



BALTIC NEWS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF HELP THE ESTONIAN, LATVIAN AND LITHUANIAN PEOPLES ASSOCIATION (HELLP)
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May, 1981

40th Anniversary of Mass Deportations

Friday, June 12th is the day chosen by HELLP (Help the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian People's Association) to commemorate the Soviet takeover of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in 1940. This occupation has been followed in subsequent years by similar events in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan and tomorrow, perhaps, Poland.

It is a day when we in Australia should consider the plight of the victims of all suppressive regimes who deny citizens those civil liberties we take for granted, who 'educate' by corrective or 'psychiatric' institutions, or who impose retribution by eradication.

Abuse in psychiatric institutions is especially rife in the USSR, as attested to even by Russian writers such as Solzenitsyn. "Baltic News" has carried stories of Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians who have been, and are still being "treated" in such institutions for daring to question the Soviet presence in the Baltic States. Unfortunately, an increasing number of Baltic dissidents appear to be subjected to this cruel punishment.

The corrective institutions, or concentration camps, identified with the Stalinist period, still exist. From latest reports, e.g. Shifrin's "The First Guidebook to Prisoners and Concentration Camps of the Soviet Union," such places as Vorkuta are doing "business as usual" in continuing to provide free labour for the mineral-extractive industries and foresting operations of Siberia and other frontier regions of the USSR. Mass deportations of peoples to such camps ceased in the mid 1950s, but individual people are still sent there, as reported frequently in this journal.

The eradication of the Baltic people began in 1941, when, on the night of June 14 the newly arrived Russian troops rounded up some 40,000 innocent Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians, loaded them into

goods waggons and cattle trucks and sent them on a long journey to icy Siberia. This event caused a new word to be added to the English language — mass deportation. The organised removal of more Balts followed, until by the end of the Stalin era some 500,000 of them had been taken. Most of the deportees did not return: they lay down their lives under the terrible arctic conditions.

A vigil of remembrance for all such victims will be held in Franklin Square, Hobart from 4.30-7.30 pm on Friday, June 12, and this will be followed by an Ecumenical Memorial Service at St David's Cathedral, commencing at 8 pm.

The same day, Friday, June 12th, a number of vehicles throughout the State will display their headlights during the day. This will not be the action of forgetful people but rather people who do not forget their separated families, relatives and friends. They will also include people who sympathise with the injustice experienced by people, who, through no fault of their own, are the victims of occupation and the suppression of basic human and civil rights by a foreign power. Do not forget those who are not permitted to forget.



● At the vigil

Civil Rights Violated . . .

IN THIS ISSUE

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Plea Against Violence

The last issue of the Baltic News reported the appearance in Australia of an important letter from Russian-occupied Estonia. The letter, signed by forty Estonian intellectuals and addressed to the official, Russian-controlled newspapers in Estonia, attempts to analyze the reasons for the latest anti-Russian demonstrations in Estonia, and particularly that of October 22, 1980, when thousands of young Estonians marched through Tallinn, capital of Estonia. We present extracts from that letter. It is not hard to see that the writers are really asking for independence from Russia. It should also be noted that the signatories are not known dissidents, thereby showing that dissatisfaction with the Russian control of Estonia is more wide-spread than just minority dissident groups.

antagonism breeds violence

The violence associated with the events in Tallinn gives cause for concern. There have been subsequent calls for more violence. The use of force is an indication that dangerous splits have formed in our society, splits indicative of antagonism between educators and those being educated, between leaders and those being led. These stresses are aggravated by inconsistencies between what is purported to be reality and what the situation actually is:

- the growing scarcity of Estonian-language journals and books, particularly those vitally important to national culture, and also the obvious inhibition of research in ethnic studies;

- the unilateral propaganda advocating bilingualism among Estonians, without a similar effort being made among aliens — a situation that deepens a feeling in the Estonian community that its mother tongue is regarded as a second-rate language.

To prevent a repetition of the events that took place in Tallinn and to alleviate the existing tensions between national groups, something must be done first of all to restore in Estonians their sense of security for the present and future and to guarantee that the native inhabitants of Estonia would always have the final word on the destiny of their land and people. Questions about the future of Estonia should not be left to the decision of the federal ministries, central boards and other governmental bureaucracies. All major socio-economic projects, such as the establishment or expansion of large industries, should be preceded by analysis of possible social, psychological, and ecological consequences, and by public discussion.

Ever since the revolution, the Estonian language has been backed by constitutional guarantees, and it has been used throughout Estonia as the official language in all aspects of public life. Every Estonian living within the boundaries of the Estonian SSR has enjoyed the automatic right to obtain secondary and higher education in the Estonian language, as well as the right to conduct everyday business, both oral and written, in his native tongue. We think that legislative enactment of this principle by the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR would go a long way towards normalizing the present unhealthy situation.

Dissatisfaction

It is unlikely that demonstrations involving thousands of young people could have been incited by a few agitators. We feel rather that these demonstrations expressed, in an amplified form, the discontent felt by many adult inhabitants of Estonia.

Dissatisfaction has deepened over the past few years, but it has in fact been developing over a much



SOVIET TANKS IN WAR EXERCISE. Buildup of Russian armored forces in Warsaw Pact poses major threat to Western Europe.

longer period of time. As a background there are the conflicts at the level of everyday needs (queuing in shops, shortages and unequitable distribution of foodstuffs and essential commodities), conducive to alcoholism, crime, instability of family life, and other destructive phenomena.

Conflicts at the ethnic level are rendered especially serious by the fact that their causes have so far not been publicly discussed with sufficient candour. In our opinion the reason for ethnic conflicts and tensions in Estonia is a feeling of insecurity, perhaps even a fear for their identities, on the part of the two largest national groups: the Estonians and the Russians. Fear, however, creates irrational and often explicitly aggressive behaviour.

The insecurity in Estonians as to their future has been caused among other things by:

- the rapid decline in the proportion of Estonians in the population, particularly in Tallinn, where Estonians are becoming a minority;

- the restrictions in the use of the Estonian language in administration, commerce, science and elsewhere — a trend that has been characterised by the compulsory presentation of university dissertations about Estonian linguistics and literature in Russian, and by the exclusive use of the Russian language at the festive gathering marking the 40th anniversary of the Estonian SSR.

