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offering information and
documentation on current
events and problems
concerning Lithuania:

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L I T H U A N I A N

E L T O S INFORMACIJOS
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LITHUANIA

is situated at
the southern end of the eastern coast
of the Baltic Sea, right at the European
continent's geographical center. It emer-
ged as a unified state in the early de-
cades of the 13th Century and became in-
ternationally recognized as the Kingdom
of Lithuania in 1251 A.D.

After nearly two centuries of vast expan-
sion eastward and southward and another
300 some years of gradual merger with
Poland into the Polish - Lithuanian Com-
monwealth, Lithuania lost its self-gover-
ning status in 1795, when it fell under
Russian rule. This lasted 120 years, ter-
minating only when Lithuania was taken by
the Germans in 1915 during World War I.

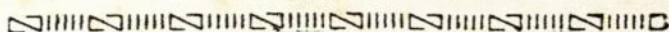
Lithuania succeeded in re-establishing
its independence in 1918, at the end of
World War I, but was occupied again in
1940 by the armed forces of Russia, now
known as the Soviet Union. It has been
held in Soviet bondage since then.

* * *

Present area within the boundaries set
by the Soviet Government:
25,213 square miles, or
65,302 square kilometers.

Population, as provisionally estimated
for January 1, 1969, --
3,096,000;

as estimated in the same
area on January 1, 1939, --
3,215,000.



WASHINGTON REAFFIRMS SUPPORT OF LITHUANIAN SELF-DETERMINATION

Secretary Rogers Praises Lithuanian Aspirations for Freedom

The new Administration's stand toward the issue of Lithuania has been summed up in a letter sent by United States Secretary of State William P. Rogers to Mr. Joseph Kajeckas, Chargé d'Affaires of Lithuania in Washington, on February 11, 1969:

"It is with sincere pleasure that I extend to you greetings and best wishes on behalf of the Government and people of the United States on the occasion of the fifty-first anniversary of Lithuania's independence.

"Lithuania's history is distinguished by the courage of its patriots and the fortitude of its people in adversity. These vital qualities of the Lithuanian nation were tested many times during periods of foreign domination, and in 1918 Lithuania took its just place in the community of nations with the proclamation of its independence. The forcible incorporation of Lithuania by the Soviet Union in 1940 frustrated this achievement. In this new time of trial, the Lithuanians have nevertheless shown a determination to maintain their national culture and consciousness.

"Americans and free men everywhere look with deep sympathy upon the aspirations of the Lithuanian people for freedom and national independence.

The United States Government, by its continued refusal to recognize the forcible incorporation of Lithuania by the Soviet Union, affirms its belief in the right of Lithuania to self-determination."

U.S. CONGRESS MARKS LITHUANIA'S INDEPENDENCE DAY

The Lithuanian Independence Day, February 16th, was festively observed in many capitals and major cities of the non-Communist world. In captive Lithuania itself the celebration was by necessity limited to private quarters and to purely individual rededication to the cause of a free Lithuania under the eyes and guns of Soviet Russian police.

One of the most impressive events on the occasion of February 16th took place in the United States Congress. A large number of Senators and Representatives took the floor to reassert their solidarity with the Lithuanian freedom aspirations.

Dodd Presents Reasons for U.S. Policy Toward Lithuania

The rationale for United States refusal to recognize the incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union as well as for the active support of Baltic freedom aspirations was explained by Senator Thomas J. Dodd (D., Conn.):

"As one American, Senator, I take pride in the fact that our Government has, to this day, refused to recognize the annexation of the Baltic countries by the Soviet Union, and that it underscores its continuing commitment to the freedom of the Baltic peoples by recognizing the pre-World War II embassies of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia as the legitimate representatives of their peoples.

"I also take pride in the fact that, over the years, Congress, too, has refused to reconcile itself to the enslavement of the Baltic peoples, and that every year at this time Senators and Representatives have taken the floor to renew our commitment to the proposition that the peoples of the Baltic countries and of other captive nations are also entitled to enjoy the benefits of these freedoms which are assured to all peoples by the United Nations Charter.

