

... 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  
M. Mažvydų  
biblioteka

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

# LITHUANIAN BULLETIN

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## MEMORANDUM

of the

Lithuanian American Council, Inc.

Concerning

### Prospective Transfer of Königsberg and Adjacent Area to the U.S.S.R.

Article VI of the Tripartite Declaration of Berlin, as released by the Associated Press from Washington on August 2, 1945, reads as follows:

#### "VI. CITY OF KOENIGSBERG AND THE ADJACENT AREA.

The Conference examined a proposal by the Soviet Government that pending the final determination of territorial questions at the peace settlement the section of the western frontier of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics which is adjacent to the Baltic Sea should pass from a point on the eastern shore of the Bay of Danzig to the east, north of Braunsberg and Goldap, to the meeting point of the frontiers of Lithuania, the Polish Republic and East Prussia.

The Conference has agreed in principle to the proposal of the Soviet Government concerning the ultimate transfer to the Soviet Union of the city of Koenigsberg and the area adjacent to it as described above, subject to expert examination of the actual frontier.

The President of the United States and the British Prime Minister have declared that they will support the proposal of the Conference at the forthcoming peace settlement."

A week later, President H. S. Truman in his radio talk to the nation commented on the above-quoted agreement in the following words:

"It was agreed to recommend that in the peace settlement a portion of East Prussia should be turned over to Russia. That, too, was agreed upon at Yalta. It will

provide the Soviet Union, which did so much to bring about victory in Europe, with an ice-free port at the expense of Germany."

This comment was preceded by the following observation:

"... the final determination of the borders could not be accomplished at Berlin, but must await the peace settlement. . . . Nearly every international agreement has in it the element of compromise. . . . No one nation can expect to get everything that it wants. It is a question of give and take—of being willing to meet your neighbor half-way."

These statements, together with the actual turning over, "for administrative purposes," of certain sections of East Prussia, south of the line indicated in Article VI of the Berlin Declaration, to Poland—seem to make the whole problem of the ultimate disposition of East Prussia a timely and prominent topic for discussion. Furthermore, although the Berlin Declaration contains no direct hint relative to the final settlement of the problem of Lithuania, it seems obvious, nevertheless, that any territorial change in the region of Europe embracing the Koenigsberg area would directly affect the future international position of Lithuania—the country of our ancestors which remains dear to us for sentimental reasons and because of close kinship ties in that ancient country.

The problem of East Prussia, particularly its northern section adjacent to the area of Königsberg, directly affects Lithuania by reason of its **geographic situation, the ethnic composition of its inhabitants, economic relations, and the system of waterways and railway trunklines.**

It is a matter of public record that this north-eastern tip of East Prussia for centuries past and until 1878 was officially styled LITHUANIA in administrative designations by the Teutonic Order, the Duchy of Prussia and the Kingdom of Prussia,—viz., “Littauen,” “Littauisches Gebiet,” “Littauische Kreis,” “Littauische Aemter.” The borders of the Republic of Lithuania extend along the northern and eastern boundaries of the Province of East Prussia, and Lithuania constitutes a natural “hinterland” for Königsberg and the adjacent area. An important part of the population of East Prussia—west, north, east and southeast of Königsberg—is of Lithuanian origin, is Lithuanian in habits and customs, is spiritually attached to the Lithuanian homeland, and in some sections at least retains its ancient Lithuanian speech. Königsberg, lying on the western extremity of the land and water communication systems, plays an important part in the economic complex of Lithuania—both in the ancient past when Lithuania had exported its timber, caulking and wood products to England, and in recent times when Lithuanian surplus production of food-stuffs and raw materials found its way into Königsberg.

Americans of Lithuanian descent always believed, and continue to believe, that their Government will persevere in its straightforward attitude and policy, publicly enunciated by the Department of State on July 23rd, 1940, and by our late President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, on October 15th, 1940.

Consequently, in interpreting the above-mentioned excerpts of the Berlin declaration, **we take it for granted** that, in spite of the fluid wording thereof, the promised support of our Government of the Russian proposal to annex northern East Prussia does not mean the abandonment of the Atlantic Charter and of the restoration of the sovereignty of Lithuania, or the intention to carve out a Russian corridor from the northern tip of Poland's new eastern frontier to Königsberg at the expense of Lithuania.

Lacking the basic information concerning the delimitations of the area deemed to be “adjacent to Königsberg,” to which our Government seems to be committed to some extent, we wish to present some observations which, we hope, might be of some use to the Government.

The expression, “Königsberg and the area adjacent to it,” may suggest two interpretations: the area of a **greater extent**, which would make the aforesaid considerations weigh more heavily,

and the area of a **lesser extent**, involving considerations that weigh less heavily.

Being vitally interested in the peace to follow the victory which our sons helped to win, and in the fate of the country of our ancestors and relatives, we feel that our Government will accept our observations for impartial consideration.

We are making a clear distinction between (a) the territory situated north of the Nemunas (Memel-Nieman-Nieman) River, which under the name of the autonomous Klaipeda-Memel Territory constituted an integral part of the Republic of Lithuania until March, 1939, when Hitler's aggression temporarily snatched that district from Lithuania,—and (b) the ethnically Lithuanian areas south of that river, the only section of East Prussia “north of Braunsberg and Goldap” that might be deemed “adjacent to Königsberg” within the frame of the Soviet-sponsored prospective territorial acquisition in East Prussia.

We beg to submit that this point of view is justified by the wording of paragraph 3 of the Atlantic Charter, and of the subsequent declaration signed in Moscow in 1943, which partly defined the retroactive period of the **beginning of aggression** as dating back to 1937 (Austria). The German seizure of the Klaipeda-Memel Territory was not approved or ratified by the signatory powers of the Klaipeda-Memel Statute. The so-called German-Lithuanian “pact” affecting the transfer of that territory was not recorded as an international treaty by the League of Nations. Consequently, that territory must be considered an integral part of the reconstituted independent Republic of Lithuania.

As for the area south of the Nemunas River to the line drawn somewhere “north of Braunsberg and Goldap,”—we beg to quote some pertinent excerpts from the study of Rev. Dr. Kazys Gečys in the book entitled “LITHUANIA IN A TWIN TEUTONIC CLUTCH” (now in print, published by the Lithuanian American Information Center, a service of this Council, in New York):

“Dr. Fr. Tetzner (*Die Slawen in Deutschland*, Braunschweig 1902), a German, on the basis of his study of the original archives of the churches, states that until the year 1719 the Lithuanian language was used in the Protestant churches north of Labguva (Labiau), Peterkiemis (Petersdorff), Norkyčiai (Norkitten), Juodlaukis (Jodlauken), Darkiemis (Darke-men) and Dubeninkai (vis-a-vis the town of Peraslīs in Suvalkai county). . .

“O. Losch, a German of typically “Prussian” views, in his study (*Politische Geographie von Litauen*) published the statistics of the Lithuanian element. According to him, there were 22,270 Lithuanians in the county of Ragaine (Ragnit) in the year 1860; there were 16,720 Lithuanians in the county of Pakalnė (Niederung) in the year 1850; in the year 1870 he counted 13,690 Lithuanians in the county of Labguva (Labiau) and 10,770 in the county of Pilkalnis (Pilkallen). As for the Klaipeda-Memel District, Stefan Kanerol (*Klaj-*

peda, 1930), a Pole, basing himself on the data of the Consistory of Königsberg, states that in 1850 there were 61,950 Lithuanians or 65% of the total number of the inhabitants. . . .

"The Nazis used every means to convince the people of the truth of their teachings. Lithuanian societies were shut down, the party hoodlums smashed the windows of the more active Lithuanians (i.e. the well-known philosopher Vydunas) and beat them upon the streets. It was decided to eliminate all traces of the original character of Lithuanian Prussia. All Lithuanian newspapers were suppressed, and the Lithuanian language was expelled from the churches. Finally, all of the geographic Lithuanian names were translated into their German equivalents and imposed as new official names, and owners of Lithuanian family names received new 'truly German' monickers."

Emmanuel Kant, the great philosopher and a son of Prussian Lithuania, did not share the views favoring Germanization of his country. On the contrary, in his introduction to the Lithuanian Grammar of Mielcke, published at Königsberg in 1800, he urged the preservation of that ancient language.

Official German census figures admitted the presence of a native Lithuanian element in the area under discussion, viz., *Preussische Statistik, Amtliches Quellenwerk*, hrsgb. in zwangslosen Heften vom Königlichem Statistischen Bureau in Berlin (Berlin 1902, page V), which fixed the average strength of the element adhering to Lithuanian "Muttersprache," even after attendance in German schools and after the service in the German armed forces, at 31.9%. Lithuanian estimates are in sharp disagreement with the official German figures—these estimates vary between the figures of 350,000 to 400,000 in a population of about 2,000,000 of East Prussia. Lithuanian estimates disregard the official census figures, inasmuch as religious and political Lithuanian newspapers published in Prussia (before their suppression by Hitler) had subscribers in the areas where no Lithuanian "Muttersprache" figures were shown in contemporary official data.

Hitler's energetic measures directed at complete germanization of East Prussia and the violent Nazi reaction to a budding Lithuanian national movement tend to substantiate the Lithuanian estimates: had the Lithuanian element been negligible, it would not have merited such drastic violence.

German bibliography of the pre-Hitler period fully substantiates the original Lithuanian character of the areas affected by the recent Berlin Declaration, to wit, Article VI concerning Königsberg and the area adjacent to it. Among the most authoritative works are the following:

1. Dr. Max Toeppen. *Historisch-comparative Geographie von Preussen*. Gotha 1858.
2. Dr. Franz Tetzner. *Die Slawen in Deutschland*. Braunschweig 1902.
3. Dr. Adalbert Bezzenberger. *Die litauisch-preussische Grenze*. Vol. XIX, *Altpreuss. Monatsschrift*, Königsberg 1883, pp. 651-5).
4. Lotar Weber. *Preussen vor 500 Jahren in cultur-historischer, statistischer und militärischer Beziehung nebst Spezial-Geographie*. Danzig 1878.
5. Hennenberger. *Erklärung der preuss. grösseren Landtafel*, Königsberg 1594 (pp. 160-161).
6. Abrah. Orтели, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, Antverpiae 1570 (Gordocius map No. 44, which calls Samland-Sambia "Samaide," that is, Samagitia).

