



BALTIC NEWS

QUARTERLY NEWS REPORT FROM ESTONIA, LATVIA AND LITHUANIA (THE BALTIC STATES)
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December, 1987

Baltic Protests Continue

Undeterred by official warnings, the people of the Baltic States are continuing their mass protests against the Soviet rule. For the third time since June, thousands of Latvians demonstrated again at the Riga Monument of Freedom on November 18. And in neighbouring Lithuania, 5,000 people last month demanded freedom for their Russian-occupied country.

In Riga, the Latvian capital, about 7,000 persons gathered to mark November 18, Latvia's traditional Independence Day. The peaceful demonstration was broken up by large numbers of uniformed and plain-clothes police. Streets were closed off, and the city area within a radius of 3 km of the Freedom Monument was declared a military zone.

Some demonstrators broke through double police cordons and fought a bloody battle with security forces around the monument. Three busloads of people were arrested and taken away.

Thousands of Latvians had also gathered all day in the port city of Liepaja. At least one person was injured seriously in clashes between crowds and police.

Unrest in Lithuania

In Kaunas, Lithuania's second largest city, calls for freedom were combined with the 125th anniversary celebrations of the birth of Maironis, a prominent Lithuanian poet and patriot.

On Sunday November 1, about 3,000 persons gathered at Maironis' grave after the noon Mass concelebrated by Bishop Preikšas. People sang hymns, recited Maironis poems and spoke of the great man's love for his country.

Then, at 9 pm, some 5,000 Lithuanians met at the same site. Speakers called for genuine restructuring,

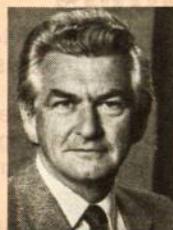


● The spark that set the Balts aflame: The first mass demonstration in Riga, Latvia's capital, on June 14 this year. Eva Bitenieks (front, left) again led the latest march.

not empty words; for freedom of religion; and for immediate restoration of Lithuanian sovereignty — a casualty of the infamous 1939 Nazi-Soviet Pact.

The police stood back on this occasion, and the crowd dispersed peacefully by 11.30 pm. However, security agents filmed the proceedings closely.

— Sources: WFFL/ELTA/LIC.



Message from the Prime Minister

I am pleased to be able to extend my best wishes to members of the Baltic Community and their friends through the *Baltic News* quarterly newsletter — now in its 13th year of publication.

The Australian Government recognises the valuable contribution Australians who originally came from the Baltic States have made to our multicultural society.

Last year's Baltic resolution, passed in the House of Representatives, reaffirmed Australia's non-recognition de jure of the incorporation of the Baltic States into the Soviet Union and stressed Australia's commitment to encouraging respect for and recognition of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

As my Government has done in the past, we will

continue to raise the matter of human rights of the Baltic peoples in appropriate forums. As you will be aware I also raised this issue with Soviet Foreign Minister, Mr Shevardnadze, during his recent visit to Australia.

The Australian Government is committed to the promotion of human rights in all countries and to respect for the rights of all groups in our multicultural Australian society.

The development of multiculturalism in Australia is due in no small part to the goodwill and enthusiasm shown by such groups as those which make up the Baltic Communities. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the members of the Baltic Community whose concern for freedom and the protection of human rights is helping to make a better world.

R. J. L. HAWKE

New Hope for the Queen of Peace

Soviet authorities announced last July that they would hand back St Mary's Queen of Peace church to Klaipėda believers, within the next two years. (Klaipėda is Lithuania's largest port on the Baltic Sea).

The Queen of Peace Catholic Church was built by voluntary labour in 1957-60. "By this action," the local church committee proclaimed at the time, "we want to emphasise that never again do we want to see the fires and destruction of war on the shores of the Baltic."

No sooner was the church completed than the Soviets confiscated it and turned it into a concert hall. The church steeple was knocked down. The Stations of the Cross were defaced and thrown into the mud.

In 1961, two priests of Klaipėda, Povilonis and Burneikis, were arrested and sentenced to prison. Father Talaisis was exiled from Klaipeda. Jonas Saunorius and Mrs Gražienė — both lay parishioners — were interrogated by the KGB and by the local executive committee.

Undaunted, the believers of Klaipėda kept campaigning for the return of their church. On one occasion, they collected 140,000 signatures on a petition sent to Moscow.

