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LITHUANIAN - AMERICAN NEWSLETTER

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EDITORIAL

"... anything that allows us to break out of Yalta is good ..."

This was a statement made by the President of France Francois Mitterrand on the occasion of his New Year's greetings to the French people. The idea that everything that is wrong in Eastern Europe today, stems from the February 1945 conference in the Crimea, where the Three Powers, represented by Winston Churchill, Jozef Stalin and Franklin D. Roosevelt divided the world into two spheres of influence, has come back to Western Europe and now is being heatedly debated in the United States during the centennial celebration of Roosevelt's birth.

The historical record shows that no one should expect from the Soviet Union anything but fraud, that is, it was Stalin who had violated the Yalta agreements which called for the holding of "free and unfetted elections as soon as possible on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot." Sure, we can argue that the Yalta agreement was well-intentioned and naive. The fact remains, that almost forty years after the events, the Soviet Union has still to live-up to its signature.

Recent events in Poland, the continuous murders and imprisonments of Lithuanian dissidents, the constant violations of human rights in Lithuania and throughout the Soviet Empire, have come back to haunt the West as a justification for having left Eastern Europe to its fate. And the answer is always the infamous Yalta where —Churchill signed in discomformity, De Gaulle refused to shake hands with the signators, and Roosevelt left this world believing that he could trust the signature of a Soviet militia man.

The recent Helsinki agreements on European security helped to cement the split of Europe engineered at Yalta. But, of course, the Soviets ignore a large portion of the agreements, and do as they please on the subject of human-rights, while at the same time pointing out Western misinterpretations of the accords. They never expected such a massive response from their own people and that is why the crackdown on dissident, Polish, Jewish, Lithuanians, Latvians, Ukrainians, etc., remind us of the Stalinist era.

Yalta and Helsinki present the same dilemma. Since the Soviets occupy the terrain, they are able to violate the accords at will, because as Helmut Schmidt said: "...any attempt to alter the resulting balance of power would mean war." Since nobody wants war, we have to wait philaphically the outcome of history and hope that someday, from inside, somebody, will rectify the division of Europe.

BRIDGES IS PUBLISHED BY THE LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY OF THE U.S.A., INC. THROUGH THIS NEWSLETTER, THE PUBLISHERS HOPE TO RE-ESTABLISH TIES BETWEEN THE DETACHED, MOBILE LITHUANIAN—AMERICANS AND THEIR LITHUANIAN HERITAGE BY PRESENTING ITEMS ON LITHUANIAN CULTURE, CONDITIONS IN THE HOMELAND EVENTS AND PERSONALITIES IN AMERICA, AND THE ASPIRATIONS OF ALL WHO SUBSCRIBE TO THE IDEA THAT LITHUANIA DESIRES TO BE AN INDEPENDENT AND FREE NATION AGAIN.

NAC CMALINÈ M. MAŽVYDO BIBLIOTEKA

NEWS FROM LITHUANIA

LETTERS FROM LITHUANIAN "PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE"

The following excerpts from recent letters of Lithuanian political prisoners were taken from the underground journal *The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* (No. 49, Sept. 9, 1981).

Iešmantas, Pečeliūnas, Skuodis (sentenced December 22, 1980, to six and seven years respectively, in strict regime camps).

"We received harsh punishment for having loved our Fatherland Lithuania, for desiring freedom for our nation, and for refusing to become traitors to the Lithuanian nation, or its enemies' slaves. Yet our conscience is clear, because the enemy has been unable to break our will ... We do not know if we shall return to our Homeland. But we face our future calmly and with strength. We ourselves are divided by some of our views and convictions: one of us is a socialist, another - a democrat, the third - a humanist; two of us are practicing Catholics, one - an agnostic. However, all three of us are united by ideas for which we sacrificed our freedom. Now we have been even more united by our common destiny.

Viktoras Petkus (a member of the Lithuanian Helsinki Group, sentenced in 1977 to three years in prison, seven years in strict-regime camps, and five years in internal exile for expressing his views):

"... The minimal necessities of normal life acquire maximum importance here... One wants to go on brushing one's teeth, but where can one get tooth-powder? Such a seemingly trivial thing as toiled soap is a luxury here that is difficult to get; I have not had it for four months....