"There are those cynics who say that the gesture is meaningless and that we must accept the reality of Soviet rule in the Baltic States today and forever more. I disagree with these cynics.

"I believe that no tyranny is permanent. I also believe that the series of uprisings in East Germany in 1954, in Poland and Hungary in 1956, and in Czechoslovakia in 1968, as well as the massive intellectual ferment in the Soviet Union itself, all point to the early demise of Soviet tyranny in the not-too-distant future."

Derwinski Urges Concrete Measures

Representative Edward J. Derwinski (R., Ill.) expressed the attitudes of many Congressmen when he urged the following concrete measures:

"Mr. Speaker, we in the Congress should take positive action to show the courageous people of Lithuania that we support their longing for independence. I have again this session introduced a resolution requesting the President of the United States to instruct our Ambassador to the United Nations to place the Baltic States question on the U.N. agenda and to have the United Nations request the Soviets to withdraw their troops and controls from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. This resolution would also call upon the U.N. to conduct

and supervise free elections in these three Baltic nations so that the historic principle of self-determination of peoples would be legitimately applied there. I urge that this resolution be acted upon during this session.

"We must take practical steps, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the oppressed people of Lithuania. Neither the Voice of America nor Radio Free Europe is doing an effective job of broadcasting behind the Iron Curtain. With the evidence before us in Czechoslovakia of the determination of the tyrants in Moscow not to permit freedom to develop behind the Iron Curtain, we should recognize the futility of a coexistence with international communism. The brave people of Lithuania recognize that they must continue to maintain their unique historic cultural background despite the efforts of the Soviet regime to Russify the people of the Baltic States."

Dwyer Draws Parallel with Czechoslovakia

Representative Dwyer (D., N.J.) saw hope for Lithuania in the ferment in East Europe today. He said among others:

"Despite Soviet oppression, the light of liberty still flickers strongly in Lithuania and throughout Eastern Europe as we have seen most dramatically in Czechoslovakia in recent months. This is why, Mr. Speaker, it is so important that we in the Congress continue to give what encouragement we can through such means as annual observances of the independence days of nations like Lithuania."

Curtis Sees Change in East Europe

Rep. Dwyer's parallel between Czechoslovakia and Lithuania was echoed by Senator Curtis:

"Just as freedom is fragile and must be protected, the spirit of freedom -- that burning ambition to be free -- is strong and cannot be totally destroyed. The fires of freedom may diminish and flicker, but they cannot be extinguished, no matter how brutal, no matter how complete, the tyranny that makes the attempt.

"Mr. President, in the events of this past year in Czechoslovakia we see some hope for all the people now behind the Iron Curtain in Europe. It will be recalled that in Czechoslovakia, too, the Soviet might was used in an allout effort to destroy the freedoms so hard won by the Czech people. And despite all the efforts by the Soviets enough vestiges of freedom are still to be found and the Russian invasion has not succeeded in bringing the people completely to heel.

"The significant development portends well for the other captive people of Europe now.

"And it gives us a renewed hope, Mr. President, that in the months and years ahead the people of Lithuania will once again be able to breathe the air of freedom and to raise their heads proudly as members of the community of free men."

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The List of Speakers:

The Honor Roll of U.S. legislators who spoke in the United States Congress on the occasion of the Lithuanian Independence Day follows:

S e n a t e:

Birch Baygh (D., Md.), Clifford P. Case (R., N.J.), Carl T. Curtis (R., Nebr.), Thomas J. Dodd (D., Conn.), Charles E. Goodell (R., N.Y.), Vance Hartke (D., Ind.), Jacob K. Javits (R., N.Y.), Charles Percy (R., Ill.), William Proxmire (D., Wisc.), Abraham A. Ribicoff (D., Conn.), Margareth C. Smith (R., Maine).

