

... 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

President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill:

1. Their countries seek no aggrandizement, territorial or other;
 2. They desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned;
 3. They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.
- Atlantic Charter
August 14, 1941

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THE NATIONAL LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS

held at the Congress Hotel in Chicago, Ill., November 29th, 30th and December 1st, 1945, was called by the Lithuanian American Council, Inc., a war-time national coalition representing the overwhelming majority of Lithuanian American Organizations in the United States, including the two largest fraternal orders—the Lithuanian Alliance of America and the Lithuanian Roman Catholic Alliance of America.

This momentous congress was called by the Executive Committee of the Council headed by Leonard Simutis, President, who is also editor of the Catholic Daily "Draugas," and President of the Roman Catholic Alliance of America; Dr. Pius Grigaitis, Secretary and editor of the Socialist "Daily News," and Michael Vaidyla, editor of the liberal weekly "Sandara," all of Chicago, Ill.

The Governor of the State of Illinois, the Hon. Dwight H. Green in addressing the Congress very fittingly remarked that:

It is significant that the president of the Lithuanian American Council, Inc., under whose auspices this Congress is held, Mr. Leonard Simutis, and its secretary, Dr. Pius Grigaitis, are Chicagoans. The fact that they are editors of competing newspapers, and that they represent different points of view, indicates the solidarity of your people in working for the common good, and demonstrates that you have truly caught the spirit of tolerance and cooperation which always has been the strength of our America.

I am familiar with the long and aggressive campaign which the Lithuanian Americans of Chicago have waged to call the attention of all Americans to the struggle for liberty in their home land . . .

The last National Conference of Americans of

Lithuanian descent took place more than two years ago in Pittsburgh, Penn. It is significant that it convened during the most crucial period of World War II—on the day that Italy was invaded.

The main interest of American Lithuanians quite naturally centered on the determination to support the United States' war effort until complete victory and unconditional surrender would be achieved.

During the two-year period the Executive Committee, given wide discretionary powers, fulfilled the duties imposed upon it by the Lithuanian American Council by supporting all Home Front activities on a national scale.

The overall picture of the Lithuanian-American contribution to the war effort is shown in the following statement issued by the Congress:

Supporting the United States War Effort

American Lithuanians, as loyal citizens, wholeheartedly supported all of this country's war efforts.

They contributed generously to the Red Cross, the National War Fund and other organizations;

They oversubscribed their War Bond quota. (Lithuanians bought approximately \$100,000,000 worth of war bonds);

They willingly sent their sons to fight for a better future for all humanity; many thousands have fallen on foreign battlefields;

On the home front, many joined the vast army of defense workers.

The Lithuanian American Congress urges the Lithuanians to continue their splendid record; it urges all organizations to the fullest extent to support all drives, particularly

the latest Victory Loan—buy bonds so that our Government will successfully complete all its war efforts.

Supporting Lithuania's Fight for Freedom and assisting her unfortunate refugees and exiles, the Lithuanian American Council brought to the attention of various agencies of the American Administration many important facts dealing with situations in which the legitimate interests of the country of their ancestors and her people were involved and even imperiled.

In particular, the Executive Committee of the Council called to the attention of the Government of the United States information emanating from occupied Lithuania. It is believed that this voluntary information by a well-informed source was useful in helping the Government to interpret the news received from other sources and brought to light factual data on the Lithuanian underground resistance of both the German and the Russian occupations.

With ever-increasing demands for accurate information regarding Lithuania and the other Baltic States, the Lithuanians in the United States, etc., the Lithuanian American Council, in June, 1944, established its news agency service in New York City—The Lithuanian American Information Center.

When victory was achieved in Europe, the Council established its Social Service Bureau, as a branch of the Information Center, to aid displaced Lithuanians in Europe, to trace relatives here and abroad, and to give other humanitarian aid.

The Council took the decisive initiative in laying the foundation for the organizing of the United Lithuanian Relief Fund of America, Inc., a member agency of the National War Fund. This organization continues to give aid and support to many thousand homeless Lithuanians scattered throughout the world.

"The Lithuanian American Congress, held in Chicago, November 29th, 30th and December 1st, fully appreciates the efforts of the United Relief Fund of America, in aiding Lithuanians scattered by fortunes of war throughout the world.

The Congress requests the American public to give increasing aid to the Fund, so that it can stretch out a helping hand to each Lithuanian who has suffered in consequence of the war.

The Congress also calls the attention of the American Lithuanians to the fact that the National War Fund, of which the United Lithuanian Relief Fund is a member, will function until the end of 1946.

The American Lithuanians are encouraged to lay and strengthen the foundation which will enable the United Lithuanian Relief Fund to increase its humanitarian work so that aid to thousands of Lithuanians will not be curtailed."

More than 800 delegates, representing the overwhelming majority of Americans of Lithuanian de-

scend, approximately one-fifth of the total number of Lithuanians throughout the world, convened on November 29 in the Congress Hotel. They were delegated by various fraternal, war veterans, civic, patriotic and cultural organizations from various parts of the United States and Canada and included men and women from all walks of life and of various political and religious beliefs.

The Congress met to support the very cause for which the men and women of the United States fought—the cause of Democracy and Freedom for all peoples and for the restoration of the independence of Lithuania and her Baltic neighbors—Latvia and Estonia.

The Secretary of the Executive Committee in his report to the Congress on the activities of the Lithuanian American Council on November 30, among other things said:

"The war is won. The aggressors and their satellites in Europe and Asia are completely defeated. The victors now face the problems of peace and post-war reconversion. Thereafter, the task of the Lithuanian American Council is far from accomplished.

We must continue the struggle against anti-democratic ideas, as implanted by nazis and fascists. The centers of these ideological aggressors have been destroyed and discredited, but respect for human dignity, tolerance, justice, civic freedom and the right of man must be inculcated on a stronger foundation.

With the end of brown and black totalitarianism, the powerful red domination still remains. At the beginning of the war, it was an ally of the nazis and fascists. In complicity with Hitler, it had seized Lithuania. Today, it is again choking our native land. Many thousands of our brothers and sisters have escaped from Lithuania and are scattered throughout all parts of Europe. They are begging for our help.

To help Lithuania shake off the unbearable foreign yoke, so that all her exiles can again return to their native land and live once more in peace is the main objective of all our efforts.

We desire that Lithuania really be free—free of foreign domination and free internally. We wish to see Lithuania independent and democratic. National freedom and internal democracy should go hand in hand after these many years of enslavement. The Lithuanian nation after the First World War unwaveringly proclaimed that policy, and it is again reiterated by its present political authority in Europe—the Supreme Lithuanian Committee of Liberation—VLIK."

It is but natural that the re-establishment of a free and independent Lithuania was the paramount subject of discussion of the three-day Congress. The gathering showed a remarkably united front for continuing the struggle unabated until a free and independent Lithuania becomes a reality.

As Governor Green so aptly stated:

"I have no sympathy with the attitude of some Americans, who have enjoyed the blessings of our freedom so

long that they have forgotten that the ancestors of all of us once were immigrants, who sometimes doubt if a man can be loyal both to the land of his birth or his fathers and to the country of his adoption. To me it is as simple as for a man to be loyal to his father and mother and still be a good husband and father at his own fireside."

These people have demonstrated not only that they are loyal Americans but worthy and proud descendants of Lithuania as well.

The Congress took a definite stand in supporting the policy on War and Peace as repeatedly enunciated by leading Democrats and Republicans and by most of the representatives of Great Britain and America, and more recently re-affirmed by President Truman in his Navy Day address.

A clear cut policy which unfortunately appears less ideological when judged by the successive international gatherings and unexplainable compromises reached therein.

In this respect, the address delivered to the Congress Friday evening, November 30th, by the Governor of Illinois made a particularly deep impression on the gathering:

"Nor am I impressed by the statement we hear often these days that since the United States has proclaimed and enforced the Monroe Doctrine in this hemisphere for more than a century, we must permit the powerful neighbors of the Baltic States to control the destinies of those peoples. No man can read history, or even the current newspapers, without appreciating the difference between the protective interest we have taken in all the American Republics and the predatory interest of the European powers in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. While we have guaranteed for our neighbors the opportunity for the full development of their free governments, their natural resources, and their culture, "protection" in Europe has meant the suppression of free institutions, of national cultures, customs, and languages, the exploitation and confiscation of economic resources, and wave after wave of invasions marked by murder, rape and destruction.

Against that sort of protection the conscience of America always will protest. And America will be false to the ideals of liberty of the founders of this nation, if we silently condone the crimes being perpetrated today against the peoples of the small nations of Europe and against the subject peoples of Asia.

America does not wish to dictate to the nations of the world. Certainly we do not intend to use our tremendous military power to enforce any American meddling in the affairs of large or small nations. Yet the tremendous victory we have won in this war has placed us in a position of great influence throughout the world—an influence which we can and should use to advance justice and liberty everywhere. The American people expect the leaders of their government and their diplomatic representatives to be guided by these high principles in their consideration of the forgiveness of lend-lease, the making of future loans, and in all our foreign relations.

From the record of events both before and since the end of hostilities, it is clear that we are not doing so. The fine words of the Atlantic Charter, of two Presidents and their

secretaries of state, are mocked by the meek subservience with which we have yielded to the imperial ambitions of our various allies.

This is particularly true in the case of Lithuania. The influence of American opinion was largely responsible for the world's recognition after the first World War of the independence of Lithuania which had been proclaimed on February 16, 1918, and which Lithuania had successfully defended on the field of battle. The American recognition of the government established under that Declaration in July 1922 has never been withdrawn. The sovereign rights of a free Lithuania were repeatedly recognized in solemn treaties executed by the Soviet government.

The United States Government still recognizes the Lithuanian Minister to the United States. It has never approved the puppet government set up by force by the Soviet Union. Yet it has failed to make any effective protest against the crushing of liberty, the mass executions, the exiles to Siberia, the interference with Lithuanian churchmen, and the manifold indignities and sufferings inflicted upon the men and women of Lithuania.

Time does not permit me to review in detail the long struggle for freedom of the Lithuanian people. The spark of freedom kept alive through centuries of oppression will not be destroyed by the setbacks of these days. Their current tragedies have taught the peoples of all the Baltic states the necessity of composing their own differences and cooperation for their common liberation. They have learned the lesson which Benjamin Franklin taught the people of the new American states when he told them in the Continental Congress, "We must hang together or we shall be all hung separately."

With such cooperation, both in their own lands, and among their friends in America, and with truth and justice on your side, I am confident that Lithuania again will be free. In recent years it has been my privilege to proclaim the anniversary of the Lithuanian Declaration of Independence, February 16, as Lithuanian Independence Day. I trust that before the next observance of that occasion, there will be new hope for the land that you love, new proof that the force of America is behind your prayers and your hopes.

Meanwhile all of us should be reminded from the fate of Lithuania and every other country where freedom has suffered in our day, that we must vigorously defend our own country and its free institutions. We in America must be prepared to defend our liberties from attack from within or without our borders. We must maintain the military and naval supremacy, both in numbers and in our scientific weapons of modern warfare, which now renders us impregnable.

The godless philosophies which flourish on the continent of Europe and brought so much suffering to your kinsmen have spread through the world. In one form or another there are manifestations of them in our own United States. They will not flourish here if we are alert to the perils which they present to our freedom of religion, our system of individual opportunity, our sound American prosperity.

I know that the Lithuanian Americans, with their deep devotion to their churches, their appreciation of their opportunity here by their own efforts to advance themselves and their children, their loyalty to their community and

their country, will be a strong bulwark in the defense of our liberties. They will stand firm with all good Americans for the preservation of the American system under which they have prospered and under which they hope their sons, who have made such a glorious contribution to our country's victory, will achieve new progress and greater happiness. They will keep America tomorrow, as it was yesterday and is today, the last great hope of free men everywhere."

The final words of the momentous address of the Governor of Illinois find expression in two resolutions adopted by the Congress on the third day of its deliberations and which read:

Preservation of American Democracy

THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS joins other patriotic Americans in a solemn warning against the systematic infiltration of subversive elements, under a deceptive label of promotion of pseudo "democratic" causes, into the Government offices, in the institutions of learning, in the forums of discussion of domestic and international problems, in the motion picture industry and into labor organizations.

The insidious propaganda, actively sponsored and directed by an extensive network of disguised agents, is slowly making inroads into all phases of American political, social, economic and cultural life. It is undermining the very foundations of the American way of life and is turning many individuals, otherwise fairminded, into blind tools of foreign propaganda, foreign imperialism and un-American ideas. This evil influence encroaches even upon our educational system, ostensibly under a disguise of "learning to know our friends"—who refuse and have no reciprocal opportunity to learn anything of our democratic ways of life.

THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS calls on the fellow citizens of the great American Democracy to be watchful and alert, to nip in the bud the vast plot of poisoning American public opinion, and to safeguard American standards of education and ways of life, particularly the freedom of the radio, press, school teaching and motion pictures from a slanted and falsified communistic propaganda. Typical of such un-American activities was the recent example of a handful of communist-minded individuals staging a convention of "democratic" Lithuanian Americans at Pittsburgh and demanding an abandonment of the Chinese Democracy to a foreign domination.

Military Preparedness

In the present stage of world affairs, the United States must retain its full armed might to carry out our country's commitments to liberated peoples and in behalf of the world order for which our sons had fought.

Firmly trusting the expert opinion of our military and naval leaders, the LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS urges the People's Representatives in both Houses of Congress of the United States to enact legislation for military preparedness, in accordance with the program promulgated by General Dwight D. Eisenhower and other experts entrusted with planning our country's defense programs.

Of the many addresses delivered by distinguished guests of this historical Lithuanian-American gathering the following speech of Archbishop (Cardinal designate) Samuel A. Stritch of Chicago is of particular interest:

"I want to thank you for the good wishes you gave me today as I celebrate the ending of the 24th year of my consecration as bishop. In these good wishes I sense the spirit of this gathering and the fine things that brought you together.

If there was not something fine in you, if there was not in you a love most real and binding for freedom you would not be here.

All of us who have an interest in taking part in this session today place Lithuania as a symbol in this modern troubled world, the world of Christian civilization.

It took a great many centuries to build this civilization. And in it are a few ideas which are fundamental. First is that all men have a cast, a personality of their own, and certain innate rights. The second is that all men came together in the great family and brotherhood of men left by Him who died for us on the cross. We took these two concepts and built upon them. There have been mistakes made in the history of the west. Grave mistakes. But never before have we seen in history an attempt made to destroy the rights of man. There have been tyrants but they have kept up a respect of human nature and of its rights.

We Americans are troubled, for we see a renewal of struggles which have tortured Lithuania throughout its history.

Lithuania decided long centuries ago to become a part of the west and not a part of the east. And in its literature and in its art it is that of the west and not that of the east.

Just a few years ago, it seems, it had achieved the struggle it had been carrying on for centuries and had set itself up as a sovereign state. It was not big, as there were not a great many people. It was not a rich state. It was a state in which the Lithuanian people had a personality.

And they have developed that personality. Any one familiar with their contributions to art and the things they have done for European and western history, has the knowledge that Lithuania has its own personality and the right for sovereignty and independence.

Our late president voiced this conviction when he planned the peace program. Clearly he said, you have no right to destroy the personality of man and no right to destroy the personality of a people. We have seen time and time again in history that the work of tyrants might have succeeded but never succeeded in crushing the personality of a people.

The Lithuanian people have contributed to the variety of our culture.

When we look on what they have done in their own and other languages, we must admit that we would be poorer in our culture if there had not been this contribution of the Lithuanian people.

There are smaller countries than Lithuania. Who of us thinks of going down and destroying Puerto Rico?

Who thinks of robbing Cuba of its independence because it happens to be off our shores?

Lithuania took its place as a free state in a family of nations in the belief that all nations should live in unity.

Its own political make-up was democracy. It wanted to respect the dignity of its citizens. It called upon its citizens to unite in the family of nations for its own common good and for the good of the world. It had reason in history to feel aggrieved. In its history there had been injustices done but it had resolved to throw off all violence and to show that though their nation was small the Lithuanians could do mighty things.

In 1920 Lithuania entered into a treaty with Russia and Russia acknowledged Lithuania's independence. Again in 1926 it entered into a non-aggression pact with Russia wherein Russia assured the independence of Lithuania. When the Russians first came into Lithuania they voiced such assurances, but they enforced slavery on the people. When they came again, again they enforced their tyranny.

They did not keep the heritage of the Lithuanian people. They set up a puppet government and made that puppet voice Russian sympathies but not the sympathies of the Lithuanian people. And so we have before our eyes today a very queer situation.

Our country recognizes Lithuania, Lithuanian, Estonian and Latvian representatives are still functioning. But on the other hand, there has been an aggression made and in fact Lithuania is occupied by the Russians who are claiming it to be a part of their territory.

This claim is not based on any just right. There is no reason which can justify the deprivation of this country of its independence and its government.

We are here today to revive in our resolutions the hope that in some marvelous way the chains of enslavement will be broken and Lithuania will regain her full freedom. But if in chains she must endure hardships for a while, she will endure it with a heart that loves freedom and she will never surrender her rights. And she will be glorious in her chains.

No, all of us have reached the same conclusion,—we want Lithuania to be free and the Baltic States to be free. We have cast aside unworthy intentions which were manipulated by the communist group in Lithuania.

These Lithuanian people are Christian Catholics and contributed much in sanctity to the church. In their days of trouble they showed that they never tried to sever religion from their culture and they are brothers of the human race as well as brothers in the House of the Church.

My mind is troubled by the sufferings which have come to the Lithuanians. I know perhaps better than most about how many members of Lithuania were forced out into exile and how many found their way in the countries of Europe. They are in these countries today and there is a power proclaiming that they should return to their homes. For what? These refugees have a right to demand our protection, and should not be forced to return to suffering and danger and death. One of the instant things which demands the attention of the champions of democracy today is to declare a rightful haven for the homeless exiles in Europe and Asia who are being forced to return to their homes.

Fortunately, at this time we bring relief to these depressed Lithuanians in Europe and in parts of Asia. We are allowed to protect many of them. We are allowed to do what we can for them, and I want to assure you that the Bishops' Council and War Relief of the National Catholic Council is doing its utmost to serve in every way these suffering people. Just recently they made a very generous grant.

It has watched this work. And while, of course, it realizes its own direct responsibility in doing what it can do, it rejoices that you are joining with them in trying to bring relief to those suffering whose hearts are crushed by the tribulations heaped upon them.

If we could only get a hand of relief into Lithuania! There is a blackout which obscures assistance. We cannot enter to relieve this suffering. So we are praying, praying not only that we may have funds, but that we can take care of those whom we are not permitted to take care of, and be permitted to enter and aid these suffering peoples of Europe.

Whatever be the political situations, the immediate thing to be done is to try to take care of the suffering and try to see if we can protect human rights of little children.

I am very glad that you gathered here in Chicago for this convention. These days will go down in the history of Chicago. You who love freedom came here to find a way to help Lithuania and the Baltic States. And you came here with sympathy for Poland, for in both countries things have happened and are still happening. You have sympathy for all who are oppressed. You love this land under the Stars and Stripes because it stands for freedom and for the vow that no Government may put it upon itself to infringe upon the freedom of another. Because it is a great democracy and democracy is Christian—you love this country. I pray that your resolves come true. May Lithuania be out of its difficulties and suffering soon. Lithuania is true to its God, it has proved true to its ideas and believes in freedom. The great God in heaven will aid it."

It is fitting that the following resolutions, inspired by the Christian principles of charity and commiseration should be recorded:

Tribute to Humanitarians

THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS was deeply moved by the wave of humanitarian response to a desperate call for help from 167 Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian internees, who, having been forcibly inducted in the German armed forces in violation of International Law governing the conduct of a military occupant used the first opportunity to flee to a neutral Sweden to seek a haven from oppression and subjugation.

When it became known that the Swedish Government, inclined to treat these Baltic political refugees as ordinary interned prisoners of war of a belligerent country, accepted a Russian demand to surrender the Baltic citizens along with the German internees on conclusion of the hostilities of war—the Swedish people were the first to demand that the Baltic internees be treated as political refugees rather than face an almost certain death at the hands of the Soviet oppressors of the home countries of the internees. The spontaneous wave of sympathy for these victims of war and aggression spread throughout Sweden and thence to other democratic countries. In consequence of this great pressure of domestic and international public opinion, the Government of Sweden is re-considering its former decision.

THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS pays its greatest respect and gratitude to His Holiness Pope Pius

XII, His Majesty Gustav V, King of Sweden, the Protestant Bishops and Delegates of the Evangelical Church of Sweden, Archbishop of Canterbury of England, and the great liberty-loving Swedish masses and their free press for their humanitarian intervention.

American Lithuanians are also grateful to the great American press agencies and newspapers, United States Senators and Representatives, and to the many churchmen, organizations and individuals, for their spontaneous response and action for the preservation of the right of asylum for political refugees.

Respect for the inalienable rights of man survives in the Western Democracies, as is shown by the humanitarian intervention in Sweden, the United States, England, Vatican City and Switzerland in this instance of 167 human beings whose lives were jeopardized in consequence of Nazi lawlessness.

Displaced Persons and Political Refugees

THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS heard with great sympathy and commiseration the reports on the present situation of Displaced Persons and Political Refugees in Europe. Several phases of their treatment were closely studied, and a considerable improvement in the condition of the unrepatriable Baltic and other political refugees is noted with satisfaction.

This Congress voices its *gratitude to General Dwight D. Eisenhower and his staff at Frankfort, to State and War Department officials* promulgating the humane policies concerning the treatment of "displaced" Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, Jews, and other political refugees, and to *Hon. Herbert H. Lehman and his staff* for their untiring efforts, in behalf of UNRRA, on the policy making level and in many instances on the field operational level, to improve the hard lot of these victims of war, aggression and racial prejudice.

THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS expresses its *firm confidence that the Dept. of State, Army authorities and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration will solve the pressing problems of* refugee life and will improve postal and other communication facilities for the unrepatriable Baltic and other political refugees.

Liberation of their home countries remains, however, the paramount problem demanding United Nations Organization's action.

Two distinguished Americans of Polish descent honored the Congress by their presence.

Alvin O'Konski, a member of Congress from Wisconsin, voiced the following sentiments:

"Those of you who came here from Russian-occupied Lithuania came to escape Russian dictatorship and despotism. As long as Lithuania stays under Russian domination, the war is lost, for if freedom is allowed to die in small countries, it will die in all of Europe. Those same people who will not raise their voices in protest to the loss of freedom in Lithuania are the ones who are willing to forfeit the independence and freedom of the United States.

The Lithuanian people have suffered immeasurably both under red and brown fascism. One-third of their people has been liquidated. The first to be exiled to Siberia by the Russians was their intellectual class. German occupation meant a continuation of slave labor and when the Russians, supported by \$10,000,000,000 in Lend-Lease from the United States, drove the Germans out, the lot of Lithuania remained unchanged. However, starving and miserable Lithuania is not asking for money, or for exchange of state secrets—simply for its FREEDOM, which, although theoretically recognized by our Government, is deprived by Russia.

What is left of Lithuania places its hope in the freedom-loving Americans."

Charles Rozmarek, a well-known Chicagoan and President of the Polish American Congress warned the United States of America against loaning Russia a single penny. The policy of appeasing Stalin is not avoiding a third war, but actually inviting it.

"The Soviet Union's lust for more territory when it already has far more land and far greater natural resources than the United States, will sooner or later lead to world disaster. It was Hitler's greed for more lands that touched off this last war.

"Fighting for a Free and Independent Poland, and Americans of Polish descent in fact are fighting for a Free and Independent Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia as well—for the very principles for which the men of the United States fought and died."

Analyzing the final resolutions adopted by the Congress as a result of deliberations and ballot duly taken, it seems proper to state that all of them can be subdivided into 2 groups: *basic policy declarations* and *resolutions pertaining to the war criminals*.

The following resolutions belong to the latter group.

German War Criminals

THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS notes with satisfaction that some of the war criminals are brought to trial for their crimes.

Nevertheless, the Lithuanian American Congress finds it necessary to call the Government's attention to the fact that the *indictment* against top Nazi criminals now being tried at *Nuremberg omits the crimes* committed by them *against* the independence, security and territorial integrity of the Republic of *Lithuania*.

In 1935, the Government of Lithuania had prosecuted Dr. Neumann, von Sass and other Nazis of the Klaipeda-Memel District for terroristic acts and plotting to separate the Klaipeda Territory from Lithuania. The trial brought into the open the fact that these acts were *directed from Berlin* by Nazi Party officials and the German Government.

Furthermore, *in March 1939 the German Government, acting through Joachim Ribbentrop, its Foreign Affairs Minister, forced the Government of Lithuania, by threats of use of superior forces amassed on the German-Lithuanian frontier, to cede the Klaipeda District to Germany. Simultane-*

ously, *Germany signed a guarantee of territorial security of Lithuania* minus the forcibly seized District of Klaipeda.