German bibliography is intentionally referred to, in order to avoid any exaggeration in evaluating the importance of the Lithuanian element on the left bank of the Nemunas River. The Lithuanian American Information Center, our press service, would be glad to amplify the bibliography upon request. At this time, in addition to the foregoing considerations, we are attaching a photostatic copy of a German-published map, the original of which is in our possession and available to the Government. We beg to call attention therein to what the German administration termed the "Litauische Kreis."

We respectfully submit this material for the "expert examination of the actual frontier" between the area adjacent to Königsberg and to be adjudicated to Russia, and the Lithuanian area adjacent to the aforesaid region.

We also respectfully ask that in the delimitation of a portion of East Prussia to be turned over to Russia in connection with the prospective transfer of the ice-free port of Königsberg, a most serious consideration be given the vital interests of the sovereign Republic of Lithuania and the will of the inhabitants, in order to avoid any settlement creating a new "corridor" problem and thus jeopardizing or imperiling the very existence of Lithuania and the hinterland along the entire Baltic coastline east of Königsberg.

August 21, 1945.

## BALTIC STATES UNDER THE HAMMER AND SWASTIKA

(Balticum under Hammeren och Hakkorset)

This is a translation of an article written by a Swedish professor, A. Schück. The original was a part of a 352-page book entitled, "Ha De Rätt At Leva?"—"Have They a Right to Live?"—published by Hugo Gebers Publishing Co., Stockholm, Sweden.

Prof. A. Schück is a lecturer at the University of Stockholm, in charge of the Department of History of Medieval Cities and an assistant to the Dean. As the author himself explains, this article is a collocation based on

notes, articles, and verbal information supplied by Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian, as well as Swedish sources. Although the article was written before World War II came to an end and refers to the events of 1940-1943, nonetheless it has not lost value in portraying the ghastly reign of terror inaugurated upon these unfortunate countries first by the Soviet and then by the Nazi administration.

Professor Schück's narration is a valuable contribution

to the information on what has happened and still is happening on the shores of the Baltic.

A warring world's dictatorships—the National Socialistic Third Reich, the Communist Soviet Union and Fascist Italy—during a ten year period robbed some twenty nations of their independence, substituting bloody occupational regimes in its place. Unveiled imperialism drove them on the road to conquest. Will they ever be compelled to disgorge what they had gobbled up? Abyssinia, the first victim, was liberated long ago; the Italian armies withdrew from Albania. Mussolini's countrymen know what a Nazi occupation means. Belgium, Holland, France, Norway, Denmark, Greece, as well as Yugoslavia, are impatiently looking forward to the coming Anglo-Saxon invasion which would free them from German fetters.

The situation in Eastern Europe is more complicated. Even here they are looking for the hour of liberation, but **not** for an invasion by victorious Soviet armies in the wake of the fleeing Germans. Experiences of a previous Soviet-Russian occupation could not be forgotten during the present German regime of violence.

Hitler's "Third Reich" and the "New Order in Europe" are synonymous with harsh, cruel occupational regimes.

News of the confiscation of property, pillage, burnings, shootings and deportations, in Czechoslovakia, Norway and Yugoslavia, for instance, constantly remind one of this. Since the summer of 1941, when Hitler threw his vast hordes against Stalin's empire, many parts of Soviet Russia have felt the lash of the occupation.

Many have been impressed by the stubborn and heroic defense of the Russian people during the German invasion. But can one condone the fact that the same Russia earlier, in an alliance with Germany, broke a free Poland, that she treacherously attacked her Finnish neighbor, and that she annexed Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The seizure of the Baltic States by the Soviet Union, and the intolerable year-long German regime are among the darkest chapters in the history of the Second World War, so saturated with the tragedies of nations. The suffering of the Baltic peoples has been extremely acute because one harsh occupational power was only replaced by another.

### The Baltic States Under Soviet Occupation

In all three countries, the first occupation—the Soviet—was accomplished by the overwhelming Soviet armies crossing the borders, and by Stalin's authorized agents taking over the highest government posts. In the beginning, the appointed Soviet-Estonian, Soviet-Latvian and Soviet-Lithuanian governments ruled their different countries, but this was only a front. They no more repre-

sented the will of the people than Vidkun Quisling represented the Norwegians. It was never the intention of Norwegian "Quislings" to germanize Norway, and their Baltic counterparts did not dream that they would be used as tools to accomplish the Russification of their homelands. Nevertheless, they were used as tools by Soviet-Russian Panslavism, and those who dared resist were soon eliminated. All that personified the Western pattern during the period of independence of these states was cast aside and rebuilt after a Soviet pattern.

A "new order" was forced on the people.

It was but natural that such "capitalistic" undertakings, as privately owned banks, industries and ship-owning concerns, were nationalized, and that capitalists and owners of the larger estates, as well as of land, were deprived of their possessions. All private business enterprises were nationalized; in Estonia alone they amounted to some 7,400. Most of the dispossessed were owners of small stores or were artisans (in Lithuania at least half of them were Jews). However, even owners of small estates and one-family houses were deprived of their ownership rights. The co-operative movement in the Baltic States was a sound prosperous venture. The usurpers merged it with governmental trusts. They did not stop with the seizure of property; they began to persecute the people connected with these business ventures. In Estonia, the director of the co-operative union was arrested and deported to Russia. At the same time, heads of the various branches were dismissed. Indescribable confusion followed the distribution of goods, and Russian military forces soon emptied the storehouses and shops of all their wares.

The Russian rulers could not reconcile themselves with the fact that the Baltic peoples, during their brief twenty years of self-rule, had attained a higher standard of living than the peoples of the Soviet Union. This was in reality a declaration of bankruptcy for the communistic ideology, and this fact was all the more galling as the incoming (Soviet) soldiers compared material conditions in their communistic homeland with those in the "capitalistic" Baltic States.

Soviet soldiers could not understand that one could buy clothing, shoes and stockings without any restrictions. It was beyond their comprehension that a worker possessed good clothes and was able to rent more than one room and a kitchen; that peasants here had the same standard of living as the exterminated Russian "kulaks" had had. In order to make Soviet citizens endure the hardships with which the communistic regime had burdened them, their official propaganda broadcast for years the misleading information about the conditions in democratic countries. The

Russian people were denied all contact with the outside world. Therefore, they had no possible means of knowing the truth. And thus, it was one of the most important tasks of the Soviets, after their occupation, to lower the standard of living of the Baltic peoples to the level of the Russians. Why should a Latvian worker or Estonian fisherman be better off than a Russian? Were they not all fellow-citizens in the same classless "Soviet paradise"?

It is true that the Sovietization of the Baltic States was a highly interesting chapter because the system was being tried out for the first time in non-Russian Europe.

One of the first measures imposed on the hapless people were the new rent laws. Every individual was assured of nine square meters of floor space. But in the Baltic States, with their roomy housing conditions, these new laws meant a decided change for the worse. A man building his own house had no right to occupy more space than this drastic law prescribed.

A large staff of men was assigned to measure and control the floorspace and the utterly intricate rent rates. The intention was to lower the standard of living of the well-to-do to the level of the lower classes. One result of the law was that those in the higher income brackets paid impropportionately small rents. Government officials, for example, could live more spaciouly and cheaply, while "capitalists" (including suspected elements, such as ministers) were compelled to live more restrictedly and more expensively. An unmarried scientist in Tartu might, for instance, pay 46 rubles per month for a room, while at the same time a minister had to pay 340 rubles for a room of equal floor space. The result was that some buildings and privately owned homes were assigned for the use of several families, and this created much unpleasantness because of cramped quarters. Those who had complained about unsatisfactory housing conditions previously did not better their circumstances. Who profited by the lowering of the housing standard? Mostly Soviet-Russian officers, government officials and policemen.

In their fight against businessmen, industrialists and farmers, the Soviet authorities were especially vindictive. Former owners of nationalized businesses and industrial enterprises in Estonia had to pay taxes on all incomes earned in 1939 and the first half of 1940. They were squeezed in every imaginable way. Their children had to pay exceptionally high fees in schools, high schools and in colleges.

Despite all the election promises in July 1940 not to collectivize land property by establishing "kolkhozes" and "sokhozes," the task of liquidating the freeholding class of the Baltic States was begun at once. Well-to-do farmers lost most of their land,

then new small farms of 12 to 15 hectares (30 - 37 acres) were created—too small to sustain their operators. Every farmer now had the right to use his land; he was no longer the owner. Obligatory deliveries of farm products to the government by the farmers were also prescribed. And the entire Baltic free peasant class immediately faced the same conditions that they had once experienced when foreign feudal lords — German, Polish and Russian aristocrats — owned their lands. Very shortly the Soviet-Russian pattern of "kolkhozes" and "sovzozes" was set up in different places in the Baltic. This had not progressed very far when the German-Russian war broke out in 1941, giving the Soviet lords other things to worry about.

The introduction of the Russian ruble valuta as legal tender brought an accelerated economic revolution which primarily consisted of unheard of rises of prices in all the free Baltic States. Some examples are given from Estonia, where it had been decreed that 1 Estonian crown was to be the equivalent of 1.25 ruble (1 Estonian crown previously equaled a Swedish krona but with a considerably higher purchasing value). The price of shoes now rose from 20 crowns to 112 rubles; woolen stockings from 2.50 crowns to 19 rubles; butter, which in October cost 2.20 crowns, one year later brought eight times as much.

Soviet-Estonian wage levels also present several surprises. Railroad conductors belonged to one of the poorest paid classes,—they received 150 rubles per month. School teachers, however, were treated more liberally. Their salaries varied from 250 to 500 rubles per month. At the same time university professors had a monthly salary from 800 rubles to a maximum of 1500 rubles. The average wage of an Estonian laborer was 100 rubles per month. Such a great difference between intellectual professions and physical labor had never before occurred in fallen "capitalistic" Estonia. Does any professor in Sweden have a salary ten times that of a railroad conductor?

In peacetime, 150 cr. could buy just as much as 900 rubles did under the Soviet regime.

The Soviet lords did not adhere to the principle of "equal pay for equal work." Skilled workers were promised wages of 600 to 700 rubles. Did they really do six times as much work as the common laborer? Why would the recipients of medals, or members of the army and the police be exempt from income tax? Was not this a re-introduction of feudalism and class-privileges?