"I was very interested how the (Soviet) press would mark the (400th) anniversary of the University of Vilnius...." The forty-six Soviet magazines accessible in the camp have not written a single word about the anniversary, except for a few critical remarks in the magazine *Voprosy jazykoznanije* (Questions of Linguistics, No. 3, 1979)...

"You may write to me in Russian, because a letter in Lithuanian must cover a distance that is three times longer..."

SAD STATISTICS

While the population of Lithuania has remained much the same as in 1940 — about 3.25 million — religious faith has declined significantly under the regime which justifies the oppression and persecution of believers. The following statistics reveal a continuing, but faltering struggle to practice the dominant faith in 1981.

— The Catholic population has dropped from 84 to 75 percent of the population.

 Priests have declined from 1,450 to 711 and their average age is 60.

— The number of seminarians has fallen from 549 to 56, the maximum allowed by the Communist government.

 Religious orders and congregations have disappeared from the 37 in 1940.

— Catholic newspapers and magazines have vanished from 32 in that year, although the "samizdat" or "self-published" clandestine religious press is alive but underground.

— The number of churches has declined from 717 to 628, but 95 of those parishes do not have priests.

WALES.



St. Casimir by V. K. Jonynas

THRIFLES MAKE PERFECTION

Among Lithuanians, whether in besieged Lithuania or in the free countries of the world, St. Casimir has been the princely saint to whom the devout have accorded their trust, their hopes, and their aspirations.

On June 11, 1948, he also became the official patron saint of Lithuanian youth when Pope Pius XII proclaimed him as the special heavenly patron of all Lithuanian youth.

Born in the royal palace of Cracow on October 3, 1458, Casimir was richly blessed with natural gifts. The prince passed away in the arms of his mother on March 4, 1484. St. Casimir was buried in Vilnius in the Blessed Virgin Chapel of the Cathedral. When in 1944 the communist converted the Cathedral into an Art Gallery, the body of the saint was transferred to SS Peter and Paul Church also in Vilnius.

Casimir took trifles and found in them the golden threads which he wove into the fabric of spiritual perfection. Herein lies the secret of the heroic, or extraordinary quality of Casimir's sanctity. He fully understood that "trifles make perfection and perfection is no trifle."

Lithuanian - American Community News

LITHUANIAN ORGANIZATIONS

The Lithuanian - American Community

Previously, in *Bridges*, we have introduced our readers to the *Vyčiai* (Knights of Lithuania) organization. This time we will get acquainted with *Lietuvių Bendruomenė* (Lithuanian-American Community of the U.S.A.)

"The vast Lithuanian population scattered throughout the world is joined to form the World Lithuanian Community," so says the Lithuanian Charter, which the Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania established in 1949. Then in 1951, in New York, the Lithuanian-Ameican Community of the U.S.A. was formed. In 1952, the Temporary Organizational Committee established itself in the state of Connecticut. So was the birth of the Lithuanian-American Community of the U.S.A., Inc.

The earlier days were mostly concentrated on Lithuanian education. Later the focus was upon the cultural aspect — folk dancing and singing, cultural congresses, theatre festivals, press participation, as well as educational and creative symposiums.

Almost a decade ago, the Lithuanian - American Community actively joined the political arena. Our youth already having finished their studies here, find easy access to the institutions of government, education and the news media. Through the efforts of the Lithuanian-American Community, there are now annual informational and educational publications printed in English and French.

The Lithuanian-American Community also became active in social activities. We now have scores of specialists, who through their efforts have come to the aid of our elderly, setting up housing centers. For this reason we now have close ties with the White House.

We are also just beginning to take on the responsibility of the Lithuanian parishes. Slowly, Lithuanians have moved from the cities to the suburbs, leaving behind our beautifully built parishes. Our goal is to make sure those parishes not only remain religious institutions but also Lithuanian landmarks.

The strength of the Lithuanian-American Community lies in its democratic process. All of the branches are elected. Each and every Lithuanian is permitted to participate in elections. The Lithuanian Community is open to all Lithuanians, giving them the right to run for election.

