

... Russia without any prejudice recognizes the self-rule and independence of the State of Lithuania with all the juridical consequences . . . and for all times renounces with good will all the sovereignty rights of Russia, which it has had in regard to the Lithuanian nation or territory.

Peace Treaty with Russia
Moscow, July 12, 1920

Lietuvos
nacionalinė
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President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill:
1. Their countries seek no aggrandizement, territorial or other;
2. They desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned;
3. They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.

Atlantic Charter
August 14, 1941

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The Lithuanian-American Conference At Pittsburgh, Penna.

The American-Lithuanian conference, held at the William Penn Hotel in Pittsburgh, Pa., September 2 and 3, 1943, was called by the Lithuanian American Council, a coalition representing the democratic thinking American citizens of Lithuanian extraction.

The task of calling this momentous conference was assumed by the executive committee of the Council headed by Editor Leonard Šimutis, president, Editor Pius Grigaitis, Secretary, and Editor Michael Vaidyla, treasurer, all of Chicago, Ill. Technical details and local arrangements were creditably handled by Mr. P. Dargis with the assistance of Mr. J. Tamkevičius, Mr. P. Pivaronas and others of the local Pittsburgh committee.

The more than 450 delegates, of whom at least one third were native Americans, represented almost a million of Americans of Lithuanian extraction, or approximately one fifth of the total number of Lithuanians throughout the world. They were sent by various fraternal, war veterans, civic, patriotic and cultural organizations from different parts of the United States and Canada, and included men and women from all walks of life and of various political and religious beliefs. Four representative political thoughts united their efforts there: Christian-democrats, Socialists, Liberals and National-Democrats. Considering the above, much credit is due Mr. Leonard Šimutis for the tactful and skilful handling of the chairmanship.

In addition to the delegates proper, the conference was attended by many guests, among whom were the following distinguished personages: U. S. Senator J. M. Tunnell (Del.), U. S. Senator J. I. Davis (Pa.), official representatives of Lithuania headed by the Lithuanian Minister at Washington, Mr. Paul Žadeikis; former Estonian Foreign Minister Mr. K. R. Pusta; some Latvian friends; and members of the Lithuanian National Council. The following points were enumerated in describing the aims of the conference:

(1) To voice a unified Lithuanian-American determination in support of the U. S. war effort until victory and unconditional surrender are achieved.

- (2) To discuss ways and means of bringing to fruition the democratic principles stated in the Atlantic Charter and the Washington Declaration, especially where these principles pertain to the future of all small nations.
- (3) To discuss ways and means of liberating Lithuania from the Nazi yoke, reinstating Lithuania as a free Independent State built on democratic principles and insuring a place for Lithuania in the post war peace plans.
- (4) To discuss the problem of relief for the Lithuanians in exile and material assistance for those in occupied Lithuania.

The spirit of the conference was reflected in the serious and cooperative attitude of the delegates many of whom have sons and daughters in the armed services of this country, and friends and relatives enslaved in Nazi occupied Lithuania or exiled to the Siberian wastelands. To further describe the spirit of the conference we quote the following excerpt from the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette: "Lithuanians cheer news of invasion."

The news of the invasion of Italy gave a dramatic touch to the American Lithuanian National Council yesterday as its two-day conference at the Hotel William Penn came to a close.

The announcement, coming in the midst of a morning war bond rally, caused demonstrations which culminated in the singing of the national anthem while many delegates were visibly overcome by emotion.

The invasion of Italy was seen as a step in realizing the aims of the convention: the winning of the war and the liberation of oppressed small nations, including Lithuania.

Despite the seriousness of the times and the fact that many of the delegates have loved ones who are giving their lives, an undercurrent of optimism pervaded the atmosphere of the conference, due no doubt to the latest victories on all fronts and to the feeling that here at home we are embarked on a huge production program; that we realize that now we are standing on the true road to victory; that the American government is strongly adhering to the principles of the Atlantic Charter and that it does not deviate from its road under impact of destructive forces. As if

sensing the serious and historic portent of the Roosevelt—Churchill talks just concluded at Quebec, the delegates showed a renewed determination to work, a greater optimism regarding the outcome of war and an unshakeable faith in their government.