The Soviet-Russian regime in the Baltic States, in contrast to the following German one, lasted only one year. Although it did not reach its full tempo, yet quite a lot was accomplished during that time in a prescribed direction. As a rule, all higher officials were discharged, and the lower ones were retained in office for a time. The dis-

charged officials and the ruined "capitalists" were the pariahs of the community. They were forced to sell their property, furniture, valuables and books. They were frequently arrested by the NKVD (Soviet Secret Police), or they were visited nightly by them. Their nerves cracked under continual anxiety. Quite a few succeeded in escaping to Germany by appealing to German acquaintances. At that time, Germany had, in fact, asked Soviet-Russia, in order to seal the new friendship, to allow all Germans (Volksdeutsche) in the Baltic States to return to Germany. The Soviet government knew full well that many residents in the Baltics, claiming real or fictitious German kinship, would use this means to escape from the country. But the Russian overlords were sufficiently astute to realize that this only aided their plan to russianize the Baltics. By getting rid of some of the active elements, they weakened the Baltic peoples' power of resistance. Germany, on her part, did not object to sheltering inside her borders a great number of Lithuanians, Estonians and Latvians. Partly, because she entertained the foolish hope of transforming them, in special camps, into pro-German propagandists, and partly because she believed they might be helpful in a future conflict with the Soviets.

The Soviet-Russian remolding of the Baltics went on with accelerated speed. Newspapers were quickly transformed into Russian propaganda instruments which fawningly praised "Father Stalin," Lenin and other communistic saints. The press and the radio competed in spreading false reports of the prosperity of the liberated Baltics.

One of the first measures taken by the new regime was to liquidate or reorganize the defense of the Baltic States. The Lithuanian army was transformed into a "29th Territorial Infantry Corps," stationed in the Vilnius District. Soon Russian officers were substituted for Lithuanian officers, many of whom were transferred eastward.

In Latvia the same measures were taken. Here a former social democrat in exile, Bruno Kalniņš, functioned as the highest "politruk" (political instructor). Later, a great many Latvian officers and part of the non-commissioned officers were ordered to a maneuvers in Litene. Upon its conclusion, Latvian officers received personal orders to demobilize. On their way home, they were arrested and shot. This mass murder liquidated the Latvian national army. Shortly afterwards even Bruno Kalniņš was arrested.

The fate of the Estonian army differed from that of the other Baltic States. An Estonian division—compulsorily mobilized—was removed to Siberia at the outbreak of the Russian-German war in 1941. During the summer of 1942, it was converted into two Soviet-Estonian divisions which in December of the same year were thrown into

the furious battle at Velikiy Luki. More than 600 of these men went over to the Germans.

During the first three or four months of Soviet rule, the outer world was led to believe that the Baltic Soviet Republics were to enjoy a certain cultural autonomy under their own leaders. No doubt it was the naive hope of Vares-Barbarus, of Kirchensteins of Paleckis and their associates that the "sovietization" should be limited to an economic and social revolution and elimination of the objectionable representatives of the overthrown regimes.

In the fall of 1940, the new lords dropped their mask. They were tired of co-operating with these satellites, who believed that their countries could hold a privileged position within a powerful Russian empire. Russification was begun according to plan with unswerving accuracy. Within the higher administration all correspondence had to be in Russian; all statutes had to be in Russian as well as the native languages. The powerful Russian nationalism that Stalin had aroused engulfed all the Baltics. In all the Baltic Soviet Republics, conflicts arose which were promptly solved by the effective Russian management. Thus, two of three consecutive Latvian ministers of the department of culture, Lacis and Lejins, had to resign. The first one, formerly believed to be an ultra Russophile, was even arrested. As so many others with child-like faith in communism, he discovered that the great Russian power that Stalin had reorganized demanded absolute obedience.

The Lithuanian Minister of Education, professor-author Kreve-Mickevičius, was also completely cured of his friendship for Russia after he had dealings with the new lords.

The Soviets radically changed the teaching in colleges. The goal was to forcibly introduce Russian methods of instruction. Marxism-Leninism, dialectic materialism, the Russian language, and the history of the Russian people were introduced as obligatory subjects. It was officially announced that all instruction should conform to Marxism. However, this was rather difficult in such subjects as mathematics and surgery.

The theological schools were abolished; the schools of law and humanity were reformed. Politically objectionable professors—for example, Professor A. Tentelis in Riga, — were discharged and made destitute. The students were forbidden to study privately. Their day was taken up with lectures and obligatory courses. The new lords considered it dangerous for a student to form independent opinions through versatile literary studies. The goal now became a communistic catechistic grind which impeded all free scientific research.

Spies mingled in auditoriums to check on the

lectures. Particular attention was focused on the Lithuanian Universities (Kaunas and Vilnius) and the Latvian University (Riga). The description of the Swedish professor, Per Wieselgren, in "From the Hammer to the Swastika" of conditions at the Estonian Tartu University, should be studied by all those who have joined "Friends of the Soviet Union." There they will find certain interesting parallels with German university conditions after 1933. Only students of "proletarian descent" were granted scholarships or special privileges: these were the "Aryans" of the Soviet paradise.

The disappearance of Jewish students, who had the misfortune of having "bourgeois" parents,—for example: industrialists, ministers, officials or officers,—was similar to that in nazified German universities.

In a communication about the changes made at Tartu and Riga Universities in 1940, the Soviet propaganda machine explained that "the might of the Soviets opened the portals of the university to the working people and granted them the right to gain an education."

Every Swedish scholar who studied in the Baltic Universities, however, can testify that to them the most remarkable fact was that the students came mostly from the "working class," that their studies were made possible because the government generously distributed scholarships to poor but gifted students. In comparison with Swedish universities and high schools, every Swedish teacher has to admit that the conditions in the Baltic universities were better than here in Sweden. No talented student in the Baltic States had to discontinue his studies because of poverty. Furthermore, instruction was so arranged that numerous students active in defense work did not have to neglect the lectures.

In the matter of "democratizing," the free Baltic universities were more advanced than those of most of the western countries.

A charge against the Baltic universities was that they had "forced out the Russian language." However, the Russian language was not the native language of the Estonians nor of the Latvians nor of the Lithuanians, so this charge is unjustified.

Being exceptional linguists, most of the educated Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians could read Russian and German. The knowledge of Russian was obligatory for lawyers and in practice the same held true for all philologists, historians and archaeologists. Every university had professors, docents and lecturers of Russian. The Soviet Union was irritated by the fact that these na-

tions which had broken away from the old imperial Russia did not regard the knowledge of the Russian language as a "vademecum" for sharing the higher education. A similar attitude in regard to the precedence of the German language in the Baltic States existed in Germany. Complaints were made that instruction in German was inadequate. Both powers resented the Baltic States seeking a cultural orientation elsewhere, especially an Anglo-Saxon or a Nordic one.

Much stress is being made today of the fact that Soviet Russia has restored the "Holy Synod." Maybe those who claim that Stalin's Russia has abandoned her earlier hostile attitude toward the Orthodox Church are right, and they regard this as by no means an insignificant part of propaganda activity among the Baltic peoples. It only shows that the Soviet lords have realized that **religion can be used to serve political propaganda and Russian imperialism**, but it does not mean that they have accepted the principle of free religion. **In the Baltic countries there were no state churches; complete religious freedom prevailed.** What does the incorporation of religion with the Soviet regime really mean?

We have already mentioned that theological schools were abolished. Baptisms, church weddings and other ecclesiastical ceremonies were shorn of their legal validity. The printing of religious books and papers was prohibited. The official residences of the ministers were taken from them, and their salaries and pensions abolished. A church minister had to pay seven or ten times more for the rental of his home than other persons. All means were used to prevent people from going to church. This had the opposite effect. The congregations were deprived of all property, but were held responsible for their economic obligations. In Estonia, it was decreed that a church had to pay 14 time more for lighting than the usual rate. An anti-religious campaign was kept up in the press at an ever increasing tempo during the entire Soviet rule: everywhere "religious people are to be unmasked as blood suckers or their helpmates whose goal was to re-establish the capitalistic order", wrote the Estonian paper "Communist" on August 17th, 1940. Observance of the great Christian feast days, Christmas and Easter, was considered most condemnable by the Soviet authorities. The commemoration of Christmas 1940 was at first prohibited, but the order was revoked upon the protestations of workers.

Some weeks earlier an ordinance had been drawn up in the Baltics containing a series of intricate directions for preventing the **danger of fire from Christmas trees**. Even the innocent Christmas tree was considered a menace to the Soviet rule of Stalin's haiduk's (hirelings). All religious societies

had to be dissolved as a matter of course. It reminds one of Hitler's ban against Rotary clubs, Freemason Lodges and the Salvation Army.

In the summer of 1941, Baltic clergymen found that they belonged to the first category to be relentlessly persecuted by the bloodthirsty Russian GPU men. Soviet authorities knew well that their rule over the Baltics rested on very shaky foundations. The fury of the people increased from month to month. Even Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians with communistic leanings began to object to the increasing oppression and the planned Russification. The only effective remedy was deportation to interior Russia—a method used by the old imperial rulers. Immediately after the occupation in 1940, a number of highly placed Baltic politicians were dragged off to Russia, among these the presidents of Latvia and Estonia. The important thing now was to continue the chosen line. The danger of a breach with Germany was increasingly imminent, and trustworthy men had to be kept at the borders—especially in Lithuania.

In November, 1940, the central government in Moscow ordered 700,000 "inhabitant units" deported from Lithuania to the more remote eastern territories of the Soviet Union. An "inhabitant unit" consisted of one unmarried person or a married one including his family. As a rule such an "inhabitant unit" consisted of three persons, and this meant that about 2,000,000, which is two-thirds of Lithuania's population, were to be snatched from the country. Moscow sent this order to the Soviet-Lithuanian puppet government, stressing the absolute necessity of having trustworthy elements at the western borders of the Soviet Union. But how does this coincide with the official communiques that 95.5% of Lithuania's electorate, a few months earlier, had joined the "bloc of working people" whose representatives insisted that Lithuania be received in the motherly arms of the Soviet Union!

Moscow's evacuation order had interesting implications. Just as during the earlier Tsarist-Russian regime when the deported were replaced by Russians, and just as the Nazis deported Poles from the western part of Poland and replaced them with evacuated Baltic-Germans, so the intention in Lithuania was to transfer to Lithuania Russian workers and peasants of both sexes, with special stress laid on the communistic schooling.

The Soviets decreed the following to be deportable elements:

1. All members of the dissolved bourgeois parties, as well as all members of the bourgeois economic and cultural leagues. All social-democrats, syndicalists and Trotskyites.
2. All officials, judges, policemen and officers of the fallen regime.
3. All those who in 1919 had fought against the Bolsheviks.

