

BALTIC NEWS

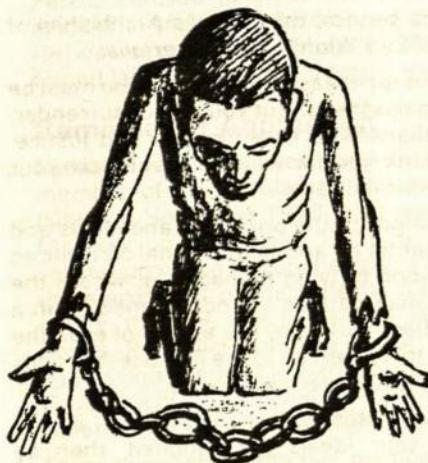
NEWSLETTER OF HELP THE ESTONIAN, LATVIAN AND LITHUANIAN PEOPLES ASSOCIATION (HELP)
 P.O. BOX 272, SANDY BAY, TAS. 7005 (AUSTRALIA).

Vol. IV, No. 4 (20)

August-September 1978

DON'T MISS THIS:

Human Rights Public Meeting



All members, friends and supporters of HELLP (Help the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Peoples Association) are asked to come to the public meeting on

HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE SOVIET UNION

Speakers:

- Rt. Hon. Andrew PEACOCK, Minister for Foreign Affairs (or his representative)
- Senator Ken WRIEDT, Leader of Opposition in Senate, and Opposition Spokesman for Foreign Affairs
- Senator Brian HARRADINE, Independent Senator
- Mrs T. KROLL-SIMMUL of Sydney, Australian Observer of Helsinki Agreement.

Chairman: Mr Ken LOWRIE, LL.B., M.L.C.

Time and Date: 3 p.m., SUNDAY, 20 AUGUST, 1978.

Place: POLISH HALL, 22 New Town Road, New Town (near Augusta Road).

ALL WELCOME — Admission free

ORGANISED BY HELLP AND THE POLISH ASSOCIATION

New Baltic States Policy

The Australian Federal Parliamentary Labor Party (known as Caucus) has decided 'that a future Labor Government *would not alter* the present Government's policy of *de facto* recognition of the incorporation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania within the U.S.S.R.'. The decision was carried without opposition.

This marks a major departure from the ALP's earlier acts. As so many still recall, the Labor Government headed by Mr Whitlam had granted *de jure* recognition, in 1974, to the Russian hegemony in the three Baltic States. This policy was reversed in December 1975, four days after the Liberal-Country Party had won the Federal election.

Public Announcement

The latest Labor decision was announced publicly at the Baltic Convention in Adelaide, on 16th and 17th June, 1978. Speaking on behalf of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Bill Hayden, M.P.), the Federal M.H.R. for Adelaide (Mr Chris Hurford) said, *inter alia*:

'The Labor Caucus decision made it explicit that we would not, on taking over Government, alter the present status.'

'We share with the people of Baltic origin, and with so many others in the world who know the value of freedom, a love for human rights, a concern for civil liberties and a desire to end man's inhumanity to man.'

- Editorial, Page 3.

A LIST OF PRISONERS

The Estonian Central Committee in Sweden has compiled a list of Estonians held in Soviet prisons and prison camps. Because of difficulties in gathering information, the list contains only 52 names. Some of these prisoners have been adopted by Amnesty International.

The list includes Peeter Einasto, a lecturer in Sociology at the University of Tartu, who conducted an opinion poll as a class exercise for his students. Since answers to some questions reflected students' attitudes towards the current social system in Estonia, the KGB stepped in, confiscated the completed questionnaires and arrested Einasto.

H.E.L.L.P. ACTIVITIES**Two Demonstrations**

On Friday, 21 July, HELL.P (Help the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Peoples Association) held a lunch-hour demonstration in Franklin Square, Hobart City.

The demonstration focussed on the harsh sentence imposed by the Soviets on Viktoras Petkus (see Story, Page 3). At the same time, attention was drawn to the continuing denial of human rights to the Baltic people who are still under Russian rule.