AUSTRALIANS have actively backed Klaipėda people's efforts over the years. In 1981, the then Attorney General of Tasmania (Mr Brian K. Miller, MLC) publicly pleaded for the Queen of Peace church to be reconverted to the service of Christianity. The Premier of Tasmania, Mr Doug Lowe, conveyed Mr Miller's request to the USSR Ambassador in Canberra, Dr Soudarikov.

On June 17, 1981, the Tasmanian Council of Churches sent a similar message to Dr Soudarikov. When the Ambassador declined to transmit the Council's request to his Government in Moscow, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation reported this injustice on its prime-time 7 pm TV news.

Over the past decade, thousands of signatures were collected in all States of Australia, urging immediate return of the Klaipėda church. The petitions were presented to the Australian Parliament by the representatives of all major political parties and by Independent Senator Harradine.



"A SERIOUS CRIME"

by Thomas J. Brazaitis

When I visited Lithuania four years ago, I inquired about a church built in Klaipėda with donations and volunteer labour. The church had been confiscated by the court in Klaipėda because a trial showed it had been built from confiscated materials.

"The priest and others obtained money from the United States for illegal materials," said Antanas Ragaišis, a Lithuanian-Communist journalist who covered the trial.

"There was even a business deal between Catholics and Jews," Ragaišis said. "A woman opened a special account in the United States where she deposited dollars. She got dollars in the United States and paid in roubles here. It was a case of currency speculation. She was convicted."

"What was the sentence?" I asked.

"She received the death penalty," Ragaišis said.

"The death penalty for building a church?"

"Currency speculation is a serious crime," he said.

— Extracted from *Cleveland Plain Dealer*.



● The trial of the priests who constructed the Queen of Peace church in Klaipėda.

Euro-Parliament Calls for Baltic Freedoms

On October 15, the European Parliament overwhelmingly passed a resolution which urges the Soviet Government to improve the situation in the Baltic States and to release all political and religious prisoners.

The five-point resolution appeals to the Soviets "to respect the right of self-determination and human rights" in Russian-occupied Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. It asks the media to "report not only on the oppression in the Baltic States, but also on the history of that oppression, lest the facts become forgotten."

The document states that the European Parliament is disturbed at the intensive process of Russification in the Baltic States, bringing with it the risk that the indigenous population, particularly in Estonia and Latvia, will become a minority and Baltic culture will be destroyed.

In another resolution, the parliament of the European Community urged the Soviet authorities, for the fourth time this year, to liberalize emigration policies to allow Jews to emigrate. Most members who took part in the debate doubted Moscow's claim that State secrecy laws prevent the departure of many Jews.

The motion for the Baltic Resolution was tabled jointly by Mesdames Boot, Fontaine, Cassanmagnago Cerretti, Braun-Moser, Messrs Habsburg, Alber, Saridakis, Klepsch and Brondlungs Nielsen.

The Baltic resolution has come at a time when Balts are taking advantage of *glasnost* to express openly their dissatisfaction with Soviet occupation and rule. The demonstrations in Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius that took place on August 23, on the anniversary of the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact of 1939, were a major source of embarrassment to the Soviet government.

● On October 14, the United States raised the issue of self-determination for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania at the United Nations. The US delegate, Judge William Treat from New Hampshire, argued that the United Nations "must not ignore the long-standing subjugation" of the Baltic States.

Balts Demand Their Freedom

Suddenly, after 47 years of foreign rule, the Baltic people have come out into the open. They want to be independent again, and they are willing to say this in public.

The first demonstration took place in Riga on June 14, 1987, when some 5,000 Latvians laid flowers and made inspiring speeches at the Monument to Freedom.

Just over two months later, on August 23, the second protest wave swept across all three Russian-occupied Baltic States. This date marked the 48th anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between Nazi Germany and the USSR. The Pact effectively ceded independent Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to the Soviet Union.

According to the *New York Times*, more than 500 Lithuanians gathered in the old section of Vilnius to sing Lithuanian national hymns and hear speeches honouring Stalin's victims. The event was closely monitored by the police, but not interrupted.