4. All who had been ejected or had left the communistic party.
5. Fugitives and emigrants.
6. Persons formerly engaged by foreign legations and representatives of foreign business enterprises.
7. Persons writing to and receiving letters from foreign countries,—for example, Esperantists and philatelists.
8. Relatives of political refugees.
9. Ministers and members of religious societies.
10. Aristocrats, owners of estates, industrialists, businessmen, bankers and restaurant owners.

The above-mentioned decree shows that not only an upper class minority, but an entire nation opposed the Soviet-Russian conquerors. This was true of all Baltic States. An instruction issued by Serov, Deputy Peoples' Commissar of the NKVD, "concerning the deportation of anti-Soviet Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians" describes how systematically this task was carried out.

"In every Baltic State a deportation staff shall be created which in each place has an "executive troyka" as its organ. This latter receives the lists of those to be deported and those to execute the orders. The apprehension and transportation to the deportation trains, which must not take more than two hours at the most, has to be performed quietly and quickly preferably at night. The prisoners may take with them their most essential clothes, household goods and tools, provisions for one month and money to pay the expenses of the journey. On arrival at the station the father of the family is to be separated from his wife and children and placed in a separate railroad coach for the arrested men because of a hostile attitude toward the Soviet state."

From the above-mentioned order one learns that the Soviet authorities effectively applied the same method in the Baltics as the Nazis used in exterminating the objectionable Jews. Rightfully, the persecution of the Jews by Hitler has been branded as one of the most brutal crimes perpetrated by the German people. Is an anti-Nazi world opinion going to pass a milder judgement on the equally barbaric outrages of the Soviet regime?

Early in June, 1941, the Russians suspected that war with Germany was imminent, and so the deportations were speeded up in all the Baltics.

Between June 14th and 17th alone, 17,800 persons were deported from Lithuania, 14,693 from Latvia. Everywhere endless crowds of hapless humans were driven to the freight cars in the railroad stations. Altogether 38,000 Lithuanians, 34,340 Latvians and 60,190 Estonians were carried off (including about 33,600 mobilized Estonian soldiers). The prisons were filled to overflowing with prisoners awaiting transportation. In spite of the fact that, during this period of terror, many fled into the forests, other thousands were caught.

After the war broke out, and deportation transports got out of gear, the Russians resorted to the

simple method of shooting the suspects. In Lithuania the number of murdered victims reached about 3,000, in Latvia about 1,700 and in Estonia more than 1,800. Shortly before they fled, the Russians shot 192 persons in the prisons of Tartu. Further figures of these crimes would take up too much space. However, to show just what this means to small nations we cite the following figures from Latvia.

Latvia's population in 1940 reached 1,900,000. After the deportations and executions, 1,086 officers, 2,671 officials, 1,168 teachers, physicians and lawyers, 6,225 industrialists, merchants, artisans and laborers, 5,592 farmers, 3,277 transportation functionaries and 5,298 policemen and military men below the officer rank were missing. To this can be added ten thousand women and children.

In spite of the repeated requests from American quarters, the Soviet Union refused to give any information regarding the fate of the deported. It is known that they were scattered throughout special concentration camps all over the vast Soviet Union, mostly in the least habitable regions. The children are, as a rule, with their mothers; otherwise the families are split up. The hapless people are forced to work in the forests, in peat bogs, in factories, in mines and in "sovkhozes" and "kolkhozes." Many are wasting away in prisons. The GPU men have compelled them to sign declarations that they voluntarily immigrated to the Soviet Union. According to two Baltic refugees who succeeded in escaping to America, conditions among the men and women confined in the concentration camps are appalling. Clad in rags, all their possessions taken from them, without sufficient food, these wretches live in filth and misery, with no means of keeping clean, without the most essential articles of clothing for change. They are vermin-infested and ill. They suffer untold mental and bodily agony, and have to perform hard labor under strict supervision. Twelve Baltic cabinet ministers and two presidents, desperately ill and in the throes of mental anguish, anxiously awaited death as a liberation from such a camp, south of the city of Krasnoyarsk.

In Stockholm, there is a list (received through secret reports) of 968 deported Estonians, in Russia. They are split up in 27 different regions where they are put to hard labor. Most of them are women; among them one notes Mrs. Adele Akel whose husband, the former Estonian minister in Stockholm, Friedrich Akel, likewise has been deported, but obviously to some other place. The former Latvian minister in Stockholm, M. Nukša and his family have suffered the same fate.

The small Swedish minority in Estonia (about 7,000 persons) also suffered severely from the Russian reign of terror. More than 400 Estonian Swedes were executed or deported. Among the lat-

ter are their most prominent leader, Matthias Westerblom, and Nicolaus Blees, as well as the teachers Victor Pohl, T. Gardstrom and N. Berggren.

Not since the days of Ivan the Terrible have the Baltic States gone through such a horrible period as in 1941.

### Baltic States Under the German Yoke

June 23rd, 1941, the friendship between Stalin and Hitler begun in 1939 came to a sudden end. For a month the Baltic States became the battlefield between the two greedy dictator states. As the German troops crossed the Lithuanian border in mid-summer of 1941, the oppressed people spontaneously rose against their Russian tyrants, and the Germans were hailed as liberators. Everywhere Lithuanian guerrillas were ready for battle. They rose in arms at the outbreak of the war. They occupied towns, railroad stations and bridges, and disrupted the Russian lines of communication. The Lithuanian infantry revolted openly against their Soviet officers and entered the battle as fighting formations on the German side. Even before the Germans had reached Kaunas, a Lithuanian national government (led by Prof. Juozas Ambrazevičius), had been proclaimed by the captured radio stations. Everywhere the Russians met a hostile population which had retrieved its hidden arms and attacked the cruel oppressors. However, the Lithuanian national government, which was proclaimed during this war of liberation, did not last long. On August 5th a German decree abolished its existence. Armed Lithuanian guerrillas had already received orders to give up their arms, and were asked to serve as German auxiliary police, which they declined to do.

The Latvians had the same bitter experience. Here, too, the partisans had risen against the Russians at the outbreak of the war and cleaned up large territories in Latvia. Even before the German occupation of a much devastated Riga, they had taken the radio station there.

The representative of the German "Wehrmacht," who on July 1st addressed the Latvian people, solemnly promised the restoration of their liberty. Nothing happened. Very shortly the Latvian national anthem disappeared from the air waves, to be replaced by "Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles" and the "Horst-Wessel." The raising of the Latvian national flag was prohibited.

In Estonia the disappointment was not quite as great because the fighting had been going on for three months before the Russians were thrown out. Under the name of "forest brethren," Estonian patriots waged a guerilla war for a long time behind the Russian lines, and took several towns before the Germans arrived. In the long drawn out battle at Tartu about 2,000 Estonian national

home guard men participated with great success. It seems that the German occupational rule was much milder in Estonia than it was in Latvia and Lithuania. The reason is that the German military administration, close to the front lines, is generally more humane than the civil administration which later took over.

The Baltic peoples were soon to learn that plans for their fate existed, but — much contrary to their first optimism. As early as July 31, 1941, the name "Ostland" appeared in the communiques of the German Telegraph Bureau. That name was applied to the occupied states—Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, together with the White-Russian Soviet Republic. An editorial of the newly established "Deutsche Zeitung im Ostland", October 19th, explained that all state property belonging to the former Baltic Republics, as well as all private property nationalized by the Russians in these countries, was now the rightful heritage of the German Reich.

The "Landesbewirtschaftungsgesellschaft Ostland" was founded January 16, 1942. Its task was to administer the property taken over from the Soviet Union. All trade and industrial enterprises in the Baltic states were placed under German administration. Both regimes had robbed the Baltics of raw material, provisions and industrial goods, and both had no consideration for the native population. In this respect the Germans were the more effective because they had a more perfect organization, and also had more time than the Russians.

One of the most striking slogans in Hitler's former domestic propaganda was that he was going to create undreamed opportunities for "the little man." As a representative of the German "Herrenvolk" he was now going to have his fill in "Ostland." And so the Baltic States were overwhelmed by the latest successors of the medieval knights and Hansa-merchants. The new lords stated openly that the freedom of the Baltic States was just a dream. "Latvia can no longer expect to become an independent state, because the history of independent Latvia has been a twenty-year mistake." An official German spokesman contemptuously called Estonia "a state of one million." The Germans put no restraint on their self-satisfaction and greed in the Baltic States. Any small Nazi functionary could become a high official, and German clerks called in from the "Reich" were quickly placed in directorships. The admiration of their relatives at home rose as tubs of butter, sausages and hams started to arrive from the happy hunting ground of "Ostland."

All the better hotels were reserved for Germans. They received two or three times larger rations than the natives. Furthermore, they had an opportunity to buy certain scarce goods as textiles, which were denied to the native population. The

district commissar, Freiherr von Medem, in a speech to a Latvian high school class in Jelgava said: "Your mother, your real home, is the 'Nordic-German' cultural sphere, within which your small country can feel secure." Exchange the "Nordic-German cultural sphere" for "the family of the Soviet Union"—and the words sound natural in the mouth of a Soviet Commissar.

In November, 1941, when the Russians were driven out entirely, the Baltics were placed under Alfred Rosenberg and the newly organized "Reich Ministry for the occupied eastern territories" as a separate "Reich Commissariat." This was later headed by Heinrich Lohse who, residing in Riga, took over the civil administration of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and White Russia. Each of the former Baltic Republics had a special Commissar General: Lietzmann in Tallinn, Drechsler in Riga and von Renteln in Kaunas. (Lohse's fourth satrap, Kube, who resided in White Russian Miensk, was assassinated in the fall of 1943).

During the first days of the German occupation the Baltic States received a "native administration." Men were necessary to administer the conquered countries, and so the German military authorities had to reinstate the remaining state officials and functionaries who had not been deported. These were, however, subordinate to the German civil administration whose officials were recruited from Nazi-Germany and, to a lesser extent, among the returned Baltic-Germans.

Though the Baltic peoples soon learned that Hitler and Rosenberg had no intention of restoring their independence, they still believed that all the old rights of possession would be restored. Hadn't the Germans in a proclamation in July, 1941, declared that private property which the Russians had nationalized would immediately be restored to the owners? This promise was soon forgotten. Shortly afterwards the Germans declared that in the Baltic States "only Soviet property exists and an absolutely destitute population to which the Reich commissar, on behalf of the German Reich, may later distribute or lease property."