Finally, in *August and September 1939, Germany violated this guarantee* by signing two Pacts with the Government of the Soviet Union, whereby the Baltic States and Poland were divided into Russian and German "spheres of influence," in effect attempting to annihilate the political independence of those countries.

WHEREFORE, *the Lithuanian American Congress requests* the Government of the United States to *move that the indictment against Ribbentrop and other German war criminals be supplemented with three additional charges of acts of aggression, to wit:*

- (1) Plotting against the orderly Government and territorial integrity of Lithuania in 1935;
- (2) Forcible seizure of the Klaipeda District from Lithuania in March, 1939; and
- (3) Violation of the sovereignty of the Baltic States on August and September 1939 in a bilateral plot to annihilate the political independence of Lithuania and other Baltic States.

International Trial of Non-Axis War Criminals

THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS expresses satisfaction that one set of war criminals of World War II is brought before the bar of International Justice, wherein the representatives of the Russian people are sitting in judgment on German war criminals for the crimes committed against non-German countries and peoples, including the Russian people.

The Charter of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg defines certain crimes: *Conspiracy and Crimes Against Peace, War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity.*

However, THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS calls the attention of the American People to the fact that *no provision has been made, thus far, to bring to justice non-Axis war criminals* for their multitude of crimes committed against world peace and civilian population of the occupied countries.

It is a generally known fact, that the *Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*, acting through Vyacheslav Molotov, Premier and Foreign Affairs Commissar, *plotted with the German Government* represented by Joachim Ribbentrop and other German officials to commit crimes *against peace in violation of international treaties, agreements or assurances* in the development and course of the common plan or conspiracy against many Eastern European countries including Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, in August and September 1939. Thereafter, in the course of the German Russian conspiracy, the Government of the *Soviet Union invaded* by armed forces the territories of *Poland*, and by threatening the use of Soviet armed might, *forced* the Governments of *Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to accept*, in October 1939, the co-called "Mutual Assistance Pacts" investing Russian armed forces into the Baltic States, *under a "solemn Russian guarantee" of respect for the sovereignty of those countries and their domestic, political, social and economic systems.* This step was thereafter followed by a *war of aggression by the Soviet Union against Finland* and installation

of a puppet regime of Otto Kuusinen to replace the legitimate Government of Finland. These actions of the Soviet Government clearly fall within the definition of Count One, of the Crimes Against Peace of the Nuremberg Tribunal.

In June 1940, when the British evacuated Dunkirk and the Germans already had over-run the Low Lands and France, *the Government of the Soviet Union*, acting through Foreign Affairs Commissar Vyacheslav Molotov, served ultimata on the Governments of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, and by investing the masses of Russian armies and naval forces, *forcibly seized the Baltic States, destroyed the legitimate Governments of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia and imposed puppet regimes* not representative of the Peoples concerned in violation of international treaties and the domestic laws of said countries.

Thereafter, in pursuing the policy of conspiracy against the political independence and territorial integrity, and in violation of the existing treaties, agreements or assurances, the Russian conspirators initiated and carried out farcical "elections." The conspirators greatly enlarged existing communist party organizations, established a network of new state and party organizations and "co-ordinated" the state agencies with the result that the life of the Baltic Peoples was dominated by communist doctrine and practice, such as that the leadership of the Communist Party, as the sole bearer of the Soviet doctrines, was entitled to shape the structure, policies and practices of the Baltic States and all related institutions, to direct and supervise the activities of all individuals within the State and to destroy all opponents. The conspirators established and extended a system of terror against opponents and supposed suspected opponents of the alien regime. They imprisoned such persons without judicial process and subjected them to persecution, degradation, despoilment, enslavement, torture and murder. The conspirators destroyed the free trade unions by confiscating their funds and properties, persecuting their leaders, prohibiting their activities and supplanting them by an affiliated party organization. The conspirators promoted beliefs and practices incompatible with Christian teaching, sought to subvert the influence of the Churches over the people, expelled the teaching of religion from all schools, and re-shaped the educational system and particularly the education and training of Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian youths, on a progressively militarized footing and for the object of maintaining a dictatorship of one single Communist Party. They deprived labor and all populations of their rights of free industrial and political association.

Thereafter, the Russian conspirators reduced the Diets of the Baltic States to bodies of their own nominees and curtailed the freedom of popular elections throughout the occupied territories of the Baltic States and Poland. The conspirators methodically and pursuant to plan endeavored to assimilate the occupied Baltic territories politically, culturally, socially and economically into the Soviet Union and endeavored to obliterate the former national character of these territories. In pursuance of these plans and endeavors, the Russian conspirators forcibly deported inhabitants who were predominantly non-Russian and introduced thousands of Russian colonists. This plan included economic domination, physical conquest, installation of puppet governments, purported de jure annexation and enforced conscription into Soviet armed forces. In November 1940, the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the Soviet Union issued, at Moscow, an executive order No. 001223, directing the listing

of all "anti-Soviet elements in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia" thereafter when the lists were compiled, one Serov, Deputy People's Commissar of Public Security (NKGB) of the USSR, issued detailed instructions regarding the manner of deportation of "the anti-soviet elements from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia."

In consequence of these orders from Moscow, in execution of a common plan and conspiracy to commit crimes against humanity, hundreds of thousands of innocent people were detained, tortured, murdered, particularly in June 1941, or deported into the interior of the USSR from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. Masses of people were massacred, as in example at Proveniskis and Telsiai in Lithuania. Murders and ill treatment were carried out by divers means, including shooting, bayoneting, clubbing, hanging, starvation, gross overcrowding, systematic under-nutrition, systematic imposition of labor tasks beyond the strength of those ordered to carry them out, inadequate provision of surgical and medical services, kickings, beatings, brutality and torture of all kinds, systematic verbal abuse, denial of right to correspond with relatives and isolation from all contacts with families and relief organizations. In some cases, the victims were American citizens whose citizenship was arbitrarily denied by the Soviet authorities.

All these crimes are clearly within the definition of crimes against peace and humanity as defined by the Character of the International Military Tribunal for the trial and punishment of the major criminals of the European axis countries.

The armed forces of the Soviet Union once more occupied the Baltic States in the summer and fall of 1944, and in the spring of 1945. Ignoring the obligations of the Atlantic Charter and Declaration to Liberated European Peoples, subscribed to by the Government of the Soviet Union, the Soviet authorities again imposed a terroristic puppet regime maintained exclusively by the armed might of Russia. All freedoms, all basic human rights are once more suppressed. The policy of mass terror, mass executions and mass deportations is once more instituted. Baltic men and women have been and continue to be forcibly drafted into the Red Army, Red Fleet and labor battalions, and shipped outside of their home countries. Atrocities have been and are being committed by the Red Army and NKVD troops with exceptional brutality in disregard of all humane standards. Russification and communization of the Baltic countries is proceeding apace, including the bringing in of masses of non-Baltic peoples from Russia, to settle in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. Postal services, railroads, radio facilities and all economic organizations are taken over and exploited by Russia and by Russian officials. No American reporters and no American or United Nations relief officials are admitted into the Baltic States. Baltic citizens forcibly inducted, in violation of International Law, into the German armed forces are being treated by the Russian authorities as traitors and peremptorily executed on their surrender. Eight months after the conclusion of hostilities in Europe the Soviet Government maintains a state of siege in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The countries are ruined economically in consequence of organized plundering of public and private property, expropriations, requisitions and nationalization by Russian officials. These multiple crimes are being perpetrated by the occupational Russian regime *in peacetime*.

Taking these generally known facts into consideration, the LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS petitions

the People's Representatives in both Houses of Congress of the United States to direct the Executive Branch of the Government to *initiate the measures providing the machinery and uniform standards for trial of all international criminals, regardless of their nationality and regardless of the commission of such crimes in wartime or peacetime*, in order to bring to justice Russian and other criminals guilty of crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, either by supplementing and extending the competence of the International Military Tribunal or by enlarging the scope of jurisdiction and venue of the International Court of Justice.

In particular, the LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS petitions for additional definition of international crimes by enacting the provisions embracing (a) seizure, by force or by the threat of force, of a territory of another state, and (b) initiation and carrying out, under the conditions of a military occupation, of political elections for the purpose of effecting either the change of sovereignty for the benefit of the occupying power and/or imposing a party dictatorship subservient to such occupying power.

The basic policy declaration includes the "Re-Constitution of Lithuania, United Nations Organization and Baltic Entente."

Re-Constitution of Lithuania

(Unanimously voted Nov. 30th, 1945)

The LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS, representing by duly elected delegates the preponderant majority of Americans of Lithuanian extraction or descent, jointly and severally re-iterates its membership's unequivocal belief in the *inalienable rights of men and nations*, in the principle of *equality of men and races*, in the right of peoples to *pursue individual happiness* and to develop their *creative talents in freedom*, under a *representative democratic form of government*, for *all nations capable of self-government*, and in the *war aims* proclaimed by our country, *based on the Wilsonian principle of national self-determination*, the Roosevelt *Atlantic Charter and Four Freedoms* and President Truman's *Twelve Points*.

Being particularly concerned with the destiny of Lithuania, the country of our ancestors, and realizing that the *People of Lithuania desire nothing that is not rightfully theirs*, this Congress takes cognizance of:

(a) The ethnic, cultural and linguistic *individuality* and political *traditions* of the Lithuanian people.

(b) The *ancient Lithuanian statehood*, dating back to the year 1,200 A.D., its splendid *historical record* of tolerance, individual, racial, linguistic and cultural liberty; its *progressive jurisprudence* and ways of *administration* perpetuated in historical reminiscences of the *liberal Lithuanian rule among the Latvian, White Ruthene, Ukrainian, Jewish and Tatar nationalities*.

(c) The most progressive and beneficial Lithuanian leadership in the *educational and political reforms* of the last quarter of the Eighteenth Century, just before the final partition of the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania in 1795.

(d) The *long, unceasing and determined struggle* of the Lithuanian People *against the foreign—Muscovite and German—domination and oppression*; the *heroic sacrifices of each succeeding generation* of the Lithuanian People *in the*

great mass insurrection of 1794-1795, 1812, 1831, 1863-1864, 1905, 1918-1920, and the epic Lithuanian fight for basic human rights, for human dignity, for freedom of the press and of the printed Lithuanian word during the forty-year suppression of all Lithuanian literary activities (1864-1904).

(e) *The Proclamation of Independence by the People of Lithuania* on February 16th, 1918; the unequal heroic struggle against several rapacious neighbors of Lithuania; victory of the People in the general, direct, untrammelled elections by secret ballot in April 1920 to a Constituent Assembly based on proportionate representation; and the *Democratic Constitution* framed by the Lithuanian People's representatives for a progressive democratic nation of Western Christian outlook and of liberal populist traditions in administration.

(f) The admirable progress in *democratic self-government, economic and cultural advancement; consistent adherence to the rule of reason, of justice and of law in international relations; co-operation in the peace machinery* devised by the League of Nations; and *scrupulous performance of all international obligations* by the Republic of Lithuania in the years 1918-1940.

(g) *The imposition by the Soviet Union*—by the threat of superior force and in connivance with Nazi German war criminals now being tried by an International Tribunal at Nueremberg—of a "Mutual Assistance Pact" on October 10, 1939, whereby Lithuania granted and leased to the Soviet Union military bases in the strategic centers of Lithuania in exchange for a solemn Russian guarantee of the *Independence of Lithuania* and of Russian non-interference in the domestic political, social and economic order of the country.

(h) *The subsequent violation by the Soviet Union of all the treaties*—Peace Pact, Non-Aggression Pact, and Mutual Assistance Pact with a guarantee of the political independence and non-interference in the domestic affairs—then and now in force between the Soviet Union and the sovereign Republic of Lithuania.

(i) *The Soviet policy of lawlessness, terror, intimidation, economic impoverishment, nationalization, sovietization, oppression, persecution, mass arrests, mass executions and mass deportations* which caused, within one year of the Soviet occupation, immeasurable losses in manpower, economic and cultural wealth in Lithuania.

(j) *The condemnation by the Government of the United States*, in a statement by the Department of State on July 23rd, 1940, of the deliberate attempt by the Soviet Union to annihilate by devious processes and predatory activities the political independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Lithuania and northern Baltic States, Latvia and Estonia.

(k) *The Universal Insurrection of the People of Lithuania against all foreign domination and enslavement in June 1941; restitution of the political independence of Lithuania under a Provisional Coalition Government, and its dissolution by Nazi Germany* in August 1941.