Signed by: Priit Aimla, Kaur Altoa, Madis Aruja, Lehte Hainsalu, Mati Hint, Fred Jussi, Aira Kaal, Maie Kalda, Tõnu Kaljuste, Toomas Kall, Jaan Kaplinski, Peet Kask, Heino Kiik, Jaan Kloseiko, Kersti Kreismann, Alar Laats, Aare Laht, Andres Langmets, Marju Lauristin, Peeter Lorents, Vello Lougas, Endel Nirk, Lembit Peterson, Arno Pukk, Rein Põllumaa, Paul-Eerik Rummo, Rein Ruutsoo, Tonis Ratsep, Ita Saks, Aavo Sirk, Mati Sirkel, Jaan Tamm, Rein Tamsalu, Andres Tarand, Lehte Tavel, Peeter Tulviste, Mati Unt, Arvo Valton, Juhan Viiding, Aarne Ukskula.

Tallinn — Tartu, October 28 1980.

NEWS FROM BALTIC STATES

Rights Committee Expands

Four new members have joined the Catholic Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights (CaCDBR) in Russian-occupied Lithuania. This group has been monitoring factual evidence of discrimination against the Church and individual believers since 1978.

Vytautas Skuodis, an American-born professor of geology, was accepted as the first lay member of the CaCDBR on December 22, 1980, the day he was sentenced to 7 years strict regimen camp and 5 years internal exile for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda". In addition to allegedly producing independent journals *Perspectives* and *Alma Mater*, Skuodis was charged with authoring a 300-page manuscript entitled *Spiritual Genocide in Lithuania*. The manuscript was confiscated by security agents during a search of his home in Vilnius, at 44-4 Vandentiekio Street.

The other new members of the Catholic Committee are: Father Leonas Kalinauskas of Josvainiai, Father Algimantas Keina of Valkininkai and Father Vaclovas Stakenas of Krokialaukis.

Four of the five original founding members (Frs Jonas Kauneckas, Alfonsas Svarinskas, Sigitas Tamkevicius and Vincas Velavicius) remain in the Catholic Committee.

Beginning with document No 36 dated October 20, 1980, the name of the fifth charter member, Father Juozas Zdebskis, no longer appears on official statements of the Catholic Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights.

Mysterious Burns

Father Zdebskis of Slavantai parish sustained second degree burns over 10-12% of his body in an "accident", which occurred under mysterious circumstances in early October 1980. Sources report that undercover agents and unmarked cars had been following Father Zdebskis everywhere a few days prior to the "accident". A petition signed by 684 parishioners states that Zdebskis was burned by yet "unexplained means — radiation, chemicals . . ."

De-colonise the Russian Empire—
free Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.



The funeral of Father Garuckas.



Father J. Zdebskis, SJ, charter member of the Catholic committee for the Defence of the Rights of Believers.

In Document No 38, the Catholic Committee expresses concern over increasing violence against priests.

In addition to the case of Father Juozas Zdebskis, four other violent assaults against priests in 1980 are cited. The most tragic example involves Fr. Leonas Sapoka of Luokey parish, who was murdered on the night of October 10-11 by a group of intruders. His body was discovered the following morning. Witnesses report that he had been a victim of sadistic torture.

Soviet Mafia

Such assaults, asserts the Catholic Committee, are linked with church arson, burglaries and desecration of sacred objects. The Catholic Committee ends by appealing to the State Prosecutor for the Lithuanian SSR:

"Sir, please take urgent measures to control the Soviet Mafia and to bring these criminals to trial, since these offences against the church and its priests . . . compromise the Soviet government, which uses all means to protect . . . those fighting against the Church."

In yet another document (No 37, October 20, 1980), the Catholic Committee appeals to the Second Secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party, N. K. Dybenko, on behalf of Eduardo Bulachas, who wishes to emigrate to the United States. Bulachas, a Pentecostal, has been harassed repeatedly by the Soviet authorities because of his religious beliefs.



"I'm back, Comrades, and I've brought you some wallpaper to decorate your living room."

LETTERS

Decolonise, or Expel Invaders?

Last Colonial Power

Over 31 years ago, the United Nations (including Soviet Russia) signed the Human Rights and Self-Determination Charter, or declaration.

A decolonisation committee implemented this, and supervised the decolonisation of British, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Belgian and Dutch dominions by granting independence to all countries in Asia and Africa.

Today, only one colonial power is left, Soviet Russia, who under Czarist and later Bolshevik rule, annexed about 100 different countries including Ukraine, Byelorussia, the Baltic states, Caucasus and Turkestan republic by military force and subversion.

Russia extended colonial rule into "satellite" republics of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania.

Under agreement with Hitler, Russia annexed three peaceful Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

More than 250 million people are now living under Soviet Russian military rule and colonial exploitation.

Today, as Australian citizens, we think the UN decolonisation committee should declare Soviet Russia to be a colonial power, and start decolonising the Russian empire.

Russia has the world's largest army, not for self-defence but to protect and suppress occupied countries. Her expansionist policies from the Baltic to Afghanistan threaten world peace and the freedom of all mankind.

The only way to ensure peace and freedom in Russian occupied countries is to enforce the de-

colonisation process in Russia itself.

We do not want bloody revolution, just peaceful decolonisation and free elections under UN supervision. We ask Australians and all people to raise the question of self-determination for all occupied countries.

As the first step, the Australian delegation to the United Nations should press for immediate decolonisation of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Byelorussia and the Ukraine.

Alb. POCIUS,
President,

Melbourne, Vic.

Baltic Council of Australia.

Australia's View

With regard to the question you raised concerning the decolonisation of the Baltic States, I would point out that the Government has publicly stated that in Australia's view these states are, and remain, independent countries. From this standpoint, what is at issue is not decolonisation but the expulsion of occupying forces.

