

Bridges

LITHUANIAN - AMERICAN
NEWS JOURNAL

Vol. 10, 7-8, July-August, 1986

YEAR OF LIVING FAITH



EROSIONS

THE LAND
AND THE
NATIONAL SPIRIT

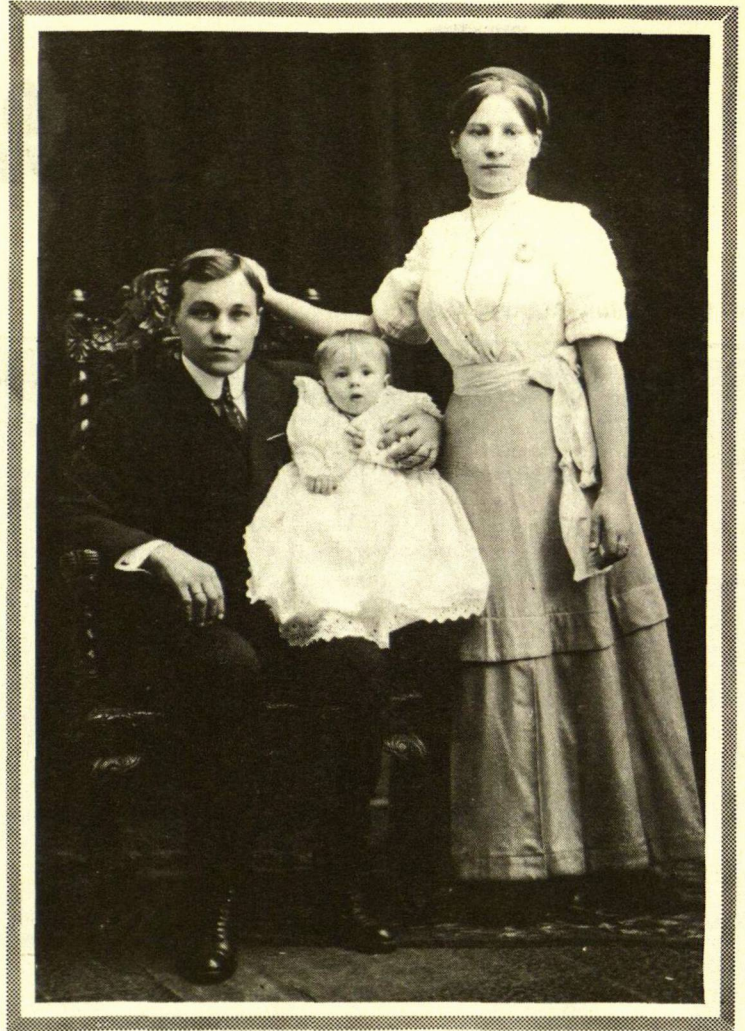
This is the "Lithuanian Sahara", formed between the Baltic Sea and Courish Lagoon 5,000 years ago by winds, sea and sand that covered the glacial deposits. Fourteen villages are known to lie buried under the sand. The earth, suffering erosion, changes its conformations. But not the spirit of man. Especially his national spirit which represents an extension of his family in time and space.

In 1964 the Kremlin Russified the names of places in this uniquely beautiful area of Lithuania. According to plan, the Kremlin confidently awaits the erosion of the national spirit of Lithuanians whom the red flood scattered all over the world.

It will wait in vain. It can boast that "the largest marine museum in USSR" is housed here on the Courish Spit in a 19th century fortress. It can boast that the first bird tracing station in the world was established here in 1901. Each year, fifteen million migrating birds descend on the "Spit"; the Kremlin permits no more than 100,000 visitors a year. To protect the area, it has planted forests and shrubs.

Nature follows pattern, but the human spirit breaks out of patterns with surprises. In 1984 communist China rejected Marxism which deadens the individual and stultifies his creative powers. Soviet communism can not but eventually succumb to similar erosion of communist precepts. The human spirit ultimately proves itself stronger than brute force.

Demie Jonaitis



"Greenhorns"

Less than a year after arriving in the USA, this family adopted the "American" custom of having a picture made by a professional photographer. They sent it to relatives in Lithuania to show their new affluence. He looks like a well groomed young business

man although his hands are bruised from hard work in a factory. She and the baby wear home-made dresses. Note the stylish watch on her chest. Sundays they wear their shoes to church. In Lithuania they used to carry thier shoes and put them on only before entering the church. Life has been their university: Lithuanian enthusiasm for work, stick-to-it-iveness and American democracy have made remarkable people of them and their families as we who have known them can testify.

Bridges is published by the Lithuanian American Community, U.S.A., Inc. National Executive Committee, Brooklyn, N.Y. each month except July and January. Subscription per year \$8. Single copy 50¢.

To subscribe or change address write to BRIDGES, Business Office: 341 Highland Blvd., Brooklyn, NY 11207.

Second class pending postage paid at Brooklyn, NY post office. Postmaster please send all inquiries to: BRIDGES Business Office, 341 Highland Blvd., Brooklyn, NY, 11207.

Publication No. USPS 735-830 ISSN 8750-8028.

Our writers' opinions do not necessarily reflect the views of the publishers or editor.

Unsolicited material must be accompanied by stamped self-addressed envelope if return is desired. Send editorial material to: BRIDGES, Editorial Office: 79-18 Park Lane South, Woodhaven, NY 11421.

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A Lithuanian and the Country Gentlemen

Elona Marijosius Vaisnys

We reprint Elona M. Vaisnys' article from the New York Times, December 22, 1975. She holds a Ph. D. in French literature from Yale and teaches second- and third-generation Americans about their Lithuanian heritage. Do you detect any erosion of social attitudes since 1975?

It bothers me that the Bicentennial is focused on battles, costumes and candlesticks of the 1770's. Pageantry is great, but a nation that has come of age should not spend all its attention on its baby pictures. After all, it's what came after that shaped it.

A great many of us are real phonies if we run around gushing about "our forefathers" fighting the Redcoats at Lexington and Concord. My forefathers were probably serfs in Lithuania, singing folk songs on their one day off. Oh sure, I can't expect the public schools to have pageants about the serfs in Lithuania, because then they would have to do everybody else's forefathers too. If you can't include everybody, don't single out a few.

Ha! As it stands now, most of our forefathers are left out of the celebration because most of them had nothing whatever to do with the wars of American independence or with drafting the Constitution.

I'm glad that the WASP's were here first, though. I'm even gladder that they were first-to-do country gentlemen who liked to read and write civil, curlicued letters to each other. They drafted the Constitution with themselves and their likes in mind.

What would have happened if the forefathers of most of us had had a say about the principles on which the United States was to stand? They were very poor, largely illiterate, and had no experience with the rights of individuals. What sort of government would those millions have come up with? Which of the many groups would have seized power?

When they got off the boat, most of them landed at the very bottom of the social structure. It is understandable that they were looked upon with contempt. They themselves felt contempt for their misery and helplessness and longed to become prosperous Americans as soon as possible. They were willing to throw away their names, their customs, their languages. Schools and adult Americanization classes were the way up from the bottom. And the most eager to shove the sorry greenhorns into the melting

pot were the immigrants who had come a bit earlier.

The heat under the melting pot was still intense after World War II when our family came to the states. On the very first day of school, teachers suggested I change my name to Ellen, Helen, Eleanor or Elaine. Lucky for me that I was in a public school and that my Anglo-Saxon homeroom teacher didn't insist on instant Americanization. My friends in Catholic schools had no choice. Many Catholic schools were staffed by first-generation Americans who equated upward mobility with contempt for their parents' national cultures. "Speak English, you're in America now!" was a phrase we heard often, and it sounded like a threat to deport you back where your family had fled from.

New immigrants really couldn't see it in actual life, but democracy was there in black and white in our schoolbooks, which spoke glowingly of America as the land of equality and opportunity for everybody, of acceptance, of compassion. I read my textbooks and became firmly convinced that it was not in the spirit of the Constitution to require amnesia for naturalization.

When my children were born, there was no doubt in my mind that my husband and I were in no way un-American to give our children names which meant something to us, to teach them Lithuanian so that they could communicate with their grandparents, grand-aunts and grand-uncles, to introduce them to a particular set of symbols and customs with which we were at home and to make them part of a community of people who recognized these same symbols and customs as their own.

Now the children are full-fledged members of two cultures, at ease in both. To them it seems obvious that other people may observe holidays which they know little about, that other people can speak languages which they don't understand (but could learn), and that such doings don't make the others crazy or funny or strange. In their own childish way they have learned that different cultures aren't superior or inferior but unique.