House of Representatives:

Frank Annunzio (D., Ill.), Joel T. Broyhill (R., Virg.), James A. Byrne (D., Pa.), Glenn Cunningham (R., Nebraska), Edward J. Derwinski (R., Ill.), William L. Dickenson (R., Nebraska), Harold D. Donohue (D., Mass.), Florence P. Dwyer (R., N.J.), Marvin L. Esch (R., Mich.), Leonard Farbstein (D., N.Y.), Daniel J. Flood (D., Pa.), Gerald R. Ford (R., Mich.), Cornelius E. Gallagher (D., N.J.), William J. Green (D., Pa.), Martha W. Griffiths (D., Mich.), Henry Helstoski (D., N.J.), James J. Howard (D., N.J.), John E. Hunt (R., N.J.), Charles S. Joelsen (D., N.J.), John C. Kluczynski (D., Ill.), Ray J. Madden (D., Indiana), Martin B. McKneally (R., N.Y.), John W. McCormack (D., Mass.), William E. Minshall (R., Ohio), John S. Monaghan (D., Conn.), Bradford Morse (R., Mass.), William T. Murphy (D., Ill.), Thomas J. Meskill (R., Conn.), Joseph G. Minish (D., N.J.), Ancher Nelsen (R., Minnesota), Edward J. Patten (D., N.J.),

A n d:

Silvio O. Conte (R., Mass.), William L. St. Onge (R., Conn.), Melvin Price (D., Ill.), Roman C. Pucinski (D., Ill.), Charlotte T. Reid (R., Ill.), John J. Rhodes (R., Arizona), John J. Rooney (D., N.Y.), J. William Stanton (R., Ohio), Samuel Stratton (D., N.Y.), Robert Taft Jr. (R., Ohio), Charles A. Vanik (D., Ohio), William B. Widnall (R., N.J.), Lester L. Wolff (D., N.Y.), Clement J. Zablocki (D., Wisc.),

As well as:

James H. Burke (R., Florida), Samuel N. Friedel (D., Md.), Frank Horton (R., N.Y.), Charles W. Sandman (R., N.J.)

This list includes names obtained by the time this bulletin went to press. Additional names will be given in the next issue.

"NATIONALISM" IN LITHUANIA ATTACKED BY PRAVDA

Resistance to Influx of Russians Admitted

"Yet it does not mean at all that the remnants of bourgeois nationalism had been defeated in our society. It is not imperative that a person be descended from a bourgeois society, as some think primitively, for him to submit to moods of bourgeois nationalism to some degree. . . . This ideology, or its phenomena, may penetrate the consciousness even of such people who have never seen a bourgeois society"

"Nationalist Views and Traditions" Survive

There are still people among us who, while accepting the socialist ideology in general, remain under the influence of nationalist views and traditions

". . . There are still people in Lithuania," who do not sufficiently appreciate the greatness of the "brotherly aid," the mutual help of nationalities, and the "significance of the exchange of cadres."

Although not a single one of the citizens interviewed in Vilnius acknowledged being a nationalist, "nationalist survivals in everyday life activities is felt more strongly than anywhere else."

"Nationalism" Disguised as "Party-mindedness"

Nationalism is "especially dangerous" since it can "mask itself" as the ostensible putting into practice of the tasks of the party itself. . . . "Localism" may parade as "seeking to make one's own republic flourish," or appear in the form of mistrust of foreign officials -- a legal effort to "raise native cadres."

Belief in "Invincibility" of Nationalism Widespread

The widespread notion that nationalism is an "invincible force" must be "condemned." Nationalism will be eventually gotten rid off. "The capitalist world" is "interested in the survival of nationalist remnants" and is doing everything to "incite the nations of our country one against another."

(Pravda, Moscow, January 24, 1969)

(Comment: Pravda's article serves as an authoritative confirmation of the strength and scope of the national spirit among Lithuanians. The fact is acknowledged that nationalism exists in the postwar generation as well.

The failure to appreciate "brotherly aid" simply means Lithuanian scepticism about Russian claims of economic benefits to Lithuania from the Russian rule. "Significance of the exchange of cadres" is a euphemism for the colonization of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia under the guise of personnel transfer necessary for economic growth. The paragraph, in general, reflects Soviet Russian concern about the rising Baltic resistance against the influx of Russians.)