Moreover, the presentation of a resolution such as you propose to the United Nations would be unlikely to receive wide support from Third World countries, who would see this issue as a matter of dispute between developed countries rather than a decolonisation issue. It could quite possibly result only in setting back the attainment of the widely-based international support which Baltic communities must seek in the long term aim of re-establishing the independence of their countries.

Canberra, A.C.T.

Malcolm FRASER,
Prime Minister of Australia.

● More Letters, Page 10.

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE:

Petkus for 1981 Nobel Prize?

Lithuanian historian Viktoras Petkus is among four Soviet Helsinki prisoners who have been nominated for the 1981 Nobel Peace Prize. The others are Russian physicist Yuri Orlov; Jewish mathematician Anatoly Scharansky; and Ukrainian poet Mykola Rudenko.

The nominations were announced on February 3, by the US Congressional members of the Commission on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

The five Senators and five Representatives noted in their letter to the Nobel Institute that these four men — each of whom faces a decade of imprisonment for monitoring Soviet compliance with the 1975 Helsinki Final Act — "have put their lives at the service of peace and decency in the conduct of all nations." By nominating the four men, the CSCE Commission also paid tribute to the personal sacrifice made by the Soviet Helsinki groups: "Of the 71 individuals who are members of these groups, 26 have been tried on criminal charges (and are serving a total of 162 years in prison, forced labor camps and internal exile); ten are currently imprisoned pending trial; nine are serving terms of imprisonment to which they were previously sentenced; seven have emigrated; two were stripped of Soviet citizenship; one was exchanged for a Soviet spy, and one person has died."

The nomination of Orlov, Scharansky, Rudenko and Petkus was signed by Hon Dante B. Fascell, chairman, Senator Robert Dole, co-chairman; Senators Claiborne Pell, Patrick J. Leahy, John Heinz, and Alfonse M. D'Amato; and Representatives Jonathan B. Bingham, Paul Simon, Sidney Yates, and Millicent Fenwick.

— BATUN.

News on Latvian Baptist

Details of the present camp conditions of Joseph Bondarenko, the Baptist youth evangelist from Riga, have reached Keston College in England. At Glyustenkhabl (near Krasnodar), the camp to which he was recently transferred, Bondarenko is forced to work 12 hours a day, from 2 pm to 2 am, as a lathe operator, cutting threads in nuts and screws. This intricate work is very hard on his eyes and requires him to stand for most of the time. His daily work target has been set quite high, and when he does not complete his quota his food ration is cut. This happens on most days, so he is frequently forced to go hungry, which is hard on his already poor health.

Bondarenko was arrested on May 9, 1978 after the dispersion of a youth meeting in Krasnodar, Krasnodar region of the RSFSR, and charged with "organizing a mass action which disrupted public order and resisting an official." He was sentenced on August 5, 1978 to 3 years in a strict regime camp according to Article 190/3 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR. He contracted tuberculosis while serving a previous sentence in a labour camp and suffered a heart attack during his trial.

Bondarenko is accompanied at all times by two men who prevent him from speaking to anyone about spiritual matters. His full camp address is: USSR, 353228 Krasnodar, Glyustenkhabl, uch UO 68/6, 8 otr, br 11, USSR.

— Keston News Service.

Whatever Happened to Janis?

A young Latvian prisoner whose photograph was featured in the last issue of Baltic News, has admitted he is an ordinary criminal. This claim has been made by TASS, the official Soviet news agency, in a recent release to the Western media.

TASS says that 22-year-old Janis Tilgalis has sent an open letter to Amnesty International who had taken up his cause. According to TASS, "Tilgalis is convinced that the Amnesty intervention had been prompted not by concern for him but by the desire to exploit his name for anti-Soviet aims."

Tilgalis was sentenced in August, 1978 to five years' imprisonment for distributing Latvian nationalist leaflets. TASS quotes his letter to Amnesty International as saying that "while in detention I understood the depth of my offences, mistakes and delusions, which led to my crime." He is quoted as saying he believed he could yet become a useful citizen of his country, that he had parents and a homeland and that he was not going to exchange them for "relatives" from Amnesty International.

TASS also quotes Latvian justice minister Vladimir Layvin as alleging Amnesty International has violated international law by illegally interfering into Tilgalis's life. The minister claims, Tilgalis had never appealed either to Soviet or any international organizations complaining about the violation of human rights. According to Layvin, this proves that the activity of Amnesty International is in contradiction with the norms of international law and that this organization serves as an instrument of interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

— BATUN.

● To Write, or Not to Write? A Former Prisoner Tells, Page 10.

Balts Salute Polish Workers

On October 11, a salutatory telegram was dispatched to the Polish workers by 20 Latvian, Estonian and Lithuanian dissidents from their respective homelands. The telegram was addressed to Polish Labor leader Lech Walesa, and it expressed their empathy with the Polish workers' cause.

--Newsletter from Behind The Iron Curtain, No. 508, December 1980

In the last issue of the Baltic News we reported that an approach has been made to the Prime Minister, the Hon. Malcolm Fraser, to try and help the release of Lithuanian prisoners of conscience, Viktoras Petkus and Balys Gajauskas.

The reply from the Prime Minister's Department states that "enquiries are being made into the matters which you have raised, and a reply will be prepared for the Prime Minister's approval."

BOOK REVIEW

Long Years of Suffering

A. Porteous*

Michael Bourdeaux, LAND OF CROSSES: THE STRUGGLE FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN LITHUANIA, 1939-78. Keston College, 1979; £3.00. ISBN 0 85172 730 1

This is by far the hardest review I have ever had to write: not because of uncertainty what to say, but because no language of mine can carry the moral weight required to do justice to such material. In some ways the book is even more impressive than Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* volumes. Since these are great works of a great literary artist, who both brings a huge organising epic power, and achieves for us the high moral exhilaration of great art, which confronts and defeats even such atrocities — comparably with Shakespeare in *King Lear*, say.

But *Land of Crosses* is a strictly documentary record: a good two-thirds of its 325 pages of texts are, simply, documents — statements by all kinds of people, court proceedings, prison testimonies, *samizdat* protests, letters. The author's role is confined to plain narrative and summary, to the choice of paragraphs (remarkable indeed that these are such visual records, as well as the verbal testimonies), an explanatory foreword, and valuable assistance in the form of three indexes, two maps, and a brief glossary.

