

BRIDGES

Lithuanian American News Journal

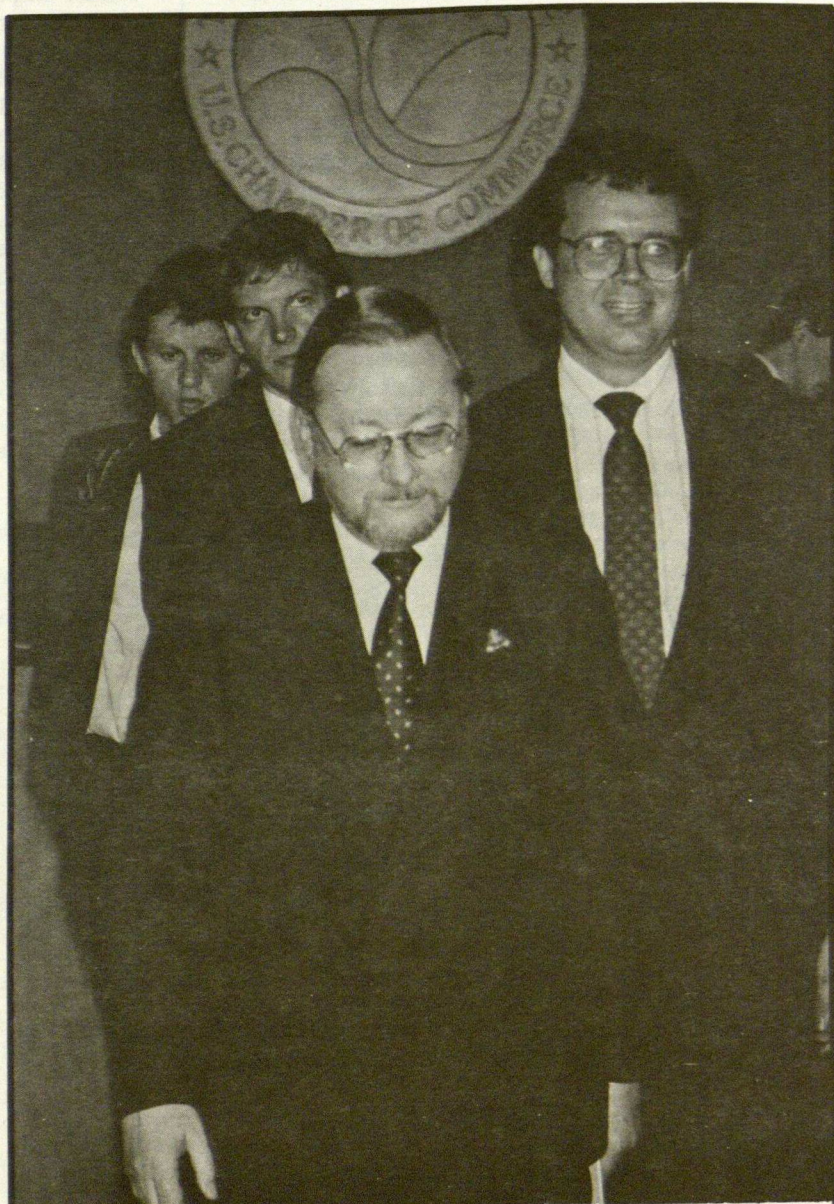
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In This Issue

- 3 Developing Lithuania's Economy. President Landsbergis Addresses U.S. Chamber Of Commerce.
- 6 All about *Radio Vilnius*.
- 8 U.S. CSCE Holds Hearing; President Landsbergis Testifies.
- 10 Virginia's Governor Wilder Supports Lithuania's Goals.
- 12 A Report On A Short, Emotionally Packed Trip To Lithuania.
- 15 *White House* Etiquette.
- 17 A Church History Reveals Lithuanian Life in America.
- 18 What Is The Real U.S. Position Towards Lithuania?
- 20 Our Lithuanian Heritage - What It Means.
- 23 *Lithuanian American Community, Inc. National Executive Committee* Report.
- 26 U.S. Senator Listing.

Plus... much more information, as well as the "Updates", "Bits and Pieces" and "Book Notes" sections.



President Landsbergis At U.S. Chamber Of Commerce Building In Washington, D.C.; Where He Encouraged U.S. Business Investment In Lithuania. (On Left, Mr. Victor Nakas, Lithuanian Information Center, Washington; On Right, Mr. Linas Kojelis, U.S.-Baltic Foundation)

To our readers:

As the result of some kind assistance from Mr. Victor Nakas, of the Washington, DC office of the Lithuanian Information Center, this editor was able to obtain clearance to cover President Landsbergis' visit to the White House on May 8th. The results of that "in person" coverage can be found in the article entitled "What Does It All Mean?"; and in the "Miss Manners" piece, which was inspired by this editor's own embarrassment in being forced to watch the events described therein. (And, yes, I wrote even more pieces for this particular issue - not because I want to dominate this, or future issues; but because, this past month, I was fortunate enough to have been "in the right places at the right times".)

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With this issue, the undersigned becomes permanent editor of **BRIDGES**. Of course, we all know that there are very few things truly "permanent"; and the appointment just described will be "permanent" only as long as you, our readers, are satisfied with my performance. The fact is that I think about you, the reader, during every stage of production of each issue. It's very clear to me that the goal of this publication is to meet your, the subscriber's needs. If I begin to stray from that goal, you need to tell me. Write, or call. Let me know that I am not doing the job you expect of me. Set me back on track with your comments. Let's work together!

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During this considerable (now completed) transition period for **BRIDGES**, there has been/continues to be one person who has had to adjust, to keep the "boat" steady. That person, Ms. Zina Dreslius, has performed her duties in a commendable manner! She has processed new subscriptions (and renewals); has made sure bills have been paid (and money has been collected); and has kept this editor advised of the myriad, essential, administrative details which accompany production of this publication. Just like everyone associated with **BRIDGES**, Ms. Dreslius is an unpaid volunteer.

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We take pride in noting that **BRIDGES** has recently received favorable coverage in the Lithuanian language press. *Dirva*, published in Cleveland, recently had nice things to say about this publication. *Draugas*, the daily newspaper, published in Chicago, has had two separate editorial items about **BRIDGES**; and has urged that its readers consider getting subscriptions to **BRIDGES**. We are appreciative of this attention; and will continue to strive to meet expectations!

Letters to this editor, from you, our readers, indicate that you are pleased with what we are doing. Several of you have made recommendations; and we are

striving to act on at least some of those recommendations. (For example, the "Bits & Pieces" feature has, apparently, been very well received; so we, as you will note in this issue, have expanded same.)

You need to know that we are not yet satisfied with the publication we are giving you. For example, this editor would like to be able to include many more stories / features / items from, and about Lithuania; so that we could all get a "feel" for everyday life there, now. This editor would, as well, welcome items on the history of Lithuanians in America; as well as on Lithuanian customs, on Lithuanian history, on the arts, on newsworthy Lithuanians and Lithuanian - Americans; and on a whole list of other possibilities simply too long to insert here. The goal is to give you, the reader, issues of **BRIDGES** which have a broad based appeal. (Continued on page 16)

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BRIDGES: Lithuanian-American News Journal serves as a link between Lithuanian Americans and their Lithuanian heritage (as well as a source of information for those interested in Lithuania and/or the activities/goals/background of Lithuanian Americans), by presenting items on Lithuanian culture, history, conditions in Lithuania, Lithuanian related events and personalities in America; and serves the aspirations of those whose goal is to see Lithuania as a free and democratic nation, once again.

Editor: Joseph Arlauskas
Director of Subscriptions and Finance: Zina Dreslius

Economic Development In Lithuania

*President Landsbergis Promotes Lithuania Before
Members Of The United States Chamber Of Commerce.*

by Joseph Arlauskas

In an address, last month, before members of the *United States Chamber of Commerce*, Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis urged American businesspeople to visit Lithuania; so that they could experience, first hand, the physical beauty of Lithuania - both natural and man made; so that they could see for themselves, the potential that Lithuania truly holds.

Speaking at the Headquarters of the *U.S. Chamber of Commerce*, in Washington, D.C., under the auspices of a program arranged by the *U.S. - Baltic Foundation*, President Landsbergis made it clear that "doing business" with the USSR is simply not the same thing as doing business with Lithuania.

President Landsbergis pointed out that Lithuania's society is vastly different from the lawless one of the Soviet Union; that Lithuanians have written laws, have adopted those laws; and enforce those laws to everyone's benefit. Lithuania's environment is thus one in which businesspeople, and others, can function in a reasonable, predictable manner. (During his presentation, President Landsbergis announced that he was leaving, at the *U.S. Chamber of Commerce*, copies of Lithuania's newly implemented laws relative to economic activity, development and investment.)

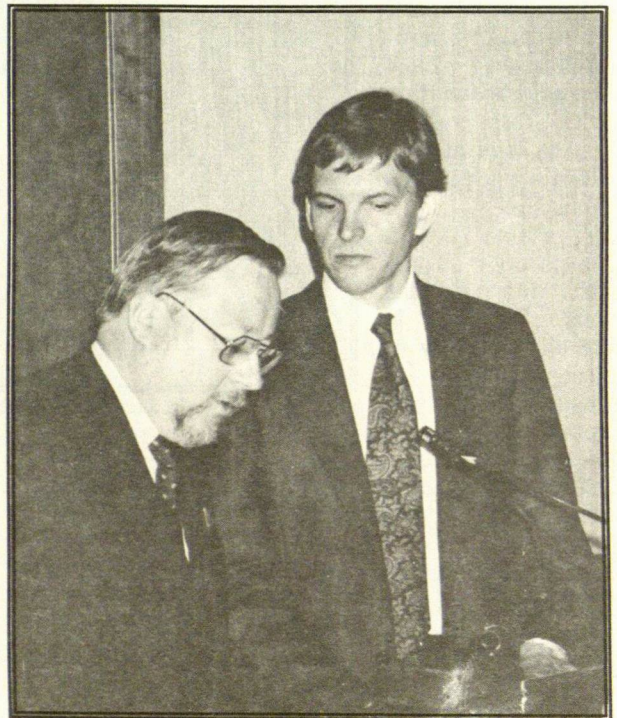
He emphasized the fact that Lithuania/Lithuanians have a "clearer vision", than do those in the Soviet Union, of what independence, free enterprise, economics is all about.

President Landsbergis also noted that Lithuania simply doesn't have a foreign debt hanging over its head; as do many of the other Eastern European countries. (Rather than owing money, Lithuania is due money, he said, from the Soviet Union. But, he jokingly acknowledged that Lithuanians weren't going to hold out much hope in getting reparations from the now, obviously, bankrupt Soviet Union!)

President Landsbergis said that even though Lithuania is eager for foreign investment, and for joint ventures, the Lithuanian government, unlike that of the Soviet Union, is not looking for "handouts" from either the United States Government or from U.S. businesspeople; but, instead, seeks to participate in creation of sound business opportunities which will

promote the interests of, and benefit, all parties.

He went on to note, as well, that Lithuanians are seeking input and advice on the best courses to be taken as Lithuania proceeds in development of a free economy. President Landsbergis told his audience that even as he was speaking, the Lithuanian Parliament was engaged in historic deliberations regarding the mechanisms to be used in return, to the rightful owners, of property confiscated by the Soviet government in 1940. President Landsbergis emphasized the fact that Lithuanians believe in the concept of private property; and are determined to redress the wrongs created in connection with Soviet occupation of Lithuania.



President Landsbergis; with Mr. Victor Nakas, translator

Even though Lithuania seeks economic development, it is not willing to proceed on such a course without some controls. For example, President Landsbergis ➡

told his audience that before Lithuanians even consider exploitation of natural resources, they will require that such harvesting be accomplished in a well thought out, ecologically sound manner.

President Landsbergis encouraged projects which would assist in the development of a tourism industry in Lithuania. He also asked that projects which would reform and upgrade health care in Lithuania, be put together, implemented, as expeditiously as is possible.

In describing current conditions in Lithuania, he noted that the Soviets continue to maintain control over Lithuanian entities essential to economic activity. He cited the fact that the Soviets still control a vital mode of transportation - the railroads. Borders to Soviet republics, as well as to the West, are, as well, under the control of Soviet authorities. And, even though Lithuania recently created its own banking system (anticipating a need for same in connection with economic development and reform), Soviet authorities have begun to interfere with that system; and to seize at least some of its branches.

President Landsbergis advised that although the ruble continues to be the currency of record, such a situation will not continue for much longer; because Lithuania is expecting to adopt its own currency, later this year.

In response to questions from his audience, President Landsbergis noted that difficulties with obtaining visas should ease; just as they've eased, considerably, recently. He also noted that Lithuania is in the process of implementing several economic agreements with neighboring Soviet republics, on an individual basis; as well as with countries in the West. While admitting that there was still the possibility that any investment in Lithuania may be subject to seizure by the Soviet authorities (should the current situation regress), President Landsbergis assured his audience that such seizures would be only temporary; because the

Lithuanian government, once it again prevailed, would not accept any seizures/would restore all property to the rightful owners.

It was clear that President Landsbergis wanted his audience of American businesspeople to understand that Lithuania is a country in which they can do business in ways which are comfortable to them; that Lithuania welcomes their investments; and that Lithuania is simply not even remotely the kind of environment they may have encountered in the Soviet Union. Furthermore, he reminded his audience that Lithuania is located in an ideal geographical position for the conduct of commerce in Eastern Europe.

Finally, President Landsbergis challenged members



(Left to Right) Mr. Linas Kojelis, President, U.S. - Baltic Foundation; Mr. Thaddeus Kopinski, U.S. Chamber of Commerce; President Landsbergis; Mr. Victor Nakas, Lithuanian Information Center.

of his audience to visit Lithuania; so that they could confirm, first hand, what he had told them about Lithuania and the Lithuanian people.

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Having heard President Landsbergis' comments, American businesspeople should now be even more receptive to seeking opportunities for investment in Lithuania.