In a sense until recently we were "closet ethnics," as one columnist puts it. Not that we ever hid our ethnic identity, but the likes of us were invisible in schoolbooks, in the press, on TV. Ethnics were reputed to have faded completely, and good riddance.

But then the theory of democracy got to the blacks. They stood up and demanded to be counted. Women rose to have their say. And then whole groups of men and women got the urge to be recognized: "Kiss me, I'm

Polish, Irish, Italian" said their hopeful buttons.

The Bicentennial Commission grudgingly included an ethnic racial council. But the general attitude toward ethnics was and is one of apprehension. Ethnics are eyed warily like a many-headed monster which, if unleashed, will wreck and devour everything in its path. It's divisive to encourage ethnics.

It certainly can be. But then so can absolutely everything else. (Have the teachings of Jesus ever been divisive!) On the other hand, it needn't be. It depends on your attitude. I, for example, see the natural clustering of people into groups of their own choosing—that includes groups which form along the lines of heritage—as a strength to build on, much preferable to a lonely crowd of unaffiliated individuals.

Having always been an integral part of a viable ethnic community I can bear witness to its many positive aspects. Belonging to an ethnic community is a source of strength for which the broader society has no substitute, especially for the less aggressive individuals.

One could almost say that an ethnic community is a haven for the ordinary man. Talents of all sizes are appreciatively nurtured, for example. No, that is not the same as fostering mediocrity. Those who have exceptional drive and talent are urged to compete outside the community, and everyone is right behind, rooting for their own runner in the fierce race for the top prizes.

If one of their own wins, the whole group feels the winner.

Actually, whatever befalls one of "our own" is of special importance to all members, be it national acclaim or personal sorrow. An ethnic community is a concerned extended family, so different from the vast, wide open American scene where it's every man for himself and where ordinary people are of interest to others mostly as consumers and sometime voters.

Not everyone wants to live in two cultures. Not everyone has to. The essential is for everyone to be encouraged to be what he and she chooses to be. That's the spirit of the Constitution. And because of that life-giving spirit of the Constitution I'll admit to having two different sets of forefathers.

One set were those beautiful country gentlemen of the 1770's who believed in the dignity of the individual, in the right to decide one's own life-style, and in the responsibility of the United States Government to make sure that we allow each other to be beautiful according to our individual characteristics.

Kestutis Girnius

The Erosion of History in the Soviet Union

In the Soviet Union, history is considered a subject that can not be treated as a discipline concerned only with determining the chronological and, perhaps, the casual relations among events. The Soviet regime invokes history to justify its legitimacy and to offer assurances of its ultimate and universal triumph.

The teaching and writing of history have more mundane, and yet equally important, tasks—for example, to further the integration of non-Russians into the Soviet empire by inculcating Soviet patriotism, the friendship of nations, and socialist internationalism. The Communist Party is insistent in its demand that the past of non-Russian nations be evaluated from a class and party position, a procedure that frequently requires the distortion, if not outright falsification, of events that do not fit the standard dogma about the so-called progressive role of Russian workers, the Communist Party and its ideological progeny.

Common to the nationalism of the non-Russian peoples is a parallel belief in the almost transcendent importance of history not, however, as an indispensable prop of the regime but as a focus of resistance to government attempts to denationalise them. Many nationalists consider history to be their nation's memory and thus an integral component of their national identity. Needless to say, this struggle is decidedly one-sided.

The government controls not only the press and all institutions of higher education but can also take repressive measures against those incorrigibly attached to an unacceptable interpretation of the past. Occasional articles in *samizdat* are hardly an effective counterweight. Yet the Party's account of the past has won far from universal assent, primarily because it is often inconsistent and so transparently biased as to evoke almost automatic disbelief and repugnance. What is more, there are many recalcitrant facts that simply cannot be integrated into the Party's favoured conception of the past.

Different nations have different pasts, so Soviet historians must make considerable effort to tailor their generic account to fit the specific historical background of each non-Russian nation. Historians in the Baltic republics give special attention to denigrating the achievements of the years of independence (1918-40), while those in Caucasus and Central Asia seek to explain the expansion of the Russian empire in the nineteenth century as a progressive act that was of benefit to all.

Soviet historians transgress against even the most elementary requirements of objec-

tivity by various acts of commission and omission. Acts of commission include the deliberate falsification of historical facts or documents, the conscious and systematic misinterpretation of events, and the passing over in silence of facts whose mention would clearly invalidate the standard Soviet interpretation.

The most clear-cut examples of such deliberate distortions are found in attempts by historians to portray the occupation of Lithuania in 1940 as a primarily internal revolution, only tangentially influenced by outside forces, during which Lithuanians overthrew the bourgeois regime and voluntarily joined the Soviet Union. Acts of omission consist of conscious attempts to ignore whole periods of aspects of Lithuanian history that cannot be easily fitted into the standard interpretation of whose presentation would lead to what Party officials consider false nationalistic pride. The Soviet version of Lithuanian history is primarily biased by acts of omission, ie, by ignoring the political and military achievements of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the role of Catholicism in cultural and national life, as well as the years of independence.

Lithuanians have grudgingly accepted the inevitability of Lithuania's history being rewritten according to Soviet specifications, for they recognize that even Russian history is subject to some characteristic distortions. However, the unequal treatment of the accomplishments of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Grand Duchy of Muscovy is held to be proof of a double standard. Russian historians are free to glorify their nation's feudal past, while Lithuanian historians cannot.

The post-war partisan struggle, in which as many as 30,000 partisans fought against Soviet rule from 1944 to 1952, poses many problems for the ideological watchdogs. An event so recent and so deeply etched into the national consciousness cannot be ignored, yet the length and the scope of the armed resistance is blatantly incompatible with claims about Lithuania's voluntary incorporation into the Soviet Union. To get out of this conundrum, the party has decided on an interpretation that minimises the scope of the resistance, defames the partisans and portrays them as uncharacteristic of the population as a whole, while asserting that armed bands of supporters of the regime, the so-called Defenders of the People, played a decisive role in crushing the resistance. This interpretation is simply untrue.

Recently, Soviet publications have even

started to falsify previously published documents in their attempt to bolster the official version. A collection of documents containing the testimony of captured partisans was published in 1983 with the title *Bažnyčios prieglobstyje* ("Under the Protection of the Church"). It is basically a reprint, with several additions, of an earlier collection. Yet in many places the text of the original document has been altered, references to NKVD troops or Red Army soldiers being replaced by references to the Defenders of the People. By attempting to eliminate mention of NKVD and Red Army troops the authorities are hoping to make their claims more plausible and to be able to point to the 'testimony' of captured partisans as corroborating evidence of the decisive role of local Communists and, by implication, the limited scope of the partisan movement. The Party must deem the matter to be of great significance if it is willing to risk having people recognize that it is falsifying documents that were already very carefully edited before their original publication.

Yet the most important constraints on the writing of history occur at a deeper and less public level. Because the Party controls all academic press, it can see to it that historians focus their research on problems and periods that the Party considers most amenable to a Marxist-Leninist interpretation or whose explication can be used to further Party objectives.

Control of the development of future historians and the approval of only a limited number of historical questions for future research is the most effective method of censorship. It would be a misconception to believe that in Lithuania solid works by competent historians are submitted to publishing houses but fail to receive the necessary approval from the censors, or that these historians are silently filing their works in a drawer while hoping for a more liberal era, or that still others have fallen into despondency and have renounced all plans for the important historical work they are eminently qualified to write.

There are such historians, but only a very few. Most historians in Lithuania can only be charitably described as Party hacks and propagandists who would be incapable of undertaking serious research even if given the opportunity.

Kestutis K. Girnius, who received his Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Chicago and is currently employed by Radio Free Europe in Munich, is completing a book on Lithuania's partisan war in 1944-52.

Pagan Lithuanians Loved the Earth

Žemyna was the beloved earth goddess of pagan Lithuanians. She is mentioned in Daukša's catechism of 1595.

Old people used to fall on their knees and kiss the earth when they went to bed at night or rose in the morning. Children were taught to do the same after prayers: "Mother Earth, I come from you. You nourish me, you carry me, after death you will embrace me."