The book's efficient compilation of thirty years' coverage and suffering defeats any summary. Its twelve chapters cover the original invasion and persecution of Lithuania, its people and its church, and the attempts varying only marginally in persistence and fervor, under Stalin, Krushchev and now Brezhnev, to close seminaries and destroy churches: kill off dissenting clerics and lay-people; bully, harass or assault youngsters loyal to their faith. Nothing original or startling: only the horribly familiar, weary and wearying calendar of state atrocities against citizens — in this case of course of a usurped nation.

One sees why the Kremlin bosses (the smallest, most powerful, and least responsible tyrannical oligarchy in the world, 'de-Stalinisation' or not) and the KGB keep it up; just as one sees why they invaded Afghanistan and bomb its 'dissidents' — (i.e. almost the whole body of citizens). There is nothing else they can think to do; since no one has yet invented ways of forcibly and effectively annihilating people's consciences and memories, and knowledge of who they are as a historic community. This is (partly) why the anguish of Lithuanian Christians (so often tempered by amazing serenity of spirit, do well as mutual cohesiveness) is of direct and urgent concern, even to conscientious atheists — to anyone with a commitment to freedom and basic human rights.

A one-page foreword by Cardinal Koenig of Vienna makes the three key points: the accuracy of the information; the objectivity and goodwill of Fr Bourdeaux (and one might add Keston College itself; in

the author's words, 'the only institution in the English-speaking world which seeks, however inadequately, to study and document all aspects of religious life, both Christian and non-Christian, in those countries which are governed by Communist or Marxist regimes'); and the relevance of this activity, and of the book, to everyone who cares about human rights, let alone religious liberty.

Given the book's scholarly reliability and good faith, which the known auspices and activity of Keston College put beyond rational dispute, what can one say of its content? Western and especially Anglo-Saxon radicals and liberals, as a group, display an appalling selectivity in the adoption of causes: anti-American campaigns are somehow much more fun than caring or even knowing about the generation-long struggle of the Baltic republics for personal freedom and their historical political identity. After all, nothing very much is achieved by the West in assisting or encouraging even larger communities like Czechoslovakia; or older sufferers like Poland; or last year's victim Afghanistan. There is often a feeling that it is somehow only natural for Soviet imperialism to act so abominably: after all, they do it to their own people with pre-eminent thoroughness, as everyone knows and nobody now denies. Why don't these people just suffer quietly, instead of constantly disturbing our consciences?

But as this quiet, sober, factual book so impassively makes clear, quiet suffering is exactly what is involved. The only actions reported are of a kind utterly commonplace and habitual in the free democracies, of which these communities were once of course members. All these people ask for, or attempt to attain, is the freedom to worship, to instruct their children, and to train their clergy, to publish bibles and other materials. But, says the irritated anti-clerical Western liberal, since they know that the tiny power group in the Kremlin won't give up oppressing them, why do they insist on bothering, for decades at a time? Why not simply be oppressed as quietly as possible?

The breath-taking answer is that these workers and school-children, nuns and clergy, are not only too courageous but too honest to pull their heads in and seek a quiet life. Indeed, all they do finally seek is a quiet life — with liberty of conscience, and with the simple basic freedoms enshrined, of course, in the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights (to look no further), to which the U.S.S.R. is a signatory. Their suffering reproaches the West, and it would cost us little at least to recognise and respect it. All honour to H.E.L.L.P., to Amnesty International, to Keston College and all other reasonable, open, quiet but untiring voices of witness to human dignity and its continuing assertions against tyrannical state oppression.

De-colonise the Russian Empire—
free Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

* Mr Alexander Porteous, M.A. (Edin.) is Senior Lecturer in English, at the University of Tasmania.

ESTONIA TODAY

Excerpts Of Juri Lina's Testimony To The Commission On Security And Co-operation In Europe — Held In Washington, D.C., April 29, 1980

Juri Lina was born in Soviet-occupied Estonia on October 13, 1949. While living in Estonia, he worked as a lecturer, dramatist and had a musical radio program for young people.

During his high school years, starting in 1968, Lina became active in the Estonian democratic movement. In 1975, as a result of his activities, he was forbidden to lecture in public and threatened with imprisonment and incarceration in a psychiatric hospital. From 1972 to February 1979, he edited Estonian underground newsletters. During this time, Lina became well-acquainted with the leading Estonian and Baltic Dissidents. In the spring of 1979, after a marriage of convenience to a Finnish woman, he obtained an exit visa and now resides in Sweden.

After the conclusion of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in August, 1975, the human rights situation in the Baltic Nations improved somewhat because the Soviet authorities wanted to leave the impression that they would honour the Helsinki agreements. Permits to visit relatives in the West were easier to obtain and many who married foreigners were given the opportunity to leave the country. For the first time, one could buy art books published abroad and non-communist foreign newspapers were displayed in Intourist hotels.

By 1976 the situation worsened because the authorities were worried and afraid of the relaxation. As for political rights, Balts have never had these under the Soviet Russian rule.

Violations of civil rights include, among others, restrictions placed upon getting inheritance from abroad. Only small sums are forwarded to the inheritors by the State, which keeps most of the money for its hard currency reserves.

No Privacy

A private telephone as such does not exist. Telephone conversations are monitored on a wide scale. The State can at any time disconnect one's phone service, especially when the phone has been used for long distance calls to western countries, or to western newsmen within the Soviet Union with complaints about illegal procedures or bad conditions...

The national rights of the native peoples are constantly violated in the Baltic Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Russians behave as if they were some kind of "herrenvolk" (master race) and they get many advantages. They are favoured over Estonians, Latvians, or Lithuanians in obtaining new housing and in getting better-paying jobs. In dual language situations, e.g. in government offices, management of state enterprises, etc, where both Russians and Balts are present, the Russian language always takes precedence even if only a single Russian demands that Russian be used instead of the native Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian languages.