(l) The Atlantic Charter Declaration of August 1941 by the President of the United States and Prime Minister of Great Britain, holding out a promise of the restoration of sovereignty to the peoples forcibly deprived of same, and subsequent embodiment of the Atlantic Charter as a part of the *Declaration by United Nations*, including the Soviet Union, on January 1, 1942.

(m) The effective *Lithuanian underground liberation*

struggle during the three years of German occupation and continuing to this date, directed against the Nazi and Soviet attempt to annihilate Lithuania as a sovereign nation and for a restoration of fundamental human rights and political independence, under a unified Supreme Lithuanian Committee of liberation which, ever since August 1941, proclaimed to the People that its fight for the Allied Cause and Liberation of Lithuania and its good Baltic neighbors is being waged in full confidence in a fulfillment of the Atlantic Charter.

(n) The present second occupation of Lithuania by the armed forces of the Soviet Union and imposition of a puppet Soviet regime maintained solely and exclusively by the bayonets of the Red Army and NKVD troops; a continuing Soviet rapacity, imperialism and refusal to honor its Peace, Non-Aggression and Friendship Pacts with Lithuania in spite of the solemn Russian underwriting of the Atlantic Charter, Moscow Declaration and Yalta Declaration to Liberated European Peoples.

(o) *The Re-iteration of the American policy of non-recognition of the Soviet attempt to annihilate the independence of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia*, voiced by the Department of State in March 1945.

(p) President Harry S. Truman's *Twelve Point Policy* enunciated in his recent Navy Day speech.

(r) *The Equally excellent record* in democratic self-government, cultural and economic advancement, scrupulous co-operation in League of Nations peace machinery, strict observance of all international treaty obligations and good neighborhood policies of the Peoples of the Republics of Latvia and Estonia.

(s) The continuing guerilla fight and underground resistance of the Peoples of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia striving for their liberation and for fulfillment of the promises made in behalf of the United Nations and "Big Three" Powers; and finally

(t) The unsurpassed American contribution to Victory over fascism, achieved at high cost in human lives and suffering, in great material destruction, and the decisive American lend-lease aid to the fighting United Nations.

WHEREFORE, the LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS pledges its full moral support to the People of Lithuania striving for a liberation from enslavement by any foreign power and for a restoration of full political independence and democratic self-government of their country, in a free world promised by the Atlantic Charter and the United Nations Organization.

The LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS calls upon the Government of the United States to implement its wartime policy declarations with active exercise of its good offices in initiating immediate measures to induce Russia to honor the Soviet Government's endorsement of the Atlantic Charter, Moscow Declaration and Yalta Declaration to Liberated European Peoples, and to withdraw Soviet armed forces, police, administrative and communist party apparatus from the territories of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS calls upon the Great Powers that had subscribed the Yalta Declaration to Liberated European Peoples to fulfill all of their jointly made promises to liberated European Peoples, certainly including among them the peoples of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia; to create conditions enabling formation of broadly representative interim Governments of Lithuania,

Latvia and Estonia; to repatriate Baltic deportees from their Siberian and Northern Russian exile, under the supervision of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration; to provide for an orderly non-compulsory repatriation of displaced Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians from Western Europe, after evacuation of the Russian troops, police and communist party apparatus from the territories of the Republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia; thereafter, to hold free and untrammelled general elections, under an impartial United Nations supervision, with the effective full participation of the United States, and under conditions of complete uncensored freedom of the radio, press, campaigning, assembly, speech and reporting, thus helping the sovereign Peoples of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to restore their democratic self-governments after the harrowing experiences of three successive hostile occupations.

THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS also calls upon the Government of the United States to initiate the move for an immediate admission of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, still fullfledged members of the League of Nations, into the United Nations Organization.

Finally, the LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS requests the Government to arrange immediately, prior to resumption of actual self-government, for admission, directly into the Baltic States, of American Press, Red Cross, Welfare organizations, and the American Staff of U. N. N. R. A.

Membership of the organizations affiliated in the LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS will spare no effort until the above-stated objectives shall have been fulfilled, and the Honor and Spirit of the United Nations shall have been preserved by effecting the promises made to American men and women of the armed forces, to the American People, and the world at large.

United Nations Organization

THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS welcomes the American initiative in forming the United Nations Organization to safeguard the world peace.

Nevertheless, it is our considered opinion that the Government of the United States, in co-operation with the Governments of Great Britain and British Dominions, should immediately initiate an amendment to the United Nations Organization Charter to abolish the veto power of any one of the great States and to return to the principle of sovereign equality of all nations, large and small, by applying the majority rule in the Assembly.

The veto power, particularly when reserved by an imperialistic State isolating itself from all outside intelligence and control, and building up a set of satellite "States" completely dominated by a single political party controlled by such State, would only tend to promote lawlessness and aggression and to perpetuate the fruits of aggression by such State at the cost of subjugation of its weaker neighbors. Malignity of such veto power is particularly illustrated by the failure and refusal of the Soviet Union to conform to its many international commitments, to evacuate its armed forces from Eastern European and Middle East countries and to create conditions enabling free and unfettered elections there.

This Congress is confident that the American people are prepared to modify the old concepts of sovereignty in order to preserve civilization in this age of atomic energy. For the

sake of survival of our civilization, there should be *no way open for sabotage* of the United Nations Organization by any veto-minded power.

Baltic Entente

Recalling the long historical record of friendly co-existence, side by side, of the Peoples of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, and the common plight and aspirations of the three Baltic Peoples, the LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS pledges its full moral support of the common struggle for Freedom and Independence of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

Lithuanian Americans are proud of the exemplary record of good neighborliness of the Baltic Entente interrupted so abruptly by World War II. Mutual ties of friendship have been strengthened in fact by the experience of foreign occupation common to all three good Baltic neighbors and by their underground fight for a common cause of Freedom.

THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS is confident that the United Nations Organization, under the moral leadership and initiative of the Anglo-American Democracies, shall soon recreate conditions enabling the Baltic Peoples to resume their places as sovereign democratic States in a world community of freemen.

The past, present and future fate of Lithuania was discussed by outstanding personalities.

The Lithuanian Minister to the United States, the Honorable Povilas Zadeikis spoke to the gathering on two different occasions.

He stated that:

"I believe that the ideal of every nationally conscious nation is its political independence; nations, large and small, strive constantly for it, fight for it, die for it.

"Since the beginning of the thirteenth century, the creative and freedom-loving genius of the Lithuanian people has been credited with the achievement of independent statehood. The people bravely defended the far flung borders of the Lithuanian Empire which at one time stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea. In 1323 the city of Vilnius was made the capital of that empire by the great Gediminas, Rex Lithuanorum et Mutorum Ruthenorum.

"When in 1776 the delegates of the thirteen original American states were declaring their independence and stating that 'we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,' the independence of Lithuania, a member of the dual Polish-Lithuanian state, was nearing total eclipse. One hundred twenty years of Russian occupation followed during which several attempts to regain freedom were made."

He expressed a firm belief in a brighter future—

"but Lithuania considered as a country, as a nation, as a state, is still alive. More than that — she is immortal. She was, she is and she will be . . ."

"Such values as moral, right, truth, the sympathies of the democracies throughout the world, are fully on the side of the Lithuanian cause."

The future of Lithuania, from a different angle, was discussed by Dr. P. Grigaitis, Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Lithuanian American Council and General Secretary of the Board of the Congress. In his carefully prepared speech on November 30, among other things, he said:

"What is the road to Lithuanian freedom?"

In reality, it is the democratic road to permanent peace based on the principles of justice, humanity and freedom for all nations. If the democracies will succeed in establishing these, then Lithuania will regain her freedom.

We must support the democracies: first, the most powerful democracy in the world — the North American democracy. We must consider her Lithuania's friend — not her enemy.

We must consider Great Britain, Sweden and other democratic countries our friends. When they make mistakes, we can criticize them. Fully understanding the Lithuanian question, we can the more quickly recognize the mistakes which bear on the fate of the country of our forebears — mistakes which other people sometimes do not see.

The Lithuanian American Council has always tried to cooperate with the United States Government. The fact that this government did not accede to Soviet pressure and during the course of the entire war upheld its determination not to recognize the annexation of Lithuania to the Soviet empire is the clearest proof of her good will — *and it is of inestimable value to the Lithuanian nation.*

Critics ask why the late President Roosevelt's administration, if friendly to Lithuania, did not ask definite guarantees from Moscow officials to leave Lithuania in peace. But, do the guarantees of totalitarian dictatorship mean anything? Did she not give a guarantee to Poland when the late Sikorski signed a new agreement with Soviet Russia in London immediately after the outbreak of the German-Russian war? Did not Stalin and Molotov themselves repeatedly give solemn promises to Lithuania to respect her independence?

Lithuania does not ask favors of America; she only wants her to support those principles which were promised to all enslaved nations in the Atlantic Charter: the right to regain the independence which was taken from her by force. Because today the Lithuanian nation is enslaved, we, living in free America, speak for her. We know her desires.

Everyday we see proof that even the American people support these desires. Very frequently, the American press, members of Congress and prominent people, raise their voices in Lithuania's behalf. Politicians seek opportunities to show publicly that they are "Lithuania's friends."

We need as many friends as possible, but we must bear in mind the fact that Lithuanian independence depends on a more secure basis than efforts to get the "Lithuanian vote."

The Americans' deep-rooted respect for justice and freedom is of great moral value to us. No American government, whether it be republican or democratic can ignore that. . . ."

Colonel K. V. Grinius, Chairman of the Lithuanian National Council, a guest speaker, saw in the struggle of the Lithuanian patriots during five fateful years of World War II, a repetition of the eternal phenomenon—Lithuanian's struggle throughout the centuries to be free, to have his own home.

Lithuania's present struggle for independence is a dramatic episode in the eventful history of that little land. It began in 1941 with the uprising against red tyranny. During the German occupation two daring and heart breaking manifestations for freedom appeared.

The struggle never ceased; doggedly and unremittingly it held its course during the entire foreign occupation.

Because of casualties, only the actors were replaced, the stage and the idea remained the same: *freedom and independence.*

During the past three years, Lithuania's Fight for Freedom centered in the Supreme Committee of Liberation (VLIK). All patriots pledged their allegiance and lives to the cause.

Lithuania again re-affirmed herself as the land of the free and the land of the brave, keeping her traditional record scrupulously clean. . . .

Even the present struggle shows no let-up. In spite of severe casualties and a seemingly hopeless situation, a handful of patriots are resisting to this day.

Morally as well as politically they are heartened by the determined support of their American brethren.

These brave people of a brave little nation symbolize Timeless Lithuania. Their spirit and unswerving faith augurs well for a brighter future.

Final Chapter

The deliberations of the Congress were carried out in an orderly manner.

The Congress decided to increase the membership of the Board of Directors of the Council to include additional members, among them returned veterans and representatives of organizations not affiliated with parishes and the large fraternal and ideological federations.

In paying tribute to decency and fairness, the Congress concluded its sessions with the following resolutions directed to the friends of small nations.

Tribute to American Press

THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS gratefully acknowledges the fairness of the preponderant majority of the American Press in reporting the world events, the plight and aspirations of the subjugated freemen of the world, the conduct of the various occupying forces, and the situation of Displaced Persons and Political Refugees in liberated Western European and Far Eastern countries.

The fair attitude of the American press and its Foreign Correspondents enabled the American People to form intelligent and unbiased opinions on world events and on the problems of peace settlement on the basis of the solemn wartime promises repeatedly made by our Government and by the United Nations—in a free world, under a rule of reason, of justice and of law in international relations.

Freedom of the Press and fairness in reporting the salient news in an uncontrolled press are two basic premises fortunately blessing the American People in a half-free, half-slave world. THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS voices its firm faith in the American free press and in the continuation of liberal press traditions that bring a ray of hope to subjugated peoples.

A Tribute to Friends of Lithuania

THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS pays its tribute to the Governments and Peoples of the countries continuing to recognize the *de jure* Independence of the sovereign Republic of Lithuania, to wit: *The United States of America, The Vatican, The United Kingdom, Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, the*

Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, Iran, Ireland, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, El Salvador, Spain, Syria, Turkey, the Union of South Africa, Uruguay and Venezuela.

In full realization that all of the sovereign States of the free world, with the sole exception of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, are in fact Friends of the Baltic States — THE LITHUANIAN AMERICAN CONGRESS pays its *special tribute of appreciation* to the Governments and Peoples of the *above named countries* for their active or moral *support of the aspirations of the temporarily subjugated freemen of Lithuania.*

Executive officers of the LITHUANIAN AMERICAN COUNCIL are hereby delegated to transmit this Resolution to the Accredited Representatives of the said countries at Washington, D. C.

