

BALTIC NEWS

Lietuvos
nacionalinė
M. Mazvydo
biblioteka

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

Vol. I, No. 6

August 26, 1975.

Material published in the *Baltic News* (other than acknowledged reprints) may be reproduced in whole or part, without any charge or obligation. If use is made of this material, HELLP Association would appreciate receiving clippings.

AUSTRALIA AND THE BALTIC STATES

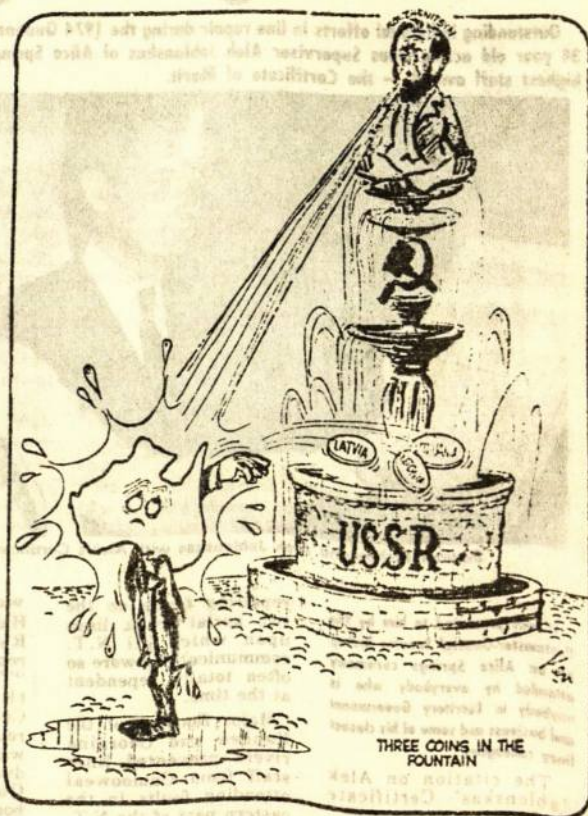
12 months ago, the Australian Government recognized, de jure, Russian colonial rule in the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania).

Having previously condemned other colonial empires, why did our Government take this unusual step? Did the plan work out? Has Australia gained anything from this "Baltic decision"? What about the Balts themselves - are they better off, or worse off?

* Factual Report "In Retrospect":
Pages 3, 4, 5.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- 1* Postal rip-off and the Baltic News - Page 9.
- 2* Baltic migrants make their mark in Australia - Page 2.
- 3* News from the Baltic States - Page 11.



By courtesy of: "The Mercury", 21/11/74.

Don't miss...

PUBLIC DISCUSSION:

WILL THE AUSTRALIAN BALTS CAPITULATE?

8 p.m. Tuesday, 9th September, 1975 - Polish Hall

Well-known speakers. All Welcome.

See back page for details.

Baltic Contributions to Australia (continued)

Flood work won Alek PO'S highest gong

Outstanding individual efforts in line repair during the 1974 Queensland floods have earned 34 year old acting Lines Supervisor Alek Jablonskas of Alice Springs NT the Post Office's highest staff award — the Certificate of Merit.



Senator Bishop and Alek Jablonskas with Alek's Certificate of Merit.

It was presented to him by the Postmaster-General Senator Bishop at an Alice Springs ceremony attended by everybody who is anybody in Territory Government and business and some of his closest liney colleagues.

The citation on Alek Jablonskas' Certificate reads —

"During severe flooding in the Barkly Tablelands, Northern Territory, in January / February, 1974, he rendered outstanding service under very difficult and sometimes dangerous conditions to provide or restore essential services throughout the Tennant Creek — Camooweal district."

As background to the award it has been recorded that:

"He worked very long hours travelling the 300 miles between Tennant Creek and Camooweal

repairing faults on the two aerial trunk lines upon which all N.T. communications were so often totally dependent at the time.

"Major flooding of the Ranken and Georgina rivers prevented lines staff from Camooweal attending faults in the eastern part of the N.T.

"These were attended wherever possible by Mr Jablonskas, who traversed flooded roads and creek crossings up to three feet deep to reach the trouble spots.

"During the flood period of January-February there were only two brief periods when all communications were lost along this route.

"A particular case worthy of mention occurred in January when the temporary telephone service at a Department of Housing and Construction Road-

works Camp at Happy Creek (near Ranken River) was reported out of service.

"The fault also affected the main Tennant Creek-Mt. Isa trunk route which at the time was also out of service due to flooding on the Queensland side of the border.

"The fault occurred approximately 1 km away from the road. A lightning strike had broken two wires and further damage was caused when cattle became entangled in wires and dragged them away.

"Mr Jablonskas attended this fault on his own, carrying a ladder and tools across deep mud between the roadway and the trunk route as his companion was not prepared to undertake the journey on foot. He was engaged on this job for about four hours."

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Although comparatively small in number, the post-World-War-2 migrants from the Baltic States have made a significant contribution to the arts, sciences and industries of Australia.

In this series of articles, we show that the typical Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian who has settled in this country, is a loyal, hard-working citizen — and not a war-monger or a Nazi-in-hiding.

The Baltic migrants have also brought with them a rich cultural heritage that is some 4,000 years old. Some of this heritage is being passed on to the coming Australian generations, in many varied forms. A lot more is likely to be lost forever, because of a lack of public interest.

Readers are invited to send articles and other suitable material for this series.

ALEK JABLONSKAS was born in the city of Kaunas (Lithuania). During the years of freedom, his father worked for the Lithuanian Post Office. After the family migrated to Australia, Alek completed his schooling (in W.A. and S.A.) and then followed in his father's footsteps, by joining the P.M.G. Dept.