Signatures were collected from the passers-by to ask the Australian Government to raise the Baltic question at the United Nations Organisation, and to protest against the Russian colonization of the entire Baltic region. Messrs Goodluck and Hodgman, M.H.R.s, were amongst those who signed the petition.

A good number of HELL.P members participated, including the Vaiciulevicius family, whose daughters Rose and Bernadetta distributed literature.

The event was reported in Tasmanian daily press, on the following day.

Thanks!

We thank the following supporters, for donations received since the last issue of *Baltic News*:

Lithuanian Community in Hobart, Baltic Women's Assoc. in S.A., Latvian Information Service (S.A.), Lithuanian Community in Canberra, Baltic Committee Canberra, \$50 each; Dr I.V. Ozols, I.I. Davis, (both S.A.), Lithuanian Community in Melbourne, \$25 each; O.P. Vitols, Bachunas Lith. Library, E. & S. Dainys, V. Stalba (all S.A.), A. & E. Varkalis (N.Z.), F. Borums (A.C.T.), H. Juodvalkis (Tas.), \$20 each; N. Balton, E. Fogarty (both N.S.W.), \$15 each; E. Stankevicius (W.A.), J. Kuslin, J.L. Randazzo (N.S.W.), B. Burbo, R.A. Nash, Dr J. Madden, J. Parums, Dr H.G. McConalogue (Tas.), J. Ruzgys, L. Tidey (Old.), J. Mockunas, E. Zakis, D.I.E. Haas, A. Baltins (S.A.), \$10 each; F. Jackowiak, A. Ancans, J.G. Jurgens (S.A.), R.F. Evans (Vic.), E. Lacis (Tas.), C. Ford (N.S.W.), \$5 each; V. Comans (Vic.), \$4.

Since *Baltic News* is sent free of charge to all who ask for it, its continued publication relies entirely on donations and advertising.

Many thanks!

TO: H.E.L.L.P. (Help the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Peoples Association),

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June Commemoration

Six weeks earlier, on 9 June, HELL.P Association organised a very impressive commemoration of the first wave of mass deportations from the Baltic States.

After a silent vigil in Franklin Square and a candle-light procession through the streets of Hobart (pictured, below), an ecumenical church service was held in St Joseph's Church, Hobart City.

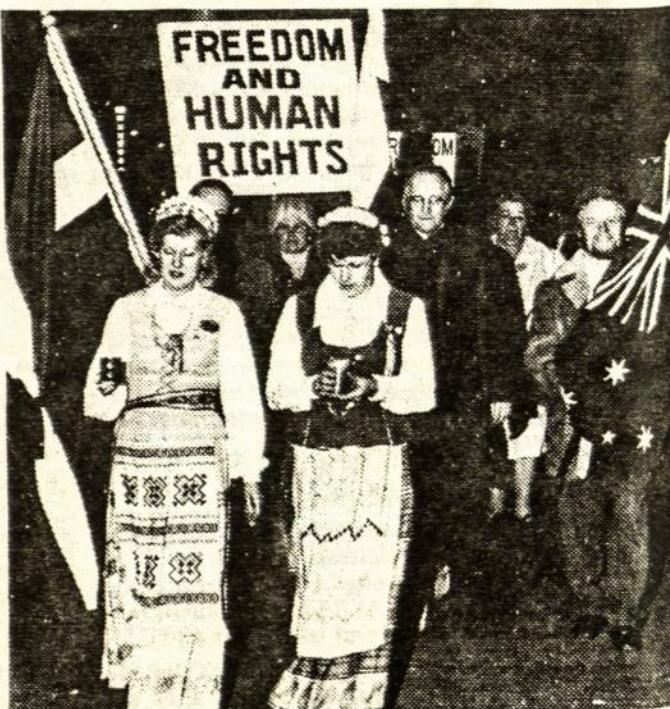
Speaking at the service, the Catholic Archbishop of Hobart (Sir Guilford Young), said, *inter alia*:

'Your endeavour is not easy, and at times you must be tempted to hopelessness. But you do not surrender; and all Australians who love freedom and justice, admire and thank you for your perseverance, your fortitude and your courage.'

