



BALTIC NEWS

QUARTERLY NEWS REPORT FROM ESTONIA, LATVIA AND LITHUANIA (THE BALTIC STATES)
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From Estonia, With Love...

By Eris Smyth

"I can vividly remember my mingled joy and disbelief when her first letter reached me . . . it was like a miracle".

That is how Mrs Theresa Maher, former teacher and wife of a Wimmera wheat farmer describes her reaction to the news that Lagle Parek, an Estonian woman architect back in her home town after imprisonment in a Soviet jail, had received letters Numbers 29 and 30.

Hearing of Father Greg Jordan S. J. speak on the "Friends of the Prisoners" prompted Theresa to ask the Friends for a name from their list. Faithfully on the last Sunday of each month from the beautiful town of Minjip, Theresa wrote to her unknown and distant friend. Her first letter was sent on 24th February, 1984 just a few months after Lagle had been sentenced (16th December 1983) for writing of her wish to keep her beloved Estonia free from nuclear contamination.

Lagle's reply dated 16th September 1987 commenced:

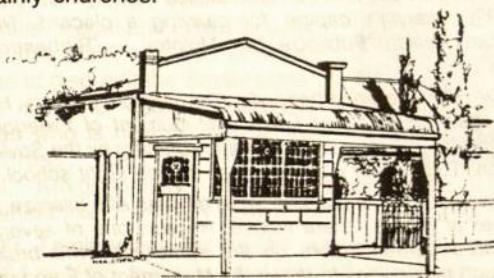
"Many thanks for these letters that finally reached me. On 13th September 1987, I received your letters 29 and 30. I am very moved. I understand that for a full two and a half years you have offered me support. I didn't know that but I think that this somehow gave me support . . ."

Although neither of the women can speak the other's language and depend on the translator's art, their rapport and appreciation of each other across the 18,000 kilometres between them, is quite remarkable.

In spite of her four years in prison, Lagle says, "I have the will and physical strength to continue my life fully . . ." Her letter of 9th March this year indicates that she has done this:

"I have now been free for more than a year. Time has passed quickly. I am still idling at home, in summer I earned some money by looking after a fodder-beet lot, I rested during the winter and was supported by my husband. I'll again seek work in the country. I don't like the work behind a desk any more as in earlier times."

Before she was arrested Lagle had worked for 20 years in architectural design institutes: ten years designing agricultural buildings and ten years measuring and drawing plans of buildings to be restored, mainly churches.



● Office of the Minjip Guardian, a weekly newspaper first published in August 1885.



● Theresa Maher (left) and Lagle Parek.

Theresa wrote of the day to day activities of her family of twelve children, only one of whom is still home, Rachel; four being still at the University. Theresa said that she always included in her letters some spiritual thoughts, some things she felt might be encouraging if she were in circumstances similar to Lagle's. She also wrote of the natural beauty of Australia.

Lagle's story was featured in the 1984 December issue of *Baltic News* — just a year after her imprisonment. Readers may recall that she was born in 1941; her father, a captain in the Estonian army, was murdered by the Soviet invasion forces that year; her mother, an art historian, her grandmother an actress, her sister Eva and she herself were deported to a forced labour camp in Siberia in March 1949.

Very recently, the cruelty of the Soviet regime again was felt by the family. Lagle writes,

"I must clear my sister's flat in Parnu, her departure to Sweden came suddenly. This was very sad, because I'll likely never see Eva again, state boundaries are very strict. Stockholm actually is quite near, but beyond the sea".

Eva and her son (who also left) are apparently among the dissidents recently deported to Sweden.

But reading the letters of both these women from different backgrounds (Theresa's grandparents came from Ireland in the 1850s), the dominant note is one of joy in living and pleasure and strength gained from their friendship.

Lagle's last letter concludes,

"I studied an atlas to find Minjip but couldn't find it. It was very nice to think that so far away and in an exciting country I have a friend. It would be even more exciting to visit there. I hope that our correspondence does not stop . . . let your life be sunny . . ."

That surely is our wish for both Theresa and Lagle, two extraordinary women.

Timeline of Russia's Invasion

Throughout their years of independence, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania faithfully observed their international obligations. In World War Two, they chose to remain neutral. In spite of that, the three Baltic States lost their freedom as a result of secret collusion between Nazi Germany and the USSR. These historic facts speak for themselves.