He is single and lives in Alice Springs.

Alek shares the Lithuanians' innate love for the nature and the wild-life. He likes bush-walking and studies the birds. He is also an amateur painter and plays golf.

Last year, Alek starred in the Alice Springs Musical Society's production of "The White Horse Inn". And, if they do not have too many floods up North in the next few months, Alek should be free to appear again in the Society's next musical, "Charlie Girl".

Reprinted, with permission, from AFO News, June, 1975. We are especially indebted to Mrs. Carolyn Burke, of Telecom Australia.

THE BALTIC DECISION

... IN RETROSPECT

In July, 1974, the Australian Government officially recognized Russian sovereignty over the formerly independent Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania).

Initially, the decision was not announced in Australia. It remained a closely guarded secret until Russian officials leaked the news to Reuters representatives in Moscow, on 3rd August 1974.

Broken Promises

In the following few weeks, there was a widespread reaction from the Australian Balts. They pointed out that, as political refugees in the late 1940's, they had chosen to come to Australia because of reassurances given by the then Prime Minister, Mr. Ben Chifley. Subsequent Labor leaders had also confirmed Mr. Chifley's attitude.

Why This Change of Heart?

The reasons for Mr. Whitlam's subsequent change of heart were released by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Willesee, in a statement to the Australian Senate on 13th August, 1974.

Senator Willesee said, the recognition of the Russian rule in the non-Russian Baltic States was aimed at facilitating (1) the reunion of families; (2) settlement of estates; (3) consular assistance to members of the Baltic communities in Australia who visited their family homeland.

It should be stressed here that the Australian Government made this decision against the wishes of the people directly concerned. The Baltic communities in Australia were not consulted, nor were they warned of the Government's intentions. This was in spite of a letter written to Mr. Whitlam two months earlier (in May, 1974) in which a Baltic leader had explicitly asked Mr. Whitlam not to recognize the armed Russian takeover of the three Baltic States.

Australian Plan Shattered

In the months that followed, it became abundantly clear that none of Senator Willesee's hopes could be fulfilled. Today, the Balts are worse off than ever. So are the Australian taxpayers and housewives who, since the recognition, have been subsidizing cut-price beef "exports" to Russia (cf. The Herald, 11/2/1975).

Let us take a quick look at how our Government's "Baltic decision" has affected the Australian Balts.

Reunion of Families?

A former migrant from Lithuania has been trying for years to bring his family to Australia. He built a nice home in Glenorchy, (a northern suburb of Hobart), and saved up enough money to pay the fares. In October, 1974 (three months after the recognition), he was told to stop trying, as his wife and children would never be allowed to join him in Australia.

In August, 1974, a migrant woman in Tasmania received word that her father was dying in Estonia. She tried to telephone her family home in Tallinn (the capital of Estonia), but was refused a connection. In desperation, she turned to a Hobart solicitor for help. The latter kept ringing for hours, but could not get past Moscow!

In December, 1974, the people of Hobart had asked the Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam, to intercede on behalf of five Lithuanian-prisoners of conscience. A resident of Hobart had a personal interest in this petition, because one of the five Lithuanians was his cousin.

The request to the Prime Minister received wide support from both Labor and Liberal politicians as well as from the general public, (for a full report see Baltic News, 5/4/75, p.2). After a prolonged silence, Mr. Whitlam's Private Secretary informed the people of Hobart that "the Prime Minister did not have the opportunity to make specific representations to the Soviet Government about imprisoned Lithuanians during his visit to Europe."

Senator Marriott (Tasmania) then asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs (Senator Willesee) to take this matter up through diplomatic channels and ask the Soviet authorities to let the five Lithuanians go. Senator Willesee took no action (cf. Baltic News, 4/6/75, p.3).

So much for the re-union of families ...

Continued on next page



... Continued from Page 3

Settlement of Estates

The Soviet system flows upon private property. Owners of houses, farms or factories are "enemies of the state". All property owned by former Baltic citizens has been confiscated by the Russian authorities.

This means that the Russians will not entertain any claims from Australian residents, but are anxious to take over all Australian property inherited by the people living in the Baltic countries.

In other words, the so-called "settlement of estates" is all one-way traffic: from Australia to Moscow.

Consular Assistance.

Australia has been unable to provide the "consular assistance", as anticipated by Senator Willes in his Senate speech last year.

The Australian Government still has no consulates in the Baltic States, nor can it see its way clear to the establishment of such official representation in the future (cf. Hansard, p.3277).

Travel to the Baltic States.

As for travel to the Baltic States, the Australian Government's 1974 decision has made it a lot worse, instead of facilitating it in any way!

Former Baltic citizens who visit the countries of their birth now, can be drafted into the Red Army, or arrested by the Russians and charged with treason. Travelling on an Australian passport is of no help. As already reported in an earlier issue of the Baltic News (5/5/1975, pp.1 & 2), the Australian Government is not in a position to protect its naturalized citizens, while they are on Russian-held soil.

NEW PROBLEMS

By recognising the Soviet Russian sovereignty over the Baltic States, the Australian Government has also created several new problems. Let us look at a few of them.

Communications.

It is quite clear by now that communications between Australians of Baltic origin and their friends or relatives in their homelands are still as difficult as they had been before the recognition.

Apart from the personal risks involved, travel in the Baltic States is restricted to a few pre-determined places and routes. Visitors from Australia are only allowed to stay in certain Government-run hotels. Their total stay must not exceed a short period prescribed by the Russian authorities: usually 5 - 7 days.

In fact, some people who had paid visits to the Baltic States previously, have said categorically that they dare not make another visit under the present conditions.

Parcels of clothing and other personal gifts from Australia are still subjected to exorbitant Soviet customs duty - which must be pre-paid in Australian currency, at this end.