There are numerous legends how the earth punishes buried evil doers. A child strikes his mother; when he dies and is buried, the hand with which he struck her rises out of the ground, impossible to inter. Adult evil doers are swallowed up by the earth, together with their manorhouses and forts, and, in their place, a hill, a swamp or lake is formed. Some bodies are totally rejected by the earth. Čičinskas, a wicked 17th century nobleman, was killed in a thunderstorm, and, because he had done much harm to his country, the earth rejected his corpse.

Mickiewicz and Maironis wrote ballads about him.

Žemyna was venerated at all seasons. The ploughman, arriving to plough his fields, said a prayer, kneeled and kissed the earth. The sower did the same before and after sowing his seeds. Children were warned never to strike the earth with sticks or stones, for the earth is our mother. Newborn children were placed on the earth so that they would grow strong and healthy. The dying were placed on the earth to ease their death throes.

At harvest time, the farmer buried bread and salt in the earth, praying, "Žemyna, you have given to me. Now I give to you." The master of the house on some occasions said a prayer and shared his beer with Žemyna, spilling it on the earth. His family and friends followed his example in ritual fashion.

In the remote past, bloody sacrifices were made to Žemyna, both animal and human.

Dr. J. Balys

Do Kremlin Atheists Love Humanity?

A Baltic perspective on the Chernobyl nuclear accident was aired at a press conference sponsored by the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. and the Baltic-American Freedom League. It was held at the headquarters of the Lithuanian Human Services Council (LHSC) in Chicago.

"We are here today to share knowledge and discuss issues that cannot be discussed in Soviet-occupied Lithuania," said LHSC Information Director Mykolas Drunga. "We want to call attention to a certain area—the Baltic. We have very little to no information about events there, and to what extent the radioactivity released from Chernobyl has affected the people of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

"There are two million American citizens of Baltic descent," Drunga continued. "We are getting little information about our relatives and loved ones, and that is what has us worried."

The featured speaker at the press conference was Dr. Kazys Eringis, a noted Lithuanian academician and ecologist, who defected from the Soviet Union in 1981. He is a former member of the Lithuanian Atomic Energy Commission.

Eringis acknowledged that "large quantities of radioactive materials" have been released into the atmosphere, and that the radioactive cloud passed over parts of Lithuania.

Eringis said that the long-term effects of the radioactivity on the citizens of the Baltic nations are unknown, but serious conse-

quences including bone cancer, growth imbalances and other malignancies may result. He added that people in certain parts of Lithuania may have been exposed to radiation levels that are up to 200 times over normal. Eringis also cited unconfirmed reports that radiation levels in sections of eastern Poland have reached 500 times the normal exposure standard.

Eringis also warned of the serious ecological impact of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Station, which will be the largest nuclear power plant in the world when it is completed. The site is located in Lithuania, near the borders of Latvia and Byelorussia. "The plant is close to recreational, residential and major agricultural areas," Eringis said. "The planning that went into the project is ruthless, and construction standards are low. There also is considerable hostility between construction workers and residents of the area. This new plant may pose a serious threat to the safety of all people in the Baltic nations."

Although Eringis pointed out that he is not opposed to nuclear power plants, he said that the U.S. government "must press for the point that qualified, trained expertise be operative in the construction and maintenance of nuclear power plants, in the Soviet Union and everywhere else."

Also speaking at the press conference was Valdas V. Adamkus, a regional administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Adamkus said that getting accurate information on the accident from the Soviets "is like pulling teeth," and said that no one can accurately predict what the ex-

act consequences of the high levels of radioactivity will be.

In response to a question from an audience member, Adamkus advised those travelling to Lithuania to take caution. "I wouldn't drink the milk, I wouldn't eat the vegetables, and I'd wash fruit before eating it," he said.

A few people present complained that their recent attempts to telephone relatives in Lithuania have been unsuccessful, and blamed Soviet officials for the problems. "I called six times, and every time Russia says 'busy, busy, busy,'" one woman said.

Drunga said that he knew of 14 people who have tried to get through to check on their relatives' health, and only one person was able to make contact. He added that the Lithuanian relative would immediately change the subject when health questions were asked, and claimed that Lithuanian citizens are afraid to speak out because they know that foreign phone conversations are being monitored by the Soviets.

"This is what happens when a superpower is not concerned with the well-being of its citizens," Drunga concluded. "We are fighting for very basic rights—the right to know about your own physical conditions and the right to communicate with your loved ones."

Tim Hadac

Do Christian Liths Love the Poles?

Pope John Paul II hopes that, on the occasion of the 600th Anniversary of Lithuania's Christianization next year, it will be possible to declare Archbishop Jurgis Matulaitis Blessed. His beatification case has been already completed.

The Archbishop's difficult life among the Poles exemplified his Christ-like approach to charity.

Perhaps the hardest lesson we Christians must learn is the charity of forgiving those who have hurt us.

It takes a long time for old wounds to heal. Certain die-hards protested against commemorating Baltic Freedom Day at Czestochowa National Shrine because it is Polish. The success of the event proved that the thousands of Lithuanians who attended are true forgiving Christians. It bodes well for the 1987 celebration of the 600th Anniversary of Lithuania's Christianization.

"And forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive..."

3,000 Lithuanians

Attend

Czestochowa

"Day of Prayer"



Fr. Pugevičius speaks for those who cannot be heard.



Fr. Paškus speaks for dissidents like Solzhenitsyn.

Dr. Jonas V. Duncia

Over three thousand Lithuanians gathered in Doylestown, Pa. on June 14th, Baltic Freedom Day, for a day of prayer to commemorate the tragic deportations of Lithuanians to Siberia forty-five years ago. Lithuanians from all over the east coast converged on the beautiful Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa to pray, to enjoy mutual fellowship, and to learn about how the church is presently fairing in Lithuania.

The day began with Mass concelebrated by 15 priests, including prel. Ladas Tulaba from Rome. Fr. Casimir Pugevičius from Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, Inc. and Fr. Anthony Paškus preached the sermons in English and Lithuanian, respectively. Fr. Pugevičius, as usual, preached a powerful sermon, challenging the listeners to make known to the world what has really transpired in Lithuania on behalf of those whose voices cannot be heard. Fr. Paškus quoted several famous dissidents, among them Alexander Solzhenitsyn who maintains that the enforcement of one ideology on the people inevitably leads to the gulags. During the Mass, the impressive Church of the Annunciation choir from Brookyn, NY, conducted by Victor Ralys, led the people in the singing of traditional Lithuanian hymns.

After Mass, everyone was invited to visit

an underground literature exhibit arranged by Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, Inc., which also included a video presentation on the state of the church in present day Lithuania. Religious folk art from Lithuania was also displayed and most of the visitors were quite impressed with the quality of both exhibits.

After a Lithuanian-style lunch, everyone gathered for a solemn procession of the Blessed Sacrament around the church. It was like a scene taken out of the pages of Lithuanian history. Young girls dressed in white led the procession, scattering flower petals from their baskets as they walked. Behind them came people in folk costume carrying crosses and banners and finally came prel. Tulaba with the Blessed Sacrament under a gold and white canopy carried by four men. All the while, a litany was being recited by the people in Lithuanian with the ringing of church bells in the background. Many people, including the younger crowd who have never participated in such an event, were visibly moved by this beautiful cohesive ceremony. The warm sunny day, serene in the rolling countryside of Pennsylvania which could be seen for miles from the church, just added to the total experience of the day.

The day ended with a closing program in the pavillion, featuring a dramatization of

the Siberian deportation experience by Rasa Krokys and folk dancing by Aušrine, both from Philadelphia. Rev. Timothy Burkauskas, one of the Pauline fathers who run the shrine, thanked everyone who helped in organizing the event, especially the Philadelphia Lithuanian Community and the Knights of Lithuania. The day's events were made possible with the aid of Cardinal Krol of Philadelphia whose letter about Lithuania and the "day of prayer" was read throughout the diocese. Many people of Lithuanian descent who otherwise would not have heard about it were thus able to attend.

Some afterthoughts about the day. I spoke to several participants and was amazed that although many of them were Lithuanian, they had never heard about the gruesome events of June, 1941. This was made evident during the presentation by Rasa Krokys, when there were "ooh's and oh's" of utter amazement emanating from the audience at what happened to Lithuanian families during those tragic days in Lithuanian history. I think this observation speaks for itself in what must be done in the future. All in all, the day was a spectacular and moving spiritual experience for everybody, and word of it will definitely spread so that next year twice as many people will surely come to unite as one to pray for Lithuania.