Contrasting the present with the tragic and dark years of 1940, many members of the conference will recollect the following excerpt from the July 23 announcement of the State Department:

„During these past few days the devious processes whereunder the political independence and territorial integrity of the three small Baltic Republics—Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania—were to be DELIBERATELY ANNIHILATED by one of their more powerful neighbors, have been rapidly drawing to their conclusion.

„From the day when the peoples of these Republics first gained their independent and democratic form of government, the people of the United States have watched their admirable progress in selfgovernment with deep and sympathetic interest.

„The policy of this Government is universally known.

„The people of the United States are OPPOSED TO PREDATORY ACTIVITIES, no matter whether they are carried on by the use of force or by the threat of force.

„They are likewise opposed to any form of intervention on the part of one state, however powerful, in the domestic concerns of any other sovereign state, however weak.

„These principles constitute the very foundations upon which the existing relationship between the twenty-one sovereign Republics of the New World rests.

„The United States will CONTINUE to stand by these principles, because of the conviction of the American people that unless the doctrine in which these principles are inherent once again governs the relations between nations, the rule of reason, of justice and of law—in other words the basis of modern civilization itself—cannot be preserved”.

A perusal of this quotation would lead one to say with pride: “This country’s idealism is not an empty theory. The democratic way of life is worth fighting for. Democracy will win and Lithuania will be reborn again!”

Pledge to the War Effort

An oft repeated saying of the Lithuanian-Americans is “America first, Lithuania always.” A sincere belief in this statement was responsible for the energy and time devoted by the delegates at the conference who rallied to increase their efforts to help the United States win the war. To further this work it was decided to divide it into three groups; namely (a) organization, (b) war bonds drive, and (c) mobilization of blood donors.

(a) After due deliberation regarding the type of organization to be employed, it was unanimously decided to establish a Lithuanian American Central Committee for the Encouragement of the War Effort throughout the country. (Up to this time there has been no such central committee.)

(b) Regarding war bonds it was unanimously decided that the Lithuanian-Americans would buy at least \$10,000,000 worth of the Third War Loan Bonds. At this writing, it has been estimated that the previous purchase of war bonds by Lithuanian-Americans has exceeded \$50,000,000.

(c) Much has already been done in organizing blood donors, and it was decided to continue expanding in this field.

Peace Aims of the Democracies

In a separate resolution pertaining to this subject the dominating thought was that we not only have to win the war but also to win the peace. Speeches by various members stressed that we are seeking a stable peace based on justice, morality, love, equality, freedom for nations, economic security, and international cooperation, with peace not only for great nations, but also for the small, or federations of small nations. Practically, it means a peace based on the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter.

The Americans of Lithuanian extraction refuse to accede to all kinds of vicious and selfish interpretations of the principles of the Atlantic Charter. They firmly believe that this kind of philosophy sooner or later would engulf us in a third world war. They are refusing to admit that force is the only means of adjusting international relations, they oppose any kind of power politics and all forms of Neo-appeasement. They are especially fed up with constantly forwarded theories of a new “zone of influence”, be it strategic or economic. They definitely believe in an efficient collective security based on an international court of justice, in which a rightful place will be reserved for all sovereign nations, large or small.

To quote the Secretary of State, Cordell Hull (radio address of September 12): “Throughout the whole history, of the U. S. A., the basic policy in dealing with foreign nations has rested upon certain beliefs which are deeply rooted in the minds of the American people. Among them:

1. All people who with a decent respect for the opinions of mankind have qualified themselves to assume and to discharge the responsibilities of liberty are entitled to its enjoyment;
2. Each sovereign nation large or small is in law and under law equal to every other nation;
3. All nations large or small who respect the rights of others are entitled to freedom from outside interference in their internal affairs.”

Although the Lithuanian-American conference took place ten days before Secretary Hull’s address was delivered, the participants of the conference showed that the above mentioned principles are deeply rooted in their minds too. This belief was further emphasized in the following resolution:

FOR THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF A FREE AND INDEPENDENT LITHUANIA

WHEREAS, Lithuania for hundreds of years had been an independent state which was later partitioned and enslaved by her aggressor neighbors and after World War I re-established herself as an independent democratic Republic acknowledged by all the world powers, and which after more than twenty

years of independent existence, during which she showed an unquestioned ability to govern herself and manage her internal affairs, raising the economic and cultural standards of her people to a much higher level than that which they had already attained while under foreign domination.