Interrogations, Threats

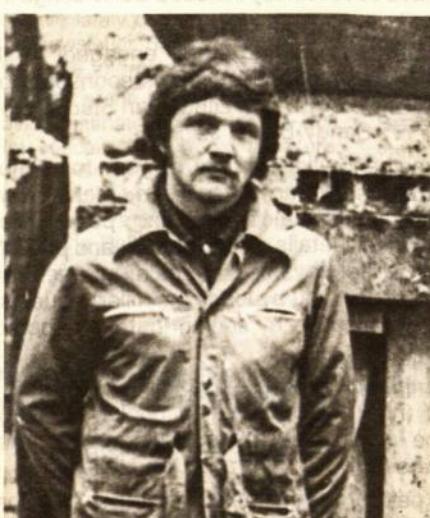
However, a few days later, activists Nijolė Sadūnaitė, Robertas Grigas, and Fr Rokas Puzonas (who had not participated in the demonstration, but delivered a sermon on the events from the pulpit) were picked up by plainclothes and uniformed police. They were interrogated and threatened for hours while being driven around in unmarked cars.

Grigas managed to escape his captors near the Lithuanian-Latvian border, while Puzonas was driven to Byelorussia, and left there to find his way back to Vilnius.

For days after the event, the official Soviet press kept publishing local "reader's letters," condemning the protesters' actions.

Police Interference

Latvian activists estimated that more than 5,000 persons gathered at the Riga Monument to Freedom and a nearby park on August 23, to sing hymns and lay flowers at the foot of the monument. Unlike the authorities' response in Vilnius, the Riga police attempted to prevent people from gathering at the monument, and resorted to violence against participants.



● Tii Madisson: expelled.



● Banished from his native Latvia, human rights worker Rolands Silaraups (in the foreground) demonstrated in front of the Soviet embassy in Stockholm on August 23.

— Photo: LNF/Australijas Latvietis.

Police broke into a nearby apartment where members of the organising group, Helsinki '86, had gathered and dragged them off to a police station. Several other persons were picked up after having bought flowers at kiosks near the monument. Altogether around 165 persons were detained by police. Subsequently all were released.

Several who were photographed by police reportedly lost their jobs or were expelled from their studies.

In Tallinn, demonstrators in numbers established at 200-300 (Moscow News) to 2,000 (Estonian sources contacting Stockholm) protested at Hirve Park in the centre of the city.

Tii Madisson, one of the leaders of the August 23 demonstration in Tallinn, Estonia, was expelled to Sweden in September. Tii belonged to an unofficial movement, called "The Estonian Group for Publication of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact."

Bruce DAWE

THE BALTIC HORSE

*You can make the street-signs Russian (and the parks),
Re-name the stadiums and re-structure schools,
You can raid the people's houses after dark
— Instead of Bibles, preach the Party rules.*

*You can drive detainees eastward as you please,
You can try to harness culture to your cart,
But there's something will not go down on its knees
— And you cannot put a blind-fold on the heart.*

*For the heart is like a horse that knows the way,
And shakes its mane and sniffs the mountain air,
And no matter how it's blinkered day by day
— It knows WHAT freedom is, and it knows WHERE.*

BRUCE DAWE is one of Australia's leading contemporary poets. He was born in Geelong in 1930 and has published eight volumes of poetry so far. He is particularly conscious of current issues, including human rights in the Baltic States. This is reflected in his work.

— Note by S.R.T.

The Thirty-three Steps

After 47 years of foreign rule, the Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians still want their independence. This message has emerged — loud and clear — from the recent mass demonstrations in the three Baltic capitals. These people need our support. And there is a great deal you can do to help.

A Chinese proverb says, "Even the longest journey starts with a single step." Your first steps are to prepare yourself.

1 Seek knowledge. Read a lot, listen and observe. Be interested in everything, and become an expert in at least one area.

2 In your chosen trade or profession, go to the top. Australia's best chauffeurs drive governors and the prime minister. Top tailors and dress-makers outfit the nation's leaders — and have their ear. The same applies to leading doctors, dentists, hair-dressers, jewellers, and so on.

3 Learn Languages. Since you live in Australia, it is most important for you to know *English* well — not just enough to be able to make yourself understood at work or in a shop. It is equally important for you to know your *family language* equally well, so that you can appreciate your history and culture. If you know one language well, it is much easier for you to learn others later on.

4 Be physically fit. "Sound mind in a sound body" (Juvenal X, 356).

5 Stop drinking and smoking. There is no doubt that living under Russian oppression is driving many indigenous Balts to drink. But will the people of Australia believe you, if they see you drinking like a fish here?

6 Do not neglect your faith. Your parents' faith is your strongest tie between your past and the present. If you have Baltic blood in your veins, your religion is also your link with those distant Baltic lands. Above all, by practising your religion here, you will witness to the religious persecution in the Baltic States.

