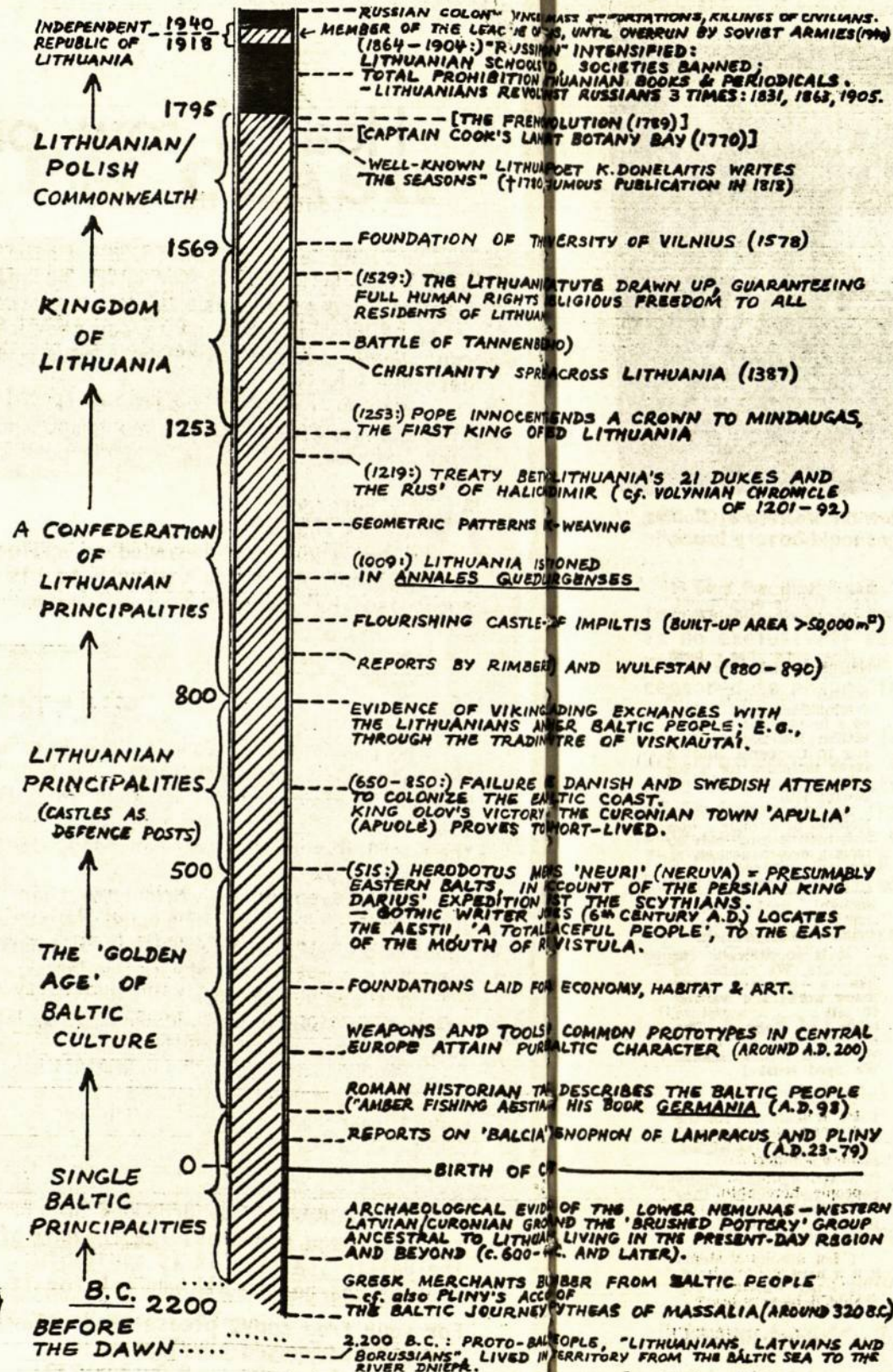
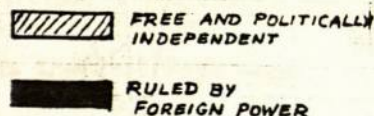
All three Baltic States regained their independence after the First World War. In separate peace treaties concluded with each of the Baltic States, Soviet Russia (as the successor state to tsarist Russia) renounced for all times its claims over the territories and people of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Although repeated in several subsequent treaties, this solemn pledge was broken in 1940 - when the Soviet armies overran Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and turned them into Russian colonies.