Lithuania, after all, has a history of economic success based on Western, free enterprise models. For example, in 1918, Lithuania faced a situation almost identical to the current one. By seizing the

initiative, as it will most certainly do, again, Lithuania, in the space of just 22 years of freedom, managed to develop an economy which achieved a level of success comparable to that of the Scandinavian countries. (And, it achieved such goals without massive foreign assistance, or "bail outs". It was done by the Lithuanian people - people who believe in, are capable of re-creating such an achievement, again.)

The fact is that Lithuania, even under almost 51 years of Soviet occupation, exploitation and oppression, has managed to maintain an economy which is the envy of the Soviet Union. (Proof in the pudding: An inordinate number of retired Soviet elite, i.e., military officers, retire to the Baltics; because of the lifestyle it is possible to maintain there.)

If American business people are looking for a work force which has enviable standards for loyalty, resolve, level headedness, and tenacity, then Lithuanians prove, weekly (as seen on American television news programs), that they possess such traits in a volume they can afford to give away to others!

At a time when other, newly liberated, countries are literally tearing themselves apart; because of non-homogeneous cultures, languages, ethnic alignments; Lithuania, instead, offers an environment which is about as far to the other end of the spectrum as one can get. (Recall, please, that we've seen several demonstrations in Lithuania which have had up to one million participants, at one time, at a single location - that's about 25% of the entire population assembled for a common purpose!)

The Lithuanian people, as demonstrated through events of just the past year, are people who turn adversity and literally overwhelming challenges into opportunities for progress. Witness their reaction to last year's economic blockade. Witness their leadership role in forging a peaceful, orderly dissolution of the anachronistic Soviet empire. These are people who employ reason rather than emotion. These are people who forego violence for orderly transition. These are people who think. These are people who innovate, create and bring value to any action in which they participate.

Lithuanians are culturally, historically oriented towards America. Lithuania is NOT an alien environment. Instead, it is, even socially, one in which the average American would feel most comfortable. (In fact, the entire environment is far more comfortable to Americans than is the environment in even the Russian Republic, for example.)

Lithuania, by most measures, is small. It's not a tremendous "market" in itself. Yet, because of its location, its government, its people, its historic background, its focus, Lithuania must be seen as something far greater than just a country attempting to gain entry into the free world's economic mainstream. Just as Lithuania has demonstrated its ability and capacity to act as the catalyst for orderly, systematic

dissolution of the Soviet empire, Lithuania also holds the potential for being the catalyst for facilitating a whole new, fresh economic environment in Eastern Europe.

American businesspeople who want to consider doing business in Lithuania/with Lithuania; but who want to proceed cautiously, should consider joint ventures which have a low requirement for capital investment; but which would, instead, take advantage of the vast intellectual capacity that Lithuanians possess. For example, Lithuania is a fertile ground for software development ventures. Even entry into the tourism business in Lithuania could be accomplished, initially, with minimal capital investment, by working with Lithuanians in the development of a network of "bed and breakfast" facilities run by Lithuanians - with organization of same, quality control of same, publicity of same, booking of same being accomplished by American hospitality firms looking for an "inside track" into ultimate, greater, later opportunities in this area.

Although interest in/investment in Lithuania, by U. S. businesspeople has been, to this point, minimal; such is simply not the case with efforts by businesspeople based in the several Scandanavian countries.

Hopefully, American businesspeople will not wait, and wait; until they find themselves in a situation which has all of the great, early opportunities in Lithuania taken by businesspeople of other nations.



A capacity audience was in attendance.

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It is encouraging to know that an organization such as the *U.S. - Baltic Foundation* is serving in an active educational role, arranging opportunities for Lithuania to interface with/meet those who can promote economic development of Lithuania; because Lithuania will be truly free, in all the important ways, only when it has a secure, stable environment not just politically; but economically, as well. Economically enslaved, or overly dependent, people are not truly "free" people. □

Radio Vilnius

*You Can Listen Daily To Lithuania's Short Wave Radio
Transmissions For Current News And Information.*

by Michael Durling

Everyone interested in Lithuania and the Baltic states knows that the only time that news from that part of the world appears in the papers or on television news is when disaster strikes. If you want to anticipate events or learn a little about life in Lithuania there is an excellent, free source of information, *Radio Vilnius*, which can be listened to by anyone with a short - wave radio and a little patience.

I found *Radio Vilnius* quite by accident one evening last April while trying to find a *BBC* news broadcast. I like to follow world events so I knew that Lithuania had recently declared its independence after fifty years of Soviet rule. So, it was very exciting for me to discover such a direct link to a breaking story. This story became so compelling that I found myself tuning in every day.

Radio Vilnius is not like a lot of stations that you hear on the short - wave. You won't hear extensive reports from other parts of the world. *Radio Vilnius* only reports about Lithuania, with occasional stories from Latvia and Estonia. *Radio Vilnius* is government operated, as are most short - wave stations. Although they are always eager to point out, they broadcast from the independent democratic Republic of Lithuania. No communist doctrine here!

How they operate is still a mystery even to those of us who listen regularly. Their signal is broadcast by a network of transmitters located in the Soviet Union. If you stay on their frequency long enough you will hear several programs in Russian, *Radio Kiev's* hour - long program in English, *Radio Vilnius* broadcast in Lithuanian, and even a three - minute summary, in English, of the news from Yerevan in Armenia.

I find that listening to *Radio Vilnius* gives me a sense of witnessing history. This history is presented live, reported as it happens. Every day but Sunday the program starts with a five minute news bulletin. *Radio Vilnius* reports each brutal action by Soviet troops on the day that it happens. Many single building occupations and abductions of draft - age youths go unreported in the Western press. Last year they broadcast accounts of the effects of the economic blockade, imposed by the Soviet government. Later,

Radio Vilnius listeners were the first to learn that the blockade had ended when they reported that oil was again flowing to Lithuania's oil refinery. *Radio Vilnius* is almost the only place where you can follow the dynamic political situation within Lithuania. This is not just wrangling over budgets like in Washington. The self - proclaimed amateur politicians in the Lithuanian Supreme Council are attempting to remake their whole society after fifty years of communist rule.

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Radio Vilnius broadcasts much more than daily news. They also have a rich variety of regular features. After the news they usually have a commentary, which often includes an interview with a leading public figure, a journalist, or a foreign guest. Lithuania's cultural life gets high priority at *Radio Vilnius*. Each week they broadcast several regular features on music and folklore. Twice each week in "Sports Roundup" their reporter tells about the latest attempts for Lithuania to be accepted by international sports organizations. A biweekly feature, "Around Lithuania" takes listeners to various small towns around the country. In "Letterbox" they answer listeners' mail. On the last Sunday of each month they present a program for the members of the *Radio Vilnius* "Listener's Club". This club is open to listeners who send in ten reception reports. There are also reports on Lithuanian broadcasting, news from the neighboring Baltic republics, the history of Lithuania, and life in Vilnius.

During the tragic events in January it took several days for American newspapers and television networks to send their reporters to Vilnius. Their early ➔

reports, posted from Moscow, were often shallow and misleading. During that time *Radio Vilnius* became a vital source of information. Each day as the violence escalated it was never certain that they would still be on the air.

Radio Vilnius broadcasts much more than daily news.

The *Vilnius Radio and Television Center*, that Soviet troops attacked and occupied along with the TV tower on January 13th, housed the studios of *Radio Vilnius*. That evening's English - language program, broadcast just hours before the invasion, had an eerie and ominous tone. The presenters talked about the people camped outside of public buildings and interviewed some of the participants. During the broadcast, reports came in of an attempted break - in at a government building, and later word that this attempt had failed. The nervousness of the announcer's voice seemed to foretell the impending invasion. I understand that cries for help could be heard during the Lithuanian - language program, broadcast two hours later. The invasion of the TV tower and the Radio and Television Center shocked the whole world. As a regular listener to *Radio Vilnius*, I felt as if the home of my friends had been invaded.

Radio Vilnius remained silent for two weeks. Then like a phoenix rising from the ashes it suddenly reappeared on the air, broadcasting from a secret location. Since then they have broadcast detailed accounts of the invasion and told of the devastation in their occupied offices when they were allowed to retrieve their belongings. They continue to do an excellent job reporting on events in Lithuania while working in cramped quarters with little equipment. In one broadcast they described working in a place with only two typewriters and one chair. People were sitting on old boxes and writing copy in the stairways. Although Soviet troops still occupy their studios the Soviet government continues to relay their message to the world. This irony seems to reflect the confused state of affairs within the Soviet Union.

You don't need a lot of fancy equipment to listen to *Radio Vilnius*. Today it is still possible to listen to reports from around the world using the same radio that your parents might have used before World War II. It is possible to spend a couple of hundred dollars on a short - wave radio with digital tuning that can fit in the palm of your hand, but you can pick up a surprising number of stations with very modest equipment. I picked up my best rig in a junk shop for \$15. With the addition of an antenna made from

speaker wire I can listen to my favorite programs whenever the mood strikes me. Since *Radio Vilnius* invariably broadcasts at suppertime I dusted off an old cassette recorder and a patch cord so that I could record the program and not bring supper conversation to a halt.

Radio Vilnius broadcasts in English for 30 minutes at 23:00 coordinated universal time (London time), which is 7:00 PM Eastern daylight time. Their Lithuanian - language program comes on two hours later. The announced frequencies as of May 20 are 11790, 15180, 15455, and 15485 kilohertz. In my location in the Eastern United States, 11790 is usually the strongest frequency. They can be reached by fax at 0122-631455.

Before I found *Radio Vilnius* I knew very little about Lithuania and its people. Now after listening to their broadcasts for a year I feel as if a window has been opened to a whole other culture. I have come to identify very strongly with Lithuania's struggle for independence. I find that the strongest message that comes from *Radio Vilnius* is the message of hope for a better life. □

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U.S. CSCE Hearing

*President Landsbergis Testifies At Washington DC Hearing
Of The U.S. Commission On Security And Cooperation In Europe.*

by Kristina R. Volertas

On May 7th, the *U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe* (also known as the CSCE or the Helsinki Commission) invited Lithuania's President Vytautas Landsbergis, Latvia's Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar, and Estonia's Prime Minister Ivars Godmanis to testify at a hearing, "Baltic Leadership on the Status of Independence Movements". The Helsinki Commission's Chairman, U.S. Congressman Steny H. Hoyer, presided over the hearing.

In Representative Hoyer's opening remarks, he pointed out the "democracy under siege", citing examples of the January bloodshed in Lithuania and Latvia; and the most recent occupation of government buildings, in Vilnius, by Soviet troops. Hoyer focused on the U.S. policy of non-recognition; which was a useful policy of moral principle, but not one of action. The current situation needs, "...a policy of *steady recognition* of the real independence emerging in the Baltic states today." This was a prelude to content of a resolution he has introduced in the House (House Joint Resolution (H.J.R) 179; introduced in the U.S. Senate by Senator Dennis DeConcini, as Senate Joint Resolution (S.J.R.) 89), which promotes a new U.S. policy towards the Baltic states, including the following: direct dealings with the freely elected, democratic governments of the Baltic states; establishment of bilateral information and cultural offices in each of the Baltic states; channeling of all U.S. assistance directly to the Baltic states; restatement that use of force to solve political problems is intolerable and will have an impact on U.S. - Soviet relations; and, finally, the proposal that the Baltic states participate in the *Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe* (CSCE).

Representative Hoyer then introduced all members of Congress in attendance, giving each Senator and Representative present the opportunity to greet the three Baltic leaders.

President Landsbergis began his testimony with a statement, which he read in English. (He later used Mr. Victor Nakas, of the Lithuanian Information Center, as a translator; while responding to questions.) The introduction was an individual's personal, eyewitness, account of the January 13 attack on

unarmed civilians in Vlinius, at the radio and television tower. His statement described a tank indiscriminately rolling through the crowd and crushing a young woman; while bystanders tried to push away the massive piece of machinery and pleaded with the soldiers to stop the assault. The account was used to illustrate the need for complete independence to insure that a repetition of such violent Soviet military attacks not be repeated. He fully endorsed Representative Ritter's Resolution (H. Res. 142, introduced February 5, 1991; which calls for the U.S. government to recognize *de facto* the government of Lithuania) emphasizing that this is the type of legislation that is currently needed; and hoped that Congress would not hesitate to pass it.

*[President Landsbergis]
fully endorsed Congressman
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President Landsbergis then focused on the ongoing robbery of Lithuania by the Soviet army and government: "When armed robbery is carried out by an army, it is the best confirmation that this is an occupying army acting not in its own country but in a foreign, occupied country." He cited examples of the attacks and occupation of buildings, the looting of these buildings and others, destruction of property, terrorizing of citizens with death threats, illegal conscription of young Lithuanian men into the Soviet army, confiscation of local police's weapons, and so forth. All these crimes have gone on without investigation or ➡

assignment of responsibility. Many of the buildings, including the Lithuanian radio and television tower, continue to be occupied. The USSR government has not answered the many communiques the Lithuanian Parliament and government have attempted in an effort to resolve the tensions; but continue to circumvent these institutions with support for the shadowy group known as the *National Salvation Committee*.

President Landsbergis reminded the Commission that the largest theft of all took place in 1940, when Stalin's army forcibly seized and occupied Lithuania, annihilating more than a quarter of its population. The founding, in 1988, of the *Lithuanian Reform Movement, Sajudis*, targeted the defense of all human rights: "...the right to live, to live honorably, creating prosperity through one's own labor; to live not in a colony where man's natural environment is mercilessly destroyed by a distant metropolis; to live in one's own state, that is, to have one's own homeland, which will defend and guarantee human and civil rights." These are the principles which the freely elected Lithuanian Parliament and government have defended; yet which fuel the Soviet leadership's desire to destroy the current leadership.

In conclusion, President Landsbergis advised the U.S. Congress and Administration not to trust the words of the Soviet government. He challenged the U.S. government to test the Soviet leadership's trustworthiness by inquiring about occupation of buildings and the continued possession of stolen goods. He quoted an old Lithuanian proverb (*He who lies also steals.*) emphasizing that the entire Soviet system is based on lies and that renouncing this policy of deceit and theft - not merely economic reform - is what must change in order to correct their system.