LITHUANIA LAST FALL

As Seen By Impartial Witnesses

A review of the situation in Lithuania in the spring and early summer of 1945 was given in the September issue of the *Lithuanian Bulletin* (Vol. III, No. 4). Nearly a half year has passed—a half year of war with its horrors and terror. The gunfire has died down, but there was no liberation for Lithuania.

It will be recalled that the three most poignant elements prominent in the background of tragedy and suffering of 1945 were: (1) the *unremitting armed resistance* of the Lithuanian patriots; (2) the occupant's intensified efforts at *sovietization*; and (3) the stepped-up process of *russification*.

Last Summer the NKVD and NKGB forces were occupied with the evacuation of the Polish-speaking element from Lithuania. A clear pattern was followed in effecting the forcible transfer of the population: the politically-nationally conscious Polish element, particularly from the Vilnius district, was deported to Eastern Russia, while the less outspoken Lithuanian Poles were transferred to a "New Poland" west of the Curzon line, particularly to the area of Danzig and Pomerania.

Mass deportations of the Lithuanians, comparable in size to the deportations executed in June 1941, failed to materialize: the best elements were already either in the Siberian and Arctic wildernesses, or escaped westward to the American and British zones of Germany and Austria.

Planned Extermination of National Leaders

A planned campaign of terror against the "socially alien" and "anti-Soviet" element is proceeding apace. The nationally-conscious individuals and their families are being uprooted on an "individual base." These people "disappear" overnight, according to the successful pattern followed by the Russian experts in "selective" purges.

From the point of view of national existence, this "selective" system of liquidation of the patriotic element is no less destructive than the mass deportations of June 1941, when farmers and laborers and children were crowded into long freight car echelons with former officers and intellectuals.

The Russians have introduced a novel excuse in effecting transfers of the prison population. Lithuanian guerrillas had succeeded in liberating the prisoners in several localities, after overpowering NKVD guards. Since then, the Russians began evacuating the prisoners "for safety" as soon as the prisons are filled, making room for additional prison "recruits", and the process is repeated every few weeks.

Several eyewitnesses, among them some foreigners, recently emerged from Lithuania. They gave a disinterested account of life in Lithuania as they saw it, either as dispossessed Lithuanians or prisoners of the Germans or interned foreigners liberated from the Germans by the Russians. Their names are omitted for obvious reasons—to protect their relatives or the persons who had given them refuge in Lithuania.

Eyewitness Accounts

The first account gives evidence as of October 1945.

"The Russian army is constantly on the move in Lithuania. The country has become a quarantine and bivouac of the Red Army. The units being withdrawn from Germany are being reorganized here. Military hospitals are being transferred to Russia. The Red Army is by no means being demobilized; only the wounded and the unfit are being released, all fit men are retained under arms. The Lithuanians are not being discharged. Furthermore, ever new classes of men are being called up for military service. For instance, the deadline of October 31, 1945, was set for all men born prior to 1927 to report for military duty.

"Mobilized Lithuanians are assigned to so-called "Lithuanian divisions." There is nothing Lithuanian about these units. The officers are all Russians, the orders are given in Russian, the correspondence is written in Russian exclusively, etc. In some Russian units there are "Lithuanian battalions" which are still less Lithuanian. The designation of such units as "Lithuanian" is considered useful for propaganda, in order to produce evidence of alleged wholehearted Lithuanian cooperation in the Russian war effort and its integration within the Soviet rule.

"Three different passports have been introduced. The loyal citizens (the communists and sympathizers) receive the passports proper, similar to those in use in 1941, valid five years. Persons of doubtful loyalty receive two-sheet passports of a pink color, called "provisional certificates" valid for six months. Persons suspected of disloyalty receive single-sheet certificates of a green color. It was rumored that the holders of these "green passports" were slated for deportation and "re-education" in other Soviet Republics. It is of some significance that all Lithuanians overtaken in Germany also receive green certificates regardless of the circumstances of their appearance in Germany, including prisoners liberated from the German concentration camps and forced labor slaves. This, by a specific order of the NKGB, because the Russians fear they might be "British spies." The holders of green passports are restricted to their particular dwelling and cannot leave the township limits.

"In spite of continual enticements, threats, promises and punitive expeditions surpassing the German punitive expeditions in ruthlessness, the Lithuanian guerrillas continue to wage an armed struggle. Even in the large cities, such as Vilnius and Kaunas, armed night clashes are not infrequent, as attested by violent firing at night. A large grouping of the guerrillas was observed in the vicinity of Kaunas in the autumn, and serious incidents were being anticipated.

"Large herds of cattle and sheep were driven to Russia from Germany through Lithuania. This circumstance enabled the guerrillas to secure meat reserves for the fighters. Similarly, there was no shortage of firearms and cartridges.

"A ruthless campaign of retaliation is being waged by the guerrillas against puppet officials and native traitors. For instance, in Karmelava, a little town east of Kaunas on the highway to Ukmerge, 17 township chiefs were successively eliminated—some of them within several days after accepting the unwanted Russian office."

The unremitting activity of the guerrilla-patriots is corroborated by the official Soviet press. For example, the October 28, 1945 issue (No. 245) of the "*Tarybu Lietuva*", daily, published in Lithuania, reports a death sentence passed on two patriot citizens,

members of the guerrilla unit called "*Vesulas*" (The Hurricane) and operating in the vicinity of Kaunas on the southern bank of the Nemunas river. The condemned, V. Juskevicius and A. Blusevicius, were charged with the murders of Soviet officials. During the trial the prosecution proved that Juskevicius had masked his underground activities by accepting the office of the secretary of the Pakuonis Executive Committee. The next issue of "*Tarybu Lietuva*" reported three additional sentences for underground activities.

Another witness described the situation as follows, as of the end of September 1945:

"The process of russification was recently stepped up. Not only the officials, railroad workers, kolkhoz experts and laborers, but ordinary urban element is being imported from Russia. No one seriously considers the alleged "Lithuanian Government," even if this government is much ballyhooed in the official press.

"The administration is completely in the hands of imported Muscovites, members of the communist party. These officials exercise their authority exclusively through the armed apparatus of NKVD, uniformed police, and informers. In comparison with the first occupation, the present one is more ruthless and the officials are more preemptory in their behavior.

"New NKVD-NKGB units appeared in the fall. Punitive detachments are now stationed not only in the larger cities, but in some townships and villages. For instance, 60 men are quartered in the little hamlet of Leliunai, near Utena.

"In spite of all these forceful measures, the activities of the guerrilla detachments did not decrease. Here and there bloody skirmishes are continually reported, especially in the larger forests.

"Travelling and communications are much restricted. A specific permit is required for any trip by railroad or bus.

"The slightest suspicion of complicity with guerrillas is resulting in indiscriminate executions without a trial or a hearing. As a rule, the men are executed on the spot, the women and children of these suspects are deported to Russia, the homesteads are razed to the ground. The corpses of hanged guerrillas are purposely held suspended from gallows for a number of days, to instill terror.

"Unfortunately, the plight of the inhabitants is rendered worse by widespread banditry. Gangs of armed bandits are roving in the country. For the most part, these bands are composed of Red Army deserters, isolated runaway German prisoners, and stray Russian displaced persons. This enables the occupying authorities to mask the punitive measures against the patriotic guerrillas by blaming everything on the nameless "bandits."

"Normal trade is non-existent. Individual trade centers around the black market, known in Soviet phraseology as a semi-legal "free market." Goods are traded there by an exchange of wares and products.

"The food situation in the cities differs from that in the rural communities. The people are better off on the farms, because after their experience with German requisitions, they are able to store something out of sight of the Soviet requisitioners. The same is true of clothing and underwear—the farmers reverted to homespun textiles. The looms and spinning wheels, for many years stored in the attics as unnecessary antiques, have now reappeared in living rooms.

"The system of food levy quotas remains, as in 1941. The system of taxes is quite the same as in 1941.

"In cities, five different food ration cards are in evidence. The cards are known by their initials "A", "B", "C", "D" and "I". The Lithuanians, with their customary humor, say that "A" is for the Aristocrats, "B" for Bourgeois, "C" for Civilians, "D" for the workers (Darbininkai), and "I" for Intellectuals. The class of Aristocrats, naturally, includes all the privileged servants of the State,—members of the Party, official newspapermen, writers, poets and artists. Especially numerous are the so-called "People's Poets." They are much despised by the people but are useful for Soviet propaganda to befuddle the simpler folk and foreign countries by their praises of the mythical "Soviet Culture". . . . The category of "bourgeois" includes professors and various "experts".

"The privileged classes often enjoy, in addition to their preferred and enlarged food rations, the facilities to eat their meals in their own exclusive mess halls, whose doors are firmly shut to the ordinary people, and to buy their clothing and shoes in special stores "at ceiling prices."

"A worker gets an allowance of 500 grams of bread daily (a little more than one American pound). The average official and worker earns 300 rubles monthly. At the official rate, this amounts to \$60, fixed by the Gosbank (State Bank). No person could exist on such wages without the aid of the state-operated bakeries and stores, adhering to ceiling prices.

"In the "free" market, a man's suit costs 10,000 rubles, a pound of bacon costs 120 rubles and so on. In consequence of this disparity in living conditions, the "free market" activity has become the only means of subsistence for the unprivileged average people. Workers, clerks, teachers, etc. are operators in this "free" market.

"It does not pay for an average person to engage in productive activity in Soviet Lithuania!

"The much advertised "agrarian reform" completely failed, due to the utter indifference of the Lithuanian people: it is merely a paper "propaganda reform." There are no takers of the land, although the individual norm is set at 30 ha. (about 75 acres). The practical folk reason that there is no sense in claiming the landgrant, as long as there are no seeds, no horses, no implements to till the land.

"The collective farms have been hurriedly established in some places, in order to induce the Lithuanians to accept this Muscovite ideal form of farming. The people well realize, in spite of all the noise made in the press about individual landgrants, that sooner or later, if the Russians will remain in the country, they will be forced to move to what the farmers themselves consider to be a return of serfdom.

"The communists call the individual farmers "kulaks". Strangely enough, the term "kulak", meaning "the fist" in the Russian language, was translated as "buoze", meaning "the bat" or "the big stick" in Lithuanian. This term is supposed to represent the rural "bourgeois" whose liquidation is openly advocated by the puppet press. Their liquidation is being accomplished by means of excessive food and tax quotas. Thus far the individual farmers survived the liquidation thanks to the opportunity provided to deal in the "free" market. . . .

"Because of increasing terrorization by police, life on the farms is becoming more and more difficult. In spite of the restrictions of travel, many rustics move into the cities. For instance, the city of Vilnius was nearly a ghost town in the early part of the summer, but had a sizable population in the early fall. It is difficult to find living quarters in Vilnius,

even though the Polish speaking citizens were forcibly transferred and the Jewish citizens had been nearly exterminated by the Germans."

Attitude Toward The Church

To complete the review of the situation, we may note that with respect to religion the Soviet administration adheres to approximately the same policy as that pursued in 1940-1941. This policy is described in detail in *The Situation of the Church and Religious Practices in Occupied Lithuania*, by A. Trakiskis, published by the *Lithuanian Bulletin* in 1944.

The policy may be summarized as follows. *Without attacking Church authority directly*, the Muscovite rulers do everything possible to draw the masses away from the Church. The clergymen are being continually shadowed and watched by NKVD agents. The priests are "top priority" suspects, suspected of dealing with guerrillas. A number of priests were arrested and taken to unknown destinations on suspicion of contacts with the underground movements of liberation. In a certain region of Sudavia (Suvalkija), affected by guerrilla operations, the rectories were repeatedly searched—ostensibly for radio transmitters. Several young priests were arrested and several churches were shut down.

Similarly, the priests have much trouble with their sermons. They are subjected to long grilling and questioning for the slightest allegory. Women predominate among the attendants of church services. No young men are to be seen in any public places.

General Depopulation

Some sections of the country, especially in the western regions, appear desolate and depopulated, inasmuch as masses of people fled westward before the returning Soviet armed tide. The Russians are disinclined to mention or discuss those masses of refugees now in Western Germany—the facts of such a mass flight do not speak well for the Russian self-advertised popularity and "liberation". The Russians prefer the explanation that the people had been forcibly driven away by the Germans. The absence of repatriates is explained away by German mass murders, mass deaths in consequence of the American-British air raids, and even by death at the hands of the British and Americans.