'You bear testimony to the principles and ideals and values fundamental to, and foundational of, civilized society. In a world of lying propaganda, where the voices of the small nations are not listened to, in a world that is often marked by the apathy of even the good men, you try to alert us to the menace that adds a horrific black cloud over our world . . .'

'Oh please God, history will thank you. For, if your thoughts and your ideals are defeated, then all history will have become a nightmare of inhumanity . . .'

● BELOW: Part of the Baltic candlelight procession through the streets of Hobart, June 9, 1978.



— Photo by courtesy of SEM (Saturday Evening Mercury), Hobart.

LITHUANIAN FREEDOM WORKER:

The 'Third Man' in Soviet Trials

In mid-July, while the free world's attention focussed on the Moscow trials of dissidents Alexander Ginzburg and Anatoly Shcharansky, a third man was sentenced in Vilnius, the capital of Russian-held Lithuania.

He was Viktoras Petkus (49), an outspoken native Lithuanian, who has repeatedly called for the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Baltic States; this would enable the local people to vote freely again for self-determination. According to reliable sources, Petkus refused to enter the Vilnius court for his mock-trial and had to be dragged in by four soldiers. He was sentenced to a total of 15 years in prison, forced labour camp and internal exile.

Reminder of Aggression

Petkus, a veteran of twelve years in Gulag camps, is a member of the Lithuanian Helsinki Group, established in November 1976. At a press conference in Moscow on December 1, 1976, announcing the setting up of the Group, he read a statement asking the signatories of the Helsinki Agreement to remember that the present status of Lithuania (as a Soviet Republic) was the result of Soviet armed aggression against Lithuania on June 15, 1940. The Group went on to issue 12 documents, describing violations of the Helsinki Agreement in Lithuania.

Three members of the five-member Helsinki Group, reliable sources report, were summoned to the courtroom to testify in Petkus' trial. They are Eitanas Finkelshtainas, Lithuanian-Jewish activist; the Rev. Karolis Garuckas, a Catholic priest; and Ona Lukauskaite-Poskiene, poet and veteran of Soviet Labor camps.

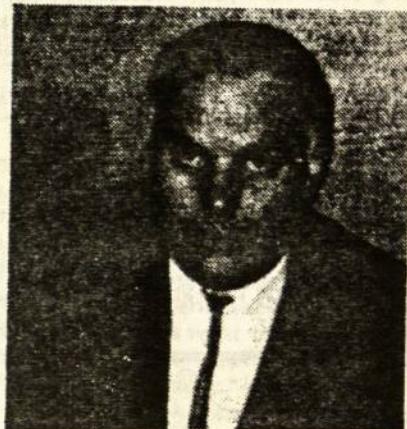
The fifth member of the Group, poet Tomas Venclova, was allowed to emigrate to the U.S. early in 1977, and visited Australia (including Hobart) last December.

Youth Worker

Viktoras Petkus was born in 1929, in Raseiniai, Lithuania. He was sentenced in 1947 to ten years in labor camps for his participation in Lithuanian Catholic youth activities, but was released as a 'minor' after six years. He studied Lithuanian language and literature at the University of Vilnius. In 1957, he was arrested again and sentenced to six years for his involvement in the case of the 'eleven members of the intelligentsia'. These facts about Petkus' life were reported by *Ausra*, The Dawn, a Lithuanian *samizdat* journal. Seven underground periodicals appear in Lithuania today.

The KGB seized Petkus on August 23, 1977. He was imprisoned without trial for almost a whole year.

• Cartoon: Back page.



• Viktoras Petkus: Veteran of Gulag camps.

Free at Last

After many protest letters and hunger strikes, two Latvian freedom workers have finally been allowed to migrate to the West.

Gunars Rode (Amnesty International's prisoner of the month, in February 1976) now lives in Sweden. He has been commissioned to write a book about his experiences behind the Iron Curtain.

Viktors Kalnins left Russian-held Latvia on 9 June, and arrived in Vienna on the following day. His plight was reported in the *Baltic News* on 12 April, 1978 (page 2).