After President Landsbergis' statement, the Prime Ministers of Latvia and Estonia made their remarks to the Commission; pointing out areas of concern both specific to their respective countries, as well as in common with all of the Baltic states. Mr. Savisaar of Estonia emphasized that only with the active involvement of Western nations would the Soviet Union enter into negotiations with the Baltics.

Latvia's Prime Minister Godmanis referred to the document signed by the nine republics, which stated that they chose to enter into a collective union; and that the six remaining republics would have to choose for themselves.

President Landsbergis further elaborated on this document saying that there was a dangerous second statement in this document, which could be a contradiction to the idea of free choice: it calls for "strict measures" to be applied to keep order. This second statement is dangerous because the Baltic states do not consider themselves to be a part of Soviet territory and it is not clear whether this second statement is meant to include them; thus leaving available the possibility of the military to intervene on

behalf of the central government - in the name of the "common good".

Co-Chairman of the Commission, Senator DeConcini raised the issue of Boris Yeltsin's influence in preventing further bloodshed in the Baltics and the possible significance of the current collaboration with Gorbachev. It was confirmed that Yeltsin was helpful in stemming the violence; and that it was a surprise when the nine republics signed the joint statement. Mr. Savisaar saw the gesture as a tactical move to minimize the differences between Yeltsin and Gorbachev for the benefit of the upcoming presidential election to be held, in Russia, on June 12th. After the elections, it is expected that the contradictions between the two leaders will deepen. The statement was not as hopeful as it might have, superficially, appeared to be; because it was done as a political declaration which is not legally binding.

The issue of Observer status, then full membership, in the CSCE, was raised several times as an important step in the move towards complete independence for Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The issue of granting further agricultural trade credits to the Soviet Union was raised, as well. President Landsbergis emphatically stated that the policy of withholding has been the most successful with the Soviet Union in the past; and he recommended that such a policy be continued.

The Hearing was well attended by Members of the Helsinki Commission, other supporters of the Baltics in Congress, Capitol Hill staff, and interested citizens. The issues raised by the Commission were specific; and presented the Baltic Leaders with many opportunities to explain their positions and rationale.

Later in the day, the CSCE held a reception in the Capitol Building rotunda; which was sponsored by the *Geonomics Institute*, to honor President Landsbergis and Prime Ministers Savisaar and Godmanis. □

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Show Of Support

June 14th Recognition In Virginia

Virginia's Governor Wilder Signs Proclamation In Commemoration Of June 14th; And Announces Support For Freedom For Lithuania.

by Bill Byrd

The cause of Baltic liberty won a symbolic victory and a significant new ally on May 21 as Virginia Governor L. Douglas Wilder voiced strong support for the rights of the peoples of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

In an emotional ceremony in the two century-old Capitol, Governor Wilder signed a proclamation designating June 14 as *Freedom Day for the Baltic Nations* in Virginia. Governor Wilder's proclamation saluted the people of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia for "their patriotism, their love of freedom, and their struggle for independence." It hailed the nations' "remarkable and recognized non-violent protest" in their quest for national and human rights.

The proclamation noted that all three states were "sovereign nations and fully recognized members of *The League of Nations*" until they were forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union. The document also recalled that "on June 14, 1940, Lithuania was ordered by the Soviet Government to dissolve its legitimate government." Soviet troops occupied the nation the next day; occupations of Latvia and Estonia soon followed.

Exactly one year later, on June 14, 1941, Soviet communists began mass deportation of citizens from all three republics, actions which claimed hundreds of thousands of lives.

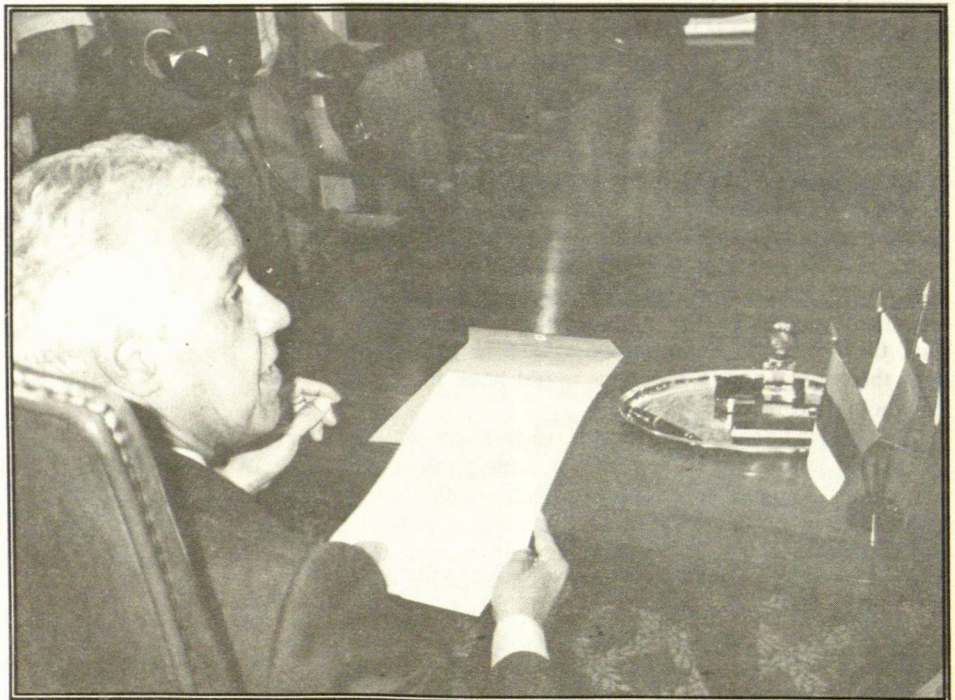
Fifteen representatives of Virginia's Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian communities attended the signing. They greeted Governor Wilder's remarks enthusiastically.

A large contingent of the Virginia and Washington,

D.C. press also viewed the ceremony, and all three local television stations in Richmond included it in their evening newscasts.

Governor Wilder has attracted widespread attention since he became in 1989 the first black elected governor of a state. He is also an undeclared candidate for the 1992 Democratic presidential nomination.

In impromptu remarks at the signing, Governor Wilder voiced strong support for the Baltic peoples and urged the United States government to take additional actions to protect human rights in both the Soviet Union and in China. "We can't afford to let what happened in January go unrecognized and uncondemned," Governor Wilder said of the Soviet massacre of civilians at the Vilnius radio and television facility. "The people in the (Baltic) republics are looking for a more definitive stand" by the ➡



Governor Wilder at Proclamation Signing Ceremony

United States government in support for their rights, he said. He termed the Vilnius shootings "essentially an act of genocide."

"We need to be more vigilant: in protecting human rights, not just in the Soviet Union, but also in China," the Governor continued. "We ought to make severe demands on them" in exchange for monetary aid and trade, he said.

The Governor encouraged the citizens of the Baltic nations to continue their efforts and said he was certain they would prevail. He compared the fight for liberty in Europe to the struggles waged by American blacks several decades ago. "It's just about where we were 20 years ago in this country," Governor Wilder said. "We will overcome."

Mr. Victor Nakas, head of the Washington, D.C. office of the *Lithuanian Information Center*, told Governor Wilder that the Baltic peoples have gained inspiration from the example of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., the slain civil rights leader who was an apostle of nonviolence. As a legislator, Governor Wilder fought for years in the Virginia legislature to have Rev. King's birthday designated an official holiday in the Commonwealth. He finally succeeded in 1984.

[Governor Wilder] termed the Vilnius shootings "essentially an act of genocide."

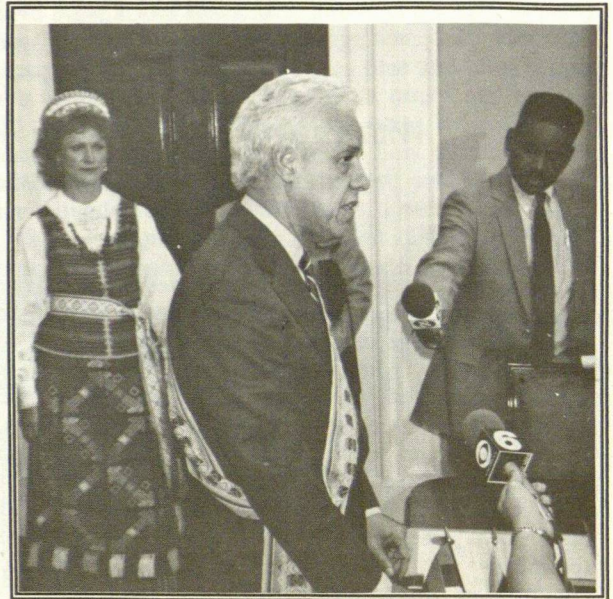
Mr. Nakas also presented Governor Wilder with a letter from Mr. Stasys Lozoraitis, Lithuania's Charge d'Affaires in Washington.

Mr. Lozoraitis expressed his "sincere gratitude" for the proclamation and wrote that Governor Wilder's action will be "highly appreciated by all Lithuanians in the United States and Lithuania." Mr. Lozoraitis urged Governor Wilder to visit Lithuania and said the trip "would not only give you an occasion to see the present situation in my country but also establish valuable contacts for trade relations between your state and my country."

In addition to the letter, representatives of the Virginia Baltic community presented several gifts to Governor Wilder, including a set of miniature national flags and two books. Governor Wilder also received a *jousta*, a wool and linen ceremonial sash knitted in Lithuania. He said the yellow, green and red sash reminded him of African ceremonial garb.

The Governor's interest heartened Virginia citizens of Baltic ancestry. "He seems to have agreed that

everyone is entitled to the freedom and liberty and pursuit of happiness we enjoy in this country," said Ms. Laima Kazakaityte Ghatak, president of the *Lithuanian-American Association of Richmond*. "He feels that the Baltic countries are entitled to it."



Governor Wilder Signing Proclamation

Other representatives of the Virginia Lithuanian community included Mr. Peter Kaufmann, national president of the *Lithuanian Catholic Graduate Association*; and Mr. Joseph Arlauskas, Editor of the *Lithuanian American Community, Inc.* English language publication, **BRIDGES**. Martin Zvaners, Director of Public Affairs of the *American Latvian Association*, also attended.

(Editor's Note: We look forward to publishing other, similar, stories about Proclamations, and other such support, in other states and cities. Such activities are taking place all over America; so send us your stories!) □

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Visiting The Survivors

*A First, Short, Visit To Lithuania Yields Encounters
With Brave, Kind People Who Will Always Be Remembered.*

by Carol Sperry

I promised myself that when I returned I would write about my thirteen hours in Lithuania, a time when I had the privilege of visiting many of the survivors of Bloody Sunday. After twelve hours on the night train from Moscow, dodging the officials who might ask me for a visa (I didn't have one), and depending on Ruta, my companion, to speak for me, we began to pull into Vilnius. "Look," Ruta pointed out the window, "the last moon," and I knew the big, golden moon, that seemed hung right outside the train window was there specifically to welcome me to the land of my grandparents, a land I thought I would never see.

Ruta and I giggled like schoolchildren because we had fooled the train authorities, boarding the train in Moscow where neither of us had a visa, I, an American in search of my homeland, Ruta off to attempt to visit her father, a member of Parliament living in that building to prevent the Soviets from occupying it. For the first few hours of the ride, we communicated by writing notes so no one would hear my English. Ruta taught me some Lithuanian words, "*labas*", "*aciu*", and the music of the language of my childhood dislodged something in my memory and old images of my mother's friends, clad in *babushkas* and speaking this strange language flooded my mind.

The Lithuanian Consulate wouldn't give me a visa. They said I didn't need one...Lithuania's doors were open..it was the Soviets who closed the doors. The Soviets said a visa would take three days but I was near the end of my trip and not ready to trust their statement. More Moscow friends than not said my journey without a visa might be uncomfortable but would not be "life threatening". They introduced me to Ruta who wanted to see her father. He is Lithuanian but her mother is half Russian, so Ruta felt lost and needed to speak to her father about emigration. She worried about bringing her partly Russian children to Lithuania and certainly she wished to leave Russia. She wished to seek her father's counsel about moving to Europe for a while. She wrote a letter to him while we were on the train. She would have to show the letter to three lines of Lithuanian citizens who were surrounding and protecting the members of the

Supreme Council and the Parliament building, itself. She wasn't sure she could get through or even if her father would be free to see her. She said he had lost forty pounds in the last several weeks and looked smaller and more grey-haired than a year ago.

It was still dark in Vilnius when we stepped off the train, except for the glow of the full moon. Ruta's school friend, Marius, was waiting for us with a thermos of hot, sweetened coffee. It was 27 degrees below zero centigrade. I moved to where the pavement ended, took my glove off, and touched the earth of Lithuania. I wondered if my grandmother and grandfather had stood somewhere nearby, waiting nervously for the train to take them to the sea and to their future in America. I never knew them. They both died when my mother was quite young, so her stories are sketchy, which frustrates me. We had only their wedding picture, a big man with a dark mustache and a rather stout woman who had the musical name of Marianna. My mother spoke Lithuanian but my father was Italian and so the language in my home was English. I knew how to say "I love you", and "What time is it?" I felt only one of those sentences might be useful this trip.

*I moved to where the
pavement ended, took my
glove off, and touched the
earth of Lithuania.*

Marius, Ruta and I took a long taxi ride into the city. We passed the broadcasting tower and Marius pointed out the huge metal cross that citizens had tried to erect in honor of the fallen. A Soviet tank had knocked it down. There were some red flowers strewn around its base and later that night, when we passed the same spot, I saw that people had placed candles there. All other signs of the horrors of Bloody Sunday had been cleared away. Marius said that the ➡

tanks crushed cars and buses and that many people were hurt. In fact, he said that some people were missing and there was rumor that the Soviets had killed more than 14 people. My mind whirled - trying to take it all in - this important moment in time, the images of a land my ancestors had known. Did I look like them? Did some of their descendants, my relatives, fight on January 13? Were they hurt? Perhaps I might consider all who fought for freedom on that day, or any day, connected in a deep way to me and to all Lithuanians.

