









GARSAS • Lithuanian U.S. Alliance of America

## English Section

### TO THE CONSCIENCE OF THE WORLD

On April 12-14, 1978, a decent Lithuanian Catholic, Balys Gajauskas, was sentenced to ten years of severe regime camp and five years of exile; he was sentenced, quite groundlessly, for nothing more than a collection of archival materials about the postwar struggles against the occupant; he was in fact, sentenced for life, because he had already served 25 years in Soviet camps; he was sentenced for having loved his Fatherland...

Tens, perhaps hundreds, of thousands of Nation's sons and daughters have sacrificed their lives and freedom on the Fatherland's altar of liberty. This sacrifice, too, is not the last one, but most probably only a routine one. The Trial of Viktoras Petkus will take place in Vilnius soon! Today the world knows about such victims, but earlier thousands perished in an uneven struggle or were deported to Siberia in cattle cars — and nobody in the world knew about their sacrifice. Only the enslaved Nation celebrated them in their songs...

On the occasion of this shameful reprisal, we wish to tell our enslavers, and the free world alike, that prisons and camps will not force the Lithuanian people, who treasure liberty more than life, to accept capitulation. On the contrary, these sacrifices rendered by our fellow-Lithuanians, only strengthen our determination to go on fighting until Lithuania

regains its freedom and independence. We are unable to understand the mighty of this world who allow self-determination to small African peoples and permit us, Lithuanians, with our long and honorable history, to go on living in slavery. Why such a horrible national discrimination? Why are the red brigades allowed to rage for such a long time?

Our heartfelt thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Liubarskis, who obtained a defense attorney for Gajauskas, to the Belgian lawyer Van der Bosch, who showed his readiness to defend him, to the great press of Belgium that threw light on the difficult situation of Lithuania, and to all people of good will who have emphasized with the prisoner and with Lithuania.

We ask all the acquaintances of Balys Gajauskas, including the lawyer Van der Bosch, not to spare any effort in the future, too, so that this case is not forgotten and to constantly remind the world of it by all means possible until Balys Gajauskas is freed and allowed to leave for the West. The more publicity, the more chance the others will have to remain free.

Publicize Lithuania's case to the whole world!

#### Suffering and Struggling Lithuania

(From the Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania, No. 33)

ingrad. Prior to the Second World War, the population was 5,000. During the press ban (1864-1904) it was the stronghold of the book-smugglers.

The Žemaitių Kalvarija had a shrine which contained a miraculous picture of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was brought from Rome by Father Petras, who later became the head of the Dominican Order.

Bishop Jurgis Tiškevičius erected a set of 20 (not 14) Stations. Between the Stations he sprinkled the ground with soil brought from Jerusalem. At his own expense, he built a church and monastery for the Dominicans as well as 19 small chapels.

In 1643 a Papal Notary authenticated a list of miracles, which also were written in the "Book of Miracles". In 1896 the Library burned and the "Book of Miracles" was destroyed.

In 1647 Bishop Jurgis died, and in 1762 his remains were buried beneath the main altar in the church.

During the years of freedom (1918-1940) crowds of 20,000 to 30,000 people would visit the shrine, especially on the great feasts of the Holy Cross, i.e., the Finding of the Cross (May 3) and the Exaltation of the Cross (September 14).

#### Šiluva (Šiluva)

The only church in America which is called "Our Lady of Šiluva" is situated in Maizeville, Pennsylvania. It was built in 1966.

Šiluva is a small town in western Lithuania about 27 miles southeast of Klaipėda — a seaport on the Baltic Sea. In 1970 the population of Šiluva was 12,400.

In the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C., there is a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Šiluva. It is a gift of the Lithuanian Catholics of America. Above the arch are the words: "Mary, console the children of a land sprinkled with blood and tears". Šiluva is often called "The Lourdes of Lithuania".

Prince Petras Gedgaudas built a wooden church at Šiluva in 1457, but later on it burned to the ground. In 1500 a new edifice was erected on the site of the old one, and in 1536 the Calvinists persecuted the Catholics and destroyed the church by fire. Some of the faithful managed to save some church vestments, an official deed to the church and a treasured picture of the Madonna and Child. These were placed in a metal-covered oak chest which was secretly buried beneath a huge rock near the church.