PARTY PAPER CONFIRMS STRANGLEHOLD ON CHURCH

Violation of Religious Rights in Laws

"Churches and other homes of prayer as well as the cult implements which the government organs pass on to believers for their use, belong to the state. This is not the religious community's but the state's property.

"The religious community receives this property from the regional (city) executive committees for use free of charge, according to a contract. The contract must be signed by not less than twenty adult members of the religious community. They assume the obligation of guarding and maintaining the cult building and other property put at the disposal of the religious community, of covering the expenses connected with the administration and use of that property, of paying for the damages to the state in case of damage or loss of property, and of using the cult building and other property for satisfaction of religious needs only.

"All the property acquired by the organs of religious communities must be accounted for to the state organs and is not considered church property. The religious community may only administer the state property and use it under lease conditions.

"The religious community must have an accurate inventory of cult property. All religious cult objects that are newly purchased, donated or transferred from other churches must be entered in this inventory. Only privately owned items on loan from individuals are not entered into the inventory records. The religious community is obliged to allow the representatives of the executive committee to make periodical checks and examinations of the property at any time, except during the performance of religious ritual. This, of course, does not violate the freedoms of faith, religious services, and performance of religious cult.

"Prayer houses of historic and artistic importance, entered in a special list, are handed over in the same order and on the same basis as the other prayer houses. In this case, however, it is also necessary to observe the rules of inventory and protection of works of art established by the organs of government.

"The faithful have the right to sign a contract about the acceptance of the cult building and other property. Having taken it over, they receive the right to participate in the administration of this property and enjoy equal rights with persons who had signed the contract initially.

"For the administration of the community's affairs and for functions connected with the use of cult inventory and finances, the religious community elects by open voting from among its members, in a meeting of the believers, an executive organ of three persons. For the inspection of cult property and finances, collected from the believers on a voluntary basis, the religious community may elect a commission of auditors.

"The clergy and the religious centers have no right to remove this or that member from the executive committee or from the commission of auditors. They also have no right to issue any obligatory decrees to the executive organ, the commission of auditors, or the believers. The functions of clergymen are limited to of religious rites. The believers hire or elect the clergyman in the same manner as a watchman, an organist, or other church servants. The right to remove individual members from the executive organ of the religious community or from the commission of auditors is reserved to the executive committees of the local government organs only.

"The clergy and the religious centers have no right to manage the property or finances at the disposal of religious communities. This is required by Soviet laws. In practice, however, it frequently happens that in the Catholic church the priest is the full master of the religious community. He alone manages the cult articles, finances of the religious community, takes the lead in other matters. Parochial priests are trying to usurp the entire direction of parishes and to use it for their selfish ends. This is a crude violation of the believers' rights and of Soviet laws.

"The priests have the right to charge the faithful only for religious services: baptisms, weddings, funerals, etc. The money received by the priests for religious services is their personal income which has nothing to do with the income of the religious community. Clergymen must pay income tax just as any other citizens. The income of religious communities is not taxed."

(Valstiečių Laikraštis, Vilnius, February 6, 1969)

(Comment: The above article was published as a reply to the alleged reader's queries: "To whom belong the prayer houses and articles dedicated for cult purposes? May the clergymen manage one-sidedly the property and finances of a religious community?"

The article is one more proof of methodic violation of basic human rights in the realm of religion in Lithuania.)

"Following the Lithuanian decision to remain neutral in the German-Polish conflict, despite German invitations, the secret protocol of the German-Soviet treaty of September 28, 1939, indicated that 'the territory of Lithuania falls within the sphere of influence of the USSR.' On June 15, 1940, Russia conveyed an ultimatum to Lithuania, demanding the formation of a friendly government. The same day Lithuania was occupied by Soviet troops. On August 3rd, it became a Republic of the USSR."