This is why an Estonian, a Latvian or Lithuanian could only get back his rightful property as a "gift" from the German "Herrenvolk." This was out of the question for a Jewish citizen.

This "gift" meant that the party concerned received the right to use the farm and other realty. This privilege was granted only to a very restricted extent. As late as February 18, 1943, the Reich Minister Rosenberg issued a proclamation that private property in "Ostland" might be returned to their rightful owners. According to Reich Commissar Lohse's decision of March 2nd of the same year, this concession applied only to "loyal" pro-German elements. Thus those who were more or less disloyal to their countrymen or

those who resorted to bribing the German occupational authorities could expect such a "gift" from the "Herrenvolk." In Estonia, the consequence of this concession has been that some 50 estates have been "restored" in the course of two months. The number of estates in Estonia is about 140,000, and therefore German generosity was of a very modest brand. All property that formerly belonged to the free Baltic States remained according to the resolution of the occupational authorities, the "legal inheritance" of the German Reich.

Hitler proclaimed his "Crusade against Bolshevism" in 1941, and with even more pathos urged the peoples of Europe to join in the fight against this power which unscrupulously trampled underfoot all moral values and deprived fellow citizens of liberty and property. How has he, himself, treated the peoples he "liberated"?

We shall here give an account of how the German occupational authorities treated Lithuania. Here, as in Estonia and Latvia, they proclaimed that farmers were not to own their farms, but were to be considered as "rightful cultivators." Furthermore, all estates that had belonged to the state, religious or national societies, to Jews or to Lithuanians deported by the Soviet, were to be transferred to the "Landesbewirtschaftungsgesellschaft Ostland." After this introduction in the fall of 1942, a German colonization plan was begun in many parts of Lithuania. The idea was to create a German "corridor" through Lithuania to Latvia and Estonia, where German settlers were to return.

To make room for the German colonists the following measures were taken:

About 30,000 Lithuanian farmers who under the Soviet regime had been forced to emigrate to Germany had to move to northeastern Lithuania on their return home; their own farms were given to German immigrants. In the same way five districts in western Lithuania were colonized, when all the Polish, Russian and Jewish farmers were driven out. Each farmer was permitted to take only 15 kg. of food, one cow, one pig and 5 chickens with him. When a Lithuanian deputation of three men, led by former President Grinius, protested to the Commissar-General von Renteln against the German colonization, and demanded that the farms should remain in the possession of their rightful owners regardless of language and nationality, the latter replied: "You are traitors to the Lithuanian people, because you compare Lithuanians to Poles and Jews." Thereafter the three patriots were taken into custody by the Gestapo.

In the spring of 1943, a new and powerful wave of German colonists overran western and central Lithuania—the immigrants were German peasants from Bessarabia. Every farmer suspected of mastering the Polish language was driven out

(quite a few Lithuanians are multilingual). Those accused of not delivering farm products to the German occupational authorities (there were many of these, almost an average of ten from each parish). Under this pretext, the Germans could chase out every Lithuanian farmer. A farmer would starve in no time, were he to give all the provisions that the Germans tried to squeeze out of him.

The same was true in the cities. In Kaunas, principal stores were reserved for German immigrants. First of all, the large Jewish population was driven out of the city into a fenced-in ghetto. Later in January, 1943, 150 Polish families were banished to a labor camp. Only those who paid 500 Reichsmarks to the German authorities succeeded in returning to their old homes later. Hundreds of Lithuanian families were evicted from their homes under the pretext that their sons had evaded military service. By these means the Germans tried to transform Lithuanian Kaunas into "an old German city Kauen."

If the loss of blood and the many reverses in the war had not caused an increasing German exhaustion, there is no doubt that an equally extensive German colonization would have been brought about in the rural districts of Latvia and Estonia. The soaring German colonization plans now as well as during the First World War, were a frightening reality. Even as imperial Germany stood on the brink of the abyss, she was dreaming of the colonization of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. In his memoirs Ludendorff writes: "I decided to take up again in the occupied territories, the cultural task that Germans had performed during centuries in these countries." How he worked out this plan in detail is described in the German journal "Jamsburg" (3/4/41). As this publication is intended to enlighten the Nordic peoples about the actual historic problems, it deserves attention. Kaiser-Germany's old colonization plan was kept alive by the national socialists, whose first adherents were recruited from adventurers and condottieres, who in 1919 conducted a reign of terror in the Baltic States. The Baltic-German, Alfred Rosenberg, next to Hitler the foremost interpreter of the national-socialistic world philosophy, later revived the plan to germanize the Baltics. As the head of the ministry which administered the occupied territories in the east, he carried the responsibility for the terrible encroachments and cruelties perpetrated against the population. He, more than anyone else, maintained that the native population's only right to exist was as obedient servants of the German "Herrenvolk."

History will record the frequent controversies between this fanatic and his haiduks and a more fairminded German military administration. Ger-

man officers upon their entry into the Baltics frankly warned the inhabitants against a coming German "civil administration." This latter was to open the sluices for a torrent of Gestapo men, Nazi office hunters and business sharks. Their prediction came true.

There is no doubt that the Baltic peoples, at the time of the German occupation in 1941, welcomed the German troops which were to deliver them from a Soviet-Russian reign of terror. Everyone was ready to forget the differences of the past. Even those who knew the character and aims of Nazism, who were not given to wishful thinking, assumed a watchful attitude, but were also willing to cooperate with the new occupational authorities. A passive attitude might have been interpreted as proof that the Baltics sympathized with the fallen Soviet regime.

No national government was formed in the Baltics. As noted, the Lithuanian attempt was choked in its cradle. The Germans, however, permitted representatives from the three Baltic peoples to form "General Councils" or "General Directorates" in order to assist the German occupational administration, similar to the temporary arrangement in Denmark after August 29th, 1943. In Estonia this was placed under the chairmanship of Dr. Mae; in Latvia under General O. Dankers, and in Lithuania under General P. Kubiliunas. No independent power was ever granted this "autonomous administration" which was wholly subordinated to the German occupational administration; Alfred Rosenberg saw to that. But if any unpopular edict was to be issued, it was always a good thing to have it signed by this "national self-administration."

It may be a misconception to brand all these Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian general directors as "Quislings," but there is no doubt that after a while they lost the confidence of their countrymen. Against their will they were forced to become the obedient tools of the Germans. Many controversies occurred, and those concerned were dismissed. Thus the Latvian director general for the ministry of justice, A. Valdmanis, was dismissed and transported to Berlin under police guard.

The German administration of the Baltics was the same as in all German-occupied countries, characterized by encroachment, arbitrariness, corruption. The "liberators" of 1941 became tyrants.

Further light is thrown on the German occupational regime by some reports from Latvia—conditions in Lithuania and Estonia were similar.

The press was under the most severe censorship, and the only news reaching the population was through underground papers. Correspondence with foreign countries was prohibited. Only by special permission were radio receivers permitted.

Listening to foreign stations has been punishable for a long time.

The more important official buildings, schools, hospitals and hotels were requisitioned by the Germans. The streets in the cities have, to a great extent, been renamed in order to obliterate all national memorials.

In the cities the population lived on the verge of starvation, and the empty stores had nothing to sell. Persistent attempts were made to relieve farmers of their products. All separators were confiscated, and the farmers had to deliver all their milk to dairies controlled by the authorities. All cattle is registered and subject to delivery; the same is true of grain and flax production.

As a matter of fact, from the fall of 1941 to the end of 1942, only small industrial enterprises with less than 30 workers were restored. Only small stores and infinitesimal amount of real estate in the cities and country houses were restored. Permission was given to withdraw a portion of savings, but the exchange was fixed to 1 lat (equaling 1 ruble or 0.10 Reichsmark). Formerly 1 lat had the same purchasing value as one mark; now it was declared to be worth ten times less.

The German occupational powers not only looted the Baltic States, but they were also very interested in young men of military and labor age.

When Germany refused to restore the liberty of the Baltic peoples and revealed her annexation plans, their enthusiasm for their fight against the Soviets cooled considerably. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that from 30,000 to 40,000 soldiers from the Baltic countries fought in the ranks of the German army.\* This number, however, is not so great considering the fact that the free Baltic Republics together might have mobilized at least 400,000 men. First only "volunteers" were enlisted and these were not hard to find. Most of them had had their relatives and friends dragged off to Russia, or had fallen victims of Soviet justice. A burning desire for revenge, and the hope of liberating them from concentration camps drove the Baltic volunteers to enlist in the German army. Late in the summer and the fall of 1941,

\* *Editor's note:* In Lithuania, the Germans attempted two mobilizations. The first was proclaimed in early spring, 1943; the second one, in the spring, 1944. The first mobilization was a complete failure—only a few Lithuanians presented themselves.

For information on how it failed and the German reaction, see *The Lithuanian Bulletin*, No. 4 and 5, Vol. 1.

The second German attempt at using Lithuanian manpower was even a greater failure.

As soon as the Lithuanians learned that the Germans were contemplating the use of Lithuanian battalions outside the country, they revolted.

This revolt was suppressed in a bath of blood and the battalions disbanded.

everyone was convinced that the Soviet-Russian armies would be defeated in short order. Had not little Finland for three months held her own against Stalin's hordes? What could Germany achieve with her formidable war machine?

However, the volunteers soon became disappointed. In the opinion of the "Herrenvolk," they were but mercenaries of an inferior class, on a level with the contemptible guerrilla bands which the Nazis had succeeded in forming among their partisans in Norway, Denmark and Holland, and who later were transferred to the eastern front. After their one-year service agreement had expired, there was not one Baltic volunteer who would not have taken off his uniform if this had been possible. An even better illustration of the Baltic nations' attitude in regard to Nazi Germany is the pitiful failure of the new recruiting campaign which the Germans started in 1943. This time the bait was that the volunteers from each country were to form a "national legion;" in other words, a slight concession was made to national demands. Here, however, a solid resistance was encountered from patriotic circles. In Latvia, as well as Lithuania, the general directors for once did not hesitate to speak up; if the German occupational administration did not restore the lost rights of possession and their independence, they refused to support the enlistment campaign. When it was, nevertheless, started by the Germans, with not only the most intensive propaganda, but also with the strongest pressure, it turned out to be a complete failure. The local Quislings did a lot of lamenting about this, in writing as well as vocally.