Adapted from a paper by Dr. E. DUNSDORFS, Emeritus Professor of the University of Melbourne.

In the next issue: How 6.5 million people were sold for \$7.5 million U.S., in gold.

KEY:



THANKS !

THIS issue of the Baltic News has been printed by professional printers and on better quality paper. It has more pages than usual and more illustrations.

All these improvements have been made possible by the generosity of a number of donors, including:

- * Mr. P. Siauciunas, Sandfly, Tas. \$100.00
- * Baltic Committee, Canberra, ACT. \$50.00
- * Lithuanian Assoc., Latrobe Valley \$20.00
- * Dr. W.V. Didzys, Altona, Vic. \$20.00

Thank you, one and all!

WHAT IS H.E.L.L.P. ?

H.E.L.L.P. ASSOCIATION is non-denominational and non-party political.

Its objectives are:-

- (1) to let you know that the Baltic people are still struggling for survival and self determination,
- (2) to press for reversal of the Australian Government's recognition of the Russian colonisation of the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania).

If you are not a member, fill in the coupon below and mail it immediately.

If you are a member, give the coupon to your friends.

TO: H.E.L.L.P.* ASSOCIATION,
P.O. Box 272, SANDY BAY, Tasmania, 7005.

I do not recognize Russian sovereignty over Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

I agree with the objectives of H.E.L.L.P. Association and hereby apply for membership.

Signature _____

NAME (Mr, Mrs, Miss) _____

ADDRESS _____

Phone _____

Action costs money. Donations are always welcome.

I ENCLOSE \$_____ Cash/Cheque/Money Order.

If a receipt is required, please tick here: ☐

*Baltic Contributions to Australia (continued)***2. VINCAS JOMANTAS**

Vincas Jomantas reaches for a phrase to explain his life "I am making," he says.

There is a Chaucerian freshness to it.

His native tongue is Lithuanian, said to be the oldest civilised language in Europe.

And while Vincas Jomantas is a modern, his art is also old.

Sculpture has been a human activity for at least 20,000 years, and although it has been disregarded in Australia it remains, in almost every other corner of the globe, one of the treasured expressions of creativity.

Vincas Jomantas, 44 (most Australians call him "Vince"), works in wood, concrete, plastic, fibre glass, bronze, stone, clay. His world is one of forms in three dimensions, of textures, colors, light and shadow, solidity and space.

But how to explain it all? He reaches for words:

"It is right when something just clicks."

**Simple
In manner**

He is a slight man, of medium height, with black hair straight back, grey eyes, and lean, pale face. His mouth, when he is thinking, firms into a line. His appearance is neat, as if he himself had been carved.

His manner is so simple that, as his Lithuanian-born wife Laima sits by, listening, her head bowed, peace overcomes you. The sculptures that stand by the fireplace, and in the centre of the room, and on the walls, give out, in comparison, a greater power.

They live in a white weatherboard house in Mens Ave., Cheltenham. They have no car. The garage is his studio.

With its hand and electric tools, its benches and materials, it is as tidy, in its way, as the kitchen.

He works long into the night, and often the milkman bangs on the door to let him know the sun is coming up. He may get \$300 or more for a piece of sculpture, but he works slowly.

Laima has become a potter, and works with her husband's thoroughness and introspection.