7 Learn more about the Baltic States. No matter how much you know already about Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, there is always something new you can discover. Arm yourself with facts, not opinions.



● The Cathedral of Vilnius (pictured) has now been closed to Christian worship for more than four decades. You can eliminate this injustice, by taking up petitions and publicly demanding that the Cathedral be returned to the believers of Vilnius.

8 Improve your humour. Take things seriously, not grimly. Learn to laugh — and how to make others laugh. One funny yarn can convey more than 1,000 ordinary words.

9 Find a hobby. Stamp-collecting, gliding, bush-walking, astronomy — the possibilities are endless. Your hobby will relax you, make you more human and find you new friends.

10 Develop a thick hide. Ridicule is the Kremlin's favourite weapon. Don't be touchy, and don't give up easily. If you don't succeed, try again. For "Moscow never sleeps" (S. Kudirka).

Having prepared yourself, enlist the help of others.

11 Join Friends of the Prisoners, Post Office Box 12, Sandy Bay, Tas 7005 — Australia. Adopt a prisoner, then publicise his or her plight.

12 Join a local organisation that could well help the Balts, but is not yet fully engaged in that area: United Nations Association, Catholic Women's Association, and dozens of others. Remember: if you channel your Baltic campaign through an existing group, you can save a lot of energy and money.

13 Seek a responsible position in your trade union or professional association. There are more Balts in Australia than members of the Communist Party. Yet the Communists have a big influence in the trade union movement, the Balts — none.

14 Make full use of your work-place to publicise the Baltic tragedy and future aspirations. The possibilities are greater than you think.

15 Publicise Baltic cultures, customs and crafts among the local population. Many people shy away from anything "political". Win them over through the Baltic arts and crafts: egg-colouring workshops, Christmas customs and recipes, etc.

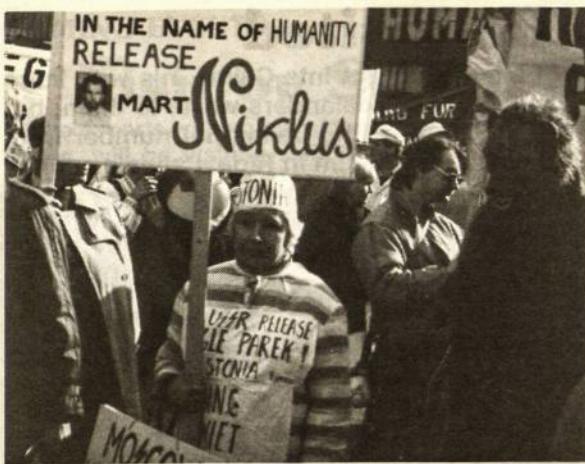
16 Inject Baltic music through local choirs and orchestras. Australian choirs in Western Australia, Launceston and the Tasmanian University Musical Society have successfully included Baltic songs in their repertoires.

17 Support the universities engaged in Baltic research. In Tasmania, this work is sponsored by the Tasmania University Union Lithuanian Studies Society, PO Box 777, Sandy Bay, Tas 7005.

18 Enrich the Baltic holdings of your local library. Check what the library has. Then, make a written request for additional books and periodicals. Be specific, give full details of title, author, and publisher. If the library at first says no, try again; and ask all your friends to support you by lodging similar requests, and — this is essential — by seeing that these books are borrowed.

Should the library still refuse you, make up a good collection (no junk or damaged books, please!) and donate the lot. Check with the Taxation department — you may be able to claim a tax deduction.

19 Take part in more public meetings, and don't be afraid to ask questions if they can help the Baltic cause. Don't steer clear of the meetings run by the



● You don't need large crowds — one person is enough to stage an effective demonstration. Above: a campaigner for prisoner Niklus in Vienna, November 1986.

"left-wingers".

When the Soviets imprisoned four campaigners for nuclear-free Baltic in 1981-83, their case was aired at question time of a Tasmanian rally for nuclear disarmament.

20 Make the most of your position in the society. The possibilities are unlimited. In the past, the Balts have rarely made the most of their positions. Otherwise, history might have been kinder to their homelands. For example, a Lithuanian, Catherine I, was the wife of Russia's tsar Peter I and, after his death, the ruler of Russia (1725-1727). Alas, she bestowed no benefit whatsoever on the country of her birth.

So far, we have looked at a few ways of helping the Baltic cause, in groups. But there is a lot more you can achieve on your own, too.