Photos by Duncia



The Solemn Procession — like pages out of Lithuanian history. Scattered flower petals. Churchbells and the chants of the litany. Folk in costume bearing crosses and banners. The Blessed Sacrament under a gold and white canopy.

Fr. Timothy Burkauskas organized the activities into a cohesive spiritual experience.





"The Gate" with Lithuanian Vytis (Knight) and Polish Eagle by Arunas Tarabilda

**"IN THE
BEGINNING
WAS
THE
WORD"**

THE POLITICS
OF RELIGION, part 3

Albert Cizauskas

The tragic flaw in the religious experience of the Lithuanians has been the foreign and political character of the Christianity it encountered through the centuries, from the ruthless "crusades" of the German knights through the imposition of a Polonized church and its subsequent persecution under the Russian Orthodoxy of the Czars.

Until the end of the 18th century, Roman Catholicism in the Grand Duchy had remained, by and large, a mixture of Lithuanian paganism and Polish Christianity. Dr. Jurgela, in his *History of the Lithuanian Nation*, points out that the sacrifice of the Mass became "truly Christian" only after the loss of the nation's independence in 1795 when the holding of ecclesiastical office no longer conferred power and riches. Admission into the hierarchy thereafter ceased to be coveted by the sons of the wealthier classes and spiritual values received greater emphasis.

But there was a price. The harsh rule of the Czars hastened the Polonization of the upper classes. Most of the Lithuanian nobility and gentry joined their Polish counterparts in a quixotic dream of regaining a privileged status under a reconstituted Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. They became, in effect, expatriates in their own land, indistinguishable from the Poles.

The defection of Lithuania's upper classes fortunately was

not irreparable. Freed of the dead weight of Polonized lords and gentry, a new Lithuania was born during the second half of the 19th century, conceived and nourished by the peasant class, and led at first by a native clergy. Once again, the two streams of politics and religion merged in Lithuanian history, but this time with beneficial results.

The Heroic Age

After an unsuccessful Polish-Lithuanian revolt against Russia in 1863, the Czar's agents tightened their hold over both countries, and in particular, over Lithuania. While still leaving the Poles some measure of national identity, the Russians had decided on a campaign of genocide for Lithuania. Since Catholicism and the Lithuanian nationality were closely identified, such a campaign to be effective had to encompass the disintegration of both. And so the Russians instituted a series of repressive measures whose aim was no less than that of converting the Lithuanian peasant into a Russian kulak belonging to the Orthodox Church. These measures included the closure of existing churches; a ban on the erection of new churches; the censorship of sermons; the control over admission into seminaries and monasteries; the removal of wayside crosses; the substitution of the Russian language for educational and official purposes; and the suppression of the Lithuanian press.

But Czarist Russia did not reckon on the deep sense of nationhood among the Lithuanians, something as primeval as the great oaks of the country's ancient forests. The first voice to be raised against the Czar's brutal campaign of Russification was that of Bishop Valančius of Samogitia (the lowlands near the Baltic). His clandestine appeals to the clergy and laity combined a pastoral concern for their spiritual welfare with a patriotic call for civil disobedience. In the words of Thomas Chase, author of *The Lithuanian Story*, these appeals had great political significance. They

“denounced Russian domination over the Lithuanian nation and demanded the restoration of the Lithuanian language to schools and government offices, freedom for the Lithuanian press, and the preservation of religious liberty. They urged the people not to speak the Russian language, to boycott books printed in Russian characters and not to send their children to Russian-supported schools.”

The fighting spirit of Bishop Valančius roused the dormant nationalism of the Lithuanians and ensured their rejection of the Russian state religion. This intrepid churchman and ardent patriot was also an historian and teller of folk-tales, all of which helped to instill a sense of national awareness among the peasants. But perhaps the Bishop's most significant contribution to his countrymen's future was his decision to cross the line of passive resistance in a non-violent but highly effective manner. The Czar's government had hoped to facilitate the Russification of the people by restricting the printing of new works to the Cyrillic (Russian) alphabet. Bishop Valančius got around this restriction by organizing the first systematic smuggling of Lithuanian literature printed in the Latin (Western-style) alphabet. The people welcomed this challenge whole-heartedly, shunning works in Russian script as if they had been X-rated material. This time around, religion became an instrument not only for political action but also for the promotion of a national culture.

The Book Smugglers

The Bishop's example was soon followed by scores of secret groups which, through an underground network of accomplices fanning out from the border across the countryside, brought in Lithuanian writings printed in the Western-style alphabet. Not only works from abroad (mostly Prussia), but in time, pamphlets and journals printed in Lithuania itself, under the very noses of the Russian police.

This contraband literature was so treasured that one of the beautiful legends of the independence movement, one rooted in fact and memorialized in Lithuanian art, is that of mothers at their spinning wheels teaching children the language of their forebears, and then concealing the smuggled works in the Lithuanian soil to prevent their seizure. These smuggled writings were the literate seed which spread and supported the Lithuanian renaissance that culminated in the independence of the nation in 1918. They were the forerunners of today's samizdat journals chronicling the Lithuanian people's rejection of yet another tyranny.

Book smuggling became one of the key elements in the rebirth of the nation. The Russians, realizing the potential threat to their plans for the de-nationalization of the Lithuanian

people, imposed severe penalties: exile to Siberia, imprisonment, the raiding of homes and even executions. Despite the evident dangers, it is estimated that millions of pieces of literature were circulated throughout Lithuania during the years of the smugglers' greatest activity (1891-1902).

The book smugglers' heroism and ingenuity in the face of Russian determination to stamp it out is a romantic epic that has not yet been fully told. Among the first to follow the Bishop's lead were young priests imbued with the twin flames of religion and patriotism. One of the largest of these groups was led by Father Sedaravičius, who is described as riding his horse tirelessly by night, through all sorts of weather, in rain storms and snow blizzards, to collect contraband literature and spread it among the people, even in outlying parishes and villages.

Among the book smugglers, I am proud to mention Joseph Ambraziejus, my father-in-law, who was one of the leaders during their most active period. The name of his group, of which he was the treasurer, was the "Brotherhood of Ploughmen," a reference to the importance of farmers in the independence movement. One of his favorite anecdotes was the way he once foiled the Czar's agents who were hot on his trail by using a church belfry to hide his smuggled books. His activities, however, were carefully monitored and he was subjected to official "searches" more than 60 times. He was finally sentenced to prison for several years. As a smuggler, he often had to hide out for long periods in swamps and streams, as a result of which he contracted a severe case of rheumatism which eventually shortened one of his legs and so incapacitated him that he had to be carried physically over streams in making good his escape to Prussia. His story is only one of many among the book smugglers without whom Lithuanian independence would not have been achieved. They were "freedom fighters" as much as the embattled farmers of Lexington and Concord.

The Dawn

Even before the Russians had outlawed the Lithuanian press following the events of 1863, a cultural ferment mixed with nationalism had already begun to make itself felt. Works recognized abroad for their high literary and historical value had been written by poets such as the Lutheran minister Donelaitis and historians Daukantas and Norbutas. Their writing served to instill a national pride in the Lithuanian past and its archaic yet living language. But it was only after 1863 that the revolutionary idea of a Lithuanian nation separate from that of Poland took root.

Some time after Bishop Valančius had launched book smuggling as a successful weapon against Russification, a number of underground journals appeared which hastened the emergence of a new Lithuania. Among these were "Aušra" (The Dawn), "Varpas" (The Bell), "Apžvalga" (The Review), "Tėvynes Sargas" (The Nation's Protector).

The most influential of these was "Aušra", founded in 1883 by a key figure in the struggle for independence. He was Jonas Basanavičius, whose fiery eyes and patriarchal beard gave him the appearance of an impassioned prophet. He wrote in "Aušra" of Lithuania's past glory, of the ancient roots of its language with its beauty and richness, he

(Continued on page 18)

Celebrating the Vitality of Our Immigrants and the Lithuanian Press in the New World

DARBININKAS: "The Worker"

70 years old

The first edition of the newspaper *Darbininkas*, which originated in South Boston, September 19th, 1915, states: "...*Darbininkas* goes forth into the wide world to awaken, rouse, inform and gather into one group, our brothers and sisters, our Catholic workers. Our main concern will be the interests of the workers: to explain, guide and answer all the important and urgent questions that our workers have."