... I began to tell him how proud the Lithuanian - American community was of him and the rest of the brave citizens ... With that my voice broke and my eyes were brimming.

Breakfast appeared in Marius' flat while phone calls were being made. I had a boiled egg, delicious white cheese and black bread. I marveled at Ruta's generosity as she took time away from her important mission to help me connect with various people. I had asked the Lithuanian-American community for names of people concerned with education and women's issues. Because of my interest in women's groups, I had the name of a leader of *Caritas*, an organization that does many good works, for the old, for the infirm, and now especially, for those in the hospital who were hurt while trying to protect the broadcasting studio and tower. Jadvyga Bieliauskiene was in a labor camp for many years with a friend I had met in Moscow. Both women had spent time in camp and prison for human rights activities. Ruta and Marius took me to *Caritas* to meet her and her son, Zilvinas, who would interpret for me.

The room was cold and religious pictures hung on all the walls. The women gave me coffee and cookies and a little woolen shoulder cape to keep me warm while waiting. Zilvinas arrived, hurrying after taking his son to kindergarten. We had an appointment with the head of the *Teacher Education Institute* and so went there first. Zilvinas and I had a chance to get to know each other during this time, which I think made the next part of the visit much easier for me.

Two hours later, we were back in *Caritas* Headquarters, waiting for Zilvinas' mother. I saw in

the faces of the women who hurried in and out, vague resemblances to the features of my own mother. Perhaps it was my imagination but they all seemed familiar to me. Finally, the door opened and in walked a tall, statuesque woman, head wrapped in wool, features seemingly carved from alabaster. Jadvyga may have been in her late sixties, although it's hard to know how years of prison camp can age someone. Her skin, though, was smooth and her eyes blue and penetrating. We helped load bags of *Pepsi Cola*, candy, and oranges in the trunk of a car. More bags held the new testament and many packets of holy pictures. We would bring these small gifts to give some comfort to the wounded of Bloody Sunday.

A doctor greeted us at the first hospital. I was a little embarrassed at the fuss made over me. The doctor told me I was doing a "noble deed" and I began to realize that it meant a great deal to everyone to have an outsider, an American, bear witness to the destruction perpetrated by the Soviet army.

Four young men occupied the first ward. They suffered from ruptured ear drums, sustained when they refused to leave the area where the tanks made such a thundering noise. They were healing, however, and all stood politely as Jadvyga, Zilvinas, the doctor and I entered. One spoke to me in English. He had studied in Canada.

Since he could understand me I began to tell him how proud the Lithuanian-American community was of him and the rest of the brave citizens. "It's amazing what you've done." I said. "And in the end there will be freedom in Lithuania." With that my voice broke and my eyes were brimming. He put his hand on my arm, smiled and said ever so softly, "But not with tears." I smiled weakly and nodded in agreement. There was no room for tears here. There was a firmness, a resolve about these young men, and the young women I later met - no anger, no show of bravado. There was a simple understanding, a knowing what needs to be done and doing it. The next room held more men, young and old, students and professionals, whose hearing had been affected by the firing of the tanks. They received the oranges and sodas and I asked Zilvinas to tell them, at every stop, of the pride and good wishes I brought from the Lithuanians I had spoken to in America. Jadvyga spoke to each one of them in a deep and intimate way. She asked them to choose from different holy pictures and, with each choice, registered her approval.

There were women of all ages in another room. A blonde girl who looked about sixteen got up to embrace me. The thought of this moment makes me cry as I write this. Those memories are so vivid in my mind, like technicolor pictures amid the black and white images of weeks in Moscow. Thirteen hours that hold the weight of a lifetime. In another room was a young woman in a long robe, a physician, who had been injured that Sunday. Each patient seemed shy, ➡

almost embarrassed at the attention. Here were real heroes, men and women who had stood up to armed soldiers and tanks. I thought about how frightened they must have been, how precious freedom is.

We crossed the hospital courtyard and entered another building. In one room was a young man and older one, both lying down. The older man had family with him, a young man and woman. He could not talk to me because a bullet had pierced his mouth, destroying his tongue. There was a pan on the floor with blood in it. He took my hand in both of his and whispered something to the girl. She told me he was very happy to see me there and wanted to give me something. It was a button that said "Lithuania" on it. The boy in the other bed was very bruised and suffered injuries to his head. I was told he was still "in shock". The nerves of many of the patients were fragile. When this boy tried to raise himself he would get dizzy but he said he longed to visit his "commander" whom he knew to be nearby. We promised to bring his message to the commander. On my way out the older man raised two fingers in the universal sign of victory, or perhaps he meant "peace".

We found the "commander" in a ward filled with people. He had many gifts of fruit and food around his table. Zilvinas told me that the Soviet soldiers had beaten him so badly he was left for dead. I was amazed at his youth but not at his high spirits. He was recovering beautifully and proud of his accomplishments and his compatriots. Jadvyga stepped forward with the holy pictures and I marveled at the care with which this young man made his choices, like a small boy with his teacher. When he heard of the boy who wanted so much to see him, he leaped out of the bed, put on a bathrobe and went to find his room.

We were now in our fourth hour of visiting. I think Zilvinas had some sympathy for me but Jadvyga was unstoppable. She seemed tireless in spite of the fact that she suffered from many ailments such as arthritis and chronic sinusitis, a remnant of her prison camp days. I was exhausted emotionally and physically but there were more patients to visit. The next hero became the last since I had to meet Ruta and catch the train back to Moscow.

We entered a dark room with three patients, one of whom was at Bloody Sunday. He was sitting up and eating a milk colored soup. His hair was shaven off and his face was covered with powder burns that had eaten into his skin. He was thin and very weak. There was an odor in the room that was hard to identify except for its association with sickness. I had to step back to gather my courage again because I felt a bit sick and ashamed for feeling that. Jadvyga, on the other hand, began to feed the young man and kissed him on the most disfigured places on his face. I stepped back to speak to Zilvinas and the doctor and that's when I learned that his head was shaven because the heat from the tank firing had "melted" it. He was

so swollen when he was brought into the hospital it was impossible to see if he were male or female. I stepped closer and Zilvinas gave him my message as I held his hand. Then Jadvyga spoke to him and gave him his choice of holy pictures, and something which I couldn't see. She turned to me and said "He wants you to have this." It was a little silver holy medal that said "Lietuva" on one side and had a cross on the other. I tried to refuse, overcome by this magnificent gesture but, of course, I accepted the offering, immensely humbled by the moment.

Before going to the train station, we stopped at Jadvyga's sister's home for supper. There I found that the sister, Teresa, had a neighbor who was one of the young men killed on Bloody Sunday. His mother came down to see me and give me pictures to send to various people in the United States. They were pictures of Ignas alive and also in his coffin. Zilvinas's little son played with his hamster while we ate, and I took names of people to call when I got back to the United States. How could all this be going on at the same time. It was difficult for me to leave this house. The family was so warm and accepting of me. Once again during this very brief visit, I felt I was at home.

There was no room for tears here. There was a firmness, a resolve about these young men, and the women I later met - no anger, no show of bravado.

We dashed to the train station where Ruta was waiting with Marius and another friend. She was happy because she had seen her father. I hugged Jadvyga and Zilvinas "goodbye". We all shed some tears. Jadvyga gave me my choice of holy card and I chose Ste. Maria Goretti, only because I remembered praying for her sainthood when I was a schoolgirl. I didn't know she was a patron saint of Vilnius. I basked in Jadvyga's approval as she told me the story - that Bloody Sunday was the day of Maria Goretti...that Jadvyga could not understand how such a thing could happen on this day... but that now she understood all. The ordeal of Bloody Sunday meant everything and pointed the way to the ultimate freedom of Lithuania. (Editor's Note: The writer advises that some of the names were changed in this story in order to protect the privacy of some individuals.) □

Proper Etiquette

A Recommendation That The White House Protocol Staff Consider Getting Some Lessons From Miss Manners.

by Joseph Arlauskas

The *White House* Protocol Staff should consider getting some guidance from *Miss Manners*.

No doubt *Miss Manners* would be glad to note, in bountiful detail, for the staff's kind and gentle benefit, that guests, who, for whatever reason, arrive a few minutes early for a scheduled appointment, should not, even in the most dire circumstances, in other words, for no imaginable reason, be turned away at the gate/be told, even in the most (if one could imagine) kind words, to go wait in the street; until the exact, precise and excruciatingly correct, time of the eagerly (we're certain) awaited appointment.

Miss Manners would, without even the slightest bit of hesitation or equivocation, tell her beloved, eager, note taking students - ever so quietly, but firmly and clearly; that such guests are to be greeted, and welcomed, graciously, by on duty staff; are to be made to feel comfortable (and what a wide ranging word that is), in facilities designed, and most certainly available (it would simply be unimaginable that there would be none) in the (one and only) *White House* for such a purpose; until the appointed time arrives.

After all, *Miss Manners* would point out, a respectful guest, striving to meet appointments in a timely (and thus, correct) manner, amidst the ever so unpredictable Washington, DC traffic, simply can't be expected to arrive at the *White House* gates on the

absolutely appointed time (without risking that most unmannerly possibility of being late).

○ ○ ○

Miss Manners would prefer that not another piece of film ever have to be used to record a scene showing President Landsbergis, waiting in an automobile, windows rolled down (on a hot day) at the curb, adjacent to the *White House* gates; having been told to wait for admittance to even the *White House* grounds; until the exact, previously scheduled time arrives. After all, the tourists viewing a scene such as the one described, simply don't deserve to have to wonder why all of those handsomely paid *White House* Protocol persons are allowing such an embarrassing (to the tourists) scene to occur on what could otherwise be such a pleasant day for those tourists. □



President Landsbergis Waiting At Curb; For Admittance To White House Grounds

"To Our Readers" (Continued from Page 2)


Future issues full of such features, will, we are certain, simply broaden the appeal of this publication.

Of course, we are totally dependent on your submissions. There is no "magic box" capable of writing all of the wonderful things we'd like to see on these pages. Many of our readers are fully capable of writing for these pages (and many of them are too hard on themselves in thinking that they are not!). Many recent items which have drawn very favorable comments from our readers have been items submitted by other readers who had been keeping their talents, and their good stories, all too themselves, for far too long!

We have prepared a multi-page listing of future article "ideas"; for use by potential authors. If you'd like a copy of this listing, give us a call or drop us a line; and we'll be glad to forward you a copy of same.

○ ○ ○

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Joseph Arlauskas

□

Letters To The Editor

Dear Sir:

The week I spent at *Camp Dainava* in 1989 was one of the most gratifying learning vacations I have ever experienced. The entire atmosphere was Lithuanian, from morning till night. The excellent staff provided a variety of activities with Lithuanian culture orientation besides the studies of the language. For one week we were immersed in our heritage.

The participants ranged in age from seniors like myself to infants, and two not yet born. The group with whom I attended were as convivial a group as could possibly be gathered. It has been a delightful experience to see two of them again since that week in August.

It was an outstanding program. Thank you, Director Bronius Krokys and Staff.

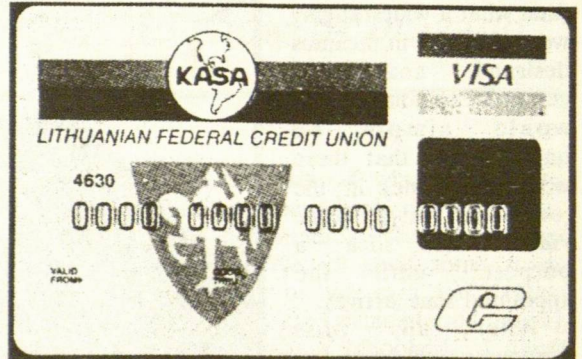
(Signed) John Kuncas / Export, Pennsylvania

(Editor's Note: We welcome letters; and will print those which we feel will be of interest to other readers, and as space permits. We reserve the right to edit letters before printing them. Mail to: **BRIDGES**, Post Office Box 363, Gloucester, VA 23061) □

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A Church History

It Reveals Much About Our Past. Here, Some Church Statistics Tell Of Lithuanian Life In America, Almost 50 Years Ago.

by John E. Usalis

Most of the time, statistical data can be the driest way of getting information, especially when it is current. But taking a look at the same information 25 or more years later seems to change those boring statistics, at the least, into interesting curiosities and, at the most, into a profound historical overview of days gone by.

The census summary of Saint George Church parish in January 1943, gives a good, and in some cases unusual, perspective of the time period when its views and attitudes seem light years away from today's.

Located in Shenandoah, Pennsylvania, in the heart of the anthracite coal mining region, Saint George Church is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year, with a history that actually goes back to 1869, when early Lithuanian settlers decided to make the borough their home.

The Lithuanian population grew so large that the town became known as Lithuania's "American Capitol." When the borough of Shenandoah at its peak had a population of over 30,000 people, over 10,000 were ethnic Lithuanian. At the time the census was taken, the population was on the decline due to the closing of many of the hard coal mines and the beginning of the exodus of borough citizens to areas where work was more plentiful.

Back in 1943, the parish consisted of 1,197 families, with the number of "souls" (family members) listed as 4,640. While it is noted that there were 289 widows and 109 bachelors in the parish's ranks, there is no mention of how many widowers or single women there were in the parish. At the very least, the widows and the bachelors most likely would have been interested in that information.

The definition of "mixed marriage" certainly has changed over the years. Today, if people of two different races marry, it is considered a mixed marriage. Years ago, if two people of different religions, and in some cases different denominations within the same religion, married, it was a mixed marriage. Apparently, intermarriage between different nationalities was labeled "mixed" in 1943.

The census shows that mixed marriages (Catholic

with non-Catholic) in the parish was numbered at 31. There was also a second listing of mixed marriages, and this was by nationality (Lithuanian to non-Lithuanian), of which there were 213 marriages, and the statistics were broken down as follows:

Polish, 139; Greek Catholic, 24; Italian, 7; Irish, 10; German, 5; Slovak, 15; Russian, 1; Ukrainian, 1; American, 11.