21 Find new readers for Baltic News. The mass media in Australia and other Western countries rarely report news from the three Baltic States. This information gap is filled every 3 months by *Baltic*

News. Make sure all public opinion shapers in your circle read it. *Baltic News* is available, free of charge. **22 Write letters to the editor.** If you are hesitating, read Tedis Zierins's booklet, *If one can do it, why not you?*

23 Be a modern book smuggler. The people in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are desperately crying out for books on their own countries' history, national heritage, religion and other topics suppressed by the Soviet censor. Many of these books have been published in the West, and modern technology is opening up new ways of smuggling them behind the Iron Curtain.

24 Stage one-person demonstrations. Estonian prisoner-of-conscience Mart Niklus is well known in Western Australia, largely thanks to Patricia Halligan's one-person demonstrations. So, don't be shy — this inexpensive method really works.

25 Document the past. All Baltic events over the past 70 years — and especially since 1940 — must be recorded accurately and in full detail. The need is urgent. The eye-witnesses are dying out, and are taking important factual evidence with them.

A number of emigre Balts have already shown how much one person can achieve in this field: L. Kerulis, B. Kviklys, P. Dauknys, A. Plaudis and others. A lot more remains to be done — now. You, too can help. Collect material from older people: use your tape-recorder.

The remaining eight steps are up to you: use your own imagination.

Sheer force is of no use. The Russians outnumber each Baltic nation at the ratio of 1:40 or worse. To regain their freedom, the Balts will have to resort to inventiveness, argument, diplomacy and forming public opinion.

History and legends give us some clues: the Trojan horse, Achilles and Paris, David and Goliath, secret paths in Baltic swamps . . .

Let us take the first step today.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Wider Publicity

We have lately come across a copy of your newsletter *Baltic News*, which we find quite interesting.

The plight of the Church, particularly in Soviet-dominated countries, is our special concern. We would therefore appreciate being put on your mailing list so that we may be able to give wider publicity to events concerning the Church in the Baltic States.

Floriania (Malta). Paul SALIBA,
Editor, *lehen is-sewwa*.

Prisoners

I have a little suggestion to make. Would it be at all possible that names or addresses of people that are suffering for their faith would be made available through *Baltic News*?

Belmont, Qld. Cyril DUFFY.

● A start has been made, on Page 8 in this issue. — Ed.

Good Work

Please find my cheque, as a small personal donation to your effort.

I think it is important for people to be informed of what is happening in the Baltic States. Though I was not born there, both my parents are Lithuanian and I am very proud of my background.

Keep up the good work.
Kalgoorlie, WA. P. A. STECKIS.

☆ ☆ ☆

Recently I had the opportunity to read some of the latest issues of the *Baltic News*. I found them very interesting and impressive.

I would like to receive this newsletter on a regular basis. I am enclosing a small donation towards expenses.

Congratulations on the magnificent job you are doing.

Bass Hill, NSW. V. LADYGA.

Congratulations on the last *Baltic News* issue. It was a very interesting, varied issue. At the same time, it retained the honest, firm, faithful voice with which *Baltic News* always speaks.

Long live the Truth!
Melbourne. S. V. JOHNS.



Calitis Family Re-Visited

In our March 1987 issue, we told the tragic story of Latvian patriot Ints Cālītis, his wife Ināra Serdāne and their three children. Dozens of Australians and New Zealanders wrote to them; but few letters were delivered, because the KGB deliberately changed the Cālītis flat number from 13-15 to 13-16. Undeterred, our writer Guntis BERZINS went to see them in Riga, Latvia's capital. He reports:

I rang Ināra Serdāne from a phone booth and asked if she was prepared to see me. Ināra said yes and I immediately went to their apartment. Yes, there are two No 16 apartments, but she answered her door right after my knock on the wrong one.

While we sat there talking, Ints Cālītis came home from work. I asked them if they had received any mail from overseas recently. They said they hadn't had any letters from abroad since February.

I told them that there were many people in the West who were writing to them regularly. Ints Cālītis replied, "I am glad about this, as the bulk of this mail would be accumulating in KGB offices. The bigger the pile, the safer I shall be."

Ints Cālītis did ask for help in having his position clearly defined by officialdom — preferably in writing.

Living in Uncertainty

Ints was released from prison without prior warning. The Soviets moved so quickly that Ints had no time to collect his personal belongings, or to farewell the other inmates.