Influx of Russians

In recent years there are increasing pressures to further the study of the Russian language in all walks of life. Emphasis is being placed on teaching Russian especially to children; plans exist and are being implemented to start universal Russian language training for Baltic children at the kindergarten and day care centre levels. Recently it was decreed that all dissertations at Baltic universities have to be written in

Civil Rights Violated . . . Telephone Conversations Monitored

Russian, or be accompanied by a full Russian translation. If these plans work, Estonians would have to speak Russian instead of Estonian in their native land.

The influx of Russians and other Russian-speaking Soviets into the Baltic States continues, resulting in degradation of national identity for Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians. According to the Soviet census of 1979 as compared to the census of 1959, the percentage of Russians and other Soviet immigrants has risen in Estonia from 22% to 35%, in Latvia from 37% to 54%, and in Lithuania from 20% to 22%. Russians have mostly settled in the larger cities where they constitute civil garrisons whose task is to further russification and suppress the national aspirations of Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians. As a result of this colonial Soviet policy, Latvians now make up approximately 40% of the population of their capital, Riga; Lithuanians approximately 65% of their capital, Vilnius; and Estonians barely 50% of their capital, Tallinn.

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ESTONIA TODAY

From Page 7

In connection with the preparations for the Olympic regatta in Tallin, large numbers of Russian construction workers were brought into Estonia. Upon arrival in Tallinn many of them took jobs at other locations and settled permanently in Estonia, thus worsening further the ethnic balance of Estonians in their native land. . .

Extensive co-operation between human and national rights activities in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania started in 1975. A joint Estonian-Latvian appeal for self determination of the Baltic peoples was issued on June 17, 1975, addressed to all governments participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. This co-operation was given a more formal status when a joint Estonian-Latvian-Lithuanian National Movement Committee was formed in August, 1977. This committee has held meetings, worked out action programs and composed memorandums. The first of these was issued in September, 1975, on the 35th anniversary of the Soviet occupation of the Baltic States, and was addressed to "all leaders of the world's freedom loving nations, organizations and associations."

1979 Baltic Appeal

These activities culminated on August 23, 1979, when the Baltic Appeal, signed by 45 Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians, addressed to Mr Kurt Waldheim, Secretary General of the United Nations, to the governments of the Soviet Union, West and East Germany and others, was released in Moscow to the western press. This appeal, which marked the 40th anniversary of the infamous Nazi-Soviet pact of 1939, was released with an accompanying supporting statement signed by Andrei Sakharov and four other prominent Russian dissidents.

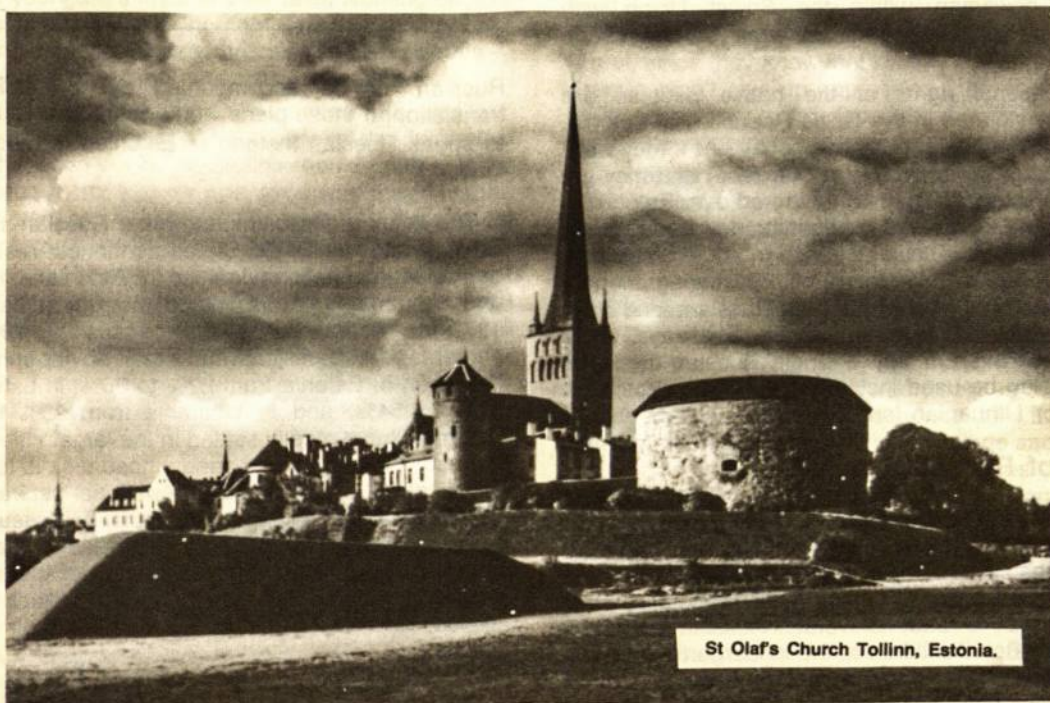
Earlier this year, Baltic activists jointly protested the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and called for an international boycott of the 1980 Olympic games. They have drawn attention to the fact that for the first time in Olympic history a part of the games will be staged in an occupied country, namely, the yachting events in Tallinn, Estonia . . .

Since the Baltic Appeal of August 1979 was released the repressive acts of the authorities in the Baltic Republics have greatly increased. The first of the signers of the Baltic Appeal to be arrested was Antanas Terleckas, a prominent Lithuanian human rights activist who was taken into custody on October 30, 1979, in Vilnius. On December 11, 1979, another Lithuanian singer, Julius Sasnauskas, was arrested. Estonians and Latvians saw it as their duty to protest the arrest of their Lithuanian comrades and did so . . .

Very important sources of information for the people in the Baltics are the radio broadcasts of Voice of America and Radio Liberty. These radios, in addition to other western broadcasts, are believed and constitute true sources of invaluable news and information. While not knowing how it can be accomplished, I will ask that every effort be made to maintain and to even expand the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian broadcasts of Voice of America and Radio Liberty.