Vytautas Kutkus

BOOKS IN ENGLISH

ATOGRĄŽŲ SAULĖ (Sol del Tropico) has just appeared in Chicago. It is a collection of Latin American poetry in Lithuanian translation. The translator is Povilas Gaučys, who has translated and published numerous works from Spanish into Lithuanian. This anthology covers 80 years of Latin American poetry from 20 different countries. It is a monumental work of 590 pages.

A DREAM OF FREEDOM by Andres Kung is a description of life in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania is a comprehensive and highly readable work. It should be of interest for students, academics, journalists and government officials. It digests a large volume of sources and produces a judicious and balanced narrative. The reader will come away from this book with a detailed understanding of both the differences and similarities among the three nations described. The author provides not only details of the history, economics, religions, politics, cultures and dissent groups of the Baltic republics, he also lists and extensive bibliography for further information.

Published by Boreas Publishing House 63 Ninian Road, Cardiff CF2 5EL 272 pages. L7.70.

THE BALTIC NATIONS by Bronius J. Kaslas. This book gives a historical review of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in three sections. The first section reviews the history

of the three nations and discusses their political structures. Part two deals with historical strategies aimed at integrating security policies. The last section analyzes the impact of World War II not only on the three countries but also on an international level.

THE LAST PICNIC by Algirdas Landsbergis. A play portraying the trauma in bridging the generation gap among Lithuanian immigrants in the United States. Old and new Christianity, burgeoning rock fests and declining religious festivals, drifting youths and their uprooted elders, all intersect, clash, and are briefly reconciled. The three-acter is set in the 1960s and the characters are Lithuanian immigrants and their children.

Published by Manyland Books Inc., 84-39 90th St., Woodhaven, NY 11421, 90 pages. paper back, \$4.00.

LITHUANIANS IN THE NEWS:

Mr. A. Bernotas of Concord MA called our attention to the fact that The Boston Globe in an article published January 26, 1982, speaks about the popular actor Ed Asner. Mr. Asner, the new Screen Actors Guild president and star of the popular TV series Lou Grant, is a "...son of a Lithuanian Immigrant, who has, indeed, succeeded in his chosen field. His humanitarian instincts run deep and he doubtless sees himself as a champion of the downtrodden".

Lithuanians in the News

"Going out on a Limb . . ."

was the caption of a news brief in the November 30, 1981 issue of U.S. News and World Report. We reprint the article in full:

When ranking bureaucrats do take personal control over events, it sometimes puts them under great pressure.

Valdas V. Adamkus, 55, Lithuanian-born administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency's Chicago region, felt that he was putting his career in jeopardy during the Nixon administration after finding that a lake in Kentucky was so polluted with mercury that it would be hazardous to eat fish taken from it.

"I called the appropriate officials to indicate we would have to post warning signs," Adamkus recalls. Because tourism was involved, the state officials were strongly opposed to that kind of recommendation. I indicated I was going to announce the warning if local officials would not.

"Later, I received a call from Washington indicating that there were some high-level officials — staffers at the White House — who inquired if I could moderate this.

"I felt this would be improper to do, and I advised the general public of the mercury pollution. I had felt political pressure to be quiet about this. I went again a good bureaucrat's way and did what I felt was right. And I was justified in this. I was never reprimanded."

That, says Adamkus, was the strongest application of political pressure he had ever encountered in 12 years of government duty.

OUR NEW LOOK

Bridges, in its effort to improve its professional look asked Mr. Romas Viesulas to design a new masterhead. Our thanks for his contribution.



Rev. Peter J. Stravinskas

THE CATHOLIC LEAGUE IN ACTION

The Rev. Peter M. J. Stravins kas, East Coast Director of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, successfully defended his doctoral dissertation before his committee at Fordham University on December 8.

That interest of the League is reflected in the title of Father Stravinskas's dissertation: "The Constitutional Possibilities of Federal Financial Assistance to non-public School Parents." In his study he identified the Supreme Court of the United States as the major stumbling block to aid non-public school parents and exposed the Court's many anti-Catholic statements in their opinion on this topic. Copies of the dissertation abstract may be obtained by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: The Catholic League, Box 268, Trenton, NJ 08602.