Darbininkas was the official newspaper of the Lithuanian Roman Catholic St. Joseph's Workers Organization. It was organized and created by the first editor Rev. F. Kemešis, with backing of numerous people. In those days people had a great need to belong, because they came from Lithuania and they did not know the English language; therefore communication with their own people was very important. Lithuanian immigrants were hard working people; the working day was long and difficult. Also, there were no laws to protect the worker.

The printing press of *Darbininkas* extended a helping hand by publishing books, booklets and pamphlets with specific information for the immigrants that arrived daily. It promoted many organizational alliances. It gave moral support and stability to Lithuanian immigrant community. It also gave information about the homeland which they had left behind. In 1918 when Lithuania became an independent nation, these immigrants collected funds for new Lithuanian government to help build a strong nation.

Prelate K. Urbonavičius was editor for the long period of time. In 1950 prof. S. Sužiedelis took over the editor's job and in May 15 of the same year the Lithuanian Franciscan Fathers took over the ownership of *Darbininkas*: They merged with *Amerika* of Brooklyn, N.Y. and *Lietuviu Žinios* of Pittsburgh, Pa. In April 16, 1951, in Brooklyn, the first edition of the new *Darbininkas* appeared. On the editor's staff worked: prof. J. Brazaitis, Rev. V. Dubušis, A. Gražunas, T.M. Stepaitis, OFM, S. Sužiedelis, V. Žukauskas and P. Jurkus. *Darbininkas* still serve the wide Eastern region of USA, where many Lithuanians live. Senior editor Rev. Kornelijus Bučmys, OFM, and his colleagues today have brought *Darbininkas* to this joyous 70th birthday. We wish *Darbininkas* continued success for many years to come.

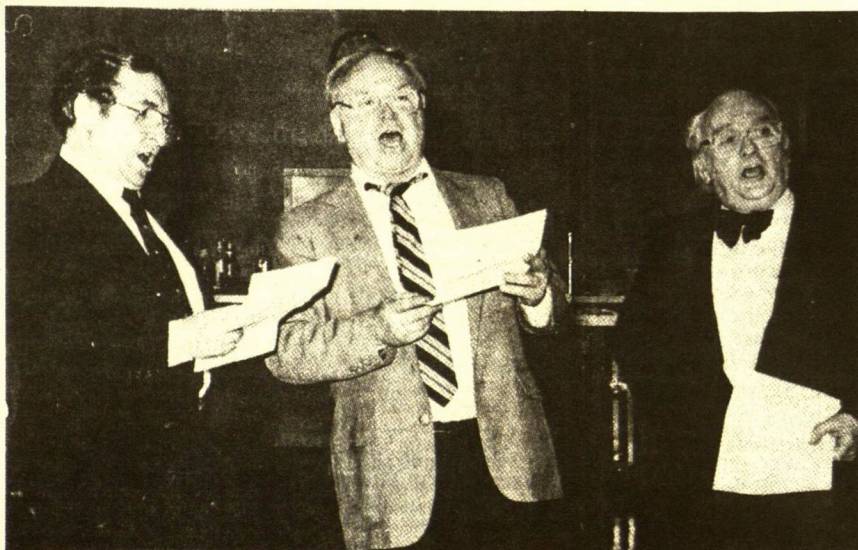
Lilė Milukienė



Fr. K. Bučmys, OFM, editor of "Darbininkas", beams as Maryte Shalins slices the festive cake. American-born, Maryte is a vital force in rallying together our Lithuanians with song, dance, financial support, and bus excursions to important events in various Lithuanian centers.



Formidable to any foe like their forefathers, Lithuanians break out into song when they're together: violinist J. Veblaitis, radio program director R. Kezys and actor-editor-satirist V. Žukauskas at a "Darbininkas" celebration.



Tamošaitis photos

VIENYBE: "Unity"

100 years old

The oldest existing Lithuanian newspaper *Vienybė* was established in 1886 at Plymouth, Pennsylvania. It was started as a four-page weekly by Juozas Paukštis, a successful grocer, and Juozas Pajaujis, owner of a saloon. As editor they hired Thomas Bačkauskas, a writer for a Polish newspaper. The first issue of *Vienybė*, 1,000 copies, came out on Feb. 10, 1886, in which the publishers stated that they would follow a policy of "unity, harmony, neighborly love, and true Catholicism." Bačkauskas almost single-handedly filled its pages, using a Polonized Lithuanian vernacular; his trademark was a personal column, the *Taradaika* (Tattler), a biting comment on Lithuanians and their activities.

During the first decade of its existence the newspaper received considerable support from the Lithuanian priests, of whom the one to exert the greatest influence was Rev. Antanas Burba, pastor of the newly established Lithuanian parish in Plymouth. He persuaded the publisher, Juozas Paukštis, to appoint Juozas Andziulaitis as editor, who before his arrival in the United States had edited the monthly of the Lithuanian national movement *Aušra* (The Dawn), published in East Prussia (Lithuania Minor). The latter changed the size of newspaper into a 16-page magazine format, introduced a pure Lithuanian literary language, and set the newspaper on a stronger nationalist course. The quality of its contents also rose appreciably, but this was not well received by the readers, accustomed to the lighter tone of the earlier articles and to the tales and adventure stories that had been offered in its pages. Furthermore, his anti-clerical leanings made him unpopular and he was replaced by the seminarian Antanas Milukas.

Important ideological and other changes were introduced under the editorship of Juozas Otto Širvydas, an able, self-educated man. He began to organize through the newspaper an American Lithuanian Socialist Party as an echo of the Social Democrats in Lithuania, to unite American Lithuanians in the struggle against tsarist Russia.

The outbreak of World War I roused American Lithuanians to a feverish pitch of activities to relieve their countrymen in war-torn Lithuania and assist them in establishing an independent state.

Within a few years the newspaper became the organ of the American Lithuanian intelligentsia.

The poet Juozas Tysliava, who had gained influence with his popular personal column *Dabar* (Now), a well-written, witty, ironical and intelligent commentary on world events in general and the Lithuanians in particular, decided to take the newspaper over in 1940, making it his personal property. He reorganized *Vienybė*, engaged new contributors, and gradually increased the circulation to 5,000. Most of the new contributors and subscribers came from the 1948 wave of immigrants, refugees from Soviet-occupied Lithuania.

With the death of Tysliava on Nov. 11, 1961, ownership of the newspaper passed to his wife Valerija, and his son Juozas Natangas. She became the managing editor, assisted by Salomėja Narkeliūnaitė as editor-in-chief and Vytautas Širvydas as senior editor. In 1968 Jonas Valaitis became editor-in-chief. Juozas Natangas Tysliava became business manager and photo editor. While *Vienybė* has represented different views, from Catholic to Socialist, it has generally held to a liberal viewpoint.

Vytautas Širvydas

DRAUGAS: "The Friend"

70 years old

Begun as a Catholic weekly in Wilkes Barre, Pa., *Draugas* was transferred to Chicago and, by 1916, became an influential daily. In response to Lithuanians' concern about World War I and conditions in their native land, *Draugas* supported the restoration of Lithuania's independence, the improvement of her economy, cultural progress and good relations with the United States. When about 40,000 Lithuanian refugees came to the United States after the war, it became one of the most widely read dailies among Lithuanians in the free world.

It publishes a stimulating weekly supplement about literature, the arts and education, which Rev. Juozas Prunskis edited from 1949 to 1961, and the poet Kazys Bradunas has been editing since then. It has published over 100 books. And it sponsors an annual contest for novelists with a \$1,000 first prize. Editors number such illustrious names as Rev. P. Garšva, Rev. J. Prunskis, C. Grincevičius, A. Baronas, B. Kviklys.

Encyclopedia Lituanica

Soviet Evidence in North American Courts

Many of the 900 cases of alleged Nazis residing in the United States have been brought to the Office of Special Investigation's attention by the Soviet secret police, the KGB.

The Office of Special Investigations (OSI) is a branch of the United States Justice Department, whose single purpose is to hunt down Nazis who illegally entered the United States. It is not clear who sought whom first, but today the OSI is heavily dependent on the KGB to provide incriminating evidence against the accused.

Having worked with legal as well as political OSI matters for four years, S. Paul Zumbakis, a defense attorney, wrote an English language book geared toward professionals, entitled *Soviet Evidence in North American Courts*.

This book analyzes the use of KGB supplied evidence by the American and Canadian court systems. The OSI's argument, always the prosecutors, is that North American judges are capable of discerning good Soviet evidence from bad Soviet evidence. The defense's position and the book's point of view is that the Soviet system is incapable of providing fair and legitimate evidence, as the Western judiciary system understands it.