1918

February 16, 24: Lithuania and Estonia are proclaimed independent, democratic republics.

November 18: Latvia is proclaimed an independent, democratic republic.

1920

February 2: Soviet Russia signs a peace treaty with Estonia. Soviet Russia unreservedly recognises the independence and sovereignty of Estonia, and declares that Soviet Russia renounces "for eternity" (irrevocably) all sovereign rights over the Estonian People and territories.

July 20, August 11: Soviet Russia signs similar peace treaties with Lithuania and Latvia. Russia renounces "forever" all sovereign rights over the Lithuanian and Latvian peoples and territories.

1926-1932

At the initiative of the Soviet Government, all three Baltic States again conclude non-aggression treaties with the Soviet Union: Lithuania on September 28, 1926; Latvia on February 5, 1932; and Estonia on May 4, 1932.

1939

August 23: J. von Ribbentrop, Germany's Foreign Minister, and V. Molotov, the Foreign Minister of the USSR, sign the Pact and the Secret Additional Protocol that divides Eastern Europe between them. The boundaries are specified of the "respective spheres of influence" of the USSR and of Germany, in "the event of territorial and political rearrangement" in the Baltic States and in the Polish State.

September 1: World War Two breaks out. Germany attacks Poland. The Soviet Union attacks Poland 17 days later, on September 17.

September 28: von Ribbentrop and Molotov sign a Secret supplementary Protocol that modifies the boundaries agreed upon on August 23.

K. Selter, the Foreign Minister of Estonia, accedes to a Soviet ultimatum and signs the Mutual Assistance Pact. It provides for Soviet naval and air bases and for the stationing of Soviet troops in Estonia. Before the signing, Molotov pointed out that the Pact (drafted entirely in Moscow) was an



● 49 years ago, on August 23, 1939, Nazi Germany's Ribbentrop (second from left) and Russia's Molotov (right) signed the pact which bears their names. This little-publicised secret agreement sealed the fate of the free Baltic States, nine days before the start of World War Two.

The agreement was later amended twice, to give Russians full control over the three Baltic nations. In return, Russia paid \$7,500,000 to the Nazis. This worked out at about \$1 per head of the Baltic population.

alternative to the "application of more radical methods."

October 5, 10: The Latvian and Lithuanian Foreign Ministers sign, also under threats. Mutual Assistance Pacts similar to the Soviet-Estonian Pact.

1940

June 14: The USSR presents Lithuania with an ultimatum, demanding "immediate formation of a new government able and willing to guarantee the execution of the Mutual Assistance Pact between the Soviet Union and Lithuania" and "a free entry of detachments of Soviet armed forces." The ultimatum is accepted.

June 15: Large numbers of Soviet troops enter Lithuania. Vladimir Dekanozov, a high-ranking Soviet emissary, chooses and installs a new government.

June 16, 17: Estonia and Latvia are presented with similar ultimatums which are accepted. Soviet troops enter Estonia and Latvia. Emissaries Aleksei Zhdanov and Andrei Vishinsky arrive in Tallinn and Riga, respectively, to change governments.

July 14, 15: "Elections" are held on the basis of a new law which is patterned after the election law of the USSR. Peoples Diets (Parliaments) of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are chosen from a single list of candidates approved by the Soviet emissaries.

July 21: The three new People's Diets convene at noon. As their first order of business, the Diets unanimously approve resolutions which proclaim Soviet Republics in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. They renounce independence (contrary to these countries' constitutions) and decide to petition the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for admittance into the USSR.

August 3, 5, 6: The three Baltic States are ceremonially admitted into the Soviet Union, during the seventh session of the USSR Supreme Council.

1941

January 10: The German Ambassador in Moscow and Molotov sign a Secret Protocol in which Germany renounces its claim to "a strip of Lithuanian territory" (the Suvalkai region), in exchange for 7,500,000 gold dollars, to be paid by the USSR to Nazi Germany.

June 14: Mass deportations of the native population commence, and continue until 1949.