Magazines Banned

Lately, even popular magazines and science journals from the West, such as the American *National Geographic* and the Finnish magazine *Suosikki*, have been intercepted by Soviet postal authorities. When people who are expecting these publications make inquiry as to why they have not arrived, they are told that these journals are not to be distributed in the Soviet Union. I am certain that the April, 1980, issue of *National Geographic* will never reach the shores of Estonia, since it contains an objective travelogue on Estonia written by an Estonian emigre, Mr Priit Vesilind . . .



St Olaf's Church Tallinn, Estonia.

Soviet authorities are not interested that broad segments of the local population would learn foreign languages, because they wish to restrict contacts with foreigners and limit comprehension of radio broadcasts from abroad. In Baltic high schools there are only two hours of foreign language instruction per week. The ultimate result is that high school graduates practically cannot speak any foreign language. This is a total contradiction to the way things used to be.

The sources of objective internal information are the *samizdat* publications which are circulating in all three Baltic States. Such publications treat cultural problems, religious questions, report on human rights violations and reprint Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian literary and cultural heritage. They provide hope and they inform.

Forbidden Fruits

Thus, to sustain their innate curiosity, the people in the Baltics have to rely on forbidden fruits — the foreign radios and *samizdat* publications. I ask you, could you live this way?

In conclusion, it is my firm belief that increased western support of Soviet and Baltic dissidents and human rights activists will widen the perspectives of action for those Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian citizens who openly demand national rights. Even if the Soviet occupying power counters the human rights movement with repressions and arrests, more and more Balts will join the democratic and national movements.

I want you to keep in mind that those people who actively, openly and fearlessly challenge Soviet authority, are only the tip of an iceberg. I can tell you from my personal experience that Soviet rule is almost universally disliked by the Baltic peoples. The very vast majority of Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians desire not only human civil rights, but most of all they seek their national rights, that is, political self-determination. They know these existed between the two world wars and that their people were free for many centuries in the past. This is now denied to them by the presence of hundreds and thousands of Soviet troops on their territory and by the ever growing Russian civil garrisons, party and KGB officials sent to rule from Moscow.

Mr Chairman, Members of the Commission, mine is only a small voice and you have heard many such as mine. I wonder when will our voices begin to have a more serious impact, and when will the western nations obtain the resolve to seriously counter Soviet power. Let us hope that for the sake of all Balts, for my friends Niklus, Tarto, Udam and Kuk, and for all the others who have little or no rights in the Soviet Union and elsewhere — this day will soon arrive.

— Latvian Information Bulletin.

Soviet Peace

The aggressively expanding imperialism of the Soviet Union has already gotten it the biggest empire with the most people under its control this world has ever seen, yet it claims to be "anti-imperialist."

Peace and victory is all the Soviets want, so they ask any "peace" that will give them victory.

Chicago, U.S.A.

J. Kesner KAHN.

Soviet rule disliked

National Day in Estonia

Several reports have reached the Estonian Relief Centre in Sweden indicating that, in spite of intensified surveillance at all strategic positions in Tallinn and Tartu on February 24, the Estonian National Day, young people used their initiative to commemorate the day.

As in previous years, in Tartu lighted candles were placed on the grave of Julius Kuperjanov, a hero of the Estonian War of Independence 1918-1920. At several localities a black stripe had been added overnight to the blue and white street signs, thus producing the blue-black-white national colours. Messages like "Long live Estonian language" were found written on the snow. Blue, black and white posters appeared at Paaskula and other places in Tallinn. The Estonian national flag hoisted above the Cultural Centre at Kuressaare on the island Saaremaa remained up for the whole morning.

As a result, the militia has initiated several investigations, but so far no arrests have been reported.

Bishop interviewed

Bishops and diocesan administrators in Lithuania have been summoned for interviews with the official for Religious Affairs, P. Anilionis. A report on the "talk" he had with Bishop R. Kriksciunas appeared in the latest *Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church* (No 42). It reveals quite clearly the bullying tone used by the Council for Religious Affairs in dealing with Church leaders.

The Deputy Chairman of the Lithuanian SSR Council of Ministers, A. Cesnavicius, was also present at the interview. He and P. Anilionis told Bishop Kriksciunas that bishops must openly condemn certain extremist manifestations in the Lithuanian Catholic Church — secret ordination of priests, "greedy criminals who have already served sentences for their crimes, uneducated persons"; extremist attitudes among priests such as Fr Mockus (who held open-air services), or Fr Kriksciukaitis (who led processions to the shrine of Siluva); the "terrorization" of priests by the Catholic Committee, which collected signatures from them to back up the Committee's documents. The Soviet government would not tolerate this any longer.

Bishop Kriksciunas protested that he was already being called a "red" by Catholic activists. At this point Canon J. Andrikonis said, "How can we act if people immediately desert us for others?" (a reference to the exiled bishops Sladkevicius and Steponavicius — Ed.) P. Anilionis threatened to show pictures of the "illegal priests" on television, but Bishop Kriksciunas advised him not to do so, as this would only make them more popular.

— Keston News Service.

British Government Considers Soviet Incorporation Of Baltic States "Illegal"

LATVIA TODAY:

Soviet Oasis for Organ Music

By Craig R. Whitney

The Soviet Navy captain, a Russian named Vladimir, was not sure whether the cathedral had been Russian Orthodox, Roman Catholic or Lutheran. But he did know that the Riga Dom Cathedral was the central attraction of the Latvian capital.

"I never believed in God," he said. "But you mustn't leave Riga without seeing the cathedral and hearing the organ in it."

The cathedral, a Roman Catholic basilica begun in the 13th century, later a Lutheran church and since 1962 a concert hall, is famous all over the Soviet Union for its organ, a 19th-century German romantic instrument little tampered with for almost 100 years.

As a sign of the value of the organ, which Liszt is said to have dedicated on the same console in 1884, the Soviet authorities have decided to spend more than \$200,000 in precious Western currency to have it restored by Dutch experts, who will start in 1981 and work for a year and a half.