Since then, more severe and more effective pressure has been applied. To start with, all men from 18 to 25 years of age were ordered to report for "labor service." Here they were confronted with the choice of either serving in the so-called labor battalions on the eastern front, or near it, or "voluntarily" joining the respective "legions." It is unnecessary to add that such compulsory mobilization (it was later extended to include those to 35 years of age) of the population of occupied countries is in violation of international law. It is, therefore, understandable that the population does everything possible to evade the compulsory mobilization. And so thousands of young men have been hiding in the forests ever since the early spring of 1943. However, the Soviet-Russian propaganda is mistaken in interpreting this, and the acts of sabotage against the Germans, as proof that the Baltic peoples wish to be reunited with the Soviet Union. Quite a few young men have succeeded in escaping to Finland, and there they joined the Finnish army as volunteers. A smaller number have found a sanctuary in Sweden. Unfortunately, only very few fugitives from Latvia

and Lithuania have succeeded in getting to Sweden.

The German occupational forces tried to suppress all resistance against the new regime in the Baltics. Objectionable persons were thrown into jail, sent to concentration camps or shot.

An account of the evil fate of the Baltic States would not be complete without mentioning the terrible fate that befell the Jewish population. In 1939, this amounted to more than 350,000. The greater part of them lived in Lithuania, which had a Jewish population of about 250,000 (after the reincorporation of the Vilnius district); about 94,000 lived in Latvia and only 5,000 in Estonia.

The Jews were not subject to any race persecution during the Soviet-Russian occupation, but their property was "nationalized," the same as with all others, that is, they were made destitute. The only consequence of this was, especially in Lithuania and Latvia, considerable fortunes (real estate, industries and commercial enterprises) wound up in Soviet-Russian possession. Not a few Jewish politicians, business men and rabbis were deported to interior Russia because they were objectionable to the Russian regime. However, Soviet sympathizers were to be found among the poorer classes of the Jewish population. But "Quislings" did exist among Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians, too. Lack of judgement and a solidarity of a few persons should not give rise to systematic persecution of a race.

When the Germans conquered the Baltics, the Jews possessed no property, thanks to the Russian "nationalizing," and so their former property was regarded as being German. Some, however, had an idea of what might happen under the new regime, and fled to Russia. But the majority remained where they were, and later became the victims of a systematic extermination by the Germans. Many were shot at once, but the majority were interned in special ghettos where they died from hunger, distress and privation. Nobody received his property back. Baltic fugitives have given dreadful descriptions of the extermination campaign against this outlawed people. Thousands have been shot when they were caught, and others were deported to the dreadful Jewish concentration camps in Poland. When the present blackout curtain is lifted, civilized nations will learn that the Germans have treated the Jewish population in the same barbaric way as the Russians treated the Estonians, the Latvians and the Lithuanians. In both instances the victims of a ruthless dictatorship will reach hundreds of thousands.

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The end of the Second World War is near. Some ten European nations, occupied by the Nazis, are impatiently looking forward to the hour of liberation. Of these, three belong to the Baltic group.

When peace comes, are they not to be given the right to live as the Dutch, Belgians, Norwegians, Danes, Czechoslovakians and Greeks?

In February and March of 1943, an interesting discussion took place about the future of the Baltic States. A contributor (Mr. A. J. Taylor) maintained that they were artificially created states, which only twenty years ago separated from the great Russian empire when it was momentarily weakened. What would be more natural than that they now return to their natural status? Only by the occupation of the Baltic States did Leningrad escape falling into German hands in 1941.

Another contributor (C. W. Fumston) declared that if such principles were to be followed at a coming settlement of the borders in Europe, then the Czechoslovakian Republic ought not to be restored either. She, likewise, came into being in 1918 because the Czechoslovak people broke away from the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy. The Russian claims to the Baltic States are no better founded than those which England can make in connection with the annexation of the Irish Republic. A third contributor (A. S. Duncan-Jones) held forth that the Baltic States had neither the

Germans nor the "allied nations" of the First World War to thank for their birth. Their independence had been solemnly affirmed in the peace treaties they had concluded with Soviet Russia. Would not Leningrad have been just as safe if Soviet-Russia had not cynically broken the covenant of friendship made in 1939? Is it Mr. Taylor's intention to corroborate Dr. Goebbels' propaganda that the Atlantic Charter has no bearing on the Baltic peoples?

It is an extremely dangerous tendency that has made its appearance lately: to think that Europe's misfortunes after the treaty of Versailles to a great extent have been caused by the appearance of so many new national states. Was it not the great powers, Germany, Italy and Soviet Russia, who by their imperialistic politics, caused the ultimate catastrophe of 1939? Would it not be deeply discouraging for all mankind if the new world war should result in the loss of the independence of a number of small states? If it is not possible to create a world order which permits even small nations to live in security and freedom, then the blood sacrifice of the present battle has been in vain.

## THE SITUATION IN LITHUANIA

It is a well-known fact that all news concerning the situation in the Baltic States is completely shrouded by Moscow censorship and measures taken by the NKGB (Narodnyj Kommissariat Gosudarstvennoj Bezopasnosti). Since last summer, when the Red Administration, in the wake of the Red Army, again took over the Baltic States, *no foreign correspondent has ever been admitted into those countries.*

Regardless of this, a fairly accurate picture of present day events in the Baltic countries can be drawn. Together with our own sources of information, news gleaned from the Lithuanian communistic press in this country has been used in the following survey on the situation in Lithuania.

The information regarding the Estonians has come from the Estonian press in Sweden.

The Latvian Information Bulletin, published by the Latvian Legation, Washington, D.C. depicts an identical situation.

The conquering Soviet armies, upon entering Lithuania in 1944, found the population greatly depleted. Haunted by their previous experience at the hands of the Soviets, the inhabitants fled regardless of destination.

Since about 25 or 30% of the inhabitants in the East and about 50% from the central parts escaped, the exodus from the western and southwestern parts of Lithuania reached about 90%, almost a half million. About 98% of the inhabitants from the Memel District (three counties on the right bank of the Niemen River) departed.

As the Red offensive penetrated further west, some of the displaced persons were cut off and were therefore forced to return.

There are about 250,000 Lithuanians in American and British-occupied western Germany. Most of these are intellectuals and the nationally conscious element. About 300 out of 1,300 R. C. priests left Lithuania. Estonia claims about 100,000 displaced.

Destruction in these lands because of war action is appalling. Cattle losses reach about two-thirds of the pre-war level. In Estonia, manpower fell 20 or 25%; in Lithuania, the percentage is higher.

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The re-occupation of Lithuania by the Soviets can be divided into two periods—

1. The period of **mopping-up**.
2. The period of **methodical sovietization**.

Information concerning the first period is given in a booklet, "The Supplement to the Appeal to Fellow-Americans on Behalf of the Baltic States," published in 1944 by the Lithuanian American Information Center. Page 7 of the booklet states that: "HERE 150 REFUGEES UNANIMOUS SOVJETS CONDUCTING SYSTEMATIC ANNIHILATION LITHUANIANS STOP ALLEGED ANTISOVIETS EXECUTED IMMEDIATELY

OTHERS IN HUGE COLUMNS DRIVEN ON FOOT TO RUSSIA STOP ESTABLISHED KOLCHOZES LITHUANIA POPULATED NOW BY RUSSIANS WHO WERE DRIVEN BY GERMAN OR FLED FROM RUSSIA. . . ."

The mopping-up has proceeded up to the present, although on a lesser scale. The result of this operation is that there are **few able-bodied Lithuanian men left in Lithuania**. Many were deported to the U.S.S.R. and many fled abroad or into the woods to continue the fight as partisans. Many of the 18-35 year group has been mobilized into the Red Army.

It may be interesting to note that the registration of girls and women at the University of Kaunas is 77%! Many elders in the villages are women.

The communist administration was able to assert itself only in towns.

Rural life is practically under partisan rule.

The orderly functioning of levies is almost impossible.

Unless escorted by armed detachments, **no individual communist dares to venture into the country**.

Armed clashes between communists and partisans are an everyday occurrence.

Scores of communists and fellow-travelers have lost their lives. In retaliation, the NKVD, with the help of the Red Army, often resorts to mopping-up operations, especially in the wooded areas. One such operation took place as late as last May-June, with the result that many forests were burned down.

Life in Lithuania at the present time is in a chaotic state.

**Russification goes hand in hand with sovietization.** This is seen in party activities, special radio hours in Russian and the publication of mass material in the Russian language. The highest positions in the Lithuanian Soviet Government are held by imported Russians. A Russian language daily, "Sovietskaja Litva," has made its appearance. In pre-war Lithuania, about 5,000 copies of any foreign publication—French, German, etc.—covered all needs. The editions in Russian now reach 50,000 to 60,000.

The teaching of the Russian language is obligatory in all schools. Many streets are renamed in Russian.

There is no doubt, also, that Moscow methodically pursues the **transfer of the population on a large scale**. This transfer has two objectives: to people Lithuania with as many inhabitants from the U.S.S.R. as is possible, and to rid, mainly the Vilna region, of the Polish-speaking population. This is done by sending people directly to Lithuania from the U.S.S.R. and by retaining there peo-

ple on their way back from Germany (former displaced U.S.S.R. nationalities in Germany).

The transfer of the Polish-speaking population seems to be in accordance with the Yalta agreement on the "Curzon Line," and in fulfillment of the recently concluded arrangement between "Soviet Lithuania," "White Russia" and the "Polish Government." As recently as last June, the Soviets began a mass deportation of the Polish-speaking people east of the Curzon line.

Last July, information was received regarding 36 trainloads of Poles from Vilna who passed through Bialystok on their way southward.

Much importance is attached by the Soviet authorities to **settling the western part of Lithuania** with "reliable people." This also includes the territory of Memel. It is partly connected with the recently expressed claim of Soviet Russia to the eastern part of East Prussia, including Koenigsberg.

The cruelest feature of Soviet rule in the Baltic States concerns the **uprooting of vast numbers of children**.

A recently published OWI item entitled, "Summer vacations in the Baltic countries for 1,700,000 youths from Soviet Russia," confirms this fact.

Simultaneously, we received information that 60,000 children from the Baltic States were sent on "summer vacations" to the U.S.S.R. There are no means of knowing whether these children were assigned permanently to State educational institutions (to make of them "conscious communists") or transferred to artisan schools in accordance with a special law promulgated on October 2, 1940.

It is a **ruthless and planned** relocation of the population with a long range aim.