All foreign news is deliberately withheld from the people. Individual radio receiving sets are confiscated. In conformance with the practice in the USSR, loudspeakers are installed in public places, factories and offices, to broadcast official news—the

specially selected programs for the benefit of the conquered population. These places are called "radio points."

Soviet Record of Reconstruction

An especially intensive propaganda is noisily devoted to "agricultural and industrial reconstruction of the Soviet Baltic States." Fantastic boasts and self-glorification emanate from the Soviet radio and press. No one was able to verify any of the exuberant claims and gloating accounts put forth by the official Soviet press and radios: all of the occupied Baltic States are hermetically closed to all foreign visitors.

I.e., Moscow's *"Izvestiya"* (No. 282) boasted that 79,000 Lithuanian "landless and smallholders" received landgrants, in addition to 50,000,000 rubles in loans and 1,200,000 cubic meters of construction materials. Furthermore, these people were given 8,000 horses, 13,000 cows and 5,000 tons of seed grains. In analyzing these figures, one will discover that 10 families share one horse, six families share one cow, each family gets 150 pounds of grains. The credit mounts to 625 rubles per family. This amount of

money is able to purchase in the free market . . . 6 pounds of bacon!

If these figures were taken at their face value, and in cognizance of the generally conceded fact that only *one-fourth of the horse* and *one-third of the cow population* survived the late war,—these figures would attest some "achievement" of communistic "reconstruction" . . .

The same is true about industrial reconversion. No. 282 of the *Izvestiya* asserts that, since the summer of 1944, altogether 547 basic industrial establishments, 40 local electric power stations, etc. were "rebuilt". However, nothing whatsoever is said about the production of these "reconstructed" plants and the number of employees.

In some other papers the Soviet propagandists boast that during the first nine months of 1945, the Lithuanian textile plants produced 450,000 meters of textile materials in comparison with the production in independent Lithuania, when 14,000,000 meters were produced within the same period.

This Soviet way of presentation belies Russian "achievements", even if the Soviets were to claim any credit for reconstruction.

ESCAPED JEWS TELL ABOUT LITHUANIA

A large group of Lithuanian Jews—escaped from Bolshevik-occupied Lithuania—arrived in the English-American occupied zones in Germany; among them were two rabbis and a Lithuanian dentist who had been interned in a ghetto during the German occupation. The dentist relates the following:

"The entrance of the Red Army into Lithuania in the summer of 1944 was marked by unprecedented bestiality toward women. In rural sections, they not only stole horses and cattle from the farmers, but they confiscated everything in sight. Appeals were useless.

"Kaunas has become an almost dead city—very few civilians are to be seen on the streets; there are more in Vilnius. The Red Army and civilian Russians with their families, imported from the Soviet Union, dominate everything. While the Russian soldiers in Berlin and Vienna are be-decked with gold epaulets, as in the days of the former czars in Russia, the soldiers in Lithuania resemble ordinary "grey" masses. Speaking of the army of the occupant, the Lithuanians call them "driskiai" (men in rags).

"The NKVD came with the second wave of Russian troops and began its activities methodically and thoroughly. It did not at once attempt mass repression; but, within a few weeks, it took over everything, and mass arrests and deportations began. No information regarding the seized people could be obtained. Even their detention was secret and the slightest inquiry places one under suspicion.

"The people are forced to fill out numerous questionnaires. Government permission must be obtained in all matters, as

for instance, for leaving one's residence, moving into another house, and so on.

"Native communists returned from the Soviet Union, weary, starved, ragged, disillusioned and bitter. The widespread poverty that they saw in the Soviet Union left a deep impression on them. The brutality of the Soviets in Lithuania shocked them. Many of them were suffering from malaria, contracted in Central Asia—a disease heretofore unknown in Lithuania.

"An employee of the Lithuanian Commissariat traveling in Russia was arrested on a train and accused of spying, because the NKVD noted his boots and clothing which, although old, were unusually good-looking, as compared to Russian standards. A man dressed in such attire could be nothing but a foreign spy.

"For publicity purposes, the Reds returned a group of children who had been deported from Lithuania in 1941. These children were more emaciated than the Jewish children in the Kaunas ghetto.

"There are no convinced communists in Lithuania. Most of the party members are fellow-travelers and collaborators as long as Lithuania is occupied by the Russians. For instance, during the German occupation, because of lack of determined men, the communist underground did not show any activity.

"The oppressive methods of the Soviet Union's police regime made an impression on the local communists. One of them, upon being asked about the spirit of the people in the Soviet Union, replied: 'The Soviet people are waiting

for a miracle or something to happen to free them from Soviet dictatorship.”

“Asked why he escaped, the dentist replied: “Life in Bolshevik-occupied Lithuania is hopeless. One fate faces everyone—deportation to Asia.” As far as Jews are concerned, the Bolsheviks have an original viewpoint: “Each Jew remaining alive after the German occupation is automatically under suspicion because of the fact of his being alive.”

The same dentist stated that during the German occupation, 400 Jews were saved from death; they were hidden in Lithuanian convents. The farmers also hid many Jews.

And The Two Rabbis:

Last September, in Salzburg, I met two Rabbis who had just come from Lithuania, our correspondent reports. I knew the one from Kaunas personally; the other came from Siauliai. I asked them to tell me the actual situation in Lithuania. They agreed to do so, but only on condition that their identity remain secret because of fear of reprisals against their relatives and other Jews in Lithuania, of which approximately only three thousand were left in Lithuania.

They told me that a strong anti-Bolshevik guerrilla movement exists in Lithuania. The guerrillas are active not only in rural places but also in the towns. They were present even in Kaunas and Vilnius. It is claimed that the guerrillas who are banded together in the wooded areas number tens of thousands.

At the time when my Rabbi reporters left Lithuania, special efforts were being made to put an end to guerrilla warfare. NKVD punitive detachments were sent to all wooded areas. They also overran the smaller towns, such as Siaulėnai, Radviliskis, Pakruojis, Ziežmariai, Kaisidorys, etc., and the troops had already started to wage war against the guerrillas. According to the two Rabbis, a veritable blood purge is gripping the nation and the entire country will be involved. When asked why the “entire country” would be involved, they replied that everyone in Lithuania was in sympathy with the guerrillas because life was unbearable there.

The Rabbis did not personally observe mass deportations on the scale of those of 1941. Seizures are made rather in an individual way. And this goes on day and night. The prisons are filled to overflowing and many jails are being built or other buildings utilized for this purpose. When a jail cannot hold any more people, the prisoners are taken to Russia.

The Rabbis said that every day new transports departed from Lithuania. The arrests are in accordance with NKVD lists; no explanation is ever given.

When I asked how many had been taken out of Lithuania, I was informed that no one knew the number, but that the number of deported must be very tremendous.

Offices and business establishments are full of foreign officials, speaking Russian exclusively, who manage all affairs. In proportion, Lithuanians are rather few. Nowhere in Lithuania did the two Rabbis meet any of their numerous former friends. The new administrators of Lithuania are unknown to them. What had happened to the old-timers? The greater part had escaped to British, American and French-occupied Germany. Many had been forcibly mobilized into the Red Army and taken away. A large number had become guerrillas; many had been seized. Those who remained and felt unsafe, either went into hiding or fled to Poland in search of a haven.

Nothing is officially said about those refugees who escaped westward. They are not referred to as being alive. The Bolsheviks explain that the Germans have killed some, that the English and Americans killed others because they were collaborators with the Germans. But the Lithuanians do not believe these stories and consider those who fled to the west as the fortunate ones who have finally found a haven.

The Rabbis were asked why they left Lithuania now after having been liberated. They replied, “There is no such thing as being safe in Lithuania. The NKVD questions every surviving Jew as to why he remained alive. The fact that the Jews are fleeing from Lithuania proves that the plight of the country is very sad indeed and will doubtless become worse.”

I was interested in how these two Rabbis managed to get out of Lithuania, as the Lithuanian frontier is hermetically closed. Because Poles are forcibly taken out of Lithuania, they claimed Polish birth, and were allowed to go to Poland; from there, they escaped to Germany.

I was told that about one-third of the Polish-speaking Lithuanians was sent East and the remaining two-thirds to Poland.

Since Rabbi X had always participated in Lithuanian-Jewish political activities, I asked him what he thought about the future of Lithuania. His view was that, after much suffering, Lithuania would again regain its independence, but he did not feel that many Lithuanians would survive by then.

FACTS AND DOCUMENTS

Regarding the Foreign Occupation of the Baltic States since 1940

THE following document deals with the manner of conducting the deportation of the anti-Soviet element from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia during the first Soviet occupation. In other words, it explains *how* the deportation should be carried out.

It is a matter of public record that during one night alone, June 14, 1941, more than 30,000 Lithuanians were seized in a manhunt of titanic proportions and deported to the Russian wastelands. The same night, scores of thousands were seized and deported from Latvia and Estonia. According to an estimate based on evidence gathered by the Lithuanian Red Cross, Lithuania during the first Soviet occupation, suffered a total manpower loss of 65,000 persons, most of whom were deported. Several hundred met death outright, among them 16 R.C. priests. The manpower losses of other Baltic States reach approximately 62,000 for Latvia and 61,000 for Estonia.

The number of executed in Latvia and Estonia is approximately 1,500 for Latvia (mostly army officers), and 1,800 for Estonia. The number of deported from Estonia reaches 55,000, including many members of Estonian armed forces. This is the highest deportation figure for all three Baltic States and attests the fact that the first Soviet occupation there was the longest.

More than four long years have elapsed since these deportations were carried out. Subjected to the most

unbearably inhuman conditions from the point of view of climate, housing, labor and treatment, many of the deportees have already died. The exact number is unknown: it is one of the closely guarded Soviet secrets, as is the number of slave laborers in Soviet Russia. Our estimates reach 60%.

The war is over! With very few exceptions the deportees were never returned to their homeland.

And no wonder! The very first sentence of this instruction bluntly states that ". . . the deportation of the anti-Soviet element from the Baltic States is a task of great *political importance*. . . ." It is obvious that this "great political importance" is still on the high priority list.

These deportations were particularly inhuman because as section 5 of the instruction shows, the deported families were deliberately broken up, fathers and mothers with children were sent to different destinations, each being kept in ignorance as to where the others were being exiled. To this very day, the respective survivors do not know the whereabouts of their husbands and wives.

Firmly imprinted in the mind of every Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian, this document enters history under the name "Serov Instruction."

It was compiled in Moscow by the Commissariat of State Security, called the NKGB (not to be confused with NKVD).

СОВЕРШЕННО СЕКРЕТНО.

ИНСТРУКЦИЯ

о порядке проведения операции по выселению антисоветского элемента из Литвы, Латвии и Эстонии.

1. Общее положение.

Выселение антисоветского элемента из Прибалтийских республик представляет собой задачу большой политической важности. Успешное разрешение ее зависит от того, насколько уездные оперативные тройки и оперативные штабы сумеют тщательно разработать план проведения операции и предусмотреть заранее все необходимое. При этом надо исходить из того, чтобы операция прошла без шума и паники, так, чтобы не допустить никаких выступлений и других эксцессов не только со стороны выселяемых, но и со стороны известной части окружающего населения — враждебно настроенного по отношению к Советской власти.

Ниже изложены указания о порядке проведения операции. Их следует придерживаться, однако в отдельных случаях сотрудники, проводящие операцию, исходят из особенностей конкретных условий операции и чтобы правильно оценить обстановку, могут и должны принимать иные решения, направленные к той же цели — без шума и паники выполнить данное им задание.

2. Порядок инструктирования.

Инструктаж оперативных групп уездными тройками проводится накануне, за максимально короткий срок до начала операции, с учетом необходимого времени на переезд к месту операции.

STRICTLY SECRET.

INSTRUCTIONS

REGARDING THE MANNER OF CONDUCTING THE DEPORTATION OF THE ANTI-SOVIET ELEMENTS FROM LITHUANIA, LATVIA AND ESTONIA.

1. General Situation

The deportation of anti-Soviet elements from the Baltic States is a task of great political importance. Its successful execution depends upon the extent to which the county operative triumvirates and operative headquarters are capable of carefully working out a plan for executing the operations and of foreseeing in advance all indispensable factors. Moreover, the basic premise is that the operations should be conducted without noise and panic, so as not to permit any demonstrations and other excesses not only by the deportees, but also by a certain part of the surrounding population inimically inclined toward the Soviet administration.

Instructions regarding the manner of conducting the operations are described below. They should be adhered to, but in individual cases the collaborators conducting the operations may and should, depending upon the peculiarity of the concrete circumstances of the operations and in order to evaluate correctly the situation, make different decisions for the same purpose, viz., to execute the task given them without noise and panic.