Dual Nationality.

The question of former citizenship still has relevance to most naturalised Australian Balts. The ironic case of Mrs. D.E. Hoile (of Seaton, S.A.) highlights the predicament, into which the Australian Government has unwittingly placed its own citizens (see: "Russian citizen against my will", in: Baltic News, 5/5/1975, p.8).

Gradual Elimination of Baltic People.

In the meantime, there is continued evidence from official Soviet census figures and other reliable sources, that the Russians are carrying out a systematic reduction of native populations in all three Baltic countries. In some cities, e.g., Kohtla-Järve in Estonia, the population is already reported to be 95% Russian. For all practical purposes, the Baltic countries today are treated as Russian colonies.

Withholding of the de jure recognition of the armed annexation is, therefore, the only way to show the world that Australia is not in favour of colonialism.

WHY WORRY AT ALL?

There are people in Australia who say, "Why should we care at all, about something that happened 12,000 miles away, some 30-odd years ago?"

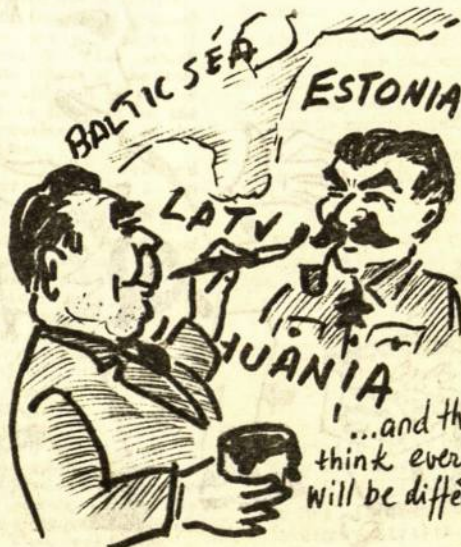
The answer lies in the Covenant of the League of Nations. Article 10 of this Covenant reads,

"Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve against external aggression, the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League."

As a former member of the League of Nations, Australia is bound by its covenants. Passage of time cannot relieve Australia of her obligations.

It is mainly for this same reason that the U.K. and U.S.A. have continually withheld de jure recognition of Russian sovereignty over the fellow members of the League (in this case, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania).

Continued on next page



NOT A POLITICAL FOOTBALL

It is unfortunate that some people have been trying to make political mileage out of the "Baltic issue" (cf. Paul Coulter's comments in The Feral, 18/9/74).

The Baltic question should have never been allowed to become a party-political football, in this country.

The Baltic question is simply one of national self-determination and of adherence by treaty signatories to international law. It is a question of restoring cultural, political and economic autonomy to ethnic groups who, as nations, have demonstrated a higher level of civilization and capacity for self-government than most of those (especially Russians, Africans, Latin Americans and several Asian peoples) who currently enjoy national, and even imperial, status (cf. teacher T. McGlynn's dialogue with Mr. Whitlam, at Launceston Matriculation College on 26/6/75).

The Baltic question is a moral question which cuts across Party-political boundaries. It asks, "Are all nations entitled to freedom?" and "What God-given right do we, Australians, have to deny freedom to others?"

The majority of Australians did not like our Government's Baltic decision when it was first made known - and they still feel the same way. The Australian Gallup-Morgan public opinion polls found late in 1974 that, of 1545 electors interviewed, only 22% agreed with the decision to recognise the incorporation of the Baltic States.

A follow-up survey in Tasmania revealed that most of the supporters of the Government's decision, knew very little - or nothing at all - about the Baltic States. Once acquainted with the historical facts, many changed their attitudes.

Labor Policy.

Some media and some Opposition spokesmen have inferred that the "Baltic decision" was a reflection of a "new twist" in the ALP policy - an attempt to please the Russian colonial conquerors at all costs.

The Baltic News believes that only the events of the next 12 months will prove or disprove, whether there is any truth in this allegation. There is mounting evidence in every Australian State that an ever increasing number of ALP politicians - like the majority of Australians - do not agree with the Australian Government's 1974 "Baltic decision".

Mr. Bob Hawke was among those who had signed a petition to the Senate, seeking a reversal of the decision.

Mr. D.A. Dunstan, the Premier of South Australia declared on 28/11/74, "I do not question the right of the Australian Government to make this decision. However, my personal view is that it is one I would not have made. I disagree with it. I recognise the distress it has caused to Australians of Baltic descent and believe it brings no benefit to Australia."

Readers of the Baltic News will recall the statement made by Mr. Ray Sherry, the Labor M.H.R. for Franklin, that the Baltic decision was "a cause of some great concern, not only to him, but to many of his colleagues". It is less well known that Mr. Sherry had in fact sought to have a reversal of the Government's decision made by Caucus, but the outcome of his action was never made publicly known.

The president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer of the Tasmanian University branch of ALP declared in a letter published in The Mercury on 1/11/74,

"It is a fact that not all members of the ALP support the recognition of the Baltic States. Our branch has informed the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of our concern in this matter".

Of course, there are dozens of other prominent ALP men and women who had spoken out in defence of the Baltic nations. At least one of them is currently facing expulsion from ALP. Is there any connection with the fact that this man had openly admitted that the Government had made a mistake and that the "Baltic decision" was a bad decision?

Electoral Repercussions.

On 19/9/74, a well-known political commentator (Dr. P.J. Boyce) said on the A.B.C. current affairs programme, "Notes on the News",

"I strongly suspect that the decision, apparently intended to pass unnoticed by the Australian public, will haunt the Whitlam government for some time to come, perhaps even to its electoral grave. There may be only 50,000-60,000 Australians of Baltic origin in this country, but annoyance or anxiety about the Whitlam government's gesture to the Soviet Union seems to have spread far beyond the boundaries of an Australian ethnic minority."