WHEREAS, Lithuania has suffered two invasions by foreign armies during this war and today is occupied by the Germans who are brutally oppressing and exploiting the people, plundering the nation's wealth, destroying her cultural treasures and forcibly transporting Lithuanian manpower into the Nazi Reich of forcing the men to serve in Hitler's armed forces.

WHEREAS, the people of Lithuania with ever growing tenacity are opposed to this Nazi oppression and in various ways show their unflinching resolve to cast off the foreign yoke and regain full political independence believing the promises of the larger democracies made to the enslaved nations as stated in the Atlantic Charter and repeated in the joint declaration of the United Nations in Washington D. C., now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lithuanian-American conference composed of 450 delegates and representing the most important ideological groups, press, war veterans, fraternal societies and cultural organizations gathered at the William Penn Hotel, Pittsburgh, Pa., on September 2 and 3, 1943, go on record for the reinstatement of an independent democratic Lithuanian State, within her historic ethnographic borders, as stated in the second and third articles of the Atlantic Charter; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this American-Lithuanian conference rejects and holds unlawful and inexcusable the pretensions to Lithuanian territory or any part thereof by not only the present occupants of Lithuania, the Germans, but also the previous occupants, the Russians, because these pretensions violate the international agreements willingly signed by them, and violates definite wishes of the Lithuanian Nation, which were not softened but were strengthened because of the aforementioned Russian and German invasions and occupations, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Conference supports Lithuania's stand that the eastern borders of independent Lithuania should be those established in the Lithuanian-Russian Treaty of July 12, 1920; that Lithuania's quarrel with Poland can and should be decided in a peaceful way, and that Lithuania's southeastern borders should encompass the ethnographic districts in East Prussia inhabited by Lithuanians, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the conference expresses its assurance that, upon its reinstatement after the war, the Independent Democratic Lithuanian Republic will establish friendly relations with Russia and with its other neighbors, cementing closer ties with the neighboring Latvians and Estonians who are also interested in keeping the Baltic Sea free; that she will extend full human and political rights to all its inhabitants and guarantee free speech and free enterprise; that she will sincerely support international peace, faithfully fulfilling her responsibility in the forthcoming Post-War Peace Plan as a stabilizing force serving the progress of humanity among the family of freedom loving nations.

It is worthy of note that Americans of Lithuanian extraction consider that:

a) The future relations between Russia and Lithuania should be based on the Peace Treaty of July 12, 1920, wherein it was stipulated:

"Lithuania on the one part and Russia on the other, being determined to base their future mutual relations on justice and right, which would grant to both countries and their peoples the benefits of earnest and peaceful neighborly relations, have to this end decided to start negotiations and have appointed as their delegates...

ARTICLE I

"Pursuant to the declaration made by the Federated States of the Soviet Socialist Republics of Russia to the effect that all peoples have the right to self-determination until they become completely separated from the state of which they are a part, Russia without any prejudice recognizes the self-rule and independence of the State of Lithuania, with all the juridical consequences and good will, all the sovereignty rights of Russia, which it has had in regard to the Lithuanian nation or territory.

"The fact that Lithuania ever was under Russian sovereignty does not place the Lithuanian people and the nation or territory under any obligations to Russia".

b) The Vilna dispute should be settled by peaceful means.

c) Close relations should be established with our friendly neighbors, the Latvians and Estonians, who are equally interested in having their sovereign rights restored.

Aid for Lithuanian Victims of the War and Foreign Occupations.

Of particular concern was the question of helping the 40,000 Lithuanians exiled to Siberia in 1940-41. These unfortunates find themselves in a desperate situation and are slowly dying of starvation. Because of the Russian claim that Lithuanians are Soviet citizens, all attempts to help these exiled unfortunates directly have so far been unsuccessful. Attempts of the American Red Cross along this line have likewise proved fruitless. To make matters worse, an even greater number of Lithuanians were deported to Germany. This process, we understand, is still in progress and it is questionable whether the fate of the latter will ultimately be any better than that of the exiles in Russia.

In a separate resolution written in a humanitarian spirit, the conference decided to establish a Central Lithuanian Relief Foundation, whose task will be to organize and to centralize the work of gathering clothing, shoes, medicines etc., also how best to raise funds to carry on this work. Alongside this, the CLRF was empowered to immediately look for practical means of helping our deported exiles. Aid will be given first to the deported Lithuanians, and then to those in need in Lithuania itself. Before much could be done, precise data regarding the actual whereabouts of the Lithuanian deportees must be obtained and this will be the duty of the LCRF.