And to the present day, Ints Cālītis still does not know if he has fully paid his debt to the Soviet state; or whether they will arrest him suddenly one day and make him serve part or all of the original sentence again.

Ints' future and job prospects are very precarious. His financial position is poor.

On top of all this, Ints and Inara are sharing their living quarters with a young Estonian, Jaan Kerbs or Kirbs. He came from the same prison as Ints. After release, he was refused a residency permit for Estonia and, as a result, he has been barred from obtaining employment in his own country. This young man is totally dependent on his Latvian hosts' generosity.



● Former prisoner Jaan Kirbs: released by the Soviets, but not allowed to live and work in his native Estonia. He has found temporary refuge in neighbouring Latvia. What next?



● Latvian anti-nuclear activist Ints Cālītis with his wife, Ināra Serdāne, and family pet: living in constant uncertainty.

In Riga, many people were asking me for literature on Latvia's freedom years and for Solzhenitsyn's works. They kept pleading, "Please provide us with the correct historical facts, because we must teach our children the truth."

Symbols of independent Latvia — banned in every shape and form by the Soviet rulers — were in constant demand. I was offered 500 roubles (\$A1,000) for a badge featuring the US and free Latvia's flags.

I also tried to contact Janis Rožkalns, but he was away for a few days. Rožkalns and his friends were preparing to accompany and protect Rolands Silaraups to the border into exile. As things turned out, this action was not necessary, because Silaraups was flown out of the USSR on July 25.

The Rožkalns family, accompanied by the Ginters family, later left for the West, too.

New Book

A RADIANCE IN THE GULAG: The Catholic Witness of Nijolė Sadūnaitė. Published by Trinity Communications, Manassas, Virginia, 1987. 148pp. Cloth, \$US9.95; paper, \$US6.

In 1975, a thirty-seven-year-old Lithuanian woman was sentenced to three years of hard labour and another three years of exile in Siberia.

During her lengthy interrogation, imprisonment and exile, the masters of the Gulag continually tried to break her spirit and get her to betray her faith and her fellow believers. Despite six years of harassment, persecution and illness, she did not break.

Smuggled out of Lithuania, this is the story of a woman feared by the KGB — the story of Nijolė Sadūnaitė. The book is illustrated.

The paperback version is now available from BRIDGES, 341 Highland Blvd, Brooklyn, NY, 11207, USA, at \$US6, plus \$US2 postage.

COMING EVENTS

Visit by Soviet Experts

Two experts with an intimate knowledge of the Russian-occupied Baltic States, will be visiting Australia later this month. Miss Gintė Damušis (pictured, right) is due to arrive for a 4 weeks' stay on December 22. Victor Nakas is expected shortly before Christmas.

Both visitors will be available to speak to media representatives, and to interested organisations. Appointments may be made by telephoning Mrs Monica (Dana) Baltutis, on (03) 691 3234 during business hours; or (03) 277 3545 after hours.

Gintė Damušis is the Director of Lithuanian Information Center in Brooklyn, NY. She has published widely on human rights breaches in the USSR and has translated extracts from underground publications. Gintė is in great demand as a lecturer and radio/TV commentator.

In 1981, she worked in Keston College (UK). In 1984, she toured the USSR with a church peace delegation.

Victor Nakas is the chief of the Lithuanian Information Center's Washington bureau. A history graduate of the Universities of Michigan and Washington, he has been prominent in Baltic affairs since 1974.

6th World Lithuanian Youth Congress

SYDNEY, 19-25 December: Opening ceremonies, concerts, Christmas celebrations. Academic convention ("Studijų Dienos") at Naamaroo.

CANBERRA, 26-31 December: Academic convention cont'd at John XXIII College, ANU. Tours for non-delegates.

ADELAIDE, 31 Dec-7 Jan: Cultural Conference ("Stovykla").

MELBOURNE, 8-10 January: Closing ceremonies. Ball.

For information, contact: Mr H. Antanaitis, 4 Robert St, Nth Balwyn, Vic 3104: Ph (03) 857 7248; or Dr A. V. Stepanas (co-ordinator, academic convention), 5 Bonwick Pl, Garran, ACT 2605: Ph (062) 82 4013; or Miss B. Prašmutas, 7 MacGregor St, East Malvern, Vic. 3145: Ph (03) 211 3775.