If the Bass by-election results are any indication, the prediction about the "electoral grave" certainly seems to have come true.

But is the continued persistence with one bad decision a sufficient reason to commit political suicide?

The evidence presented here shows that no real disadvantages - and quite a few tangible advantages - would accrue, if the present Australian Government reversed its 1974 decision to recognise de jure the Soviet Russian sovereignty over Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The present Labor Government in Canberra has shown, at least once before, that it has enough courage to admit its own mistakes, and that it is not loathe to reverse a decision if it fails to bring the desired results (e.g., the tariffs case).

We therefore appeal to Mr. Whitlam and his colleagues:

Please, Reverse the Baltic Decision Now!

● Australia's Name Blemished: Page 11.

V. STANLEY VARDYS

*Aggression, Soviet Style, 1939-40*Extract from: VARDYS, V.S. (ed.), *Lithuania Under the Soviets*. New York:

Fred. A. Praeger, 1965, pp. 47-52.

In the summer of 1939, the Nazis and the Soviets decided jointly to complete the destruction of the Versailles organization of Europe, at which until then each had been nibbling away individually. This destruction was set in motion by means of the nonaggression pact of August 23, 1939, which unleashed Germany against the Western powers and sealed the fate of Eastern Europe, including Lithuania.¹ The pact's secret protocol provided for a division of Poland and for Soviet domination over Latvia and Estonia. Initially, Lithuania was allocated to the German sphere of influence, but by a supplementary provision of September 28, it was transferred to the Soviets. The Germans, pressed by their Russian ally, traded Lithuania for the Lublin province of Poland (which was seized by the Soviets) and for an additional compensation of 7.5 million dollars in gold. Berlin had lost interest in Lithuania after the Kaunas government, anxious to remain independent from both Berlin and Moscow, rejected von Ribbentrop's invitation, at the price of an alliance with Germany, to attack Poland and capture Lithuania's old capital city and region of Vilnius.² General Jonas Cernius, the Lithuanian Prime Minister, publicly declared that Lithuania would seek to regain Vilnius only by peaceful means.

History has many ironic moments and this was one of them: Lithuania had suffered diplomatically and economically for refusing to abandon Vilnius, but now it declined to take it, although invited to do so. Instead, together with the other Baltic states, Lithuania declared its neutrality, thus hoping to weather the storm of the war. This, however, appeared to be impossible.

By declining to join the war against Poland, Lithuania avoided the status of German protectorate that Hitler usually imposed on smaller nations allied with Berlin; however, by rejecting German "protection," Lithuania delivered itself into the hands of the Soviet Union.

THE FIRST STAGE OF THE DRAMA: THE SOVIETS MOVE IN

The Kremlin's "Limited" Objective. Moscow proceeded carefully. Although Soviet military maps³ began showing Lithuania as a Soviet Socialist Republic in the fall of 1939, at first the Soviets demanded of Lithuania (as well as of Latvia and Estonia) only a mutual assistance pact that would allow the Kremlin to maintain land and air bases and 20,000 Red troops. To make this demand more palatable, Stalin sugar-coated it with a promise for the return of the city of Vilnius and a portion of the surrounding territory, which had been recognized as Lithuanian by the peace treaty of 1920—territory that just weeks before had been wrested from the terrified Poles. Thus it happened that, unwilling to seize it directly, Lithuania now had to accept the city from the Soviet Union.

Although the mutual assistance pact, signed on October 10,⁴ guaranteed that the Soviets would not interfere in Lithuania's domestic affairs, rumors about an impending seizure of the Baltic states began to spread immediately, and Foreign Commissar Molotov felt it necessary, in a speech to an extraordinary session of the Supreme Soviet, to "declare that the foolish talk of sovietization of the Baltic states is useful only to our common enemies and to all kinds of anti-Soviet provocateurs."⁵

At first, Soviet behavior seemed to confirm this solemn assurance. The troops that entered Lithuania in accordance with the "mutual assistance" treaty conducted themselves reasonably well. The underground Communist Party was apparently ordered to tread softly; in the negotiations on the bases, Stalin had given the Lithuanians freedom to deal with the Lithuanian Communists however they liked. But, this attitude of sweet reason lasted only as long as the Soviets were fighting the winter war against Finland, which had refused to accept a mutual assistance pact of the sort foisted on the other Baltic states. Once the Finns were subdued, the Communists in Lithuania started fomenting strikes on Soviet military base sites; military commanders began complaining to Lithuanians about alleged failures to provide promised food supplies; Soviet soldiers were allowed to mingle with Lithuanian



civilians, with whom they would become involved in tavern brawls. At the same time, the Soviets, in a show of strength, transferred substantial military equipment to their bases near Kaunas. Their true intent became clear when, on May 16, 1940, *Izvestia* excitedly came out against the cornerstone of the current Lithuanian (and Baltic) policy of neutrality, then very much the talk of Baltic diplomats. "The recent war events [the occupation of Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg by the Germans] once more proved," the Soviet newspaper wrote, "that the neutrality of small states, which do not have power to support it, is a mere fantasy. Therefore, there are very few chances for small countries to survive and to maintain their independence. All considerations of small countries on the question of justice and injustice in relations with the Big Powers, which are at war to determine if they are to be or not to be, are at the least, naïve." The Lithuanian minister in Moscow, Ladas Natkevičius, reported that "a black cat crossed the path of Lithuanian-Soviet relations."⁶