EDITORIAL

After announcing Labor Party's revised policy in regard to the Baltic States (Story: Page 1), the Federal member for Adelaide (Mr Chris Hurford, M.H.R.) added a new revelation. He said, on 17 June, 'The Australian Labor Party will not make the mistake of returning to the *de jure* recognition of the Russian rule in the Baltic States. It was a terrible mistake that was made by the Whitlam Government. It mainly came from public servants'.

It is this last sentence that is causing concern. Have we really reached the stage in Australia, where the public servants (paid by the taxpayers) can control their political masters? How many other decisions have been made by the 'servants of the public', instead of our elected representatives in Canberra?

We need a Royal Commission, or a public enquiry, to find answers to these very important questions of principle.

LETTERS

PENSIONER'S SUPPORT

I very much like your newsletter which I have been receiving since last year. However, I don't wish to receive it without payment. Having worked in the printing trade until my retirement last year, I know that, even with a lot of voluntary work, it must cost you at least 30 cents per copy to achieve the high quality of production evident in the latest issues.

I have based my estimate on a circulation of 1300, mentioned in your last annual report. Including postage, I would therefore owe you at least \$5 by the end of this year. To settle my debt, I am enclosing a donation of \$10 and hope that this also enables you to send a free copy to a library of your choice.

Sydney

Joh. KUSLIN



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KEEP IT UP!

Keep up the good work!

The things that could destroy us, are: politics without principle; pleasure without conscience; knowledge without character; and worship without sacrifice.

Reseda, Calif. (U.S.A.)

Joseph KNIUPYS

At my request you have been sending me the *Baltic News*, and I am writing to say how deeply interested I am in your cause. I assure you of my support.

I am enclosing a cheque for \$5.00. Keep up the good work.

Seymour, Vic.

Roy F. EVANS

Similar letters have also been received from Maurice Young (Curtin, A.C.T.), A. Barber (Darwin, N.T.), 'A Lithuanian' (Adelaide, S.A.) and R. Mathews (Tas.).

NEW EXPORT MARKET?

I see, the West Germans now have to pay more for East Germany's political prisoners — DM40,000 to DM100,000 per head.

Is there any chance of selling a few pro-Soviet Aussies to Mr Brezhnev? Even at half this price, it would be a great boost to Australia's flagging balance of payments.

Burnie, Tas.

OLD ANZAC

The Editor welcomes letters, especially brief ones, at P.O. Box 272, Sandy Bay, 7005, and reserves the right to condense.



'But, please continue, Mr Carter... we're quite interested in your views on international arms control.'

— THE FIFTH WORLD —

Does Justice have a Statute of Limitations?

Joseph EHRET

Formally the constitution of the Soviet Union leaves room for the possibility of the member republics to conclude a secession by way of secret elections by the people of the given region. But what significance do paper rights have in a dictatorship? The saying, by which the French Marquis de Custine in 1839, while staying in Russia, had characterized the politics of conquest of the Czars, is maintained to be true by the Soviets: 'One forgets the injustice and the shame, but the acquisition remains'.

Anyone who is acquainted with history to some degree knows that a conqueror does not have the subjugated people in his grasp as long as they retain their national dignity and a sense of independence.

And this is the case with the Baltic people. Thus, for example, in February of 1972, over 17,000 protesting Lithuanians confronted not only Brezhnev, but also the United Nations with a charge of suppression of religion. As an expression of resistance against the oppressive regime, some time later four Lithuanians died by self-immolation, three of them were laborers. In Riga, even Latvian communists have revolted openly against the russification of their home land. Reports of similar actions come also from Estonia. This occurs despite the fact that the Soviets employ all means to suffocate the national feeling of the Balts. At present, the Balts are silent; yet the daily confrontation with the occupant strengthens their self-esteem and self-consciousness, striving with all their powers for liberation from the prison of nations, the Soviet Union.

The striving is not hopeless; it is obvious that the great powers do not remain eternally great and powerful and indeed the far-flung states often disappear faster than the little states. In this connection, Mao loves to repeat the saying of one Chinese classic writer: 'That which grows high, breaks easily'. And this — above all — applies to the Soviet Union whose prospects cannot be the best. Even today the yellow streak across the eastern horizon forebodes bad tidings for the Soviet Union; on the rise is a bitter and constantly growing opposition between the Soviet Union and the upsurging power of the Peoples Republic of China.