Issuance of Special U. S. Stamps in Honor of the Sovereign Republics of Lithuania Latvia and Estonia.

The following excerpt from the resolution speaks for itself:

"WHEREAS, the Post Office Department has thus far authorized the issuance of special postage stamps of 5-cent denomination in commemoration of but twelve, out of fifteen, European countries which have been over-run by the Axis powers, in effect overlooking the Baltic Republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia; and

WHEREAS, the issuance of special postage stamps, of the conquered countries series, in commemoration of the freedom-loving Peoples of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia would serve as the best means for transmitting to them a definite encouragement and a hope that their anti-Axis resistance and their courageous fight for liberty and independence is being watched and respected by the American Democracy, and that the fulfillment of the Atlantic Charter and of the Four Freedoms will be their justly earned reward for their sacrifices,

NOW, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this Conference, representing a million of Americans of Lithuanian descent, petition the President of the United States of America and the Postmaster General to authorize the issuance, in a series of conquered countries already authorized, of special postage stamps in honor of the sovereign Republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia."

Punishment of War Criminals and Condemnation of the Persecution of Jews in Europe.

According to the principle that "these must be taught that crime does not pay, and must be made to serve as an example to possible criminal heads of state of the future" as it concerns the Jews, the conference unanimously expressed itself as follows:

The Lithuanians have lived for centuries in peace and friendship with their Jewish fellow citizens.

Lithuanian-Americans, convened in a special Lithuanian-American Conference at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on September 2nd and 3rd, 1943, fully aware of the extent and horror of the terrible tragedy being endured by the Jewish people in the Axis controlled lands of Europe at the hands of the savage and sadistic Nazis, whose avowed purpose is the mass destruction of the Jews, strongly urge the Government of the United States of America and all of the United Nations, to take immediate and effective steps to save our Jewish fellow men in Europe.

Conclusion

Reviewing the manner of discussion and the results accomplished, Lithuanian-Americans of

divergent views and party affiliations demonstrated that they could close up their ranks and show the world that they are united on basic questions and by their actions prove that the words "America first, Lithuania always" are not an empty phrase.

We are certain that the unity shown at the Pittsburgh conference will not remain just a platonic demonstration. We know that even before the conference there was plenty of evidence that people were willing to work and to give financial aid when necessary. Now that the conference has given the program its initial impetus, we must proceed on the charted course. The results should be evident, soon.

UNFRIENDLY PROPAGANDA AND THE TRUTH.

A Statement of the Press Bureau of the Lithuanian National Council.

Insinuations seeking to compromise the fair name of Lithuania have recently become more frequent in the press and are inspired from diverse sources.

One such disparaging attack is found on the pages of "The Polish Review", No. 32, published in New York. In an article entitled "Ethnography of Eastern Poland" it is stated as follows:

"The Lithuanian borderland has its own history. In December, 1918 the German troops retreated westwards and detachments of the Bolshevik Army entered the area of Wilno, which was taken on January 5th, 1919. Eight days before, the Lithuanian National Council (Taryba) created there by the German occupants *) had moved from Wilno to Kovno" etc.

A little further down it is stated:

"... On October 9th, 1920, a Free Corps conducted by General Zeligowski entered Wilno".

In so far as it relates to "the Lithuanian National Council (Taryba) created there by the German occupants", we deem it necessary to recall that the Council of Lithuania has been created in 1917 by Lithuanian patriots who, on February 16th, 1918, have announced the Act of Independence of Lithuania—the cornerstone whereon an Independent Lithuania was built up. It is no fault of the Lithuanians that the German occupant was rampant at Vilnius in 1918.

Should the reasoning of the author of that article in "The Polish Review" be followed, the activities initiated in Austria in 1914 by the great Polish patriot, late Marshal Joseph Pilsudski, and the creation of the "Regency Council" at Warsaw in 1917, could analogously be termed "the work of the German occupant", probably with more of truthful emphasis.

Joseph Pilsudski laid the groundworks under a Hapsburg aegis, and the Regency Council worked under a protective German wing. There was no other way out for Polish patriots at the time. The patriots of Lithuania at the same time

*) Underscoring is ours.

were in a somewhat similar situation, except that they were laboring under more adverse conditions.