Father Stravinskas is a frequent lecturer on this topic and welcomes opportunities to address interested groups.

P.E.N. REPORTS ON IMPRISONED WRITERS

The Writers in Prison Committee of International P.E.N., a global literary association, regularly publishes reports listing writers and journalists, including contributors to underground journals, who are imprisoned for expressing their ideas. These reports are presented to the P.E.N. congresses and released to the media.

This report, dated August 1981. and discussed at the P.E.N. congress in Lyons, France, on September 22-23, 1981 demonstrates the severity of the political and cultural repression in Lithuania. Of the 33 writers and journalists now imprisoned in the Soviet Union, 14 are Ukrainians, nine Russians, eight Lithuanians, one Estonian and one Armenian. Thus Lithuania, whose population amounts to slightly more than one percent of the USSR total, provides almost 25 percent of the literary and journalistic prisoners of the Soviet empire.

HOPEFULL ANNIVERSARY

The Voice of America has a very impressive Lithuanian Service which directs information to the people of enslaved Lithuania. Last year marked the 30th annivesary of that Lithuanian program. The anniversary was very solemnly commemorated at the Senate building on May 14, 1981, under the guidance of Senator Charles H. Percy. The Lithuanian program of the Voice of America, was initiated on February 16, 1951, through the efforts of the Lithuanian American Council and other leaders of the Lithuanian Community, who found a favorable climate for this program at the government institution.



Personalities

IN MEMORY OF THE CONQUERORS OF THE ATLANTIC OCEAN

Two American pilots of Lithuanian descent, Steponas Darius and Stasys Girėnas in 1933, in a daring and perilous flight, were able to cross the Atlantic Ocean in their small plane. Their aim was to reach their native land Lithuania. Unfortunately, adverse atmospheric conditions caused their crash in the forest of Soldin, 650 km from their destination Kaunas. There were suspicions that perhaps they were shot down by the Nazis. Their dedication, heroic flight and their tragedy gained great publicity for the USA and for Lithuania. The 50th anniversary of their death is approaching. The Lithuanian American Council has started an action aspiring that the U.S. Post Office issue a commemorative stamp of Darius and Girenas in 1983. Lithuanian organizations, Veteran Posts and other supporting this endeavor are asked to write to: The Honorable William F. Bolger, Postmaster General of the United States, Washington D.C. 20260.

A NEW LITHUANIAN TALENT

Vytas I. Bakšys is a young composer studying at the New England Conservatory of Music. He has been playing the piano since the age of 2 1/2 and has studied the cello for 9 years. Following his senior recital (a requirement for the Bachelor of Arts degree), Vytas will prepare for a series of performances with the New England Conservatory Symphony Orchestra, with Benjamin Zander as conductor. The highlight of the spring concert series will be Sumphony in Three Movements by Igor Stravinsky. Mr. Zander has also chosen La Mer by Claude Debussy and two pieces by Dutilleux — Timbres e mouvement and Cello Concerto.

In May the orchestra will take this program on tour to Europe starting with the Evian Festival in France. Performances are also being arranged in Turin, Italy, and Lousanne, Switzerland.

In September, Vytas will begin graduate school in either piano or composition.

The Lithuanian musician, Jeronimas Kačinskas has performed the compositions of Bakšys.



Postage stamps published in independent Lithuania honoring Darius and Girenas.

LITHUANIAN BISHOP APPOINTED VATICAN "MAYOR"

Pope John Paul II appointed American Archbishop Paul Marcinkus to head the administration of Vatican City.

The burly, plain-spoken and pragmatic Marcinkus, born in 1922 of Lithuanian parents in Cicero, Ill., is widely considered as one of the most active members of the Roman curia.

Marcinkus has been president of the Institute for Religious works, known as the Vatican Bank, for the last decade.

TONY DOUGALAS: "PHARMACIST OF THE YEAR"

Tony Dougalas, the pharmacist/ owner of the Medicine Shoppe, Nanticoke, has 'een selected from hundreds of pharmacists across the country to be "Pharmacist of the Year." This nationally recognized award is presented to the pharmacist most involved in curbing drug abuse.