We need only to recall that, about the middle of the nineteenth century, Czarist Russia, by means of the so-called 'unequal treaties', i.e. by means of power, seized approximately 1.5 million square kilometers of Chinese territory. Up to the present, the Soviet Union has failed to return the smallest area and thus has opened a gulf between Peking and Moscow. Moreover, the gulf has been deepened by controversies of racial and ideological nature which have intensified the opposition into enmity and included the possibility of a future war. An entrance into armed conflict against Peking is a precarious venture; with the

increasing strength of China, such a war has little promise of success for the Soviet Union. For the Kremlin to succeed in the east, it would have to weaken its European west front so decisively that it would be exposed to counter attacks. The situation would not only be exploited by the satellites of that area, but also by the Baltic Republics which were forced into the Soviet Union. As the defeat in 1905 by the Japanese shook the Czarist empire, so would a war of the Soviet Union against China weaken Moscow to such an extent that it would have to fear a general secession in its west. In 1895, Wilhelm II had called China the 'yellow peril'. Has not today this 'peril' become a hope which could lead the western satellites, including the occupied Baltic States, back to freedom?

This is not at all an illusion if one considers that only half of the Soviet army consists of Russians while the other half consists of soldiers from 130 foreign nations on whom the Kremlin cannot depend unconditionally in case of setbacks. As far as the satellites go, we know enough concerning their loyalty.

The leadership in the Kremlin must also face constant difficulties which arise from the Russian nationals themselves — take the rising intelligentsia — which makes it understandable that one of their spokesmen, Andrej Amalrik, could publish, obviously in secret, the writing 'Can the Soviet Union survive the year 1984?'. Obviously the question is rhetoric. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that it could have been raised at all.

From all that has been said it ought to be clear that the Soviet Union is far from being the Colossus that it pretends to be and hence it cannot count on the prospect of holding its satellites and the Baltic States in its power. They have been forced into dependence on Moscow only by the power of the fist, and, given a free choice, they would liberate themselves from these chains by an overwhelming majority. Hence it is more than understandable that the suppressed risk everything in order to burst once again the door to freedom.

This is not an attempted prolongation of the 'cold war' but an effort to aid a people in the achievement of the elemental right of self-determination. Such a right is natural and cannot be broken by human intervention. Only he who so intervenes is 'the cold warrior' and has failed to understand the signs of the times nor taken note that the United Nations in New York have firmly established that self-determination is an inalienable right of all peoples.

Swiss-born, Dr Ehret fought alongside Lithuanian natives in the Baltic Wars of Independence, 1918-20. He later taught at the University of Kaunas and became known as an expert on Baltic affairs.

U.N. DELEGATES TOLD:

Balts want their rights

Earlier this year, representatives of BATUN (Baltic Appeal to the United Nations) met with delegates of seven Member States of the United Nations and handed to them eleven documents on human rights violations in Lithuania and Estonia.

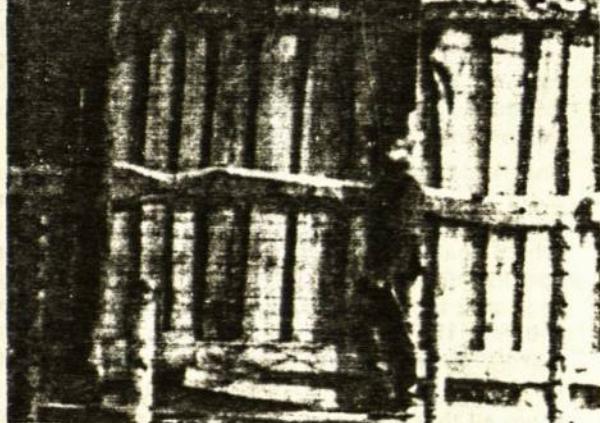
These documents were submitted to members of the Second (Social) Committee at the first session in 1978 of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in connection with agenda item 11 — human rights questions. The documents contain evidence that the authorities of the USSR violate or permit violations of four rights protected by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. These four rights are: freedom of religion; freedom from cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment; the right to leave and to

enter one's own country; and the right to hold opinions and to freedom of expression.