BALTIC NEWS

At its annual general meeting on 18 September, 1987, HELLP Association decided that, starting with this issue, the publication of *Baltic News* will be the responsibility of the Baltic News Committee of Baltic Research Foundation.

The move will leave HELLP free to pursue its other tasks, while another team of volunteers looks after *Baltic News*. No changes are proposed. In fact, the last two issues had already been produced by the new Baltic News Committee, on a trial basis. They were warmly received by our readers everywhere.

For the past 13 years, *Baltic News* has existed entirely on gifts and donations. The new publishers have no cash reserves; so we will have to rely on you, our readers, for your continued support. Please make cheques and money orders payable to BALTIC NEWS. All donations are gratefully acknowledged in *Baltic News*.

We thank you all for the following donations received since the last issue:

NSW & ACT: A. Cook, Dr A. V. Stepanas, \$25 each; V. Venclovas, S. Zablockiene, \$20 each; R. Daukus, V. Deikus, A. Giniūnas, Mrs O. Jarmalavicius, K. and M. Kaldma, A. Miguš, Dr H. Salasoo, \$10 each; N. Celkiene, Marta Kond, V. Narusiene, Mrs J. Zitkevicius, \$5 each; V. Miežis, \$2.

Vic: Latvian Federation of Vic, \$150; Q. King, \$50; P. Verbyla, \$25; B. Prašmutas, M. Sazenis, \$20 each; V. Cerekavicius, \$15; L. Jansons, R. Lennie, P. Mazylis, J. Valaitis, \$10 each; A. Bajoras, Z. Jokubaitis, \$5 each.

In Memory of a Great Worker

Mrs Anita Matukevičienė, the chief organiser of our annual *Baltic News* fishathons, died on November 2 after a severe illness. Her friends have donated \$150 to *Baltic News*, in lieu of flowers: V. Grigonis, \$50; A. Kalade, \$35; A. Bajoras, A. & E. Eskirtas, \$20 each; A. & V. Baltrukonis, L. & K. Bartaska, \$10 each; A. & A. Ramanaukas, \$5.



● **Gintė Damušis:** will give a public lecture in the University Centre, Sandy Bay, on Wednesday, January 13.

Public Lecture

Tasmanians will have an opportunity to hear the visiting Soviet expert, Miss Gintė Damušis, on Wednesday, January 13, at 8 pm. She will speak in the University Centre, University of Tasmania, Churchill Avenue, Sandy Bay. The lecture will be open to the public; everyone is welcome.

Miss Damušis will talk on the present situation in the Baltic States. In her full-time position as Director of Lithuanian Information Centre in Brooklyn, N.Y., she maintains close contact with the Baltic underground and has an in-depth knowledge of the real life behind the Iron Curtain.

Please keep this date free: Wednesday 13/1/88, 8 pm, University Centre, Churchill Ave, Sandy Bay.

BALTIC NEWS

SA: B. Mockuniene, \$20; V. Stalba, \$10; J. Aleksandravicius, S. Guscia, L. Stausas, \$5 each; J. Abukevicius, V. Opulskis, \$2 each.

Various: Lithuanian Co-operative Credit Society Talka Ltd (Vic), \$700; Council of Estonian Societies in Aust, (SA), \$200; Mrs Burneikiene (WA), L. Cox (NSW), Latvian Community of Tas, A. L. Pensininku Klubas (SA), \$50 each; V. & L. M. Lipping (NSW), Martin Consolidated P/L (Tas), \$25 each; M. J. L. Bean (SA), E. E. Clark (Tas), D. B. & G. D. Dawe (Qld), A. Kaitinis (Tas), G. Krumins (NZ), J. Krutulis, Mr Lazdauskas (Tas), R. Slapjeims (Vic), T. & V. Tehnas (WA), G. W. Wall (Vic), \$20 each; P. A. Steckis (WA) \$15; V. J. Vitkauskas (USA), \$14.12; A. Andrikonis (Tas), Anomonaite (Vic), Anonymous (Tas), Anonymous (Qld), D. W. Buck (NSW), U. Flicker (Vic), A. Reinfields (Vic), J. Terry*, M. Trus, Rev E. M. Webber (Tas), \$10 each; D. Hogan (NZ), \$8.19; L. Braniska (Vic), Dziedzic (Tas), A. Murfet (Qld), \$5 each; J. Andrikoniene (Tas), \$4; J. D. W. Wiebe (Canada), \$2.04; A. C. Murray (Qld), \$2.

* Lost in the mail.