Exceptional dedication to state and community programs plus drug and pharmaceutical expertise distinquished Dougalas. "If any man deserves an award, it's Tony Dougalas," said Frank Patts, chief training officer for the Pennsylvania Bureau of Corrections.

Besides counseling teenage drug addicts, teaching at King's College, and lecturing community organizations about drugs, Dougalas devotes considerable time to law enforcement training in drug abuse.

Commissioner of Pennsylvania Corrections, Ronald J. Marks, notes correctional employees have been "greatly assisted by Tony Dougalas' training and shared knowledge of drug related problems."

> SVEIKI SULAUKĘ ŠV. VELYKŲ!

Lithuanian Life - Styles

THE FOLK COSTUME OF THE VILNIUS REGION

Vilnius, the old capital of Lithuania, is a beautiful city noted for its legendary castle of Gediminas, its classical style cathedral, Gothic, baroque, and rococo churches and old buildings. The surrounding countryside, characterized by the Neris River, rolling hills, lovely lakes and forests, further enhances the beauty of this historical city.

In general, the clothing of the local royalty, as well as that of the international visitors to Vilnius and Trakai, influenced the tastes and styles of the local populace. Their costumes therefore were characterized by a more ornate appearance in the cut, colours, and patterns than costumes found elsewhere in Lithuania.

Various colours of blue as well as white with red were dominant in women's and girls' costumes. Distinctive embroidery and various patterns in pickup, overlay, and inlaid technique were found in their shirts, aprons, ribands, headdresses, kerchiefs, headshawls, and stoles.

The women and girls of the Vilnius Region wore tiny beaded amber, red coral, or silver necklaces with open work pendants.

The prehistoric clasps, found in castle mounds and old grave diggings, were plain but carefully and tastefully crafted.

Girls' Headdress. Girls braided their hair into two braids, occassionally winding them about their heads. For summer holidays the hair was adorned with flowers and wreaths of rue. During the other times of the year and especially for weddings the hair was decorated with a narrow galloon or a crown having dentated edges, both fashioned in a variety of ways, determined by the locality in which they were made. The galloons were woven from linen and metallic threads with diamond or rectangular patterns in the inlaid technique. The top edge was embellished with silver and fold folds, or bands in pick-up-design, or openwork crochet.



Vilnija (Vilnius Region) National Costumes: from the left: Girl's holiday dress, district of Trakai, Girl's wedding costume, Švenčionėliai (near Švenčionys), Young Man's autumn garb, district of Vilnius, Woman's holiday costume, district of Švenčionys, Girl's autumn garment, region of Trakai.



St. Casimir's Church Sioux City, Iowa.

80 YEARS OLD AND GOING STRONG

Would you believe that there is a Lithuanian parish in Sioux City, Iowa? The parish is St. Casimir's. Its pastor is Rev. Simonas Morkūnas, who celebrated his 80th birthday last February 16th. (Lithuania's Independence day). A few months from now, he will be celebrating his 30th anniversary of his association with the parish. The parish is not large. When two meat packing plants closed, many of the parishioners moved away to seek jobs elsewhere. But through the pastor's ingenuity and thrift, the parish is not only in the black, but has already amassed \$250,000 for future needs. Even though he is far beyond the retirement age, Father Morkūnas is still going strong, but on the lookout for a younger priest to "some day" take over. We wish Father succes in his undertakings. A replacement for him will be difficult to find. Ilgiausiu Mety! St. Casimir's Lithuanian Church, 2514 Leech Ave., Sioux City, la 51107. Telephone 712 275-4194.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Let me mention two defects of Bridges:

1) During the course of one subscription you should give the name, address, and information on the various national and international Lithuanian organizations. You banter the names of the various organizations as if everyone should know them. You must remember that the average Lithuanian in the United States is not that acquainted with all these organizations.

2) During the course of one subscription you should mention the sources of Lithuanian newspapers, books, periodicals, presses, records, tapes, etc. Local Lithuanians often ask me for such sources but there is no information available on this score.

Thankful for any consideration rendered in the above matter.

Charles P. Treppe (Kazys Trapočka)

Thank you for your suggestions Mr. Treppe. We will keep them in mind for future issues of Bridges.