The cases cited included the persecution of Viktor Vasilyev and his family, Russian Pentacostals living in Lithuania, and the denial of their right to leave the USSR; the denial to Lithuanian political prisoners who have completed their sentences outside Lithuania to return to their country; the arrest of former political prisoner Balsys Gajauskas in Vilnius; the anguished lengthy plea by Algirdas Zibre to USSR Procurator General Rudenko describing the crippling drugs and inhumane treatment inflicted on him in a psychiatric hospital in Perm; the arrests of activists Viktoras Petkus and Antanas Terleckas; a long list of violations of freedom of religion in Lithuania in contravention of the Helsinki Final Act, covering the period between August 15, 1975 and April 28, 1977; descriptions and testimonies of the trial against five members of the Estonian Democratic Movement whose only 'crime' was that they wrote to the United Nations asking for the restoration of independence and human rights to the Estonian people.

Baltic Connection

The U.N. delegates expressed interest in reading the materials and indicated they would also transmit them to their country's representative on the ECOSOC or to their Permanent Representative (Ambassador) to the U.N. Miss M. Valere (Trinidad and Tobago) said she would definitely send the materials to her Prime Minister for his consideration. She mentioned reading some materials about human rights violations in Estonia that were sent by someone in Canada. Miss Valere was aware of the Latvian connection with Tobago and of the forthcoming ceremonial unveiling in June of a monument commemorating the coming of the ancient Courlanders to the island some 400 years ago.



Soviet prison guard makes his rounds around a camp in Soviet occupied Latvia.

— Reprinted from *The Voice of the Martyrs*,
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START WRITING NOW!

Tedis Zierins*

You probably don't realize, how much *you* can do in the free world's struggle against the atheistic Communism. Years ago, I believed that there was nothing I could do. I was just a blue collar worker and my English was very poor. Politics? — not for me!

Then, an event in November, 1957 changed my attitude. I discovered that I could do a lot! The Russians had just launched their first sputniks; a dog was aboard one of them. Protests started pouring into the United Nations. The British National Canine Defence League asked people throughout the world to observe one minute of silence daily, on behalf of the suffering little dog.

I happened to remark to a friend of mine, 'This sounds very nice, because nobody wants to be cruel to animals. But no-one has ever suggested to observe even one second of silence, on behalf of the millions of people who are suffering in Communist slave camps and prisons today. Aren't all those millions of people worth more than one dog? Somebody should write a letter to the newspapers about it'.

My friend told me that, if I had a complaint, I should write myself. 'Impossible,' I said, 'I can't write Eng-

lish'. My friend pushed a piece of paper and a pencil in front of me and said, 'There! Write in Latvian! My sister will be home soon and she will translate it for you'.

Immediate Success

I had no choice but to write. His sister did the translations and, to our surprise, three out of four dailies in our city printed my letter, 'Quo Vadis Free World'. I wrote another letter for Christmas Day, saying that Communism knew no Christmas. That was published, too.

Encouraged, I kept writing. Within twelve months, my letters appeared in several States. Several years later, I was able to dispense with the translator's services and ventured into English myself. I am still a factory worker, but my letters appear all over the country — and Soviet publications are attacking me, because of it.

How to Write

Communists and their friends are urging their people to write letters to the press, thus promoting their cause. Why shouldn't we?

One good way to get your letter published is to express thanks for something. Another way is to comment on an editorial or another letter you have seen in the paper. But, when a newspaper publishes an editorial with a mistaken viewpoint, it is better not to attack it angrily; start your letter in a friendly way, such as 'Sorry, but I cannot agree with your editorial . . . '.

People don't like to have your ideas pushed on to them — they prefer to make up their own minds. Letters in question form, leading to logical conclusions, may be more appealing. Or, you may point out some less known facts and let the reader reach his own conclusions.