The Squeeze and the Occupation. These premonitions were well-founded, for on May 28, the day the Belgian King surrendered to the Germans, Moscow accused Lithuania of kidnapping two Soviet soldiers and causing them to desert the Red Army. The accusation was repeated the next day by General Lokteney, the Deputy Commissar for Defense. Lithuanian authorities reacted immediately, and on the General's information found one of the soldiers happily spending nights with a local lady. With him was another Red soldier, not named in the note. Kaunas proposed a joint Soviet-Lithuanian commission to investigate the affair. However, since this proposal did not agree with Soviet plans, it was ignored; instead, three days later, on May 30, the Soviet Government publicly accused Lithuania of kidnapping Soviet soldiers and of adopting a "provocative" attitude that might have "grave consequences."⁷ Immediately after the publication of this warning, the Lithuanian Government decided to send its Foreign Minister to Moscow to clarify the situation and propose methods to avoid such incidents in the future. The Soviets, however, seized on their own provocative acts as a *casus belli* and demanded the visit of the Prime Minister. Russia needed to act at once if its designs on Lithuania and the other Baltic states were to come off smoothly: time was short, but Russia's timing was perfect. The Germans, busy with their invasion of France, were far too occupied to restrain Moscow in the Baltic area. Amid the noise and excitement over the war in the West—as it happened, the collapse of Paris and France itself—Russia found it easy to swallow the Baltic states without opposition from Germany or the rest of the world.

On his June 6 trip to Moscow, Prime Minister Antanas Merkys and his aides were refused elementary diplomatic courtesy⁸—a bad omen for the travelers—although they regained some of their optimism after being met in Moscow with official honors. The initial meeting at the Kremlin was set for 9:00 P.M. on June 7.⁹ In this first confrontation, Foreign Commissar Molotov did not yet completely spell out Soviet demands, but he bitterly accused the Lithuanian press, some of the ministers, and several organizations of hostile attitudes. He did not seem to care about the results of the investigation of the alleged kidnappings, but required "a 100 per cent pro-Soviet policy" and the dismissal of the Lithuanian Minister of the Interior and the Director of Security, the alleged culprits in the incidents involving Soviet soldiers. At the second meeting, on June 9, Molotov brought forth more startling charges and demands. He accused Prime Minister Merkys of organizing a military alliance with Latvia and Estonia and intimidated that Merkys, too, should be dismissed, and a new, more pro-Soviet government established. When all of this was communicated to Kaunas, the Cabinet, together with the President, decided to assure the Soviets of Lithuania's "unquestioned and firm" loyalty. The President also promised to reorganize the Cabinet. Furthermore, he was persuaded to write a letter of similar assurances to Mikhail I. Kalinin, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. In addition, Foreign Minister Juozas Urbšys was sent to Moscow to answer allegations about the Baltic military alliance (which did not exist). Upon his arrival, a third meeting was held in Moscow, but this could not relieve the mounting tension, because the Soviets did not wait it to Urbšys' frantic visits to Kalinin and later to V. G. Dekanazov, the Deputy Foreign Commissar, did not diminish the gravity of the threat either.

Finally, the artificial tension was resolved by its creator. On June 11, Molotov handed the Lithuanian envoy an ultimatum¹⁰ demanding in effect Lithuania's self-liquidation. In less than twenty-four hours, Lithuania was to allow "a free entry" into Lithuania for any Soviet divisions the Kremlin considered necessary to "assure the enforcement" of the mutual-assistance treaty. Furthermore, a new government was to be formed, "able" and

"determined" to "fulfill" the treaty and to "suppress firmly" the treaty's alleged enemies. To justify these unwarranted demands, the Soviets attributed them to so-called Lithuanian "provocations" against Soviet soldiers; they also called for the arrest and trial of the Lithuanian Interior Minister, Kazys Skučas, and Director of the Department of Security, Augustinas Povilaitis. Thus, the Soviets finally showed their true intentions. After more than two decades of pretended friendship, they now sought to destroy Lithuania, despite their earlier solemn promise, in the treaty of 1920, to abandon their claims on Lithuania "forever," a promise elaborated in the nonaggression pact of 1940, and finally reaffirmed in the mutual-assistance pact of 1939 itself.

The choice faced by the government in Kaunas was difficult. In an emergency cabinet meeting, President Smetona proposed to reject the ultimatum and to resist.¹¹ However, he did not get the majority's support. It was clear that resistance to the Soviet forces rushing into the country from their bases close to the largest Lithuanian towns and from across the Eastern border would be merely symbolic; practical-minded men dreaded the price. It seems also that the chief of the army, General Vincas Vitkauskas, who had just been appointed by the President to replace General Raštikis, whose political influence the President thus sought to reduce, was a turncoat. Some well-intentioned ministers, furthermore, did not think that the Soviet protectorate would be so onerous; they felt that during the war the small country would not be able to maintain its complete independence anyway. It also seems likely that President Smetona could not get unity now because his motives were suspect as a result of his authoritarian rule during the previous decade. (Yet the division in the coalition Cabinet of Merkys was not based on political "position" of "opposition" to the Nationalist rule of Smetona.) The President, of course, could have ordered resistance; however, this might have added to the difficulties rather than resolved anything. Therefore, he agreed to accept the Soviet demands, specifying that he, not the Soviets, would appoint the new Prime Minister. The Soviets, however, rejected both the suggestion and the person (General Raštikis) Smetona named to the post. Instead, they sent V. G. Dekanazov, the Deputy Foreign Commissar, to take charge of matters in Lithuania.