They find pleasure in good music, on an old-style radiogram.

"Shall we have music tonight?" she sometimes asks him a little plaintively, when he is not in the studio.

But he is usually sitting there, drawing endlessly, and just thinking in the forms that rise in his mind.

And when he shakes his head she takes it philosophically, if with a sigh.

"It is our life," she says.

**Ship
ballot**

Vincas Jomantas came to Australia by chance within a chance.

Born in Kaunas, the second city of tiny Lithuania, he was educated at a Jesuit college, and wanted to be a graphic artist and lithographer like his father.

But the end of the war, with the Russians grabbing Lithuania for keeps, saw him in a displaced persons' camp in Bavaria.

His mother died in 1941. He thinks his father died in the Ukraine, or possibly back in Kaunas. He does not know.

When the first Australian immigration officers went to the camp after the war, a ballot was held, for places on a ship to Australia.

Vincas did not enter, but unbeknown to him a friend put his name in. It drew a berth.

In 1948 he landed in Fremantle and went to a lumber mill job near Margaret River in south-west WA. He spoke Lithuanian, Russian and German but not English.



Sculptor Jomantas at work on Meeting of Nobles. "I tell my students they should be very brave."

He was from a little-known country and in an unknown land, but he carried with him the impact of Lithuania, and its forests, farms, music, sudden springs, and tragic history.

In the west ("In the west," as he puts it) Australians were good to him. The mill manager built him a special studio shed. He began to carve again.

He visited Lithuanians in Beechworth, Victoria, and stayed on there as a carpenter and builder's laborer. He saved money to buy carving tools.

**Hookey
boards**

Moving to Melbourne, he took a room in Sandringham and worked for a furniture firm in Prahran.

Laid off from there, when business slumped, he got a job in Moorabbin, spraying color on dart and hookey boards.

Next move was to a drafting desk in the Frankston office of the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission. He lived first in Cheltenham, then in Highett.

He was taking part in group-art shows.

Then in 1961, a fresh turn in his life began to force the wolf back from the door.

The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology appointed him to its art

staff. He is now head of the sculpture department. He teaches there four days a week.

His work has been bought by most big Aus-

tralian collectors. His commissions have included a fountain at the Australian National University in Canberra, and a foyer sculpture for a big mining company in Broken Hill.

His agent is Mr Rudy Komon, of Sydney, who has been urging him to have a one-man show at Komon's gallery.

"But I cannot get enough works done," Jomantas says with a touch of exasperation.

"It is so difficult for sculptors. We cannot be like a painter, doing many works and waiting to sell... A sculpture takes so long. The materials cost so much. We need commissions. We need trust..."

"And people do not think of sculpture for the ordinary home. Why not? It is more satisfying, more wonderful."

"Why do so many people here think they are showing charity just to invite sculpture to an arts festival?"

"I tell all my students it is a hard life," he said. "I tell them 'You should be very brave'."

- Noel HAWKEN.

Reprinted, with permission, from
"The Herald", May 27, 1967, p.28.

NEWS FROM BALTIC STATES.

ESTONIA

RUSSIFICATION IN ESTONIA.

The most significant difference between the present and former independent Baltic States is that Russia now has the overall supreme power and is under - taking a systematic russification program.

In Estonia, at the beginning of 1973, only 66.6 % of its 1,405,000 inhabitants were Estonians. About 10,000 Russians move to Estonia each year. Estonians dread the day when they will become a minority in their own country. They have yet to benefit from the numerous industries founded there, because most of the products are exported to other parts of the Soviet Union.

The "achievements" of the russification policy are reflected in the character of the mass communication media : 3 of the 7 newspapers are Russian; there is no exclusively Estonian T.V. network, only a Russian one. The publications, radio broadcasts and T.V. programs that do exist in Estonian are all strictly censored to ensure their adherence to the Party line.