Make your point clear by comparing it with some very well-known fact. Commemorative days can be used to contrast Soviet Communism and Freedom. Everybody knows that Nazism is evil; compare Russian colonialism with Nazism and Fascism. Do not call your opponents leftists or Reds — merely quote the facts which contradict their words.

Do not allow subversive groups to impose their will upon the finest country in the world, Australia. Let's all become members of the volunteer army of little candles who keep the freedom's light aglow.

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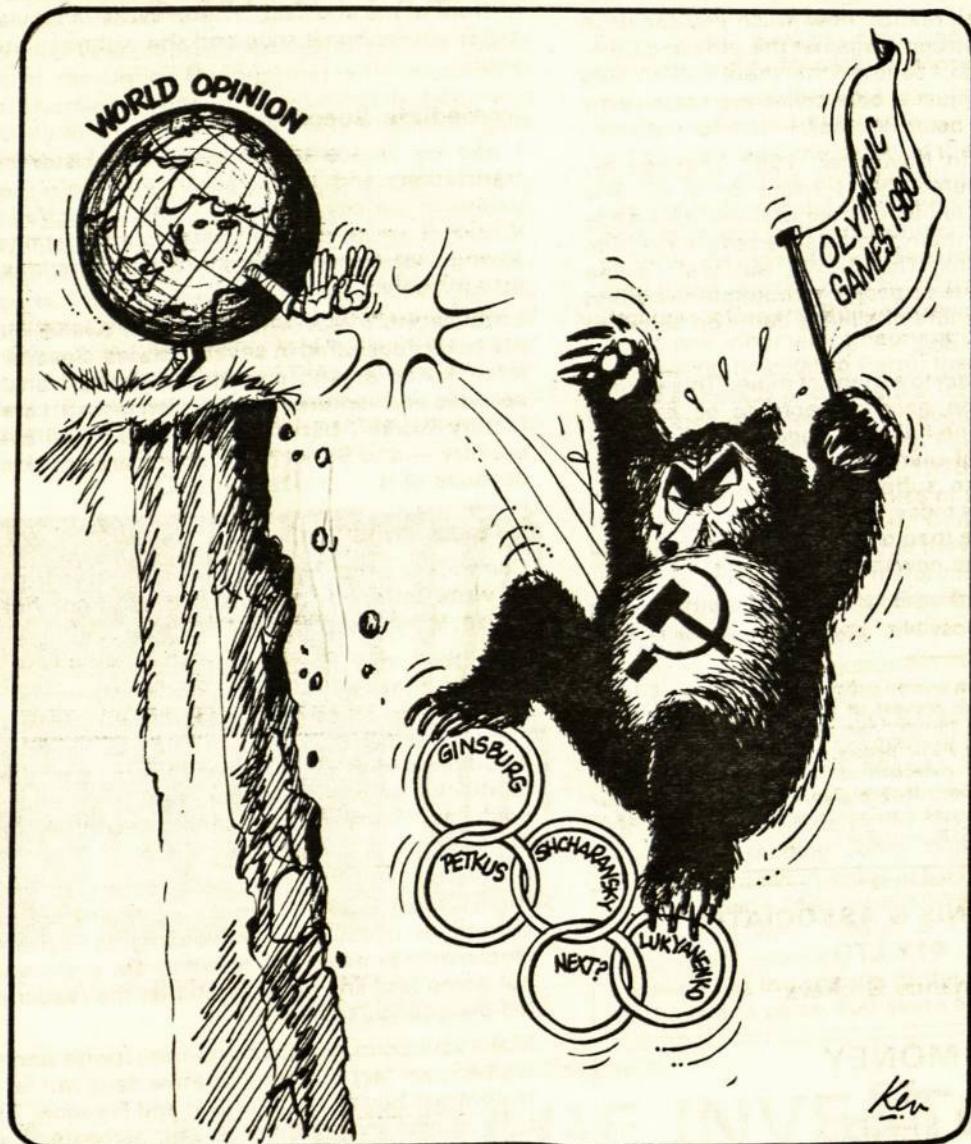
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'Olympic Rings'



— Kev's cartoon by courtesy of *The Mercury* (Hobart).
See Story, Page 3.

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