In respect of "a Free Polish Corps conducted by General Zeligowski", it will suffice to state that the history of the seizure of Vilnius in October 1920, is too well known to the civilized mankind to require our recounting at the present moment. We shall limit ourselves to an observation that the so-called "Free Polish Corps" of Zeligowski was as much "free", as the Kosciuszko "Polish" Division under Z. Berling, a former Colonel in the Polish Army, could be considered "free" in the Soviet Union at the present time, or as the Frei Korps of a German general von Eberhardt and of one Bermond-Avalov could have been deemed "free" in 1919 when it had occupied parts of the Baltic States.

We are taking this opportunity to comment upon another article appearing in the same publication, entitled "Fate of those who put their trust in Hitler" (*The Polish Review*, No. 34, Sept. 20, 1943, p. 15). Here is the pertinent quotation:

"Used by the Germans as executioners in Occupied Poland, Ukrainian and Lithuanian hirelings are now learning the fate of those who put their trust in Hitler. Willing tools of Germans, these traitors, who betrayed their own people, have discovered — too late! — that the Nazis waste little time with those who become a liability to them, no matter how well they may have tried to serve the German aims.

"As defeat of Germany looms, and retribution at the hands of the ravaged Poles become increasingly certain, the Germans in Poland are busy ridding themselves of all witnesses to their crimes — including their Ukrainian and Lithuanian hirelings who took part in the killing of helpless Poles.

"More than fifty of these were recently rounded up by the Germans at Chajnowka in Eastern Poland, and placed before a firing squad to silence forever any testimony they might give in Polish courts after the war."

Without denying the fact of the alleged execution itself, we wish to remind the author of that article that the Germans today are seeking, in a most determined manner, some means for an alibi, — probably aiming at getting under good graces of the Poles, if possible, in order to create an impression that the atrocities criminally and in cold blood perpetrated by the Gestapo had, in fact, been committed not by the Germans, but by various „national groups", including among them the Lithuanians, Ukrainians, White Ruthenes, etc.

We are certain that among those executed at Chajnowka a number, probably the majority, of utterly innocent persons were included.

We cannot fail but regret that the author of the aforesaid article permitted himself to be caught so easily in the tentacles of this new "clever" German trick.

The probability of a similar fate, today or tomorrow, for some group of Polish policemen "criminals" could not be ruled out. The fact is that

not only the Lithuanians, Czechs, Letts, Ukrainians, Estonians, etc., but the Poles also are being compelled today to serve the German war machine, not only in the ranks of the Wehrmacht, but in the ranks of the police. Men from the General-Gouvernement Polen as well as those from the Polish areas incorporated into Wartpreussen or Ostpreussen, are drawn into service of the "master race" — as "hirelings", if such an expression is more pleasing to Poles.

When the hour will strike, their past behavior will be judged by competent courts, each in its own jurisdiction, of the reconstituted free peoples of Europe, including also the courts of the sovereign democratic Republic of Lithuania.

A SERMON

preached at the Church of Holy Trinity, Kingsway on Thursday, June 24th, the Festival of St. John the Baptist, by the Rev. Arthur C. Headlom, Bishop of Gloucester.

A PRAYER

for the Baltic States.

O God, Who from of old time hast gathered into nations the peoples of the world, and hast chosen them as instruments to fulfil Thy righteous purpose for mankind. Grant to these nations, ever more and more to know Thy will and give them grace to answer to Thy call. Look in mercy, we pray Thee, on the peoples of the Baltic States, especially on our Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian brethren, that in the midst of so many and great dangers from aggression and oppression, they may win from adversity the strength and character to do Thy will. Relieve their distress, strengthen their endurance, restore their freedom, and stir up in the hearts of all Christian people the desire to help them: Grant this, O Lord, for His sake, Who died for all mankind, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

A SERMON.

Rev. xxii. 2: "The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

We are met together to day, moved by the cruel fate of the people of three small countries, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, to show our sympathy for them and to offer up prayers on their behalf.