2. Manner of Issuing Instructions

The instructing of operative groups should be done by the county triumvirates within as short a time as possible on the day before the beginning of the operations, taking into consideration the time necessary for traveling to the place of operations.

Уездные тройки заранее готовят необходимый транспорт для переброски оперативных групп в села к месту операции.

По вопросу выделения необходимого количества автотранспорта и гужевого, уездные тройки договариваются на местах с руководителями советско-партийных организаций.

Помещение для инструктажа должно быть тщательно заранее подготовлено, учтена вместимость, выхода и входа и возможность проникновения в него посторонних лиц.

Во время инструктажа здание должно быть обеспечено охраной из числа оперативных работников.

В случае, если на инструктаж кто-либо не явился из состава участников операции, уездная тройка немедленно принимает меры к замене неявившегося из резерва, который заранее должен быть предусмотрен.

Через участковые тройки сообщают собравшимся о решении правительства, о выселении с территории данной республики или района учетного антисоветского контингента. При этом коротко рассказывают, что выселяемые из себя представляют.

Обратить особое внимание присутствующих на инструктаж советско-партийных работников /из местных/, что выселяемые являются врагами Советского народа, а поэтому не исключена возможность оказания вооруженного нападения со стороны выселяемых.

3. Порядок получения документов.

После общего инструктажа оперативных групп, последним необходимо выдать документы на выселяемых. Личные дела на выселяемых должны быть заранее подобраны и разложены по оперативным группам, волостям и селам, чтобы при выдаче не было никаких задержек.

The county triumvirates previously prepare necessary transportation for transferring the operative groups to the villages in the locale of operations.

In regard to the question of allotting the necessary number of automobiles and wagons for transportation, the county triumvirates will consult the leaders of the Soviet party organizations on the spot.

Premises in which to issue instructions must be carefully prepared in advance, and their capacity, exits, entrances and the possibility of strangers entering must be taken into consideration.

During the time instructions are issued the building must be securely guarded by the administrative workers.

In case anyone among these participating in the operations should fail to appear for instructions, the county triumvirate should immediately take measures to substitute the absentee from a reserve force, which should be provided in advance.

The triumvirate through its representative should notify the officers gathered of the decision of the government to deport an accounted for contingent of anti-Soviet elements from the territory of the respective republic or region. Moreover, a brief explanation should be given as to what the deportees represent.

Special attention of the (local) Soviet-party workers gathered for instructions should be drawn to the fact that the deportees are enemies of the Soviet people and that, therefore, the possibility of an armed attack on the part of the deportees is not excluded.

3. Manner of Obtaining Documents

After the issuance of general instructions to the operative groups, they should definitely be issued documents regarding the deportees. Personal files of the deportees must be previously discussed and settled by the operative groups of townships and villages, so that there are no obstacles in issuing them.

После получения личных дел старший опергруппы знакомится с личными делами семей, которые ему предстоит выселять. При этом устанавливает состав семьи, наличие необходимых бланков для заполнения на выселяемого, наличие транспорта для перевозки выселяемого и получает исчерпывающие ответы на неясные ему вопросы.

Одновременно с выдачей документов уездная тройка раз'ясняет каждому старшему опергруппы, где расположены выселяемые семьи и рассказывает маршрут движения к месту выселения. Указываются также пути следования оперативного состава с выселяемыми семьями к железнодорожной станции для погрузки. Необходимо также указать место резерва войсковой группы в случае необходимости вызова во время каких-либо эксцессов.

У всего оперативного состава проверяется наличие и состояние оружия и боеприпасов. Оружие должно быть в полной боевой готовности, заряжено, но патрон в патронник не досылается. Оружие применяется в крайнем случае, когда на опергруппу произведено нападение или оказано вооруженное нападение, или сопротивление.

4. Порядок проведения выселения.

В том случае, если в населенном пункте проводится выселение нескольких семей, тогда назначается один из оперработников старшим по выселению в этом селе, под руководством которого и следует оперативный состав в данные села.

Прибыв в села, оперативные группы связываются /при соблюдении необходимой конспирации/ с местными представителями власти: председателем, секретарем или членами сельских советов / и выясняют у них точное местожительство выселяемых семей. После этого оперативные группы, вместе с представителями власти, которые выделены на производство описи имущества,

After receiving the personal files, the senior member of the operative group acquaints himself with the personal files of the family which he will have to deport. He must check the number of persons in the family, the supply of necessary forms to be filled out by the deportee, and transportation for moving the deportee, and he should receive exhaustive answers to questions not clear to him.

At the time when the files are issued, the county triumvirate must explain to each senior member of the operative group where the deported family is to be settled and describe the route to be taken to the place of deportation. Routes to be taken by the administrative personnel with the deported families to the railway station for embarkation must also be fixed. It is also necessary to point out places where reserve military groups are placed in case it should become necessary to call them out during possible excesses.

Possession and state of arms and ammunition must be checked throughout the whole operative personnel. Weapons must be completely ready for battle, loaded, but the cartridge should not be kept in the chamber. Weapons should be used only as a last resort, when the operative group is attacked or threatened with an attack, or when resistance is shown.

4. Manner of Executing Deportation

Should a number of families be deported from one spot, one of the operative workers is appointed senior in regard to deportation from the village, and his orders are to be obeyed by the operative personnel in that village.

Having arrived in the village, the operative groups must get in touch (observing the necessary secrecy) with the local authorities: chairman, secretary or members of the village soviets, and should ascertain from them the exact dwelling of the families to be deported. After that the operative groups together with the local authorities go to the families to be banished.

направляются к выселяемым семьям.

Операция будет начата с наступлением рассвета.

Войдя в дом выселяемого, старший оперативный группы собирает всю семью выселяемого в одну комнату, принимая при этом необходимые меры предосторожности против возможных каких-либо эксцессов.

Проверяя состав семьи по списку, выясняет местонахождение отсутствующих и наличие больных, после чего предлагает сдать имеющееся у них оружие. В независимости от того, будет сдано оружие или нет, проводится личный обыск выселяемых, а затем и обыск всего помещения, с целью обнаружения оружия.

Во время обыска помещения для наблюдения за поведением выселяемых назначается один из членов оперативной группы.

Если при обыске обнаружено оружие в небольшом количестве, то его забирает опергруппа, распределив между собой. Если оружия найдено много, то оно, с вынутыми затворами, складывается на повозку или автомашину прибывшей опергруппой. Боеприпасы упаковываются и грузятся вместе с винтовками.

При необходимости, для перевозки оружия мобилизуется подвода с соответствующей охраной.

В случае обнаружения оружия, контрреволюционных листовок, литературы, иностранной валюты, большого количества ценностей и т.д., об этом составляется на месте краткий протокол обыска, в котором указывается об обнаруженном оружии или контрреволюционной литературе. При оказании вооруженного сопротивления, о лицах оказавших вооруженное сопротивление решается вопрос уездными тройками о необходимости их ареста и доставки в уездный отдел НКГБ.

На лиц, из числа выселяемых скрывшихся до выселения или больных, составляется акт с подписью представителя

The operation should be commenced at daybreak. Upon entering the home of the person to be banished, the senior member of the operative group should gather the entire family of the deportee into one room, taking all necessary precautionary measures against any possible excesses.

After having checked the members of the family against the list, the location of those absent and the number of persons sick should be ascertained, after which they should be called upon to give up their weapons. Regardless of whether weapons are surrendered or not, the deportee should be personally searched and then the entire premises should be searched in order to uncover weapons.

During the search of the premises one of the members of the operative group should be left on guard over the deportees.

Should the search disclose hidden weapons in small numbers, they should be collected by and distributed among the operative group. Should many weapons be discovered, they should be piled into the wagon or automobile which brought the operating group, after the locks have been removed. Ammunition should be packed and loaded together with rifles.

If necessary, a convoy for transporting the weapons should be mobilized with an adequate guard.

Should weapons, counter-revolutionary pamphlets, literature, foreign currency, large quantities of valuables, etc. be disclosed, a short search act should be drawn up on the spot, which should describe the hidden weapons or counter-revolutionary literature. Should there be any armed resistance, the question of arresting the persons showing armed resistance and of sending them to the county branch of the People's Commissariat of Public Security should be decided by the county triumvirates.

An act should be drawn up regarding those deportees hiding themselves before the deportation or sick, and this act should be signed by the chairman of the Soviet-party organization.

совпартактива.

После производства обыска выселяемым об"является, что они по решению Правительства будут выселены в другие области Союза.

Выселяемым разрешается взять с собой вещи домашнего обихода, весом не более 100 кг.

1. Одежду,
2. Обувь,
3. Белье,
4. Постельные принадлежности,
5. Посуду столовую,
6. Посуду чайную,
7. Посуду кухонную,
8. Продовольствие - из расчета месячного запаса на семью,
9. Имеющиеся у них деньги,
10. Сундук или ящик для упаковки вещей.

Громоздкие вещи брать не рекомендуется.

При выселении контингента в сельских местностях, разрешается брать с собой мелкий сельско-хозяйственный инвентарь: топоры, пилы и другие вещи, которые связываются вместе и упаковываются отдельно от общих вещей с тем, чтобы при посадке в эшелон они были бы погружены в отдельные специально выделенные товарные вагоны.

Чтобы не смешать с чужими вещами, на упакованном имуществе надлежит сделать надпись - имя, отчество, фамилию выселяемого и деревня.

При погрузке этих вещей на подводу, принимаются меры к тому, чтобы выселяемый не мог ими воспользоваться для оказания сопротивления во время движения колонны по шоссе.

Одновременно с работой по погрузке оперативными группами, присутствующие при этом представители советско-партийных организаций производят опись имущества и организацию его

After the search the deportees should be notified that upon the decision of the Government they are being banished to other regions of the Union.

The deportees are permitted to take with them household necessities of not more than 100 kilograms in weight.

1. Suit
2. Shoes
3. Underwear
4. Bed linen
5. Dishes
6. Glasses
7. Kitchen utensils
8. Food—an estimated month's supply to a family.
9. The money at their disposal
10. Haversack or box in which to pack the articles.

It is recommended that large articles be taken.

Should the contingent be deported to rural districts, they are permitted to take with them a small agricultural inventory: axes, saws and other articles, which should be tied together and packed separately from other articles, so that when embarking on the deportation train they are loaded into special freight cars.

In order not to mix them with articles belonging to others, the name, father's name, and village of the deportee should be written on his packed property.

When loading these articles into the carts, measures should be taken so that the deportee cannot use them as means of resistance while the column is moving along the highway.

At the time of loading, the operative groups together with representatives of the Soviet-party organizations shall prepare a list of the property and the manner in which it is to be preserved in accordance with instructions received by them.

хранения в соответствии с полученными ими указаниями.

Если выселяемый располагает собственными средствами передвижения, то его имущество грузится на подводу и вместе с семьей направляется на намеченный пункт погрузки.

Если у выселяемых средств передвижения нет, то мобилизуются в селе подводы через местную власть по указанию старшего опергруппы.

Все лица, которые за время производства операции зайдут в дом выселяемых или же будут находиться там к моменту проведения операции, должны быть задержаны до окончания операции, при этом выясняют их отношение к выселяемым. Это делается с той целью, чтобы изъять скрывшихся от розыска полицейских, жандармов и других лиц.

После проверки задержанных и установления, что они являются лицами не интересующего нас контингента, таковых освободить.

Если у дома выселяемого во время производства операции начнут собираться жители села, то надо им предложить разойтись по домам, не допуская при этом образования толпы.

Если выселяемый откажется открыть дверь своего дома несмотря на то что ему будет известно, что прибыли сотрудники НКГБ, дверь необходимо взломать. В отдельных случаях привлекаются на помощь соседние оперативные группы, проводящие в данной местности операцию.

Доставка выселяемых из села на сборный пункт железнодорожной станции производится обязательно в течение светлого времени дня, следует стараться при этом, чтобы сбор каждой семьи продолжался не более двух часов.

Действовать во время операции во всех случаях необходимо твердо и решительно, без малейшей суеты, шума и паники.

If the deportee has at his own disposal means of transportation, his property is loaded into the vehicle and together with his family is sent to the designated point of embarkation.

If the deportees do not have their own means of transportation, wagons are mobilized in the village by the local authorities upon directives of the senior member of the administrative group.

All persons entering the home of the deportees during the execution of the operations or found there at the moment when these operations are begun must be detained until the conclusion of the operations, and their relationship to the deportee should be ascertained. This is done in order to disclose policemen, military police and other persons hiding from investigation.