THE WINNERS

of the Baltic News Guessing Competition (NSW)

1st prize: Mr E. Germanis, ticket No 2392. 2nd: Mr V. Sutas, No 2299. 3rd: Mrs J. Venclovas, No 1336.

To: Baltic News,
Post Office Box 272.

SANDY BAY, Tasmania, 7005 (Australia).

I do not recognise 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/Money Order.



These People Need Your Help



● A group of Lithuanian human rights workers, photographed in 1979. By now, the Soviets have punished most of these people for their peaceful campaigning. *Left to right, standing:* Fr Kastytis Matulionis, unknown woman, Mečislovas Jurevičius, Fr Sigitas Tamkevičius, Antanas Terleckas, Dr Algirdas Statkevičius, Liutauras Kazakevičius, Leonora Sasnauskaitė, G. Rickevičius; *crouching:* Algimantas Andreika, R. Grigas, Jonas Volungevičius, Kęstutis Subačius.

Letters from Australia are like an insurance policy for prisoners — while in captivity and after release.

QUESTION: What can we do to help prisoners of conscience in the Soviet Union?

ANSWER: Write to them.

This is how Simas Kudirka answered this question when it was put to him at a public meeting in Hobart Town Hall on June 24, 1980. More recently, Dr Cronid Lubarsky on his 1986 Australian tour said, "By writing to jailed Soviet dissidents, individuals in the West can keep them alive . . . You can save them!"

These men should know. Both have suffered imprisonment and exile simply because they loved freedom and defended human rights.

Simas told his Hobart audience about the mail he had received while in a Soviet prison. Some letters came from friends and supporters, some from complete strangers. Simas stressed how much these letters had helped him and his fellow prisoners. Even letters that do not "get through", help; for prisoners soon learn that people are writing to them, that they are not alone or forgotten.

Christian Friends

After Simas's visit, a small Christian ecumenical group was formed in Tasmania, to support the Soviet prisoners of conscience with regular letters and prayer. Known as **Friends of the Prisoners**, the group has spread rapidly throughout Australia, New Zealand and to other countries in the free world. Today, Friends have over 2,000 active members and are still growing.

You, too, can join this group of volunteers and "adopt" a prisoner in the USSR. Simply drop a line to: Friends of the Prisoners, Post Office Box 12, Sandy Bay, Tasmania, 7005.

In spite of promises of democratisation and open-

ness, many prisoners of conscience are still languishing in Soviet prisons or in exile. The following are the addresses of just a few Baltic prisoners; they would love to receive letters of encouragement from *Baltic News* readers:

CCCP
Komi ASSR,
169715 Vuktylsky raion,
pos. Podcheryo,
ul. Sovetskaya, obshchazhitie 1,
IEŠMANTAS Gintautas,
USSR.

CCCP
682460 Khabarovski kray,
Khumnikan,
ulitsa Sovetskaya 4,
GAJUSKAS Bals.
USSR.

CCCP
618263 Permskaya obl.,
Chusovskoy r-n, pos. Kuchino,
uchr. VS-398-36-1,
ASTRA Gunars,
USSR.

Two other prisoners are at the same address. To write to them, just delete ASTRA Gunars; and insert NIKLUS Mart or TARTO Enn.

Astra's wife's address is: CCCP / Latvia / 266004 Riga, / Lucavsalas iela 4-5 / Astra, Herta Livija / USSR.

Amnesties

To mark the 70th anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, the Supreme Soviet has decided to amnesty certain classes of prisoners of conscience, and to shorten the sentences of some others.

Friends of the Prisoners are monitoring this development, and will report on the outcome in the New Year.

STOP PRESS: The Soviets have released two Lithuanian prisoners of conscience, Povilas Pečeliūnas and Rev. Fr Jonas Kastytis Matulionis. Following his Siberian ordeal, Father Matulionis is now very ill.

BALTIC NEWS is published four times a year, by Baltic Research Foundation (Tas.), in Hobart, Australia. The Foundation is a non-profit group of volunteers who study human rights in the Baltic States, and promote knowledge of the existence, history and plight of the Baltic nations. **BALTIC NEWS** aims at providing authentic news and pictures from the Baltic region. To maximize reliability, all details are double-checked against independent sources before they are published in **BALTIC NEWS**.

Postal address: **Baltic News**, PO Box 272, SANDY BAY, Tasmania, 7005 (Australia). Phone (002) 25 2505.

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