● Many aspects of the above events and their consequences require further research. Anyone wishing to undertake, or perhaps sponsor, such research is asked to contact: Tasmania University Union, Lithuanian Studies Society, PO Box 777, Sandy Bay, Tasmania, 7005 (Australia).

Sacked for Protest

On August 23, 1987, an unidentified man was arrested in Riga, Latvia's capital, for carrying a placard. The placard read, "Publicize the Molotov — Ribbentrop Pact".

The man has since been identified as Valdis Torins. He was demonstrating at Latvia's Monument of Freedom against the illegal annexation of his country by the Soviet Union. Torins later lost his job at a Riga night school.

Pressure is also building up to dismiss Atis Silaroze, a singer at Riga's Opera House. He was one of several hundred demonstrators on the same day who broke through militia lines to reach the Monument of Freedom. Once there, Silaroze led the demonstrators in singing.

Joy for Some, Bitter Tears for Others

Remember Mart Niklus? The Estonian teacher who was arrested in 1980 and sentenced to 10 years in Soviet concentration camps plus 5 years exile, for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda"?* Well, Mart Niklus and several other Balts are free — at last. But many more remain imprisoned, in spite of Soviet leaders' glib promises and the so-called *glasnost*.

Mart Niklus's sentence was revoked on June 28. Mart read about it in a newspaper, at his prison camp on July 5. When he asked his guards, they knew nothing.

It was not until three days later that Mart was told officially that he had been freed. He returned to his hometown Tartu on July 13.

Mart Niklus's release is a quiet triumph for human rights organisations such as EVVA (Estonian prisoners' relief centre), Amnesty International, Friends of the Prisoners and IGMR, as well as for individuals like Mrs Patricia Halligan of Mandurah, WA, who had tirelessly worked for this innocent man's release, over the past eight years.



63-year-old Lithuanian priest Father Alfonsas Svarinskas returned to his native country on July 15, after serving 5½ years in Soviet prisons. He had been sentenced to a total of ten years under Article 68: "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda". In Svarinskas' case, he was found guilty, merely because he was an active member of the Catholic Committee for the Defence of Believers Rights in Lithuania.

Juris Bumeisters, a leading Latvian dissident, received an official pardon on January 28. He had been jailed in 1981 for 15 years, on spying charges. In the 1970s, Bumeisters attempted to launch a social democratic movement in Russian-occupied Latvia, and maintained contacts with an exile Latvian Social Democratic Party in Stockholm.

Father **Jonas Kastytis Matulionis**, was released towards the end of last year, after completing his full sentence. Father Matulionis was arrested on November 9, 1984 after administering last rites to a dying man. He was at first accused of being an impostor priest, but was later jailed for 3 years for organising a religious procession.

No Sign of Release

However, another Roman Catholic priest from Lithuania is still serving his 10 years' sentence for organising a Christmas party for parish youth and for similar "illegal and unlawful activity, the main purpose of which was to discredit the Soviet state". He is Father **Sigitas Tamkevicius** who is now in exile at this address: 636210, Tomskaya obl., Krivosheinsky r-n, pos Volodino, der Staraya Sainakovka, TAMKEVICIUS, Sigitas. — U.S.S.R.

Fr Tamkevicius reportedly ruptured his hernia in 1984 or 1985, but was not operated upon until June 20 this year.



* Mart Niklus was featured in our front-page story, in the September 1985 issue of *Baltic News*.



● Happy news: Mart Niklus (pictured) is free, at last.

Many other Baltic prisoners of conscience are still in Soviet captivity, without any signs of an early discharge. They include:

Imre Arakas, Aivar Kalvik, Olev Kiirent, Tauno Kotkas, Vambola Koiv, Johannes Lapman, Riho Notta, Erik Nurmsaar, Valdo Padar, Bruno Raab, Raimond Rosenfeld, Enn Tarto, Heiki Terras, Jaan Valk, Tiit Valk, Ivo Varav, Teovils Kuma.

Algimantas Andreika, Jonas Bagdonas, Arvydas Cekanavicius, Vyacheslav Cherepanov, Balys Gajauskas, Kazys Gruzdys, Gintautas Iesmantas, Donatas Jonutis, Kaktis, Jonas Kurzinskas, B. Kvarciejus, Vytautas Lazinskas, Boleslovas Liziunas, Petrus Lukosevicius, Albertas Meskinas, Stanislovas Murauskas, K. Muzikevicius, Motiejus Namcevicius, Jonas Pakuckas, Viktoras Petkus, Puodziukas, Juozas Rugys, David Sevelev, Ignas Simonis, Voveris, Pranas Zaksauskas, Zeimavicius.