Having checked the detained persons and ascertained that they are persons in whom the contingent is not interested, they are liberated.

Should the inhabitants of the village begin to gather around the home of the deportee during the operations, they should be called upon to disperse to their homes, and crowds should not be permitted to be formed.

Should the deportee refuse to open the door of his home in spite of the fact that he is aware that members of the People's Commissariat of Public Security are there, the door should be broken down. In individual cases neighboring operative groups performing operations in that vicinity should be called upon to assist.

The conveyance of the deportees from the villages to the gathering place at the railway station should by all means be done in daylight; moreover, efforts should be made that the gathering of each family should take not more than two hours.

In all cases throughout the operations firm and decisive action should be taken, without the slightest pomposity, noise and panic.

Отбирать какие-либо вещи выселяемых, за исключением оружия, контрреволюционной литературы и валюты, а также пользоваться продуктами питания выселяемых — категорически воспрещается.

Предупредить всех участников операции о строгой судебной ответственности за попытку присвоения отдельных вещей выселяемых.

5. Порядок разделения семьи выселяемого от главы.

Ввиду того, что большое количество выселяемых должно быть арестовано и размещено в специальные лагеря, а их семьи следуют в места специальных поселений в отдаленных областях, поэтому необходимо операцию по изъятию, как выселяемых членов семьи, так и главы их, проводить одновременно не объявляя им о предстоящем их разделении. После того, когда проведен обыск и оформлены соответствующие документы для личного дела, в квартире выселяемого, оперативный работник заполняет документы на главу семьи, вкладывает их в личное дело на него, а документы, оформленные на членов семьи, вкладываются в личное дело выселяемой семьи.

Сопровождение же всей семьи до станции погрузки производится на одной подводе и лишь на станции погрузки главу семьи помещают отдельно от семьи, в специально предназначенный для глав семей вагон.

Во время сбора в квартире выселяемых предупредить главу семьи о том, что личные мужские вещи складывал в отдельный чемодан, так как будет проходить сан.обработка выселяемых мужчинам отдельно от женщин и детей.

It is categorically forbidden to take any articles away from the deportees—except weapons, counter-revolutionary literature and foreign currency—or to use the food of the deportees.

All members of the operations must be warned that they will be held strictly responsible for attempts to appropriate individual articles belonging to the deportees.

5. Manner of Separating Deportee from His Family

In view of the fact that a large number of the deportees must be arrested and placed in special camps and their families settled at special points in distant regions, it is necessary to execute the operation of deporting both the members of his family as well as the deportee simultaneously, without informing them of the separation confronting them. After having made the search and drawn up the necessary documents for identification in the home of the deportee, the administrative worker shall draw up documents for the head of the family and place them in his personal file, but the documents drawn up for the members of his family should be placed in the personal file of the deportee's family.

The moving of the entire family, however, to the station should be done in one vehicle, and only at the station should the head of the family be placed separately from his family in a railway car specially intended for heads of families.

While gathering together the family in the home of the deportee, the head of the family should be warned that personal male articles are to be packed into a separate suitcase, as a sanitary inspection will be made of the deported men separately from the women and children.

На станциях погрузки глав семей, подлежащих аресту, грузить в особо отведенные для них вагоны, которые будут указывать выделенный для этой цели оперработник.

6. Порядок конвоирования выселяемых.

Сотрудникам, конвоирующим колонну выселяемых движущуюся на подводах, садиться на подводы выселяемых воспрещается. Сотрудники должны следовать сбоку и сзади колонны выселяемых. Старший конвоя периодически обходит все колонны, проверяя правильность движения.

При прохождении колонны выселяемых через пункты, а также мимо встречных, конвой должен быть производиться особенно тщательно, должны следить за тем, чтобы не было побегов, не допуская также каких-либо разговоров переселяемых со встречными их людьми.

7. Порядок погрузки в эшелоны.

На каждом пункте погрузки ответственным за погрузку является член оперативной тройки и специально выделенное для этой цели лицо.

В день операции начальник пункта погрузки, вместе с начальником эшелона и конвойных войск НКВД, осматривают представленные железной дорогой вагоны, с точки зрения обеспечения и снабжения их всем необходимым /нары, унитазы, фонари, решетки и др./ и условиться с начальником эшелона о порядке приема последним выселяемых.

Станционная погрузка оцепляется красноармейцами конвойных войск НКВД.

Старшие опергрупп передают начальнику эшелона один экземпляр повагонного списка выселяемых. Начальник эшелона

At the stations the possessions of heads of families subject to arrest should be loaded into railway cars assigned to them, which will be designated by special operative workers appointed for that purpose.

6. Manner of Convoying the Deportees

It is strictly prohibited for the operatives convoying the vehicle-moved column of deportees to sit in the wagons of the deportees. The operatives must follow by the side and at the rear of the column of deportees. The senior operator of the convoy should periodically go around the entire column to check the correctness of movement.

The convoy must act particularly carefully in conducting the column of deportees through inhabited spots as well as in meeting passers-by; they should see that there are no attempts made to escape, and no exchange of words should be permitted between the deportees and passers-by.

7. Manner of Embarking

At each point of embarkation the members of the operative triumvirate and a person specially appointed for that purpose shall be responsible for the embarkation.

On the day of the operations the chief of the point of embarkation together with the chief of the echelon and of the convoying military forces of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs shall examine the railway cars furnished to see whether they are supplied with all necessities—(bunks, bed pans, lanterns, railings, etc.) and shall discuss with the commander of the echelon the manner in which the latter will take over the deportees.

Embarkation station shall be encircled by the soldiers of the convoying troops of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs.

The senior member of the operative group shall deliver to the commander of the echelon one copy of the list of deportees in each railway car. The com-

по этому списку вызывает выселяемых, каждую фамилию тщательно проверяет и указывает место в вагоне.

Вещи грузятся вместе с выселяемыми в вагон за исключением мелкого сельско-хозяйственного инвентаря, который грузится в отдельный вагон.

Выселяемые грузятся в вагоны по семьям, дробить семьи не разрешается /за исключением глав семей подлежащих аресту/. Надо рассчитать таким образом, чтобы было до 25 человек на вагон.

После того, как вагон заполнен, необходимым количеством семей, он закрывается.

После приема и посадки людей в эшелон, начальник эшелона несет ответственность за всех переданных ему людей и доставку их к месту назначения.

Старший опергруппы после передачи выселяемых заполняет рапорт о проведенной им операции на имя начальника уездной оперативной тройки, в котором кратко указывается фамилия выселяемого, обнаружено ли оружие и контрреволюционная литература, а также как происходила операция.

После посадки в эшелон выселяемых и сдачи рапортов о результатах проведенной операции, участники опергруппы считаются свободными и действуют по указанию начальника уездного отдела НКГБ.

ЗАМЕСТИТЕЛЬ НАРОДНОГО КОМИССАРА ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЙ
БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ СОЮЗА С.С.Р.
КОМИССАР ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЙ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ 3 РАНГА-

/ С Е Р О В /

Верно: *Масин*

mander of the echelon thereupon shall call out the deportees according to this roll and shall carefully check each family and designate their place in the railway car.

The possessions of the deportees should be loaded into the car together with the deportees, with the exception of the small agricultural inventory, which should be loaded into a separate car.

The deportees shall be loaded into railway cars by families; it is not permitted to break up a family (with the exception of heads of families subject to arrest). An estimate of 25 persons to a car should be observed.

After the railway car has been filled with the necessary number of families, it should be locked.

After the people have been taken over and loaded in the echelon train, the commander of the train shall bear responsibility for all the persons turned over to him for their reaching the destination.

After turning over the deportees the senior member of the operative group shall draw up a report to the effect that he has performed the operations entrusted to him and address the report to the chief of the county operative triumvirate. The report should briefly contain the name of the deportee, whether any weapons and counter-revolutionary literature were discovered, and how the operations ran.

Having placed the deportees on the echelon of deportees and submitted reports of the results of the operations performed, members of the operative group shall be considered free and shall act in accordance with the instructions of the chief of the county branch of the People's Commissariat of Public Security.

DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR OF STATE
SECURITY OF THE U.S.S.R.
Commissar of State Security of the Third Rank

..... Signed: (SEROV).

Correct: (signed) MASHKIN

APPEAL BY THE BALTIC HUMANITARIAN ASSOCIATION To All Christians and the Public Opinion of the Western World

AT the eastern frontiers of devastated Europe, at the point where East and West have met for thousands of years, there are three small states: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. For thousands of years have the Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians tilled their soil there and fought for their freedom. After centuries of enslavement, the struggle for liberty of these nations found its reward in their political and national independence after the first World War. Their achievements both in the cultural and in the economic sphere during their period of independence proved to the entire World that even small nations can do if only they are permitted to live in freedom and to look after their own affairs. "The admirable progress of these Baltic Republics," to use the words of Sumner Welles, has indeed been undeniable. These twenty years of independence were for the Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians a period of unceasing activity, constructive work and creative achievement. Few communities in Europe led happier lives than these three. Freed from the German and Russian yoke at the close of the first World War, they proved beyond all doubt they are admirable members of the family of nations, enlightened, vigorous and progressive. "While their former masters have become totalitarian, in sacrificing individual freedom on the altar of collective power, these emancipated people approached the highest civilization and democracy of the West. Judged by Western standards, their rise has formed an almost unimpaired gain to the human race" says a British observer, W. F. Reddaway.

The Baltic peoples have invariably done everything to keep on friendly terms with their big neighbours. Nevertheless, their fate from 1940 onwards has been an unceasing martyrdom, of the extent and horror of which outsiders have but a faint conception. Both totalitarian invaders have violently and brutally trampled on the lawful rights of the Baltic nations, robbing the peoples of their freedom and mercilessly devastating their countries. Far over one million of their total population of six million have been killed, deported in the most revolting circumstances or forced to flee their countries. The physical destruction of these small peace-loving nations has been going on ceaselessly during the different occupations and is still continuing at the present moment. The religious life of the Baltic countries has heavily suffered. The churches are in ruins, many servants of the Lord have been deported or killed or have escaped to Sweden and Germany.

Confidence once lost cannot be regained. When the military forces approaching from the east invaded the Baltic countries in the autumn of 1944, an indescribable panic arose. Who could, fled, 35,000 persons from the Baltic States sailed across the stormy seas to neutral Sweden in small rowing-, motor- and sailing-boats, and in the last emergency 600,000 persons who could not fly to neutral countries, fled to Germany. The great majority of the refugees were simple fishermen from the coastal districts as well as farmers and workers, but the intellectuals, too, were represented in considerable number. These fugitives abandoned all they had been working for, their homes and possessions and everything dear to them in order to save their dearest and most sacred treasure: their personal liberty.

But even abroad the martyrdom of these refugees has not come to an end. Peaceable citizens, genuine Christians, mothers and children are unable to return to their countries which are still under foreign occupation.

Millions of people in Europe are returning to their liberated countries. It is with great warmth and sympathy that the Baltic nations and refugees think of the joy of these fortunes. But they also believe, that there is still enough broadmindedness, Christian compassion and unadulterated fairness of mind in the world to make people think with sincere sympathy of these nations which, as a result of the complications of world politics, are still suffering under the heel of brutal force and whose members are compelled to lead miserable lives as homeless exiles in foreign countries.

Unprincipled expediency cannot build a new peace. Each people, said the American Declaration of Independence, is entitled "to assume, among the powers of the earth, a separate and equal nation . . ." The British Commonwealth grew out of the same ground. The nations of Europe subscribe to the same creed. The Atlantic Charter of 14 August 1941 was but its last expression: "They desire," the spokesman of the United States and Britain declared, "to see no territorial changes concerned; 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 . . ." These are the principles on which peace alone can be built.

We, the priests and free citizens of the independent Baltic Republics, appeal to all Christians and fair-minded citizens of the Western World not to forget those small Baltic nations, whose general attitude and culture so indisputably prove them to belong to the Western World, but who are not yet enjoying the new dawn of freedom. With the help of the Western Democracies millions of Europeans have been accorded freedom, light and life. In the name of truth, justice and Christian feeling, do not forget those Christian brethren who are still forced to live in impenetrable darkness. Lend a helping hand and provide moral support and protection also to those unfortunate refugees, mothers and children, whom the Great Tragedy of our time has deprived of that which is dearest to them: their freedom, their homes and their countries.

Editor's Note: The Baltic Humanitarian Association, as its name shows, is a non-profit organization, formed by a group of Baltic exiles in Sweden with Headquarters in Stockholm, Bokbindarevägen 80.

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