From this the President understood that his own and his country's freedom were at an end. Unwilling to become a Soviet tool, he left the country in protest, and came to the United States via Germany and Switzerland, where he was received by President Roosevelt. (He died here in a hotel fire in 1952.) Meanwhile, some 300,000 Soviet troops rushed into the country in their steam-driven trucks. From June 15 on, all power in the country belonged to the Red Army and to Dekanazov, the Kremlin's emissary, operating from the Soviet Legation in Kaunas. The government that Dekanazov installed, and even the Lithuanian Communist Party (which was soon legalized), were mere tools in Soviet hands, although some individual politicians at first viewed them as relatively free Lithuanian agents.

Notes

1. For the text and for other related documents, see: Department of State, *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-41: Documents from the Archives of the German Foreign Office* (Washington, D.C., 1948), esp. pp. 76-78, 107, 112-19, 176, 267-68.

2. See the report of the American Minister in Latvia to the Secretary of State, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers: The Soviet Union, 1933-1939* (Washington, D.C., 1942), p. 438; statement of policy by the Lithuanian Foreign Minister Juozas Urbšys in U.S. House of Representatives, 83d Cong., 2d sess., *Third Interim Report of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression* (Washington, D.C., 1954), p. 444 (hereinafter cited as *Third Interim Report*); a discussion of this story in Albert N. Tarulis, *Soviet Policy Toward the Baltic States* (Notre Dame, Ind., 1959), pp. 129-36. The Soviets popularize a cleverly fabricated claim that Lithuania itself sought a German alliance and protectorate. See, for example, *Trys ir Balas* (Vilnius), No. 81 (1963), p. 3; *Komunistas* (Vilnius), No. 6 (June, 1960), pp. 35 ff.

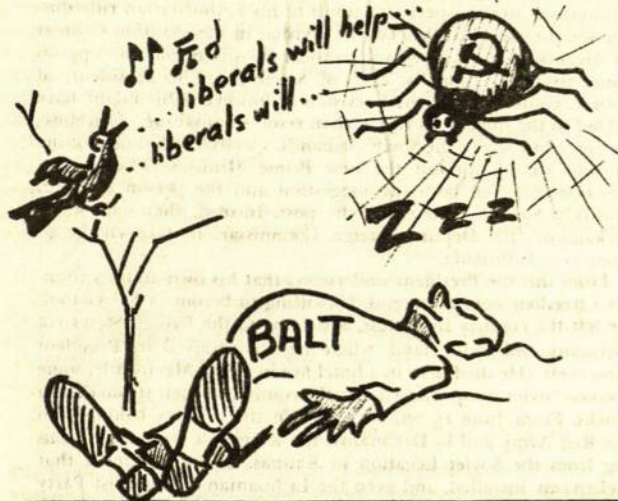
WILL BALTS EVER LEARN ?

The East European ups and downs during the past 50 years have convinced me that the Balts have repeatedly made the same mistake: they have relied on some outside body (i.e., a "big brother"), to save them from disaster - instead of becoming more active themselves. Time and again, the expected outside help did not eventuate at all; or else, the "big brother" turned out to be a selfish conqueror.

Let's look at the facts.

1. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania had joined the League of Nations (way back in 1920's), in the mistaken belief that other member nations would protect them against foreign attack. When the Russians did grab the Baltic States in 1940, what did the rest of the League nations do? Absolutely nothing!

2. Some socialists, social democrats and some ethnic minorities in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania collaborated with the Soviet Russians, in the naive hope that the Russians would build a better social order for the indigenous people. Instead of gaining a better deal for the locals, the three Baltic countries simply became Russian colonies.



Notes on: "Agression Soviet Style, 1939-40" (continued from Page 7)

3. See a photostatic copy of this map in *Memoranda on the Restoration of Lithuania's Independence*, published by the Supreme Lithuanian Committee of Liberation (Reutlingen, Germany, 1950), insert between pp. 36 and 37.

4. Text in Jane Degras (ed.), *Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, 1917-1941* (London and New York, 1951-53), III, 380-82.

5. *Izvestia*, November 1, 1939.

6. *Third Interim Report*, p. 318.

7. Text in *ibid.*, pp. 320-21.

8. Dr. Petras Mačiulis, *Trys Ultimatumai* (Brooklyn, N.Y., 1962), pp. 31-95. An account by a former chief of the Soviet division in the Lithuanian Foreign Office.

9. See reports by the Lithuanian envoy to Moscow, Ladas Natkevičius, to the Lithuanian Foreign Office, *Third Interim Report*, pp. 322-32.

10. Text in *ibid.*, pp. 332-33.

11. Cf. Stasys Raštikis, *Kovose dėl Lietuvos* (Los Angeles, 1957), II, 23-25.

3. There were other Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians who believed that their liberation would come from the Germans. The events of 1941-44 convinced even the most casual observer that the Nazis and the Soviets had been tarred with the same brush.

4. Undaunted, the Balts then switched their hopes to the empty promises of the Atlantic Charter. From 1944 to 1952, they went on fighting the Russian colonists. Poor Balts! For 7 years after the end of World War II, they continued their guerrilla warfare against an enemy who was better equipped (by the British and U.S., incidentally) and who was 20 times bigger. Propped up by occasional supplies (which were dropped into their forests by the same British and Americans), the Baltic guerrillas no doubt clung to the vain hope that Great Britain and U.S.A. would keep their wartime promises, would land on the Baltic shores any day, and make the Russians go home... They never lived to see this happen - quite literally.

You would think that, after all this, the Balts would have learned their lesson. Not on your life!

In Australia today, the former Baltic citizens are facing a most uncertain future. Senator Willessee's statement published in your own newsletter (*Baltic News*, 5/5/1975) would have scared me to death, if I were a Balt myself (please pardon the pun). I would have expected every Australian Balt to knock on the doors of their local M.P.s and Senators. I thought, they would have flooded the streets with their protest marches and let us read some factual and unemotional literature.