## Agrarian Reforms

All available information points to the radical switch to collective farms (Kolkhoz and Sovkhoz), although communistic papers sometimes mention the allotment as "ususfructus" (temporary possession), or individual properties (usually small in size, never exceeding 12-13 acres). This is being explained by the physical impossibility of switching to an all-out collective system (because of lack of agricultural equipment, lack of manpower, great devastation, etc.), partly for purposes of propaganda for America, and partly to prove to the people the disadvantages of small farms.

In all other fields, as **administration, judicial, party organization, economics, etc.** there is a marked tendency to achieve a complete "Gleichschaltung" with the U.S.S.R.

Much publicity is given the extension of **school network** (although the Theological Department of the University is suppressed) and **stage activities** (opera, drama, ballet, etc.).

**Religious life** is at a low ebb. People are persuaded to keep out of churches. Whenever possible, the Roman Catholic priests are being discredited in the eyes of the faithful. Many priests were deported. Of four seminaries, only one remains. It is forbidden to repair destroyed or damaged churches.

Attention may be called to the fact that in Estonia, a Lutheran country, the Soviet treatment of the Lutheran church is directed along a more liberal line. The Soviet authorities are even filling the rectories, which became vacant, subsequent to the exodus. As a rule, clergymen are chosen from fellow-travelers.

It is impossible to ascertain at present whether the Soviets intend to permit **Lithuanian industries** to function, or whether they will remove all existing installations to the U.S.S.R. as they did in the case of Austria, Hungary, etc.

Everything depends on further political developments. Thus far, the Potsdam Conference has given no clue to the final territorial settlement in this corner of Eastern Europe. But, the Soviet-controlled press in this country is full of slogans as "Lithuanian industry is in full swing," etc. The same is true of Estonia and Latvia. This may apply too to the installations in Eastern Prussia, such as the huge cellulose plants at Ragnitt, the Koenigsberg industrial area, the Schneidemeuhl plants, the industries of Tilsit, Memel, Pillau, Elbing, etc.

**The harbor facilities at Memel and Liepaja** are being put in working order with utmost speed. For this purpose, the Soviets are using technicians from Leningrad.

September, 1945.

## THE DECAPITATION OF A NATION

The following is a letter published in the September issue of "Relations," a Catholic monthly review of *Ecole Sociale Populaire*, 1961 Rue Rachel Est, Montreal, Canada.

The author of this letter is a Lithuanian intellectual who recently returned from a mission through occupied western Germany.

He had the opportunity to contact many displaced Lithuanians whose number runs into many hundreds of thousands.

"Your letter has consoled me and given me much hope. And, I need it after my journey in Germany, where I have seen thousands and thousands of people in great misery, both material and spiritual.

I have visited about 30 Lithuanian camps in which were 80,000 people. A large part of these people are learned men: doctors, professors, tutors, politicians, functionaries; then, there are peasants and workers. The intellectuals are, however, the most numerous. In all of Allied-occupied Germany, there are 241 priests and 3 bishops: NN. SS. Brizgys, Podolskis and Skvireckas. 75% of the university professors, of the high school and primary school teachers have left the country. Likewise, 80% of the doctors, 70% of the lawyers, 70% of the engineers, more than 60% of the business men, 85% of the functionaries, of the officers, of the politicians and government leaders, a large part of those who worked directly to augment our cultural heritage: writers, painters, musicians, artists, etc. Fortunately, the clergy was not persecuted and has remained with the people.

There are actually 3,000 students and pupils in Germany, not counting the pupils in primary

schools and the lower grades. In my opinion, there are about 150 to 250,000 Lithuanians in all of Germany. They are obliged to live in camps where material and spiritual conditions are most difficult. Very often, families are broken up, with no means of communication among the members. Everyone lives in continuous agony, caused by the uncertainty of the fate of dear ones, parents, friends, brothers, sisters, husbands, wives, etc., and by the fear of being sent to Russia. Living quarters are small and badly arranged; there is a lack of sufficient clothing, linen, and food. The people are mentally wasted, tired, nervous, without hope for the future. Of the 80,000 I visited, I did not meet ten who would like to return to their homes while the Russians remain (in Lithuania). Terrible problems are brought about by this feeling.

The material and mental agony endured surpasses all imagination. I have never seen so many tears, so many weeping mothers, so many children who have lost their parents. One can say that there are those who have lost their fortunes, their homes, their country. The children especially are to be pitied. They must be sent immediate aid.

All the refugees wish to go to France, to the United States, to Canada, etc.—the farthest possible from the Russian menace. I could write books on all that I have seen in Germany. I shall send several articles to your newspapers. . . .

What is to be done in the face of these problems? Firstly, we must try to liberate our country-men from the concentration camps, and find work for them, either in Germany or elsewhere. That depends on the Allies. A great part of our

country-men are actually in the American zone of occupation. Therefore, their cause must be brought before the government of the United States. The possibility of their immigration to the United States must be investigated. Almost all of them wish to leave. We shall try also to have some of them go to France. But, as I have told you, life in France is actually very difficult and uncertain. No one wants to return to Lithuania as long as the Russians occupy the country.

As you can see, the situation is intolerable. These refugees are the "cream" of our nation. And, the worst is that these people despair of even speaking of the future. They cannot return to Lithuania—that would be suicide. We are well aware of the Bolshevik plans for deporting the entire nation and disbursing it in the immensity of Russia. We also knew what the Russians did during their first occupation in 1939, and what they are doing today. Above all, we know that they wish to remove our ruling and educated class so that there will be no one to preserve in the people their national feeling for Lithuania. Our refugees do not know where to go. No one wants them. They are ready to do anything, provided that they escape the Communist menace and have something to eat.

I suppose that you have influential friends in Canada. Could you not interest them in these refugees? Could you not plead the cause of their admission to Canada? You have so much land to put to valuable use. They would be infinitely grateful for the opportunity to show their ability to be of service in countless ways. I know that this entails great problems. But, where there is a will, there is always a way.

And, let us remember that the majority of these people are excellent Catholics. Shall we allow them to perish? If, one day, as I hope, they are able to enter a free Lithuania, the name of a generous and

hospitable Canada will be inscribed in the annals of our nation for her magnificent gesture of Christian charity. The appeal which I make to you is personal. I have no special authorization to address myself to you, excepting that of Christian charity. I know that you will do all in your power to reclaim liberty for the Lithuanian people."

### Another letter has reached us from a Sergeant in a U.S.A. Tank Force. It says:

... Thank God this slaughter has come to an end, but very sorry to say that hard times are ahead. Countless million souls are left homeless, and hardest hit are those who were forced to give up their beloved country against their own wish. Nobody stood up for them, they are now a forgotten people. I have covered a large part of Germany and Austria. During this period have met thousands of those unhappy people, who are now worse off than the once travelling gypsies. I spoke to many I used to know, old and young, men and women. They have nowhere to stay, nowhere to go. Their experiences are all similar, they have gone through hell. Nobody has work—there is none. Food is not obtainable although promised by UNRRA. At the present time there is no relief in sight. As winter nears conditions will become unbearable, many will freeze and starve. Nevertheless these unhappy victims have some hope for survival. Their faith is pinned on democracy, truth and justice. There is hardly a village in Western Germany which does not contain a group of Baltic peoples. It is a pity for those who were left behind. It is known though that more than a fifth were luckier. No one wants to return, not under these conditions. They live in oblivion, who knows for how long in this strange unchosen country? As one man they look to the Western Hemisphere for immediate help. ...

## BACK TO DECENCY AND CIVILIZATION

This is the story of a displaced Lithuanian workman who escaped to Scandinavia from Nazi-occupied Lithuania in 1944. Believing the Soviet promise to provide any refugee with "bread and home," he consented to return to his homeland.

He never saw his homeland!

First taken to a transit camp at Kalinin (northwest of Moscow), he was later shipped to a state labor camp somewhere on the shores of the Baltic. He spent last winter and spring of this year in Soviet Russia. The extreme hardships and ill-treatment in the labor camp were unbearable; at the first possible opportunity, he escaped. ... Let it be noted here that before returning to Soviet Russia, this Lithuanian showed a truly sympathetic attitude toward communism, and because of this fact, his story is particularly interesting.

"On one fateful day of last year, I presented myself at the Russian gathering camp of Lisma

in Sweden. Unsuspicious of any malintent on the part of the officials, each member of my group gratefully accepted a new issue of clothing and twenty Swedish crowns in cash. We saw no reason to doubt the promises of the Soviet Consul who assured us that we would soon be returned to our homeland and given the cherished privilege to work and live in peace. No premonition of what was in store for us, no misgivings about the orders given troubled our thoughts.

The following evening, the Russian steamer in which we were herded left the Stockholm harbour. The meal served us was kingly in comparison to the rations the future would bring us—it consisted of sausages, bacon, bread, canned meat.

The next day, when we docked at Turku, a Fin-

nish port, a Russian lieutenant and three Finnish soldiers were on the dock to meet us. The Finns were there to see that none of us broke our ranks for possible freedom in Finland; the Russian, of course, was there to see that we were safely conducted to an already waiting train which was to take us to Viipuri (now in the hands of the Russians and called Vyborg). As we moved on, doubt about the worth of the Consul's promises and the thought of a fate entirely alien to the one of liberty and freedom pictured for us took possession of our minds.

At the Finnish-Soviet border the next day, officers of the NKVD put us through a methodical check-up. Finally, near midnight, we arrived at Viipuri. Once again placed under guard, we left the train, very conscious of surrounding armed NKVD soldiers.

No longer did we ponder our futures: by now, none of us was unaware that we were being taken to a prison camp. The curt instructions to form columns and to march forward served to confirm the dread that we felt.

The sudden consciousness of our plight determined two of our group to attempt escape. But, that would be folly—the frontier was heavily guarded and mined; arguing thus, I managed to dissuade them from such a rash step. Another one of my friends required constant watchfulness, for he had made himself disliked by some of the criminal inmates of the camp, who tried to steal his few belongings. Our vigil, however, was inadequate, because the following night, we were robbed of some of our suitcases; all of our extra clothing was taken. Too late we learned that stealing was openly indulged in with full knowledge of the administration.

Upon our arrival, our hair had been cut. During our five-weeks stay, our daily lot was hard labor, always under heavy guard. At first, we refused the meagre and impossible rations of food given us twice a day. It was not long, however, until we realized that twenty-one ounces of black bread were better than no bread at all and ate greedily the food doled out to us.

The camp which imprisoned us had been built for former Russian prisoners of war in Finland and had housed more than 2,000 of them. The thought, however, did not prove consoling to us who were now serving a term—for how long we did not dare guess—under the Russians.