Urgent Call for Help

In spite of relaxations in some areas, the Soviet authorities continue to harass and arrest Baltic human rights workers.

A desperate appeal on behalf of one of these new prisoners, **Petras Grazulis**, recently reached Keston College in Kent, Britain. Grazulis, a 29-year-old Lithuanian church deacon, was sentenced on February 2 to 10 months in an ordinary-regime camp. The Soviets found him guilty of refusing, on grounds of conscience, to perform military reserve duty.

Grazulis had been active in peaceful demonstrations condemning Soviet policies in Afghanistan and in the occupied Baltic States. He was called up for a 3-month military exercise, even though he had already served in the army.

On July 22, 1988, Petras Grazulis was transferred from Pravieniskiai camp No Och.12,8-21 to a camp in the Mordovian ASSR.

Grazulis' health has now deteriorated seriously, after two periods of punishment in an isolation cell.

Please write TODAY to Mr M. Gorbachev, Secretary-General of the CPSU, Moskva, USSR; and to your local Member of Parliament. Ask them to press for immediate release of Petras Grazulis and for his complete rehabilitation.

This page has been sponsored by Friends of the Prisoners, — PO Box 12, Sandy Bay, Tasmania, 7005

All They Want is Freedom

by Sarah Walker

Recent demonstrations in the Russian-occupied Baltic States have repeatedly called for the restoration of their independence. These demonstrators were not "minorities" or "nationalist extremists", as some media tried to suggest. The Baltic protesters were voicing the wishes of three entire nations, anxious to break free from the Russian rule.

"All we want is freedom", the natives chanted in Tallinn, Estonia's capital, as I watched thousands upon thousands of people raise their voices and vent their feelings in *Lauluvaljak* (Song Festival Grounds), on June 17 this year.

And their demand was echoed in other mass gatherings in Riga, Liepaja, Vilnius, Kaunas.

The atmosphere in the Baltic States has changed so dramatically since my last visit in 1986. Cautious, reticent natives are suddenly speaking out — even to strangers like me. "We welcome *glasnost*", an Estonian woman told me. "There has been enough talk, we now want action."

In the Baltic States, Soviet leader Gorbachev's policy of openness (*glasnost*) was first applied to such "safe" topics as alcoholism and crime. But, as writers and journalists gained more confidence, even the official Soviet papers and periodicals started discussing subjects that were previously taboo. These included: emigres, local corruption, national emblems, nuclear dangers, national rights, and even mass deportations to Siberia!

Variety of Organisations

Today, the three Baltic countries are seething with a healthy variety of organisations, movements and groups. Some of them border on becoming opposition political parties.

Economic independence seems to be the first aim of the Estonian grassroots movements. People are bitter that high quality Estonian products are not available to the Estonians, but are swallowed up by the vast Russian empire. Our tourist guide in Tartu commented, "The people want *ime*". Translated literally, *ime* means: miracle. But here, the initials stand for *Isemajandav Eesti*, economically independent Estonia.

In Latvia, I read a statement by Juris Ziemelis, a member of the Riga branch of the *Helsinki-86* group. Ziemelis said his group would continue its campaign until true democracy was restored in Latvia. Before the next Soviet-style election, each candidate would be asked to declare his or her stand in regard to (1) economic independence for Latvia; (2) cultural



Recent mass demonstrations in Latvia



● When the Lithuanian delegates returned from the 19th All-Union Communist Party congress, they made a report to this crowd in *Vingis Park*, Vilnius, on July 9, 1988. People displayed free Lithuania's flags. Banners called for full sovereignty.

sovereignty; and (3) Latvian citizenship. Candidates answering in the affirmative would then receive *Helsinki-86*'s support.

Out of the Hiding

The clandestine Lithuanian Freedom League was founded in 1978 to foster people's national consciousness and to seek independence. After ten years of working underground, the League came out into the open on July 3, 1988. It named its 18-member council, which includes several better-known dissidents, such as Antanas Terleckas, Andrius Tuckus, Leonora Sasnauskaite, Romualdas Ragaisis.