I thought, the bleak outlook would have awakened the Balts and taught them how to use our democratic processes to the full.

I have waited in vain. The majority of Australian Balts are fast asleep or else, too scared to come out into the open. They are dreaming of a new saviour, a new big brother by the name of Malcolm Fraser, who will come into power one day, sweep the "Baltic decision" aside and let the poor gullible Balts live happily forever after.

They seem to have conveniently overlooked that the Opposition have condemned the Government's act of recognition of the Russian rule in the Baltic States - but have not said unconditionally that they would reverse it!

My advice to all Australian Balts is this: when in Rome, do as the Romans do. Our prescription for success hails back to C.J. Dennis's immortal verse, written around 1908 and still applicable today:

"Get a ----- move on,
Have some ----- sense.
Learn the ----- art of
Self de-----fence."

So, get a blessed move on, and best of luck to you, fellas!

Melbourne.

Jock WILLIAMS.



Editorial

POSTAL RIP-OFF...

Postage on ordinary letters in Australia will jump from 10 cents to 18 cents on September 1st.

In addition to raising more cash for the Government, this move will also gag many independent thinkers in our once-lucky Australia.

We all know that unhindered communication is a corner-stone of true freedom and democracy. If you can stop people from communication with each other, the path to dictatorship becomes easy.

...AND BALTIC NEWS

The increased postage has certainly crippled H.E.L.L.P., the publishers of the BALTIC NEWS. At one stage, it looked as if this issue might be the last one.

Just then, we received a flood of letters and telephone calls. Readers from all parts of Australia urged us not to give up so easily. Donations-big and small - accompanied some of the letters.

A pensioner sent us \$5. Donations also came from:

B.A. Group of W.A.	\$59.97
J.Pleckaitis	\$20.00
Lithuanian Committee of Newcastle	\$20.00
E.Keenan	\$10.00
A.Sernas	\$10.00
Mr. & Mrs. P.Reiljan	\$ 8.00
D.A.Lowe M.H.A.	\$ 6.00
Mr. E.Lacis	\$ 5.00
K.Anderson	\$ 4.72
Mrs. M.Truchanas	\$ 3.00
Mrs. Madden	\$ 2.00
L.Kalasu	\$ 2.00
Linda Kalasim	\$ 1.00

Thank you one and all ! As long as your support continues, we'll keep battling on.

WANTED

Baltic News urgently needs typing help. Can YOU assist for a few hours each month? Please ring Ray on 72 5147, or Ilma on 72 5780, or Al on 25 2505.

NEWS FROM BALTIC STATES

LITHUANIA

The church of St Kazimieras in Vilnius was turned into a secular museum in 1965. Today, it buys for cash any articles connected with religion on the pretext that it will preserve them for posterity. However, the relics are exhibited in a vulgar and irreligious manner, designed to insult believers.

The museum advertises in most regional newspapers. It also mounts expeditions throughout all Lithuania. Collectors disguise themselves as historians or the like and portray an attitude of great reverence. In obtaining the items, they stop at neither deception nor force. Only later do people realise that they have sold their treasures to atheists instead of fellow Christians.

However, despite free admission into this museum, attendance is very small and even these express disgust at what has been done. Ironically, the church was subject to less indignity in 1812 when Napoleon used it as a warehouse than by the current insult.

ESTONIA

WAVE OF REPRISALS

"Search Operations" have been carried out in Estonia by the K.G.B. Their major targets were literature and typewriters. Four men were arrested.

The campaign coincides with a wave of similar arrests and house-searches in Lithuania and Latvia. The four men arrested were:

K.Matik, 41, automation specialist;
M.Kurendi, 36 senior engineer at the Tallin Thermal Power Plant; A.Veratos, 41, physician; A.Juskevits, 43, senior engineer. Another Estonian, O.Meremaa, was dismissed from his post and temporarily imprisoned for peacefully demonstrating in Tallin with placards saying "Put Human Rights into Practice"

Although these men acted according to the rights guaranteed them in the Soviet Constitution, they now stand accused because they tried to inform the U.N. of the reality of the conditions in Estonia, and demanded that the principles of the U.N. Human Rights Declaration be put into practice.

...Continued on Page 11.

Books available from H.E.L.L.P. Association,

P.O. Box 272, SANDY BAY, Tas. 7005:

Baltic States, 1940-72 (2nd ed.) @ \$.4.95*

War against God in Lithuania @ \$.2.75*

* Please add postage (old rate was 33¢ each)

IN MEMORIAM

BAUKYS, Juozas. - A tribute to a fearless Lithuanian freedom fighter, who died in autumn, 1944, while defending the shores of the River Svetoji against Russian colonists.
Inserted by Marilyn and Vytas.

STANKUNAS, the Rev Juozas. - In sad memory of the co-author of the ill-fated 1947 Letter to the Pope, from the Faithful of Lithuania; died in Bapal, August 1, 1968, after 10 years' torture in Russian prisons.

KAIRYS. - In loving memory of Jonas, another Lithuanian freedom fighter, killed by the Russian colonists in Antazave forest.

VAILOKAITIS, the Rev Juozas, B.Ec. - In sad memory of the former foundation member of the Parliament of free Lithuania; tortured by the Russian colonists, died at Pastuva, August 2, 1953, shortly after return from Siberia.
Inserted by his former parishioners.

KUPLAIS. - In loving memory of Eduards, an officer in the free Latvian Army; arrested by the Russian colonists and deported to Siberia, where he died, 1942.
Inserted by Brigita.

PUKYS, the Very Rev Mgr Povilas. - A tribute to a devoted Lithuanian priest and the finest of honest men; died August 19, 1964, in Zemaicių Kalvarija, after 10 years' torture in Siberia.