Three more trainloads of repatriated persons arrived from Sweden to share our miserable lot; a few of them were Latvians and Estonians.

And then, one day, we were informed that we were to go to Kalinin (formerly Tver, northwest of Moscow) for a few weeks. Again hopeful, we left the camp for Leningrad on the last day of the year. We were unguarded save for one official in

charge of our papers. Here we stayed two days, and, surprisingly enough, were permitted to move freely in the town. But, arrival at our final destination proved to mean simply removal from one prison to another—the difference being that this last was a "transit" camp. Although first assured that our stay would be short, we were officially informed when we gathered at the 140th Camp, Zone 3, that we would be detained six or seven months and then—not freed—but directed to a "labor camp."

There were at least 1,500 of us here, including Russians, Poles, Estonians, Latvians, Czechs, Bessarabians. A thorough investigation resulted in the dispatching first of most of the Russians, who were sent to Asiatic Russia or to work on the construction of the Moscow canal. Very few Latvians were released.

Toward the middle of March, a new arrival brought many Lithuanians, most of whom were peasants. Not much later, a group of 60 Lithuanian women were brought in. There were no children. Weary and weak, their dejected faces belied the suffering to which they had been subjected. They had been driven from their homes in Southern Lithuania and locked in a cattle car during a journey which lasted twelve days. They were given food—a total of seven ounces of black bread and water! Questioned about their deportation, they told us that one day they were summoned from their homes by a local policeman to report immediately to police headquarters, supposedly to sign a paper of some sort. The business was short and urgent, so they must not even be allowed to dress. "Too late we realized," one of them said, "that our fate was to be the worst; even had we surmised it, there was nothing we could do about it. On that very evening, we begun our Calvary. . . ."

Among the newly arrived Lithuanians, there were people from many walks of life: country teachers, ballet pupils, members of a military man's family, even an old Orthodox priest. Those of them who were able gathered in the evening to sing religious hymns. They were reluctant to discuss the plight of the Church in Lithuania. Yes, what we had been told was true: plunder and murder in Lithuania caused many to flee for their lives to surrounding woods and forests.

Meanwhile, we were acquainted with our new daily routine. Ten hours of daily labor left many of us sick and exhausted. Laborers were separated according to groups: Group I and II consisted of those who must work in factories; Group III was made up of those who must clean the camp; the fourth or Group OK comprised those who were too weak to be of any use to our jailors.

Despite the heavy burden of our work, we continued to try to exist on two meals a day. In the

morning, we were allowed a small portion of very thin cabbage soup; in the evening, we again ate cabbage and porridge. Twenty-one ounces of bread completed our menu. Such was the diet of a workman in a Russian camp. Driven by hunger and despair, many of us sold our few remaining belongings for a few more precious bits of food. The entire body of a friend of mine became horribly distended because of lack of nourishment; a new assignment was arranged for him: transferral to work in a nearby kolchose.

Miraculously, it seemed, one of us were freed toward the end of the fifth month. He had promised to write, but we did not receive a word, a situation which only aggravated our feeling of being hopelessly lost to the outside world. Soon after, another was freed; but, we later learned, to be assigned as a guard in a German labor camp.

Mental and physical exhaustion inevitably drove some to insanity; others contemplated suicide. Even common medical care was denied us. Despite

the heavy guard which watched our every move, a few daring ones escaped, only to be recaptured after a few moments of freedom. Their fate was not disclosed to us, but we entertained no illusions about it. During the latter part of our imprisonment there, some of the Lithuanians were individually taken away; we never knew where.

In the beginning of mid-summer, twenty of us were summoned for re-assignment and dispatched to a labor camp near Tallinn, Estonia, where most of the inmates were Estonians. We received military clothing and were boarded on a small tugboat. Suddenly besieged with the determination to escape, I managed to break away from my companions and elude the omni-present guards. Happily for me, fishermen who were close by saw me safely to friendly shores. Dazed at the success of my daring and grateful for being alive, I breathed deeply of the air of freedom and liberty."

August, 1945.

## NEW BOOKS ON LITHUANIA AND THE BALTIC STATES

### LITHUANIA IN A TWIN TEUTONIC

*CLUTCH—A Historical Review of German-Lithuania Relations*

by Constantine R. Jurgela, Rev. Kazys Gečys, Simas Sužiedelis

Illustrated with five maps . . . Published by THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN INFORMATION CENTER . . . 112 pages . . . Price \$1.00.

Lithuanians at Tannenberg in 1410 resisted and doomed the Teutonic "Drang Nach Osten"; Lithuanians at Pabaiskas in 1435 checked the advance of the Livonian Order (present-day Latvia and Estonia) hastening the decline of both Orders' aggressive potency. Small wonder, then, that today's Lithuanian scholars undertake to present a detailed account of these events—not only to supplement the facts already published by American historians but also to demonstrate Lithuania's historical right to an esteemed position in today's family of nations.

It was not the Slav alone who resisted the Teuton; indeed, ancient Muscovy had no part whatsoever in the decisive battle which shattered the might of the Order of Crossbearers—as Moscow in the nineteenth century would have had the world believe! Neither was the victory a Polish one — Poles participated, but the greatest credit due to the superior experience of Lithuanian warriors and the incontestable quality of Lithuanian leadership. The Livonian Order was likewise doomed when two contenders for the Lithuanian

throne engaged in battle—one in alliance with the Livonian Order of Swordbearers.

The Lithuanian nation was not one of stubborn heathens who had to be subdued by Crusaders in order to be converted to Christianity. A nation of brave people who for years were helpless victims of the knights of the Teutonic Order who, establishing not one church, nor sowing in any way the seeds of conversion, used the "heathens" as an excuse for continued plunder and warfare and for asking a continued support and funds from the Catholic Empire.

The pure Prussian blood which the followers of Hitler sought so thoroughly to uphold is traced in history to a Prussia which was a member of the Lithuanian race. "The Germans (in Prussia) are either immigrants or descendants of immigrants" (p. 68).

The foregoing, perhaps enlightening to many of us who were unaware of Lithuanian influence in history, along with information important for an honest understanding of Lithuanian, Polish, Livonian, Germanic, and Muscovite history (because its effect on present-day history is made clear) is expounded and well documented in *LITHUANIA IN A TWIN TEUTONIC CLUTCH*, a book written in three parts.

"Theutonus versus Lithuanum" by Constantine R. Jurgela is intended to familiarize the reader with the facts of the defeat of both Orders. The battle of Tannenberg and the strategy of its Lithuanian leader; the clash between the Livonian Order with a few Lithuanian and Rus troops on

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the one hand and Polish and Lithuanian forces on the other at Pabaiskas; the import of these struggles; the manner in which Livonian and Lithuanian unity was effected—are detailed.

The long and terrible struggle of Lithuanians against the aggressions of the Teutons is treated in "Seven Centuries of Lithuanian Resistance to Teutonic Aggression" by Rev. Kazys Gečys. The author demonstrates the infamies suffered at the hands of the ruthless crusading knights; the stalwart resistance of a peace-loving nation; the studied suppression of Lithuanian culture and language in a Prussia which was German-colonized since the thirteenth century; the actions leading to the German seizure of the Klaipeda district.

Finally, in "Livonian Germans" by Simas Sužiedelis the story of the Germans who entered what is now Latvia and Estonia in the thirteenth century is traced to the account of their "repatriation" to Germany in 1939. Livonia in the hands of German colonizers (wealth and power for the invaders, merciless serfdom for the natives), Livonia united with Lithuania, and later under the influence of Muscovy, Sweden, receives attention here.

This is a treatise prepared by three Lithuanian scholars well-versed in the matter of which they speak and presented for the scrutiny of the honest historian of the Middle Ages and the conscientious laymen interested in concise and accurate historical data.

Five maps serve to aid in a comprehensive reading of the book.

#### THE BALTIC NATIONS—ESTONIA, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, by F. W. Pick, D.Phil.

An English critic of the book writes:

"This is the history of Russia's neighbours on the Baltic. Viewed as one, the three North European nations of Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians spring to life in this carefully documented record of their struggle for independence. Their history proves as dramatic as is that of any Small Nation fighting in the good cause of self-preservation and winning through from serfdom to self-government. Liberty, won at the moment of Allied victory in 1918, gave these six million people their first chance of building up happy and contented communities of their own: the inspiring progress of the Baltic Nations, freed from foreign domination, and their contribution to our Western heritage is the highlight of this book.

At the same time, the history of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania puts a question to the **Peacemakers of tomorrow**: will they accept the lesson of the past and restore these Small States to their rightful place of independence so that the Baltic nations can once more live their own lives in liberty, contributing, as before, to European peace

and progress? This is the **Peace**. Unless it is answered aright, the **Peacemakers of tomorrow** must fail us."

The answer to that is simple—states Dr. Pick. It is the principle of self-determination. Each people, said the American Declaration of Independence, is entitled "to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station. . . ." The British Commonwealth grew out of the same ground. The Atlantic Charter was but its last expression. Russia has formally subscribed to the Atlantic Charter. This is unequivocal. Nobody doubts, says Dr. Pick, that the principles of the Atlantic Charter are to be applied to Czechoslovakia, to Greece, to Belgium, to Norway and others, if we want peace. Equally these principles must be applied to the six millions who belong to the ancient peoples of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania—as ancient and distinct as any in varied Europe. Unprincipled expediency cannot build peace. No argument of strategy can alter these truths which we hold to be self-evident. Peace without independence also for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania is a contradiction in terms, is impossible. Dr. Pick also says: "We can say what we know is right"—and he said it.

Dr. Pick's book is a great contribution by a distinguished impartial British publicist to the political science of which he is one of the leading minds. He is professor at the Elizabeth College, Buxton.

The book is illustrated with several maps, has a learned bibliography for each chapter of which there are sixteen.

The index is very helpful for students, as much as the bibliography.

The book's 172 pages written by Dr. Pick plead for a just cause. It is published in London by the Boreas Publishing Co., Ltd., and costs clothbound only 7 shillings 6 pence. (An excerpt from Latvian Information Bulletin issued by the Latvian Legation, September copy).

*Let's get acquainted with  
Lithuanian History!*

**Ghillebert de Lannoy**

**In Medieval Lithuania**

*Voyages and Embassies of an Ancestor  
of one of America's Great Presidents*

by **PETRAS KLIMAS**

96 pages, 7 plates, \$1.00