There may be some of you who know little about them. For them I would say that they are three small but extremely interesting countries, situated to the South and East of the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic sea — between Russia and Germany. They are interesting above all for their languages — those of Lithuania and Latvia are akin to one another; they are reputed to be the oldest Aryan languages in Europe, allied to Sanskrit; that of Estonia is Ugrian and of the same family as Finnish. They are all alike in having suffered centuries of foreign domination. For many hundred years they lost their freedom. Yet though all those dark days, they preserved their

nationality, their languages, and their traditions. Then after the Great War, there came to them the greatest of all gifts—national freedom. They seized on the gift with eagerness, with enthusiasm and with wisdom, and began to build up their national life. Of two of them I can speak with personal knowledge. In 1938 I visited, with a small Ecclesiastical Commission from the Church of England, Latvia and Estonia, and was surprised and delighted at the re-birth of their national life. I could see everywhere signs of a reconstituted society, of a careful agriculture, of villages and houses, which had been destroyed in war-time, being re-built. I heard from residents there, and could see for myself, how much they had accomplished. I met them in the services of their Church and their Universities, and learnt something of their invigorated intellectual life.

It is I think a matter of some interest that it was on St. John the Baptist's Day five years ago that we signed the first formal agreement between the Church of England and the Churches of Latvia and Estonia—an agreement which at this time imposes on us the obligation and privilege to do anything in our power to help these people in their distress.

Especially may I speak of their Song Festivals. It is significant and interesting that what had enabled them to preserve their nationality through the dark centuries were their folk songs, and when freedom came they celebrated it each year in a great National festival which was a service of song. On a meadow by the sea, where a huge orchestra had been erected, a chorus of 10,000 voices, trained and eager, sang to an audience of 100,000. Previously I had seen a long procession of singers, drawn from all the districts and villages of the country, with immense variety of National costumes, waving bunches of flowers in their greetings of their President and their country. I was deeply stirred.

And then in the vicissitudes of this terrible European war all this came to an end. The freedom of these little nations was destroyed, all the hopes and work of twenty years of peace was undone, a period of cruelty and oppression began. I need not dwell on the sad history. We know it only too well. We have seen it in Poland, and Czecho-Slovakia, and Jugo-Slavia. Seizure of land, destruction of free Institutions, banishment, deportation, imprisonment, murder, persecution of the Church and the Clergy. All this these people have suffered as so many others. I read, for example, of massacres and a mass depopulation policy whereby some 60,000 persons, including infants a few weeks old, and persons over a hundred years old have been exiled. I read of the closing of Universities, of the confiscation of Church property, of the suppression of theological faculties, of the imprisonment and deportation of the clergy. I read how the people are turned into serfs and made to work for their conquerors. I need not repeat the story. You know it only too well. It is a history of cruelty and oppression more fiendish,

more widespread, more diabolical, than anything recorded in history.

The first duty for us is that we should humbly offer up our prayers to God that this evil oppression may cease. We know that these times of suffering and trial and discipline come to nations. We know that we have our character and endurance and loyalty tested by these periods of trouble. We pray that we have strength to endure and to dare; but we pray, too, that these times of trial may cease and that a time of peace and rest and new life may come to the oppressed nations of the world, and that we all may be worthy of it.

But now I look further into the future and I ask, how can we prevent such things happening in the days to come? Can we secure that small independent nations shall have their right to a free existence respected?

There is the work of politicians and diplomats. What can they do? I have no doubt that our Statesmen will do their best. But they have failed in the past. We have many advisers who are prepared to plan the whole world for us. They have hitherto failed. I do not know whether they are likely to be more successful in the future. These things do not much concern us here, but one thing I may suggest. Could there not be more co-operation? I do not believe in super-nationalism. I do not believe in interference with National Sovereignty. National Sovereignty means the development of national individuality. **I do not believe in federation, but I think that there might be more confederation. If the seven Baltic States should form a defensive alliance, and should agree all to join in if any one of them were attacked, there are few States which would not hesitate in an act of aggression. I do not believe in a confederation only for neutrality.** "Curse ye Meroz, says the Angel of the Lord; curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof: For they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

But I do not wish to dwell on these political issues. I want now to look deeper into the causes of things. I do not think that any of us would doubt that this oppression of subject people has been more brutal than anything we have ever read of before. We have never before read in our histories of the attempt at the total extermination of a whole people. Nothing that we have ever heard of can exceed the cruelty of concentration camps. I do not doubt that a fundamental cause of all this is that those who have been guilty of these atrocities have repudiated the Christian faith and look with contempt on Christian ethics. People may not have been very good Christians in old days, but there was a recognised standard of public morality, to which people conformed and which public opinion imposed, and that regulated the relations of States. But that is now gone. There is no power that can change men's hearts and restore respect for the sanctity of human life than that of Christ.