In the summer of 1608, some shepherd children were passing near the area and they observed a beautiful lady with a child in her arms. She was standing on the rock and weeping.

The shepherds reported the incident to their families and neighbors. The next day a crowd gathered near the rock. A Calvinist minister also joined the people. He began to berate the people. "Don't listen to the tale of the children. It's only their imagination. If anyone did appear, it must have been the devil trying to draw you away from the Calvinist faith".

As he was speaking, the Weeping Lady again appeared in a vision. "Why are you weep-

ing? asked the astonished minister.

"Formerly in this place my Son was adored and honored, but now all that the people do is plow and sow the land".

Pope Pius VI officially proclaimed the apparitions to be true and authentic.

In a nearby village there was a blind old man, who said: "There used to be a Catholic church on that spot, but it burned down. The people placed a vestment, a document and a picture of the Madonna in a metal-covered trunk and buried it in the ground".

The people led him to the place where once stood the church. As he approached the spot, he regained his sight instantly, and he showed them where to dig. They uncovered the trunk and found the vestment, document and picture. This happened long before Lourdes and Fatima.

The shrines in Lithuanian still exist although the Russian masters discourage people from gathering there.

Lithuania is known as the "Land of Heroes" — The Land of Mary". As long as the people sing the songs and hymns of their native land, Lithuania will live long after the Russian Empire has collapsed.

As long as the children of Lithuania believe in Our Lord and have a deep devotion to our Blessed Lady, Lithuania will survive. God will never abandon His own.

— J.A.N.

#### Gajauskas signs prisoners' letter on Carter policy

Balys Gajauskas was one of the seven Soviet labor camp inmates who drafted and signed an open letter to President Carter. The letter praises Carter for his human rights policies and warns the West of the dangers of Soviet expansionism. UPI reported on September 21 that typewritten copies of the letter were shown to Western reporters at a news conference organized in Moscow by members of the Helsinki monitoring committee. The letter said:

"Like all honest people who are inhumanly persecuted in the U.S.S.R. for their convictions, we, special regime political prisoners, draw the policies of Carter's government with hope and admiration", the letter from the seven camp prisoners said.

"Our fate is a sad image of the fate which awaits all the free peoples of the West if no limit is imposed on the... Soviet expansion..."

Apart from the threat of war, there exists as well the threat of Soviet concentration camps and, while worrying about the one, we should not forget the other".

The other signatories were Sviatoslav Karavansky, Eduard Kuznetsov, Aleksei Murzhenko, Vasyli Romaniuk, Danylo Shumuk and Bogdan Rebrik.

(Elta)

#### Staff Sergeant Stanley Bender

Who is the only Lithuanian-American to have earned the Congressional Medal of Honor? The answer is: Staff Sergeant Stanley Bender (Bendorius), who received this top honor for his heroism in World War II. France also recognized his valor by awarding him the Croix de Guerre, as did his former home state West Virginia, which granted him its Distinguished Service medal. In addition it named one of the state's largest bridges after him (it's the Stanley Bender Bridge over the West Virginia Turnpike). Sgt. Bender was recently honored by the American Legion's Darius-Girėnas Post in Chicago, of which he is a member.

(Bridges)

### WHAT'S NEW IN THE ALLIANCE

By Frank J. Katilius  
Executive Director

Another year is fastly coming to an end. With Christmas just around the corner and everybody busy buying presents for their loved ones, it is only proper and most fitting for yours truly to wish you all a very Merry and Blessed Christmas and a very healthy and prosperous New Year. Also, best wishes for the Holiday Season from all of us at the Home Office of the Lithuanian Catholic Alliance, its National Officers, and Directors.

#### BUT IN THE HAMLET IT IS GREENER

Translated by Antonia M. Wackell

No where is there such a forest, just like our own —  
On the pine trees, like little bells, the pine cones ring.

And the small birds, as tho from the books, I would say,  
When they alight they swing and sway on the branches

Now they chirp and coo, now they warble, or they  
twitter

So that even the songs ring thru the forest green.

No one did see, nor did they hear, and do not know  
Of others so white, so vibrating as this grove.

We come to life again and glow to recall  
We had been there before to wait for Whitsunday.

On the paths poured all over were yellowish sands,  
Oh that birch tree, that birch's foliage of green!