In March 1984, attorney S. Paul Zumbakis published a collection of exemplary documentation about Soviet evidence in OSI cases, entitled, "Exhibits Documenting the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Special Investigation's Cooperation with Soviet/KGB Procurators." The book's purpose was to acquaint U.S. senators and representatives with this complicated issue and to provoke the American Bar Association to take a more active interest. It was distributed widely in Washington D.C., including every member of Congress.

As momentum was rising in the OSI's search for suspected Nazis within the United States, Canada too became involved. With the start up of the Royal Commission of Inquiry in 1985, Eastern European political organizations in Canada, headed by the Civil Liberties Commission of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee also began to protest admission of Soviet evidence. This organization, however, lacked a compiled easy-to-read English source about the American experience with Soviet evidence. This book will be used as a basis to convince Canadian parliamentarians and US congressmen and senator's about the pitfalls involved in using Soviet evidence.

It is the first comprehensive publication that attempts to explain one of the many

complicated aspects of OSI cases. Zumbakis gives a detailed account of the ironic and highly suspect characteristics of Soviet evidence. He delves into Soviet deposition transcripts, demonstrating the Soviet procurators' immense power in the curtailment of effective cross-examination. KGB and other Soviet defectors are quoted at length, showing that the Communist state overrides all petty details concerning honest evidence and justice.

For example, one ex-KGB agent said in response to a question concerning how the accused can be slandered, "It depended on the particular case. If war crimes wouldn't be alleged, then individuals were accused. They were accused of anti-Semitism, of Nazi propaganda, anti-American propaganda... Sometimes people are accused without any grounds, just on the principle that they were leading personalities in emigre organizations."

All of the odds are stacked against the defense, Zumbakis points out. The Soviets forbid United States officials, prosecutors and defense attorneys from personally examining and searching Soviet archives to verify that no exculpatory documents exist. Instead, the American officials are forced to rely on the honesty and validity of Soviet produced evidence.

Soviet witnesses are questioned only in the presence of Soviet officials, and questioning about the witness' prior contracts with the KGB or the accused's family or his own personal history are sometimes forbidden. The witnesses are never questioned in American courts because of the Soviet fear of defectors.

Zumbakis tells of how the majority of cases come to the OSI's attention through Soviet propaganda distributed in the United States. There is a consistent pattern. The Soviet Union publishes its charges, the person is investigated by the OSI, the action begins. Zumbakis also examines Soviet produced interpreters within the Soviet courts. The interpreters are provided by Intourist, a notorious group known to be affiliated with the KGB.

Zumbakis' enthusiastic earnestness, that has been cultivated over years of defending such cases, accounts for the book's colorful interpretation and involving interests. Aside from citing concrete facts obtained from earlier OSI cases, Zumbakis brings up some moral questions pertaining to OSI's search for Nazis using KGB evidence. He asks, how can the KGB judge the Nazi persecution of 11 million while Stalin obliterated 40 million? Why is the KGB providing evidence only

THE TRUTH IN CHERNOBYL



"Remember the Dead" by Tutalakis

The world's worst nuclear disaster occurred April 25, 1986 at an atomic reactor in Chernobyl, Ukraine. It is the biggest plant in the USSR. There are, in fact, four 1000 megawatt reactors in Chernobyl. The technology employed at the reactor is obsolete: hot graphite is used to control the nuclear fission process. The graphite is cooled by carbon dioxide, which is injected into the reactor. The Soviets do not build contained vessels (steel reinforced concrete domes) around their reactors because they believed this type of reactor was a "fundamentally benign and fundamentally safe design." The West uses contained domes to capture escaping radiation.

On April 25, a "core meltdown" began. In a meltdown caused by a cooling system failure, the fuel rods melt and radioactive material in the core of the reactor burns into the earth. This results in a release of dangerous radiation, particularly if the molten material reaches the water table. The

against Nazi war criminals and ignoring its own human rights violations?

If a defense lawyer were to receive an OSI case, this is the first book he would have to read. But the book's focus is not just for lawyers. It is for all professionals, in all walks of life, who are interested in examining the Soviet judicial system and how it is able to successfully interact with North American courts.

This book may be obtained from the publisher for a contribution of \$15 or more by writing to: Americans For Due Process, P.O. Box 85, Woodhaven, New York, 11421.

S.K.

400 degree graphite fire soon developed into a 7,000 degree holocaust.

It was alleged that eighty persons were immediately killed. More than 2000 were dead prior to or after arrival in hospitals. Thousands more, suffering radiation sickness, jammed the Kiev area hospitals. Ten to fifteen thousands were evacuated from neighboring Pripyat.

Soviet authorities finally admitted the existence of the disaster. On April 29, the Soviet News Agency TASS announced that no more than two people had been killed.



"The End" by Detankstas

The World of Vytautas Kernagis

My first exposure to Vytautas Kernagis was in San Francisco during a short visit in September 1985. We all eagerly awaited his arrival at the private function in Palo Alto while munching on hors d'oeuvres and sipping red wine. He finally arrived, escorted by his not so inconspicuous "guard." A brief session of introductions, then the music began...

V.K. played grand piano or guitar while singing through an array of oldies and some newies. He entertained the crowd for two hours without a break, apart from between songs, when he joked about the origin of some songs. Many were written by poets, eg. Marcellijus Martinaitis, "Oi Pelėda!" — quite a comical little piece, but others were written by V.K. himself. His earlier works consist mainly of piano-accompanied ballads, but more recently he has produced songs with percussion and guitar.

It was in Europe where his talent once again captured my interest. In London, the small and active Lithuanian community thrives on Kernagis. They don't seem to listen to music that other Londoners listen to. More often than not they play Kernagis. He is extremely popular among the Lithos in western Europe so I wondered what his following in Lietuva would be like.

I arrived in Vilnius on December 30, 1985. During the first night, a group of us attended some small parties. Unsurprisingly, most of the music played was either The Beatles, Boney M, Rolling Stones, Queen and Abba.

THE TRUTH IN IGNALINA

The probable dangers of the nuclear plant being constructed today in Ignalina, Lithuania, have raised serious concern. This 6,000 megawatt station started operating January 1984. One of its functions is to supply power to the Soviet military installations in the Baltic area. The Baltic World Council made public a report that Lithuanian and some Soviet scientists had protested about inadequate protective equipment at the station. They drew attention to the absence of installations to cool and contain contaminated water from the reactor core. As a result, hot water from the plant was to be conducted directly into Lake Drukšiai, and a nuclear leak would mean radioactivity going directly through a river system into the Baltic Sea. Demands of Lithuanian scientists for further investigation of safety measures at the plant were published in a limited circulation Soviet journal. At completion in 1990, the Ignalina plant will be the largest in the world. Authorities have criticized the slow pace of construction.

Elta

LETTERS to the EDITOR

I discovered your Journal in March of '84 and have been an ardent subscriber since then. I made my first visit to Lithuania in 1982 and my second in 1984. It was wonderful to discover relatives I did not know existed, to walk in the garden my mother had tended as a child and to visit the cemetery where some of my ancestors are buried. I regret I was forbidden to visit many areas in Lithuania which I would have liked to see. However, your Journal has taken me to some of these places and has given me much historical background, for which I thank you.

Valerie Jankus
Boston, Ma.

We need a clear-cut map of Lithuania on all our publications, at each exhibit and demonstration, even on our personal stationery, so that the public will become aware and informed. Congressmen and politicians, especially, need to be deluged with literature on Lithuania so that they will appear to "have done their homework!"

Francis Kabasin
Amsterdam, NY

The May issue was the best ever; the story about the Radvila lovers is about some of my ancestors!

Constance Pernetas
Akron, OH.

In the winter of 1812, a defeated (and depressed) Napoleon headed from Russia with remains of his troops. He paused to rest in the ancient Lithuanian capital of Vilnius where he found his spirits uplifted. He pointed to the Gothic church of Saint Anne and said, "If I could only carry this church on the palm of my hand back to Paris!" Here's something for us to contemplate: What would Lithuania and the rest of Europe be like if Napoleon had defeated the Russians?

Donald Wieta
Huntington Station, L.I.

Before the introduction of Christianity in Lithuania, travelers who encountered pagan Lithuanians, especially the Romans, referred to them as "homines gentiles" (nice people.) Our people were peaceful, like the Hawaiians (before the missionaries came.) They believed in reciprocal love. They didn't even have "curse words"! When the Poles introduced Christianity, Polish loan words were adopted, such as "griekas" (sin) and "griekininkas" (sinner.) Only in 1924 were these words replaced by Lithuanian scholars with "nuodėmė" and "nusidėjėlis."