The organ has none of the electronic or pneumatic gadgets designed to lighten a performer's work. "With all 127 stops out, it takes 550 grams — more than a pound — of finger pressure to play each note," said Brigita Mize, a Latvian who gives regular recitals.

The Dutch experts will restore all the trackers and levers behind the organ facade to their original shape and perhaps make playing a little easier on the organists. They also plan to undo some rearranging of the organ's five sections that was done around 1906, moving one entire section down about 30 feet to its original place behind the console, the way the builder.

E. F. Walcker of Ludwigsburg, intended it a century ago.

"Here people are discouraged from going to church and public concerts are not allowed in the churches that have organs. There is a fine turn-of-the-century organ in the Lutheran church down the street, but it's only heard during services. The Russian Orthodox tradition doesn't use organs. So it's a novelty to our people, and it's catching on."

Concert programs frequently include the mainstay of the organ repertoire, the works of Bach. Usually they do not have Russian translations of the hymns whose tunes he based his chorale preludes on — "Glory to God Alone on High" was on one of Miss Lisitsyna's recent programs, but it was listed only as one of "seven chorales."

The Latvian religious tradition is Lutheran but more than 30 percent of the 2.5 million people in Latvia today are Russians. Riga has a functioning Russian Orthodox Church on Lenin Street downtown, but another one was suddenly turned into a planetarium a few years ago.

Riga was strongly influenced by German culture before World War I. Richard Wagner lived here a while, and the streets and churches have the red-brick Gothic look of north German towns farther down the Baltic like Rostock or Lubeck.

Most of the German residents left Riga in 1940, when the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact allowed Stalin to annex Latvia and the Baltic states of Lithuania and Estonia. — Reprinted, with permission, from *The New York Times*

● The Editor welcomes letters

Writing to Prisoners Effective

I was delighted to learn of your activity of writing letters to the prisoners. I want to emphasise, repeating Simas that even when the letters go undelivered to the prisoner, they are of a great help to him, as they make the authorities aware of the fact that this prisoner is known about in the Free World, somebody watches his fate and if they allow themselves any atrocities against him this may stir noise in the world which is highly undesirable for them.

When they return a letter marked "Addressee unknown" or "Return to sender" (this happens more often when a new correspondent starts sending letters to a prisoner) they simply want to see if this will discourage the correspondent and he will stop writing; if, however, the correspondent displays persistence and stubbornness they begin, sooner or later, to deliver his letters. Certainly, it is good in such cases to check the address and the spelling of the prisoner's name with somebody who knows, and once you made sure the address and the name are correct — just go on writing (short letters or even post-cards) regularly and do not stop.

The Soviets must see your determination to break through their wall. After they return several letters to the same person (which is doubtful if you write regularly) you can complain to the international postal organisation sending a copy of your complaint to Soviet Interior Minister Gen Schelokov or the head of the KGB, Andropov. Knowing Soviet bureaucracy, you can be sure that your copy will be forwarded down to the local KGB and then to the prison authorities who will attach it to the file of the prisoner; but along with the copy they will get a reprimand for conducting a wrong policy and stirring noise in the outside world. After such a reprimand they will prefer to deliver letters to this prisoner.

Avraham Shifrin,
Executive Director,
Research Centre
for Prisons, Psychprisons and
Forced-Labour Concentration
Camps of the USSR
Zikhzon Ysakov (Israel).

NEWS FROM BALTIC STATES

Theft of church valuables in Estonia

Widespread looting of works of art from open churches in Estonia appears to have been going largely unpunished, reports Keston College. Evidence for this is contained in an article in the Russian language daily paper *Sovetskaya Estoniya* of March 15, 1980. The official paper reports that sentences of 5 and 6 years imposed on two young men for attempting to steal 8 antique prints from the village church at Piirsalu were recently confirmed by the appeal court.

The author of the article finds the sentences fully justified, but is disturbed by an apparently widespread attitude that religious works of art are of no great value. At the appeal hearing the defence lawyer for one of the two thieves attempted to argue that these "yellowed old prints" were practically worthless and did not warrant such a stiff sentence. It sometimes happens that the militia does not even bother to investigate thefts of church art on the grounds that they are valued at less than 50 roubles. Today the prices on the black market are many times higher: the thieves are well aware of this, but officials continue to find it more convenient to regard church art as "boards daubed with religious propaganda", which are not worth protecting.

The author rejects the solution of removing works of art from churches to museums, on the grounds that this would ruin them as historical and architectural monuments (nowhere does the article consider the views or feelings of the Christians who worship in the churches). In any case, museums are not much safer: an angel from the Saint Anne's altar was reported not stolen, but simply "missing" from the Museum of Art.

— Keston News Service.

Political imprisonment of students

Estonian Relief Centre in Sweden has received more information about court actions against Estonian students, under the Soviet regime.

On January 7, 1981 a court of Kalinin Region in Tallinn passed the sentences against three 18-year-old high school students for pulling down and burning Soviet flags in Harjapea and Rohu Streets in Tallinn on November 7, 1980. They were charged under paragraph 195-2 of the Criminal Code for "criminal hooliganism".

The sentences were: Kermo Alle from the 42nd High School, 3 years; Jaanis Surva from the same school, 2½ years forced labour; Andrus Meesi from the 32nd High School, 3 years on probation. Kermo Alle and Jaanis Surva are serving their time in a forced labour camp in Tallinn, and their address is: Estonian S.S.R., 200 001 Tallinn, Tisleri 31a, Uchrezhdenie YuM-422/5.

Reports have also been received that prolonged investigations have been concluded against high school students at Varstu near Voru. As a result, Riho Nool will be charged under paragraph 194-2 of the Criminal Code for "a crime against the flag". He could face up to two years of forced labour.

Call for Independence

The Latvian Democratic Youth Committee, and the Latvian Independence Movement in Soviet-occupied Latvia have issued three appeals for freedom. To the people of Latvia they have urged to have faith in and to regain their courage to work for independence. Latvians abroad are extorted to put the plight of their countrymen before the whole world. To the Latvian youth in the West it says "The fight for your nation's freedom must become your great calling".