Curving curving down its leafy branches slowly,  
When they change to red, the little cuckoo sings out...

The summers come, the summers pass as in a dream,  
Winds are blowing, and the forest will howl again,

Oh how angry it is, when the winds send in their rage —  
And fill it with white legends and drifts of white snow.

Antanas Miškinis

### HEALTH FOR ALL

Preventing and treating lung disease in children is important. Because lung disease can last a lifetime, says the American Lung Association.

"Any disease that occurs early in life may inhibit growth and damage the lungs permanently," says Dr. Lynn Taussig, associate professor of pediatrics at the University of Arizona Health Sciences Center. Dr. Taussig points to studies that show a relationship between lower respiratory tract illness in early life and chronic lung disease in adulthood. Contributing factors in childhood diseases include: air pollution, smoking, including exposure to secondhand smoke; social factors; infections; and asthma.

One study of 3,000 newborns and their families showed that at age 20 the prevalence of chronic cough was nearly double for those with a history of one or more lower respiratory tract illnesses prior to age two. The study focused only on those who had never smoked.

According to Dr. Taussig, preliminary results of a study at the University of Arizona indicate that children with a history of such diseases as croup and pneumonia later develop abnormal lung function; nearly 100 percent also showed "exercise-induced bronchial reactivity", which involves a constriction of the air passages of the lungs during exercise. Dr. Taussig's study is attempting to find out whether or not this group of children will develop chronic lung disease as adults.

One recent study has shown that the rate of hospital admissions for pneumonia and bronchitis was nearly 50 percent higher among infants of mothers who smoked than it was among infants of non-smoking mothers.

To find out how to protect everyone's lungs — especially children's — contact your Wyoming Valley Division of the Lehigh Valley Regional Lung and Health Association — the Christmas Seal People. It's a matter of life and breath.

Our duty is to use word and pen in rebuttal of the occupant who has been trying for centuries to erase Lithuanian nation from history. Each family must be our auditorium. As in those times when the Lithuanian press was forbidden by the tsars and when schooling took place by the spinning wheel, so today our apartments, children's and living rooms must become our patriotic and philosophical schools. They must become the hearths for maturation of individuals who will be able to resist the occupant's propaganda and to sacrifice themselves for the homeland."

(From Aušra No. 11)

### The Shrines of Lithuania

(Continuation)

#### Trakai

Trakai is a town about 14 miles southwest of Vilnius. There are many lakes and islands in the district. Vytautas the Great, who was the son of Kęstutis, built his own castle on one of the islands, and frequently received foreign diplomats and visitors.

In 1409 Vytautas the Great erected the Church of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Trakai. To the church he donated a picture of the Blessed Mother and Child. This picture was given to Vytautas by the Byzantine Emperor Emanuel II. In 1718 the Bishop of Vilnius crowned the painting with two crowns, which were gifts from Pope Clement XI. It is considered to be the first of the miraculous paintings in Lithuania.

Vytautas the Great died at Trakai on October 27, 1430. His remains were buried at the Cathedral of Vilnius which is a Soviet Museum at the present time. No Mass has been offered there for at least 15 years.

#### Kalvarijos

There are two Kalvarijos (Calvary) or hills which are famous in Lithuania. One is located about 14 miles northwest of the town of Telšiai. This is called the Žemaitių Kalvarija. The other is situated about 12 miles from Marijampole, which is now named Kapuskas. This was known as the Suvalkų Kalvarija. Both are famous for the chapels, Stations of the Cross, and for the large pilgrimages to the two towns and churches.

Suvalkų Kalvarija was on the main road from Vienna to Len-

#### ADDITIONAL JUVENILE BENEFITS

**PAYOR BENEFITS.** Payor Benefits are obtainable for an additional rate for a juvenile, provided the applicant or payor is employed at non-hazardous work and further provided the age of the payor is not less than 20 years nor over 40 years of age. Payor Benefit provides that in the event of death of the payor, before the insured member has attained the age of 21 years, the regular dues are waived. The dues waived under this provision does not reduce the amount of benefits at maturity or as a death claim. Payment of dues is resumed when the insured member reaches the age of 21 years provided the Life Insurance certificate has not matured or has been fully paid-up.