The Seer of the Apocalypse tells us in the midst of the city, the new Jerusalem, is the tree of life and its leaves are for the healing of the nations. I am addressing those of varied religious allegiance, but united in this common service in which we all express our allegiance to Christ. More and more it is dawning upon us that what really matters is not whether we are Catholic or Protestant, Anglican or Lutheran, but whether we are Christians. What matters is that the world should become Christian. Unless that can be, I do not feel that there is any hope for the human race. If we could once secure that, all the other problems which trouble us could be easily solved.

Addressing you therefore—a body of thoughtful men and women, many of whom have suffered much, whose countries have suffered much by modern barbarism—I ask you first of all offer up your prayers for these distressed peoples, to pray that their sufferings may cease, that their liberty may be restored, that their national life which has made such a fair show may once again flourish, that an end may come to this present strife, and oppression may cease.

But I ask more from you. I ask you to consider whether in the years to come we Christians might bring to an end our unhappy divisions, that we should become as we were intended to be, a great International Society, in which there is no distinction of people or races, in which there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither Greek nor Scythian nor barbarian, but all are one in Christ, giving unity and brotherhood to the world. And I ask you also if we were thus one body, one society, whether we might intriguing against one another, no longer injuring one another—to win the world to Christ.

For the world is a fair and beautiful world. I have a vivid memory of the fields and forests and heaths of your Baltic States, of the flowers and meadows. The world would be a happy world if it were not spoiled by the cruelty and rapacity of men, and it is a world of peace that we would desire.

But if we are to accomplish anything of this, there must be a change in ourselves. If we want to make the world better, we must become better ourselves; if we want the world to be just, we must be just; if we want to make the world peaceful, we must be peaceful; if we want to make the world a brotherhood, we must learn to live in brotherly love one with another. That is what many of our reformers forget. They are so anxious to reform others, that they forget to reform themselves. We must begin each in our sphere to be what we would have others be. We must learn to be good Christians seeking the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. We must seek unity and brotherhood with all Christians around us, of whatever sect or persuasion. We must begin with ourselves and in our own sphere.

It is a great vision that I have before me of the nations of the world living at peace, one with another, living each free and independent, developing their own genius, cultivating the talents that God has given them bringing each their own gift to the new Jerusalem.

"I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And the city hath no need of the sun, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof; and they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it."

But this vision can only be realised through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and if we learn to be faithful followers of Him.

NEWS FROM LITHUANIA

Dagens Nyheter, 21. 7. 43. A private Lithuanian informant who is well informed about political economic conditions in his country writes, *inter alia*: The German regime in Lithuania is milking the whole country, and if the Germans, after two years of occupation, were to leave, the Lithuanians would require at least ten years to recover and remove the traces of German occupation. Apart from trade and industry being practically stopped, forestry and agriculture have suffered most. At present the peat production is at a standstill, owing to the shortage of labour and the spare parts for the machines. To make the shortage good, the saw mills have been mobilised instead for intensified work. The wood has not only to cover the country's fuel requirements, but it also has to be exported to Germany. Furthermore, very considerable quantities of timber are used for fortifications. It is estimated that in two years about 25% of all the Lithuanian forests will have been felled.

The stock of cattle, except sheep, has dwindled during the past three years by 60% and the harvest this year, despite favourable weather conditions, is expected to yield a maximum of two-thirds of the normal. Last winter the Germans suddenly increased the already high meat and pork rations for the armed forces by 20%, and from January 1, 1943, these requisitions have been doubled. Sheep may still go free for the sake of their wool.

Peasants are unable to cultivate the fields properly because they have to part with over half their horses. Helpers for agricultural work are unobtainable. They refuse their wages in cash because money has practically lost its purchasing power, and at the same time it is strictly forbidden to remunerate workers in kind. Fertilisers are no longer obtainable, neither are wrought iron, implements, fuel oil, and the same is true of almost anything that farmers require. However, for one k butter people can get on the black

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market four litres of paraffin oil, for one sheep two pairs of military boots, for one pig — one machine gun with the required ammunition. Peasants also exchange foodstuffs against arms and ammunition. They are of the opinion that they may need it as they did at the end of first World War and in June, 1941.