Le Monde, Paris, January 26-27, 1969)

WRITER ATTACKED FOR "SUBVERSIVE" STORY

"... He was acting and pretending like all people. Don't they all, without exception, hide behind seven doors with seven locks their spiritual treasure and poverty? Why? Because they are afraid of one another... This is why each individual puts on a mask, according to his abilities, why he hides his real face, acts an alien role, covers himself demagogical phrases and keeps lying, lying... The more circumspect and deft the individual, the more difficult it is to recognize him."

Party Critic Discovers Depiction of "Alienation" Under Soviets

This is one of the passages in a new novella by the young Lithuanian writer J. Mikelinskas, which drew the ire of Party critics. What especially irritated them was their interpretation of this and similar passages as a depiction of "alienation" in Soviet society.

Trys dienos ir trys naktys (Three days and three nights), the controversial novella by Mikelinskas, was originally published in the magazine Pergalė (Vilnius, December 1968). Written in a stream-of-consciousness manner, the novella is a kind of a psychedelic portrait of the mind and soul of Vytautas Norvilas, a young man in Soviet-occupied Lithuania today. Dreams and dark visions are used profusely.

"Uniformity" and "Fear" Singled Out

The world that surrounds the protagonist in his wanderings has a nightmarish quality. Stone statues with "frozen sphynx smiles" walk the gloomy streets. The people he meets are either monotonously uniform or too frightened to complete their statements.

Priest -- a Positive Character

Significantly, in this nightmare environment, the only man who has his own convictions, ideals and firmly defends them is a... priest. The protagonist remembers him as a former classmate. They meet and embrace each other in the churchyard. The kiss awakens the protagonist's fears. What will happen, he thinks, if a letter will reach the ministry for which he is working: Vytautas Norvilas has encountered an "ideological enemy" and has kissed him publicly and demonstratively." Norvilas envisages how this "monstrous news" will spread and swell and reach the capital, "scaring peaceful employees, infecting leaders of social organizations and associations with holy indignation, "making my bosses, much experienced in suffering and other things, open their mouths widely."

"Persecuted" Church

The main attack against Mikelinskas' novella has been staged so far by the regime critic Antanas Balsys in Tiesa (Vilnius, January 26, 1969). Balsys is especially indignant about "completely unrealistic" scene of the protagonist's meeting with the priest, which serves to "make thicker that atmosphere of fear and distrust, in order that the words of a representative of a 'persecuted' church would sound more convincingly" in it.

"The priest's tirades are accorded entire pages," Balsys continues. "He speaks about sealed lips, about the situation of a mute in which the church is placed today. The priest's lips voice all the propaganda of the reactionary clerical emigres now hovering in the Vatican."

Protagonist Lauds Priest's "Sincere Faith"

"And what is the protagonist's answer to such ruminations of the priest?", Balsys asks. "He does not present a single serious argument. And only in saying his farewells he states: 'Sometimes I envy those who are able to have sincere faith in something.'"

And then comes the main reason for Balsys' indignation: "The reader cannot believe that Soviet people feel themselves as such pitiable slaves of circumstances and situations, who fulfil somebody's will and who do not know the limits of their competence or their responsibilities."

Author Accused of "Seconding Bourgeois Propagandists"

Mr. Balsys then goes on to accuse the author of seconding the views of "bourgeois propagandists." "Hundreds of bourgeois propagandists, sociologists and literary critics have been searching for years for features of alienation of the Socialist society. And, quite unexpectedly, these features, arranged in a neat formula, have erupted with a steam of consciousness from lips of Mikelin-skas' protagonist."

The conclusions of Mr. Balsys' criticism have a threatening ring. "The position taken in this novella," he says, "clearly shows where one may be taken by esthetic views which are used to justify the 'freeing' of the writer from his responsibility to the truth of life."

"The combination of literary ferment and national self-assertion will be a most potent one It is not inconceivable that in the next several decades the nationality problem will become practically more important in the Soviet Union than the racial issue has become in the United States."

Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, in foreword to
The Chornvil Papers (McGraw Hill, 1969).

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B R I E F S

The population of Kaunas, the second-largest city of Lithuania, has reached 301,000, according to Tiesa (February 2, 1969).