The Lithuanian Freedom League has merged with the Lithuanian National Consolidation. It has also pledged to work in close co-operation with the Lithuanian Restructuring Movement, Temperance Movement, Defence of religious Rights group, and with all who are concerned with Lithuania's fate.

One of the original founders of the League, Dr Algirdas Statkevicius, is now living in the United States. He has been asked to represent the Lithuanian Freedom League abroad, and to establish the League's foreign council.

Never a Dull Moment

A reader of our mass media probably forms the impression that the Baltic people stage two mass demonstrations per annum, and that's that. Nothing is further from the truth. The occupied Balts' opposition is seething all the time, and it shows itself in many ways.

Here are just a few examples of the continuing Baltic resistance. The events listed below all took place within one week:

● Three groups combined to hold a meeting at the monument to A. Tasmaare in Tallinn, on May 1, 1988.

● From Page 4

They were: the Estonian Group for the publication of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, "Word of Life", a Pentecostal group, and the local "Greenies".

● In Latvia, Helsinki-86 members marked the Press Day, May 5, 1988, with a silent demonstration in the city of Liepaja. They stood outside the Press House, with their lips sealed with sticking plaster.

● On April 30, 1988, "Word of Life" members set out on a Pentecostal preaching tour of Estonia. Within 24 hours, two participants were detained: Madison Eisp was jailed for 15 days, and Andres Lukas was fined 10 roubles.

● On May 1, K. V. Kairys, a Lithuanian from Kaunas, was arrested in Moscow, together with T. G. Kobakhidze from Georgia. Both men were accused of conspiring to set off an explosion at the May Day march.

Joining Forces

Various Baltic freedom groups are now looking for the ways and means of co-ordinating their activities. They are also seeking out new allies beyond the Amber Coast. This, I believe, may turn out to be the greatest leap forward this decade.

When I reached Vilnius, Lithuania's capital, late in June, rumours were rife about the latest Estonian-Lithuanian economic proposals. A group of economists from the two nations had met for talks at the Economics Institute of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences on May 26. Their conclusions were so radical that they were not published until July 2.

The economists recommended more economic and cultural independence, greater control over immigration and environmental matters, as well as the establishment of Estonian and Lithuanian currencies, or a convertible rouble, to enable self-financing.

In neighbouring Latvia, the nets were cast even wider on the eve of my departure, on July 10, when the representatives of four national democratic move-



● On June 17 this year, a crowd estimated at from 70,000 to 220,000 assembled in Tallinn, capital of Russian-occupied Estonia, and demanded more freedom. Flags of independent Estonia — totally banned until recently — were flown defiantly at the gathering.

ments met in Abraka, a village in occupied Latvia. The delegates included Juris Vidins, representing Latvian Helsinki-86; Povilas Pececiunas, of the Lithuanian National Democratic Movement; Jurij Adam, of the Estonian National Independence Party; and Michael Gorin, of the Ukrainian Helsinki Association.

These four men signed a declaration calling for the peaceful implementation of a six-point plan, to: (1) legalise political pluralism; (2) establish a truly democratic voting system; (3) implement international human rights agreements to the fullest extent; (4) consider the church to be part of the national democratic movement; (5) promote close collaboration among the national democratic movements, so that their goals can be implemented most effectively; and (6) establish a Baltic regional consultative committee.

The three Baltic States and Ukraine — quite a formidable force. How will the Kremlin react?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Our Culture

The cohesion and stability of a community depends very much on all its members sharing a common language. In Australia, the common language is English. In ordinary, every day affairs language means chiefly the spoken word. To establish a strong community identity here, then, it is most important for us all to use a standard English speech we can all follow without having to translate all the time.

Nobody feels at ease with people with whom they cannot communicate, either because they have no common language or because their accents are unfamiliar. Indeed, I am convinced that a simple lack of understanding explains attitudes that are wrongly labelled classist or racist.

JOHN W. DOYLE.

Dynnyrne, Tasmania.

● The Editor welcomes letters, especially brief ones, at PO Box 272, Sandy Bay, Tas, 7005.