On to education. As to where its younger members went to earn an education, Saint George parish had 155 students in J.W. Cooper High School, the borough's public high school, 19 in Shenandoah Catholic High School, 358 in the public elementary schools and 322 in Saint George's Parochial grade school.

The very large discrepancy between the number of students from the parish attending elementary schools as opposed to the amount in the high schools gives an indication of the percentage of children who had to go to work, due to the economic conditions and, very likely, World War II, to help support their families instead of having the opportunity to continue their education as they grew older.

In the world of business, Lithuanians in Shenandoah owned 31 meat and grocery stores, and if you were thirsty for a brew, you could stop in at any one of the 31 saloons owned by Lithuanians in the borough. The parish had representatives in many other professions and trades, as well. Here is a partial list:

Nurses, 24; county courthouse clerk, 1; councilman, 1; reporters, 2; doctors, 3; lawyer, 1; flower shop manager, 1; undertakers, 4; blacksmith, 2; mine foremen, 3; chauffeurs, 5; ice cream manufacturer, 1; paperhanger, 1; cigar plant workers, 4; mine timekeeper, 1; forest warden, 1; telephone operator, 1.

The census also noted that there were 168 parishioners who failed to make their Easter duty, though how that was determined is a mystery.

It's too bad that any census taken today will not have the same unusual information, but considering the changes that time seems to make, the data we collect this year will also seem very unusual 50 years from now. (Editor's Note: Mr. Usalis, newsman by trade, is historian for Saint George Church; and is writing its 100 year history. We'd love to get more, similar stories, of other churches, for future issues.) □

Road To Independence

What Does It All Mean?

President Landsbergis Meets President Bush At The White House. Some Signals; Or Just "Photo-Ops"?

by Joseph Arlauskas

No doubt about it - the scene on May the 8th was impressive: President Landsbergis, along with the Prime Ministers of Latvia and Estonia, in the White House, sitting across the table from President Bush, Secretary of State Baker, National Security Adviser Scowcroft, Chief of Staff Sununu, and others (including the Deputy National Security Adviser, Mr. Gates; who would soon be nominated for the position of Director of the Central Intelligence Agency).

The scene was historic, as well. Never before had the leaders of all three Baltic Republics met, at the same time, with a President of the United States - in the White House, or elsewhere.

Obviously, this whole scene was a great "photo opportunity".

With all of that said, one must now ask the important questions:

Was all of this activity substantive?

Did this activity represent, in any way, a movement on the part of the United States Government towards diplomatic recognition of Lithuania?

President Landsbergis, and the other Baltic Leaders had released a joint Statement in connection with their visit to Washington, DC/on the date of their meeting with President Bush; in which they asked that the United States take specific, concrete steps regarding recognition for the Baltic States.

As best as can be determined, based on public statements, none of the Baltic Leaders' requests were directly acceded to by President Bush; during his meeting with them.

Yet, many would say that the meeting, itself, represented a "creeping" towards recognition by the United States. After all, as noted, such a meeting had never before taken place.

In fact, earlier in the week, while speaking in Canada, the U.S. Deputy National Security Adviser (and soon to be nominee as Director of the CIA), Mr. Robert Gates, had advised that United States policy towards the Soviet Union would be changing/would



President Landsbergis, along with the Prime Ministers of Latvia and Estonia (and others); at the White House, meeting with President Bush (not shown - across the table), on May 8, 1991.

include more direct contacts with leaders of the individual republics/the people representing democratic movements.

Of course, President Bush's meeting with the Baltic Leaders had occurred less than three hours after a presidential news conference during which President Bush had almost unequivocally affirmed support for Gorbachev; and during which President Bush indicated that he was most interested in finding a way (even a "loophole"?) to grant U.S. trade credits to the Soviet Union; so that Soviet authorities could purchase U.S. grain. President Landsbergis and the other Baltic Leaders, even prior to this presidential news conference, had gone on record/had been most vocal/had even talked to some Senators, urging that the United States Government not grant these trade credits for which the Soviet Union had been asking; because, they felt, such an action would serve as an endorsement of the Soviet Union's continuing (and even, escalating) illegal, unjustified actions towards the Baltic States.

And, just the day prior, the United States Senate had considered, but had not acted on, a Resolution introduced by Senator Robert Dole (Kansas), the Republican Senate Minority Leader; and which Resolution urged the President to grant the \$1.5 Billion grain trade credit to the Soviet Union. (Senator Dole, as readers will recall, had been extremely vocal in the aftermath of Bloody Sunday; and had noted several times that the United States should not be supporting

the Soviets while they continued to oppress the Baltics. As the rationale for this now radical, dramatic switch in his position, Senator Dole noted that he had received "assurances" from the Soviet authorities that the grain to be obtained with this \$1.5 Billion U.S. Government trade credit (read: "giveaway") would not be used as a tool of oppression. He offered no further "rationale" as to why he had, all of a sudden, decided to believe what the Soviets were telling him. Of course, because he is the leader of the Republican Party, in the Senate - the same party to which President Bush belongs - one can't help but assume that Senator Dole's action was not without agreement from the White House.) (President Landsbergis even met with Senator Dole, and with other senators; and talked about this proposed resolution; but, obviously, that meeting had little, or no, effect; because the Senate again considered this resolution, on May 15th - and passed it, by a wide majority. Fact is, they didn't even wait for President Landsbergis to leave the United States, on May 16th.)

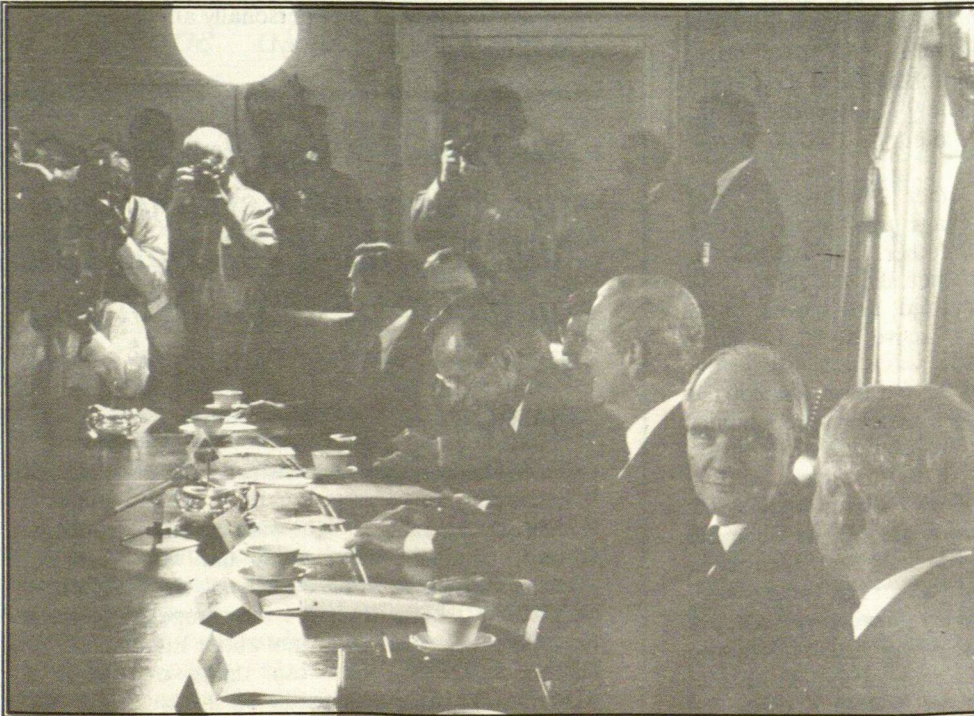
During the week of President Landsbergis' visit to the White House, we learned, as well, that two senior U.S. Department of State officials, who are normally based in Washington, D.C., were visiting the capitals of the Baltic Republics (including Vilnius).

So, what's really going on? Is the United States "creeping" towards recognition of Lithuania?

And, if so, is the "creeping" going to be rapid enough; so that, as President Landsbergis, and others, hope, the decision to grant recognition comes before the Soviet Union succeeds in its ongoing, insidious, low key actions against the people and elected government of Lithuania; actions which are far more sophisticated - and even more effective - than what took place on Bloody Sunday?

Will May 1991 be looked back on as a dramatic, positive, "water shed" time in the history of Lithuania's struggle; or will it pass by as just another month during which Lithuania was left to drift in the wind?

□



President Bush, along with Secretary of State Baker, General Scowcroft, Mr. Sununu, Mr. Gates (and others); sitting across the table from President Landsbergis.

On Being Lithuanian In America

*The Pride Of Being Able To Relate To A Noble,
Long, Proud And Culturally Filled History Of Lithuania.*

by David Skirkey-Skirkevicius

(Editor's Note: This article is the text of a speech written and presented by the author at a February 16th commemoration ceremony conducted by the Knights of Lithuania, in Providence, Rhode Island. We felt that it deserved to, and should, be shared with a much wider audience than originally heard it presented.)

I have been asked to explain what being Lithuanian means to me, a third-generation Lithuanian-American. The answer to that question comes with difficulty; it is less obvious than the answer one could expect from a native Lithuanian. I was not born when Stalin's troops trampled Lithuania's nationhood. My father was in high school when the Lithuanian Resistance fought the Red Army. My family had long since been established in America, when others were fleeing for their lives and still more were packed into trains to Siberia, never to return. All these tragic events seem distant and incomprehensible to us younger ones, who have known only safety and security. I am born American. I love my country. I could simply leave it at that.

Yet when I am among other Lithuanians I feel kinship and pride. These feelings grow mostly out of fragile memories of my grandmother. She was born in Trakai and came to America when she was three. She grew up in South Boston, married, and moved on to Nashua, N.H., where she was active at St. Casimir's Church and sang in the choir. It was she who kept the family together and preserved the old ways, and cooked wonderful Lithuanian food. I remember one summer morning when I was four, singing "Puff the Magic Dragon" for her as she sat in her lawn chair. She smiled a very peculiar smile which I did not understand, but will never forget. In fact, she was ill, and when she passed away several months later, she left upon me a very strong impression and a lot of unanswered questions as well. Throughout my growing-up years and until now I have met many young Lithuanians who knew only that they were Lithuanian and little else. "Oh yeah, I know how to say *Labas*, I know the prayers," one said. Again, most conclude, "Well, I was born in America, so I'm an American now."

I have a friend who is an Italian national. She spent

her early childhood in Italy, but grew up in America. Her brothers were born here. She tells me rather poignantly of how they struggle inside themselves to reconcile the old with the new, how they are torn between great pride for a homeland they have never seen, and a kind of embarrassed confusion because the American way of life is all they have known. Something so close to them is at the same time alien. Some people block it out. Some of us, however, are blessed (or cursed) with the desire to know about our heritage and somehow make it a meaningful part of our lives. It's a fact that not all of us can grow up in a Lithuanian neighborhood or go to Lithuanian school or summer camp. When one's grandparents are gone, it becomes very difficult to find personal answers to the question of heritage. The books we find in the library are mostly old and yellow. The new ones are blurred by Soviet ideology. I feel personally affected by Soviet censorship, half a world away!

*The howling Iron Wolf,
the ancient symbol of
Vilnius, must become an
emblem of hope for all
people who yearn for
freedom.*

And it's hard too, to deal with the whole concept of ethnicity when so often today the word 'ethnic' is associated with such words as 'hatred', 'tension', 'conflict', or 'problem'. Nevertheless, I am compelled to answer for myself, what's so important about Lithuania, a tiny, obscure country? We can thank our press for educating the American public on this question. Over the past year and a half, anyone could pick up a newspaper and read the basic facts of Lithuania's history and of her illegal occupation half a century ➡

ago and to some extent share in the pain and sorrow and hope and joy that attends the Lithuanians' relentless struggle to restore their independence. But inasmuch as the media has given many political facts, Americans still have little sense of the spiritual side of the question, who the Lithuanians are and what they're like, no sense of their language, culture and art. Thus it's hard to attribute importance to them. In a sense, Lithuanians remain faceless, and given the urgency of current events in the Baltics, this can be dangerous.

Perhaps now more than ever, we Lithuanians in America must be 'cultural ambassadors'. The solution for me has been to assemble a 'crazy quilt' of cultural snippets from a variety of sources. This mass of information serves the double purpose of teaching myself and others. A lot of this reads like 'Ripley's Believe It or Not,' but I find that people are genuinely interested in these little stories. I will present a few examples. They are necessarily brief and incomplete; indeed, books could be and have been written on each subject.

[Ciurlionis] combined his musical knowledge with visual art to evoke the magic of the sky and of the landscape of his beloved homeland.

The first of these is on the subject of language. I heard on the radio some time back, the account of a young musician who wished to learn how to play the Irish bagpipes. This instrument is different from the ones most of us are familiar with. Rather than blow into a mouthpiece, the musician must continually pump a bellows with his elbow. This musician went to see the best player on the island, an intense old man who told him sternly, "You must learn to speak Gaelic first, for to play the bellows pipes one must know the sounds and rhythms of the Irish language." I like this story; it shows the importance of language and how it reflects the character of the culture that produces it. And so it is with Lithuanian. The Lithuanians have existed for hundreds and hundreds of years, and in their relative isolation from mainstream Europe, have preserved some of the most ancient ways of the European people. They were an agricultural people who continue to have an abiding love for their land. To the pagan Lithuanians, every stream and forest was inhabited by spirits; the world was full of magic and enchantment.

Like most Eastern European peoples, Lithuanians saw themselves as a very small part of a huge universe, and not at all its center.

Anyone who studies the Lithuanian language will find these stories embroidered into every word. Lithuanian is quite different from our own business-like, legalistic, fast-food, modern English. Lithuanian words are often longer, more musical, and full of infinite potential for subtlety. It is indeed a language made for songs, songs of all kinds, work songs of men in fields, of women weaving at home. These are the *dainos* - the folksongs that preserve the ways and beliefs of our most ancient ancestors.