Meanwhile, the jamming of Western broadcasts to the Soviet Union continues; Western newspapers, except Communist ones, are still unobtainable and travel outside of the country without permission of the K.G.B. and the Central Committee is impossible. Instead of elections with a choice of candidates, there is only one candidate who has been designated in advance by the party hierarchy. The Party leadership and administrative bureaucracy consist entirely of Russians or russified Estonian collaborators.

It is under these very harsh conditions that the activists and the Church must operate, for religious freedom and the right of speech exist only on paper.

LATVIA

BAPTIST PASTOR IN TROUBLE.

The Reverend Janis Smits is today without a church to preach in and without the means of livelihood to support his ten children and wife, in spite of the fact that his congregation and fellow pastors wholeheartedly support his ministry and are concerned for his welfare.

For nearly a year, pastor Smits has been harassed and threatened with arrest by local and Moscow-based government officials for preaching the word of God in Aizpute, a town in Western Latvia.

Continued on the next Page

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...Continued from Page 9.

The reasons for this campaign of persecution have never been made clear or public.

Other Baptist leaders in Latvia have also been harrassed and repeatedly instructed to censure Pastor Smits. They have refused to do this because they do not know the reasons why he should be brought to account. The Bishop himself has been threatened with removal from office.

Said Pastor Smits; "I no longer minister to my parish. Because of threats to it and to the Bishop, I can no longer take a risk. We are even being expelled from our home and no other is available"

Although the U.S.S.R. constitution clearly states that there is separation of Church and State, this case clearly illustrates the reality of religious life in the Soviet Union.

LITHUANIA

UNDERGROUND PERIODICAL - "MIJES"

Four new issues of the underground "Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church" have arrived in the West after a lapse of seven months due to tighter controls and checks by Soviet authorities.

They include transcripts of a trial which reveal the great concern of the Communist authorities over the impact of the "slandorous" allegations of the "Chronicle". In addition to the "Chronicle", the defendants were charged with multiplying and disseminating a number of anti-Soviet books. These include prayer-books and translations of The Gulag Archipelago.

NON-CONFORMIST PLACED IN PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL

Mindaugas Tamonis, a 34 year old doctoral student in technical sciences and a poet, has been placed in "intensive care" in the psycho-neurological dispensary in Vilnius to be cured of his convictions. The cure includes overdoses of Insulin, resulting in shock, and other unknown drugs. Apparently Tamonis refused to go on a tour to inspect the monument to the "Red Army - Liberator of Lithuania", because he did not recognise the present status of Lithuania. He also demanded that monuments be built to honour Stalin's innocent victims, a referendum be introduced to determine whether Lithuania and other republics desired independence and a "multi-party" system with democratic elections.

In the next Issue: FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE "BALTIC DECISION". It was a bad decision; it has brought no tangible benefits to Australia and has done a lot of harm to the Baltic people. Will it lead Mr. Whitlam to his "electoral grave" or will the Labor Government have the courage to reverse this decision, too?

IN MEMORIAM

BALCIUS, The Rev. Valentinas. - One of thousands of Baltic civilians, murdered by Soviet Russians, June 1941.

CELMINS. - In loving memory of Fricis, a former colonel in the free Latvian Army, who shot himself on June 24, 1940 - nine days after the Russian colonial armies overran his tiny country.

"I know, I am not strong enough to withstand torture. I'll take my own life, rather than betray my friends and my fellow Latvians" (Fricis' last words).

STALLITIS. - In sad memory of J. Stallitis, a baker in once-free Latvia, shot by the Russian colonialists on June 27, 1941.
Inserted by Arvids.