MATULIONIS, the Very Rev Teofilis. - In sad memory of the former Archbishop of Kašiadorys (Lithuania), died August 20, 1962 at the hands of the Russian colonists, after torture in Lubianka and Vladimir prisons.

"Piat voluntas Dei" (his dying words).

Remembered by Frank Kelly, who saw it all happen.

LATVIA

PASTOR SMITS ON HUNGER STRIKE

Rev. Janis Smits, harassed pastor of the Aizpute Baptist Church in Latvia, announced he would go on a hunger strike from July 8th to July 13th. This was to coincide with the meetings of the World Baptist Congress being held in Stockholm.

Smit's plea to Kosygin for permission to demonstrate in Red Square or at Moscow's International Airport was answered by officials of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the police with threats of arrest if he tried to go out of town. On June 6th Smits was told by a visa officer that the family would not be able to emigrate for three years, and that any further attempts to seek help from Moscow or from international organisations would invite arrest. Without home or work and with an addition to the family in autumn, such a wait appears impossible.

Smits and his wife then submitted a petition to the Ministry of Internal Affairs asking for a speedy and favourable response to their visa applications. Pointing out that at present they were deprived of home and work, which were assured abroad, they emphasised that their departure had no political motive. When this petition was also denied Smits decided on a hunger strike.

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 always welcome.

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

If receipt required, please tick here: _____

... Continued from Page 5

WHAT OTHERS THINK OF AUSTRALIA

The Baltic recognition act has given Australia the image of a "nation with double standards".

Several commentators have pointed out that, on the one hand, the present Australian Government has been most outspoken against foreign interference in Vietnam; in the next breath, the same Government has given its de jure blessing to the foreign rule in the Baltic States.

This kind of hypocrisy has lowered Australia's reputation abroad. The following observation in The Washington Star-News is a typical example of the free world's reaction to the Australian double standards:

"When last heard from in the field of foreign affairs, Australia was distinguishing itself by recognising the forcible annexation of the Baltic States by the Soviet Union during World War 2..."

Can Australia really be so hungry for the presidency of the next General Assembly that she will contribute her support to this hypocritical and foolish initiative?"

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, the exiled Russian champion of human rights was astounded by the Australian Government's "new position". His biting comments about "the level of the Prime Minister of a whole continent, Australia" and about trying to explain it all "to the communists who rule over the Baltic nations by force" have been headlined all over the world; it would be superfluous to repeat them here.

Even mainland China does not share the Australian Government's present attitude to the Baltic question. The Peking Review expressed the Chinese view in its No.4, 1974 issue (pp.12-14):

"The Soviet revisionist renegade clique, the new tsars, ... has brazenly reinforced its fascist dictatorship in suppressing the people who have put up sustained and mounting resistance to the reactionary rule of Soviet revisionism."

"In Kaunas, city in Lithuania, thousands took to the streets, shouting the slogan 'Give Lithuania freedom'. They attacked the buildings of the municipal party committee and the police station, and fought military police and paratroopers. Seventeen veteran party members in Latvia sent long letters to people inside and outside the Soviet Union, exposing the Soviet revisionists' betrayal of Marxism-Leninism and their policy of arbitrary assimilation of the national minorities. In Tallin, Estonia, demonstrations were held by college students..."

"Where there is oppression and exploitation, there is opposition and struggle. The more rigid the oppression, the stronger the opposition; the longer the storm of struggle brews, the more violently will it erupt. This is the dialectics of history. The heroic struggles of the... national minorities will surely strike and shake the dark rule of the social-imperialists ever more violently."

COMING EVENTS

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

BALTIC DANCE

in the Polish Hall, New Town - NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE !!!

Tuesday, 9th September, 1975, 8.00 p.m. Polish Hall

WILL THE AUSTRALIAN BALTS CAPITULATE ?

A public forum and discussion.

Principal Speakers:-

Dr. Peter BOYCE, Reader in Political Science, at the University of Tasmania.

Professor John B. POLYA, of the University of Tasmania.

Mr. Angus DOWNIE, journalist.

Chairman:- Dr. Richard JONES, of the University of Tasmania.

You have witnessed the consequences of Mr. Whitlam's decisions. What next ? What does the future hold for the Australian Balts ? - If you care, come and hear expert assessments of this vital issue. ADMISSION FREE - ALL WELCOME.

ESTONIAN: Teie osavõtt on äärmiselt tähtis. Tooge kaasa kõik sõbrad ja tuttavad.

LATVIAN: Neaizmirstiet !!! Publiskis forums un diskusijas. 9. Septembri, 8.00, Poļu zālē. Šī ir svarīga sanāksme ar prominentiem runas vīriem. Jūsu klātbūtne ir nepieciešama lai šis notikums būtu sekmīgs.

LITHUANIAN: Ateikite būtinai ! Australijos politikai jau kalba, kad dėl pabaltijo nebereikia rūpintis; parodykim jiems, kad Lietuviai nesnaudžia.

Tuesday, 16th September, till Thursday, 25th September, 1975, 12.00 - 9.00

LATVIAN ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION

in the Auditorium of the Tasmanian State Library, Murray Str., HOBART.

Official opening by the Hon. B.K. MILLER M.L.C. on Monday, 25th September at 8.00 p.m. All persons wishing to be present at the opening are asked to ring Mr. G. Zodins on 725336 beforehand.

Demonstrations of wood carving, weaving and spinning will be performed at various times during the exhibition.

Saturday, 2nd November, 1975, 8.00 p.m., Polish Hall, New Town.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF HELLP ASSOCIATION

Nominations for the executive (up to fifteen members) are to be sent to the Secretary of the Association by 26th October. These must be signed by two members of the Association and the candidate.