A second example is on the subject of folk art. A well-known example of our folk art is the *Rupintojelis*, the little figure of Christ mourning the suffering of mankind. Found in little shrines all over Lithuania, the *Rupintojelis* was based on the form of an ancient pagan image, the mournful dying vegetation god of Old Europe. Sculptures of this being have been found in the Middle East (Turkey) at ruins of Catal Huyuk, one of the world's oldest known cities, and dated at about 6,000 B.C. The pagan Lithuanians called this god *Vaizgantas*, the god of flax. As *Vaizgantas* stood for resurrection, the old Lithuanians found it quite logical to save this ancient figure as a symbol of their new Christian faith. Along with the wayside crosses, these sculptures were set out-of-doors to live with the elements. They would gradually decay, and return to the earth. They were constantly replaced. Our folk art could be said to live in harmony with nature's rhythms.

Thirdly, in the field of modern art, the sons of Lithuania have made a substantial contribution: Cubist sculptor Jacques Lipchitz, painters Chaim Soutine and Ben Shahn, art historians Bernard Berenson and Jurgis Baltrusaitis. Of these, none is more remarkable than Mikalojus Konstantinas Ciurlionis, the composer and Symbolist painter. The story of his personal struggle for an artistic voice is not unlike the struggle of the entire Lithuanian nation for its rightful voice in the world community. In Ciurlionis's music one hears the influence of Bach, Beethoven, Wagner and Chopin, Yet to these Ciurlionis brings something distinctly Lithuanian. In its heartfelt gliding, jumping and pouncing, his music has the same raw, direct energy and also the tenderness that we find in the *Rupintojelis*. In his paintings Ciurlionis celebrates his national origins. He strove to produce works that would touch the hearts of his countrymen and awaken them into nationhood. To do this he combined his musical knowledge with visual art to evoke the magic of the sky and of the landscape of his beloved homeland.

Through these three examples runs a common thread. One hears the voices of our ancestors forming a chorus of ideas - universal, basic ideas: from our pagan ancestors, that life is a divine gift, that we must treat our earthly home with loving care. In the voices of the "book-smugglers" of the turn of the century ➡

and the freedom fighters of the 40's and 50's we hear of love of truth and freedom. How very central are these old ideas to the hot political issues of today!

George Bush has spoken of our troops in the Middle East as "doing the hard work of freedom." In Lithuania, past and present, the people are also doing the hard work of freedom, and when they are free at last, must stand with the other nations of the world and continue to speak out for peace and justice. For example, in Tibet, yet another peaceful nation faces cultural destruction at the hands of an occupying force. By speaking out, Lithuania will extend the legacy of her valiant citizens, those who gave their lives on that terrible day last January 13th. Like America, Lithuania must be a beacon, not a mirror reflecting upon herself.

The howling *Iron Wolf*, the ancient symbol of Vilnius, must become an emblem of hope for all people who yearn for freedom.

So, it is by understanding the various aspects of the history and culture of Lithuania, such as I have given, that those of us born in America can make that essential connection with our ancestral homeland. If we do not preserve our culture, we lose a sense of what we are, by losing yet another piece of what we have been. And in America, a nation of immigrants, our strength comes from our diversity, our individuality, our pride in our uniqueness. Lithuanian-Americans have much to be proud of.

And that I believe to be my grandmother's meaning, for in her smile was everything that was in her heart. □

Open Letter To Senator Robert Dole (Republican/Kansas)

Dear Senator Dole:

Please recall that our last, subsidized, "give away", grain "sale" to the Soviet Union was greeted by accusations, from among the highest leadership in the Soviet Union, that we were shipping "contaminated" grain to the Soviet Union.

I note that you are supporting a new program which proposes to provide funding for the shipment of \$1.5 Billion worth of additional grain to the Soviet Union.

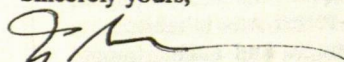
In order to protect the integrity of US farmers, may I ask that you convene a Senate Panel which will insure/oversee testing of all grain destined for the Soviet Union, in this latest round; so that we can "wave" Senate produced reports, for all the world to see; and which clearly indicate that we shipped the Soviets only the highest quality grain? Such a "preemptive strike", on our part, will, hopefully, preclude any attempt on the part of the Soviet leadership to repeat their accusations of last year.

Of course, this Senate Panel will need to be a bi-partisan one; and will have to include Members from grain producing states (but not from "defense industry states" - because of the potential for accusations by the Soviets that these "defense industry states", in an attempt to share in the bounty of this significant export, participated by producing weapons like materials for use as "lacing" for that grain). You might consider inviting the "Shadow Senator" from the District of Columbia to be a member of this panel; because the District produces nothing, and, so, clearly would have no "hidden agenda" in the eyes of the Soviets.

You might even consider retaining the services of Mr. Arthur Lyman. He's got "viewer recognition" from participation in past Senate activities; and his presence would, most certainly, insure that hearings of this Senate Panel will enjoy exposure on the major TV networks. (Who knows, the Hearings may even serve as a "spring board" for emergence, finally, of a viable Democratic Presidential Contender for '92. In that sense, they'd serve a far greater purpose than the immediate one.)

Senator Dole, as one of America's great leaders, we expect that you will see fit to act on this requirement in a firm, forceful and eminently photogenic manner.

Sincerely yours,



Joseph Arlauskas

Community With A Capital "C"

*A Report From The National Executive Committee of
The Lithuanian-American Community, Inc.*

by **Ramune Kubilius**

Chapters:

The Las Vegas (Nevada) Chapter of the *Lithuanian American Community, Inc. (LAC)* has a new president, Ms. Aldona I. Jonynas.

Former president, Ms. Mary Yanauskas stays on as vice president for information and publicity.

The Melrose Park (Illinois) Chapter has a new chapter president, Mr. Kazimieras Valis.

The Washington State Chapter (formerly the Seattle, Washington Chapter) has a new president, Ms. Irena Blekys. Long time president, Ms. Ina Bertulis-Bray, stays on as an officer.

Educational Council:

On April 15th, a 20 ton container was dispatched from Chicago via train to New Jersey where it was placed on to a ship bound towards Lithuania. This container is scheduled to reach Lithuania before the end of the school year. This container shipment project, organized by the *Educational Council* (of the *LAC*), represented donations of school supplies, non-perishable food items, books, and clothing for Lithuania's children; and is to be distributed, in Lithuania, by Lithuania's *Ministry of Education and Culture*. Ms. Regina Kucas, president of the *Educational Council*, has thanked, and acknowledged, the many donors by having their names listed in the Lithuanian language press.

The 25th annual Lithuanian language school teachers' and principals' week-long conference will take place at *Camp Dainava* (near Manchester, Michigan), from August 11th through the 18th. *The Educational Council* will prepare the agenda, invite the speakers and register interested participants. A number of teachers return each year, since they feel that the conference is useful. Along with more formal lectures on methodology, the conference gives teachers the opportunity to brainstorm and share ideas on how to convey Lithuanian language, history, and culture knowledge to students; many of whom already attend school five days a week. Participants also are given the opportunity to meet with members of the *Educational Council*, to convey their needs and expectations of the

Council, and gives the Council an opportunity to meet its "constituents".

A tradition more recently introduced at the conference is a parallel session taking place at *Camp Dainava* the same week - Lithuanian language classes. Participants attend daytime classes coordinated by Mr. Bronius Krokys of Philadelphia, and mingle with the Lithuanian language school conference attendees at evening programs. For more information about the Lithuanian language classes at *Camp Dainava*, contact Mr. Krokys at telephone: 215 671-0397.

Political Seminars:

The Director of the *LAC Government Affairs Office*, Ms. Asta Banionis, was one of many invited speakers at the *5th Annual Political Seminar* sponsored by the *Lithuanian American Youth Association*, during the period April 12 - 14, in Washington, D.C. (Asta has seen the seminar evolve over the years since she was one of the initiators of the first seminar). The seminars are known by attendees to be well-organized, interesting, and challenging. The events of the first day of the 1991 seminar were at the State Department, the events of the second day at the *Hyatt Arlington Hotel*, the events of the third day at the Lithuanian Legation.

Mrs. Grazina Landsbergis (wife of President Vytautas Landsbergis), Lithuania's Minister of Economy, Mr. Vytautas Navickas, Czechoslovakia's Ambassador to the United States, Ms. Rita Klimova, Congressmen Bill Sarpalius (Texas) and Henry Hyde (Illinois) were just some of the speakers who gave attendees insights into the seminar's theme of "Lithuania 1991: Destiny and Directions".

On March 11th, a number of demonstrations, symposia and other commemorations took place on the first anniversary of the redeclaration of Lithuanian independence. In Chicago, the day was devoted to the theme "Freedom Reborn". A symposium entitled "The Baltic Crisis", was held in the State of Illinois Building. The speakers were Professor A. Shtromas, Professor R. Ebeling, Professor S. Soot and Professor Z. Zile. The first was a classmate of M. Gorbachev's and has since emigrated first to Great Britain, now to the United States. The sponsors of the symposium were the *Lithuanian "Hotline"* organization (of Lemont, IL), ➤

the *Lithuanian-American Community, Inc.*, the *Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania*, the *American Lithuanian Council and Americans for Lithuania's Freedom*; and co-sponsored by a number of other groups. The moderator, Mr. David Roth, Director of the *American Jewish Committee's Institute for American Pluralism* made a number of well-placed comments about coordination of and cooperation among the varied Lithuanian groups in the diaspora.

E-Mail:

These days, Lithuanian themes and news of various events are transmitted via modern technology: newswires, videotape, telefax to name a few means. Thanks to the inspiration provided by an article in the March 1991 issue of **BRIDGES**, by Mr. Ed Klimas, electronic mail became an avenue to publicize the *Lithuanian Music Festival* (and to answer other questions as well). *Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. National Executive Committee* member Ms. Ramune Kubilius took advantage of computer access afforded to her by her employer (a university) and its computing center (in her "spare time") to place news items about the *Lithuanian Music Festival* on *BALT-L (Baltic List)*.

In April, the *BALT-L* forum featured favorable comments about various **BRIDGES** articles, about the similarities between the Kurds' situation and Lithuania's, about the latest events in the Baltic States, and many other miscellaneous topics. Some days, about half a dozen new items are loaded into *BALT-L*.

The editor of *BALT-L* is Mr. Edis Bevans of England. Along with passing on news items from the newswires, and electronically discussing them, *BALT-L* also allows participants to exchange information. Someone wanted information about the *Lithuanian Music Festival* (after the initial news item was placed). Someone wanted information about Baltic organizations in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area (an answer was relayed about the Minnesota chapter of the *Lithuanian-American Community, Inc.*). Someone wanted to know what the itinerary of Lithuania's President Vytautas Landsbergis would be in the days before the *Lithuanian Music Festival* (suggestions to contact the Lithuanian Legation and referrals to the *Government Affairs Office* and the *Public Affairs Council* of the *LAC* were made).

Electronic conversations take place between various geographic regions - Australia, Norway, the U.S. and elsewhere. Whether electronic mail will replace or supplement paper remains to be seen, but its audience can be wide and varied, and the voiceless conversations don't discriminate. One participant writes that he has multiple sclerosis, another writes that he is deaf. All participants share an interest in the Baltics. Until the term of office ends for this *National Executive Committee*, Ramune can be reached at her E-Mail address: kubilius@casbah.acns.nwu.edu.

Proclamation:

The media coordinator of the *Lithuanian Music Festival*, Ms. Silvia Foti and her committee publicized the Festival and its various events by a variety of means. Sylvia also succeeded in getting a proclamation of May 15 - 28, 1991 to be "LITHUANIAN MUSIC FESTIVAL DAYS" in the City of Chicago. Mayor Richard M. Daley signed the proclamation on March 26, 1991. *Festival Organizing Committee* members noted that American politicians and foreign dignitaries did not immediately respond to the invitations extended them well before the event, but preferred to respond only the month before. On the other hand, the transportation offices (rail, air, bus) needed quite a bit of advance notice to arrange the trips of the visiting Festival participants from Lithuania (via New York to Chicago). Prices, of course, were greatly influenced by short notice on arriving guests from Lithuania.

Ms. Foti also worked with *Educational Council* President Ms. Regina Kucas to conduct an essay contest among Lithuanian language school children to stimulate interest in the Music Festival.

Updates:

A letter of thanks was received by the *National Executive Committee* from the Martynas Mazvydas National Library of Lithuania. The "Gift for Lithuania" (Dovana Lietuvai) Fund enabled the library to purchase CD-ROM equipment in preparation for the planned subscription to various discs in technical information areas. (This was mentioned in the May 1991 column.) In libraries, discs can provide access to a large body of literature since the discs can compress the contents of many pages of information, everything from material safety data sheets to drug information, psychological and medical references to full-text newspaper articles. The discs also can be viewed without accessing a remote computer via modem (especially when telephone lines may not be reliable.) The Martynas Mazvydas National Library of Lithuania sees compact disc technology as a means to break through the information blockade which for so long has strangled Lithuania.

The mail blockade ended mid-March. Relatives, friends, and other correspondents in Lithuania expressed puzzlement and surprise about the lack of mail from before Christmas until mail resumed. An official answer may never be found for the blockade, but thanks to all who participated in the *Government Affairs Office's* questionnaire.

The Director of the *Government Affairs Office*, Ms. Asta Banionis has a new assistant, Ms. Ruta Aidis, with whom some callers to the office may already have spoken. Ruta was an anthropology major in college and spent some time in the *Peace Corps*. Her experience will be a valuable asset to the *Government Affairs Office*. ➡

The *Hope for Lithuania's Children (Lietuvos Vaiku Viltis) Committee* (established by the *Human Services and Religious Affairs Councils*) now has an administrator, Ms. Terese Soliunas. She will be responsible for the day to day concerns and details of coordinating the trips of sick Lithuanian children to the U.S. for treatment in *Shriner* hospitals.

Letters:

Some persons in Lithuania are interested in establishing contact with persons in the U.S. using the *Lithuanian Red Cross Society* as an intermediary. The Society sends form letters to the *National Executive Committee* with some particulars. Persons in Lithuania may be seeking to re-establish ties with long-lost relatives. Some are trying to establish contact with relatives of their parents and grandparents who emigrated to the U.S. before World War I or World War II. Some lost contact with relatives more recently. The *National Executive Committee* places short notices in the Lithuanian press. One example: Kestutis from Vilnius writes that he would like to learn about American etiquette - how does one behave at a host's home, in a restaurant, during official visits? Kestutis hopes that by publicizing this kind of information, he can elevate the standards of Lithuania's inhabitants.

(Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. National Executive Committee, 2713 West 71st Street, Chicago, IL 60629.) □

Letters From Lithuania

The following are translated excerpts of letters from Lithuania; which have been made available to the National Executive Committee of the Lithuanian American Community, Inc. They reflect the various interests and state of mind in which many Lithuanians now find themselves. (Since there was a mail blockade in effect from December to mid-March, some of these letters have only recently reached the United States.)

✓ (November 16, 1990) In Lithuania now, it is very popular to take foreign language courses, because many people who take them want to mingle with people from other countries and there are people who like to work in other countries as well. Most people take English and German lessons. I like English best, so that's what I am studying. (Rita - Vilnius)

✓ (December 11, 1990) I was very interested in a comment you made in your last letter that there are some neighborhoods in the U.S. which are safer than others, where people can feel safe. In Lithuania, there isn't a single place, even in their own homes that people can be safe. Especially now, when crime has reached a catastrophic level. Maybe, when the economic and political problems calm down, this matter will correct itself as well. There's nothing new by us.

Again, there's the fear as to how to live through the winter, if there is a blockade... (Daiva - Vilnius)

✓ (January 21, 1991) It's hard to write you this letter after all the sleepless nights and tragic events in Lithuania. You probably know all about it. Now the situation is a bit quieter, even though the Soviet patrols are catching and beating our people, even the deputies and Lithuania's policemen. That horrible night we were standing in Kaunas near the Radio and Television buildings and we were ready to defend them as best as we could. I think that this all-around movement of people stopped any further war-like efforts. (Petras - Kaunas)

✓ (February 13, 1991) That's how we live: we are alive and still free, we rejoice that it's now the second week when foreign soldiers haven't shot anyone, didn't beat anyone. (Vile - Kaunas)

✓ (February 24, 1991) I recently started working after my illness. Lithuanian Independence Day February 16th went by sadly as well, because I had temperature, therefore I wasn't even able to take a step outside my door. Now we are awaiting the rise in costs. Our stores are empty and barren. If someone brings something in, people buy it out right away, whether they need it or not. And we have a very unstable political situation. I wonder if this nightmare will ever end. I would so like to live at least one day without worries. So much for now! (Daiva - Vilnius)

✓ (March 8, 1991) Only a few days and it'll be March 11th. One year. Hope and light. Patience and determination. Pain. And where does one gain strength, knowing, that after February 16th there was June 14th; after March 11th, January 13th? You know, Bloody Sunday events even today seem to be an open wound. Just touch it and it hurts ... And for what sins are we being crushed again, being disposed of? Little Lithuania is taking another examination... (Laima - Kaunas)

✓ (April 29, 1991) Thank you for the pretty card decorated with the Easter eggs. They are so pretty, that even censorship didn't dare take them away. Otherwise, letters have begun to travel with great difficulty and don't always reach the addressee. I had written you in great detail our events. Unfortunately, too much in detail, it appears, because you didn't get the letter. I can't send you any happy news. We are still slipping downward, everyone is growing tired of the unknown. It's hard for Lithuania ... Mother is well at this time, she is very interested in politics and hopes, that her great granddaughters will live to see better days. And we will be that generation which lived through the hard times. My brother and I joke that we were born at the wrong time. But that's just an aside. In reality, we are moving around not too badly... (Stase - Vilnius)

- Selected, and translated from Lithuanian, by Ramune Kubilius □

Current Members Of The U.S. Senate

Use This List Regularly. Call And Write At Least Your 2 Senators; About Actions They Are Taking For Lithuania's Freedom.

This Listing Follows the Following Format:

- 1 **Last Name**
- 2 **First Name**
- 3 **Middle Name** *And Followed By, IF ANY - Appendage, i.e., "Jr.", "III", etc.*
- 4 **Office # / Building Name**
- 5 **State**, i.e., from which State elected / **Party** ("D" is Democrat; "R" is Republican)
- 6 **Phone #** (Office in Washington, DC Office)

Letters to a Senator should be addressed as follows:

Senator (*First Name*) (*Middle Name/Initial*) (*Last Name*) (*Appendage*)
 United States Senate
 (*Office # Building Name*) Senate Office Building
 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator (*Last Name*):

The following is an alphabetical listing of senators, by name, keyed to the format above; from which you should be able to find mailing addresses, and telephone numbers of the two senators elected from your state. (If you are not sure of their names, simply look through the whole list, for the two who are listed as being from your state):

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| Adams Brock (None) 513 Hart Washington/D 1 202 224-2621 | Armstrong William L. 528 Hart Colorado/R 1 202 224-5941 | Bentsen Lloyd (None) 703 Hart Texas/D 1 202 224-5922 | Bingaman Jeff (None) 524 Hart New Mexico/D 1 202 224-5521 | Boren David Lyle 453 Russell Oklahoma/D 1 202 224-4721 |
| Akaka Daniel (None) 109 Hart Hawaii/D 1 202 224-6361 | Baucus Max (None) 706 Hart Montana/D 1 202 224-2651 | Biden Joseph R. / Jr. 221 Russell Delaware/D 1 202 224-5042 | Bond Christopher Samuel 293 Russell Missouri/R 1 202 224-5721 | Bradley Bill (None) 731 Hart New Jersey/D 1 202 224-3224 |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| Breaux John B. 516 Hart Louisiana/D 1 202 224-4623 | Cohen William S. 322 Hart Maine/R 1 202 224-2523 | Dole Robert (None) 141 Hart Kansas/R 1 202 224-6521 | Gorton Slade (None) 730 Hart Washington/R 1 202 224-3441 | Hollings Ernest F. 125 Russell South Carolina/D 1 202 224-6121 |
| Bryan Richard H. 358 Russell Nevada/D 1 202 224-6244 | Conrad Kent (None) 361 Dirksen North Dakota/D 1 202 224-2043 | Domenici Pete V. 343 Dirksen New Mexico/R 1 202 224-6621 | Graham Robert (None) 241 Dirksen Florida/D 1 202 224-3041 | Humphrey Gordon J. 531 Hart New Hampshire/R 1 202 224-2841 |
| Bumpers Dale (None) 229 Dirksen Arkansas/D 1 202 224-4843 | Cranston Alan (None) 112 Hart California/D 1 202 224-3553 | Durenberger David F. 154 Russell Minnesota/R 1 202 224-3244 | Gramm Phil (None) 370 Russell Texas/R 1 202 224-2934 | Inouye Daniel K. 722 Hart Hawaii/D 1 202 224-3934 |
| Burdick Quentin Northrup 511 Hart North Dakota/D 1 202 224-2551 | D'Amato Alfonse M. 520 Hart New York/R 1 202 224-6542 | Exon J. James 330 Hart Nebraska/D 1 202 224-4224 | Grassley Charles Ernest 135 Hart Iowa/R 1 202 224-3744 | Jeffords James M. 530 Dirksen Vermont/R 1 202 224-5141 |
| Burns Conrad (None) 825A Hart Montana/R 1 202 224-2644 | Danforth John Claggett 249A Russell Missouri/R 1 202 224-6154 | Ford Wendell Hampton 173A Russell Kentucky/D 1 202 224-4343 | Harkin Thomas R. 316 Hart Iowa/D 1 202 224-3254 | Johnston Bennett (None) / Jr. 136 Hart Louisiana/D 1 202 224-5824 |
| Byrd Robert Carlyle 311 Hart West Virginia/D 1 202 224-3954 | Daschle Thomas Andrew 317 Hart South Dakota/D 1 202 224-2321 | Fowler William Wyche / Jr. 204 Russell Georgia/D 1 202 224-3643 | Hatch Orrin Grant 135 Russell Utah/R 1 202 224-5251 | Kassebaum Nancy Landon 302 Russell Kansas/R 1 202 224-4774 |
| Chafee John H. 567 Dirksen Rhode Island/R 1 202 224-2921 | DeConcini Dennis (None) 328 Hart Arizona/D 1 202 224-4521 | Garn Edwin Jacob ("Jake") 505 Dirksen Utah/R 1 202 224-5444 | Hatfield Mark O. 711 Hart Oregon/R 1 202 224-3753 | Kasten Robert W. / Jr. 110 Hart Wisconsin/R 1 202 224-5323 |
| Coats Daniel R. 411 Russell Indiana/R 1 202 224-5623 | Dixon Alan J. 331 Hart Illinois/D 1 202 224-2854 | Glenn John Herschel / Jr. 503 Hart Ohio/D 1 202 224-3353 | Heflin Howell Thomas 728 Hart Alabama/D 1 202 224-4124 | Kennedy Edward M. 315 Russell Massachusetts/D 1 202 224-4543 |
| Cochran Thad (None) 326 Russell Mississippi/R 1 202 224-5054 | Dodd Christopher J. 444 Russell Connecticut/D 1 202 224-2823 | Gore Albert (None) / Jr. 393 Russell Tennessee/D 1 202 224-4944 | Helms Jesse Alexander 403 Dirksen North Carolina/R 1 202 224-6342 | Kerrey Joseph Robert 302 Hart Nebraska/D 1 202 224-6551 |

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|---|--|---|--|---|
| Kerry John (None) 421 Russell Massachusetts/D 1 202 224-2742 | McCain John Stuart 111 Russell Arizona/R 1 202 224-2235 | Nunn Samuel Augustus 303 Dirksen Georgia/D 1 202 224-3521 | Roth William Victor / Jr. 104 Hart Delaware/R 1 202 224-2441 | Specter Arlen (None) 303 Hart Pennsylvania/R 1 202 224-4254 |
| Kohl Herbert H. 702 Hart Wisconsin/D 1 202 224-5653 | McClure James A. 309 Hart Idaho/R 1 202 224-2752 | Packwood Robert William 259 Russell Oregon/R 1 202 224-5244 | Rudman Warren D. 530 Hart New Hampshire/R 1 202 224-3324 | Stevens Ted (None) 522 Hart Alaska/R 1 202 224-3004 |
| Lautenberg Frank R. 717 Hart New Jersey/D 1 202 224-4744 | McConnell Mitch (None) 120 Russell Kentucky/R 1 202 224-2541 | Pell Claiborne (None) 335 Russell Rhode Island/D 1 202 224-4642 | Sanford Terry (None) 716 Hart North Carolina/D 1 202 224-3154 | Symms Steven D. 509 Hart Idaho/R 1 202 224-6142 |
| Leahy Patrick (None) 433 Russell Vermont/D 1 202 224-4242 | Metzenbaum Howard M. 140 Russell Ohio/D 1 202 224-2315 | Pressler Larry (None) 133 Hart South Dakota/R 1 202 224-5842 | Sarbanes Paul Spyros 332 Dirksen Maryland/D 1 202 224-4524 | Thurmond James Strom 218 Russell South Carolina/R 1 202 224-5972 |
| Levin Carl M. 459 Russell Michigan/D 1 202 224-6221 | Mikulski Barbara A. 320 Hart Maryland/D 1 202 224-4654 | Pryor David Hampton 264 Hart Arkansas/D 1 202 224-2353 | Sasser James Ralph 363 Russell Tennessee/D 1 202 224-3344 | Wallop Malcolm (None) 237 Russell Wyoming/R 1 202 224-6441 |
| Lieberman Joseph I. 502 Hart Connecticut/D 1 202 224-4041 | Mitchell George J. 176 Russell Maine/D 1 202 224-5344 | Reid Harry M. 324 Hart Nevada/D 1 202 224-3542 | Seymour John (None) 720 Hart California/R 1 202 224-3841 | Warner John W. 225 Russell Virginia/R 1 202 224-2023 |
| Lott Trent (None) 487 Russell Mississippi/R 1 202 224-6253 | Moynihan Daniel Patrick 464 Russell New York/D 1 202 224-4451 | Riegle Donald W. / Jr. 105 Dirksen Michigan/D 1 202 224-4822 | Shelby Richard Craig 313 Hart Alabama/D 1 202 224-5744 | Wellstone Paul (None) 702 Hart Minnesota/D 1 202 224-5641 |
| Lugar Richard Green 306 Hart Indiana/R 1 202 224-4814 | Murkowski Frank H. 709 Hart Alaska/R 1 202 224-6665 | Robb Charles S. 517 Hart Virginia/D 1 202 224-4024 | Simon Paul (None) 462 Dirksen Illinois/D 1 202 224-2152 | Wirth Timothy E. 380 Russell Colorado/D 1 202 224-5852 |
| Mack Connie (None) / III 517 Hart Florida/R 1 202 224-5274 | Nickles Donald Lee 713 Hart Oklahoma/R 1 202 224-5754 | Rockefeller John D. / IV 724 Hart West Virginia/D 1 202 224-6472 | Simpson Alan Kooi 261 Dirksen Wyoming/R 1 202 224-3424 | Wofford Harris (None) 227 Russell Pennsylvania/R 1 202 224-6324 □ |

⇒ Updates ⇐

Bringing you "up to date" on activities, projects, initiatives which are underway; and which have been previously reported/about which you've probably heard; so that you know "where things stand".

Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture:

... is celebrating its 25th Anniversary, this month. The Museum's President, Mr. Stanley Balzekas, advises that the various programs of the Museum have allowed more than one million people to make, "...contact with Lithuanian culture, customs, traditions...", and, of course, with Lithuanians.

Concurrent with its anniversary programs, the Museum has announced plans to establish an extension branch in Vilnius. (The original *Balzekas Museum* is located at 6500 South Pulaski Road, Chicago, Illinois 60629; Telephone: 312 582-6500.)

The Vilnius extension, "...will be housed in the 17th century palace of the famous Lithuanian Radvilas nobility." According to Mr. Balzekas, "One of the greatest needs of Lithuania is the resource of information that can be channeled through the Museum to the Lithuanians and organizations in Lithuania." Mr. Balzekas goes on to say that the *Balzekas Museum's* experienced staff can, "...help in the cultural; as well as business, professional and financial areas."