Last year the majority of the peasants managed their work with the help of their children, however, they are unable to do it any longer after the forced mobilization for the so-called Lithuanian Legion which took place last March and for the Reich Labour Service, which deprived the farms of all young men. All who could, hid, with the result that only four per cent of the "volunteers" reported to the German Recruiting Authorities, nevertheless, the farms are deprived of their best workers. The infuriated Germans closed the University and the high schools, and about 25,000 young people, of both sexes, who thus became "unemployed" were transferred for the Reich Labour Service in Germany. Conditions in agriculture became increasingly worse, owing to the new German measures, because the peasants were forced during the winter time to clear the snow from the aerodromes and roads. Furthermore they had to supply the German institutions with fuel and drive, with their own horses and vehicles, numerous German officials from place to place. Each peasant may be mobilised for similar services up to 15 days a month. As the Germans are anxious to spare their motor cars whenever possible they make full use of the peasants' duty drive them about. In the summer the number of days when the peasants were obliged to provide conveyances for carting fuel, driving officials, etc., is reduced to about three to five days a month but in return they have to repair roads and effect transports for the armed forces.

The German claims upon the Lithuanian peasants are disproportionate. Thus the German occupying authorities increased the quantities of bread, grain and potatoes to be surrendered in 1942 by 50% for the former and 80% for the latter, as compared with those fixed by the Lithuanian Agricultural Authorities, who had assessed the maximum the country could deliver. The results for many peasants were disastrous, and the peasants who refused to part with what they needed themselves were declared saboteurs. As a result of this policy they were forced themselves to reduce their stock of domestic animals owing to lack of fodder, and for this reason pork, milk, and egg production fell catastrophically. When some peasants were unable, last spring, to deliver more than nine per cent of their flax quotas within the specified time they were declared to be unfit to pursue this occupation.

The impression, meanwhile, is growing in Lithuania that the Germans intend to colonize Lithuania for the Germans and force the Lithuanians out of their country. Therefore, the landed pro-

perty nationalized by the Russians was restituted unconditionally, but been installed on their property and are often removed later under the pretext of having proved unfit, or more correctly, are suffered to remain on their property till the Germans have appeared to replace them. Alfred Rosenberg's decree, introducing private ownership in the Baltic countries, was revoked a month later as far as the Lithuanians were concerned, because they had shown themselves disinclined to assist the Germans to set foot in the Eastern space.

This refusal gave the Germans a pretext for depriving the Lithuanians of what they most cherished — their high national education. Thus on March 19, 1943, the light in the Lithuanian high schools was extinguished. They sought in many ways to discriminate between the Lithuanians and the Germans, for instance, the Lithuanians' food rations were only half those of the Germans. Furthermore, the Lithuanians were forbidden to use the trains, buses or even to transport their goods by this means. Only one Lithuanian book was published during the two years and only one daily paper appears which is controlled by the Germans. However, the Clandestine press is thriving. The only public organization which is now legal in Lithuania is "Self-Help" which has replaced the Lithuanian Red Cross. The economic, religious and cultured organizations, communal property archives, libraries, etc., have been taken over by the German Party Organizations. The provisional Lithuanian Government has abolished the communist marriage law of 1941, which the German Civil Administration restored later on introducing the Reich German marriage code.

The resentment in Lithuania at present is similar to that prevailing during the Russian regime. German propaganda is doing its utmost to try to convince the Lithuanians that as the Allies betrayed the Baltic States by delivering them to Soviet Russia, the Baltic peoples' only hope is to rally round the Germans to save their own lives and their countries. The Lithuanians, however, have set their hopes on an Atlantic declaration and that it will be applied also to their country. The Clandestine Lithuanian press hopes for an Allied victory, and this belief increases their resistance to the German invaders.

The 30,000 Lithuanians who, together with 17,000 Lithuanian Germans, were allowed in the winter of 1940 to 1941 to go to Germany, are still there and not one believes that he will soon be able to return. About 10,000 Lithuanians were forcibly sent to White Russia and the Ukraine. When the schools were closed the majority of the teachers personnel and the professors were sent to Germany. Despite the hardships the will of resistance among the Lithuanians has not been broken.