* * *

The gravity of the pollution problem in Lithuania was again underscored by the recent events of the Antanavas Power Plant, where the entire fish population died out in a 60 ha dam, and in the vicinity of Mariampole's sugar factory. "The waters are carrying the deadly poison farther and farther," complained Tiesa (Vilnius, January 31, 1969). Failure of the factory to observe water purification regulations was mentioned as one of the main causes of pollution.

* * *

Vandens ir vėjo fuga (The Fugue of Water and Wind), a documentary on old Lithuanian windmills, is now under preparation in the Vilnius Cinema Studio.

* * *

E R R A T A

On p. 1 of ELTA Bulletin of February 1969, the date under the quotation from Andre Malraux should be "1968", instead of "1918."

BOOKS, ARTICLES, PAMPHLETSOn Lithuania and by Lithuanians

Vsevolod Holubnychy: "Some Economic Aspects of Relations Among the Soviet Republics" in Ethnic Minorities in the Soviet Union, ed. E. Goldhagen. New York, Praeger, 1968. A pioneering work on Russian economic colonialism or exploitation, the study contains statistical data on Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

The Poetry Society of America Bulletin (December, 1968) contains a summary of a speech on Lithuanian poetry, recently presented by Rev. L. Andriekus OFM, poet and editor.

Lituania Quiere Ser Libre. Reprint of an article by Algirdas Gustaitis that had appeared originally in La Opinion (Los Angeles, September 22 & 29, October 13, 1968). Basic information on Lithuania in the Spanish language.

Rasa Gustaitis: Turned On. New York, Macmillan, 1967. A study of America's drug scene.

* * *

One of Mr. Balciuskis' main contributions was his work on Lithuanian etymology and the history of the Lithuanian language which he initiated. The first volume of the dictionary appeared in 1961, but it took until 1967 for the second volume to emerge from the Soviet censorship mills. Mr. Balciuskis was also one of the editors of the third volume.

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O B I T U A R I E SJonas KARDELIS

One of the grand old men of Lithuanian journalism, Jonas Kardelis, died on February 10, 1969, in Montreal, at the age of 75.

Mr. Kardelis began his journalistic career in 1908. He was also active in politics as one of the organizers of the Lithuanian Peasant Populist Union. Following the restoration of Lithuania's independence, he joined one of the main Lithuanian dailies, Lietuvos Zinios, in 1923 and was its editor-in-chief during 1928-1940. The daily was closed by the Soviet occupation authorities soon after the invasion of Lithuania by the Red Army.

A member of the underground resistance during the Nazi occupation (1941-1944), Jonas Kardelis closely worked with the Supreme Committee for Liberation of Lithuania and edited the underground paper called Nepriklausoma Lietuva (Independent Lithuania).

While in DP Camp in Detmold, Germany, Mr. Kardelis was editor of a weekly Lietuviu Zodis (The Lithuanian Word).

After having emigrated to Montreal, Canada, he was editor-in-chief of the Lithuanian-language weekly Nepriklausoma Lietuva (Independent Lithuania) from 1949 to 1968.

On February 17, Jonas Kardelis was cremated in Montreal and his ashes entered in Chicago, Illinois, on the Lithuanian National Cemetery.

He is survived by wife, Mrs. Elzbieta Kardelis, a former star of the Lithuanian State Opera.

Juozas BALCIKONIS

Juozas BALCIKONIS, one of the outstanding Lithuanian etymologists, died on February 5, 1969, in Vilnius. He was 83 years old.

The late linguist left a deep mark on Lithuanian etymology and education. Since 1924 he had been teaching at the Lithuanian University in Kaunas. Following the Soviet occupation, he headed the Institute of the Lithuanian Language at the Academy of Sciences and taught Lithuanian literary language at the University of Vilnius.

One of Mr. Balcikonis' main contributions was Lietuviu Kalbos Zodynas (The Dictionary of the Lithuanian Language) which he initiated. The first volume of the dictionary appeared in 1941, but it took until 1947 for the second volume to emerge from the Soviet censorship mills. Mr. Balcikonis was also one of the editors of the third volume.