BALSYS, The Rev. Vaclovas,
BALTRIMAS, The Rev. Stanislovas,
DABRILA, The Rev. Justinas,
DAMBRAUSKAS, The Rev. Vaclovas,
DAUGELA, The Rev. Jonas,
JUKNEVICIUS, The Rev. Andrius,
TUTINAS, The Rev. Jonas,
VANAGAS, The Rev. Banediktas,
VEGELE, The Rev. Boleslovas,
VITKEVICIUS, The Rev. Pranciškus. -
A tribute to these fearless followers of Christ and many other Baltic priests who gave their lives for their faith; killed by the Russian colonialists, in June 1941.
- Inserted by their former parishioners.

LŪKINS, Col. M. - In sad memory of the former aide-de-camp to the President of free Latvia, shot after torture by the Russians on June 27, 1941.

SKUJENIEKS, Margers. - A tribute to the former Cabinet Minister in free Latvia. Shot in Moscow Lubjanka prison, in June 1941.
Remembered by Joseph Czapski, author of "Terre Inhumaine".

VAITIEKAITIS, The Rev. Augustinas. - In memory of the former rector of the Roman Catholic seminary in Kaunas (Lithuania), who died July 4, 1968, on return from terrible tortures in Siberia.

"Oh Lord, why have you deserted us?"

STONIS, Stasys. - Fond memories of "Alunta", leader of the "Lelija" troop of Lithuanian Freedom Fighters, killed in action against the Russian colonialists, July 17, 1949, at Zatriškės.

My love for you will never fade, Stasys, because you loved your country above all!

Inserted by Milda.

TASKUNAS, The Rev. Vladas. - Treasured memories of a devoted priest, whose body collapsed but the spirit remained unbroken by the Nazi and Soviet tortures. Died July 26, 1956, at Laukūva (Lithuania), soon after his return from a Siberian prison.
- Inserted by his loving nephew.

Genuine In Memoriam notices for the victims of the Baltic peoples' struggle for freedom, are published in the Baltic News free of charge. To prevent bogus advertisements under Section 44 of the Police Offences Act 1935, all copy must bear the name, address and signature of the person submitting it. This name and address will not be published, unless otherwise requested.

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COMING EVENTS

Saturday, 19th July, 1975, 8.30 p.m. to 1.00 a.m.

LITHUANIAN DANCE

in the Polish Hall, New Town. Table bookings phone 72.6360.

Friday, 25th July, 1975, 5.30 p.m. (and every Friday thereafter)

INVITATION TO ROSARY

A Rosary is recited each Friday evening from 5.30 p.m. to 5.45 p.m. in St. Joseph's Church, Macquarie Street, Hobart.

The special intentions of the Rosary are for the defeat of secular humanism and Communism, seen as the great threats to the Church in the present day.

Tuesday, 29th July, 1975, 5.30 p.m. for 6.00 p.m.

MEMBERS' GET-TOGETHER AND COUNTER TEA

at Hotel St. Ives, corner Sandy Bay Rd. and St. George's Terrace, Battery Pt.

A social occasion for all members and their friends. Guest speaker.

Counter tea - order your own from a menu priced from \$ 1.00 to \$ 2.00.

No prior booking is necessary: simply gather in the Lounge Bar from 5.30 p.m. onwards.

Saturday, 30th August, 1975, 8.30 p.m. to 12.30 a.m.

BALTIC DANCE

at the Australian Croatian Club, 336 Main Rd. Glenorchy, opp. Elwick Rd.

Admission \$ 3.00 single, \$ 5.00 double.

Good band ===== Hot or cold supper.

Late October or early November.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Watch future issues for final date.

BUY A BOOK TODAY

H.E.L.L.P. Association has a limited supply of several good books about the Baltic States (in English). If your favourite book-shop does not yet stock them, you may order from H.E.L.L.P. direct.

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

To: H.E.L.L.P. Association, P.O. Box 272, Sandy Bay, Tasmania, 7005.

Please send copies, Baltic States, 1940-72 @ \$.4.95 + 33¢ post = \$

..... copies, War Against God in Lithuania @ \$.2.75 + 33¢ post = \$.....

NAME and ADDRESS:

.....Postcode