Accurate Reporting Promised

Would you please publish the enclosed letter from Channel ATN-10, to enable your readers to monitor the promise by their Director of News and make sure that they keep it during the coverage of the Summer Games in Seoul.

G. JAWORSKY, Melbourne.

Austarama Television, X-TEN

March 9, 1988.

Mr G. Jaworsky,
Vice Principal,
South Melbourne Technical School,
Albert Road, South Melbourne.

Dear Mr Jaworsky,

Thank you for writing to express your concern about our blanket use of the term "Russian" to describe the Soviet Union participation at the Calgary Winter Olympics. You are, of course, correct in pointing out that we were wrong.

It's also unfortunate your complaints to the Channel Ten newsroom were not handled with more understanding. Our producers have now been advised to avoid such scripting errors in the future.

Remember Us in Your Will

Please remember Baltic News in your will. Your bequest will extend the life of this newsletter, and the Baltic message will continue to be spread.

At present, Baltic News has no financial reserves for its future. Will you please help, through your will?

The Big Soviet Secret is Out

After more than four decades of total silence, the Soviets are finally beginning to admit their own crimes against humanity.

Last year and again this year, thousands of ordinary Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians staged peaceful demonstrations in memory of their kinsfolk who were deported in large numbers to Siberia in 1941 and in 1944-49.

In response to these demonstrations, the Soviet authorities recently changed their tactics. They admitted, in selected official publications, that mass deportations did take place.

They quoted a few isolated statistics. For example, *Cina*, the Latvian Communist Party's newspaper, revealed in its March 4, 1988, issue that 43,231 Latvians had been deported in just three days, during Stalin's 1949 drive towards enforced collective farms.

At about the same time, the Latvian magazine *Literatura un Maksla* (Literature and Art) published a lengthy article, 'The Writers' View of the Tragedy of

Our People". It discussed the official plans for the commemoration of the earlier Soviet deportations.

Confession

An interesting confession has appeared in issue No. 23/88 of *Gimtasis krastas*, an official Soviet weekly targeted at the Lithuanian emigres in the West. In an article entitled *Truth, nothing but the truth*, Mr Danielius Todesas owns up to the part he played in the Soviet security machine and in the mass deportations of June, 1941. His conscience told him to come forward, Mr Todesas writes. He blames his immediate superior Merkulov and Stalin for the horrors of 1941; but he claims immunity for himself because he was unaware that his actions were wrong. There is no excuse for mass deportations, Mr Todesas says: they are not only a crime, but absolute madness.

Mr Todesas comments on current developments, but is vague in recalling facts of the past. Nor does he name the main operators of the deportations and their clandestine collaborators.

"We are glad that the Soviets and their lackeys have eventually admitted their guilt", a Lithuanian human rights activist told *Baltic News*, "but this is only the first step. If the Soviets are serious, all persons linked with the deportations must be found and tried. All victims and their families must be rehabilitated and paid adequate compensation."

Lithuanian Cardinal



A humble Lithuanian priest who had suffered for his faith for 25 years was appointed a Cardinal by Pope John Paul II on May 30. He is the Most Rev Vincentas Sladkevicius, Apostolic Administrator of Kaisiadorys, in Soviet-occupied Lithuania.

Sladkevicius, now 67, was ordained as Auxiliary to the Bishop of Kaisiadorys on Christmas Day, 1957. He was immediately impeded by the Soviet government from performing his duties, and in 1959 he was banished to virtual house arrest in Nemunelio Radviliskis, an obscure village outside his diocese. Bishop Sladkevicius remained in exile until his reinstatement in 1982.

Another Lithuanian churchman, Bishop Julijonas Steponavicius, is still in exile. He was expelled from his Archdiocese of Vilnius 27 years ago.

Frozen Inferno

FROZEN INFERNO is a first-hand account of a Lithuanian woman's sufferings in Northern Siberia, followed by her attempted escape and a brush with the Soviet secret police.

When this booklet became available to *Baltic News* readers in March, the demand exceeded all expectations. Our stocks were snapped up within days, and we decided to publish an Australian edition.

Ample supplies are once again available, free of charge, from *Baltic News*, PO Box 272, Sandy Bay, Tasmania, 7005; or PO Box 414, Campsie, NSW, 2194; or PO Box 118, Chelsea, Vic, 3196.