Strike at Kuldre

Fifty truck drivers staged a two day strike at the Kuldre state farm in Russian-occupied Estonia, on February 5 and 6 this year. They demanded better pay and work conditions. The strike ended on February 7 after the management promised improvements.



The Shifting Balance

Our thanks

Baltic News is still mailed **FREE OF CHARGE** to over 2,000 readers and relies entirely on private donations for its existence. We therefore thank most sincerely for the following donations:

Lithuanian Women's Club (S.A.), \$100; Joint Baltic Committee of Vic., J. Zars, A. Kalade (Vic.), \$50 each; A. Ramoskiene (Vic.), \$30; O. Litikas (W.A.), \$25; A. Wiedebaum (N.S.W.), L. Barkus, M. O'Leary, P. Jokubaitis, Q. King (Vic.), A. Stalpa, P. Launikaitis (S.A.), Latvian Association W.A., \$20 each; C. Ford, A. Kiisk, A. Vinevicius, A. Adomenas (N.S.W.), M. Nogeste, V. Lynikas, V. Alisauskas (Vic.), L. and N. Tidey (Qld.), J. Jonavicius (S.A.), V. Kasputis (W.A.), E. Kujath, M. Gratz, B. Siksnius (Tas.), \$10 each; R. F. Evans (Vic.), \$7; M. L. Valtas (N.S.W.), K. Mieldazys, J. Zalkauskiene, Mrs. Sodaitiene, Anon. (Vic), R. Ciuras (Qld.), J. Gudelis (S.A.), E. Kujath, A. Viknius (Tas.), \$5 each; J. Kesner Kahn (U.S.A.), \$4; Sr. M. Michael (N.Z.), \$3; A. Taskunas (Tas.), \$2.50; L. Nobelius, Mrs. Savickiene (Vic.), V. Mulligan (Qld.), \$2 each; Mrs. Bakaitiene (Vic.), \$1.

Many thanks!

TO: H.E.L.L.P. (Help the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Peoples Association).
Post Office Box 272,
SANDY BAY, Tasmania, 7005 (Australia).
I do not recognise the Russian sovereignty over the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania).
Please send me the *Baltic News* free of charge and without any obligation.

Name

Address

..... POSTCODE

Optional:

I enclose my donation of \$..... Cash-Cheque-M.O.

COMING EVENTS

● 12th JUNE (Friday)

4.30 pm-7.30 pm
Vigil in Franklin Square, Hobart City
to commemorate

40th ANNIVERSARY OF FIRST MASS DEPORTATIONS FROM THE BALTIC STATES

*If you cannot come for the whole of this time,
join us when you can!*

7.30 pm

CANDLELIGHT PROCESSION

through the streets of Hobart.
Starting point: Franklin Square
(corner Elizabeth and Macquarie Streets).

*Please bring your own candles (in wind-proof containers)
or battery torches.*

8 pm

St David's Cathedral,
Macquarie Street, Hobart

ECHUMENICAL SERVICE

*Representatives of all major churches
will take part.*

Sponsored by HELLP Association in Hobart

● 1st JULY (Wednesday)

8 pm
Migrant Resource Centre,
222 Elizabeth Street, Hobart
(upstairs)

MONTHLY MEETING

of

FRIENDS OF THE CAPTIVES

Association

**Guest Speaker: Mrs Alyona KOJEVNIKOV,
Information Officer, Keston College (U.K.)**

New members welcome . . . Admission free

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Conducted by Mrs Regina Share, B.A., Dip. Ed.,

Fridays, 4-6 pm, commencing June 19, 1981, at

Elizabeth Matriculation College,

256 Elizabeth St, North Hobart

Parents of prospective pupils please contact

Mrs Share, tel 72 9777, or
Mr J. Paskevicius, tel 72 6360

AROUND THE WORLD

Latvian Unionist Dies in Paris

On March 10 and 11, the Western news agencies, AP, DPA, AFP reported from Paris that Pavils Aboltins (64) from Riga, committed suicide by jumping from the 5th floor window of Hotel Dania where he was staying together with two other Soviet trade union officials. They had arrived five days earlier to participate in discussions on labour social protection services and retirement programmes. They had been invited by the French Communist-led trade union CGT (Confederation Generale de Travail).

Aboltin's travel companions explained to the French police that he had long been suffering from an undisclosed illness and that he had left a letter in which he asked that his luggage be returned to his wife in Riga. (But the French police did not see the note).

So far, there is no suspicion of this being anything other than suicide. However, the event has left many questions unanswered.

Another Blow to Freedom

The 1980 telephone directory for Riga has just been published, in Russian. Its 700 pages contain some 130,000 entries. Latvia has a total of 400,000 subscribers, making it the highest per capita in the Soviet Union. Waiting time for a new telephone is 6 years, unless one is privileged.

In Defence of Human Rights

The 37th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights was held in Geneva from February 2 to March 13, 1981. For the eighth time, a delegation from UBA-BATUN (United Baltic Appeal — Baltic Appeal to the United Nations) was also there.

The Baltic delegation informed the delegates and journalists about the current situation in the Baltic States. Documentary evidence included a chronology of events since the autumn of 1979 when official harassment began of the 45 signers of the petition issued on the 40th anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. The chronology lists the arrests of 30 people and ends with the recent trial and sentencing of Mart Niklus and Juir Kukk.

This has led to a widespread factual coverage of the Baltic question in the world's press, including *The Guardian* (Feb 11), *Le Monde* (Feb 14) and *The Economist* (Feb 21-27).

The UBAN-BATUN delegation included Mrs Jutta Ristsoo, president of UBA-BATUN (from New York); Mrs Julijs Kadellis, in charge of Information for the World Federation of Free Latvians (from Germany); and the Lithuanian representative Mr Prielaida residing in Geneva.

— BATUN

BALTIC NEWS is published four times a year by HELLP (Help the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Peoples Association) in Hobart, Australia. HELLP is a non-denominational and non-party-political group of concerned Australians, who (1) do not recognise Russian sovereignty over the three Baltic States; and (2) are working to publicise the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian people's continuing struggle for survival and freedom. New members are welcome to join at any time.

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