J.A. Evan Adler (Abucevičius)
Bel Air, MD

Lithuanians don't have much opportunity to enjoy music from America or western Europe (hardly any from Australia), so it is sought after and played wherever possible. That's also why their choices are out of date. This is not to say that V.K. and his contemporaries are unpopular: au contraire!

A concert which I was lucky enough to attend (which to me seemed like the equal of "Entertainment with the Stars"—Kaunas-style) was called "Naujuju Metu Spektaklis" and featured Litho rock groups (some heavy metal), dancers and folk singers from all generations. V.K. was expected to be the main feature; however, he wasn't available. The organizers, nevertheless, brought on a Kernagis mimic who mimed his way through two or three of V.K.'s songs. At first, most believed that it really was he—the facial make-up was convincing as were the mannerisms, but closer study suggested that either V.K. had gained three stone, or we were watching a very talented, chubby impersonator.

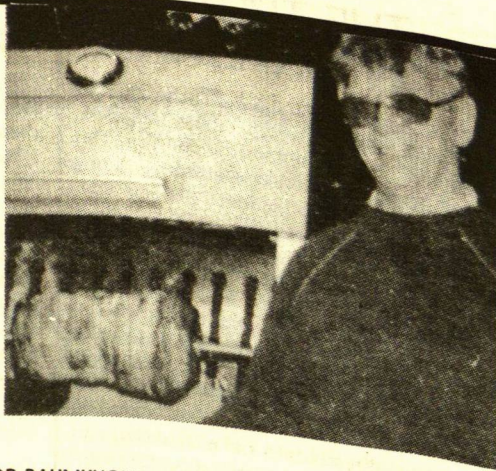
Such is the popularity of V.K. that even a mimed act can be most entertaining. His music repertoire doesn't cease to increase, with recent songs: *Geris Vyras*, *Oi Pelėda!* and *Tobulas eilėrašitis*, to his LP "Kabaretas tarp girny" (1982) which completes a sizeable collection of albums well-recommended for a good listen. His ever-growing fame in North America, Western Europe and now in Australia won't stop!

(Courtesy of "Jaužinios" of Australia)

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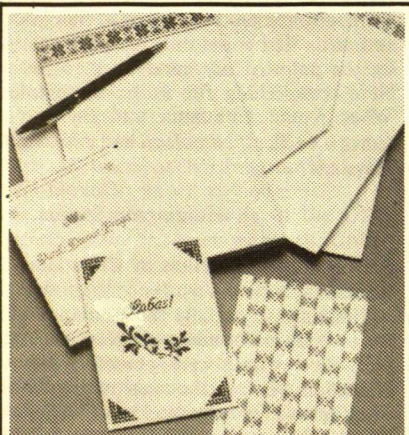


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CREDIT UNIONS

AND OUR HERITAGE

The April 28, 1986 issue of the Daily News in New York contained an interesting article by Sylvia Porter, a well known financial columnist. She described the general principals and benefits of Credit Unions. Quoting some statistics, she noted the tremendous growth of these savings and loan institutions. Currently over 52 million Americans belong to Credit Unions with a total of \$126 billion in deposits. In 1985, Credit Union savings rose by 23.4% while all other financial institutions rose only 9.5%.

Why such an amazing rise in popularity? A direct quote from Sylvia Porter's column "Your Money" may give us the answer: "Since credit unions are nonprofit organizations, they can usually offer financial services at lower costs than commercial institutions."

Sharply rising costs of services in commercial banks are obviously sending customers to look for greener pastures. More and more of them settle their accounts in a Credit Union of their choice. There they find less costly banking, higher interest returns, personalized services and full protection of deposits by the National Credit Union Administration, a federal agency, better known as CUNA.

How does one join a credit union? Most Credit Unions are organized at places of employment, though recently the concept has opened up to the general public. All that is required is a "common bond" with other members. This includes residence in the same community, membership in a fraternal organization, ethnic group, religious or professional association, etc.

It should not be much of a surprise to discover that Lithuanians also have their own Credit Unions. Some of them are up in Canada, serving Lithuanian communities for more than three decades. More recently, other Lithuanian Credit Unions have been organized in the United States. By far the largest one is the Lithuanian Federal Credit Union, KASA, based in Richmond Hill, New York, with branch offices in Chicago, Cicero, St. Petersburg Beach and Detroit.

In little over six years, KASA Lithuanian Federal Credit Union has reached \$54 million in assets. It provides most banking services found at other financial institutions, except the costs of services are lower and dividend percentages are higher than in most commercial banks.

Operating at low overhead, KASA, like most other Credit Unions, is able to offer its

(Continued on page 16)

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VIDEO CASSETTES

DOCUMENTARY FILMS FROM LITHUANIA

LITUANIKOS SPARNAIS— The tragic pioneering flight across the Atlantic of the two Lithuanian-Americans, Darius and Girenas.

ŠIMTAMEČIU GODOS— Interviews with men and women in Lithuania who are over one hundred years old.

ŠVENTEN— Preparations for a Lithuanian folk song festival.

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(From Page 14)

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K of L CONVENTION

The 73rd Annual Convention of the Knights of Lithuania will be held at the Hilton Hotel in Allentown, Pa., August 7 to 10. This year's convention will be hosted by the Supreme Council with Helen Shields of New York Chairperson.

The convention will open with a Mass which will coincide with the closing of the Lithuanian Priest's League Convention. Panels on the 600 Christianization Jubilee and Lithuanian Culture will be presented during the convention.

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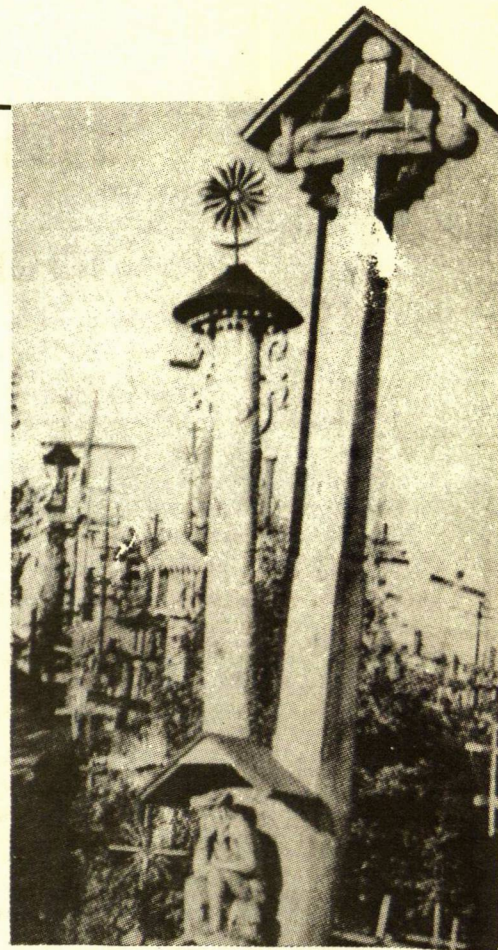
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THE WORD (continued from page 9)

inspired a national self-respect and preached a never-ending battle against the nation's oppressors. Vincas Kudirka, the author of the Lithuanian national anthem and editor of "Varpas," claimed that when he heard Basanavičius, he felt that he had heard the voice of Lithuania itself.

History has shown that the struggle for political freedom will often release the latent intellectual and cultural resources of a people. And so it was with the Lithuanians. A surprising number of gifted writers and artists appeared who complemented the work of the more political journalists. Prominent among these was Bishop Baranauskas, a scholar of the Lithuanian language, a leader in the patriotic resistance to Russification and one of Lithuania's greatest poets. It is interesting that two Bishops - Valančius and Baranauskas - played major roles in both Lithuania's national rebirth and its cultural awakening. Another gifted writer was Maironis, a priest, educator and "fiery patriotic poet." At this time, too, arose the troubled genius of Čiurlionis, whose exceptional talents encompassed two distinct art forms, that of painting and music. In both fields, his somber and imaginative style earned him a place in the front rank of European artists. All these sons of peasant Lithuania summoned from the mists of an almost-forgotten past the memory of a nation that predated its political alliance with Poland.