For single copy orders, please send a 21cm x 15cm self-addressed envelope, stamped 63c. Multiple copies of **FROZEN INFERNO** may be ordered, also free, for schools, libraries, community clubs, repertory companies, film makers, historical societies and other interested groups.

Latvian Awakening

A minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Latvia and one of its most vocal critics, the Rev Maris Ludviks, visited Australia during May and June 1988.

He spoke of the "awakening" of Latvians in 1987. One of the strongest influences uniting religious and patriotic groups was the banned paper *Auseklis*, whose international connections gave it considerable strength. Formed on June 14, 1987, the Rebirth and Renewal Movement had attracted many younger people, who had also become active in church affairs.

The Church was no longer as subservient to the State as it had sometimes been. Despite threats to his life, Ludviks himself had felt much freer in his dealings with Soviet officials since he joined the Helsinki '86 group.



● Rev Maris Ludviks.

He had no doubt Latvia would be free again — in God's own time. He did not see any real changes coming for at least three or four years: the Old Guard still had great power.

Rev Ludviks illustrated his lectures with videotapes of interviews with such leading figures as Dr Vidins, Ivars Zukovskis (editor of *Auseklis*), Modris Plate, Andrejs Kavacis, Juris Rubenis, Arturs Kaminskis and Janis Vanags.

— eom/jwd/Aust.Latvietis.

COMING EVENTS:

Baltic Ex-Prisoner to Speak Here

A Lithuanian dissident who spent seven years in a Soviet labour camp is coming to Hobart, to give a public talk on his experiences. Vytautas Skuodis will speak in Arts Extension room 346, University of Tasmania, Churchill Ave, Sandy Bay, on Wednesday night September 14, at 8 pm.

The meeting has been arranged jointly by Tasmania University Union Lithuanian Studies Society and Friends of the Prisoners. The meeting is open to the general public.

Skuodis, 58, a former professor of geology at the University of Vilnius, was released from Soviet imprisonment a year ago. He now lives in the United States.

Skuodis was born in Chicago, but his parents took him back to Lithuania at the age of 18 months. Caught there in 1940, when the Soviet Union annexed the Baltic States, members of his family were not allowed to leave.

Skuodis attracted official suspicion in 1979, when he joined the Lithuanian Helsinki Group monitoring human rights abuses in the Soviet Union. He was arrested in 1980 and charged with a wide range of activities, including authorship of a manuscript about the plight of religious believers and his leadership role in the human rights movement.

Skuodis is coming to Tasmania especially to thank the members of the Friends of the Prisoners group (PO Box 12, Sandy Bay, 7005) who had fought for his release since 1981. Skuodis claims that the most effective pressure on Soviet officials is what comes



● Vytautas Skuodis

from the West — from governments or from journalists and community groups.

Altogether, Skuodis will spend three weeks in Australia. He will also visit Melbourne, Adelaide, Canberra and Sydney.

Lithuanian Concert

Southern Tasmanians will have a unique opportunity to enjoy Lithuanian folk-songs and dances at a concert to be staged at the University of Tasmania on Saturday night, September 24, at 8 pm.

The programme, not seen in this State before, will be presented by a visiting company of Lithuanian folklore artists from Adelaide. The concert will be in the Sir Stanley Burbury Theatre, University Centre, Churchill Ave, Sandy Bay. Everyone is welcome. Admission to the concert will be free, but donations will be accepted.

This bicentennial event has been arranged by the Lithuanian Community of Hobart and Tasmania University Union Lithuanian Studies Society. It will be funded entirely by the organisers and by the visiting artists.

Thanks for Remembering Us — Now and in Your Will

When Mrs Klava Jakstas died in 1979, she left a sufficient amount to pay for the printing of one whole issue of *Baltic News*. Her legacy was especially appreciated, for it came at a critical time for this newsletter.

By now, we need some longer-term help. Our readership has climbed to 9,000 during the past decade; while the cost of producing and mailing one issue now comes to about \$4,000.

We are indebted to you, our readers, for your continued support. We still rely entirely on your regular donations to keep paying the unavoidable running expenses of *Baltic News*.