I am sending you a recent issue of San Jose News, our local newspaper, where it finally shows our country Lietuva as it should. Could you publish this notice and send a word of thanks to the Chicago Tribune and San Jose News?

Some suggestions: A sports section in *Bridges* would be welcome. Also, news about Lithuania's achievements from present day Lietuva and from all around the world would benefit your newsletter. Are you aware that since W.W. II there has been two European champions (lietuviai) Poznickas and Gocikas, and one Olympic gold medalist (Poznickas). Lina Kačiušyte is a

world record holder. Let's hear if they are all Lietuviai, it does not matter where they live.

> Benas Stankus Santa Clara, California

Ačiū labai for the information and suggestions. Do continue to inform us about Lithuanians in the field of athletics. It is difficult for us to reach into every field. We need your help. Editor

BOOKS IN ENGLISH

LITHUANIA: 700 YEARS. Edited by Dr. Albertas Gerutis. Hard cover. 456 pages. \$15.00.

Lithuania: 700 Years is the first book to appear in the English language that not only "tells" the story of the Lithuanian state, but succeeds eminently in "explaining" the Lithuanian people.

SOVIET GENOCIDE IN LITHUANIA by Joseph Pajaujis-Javis. Hard cover, 240 pages. \$12.00.

The book brings into sharp focus the process of the attempted political killing of a nation, and constructs a paradigm of the true expansionist foreign policy of the Soviet Union. It is painstakingly researched and documented. The study explores the Soviet Union's attempt at cultural extermination of the Baltic States, and reveals in frank and often

painful detail the persecutions, repressions, and violations of human rights the Lithuanian people have suffered at the hands of the Soviets.

Available from: Bridges, 341 Highland Blvd., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11207. Enclose \$1.00 for postage and handling.

INFORMATION ON PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE AVAILABLE

The Lithuanian Information Center has published a 4-page information sheet on Lithuanian Prisoners of Conscience Vytautas Skuodis (Scott) and Dr. Algirdas Statkevičius. These sheets contain biographical information and suggestions for action on each prisoner's behalf. Suitable for parish and organizational activity. Free in any quantity. Write to: Bridges, 341 Highland Blvd., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11207

AUŠROS VARTŲ MARIJA PHOTOGRAPHS

For the Year of the Lithuanian Parishes, beautiful full-color photographs of Our Lady of the Dawn Gates (Aušros Vartų Marija) 8" x 12" are available at \$3.00 each. Write to: Bridges, 341 Highland Blvd., Brooklyn, NY 11207

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GERA ŠEIMININKĖ COOKING LITHUANIAN STYLE

TRADITIONAL EASTER TABLE VELYKŲ STALAS

The traditional Easter menu includes: homemade horseradish, stuffed roast goose or duck, crullers, cold baked ham, homemade sausage, vegetable salad, Easter Bread, Easter Butter Lamb, homemade cheese, sour cream butter, fruit, coffee and of course the margučiai (Easter eggs).

This menu is served throughout the holiday season. The festivities for this Christian holiday lasted for approximately one week. The season would end with low Sunday, affectionately referred to in some areas as "Little Easter."

WHAT ARE

Unusual Easter customs, so familiar to our people, have their beginning a week before Easter, when, on Palm Sunday, sleepy-eyed children are awakened early in the morning by a gentle flogging with juniper twigs. The older brothers and sisters or thie parents of the children repeat this little formula, "I am not flogging you, the palm (verba) is doing it. In a week it will be Easter and I wish you health. Will you promise me a marguti? It is an age-old belief, that the touch of the evergreen twig induces health and beauty.

The coloring of the Easter egg is probably one of the most important customs amongst our people. The Lithuanian patterns are usually geometrical and plant of

techniques are used in the decoration of eggs: ornaments are scratched with a sharp knife on an already colored egg, or the egg is covered with a wax in various patterns and then dipped successively in several dyes.

The most popular game during the Easter season is the breaking of eggs with the owner of the stronger egg taking the broken egg.

It was the usual custom to visit the cemeteries in the afternoon and to place decorated Easter eggs upon the graves of the little children. On Easter morning children found colored eggs on their beds and they were told that the eggs were left by the Old Easter Lady (Velykų Bobutė).



Lithuanian margučiai

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