The Catholic Church continued in the mainstream of the independence movement but it was no longer the sole agent. Basanavičius and other non-clerical patriots joined the strug-

gle and transformed it into a national movement, representing all points of view. There were still many vexing reminders of the past which had so tragically split the Lithuanian nation. For instance, Polish Catholicism remained a significant influence in the Lithuanian Church, a situation which the new patriots rightly criticized. Also, social democratic thought and anticlericalism, prevalent in the rest of Europe, had its share of adherents among the new Lithuanians.

Fortunately, however, the partisans of divergent viewpoints were able to unite during the great Seimas at Vilnius in 1905 chaired by Basanavičius. There, much like the drafters of the Declaration of Independence at Philadelphia, two thousand representatives of the Lithuanian national will spelled out the basic principles of Lithuanian nationhood which was finally realized in 1918.

It was during this heroic period, from the end of the rebellion in 1863 to the outbreak of World War I, that a native Lithuanian clergy, under the leadership of Bishop Valančius, aroused the national consciousness of the Lithuanian peasant. It was then that the book smugglers spread something more powerful than bullets: the printed Word which eventually made Lithuania free. It was then that writers like Basanavičius and his contemporaries gave the independence movement a voice which finally woke the nation from its long sleep.

(A final installment will deal with the Catholic Church under the communists.)

Cooking

with Aldona Marcavage

RHUBARB SOUP (Rhubarbaru Sriuba)

1 lb. rhubarb, cut into small sticks
2 sliced onions—1 carrot, chopped
1 oz. chopped smoked ham
¼ cup butter
10 cups chicken broth
1½ cups fresh white breadcrumbs
salt, sugar, cayenne pepper to taste
small cubes toasted—bread or croutons.

Peel rhubarb and cut stems in pieces. Blanch in boiling water for 3-4 minutes. Drain—put into large saucepan with onion, carrot, ham and butter. Saute gently until rhubarb is tender. Add chicken stock and breadcrumbs and cook over brisk heat for 15 minutes. Skim off fat. Season to taste with salt, sugar and cayenne. Puree in blender or push through a sieve. Reheat. Check for seasoning. If a little thick add more chicken stock. Serve with croutons. (Serves 8-10).

RHUBARB PUREE (Rubarbaru Kisielius)

1 pound rhubarb cleaned and cut into
1" pieces

⅓ cup plus 1 tb. honey
grated rind of ½ lemon
dash of cinnamon and ginger

In a deep saucepan, combine rhubarb, honey, lemon rind and spices. Cover and cook over low heat until rhubarb is tender. Stir occasionally to prevent scorching. Puree mix in blender. Makes 2 cups.

Crunchy Rhubarb Bake Rubarbaru Pyragaitis

3 c. rhubarb cut into 1/2" slices
1 tb. flour
1/2 c. flour
1/2 c. sugar
1 tsp. cinnamon
1/8 tsp. salt
1 tb. orange juice
1 cup uncooked rolled oats
1/2 cup flour
1/2 c. brown sugar—firmly packed
1/2 c. butter cut into smaller pieces

Preheat oven to 350°F. Place rhubarb in a large bowl, sprinkly with flour, sugar, cinnamon and salt, add orange juice, stir well, set aside. In another bowl place uncooked rolled oats, flour and sugar. Cut in butter with a fork until mix is crumb-like. Lightly grease an 8x8x2 square pan. Place a layer of rhubarb mix and sprinkle with the crumb mix. Bake at 350° for 45 min. until crumb topping is gold. Cut into squares and serve warm or chilled with strawberry ice cream.

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Albert Cizauskas

THE ISSUE OF CLOSER TIES WITH LITHUANIA

Magazine articles are like people: it takes more than a superficial acquaintance to become aware of their virtues and warts. Such an article is "Our Silence in a Free World" excerpted from *Baltic Forum* in the April issue of *Bridges*. My first reading left me interested but somewhat puzzled. Subsequent readings made me squirm with annoyance at the writer's unsupported allegations and his smug assumption of superiority vis-a-vis those with opinions different from his own. In the end, however, I did agree with his basic proposition, although with qualifications. Taken in random order, my comments follow:

1. I understand that the use of the term "emigre" to refer to post-World War II Lithuanian immigrants is not uncommon, but I find it objectionable. There should be no distinction with respect to emigration from Lithuania between post-World War II "emigres" and pre-World War I immigrants. Both groups were primarily political refugees, the former fleeing from Soviet oppression and the latter from Czarist oppression. To me, the word smacks of affectation, part of the verbal inflation cheapening language today, like the elevation of "gardener" to the status of "landscape engineer." In any case, the writer ignores the views of the many Lithuanian Americans, born of parents who, in emigrating here, became part of the influx of pre-World War I immigrants, just as post-World War II immigrants were part of the influx of displaced persons.

2. The writer claims, without producing evidence, that the "opposition" (i.e. those holding views contrary to the writer's) is in the minority.

3. The personal nature of the writer's polemics becomes evident when he characterizes those holding views alien to his own as members of an older generation, while those supporting his views he praises as the "younger intellectuals." It's presumptuous of the writer to infer that the younger generation thinks as he does, and invidious to claim intellectualism as the prerogative of any one generation.

4. The writer criticizes the older generation for not believing that conditions im-

proved after Stalin's death and that "life in Lithuania became more free." The pertinent questions ignored by the writer are the extent of the amelioration and its duration. While conditions did improve marginally after Stalin, the situation soon returned to "oppression as normal" under Brezhnev and his successors, even if not as abysmally evil as during the years of Stalin's misrule. One needs only to read the State Department's annual reports to the Congress on the violation of human rights in Lithuania at the present time and its dismal judgement that repression in Lithuania is becoming worse, to wonder at the naivete of the writer.

Verification from a non-official source of the pervasive depth of current Soviet oppression in Lithuania may be found in *Reluctant Farewell*, a recent book by Andrew Nagorski, a correspondent for *Newsweek*, who was banished from the Soviet Union because of his insistence on travelling about the country, including areas inhabited by non-Russian nationalities, such as the Lithuanians. Nagorski, wishing to see and hear for himself, penetrated the blanket of Soviet censorship to a surprising degree but for too short a time, since independent and objective reporting was too dangerous to be tolerated.

5. The heart of the *Baltic Forum's* argument is that closer ties with Soviet-occupied Lithuania are desirable and that only the older generation is opposed to them. Implicit is the writer's assumption that younger Lithuanian-Americans are also more well-disposed to the Soviet Union than their elders. On the contrary, I have been impressed by the vigor of the anti-Soviet stance among the younger generation. Witness its participation in the Baltic cruise last year to draw global attention to the illegality of the Soviet's occupation of the Baltic republics and to the Soviet's flagrant violations of the Helsinki human rights accords, the civil disobedience of Lithuanian youth several years ago in front of the Soviet Embassy in Washington, and, in general, the anti-Soviet activities of the Lithuanian World Youth organization.

6. The question of closer ties both ways with Soviet-occupied Lithuania and its peo-

ple is not a simple, black-and-white affair. I don't believe that any group, Lithuanian Americans from the earlier or later waves of immigration and regardless of age, would object to closer ties per se with Lithuania. What I presume, however, is that most would be opposed to ties that implicitly recognize the illegal occupation of Lithuania. And here there is room for argument as to what would constitute such recognition.

As a general rule, I believe in the desirability of closer ties, giving visiting Lithuanian professionals and artists the benefit of the doubt as to their political orientation, and keeping as open as possible a dialogue with all groups in Lithuania, while making it unambiguously clear that our support reflects our love and concern for fellow Lithuanians who are today the victims of an odious tyranny. Such an open attitude should be identified as one that is unalterably opposed to the Soviet regime's negation of the fundamental values of political freedom, human rights and religious tolerance.

Difficult and even tragic as the price may be for them personally, most Lithuanians in Lithuania have made their own position unambiguously clear. Andrew Nagorski has reported in his book that Lithuanians "provided a picture of near-universal opposition, both active and passive, to the Soviet government and everything it represented..."

Lithuanian society in the United States would do well to follow the example of unity displayed by its countrymen back home. Given the smallness of Lithuania and the immensity of the enemy, Lithuanians everywhere need to overcome factional rivalries or else the Lithuanian cause will be buried under animosities that sap our energies in fighting the true adversary: the Soviet Union.

Albert Cizauskas' varied career includes Foreign Service (Vice-Consul in India and Indonesia, Consul in Milan, Italy, First Secretary of Embassy in Bonn, Germany) and International Finance Officer with the World Bank.