Will you now take one step further, please, and — like Klava Jakstas — remember *Baltic News* in your will, too? In this way, you will ensure future finance for *Baltic News*, long after we have gone. The continued publication of this Baltic newsletter will be a living tribute to your generosity.

This issue of *Baltic News* has been financed by the following donations, received at our three centres in Sydney, Melbourne and Hobart (see foot of Page 8, for addresses). We thank you all, most sincerely:

NSW & ACT: Lithuanian Community of Sydney, \$400; Lithuanian Society for Human Rights (Sydney), \$150; Dr I. Venclovas, \$60; P. Armonas, A. Jakstas, "J. Treimanis, S. Zablockis, B. Sildauskas, \$20 each; N. Bizys, S. Edmonds, V. Kardelis, "J. Kusleikai, M. Statkiene, \$10 each; A. Vinevicius, \$8; O. Jarmalaviciene, \$7; A. Steponavicius, \$5; V. Meizis, \$2; E. Baueris, \$1.

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Balts to the Rescue — Again

Last month, the Soviets sent their strongest team to compete in the Australian Superpower basketball series. At least six members of the visiting team were non-Russians: Rimas Kurtinaitis, Sarunas Marciulionis, Valdemaras Chomicius (Lithuanians), Valdis Valters, Gundars Vatra (Latvians), and Tiit Sokk (Estonian). Another Soviet player, Igor Migliniek, is believed to be Latvian, too.

Since the capture of the three Baltic States, the Soviets have not allowed the Balts to field their own teams in international events. This is ironical because, in the days of freedom, Latvia won the European basketball championship in 1935, as Lithuania did in 1937 and 1939.

Basketball has remained one of the most popular sports in the Baltic States, and many of the finest basketballers who play under the Soviet colours come from these occupied lands.

Clean sweep

The USSR made a clean sweep of the recent series, narrowly winning all six games against Australia.

Lithuanian veteran Marciulionis top-scored on several occasions and has already been recruited by the US professional club, the Golden State Warriors, on a very costly contract.

However, attention will now centre on fellow Lithuanian basketballer Arvydas Sabonis, considered by some to be the greatest player in the world. Sabonis



● Rimas Marciulionis (left) in action.

did not make the trip "down under" because of a leg injury. His participation in the Olympics will depend on whether he recovers in time.

Results, USSR — Australia: 1. Brisbane test, 87-86. 2. Sydney, 86-77. 3. Canberra, 85-82. 4. Melbourne, 94-90. 5. Adelaide, 93-82. 6. Perth, 104-81.

Boosting Soviets' Olympic Victories

Seoul, South Korea's capital, is preparing for this year's Summer Olympic Games which will run from September 17 to October 2. A record 12,000 athletes from 161 countries are expected, along with 230,000 sports officials, specialists and tourists.

As this issue goes to print, the final composition of the USSR team is not yet known. However, strong Baltic participation is expected once again, as in previous years. Unable to represent their own countries, the Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians will be boosting the Soviets' share of medals.

The USSR basketball team will continue to rely on the "Baltic backbone", similar to the combination used during its recent tour of Australia (see story, above).



● Janis Kipurs pilots his Latvian-built bobsled across the finishing line, to win the Olympic Bronze Medal at Calgary.

— Photo: Jose R. Lopez/The New York Times.

Latvian Raimonds Vilde is expected to be in the Soviet volleyball lineup. The fastest woman in Latvia, Vineta Ikauniece, should gain a place in the 4 x 400 metre relay team. Other promising Latvians include European triple jump champion Maris Bruziks and talented newcomer Dainis Berzins.

Top sportsmen and sportswomen from Russian-occupied Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania will also wear Soviet guernseys in cycling, rowing, swimming and various track and field events.

Disproportionate

Lithuania alone had 63 athletes competing in the Olympic Games, during the period 1952-1980. Some of them took part in two and three Olympics. Altogether, they won 42 medals for the USSR: 14 gold, 15 silver, 13 bronze. This is a disproportionately great achievement, as Lithuanian's population is only 3½ million.

Similarly impressive results have been achieved by the Estonian and Latvian Olympians.

At the last winter Olympics in Calgary, Canada, Baltic nationals won five medals.

● Channel ATN-10 will report more accurately, Page 5.

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