Present plans call for the extension in Vilnius to have the following exhibits/facilities:

1. An art gallery to exhibit the works of artists ... Lithuanian and American.
2. Exhibits on Lithuanians and Lithuanian organizations in the United States.
3. An office, staffed by experts in their field, will be available to artists, professional people, scholars, those interested in industry and finance, and private individuals, to have a direct line of contact with resources in the United States through the *Balzekas Museum*.
4. Special emphasis will be placed on the young people to inspire their creativity and help them become aware of the educational and professional opportunities in the United States.
5. The Museum will be available to all [*Balzekas Museum*] members as a center of activity when they are in Lithuania.

Obviously, these ambitious plans envision something far greater/more comprehensive than a "museum" in the generic sense!

Mr. Balzekas seeks, "...help and advice ... from the choosing of what should be sent to Lithuania ... to the packing .. to the establishment of direct lines of

information on both sides of the world ... and fundraisers to help pay for this project, as well as to bring the Museum facilities here and abroad to the highest professional standards." (Editor's Note: This "update" was transcribed from a news release of the *Balzekas Museum*.)



Pen Pals:

Stories/Items about on going "pen pal" projects between Americans and Lithuanians, in two recent issues of BRIDGES have prompted others to write in about similiar, successful programs. The following is from Ms. Ina Bertulyte Bray, a school librarian (and a strong, very successful, activist for Lithuania!), of Seattle Washington).

In 1988, when I came back from a visit to Lithuania, I asked teenagers in our school if they would like to correspond with students in Lithuania (in English). What a question! At last count, I had some 300 students who had received addresses of Lithuanian students in Vilnius and Kaunas. Many more students expanded that circle on their own, both here in Seattle and in Lithuania. And now, with the blockade of mail of the past few months, many of these students filled in the documentation from the *Lithuanian American Community [Inc.]* regarding lack of mail.

The enthusiasm with which our students receive letters is infectious. Consequently, at least the whole family is made aware of Lithuania, if not friends and neighbors and all with whom that student comes in contact. What wonderful public relations for Lithuania! What a service for students in Lithuania! How many times have I heard, "My mother clips out *everything* about Lithuania that she can lay her hands on!", or, "My pen pal has the nicest handwriting of anyone I know! Why can't I write like that?"

These are American students, who, in another school, perhaps might have never even been aware of Lithuania.

- Ina Bertulyte Bray



A.P.P.L.E.:

The *A.P.P.L.E. (American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education)* project, about which we truly enjoy keeping you up to date (because it is so successful!), has recently been awarded grants from *The Kennedy Foundation* and from the *Soros Foundation*; in order to carry out initiatives *A.P.P.L.E.* has designed/is implementing in support of Lithuania's education system. In spite of this successful "track record" in garnering grants from major US foundations, *A.P.P.L.E.* is actively looking for volunteers who have experience in writing requests for grants. With availability of additional funds (and the expert assistance that many foundations are capable of offering), *A.P.P.L.E.* hopes to tackle even more worthwhile projects in, and for, Lithuania.

Because *A.P.P.L.E.* operates only with unpaid volunteers, the "successes" which have recently been realized - and which must be coordinated, monitored and facilitated - are creating a workload which the existing volunteers can barely handle. If you'd like to help out, and be a part of this successful, worthwhile program, please write to *A.P.P.L.E.* at Post Office Box 1370, West Hartford, Connecticut 06107.



U.S. - Baltic Foundation:

While we're on the subject of grants, we would be remiss if we didn't note that the *U.S. - Baltic Foundation* has recently been awarded a \$50,000 grant from the *National Endowment for Democracy*; as well as a \$50,000 grant from the *Pew Charitable Trusts*. Both awards will be used in order to fulfill the *U.S. - Baltic Foundation's* mission, which is to:

Initiate and support education and training programs in Estonia, Latvia and Estonia, in order to achieve the following goals:

- Facilitate the quick and complete restructuring of Baltic economies from central planning to free market principles through business and management programs.
- Support the immediate improvement of the quality of life in the Baltic States by developing and implementing public health education programs.
- Promote the establishment and growth of independent, non-governmental institutions in the Baltics to foster democracy and pluralism.
- Initiate English language programs to facilitate the integration of the Baltic people into the international

economy.

The Foundation's work is based on three fundamental principles:

- To encourage support and participation by private and public American institutions for the achievement of the Foundation's goals.

- To establish and strengthen public and private sector partnerships between the U.S. and the Baltic States.

- To promote pan-Baltic institutional cooperation. To support this third goal, the Foundation will help establish and strengthen pan-Baltic institutions.

All programs at the Foundation are developed and implemented in English only. Also, all programs will be designed, to the extent possible, to provide benefits in equal proportions to citizens and institutions of the three countries.

For more information, please write to the *U.S. - Baltic Foundation* at 1717 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Suite 601, Washington, D.C. 20036.

(Note: In an upcoming issue of **BRIDGES**, we look forward to having an article on the *U.S. - Baltic Foundation's Baltic Municipal Management Seminar*, entitled "Municipal Government in a Democratic, Free Market Society". This seminar is taking place, this month, in Vilnius and Riga. Several prominent elected officials, municipal managers and other experts from the United States have travelled to Lithuania in order to participate in / host / lead this seminar. Individuals from several European countries are expected to participate, as well.)



Lithuanian Music Festival:

by Ramune Kubilius

The historic *Lithuanian Music Festival* of 1991 is now just a memory. The Festival, which lasted almost two weeks presented Chicagoans and visitors with many cultural experiences. Amidst the many road repairs and the hot, humid weather of Chicago, some old traditions were maintained, some new ones begun.

More than 100 persons worked in the various subcommittees of the *Lithuanian Music Festival* Organizing Committee. The logistics of mounting the festival, held May 15-28 were literally phenomenal. Coordinating the efforts was Festival Chairman Mr. Stasys Baras, formerly Chairman of the *Lithuanian Foundation (Lietuviu Fondas)*. The official sponsors of the Music Festival were the American and Canadian Lithuanian Communities.

The Festival, held in Chicago and environs, featured the *Lithuanian Song Festival*, two performances of the opera *I Lituani*, a religious concert, a ballet concert, several art exhibits and other events. Lithuania's President Vytautas Landsbergis attended the opening religious concert during his short but very busy visit to the United States. Unfortunately, his schedule forced ➡

him to leave before the Festival was fully underway. Ticket sales were brisk in the weeks before the Festival was to begin.

Included here are some miscellaneous thoughts about the Festival.

Song Festival

The event which drew the largest crowds, of course, was the VIIth *Lithuanian Song Festival*. It featured actress Ann Jillian (Ms. Jurate Nausedas) as "Master of Ceremonies" and was attended by Senator Allen Dixon (D-IL), the Consuls of Poland, Germany and Denmark, Bishop Zemaitis from Lithuania, and others. Almost 2,000 choir members from Canada and the United States and 120 local Chicagoland folk dancers performed, accompanied by an orchestra from Lithuania (with some local, supplementing musicians).

Along with renditions of beloved Lithuanian folk songs, the Song Festival featured a very modern sound system, a fog machine and a performance by Mr. Darius Polikaitis and his band of the song "*As cia gyva*". The song, performed by Darius and his band in Lithuania in 1989 (and bearing the same title as his 1984 album of the same name) features words from a poem by Mr. Bernardas Brazdionis. It also closely resembles the motto of the 1991 *Lithuanian Music Festival*: "*Kad liktum Tu gyva*". (Rough translations: "*As cia gyva*" - I am here: alive. "*Kad liktum Tu gyva*" - (Lithuania) may you remain alive.)

Logistics

It was only days before the beginning of the Festival that 55 people from Lithuania, representing the largest contingent, arrived via a flight from Warsaw; at a time when flights from Moscow became difficult to arrange. The coordination of visas and airplane tickets presented the Organizing Committee with some challenges. There is no doubt, however, that the presence of the guests from Lithuania made up in part for the disappointment that President Landsbergis wasn't in the audience of the later events of the Music Festival.

The guests from Lithuania had been issued U.S. work visas, and they certainly "earned their keep", performing at various functions both during the Music Festival and before it. A small group from *Lithuania's Opera Company Choir*, for example, sang to an appreciative audience during Mass at the *Lithuanian Youth Center* chapel on Mother's Day; while other soloists and Lithuania's President Landsbergis, along with his wife, Grazina, attended Mass at *Nativity B.V.M. Parish Church* on Chicago's Southwest Side.

Housing for the guests from Lithuania was arranged with Lithuanian Americans in the Chicagoland area by Mrs. Jone Bobinas and her committee. Considering that an estimated 800 persons were visiting from Lithuania, that was truly a feat!

I Litvani

Before the Festival, there was much discussion about the appropriateness of performing *I Litvani* as the opera of choice. Some opera lovers noted that this



opera had already been performed in 1983, during the *Lithuanian World Days*; while others feel that it is not particularly melodious, and that a truly Lithuanian opera (written by a Lithuanian) should be performed. The organizers decided that it was an appropriate choice: its theme is patriotic; and since it was written by a recognizable Italian composer, it could offer international recognition should it be performed, as is hoped, in 1991-92 in various European cities. The set design was prepared in Lithuania and shipped to the United States. The conductor for one performance was from Lithuania, the second a Lithuanian American. The orchestra members were from Lithuania; with soloists and choir members from Lithuania and from the United States. It is hoped that a Chicago contingent will participate in upcoming performances of the opera in Lithuania, and perhaps in other areas of Europe.

○ ○ ○

Attendees and participants at the Festival came from Omaha, Nebraska and from Toronto, Ontario, from Los Angeles, California and from Hartford, Connecticut. Would they concur that mounting a massive event of this nature is worth the effort? It's hard to say, especially during a year when Lithuanians in Canada and the U.S. worked hard to drum up support for Lithuania from their respective governments, when Lithuania's president visited the United States, when a Symposium on the Arts and Sciences was scheduled in Lithuania to occur almost at exactly the same time, when a large Sports Festival was scheduled to take place in Lithuania in mid-summer. It possibly depends on a person's interests, finances, desire to travel and personal calendar (and agenda). Now, in 1992, there may be a *Lithuanian Dance Festival* in North America to coordinate with events both here and in Lithuania. □

“ Bits & Pieces ”

Information which might be of interest to you; gathered from near and far; as well as provided by readers like you. We look forward to having you share information with us for future issues.

The Lithuanian Review:

... is "The English language newspaper of Lithuania. Published in Vilnius". Subscription is \$26.00 per year; and it is published twice monthly, is mailed to subscribers directly from Vilnius. Send a check or money order to: *The Lithuanian Review*, c/o Gintasis Krastas, Tiltos k. 8-2, Vilnius 232600, MTP-8, Republic of Lithuania.

The undersigned has been receiving this newspaper since just after its inception. It is well worth getting; it has great information and interesting stories simply not found elsewhere; but, as a word of caution, be prepared to wait, on occasion, literally months between issues. In fact, the undersigned has received just 6 or 7 issues in the past year. (Were just those 7 issues worth the price of a subscription? A most emphatic "Yes".) (Obviously, the environment in Lithuania, over the past year, has not been one which lends itself to the orderly publication of a newspaper!) One more note about *The Lithuanian Review*: Many of the articles are written by Lithuanian Americans living, or travelling (for extended periods), in Lithuania.

- Joseph Arlauskas



President Landsbergis - A Short Biography:

Although we plan to have a full article about President of the Supreme Council, Republic of Lithuania, Vytautas Landsbergis, in an upcoming issue of **B R I D G E S**, we thought you might want to know at least the following:

Vytautas Landsbergis was born in 1932 in Kaunas, Lithuania where he attended elementary school and graduated from the J. Gruodis School of Music. As a student at the State Conservatory of Music in Vilnius, he began his career as an educator in 1952, and received his doctorate in musicology in 1968. In 1978, he was appointed a professor of music at the State Conservatory of Music.

President Landsbergis was one of the founders of the Lithuanian Reform Movement *Sajudis*, and was elected its chairman in 1988. Under his leadership, *Sajudis* promoted the democratization of Lithuanian society through peaceful methods of civic organization and

protest.

In 1990, *Sajudis* ran a successful election campaign on an independence platform in Lithuania's first democratic election since its annexation by the Soviet Union in 1940, capturing a majority of seats in the parliament. A candidate, Mr. Landsbergis was elected to parliament from the city of Panevezys. At its first session, on March 11, 1990, the new parliament elected Vytautas Landsbergis President and declared the restoration of independence of Lithuania.

Mr. Landsbergis is married to concert pianist Grazina Rucyte-Landsbergiene. They have three children.

President Landsbergis is the author of ten books on music history, primarily on the works of the renowned Lithuanian artist and composer, M.K. Ciurlionis. He is fluent in Polish, Russian and English.

- Courtesy of U.S. - Baltic Foundation



Activist Bulletins:

The *Lithuanian Communications Center* of Philadelphia (associated with the *Lithuanian American Community, Inc.*) provides a political activist alert/update service, via FAX, to individuals all over the United States. If you would be willing to share the information you receive in this way, with others in your community; and would act on this information, i.e., would dispatch letters, as necessary, to Congressmen, local newspapers, etc.; then you are welcome to request participation in this service. (If you don't have a Fax, information will be mailed to you; but, of course, with a mail delay, you will not be able to react as quickly as some requirements may demand.) For more information, please call the *Lithuanian Communications Center* at telephone number 215 739-9353.



Electronic Spelling Dictionary:

Dr. Walter Norton has developed an electronic spelling dictionary (MS DOS/Wordperfect format) which allows for virtually instantaneous retrieval of Lithuanian-English and English-Lithuanian words. One version ➡

includes diacritical marks; while the other does not. Approximate spellings are allowed. This software is available for downloading, free of charge, from the *Lithuania advocate Computer Bulletin Board System*; which can be reached, via modem, at 804 693-6571.



Action Bulletin:

The *Americans For An Independent Lithuania* (6 Davis Avenue, Kearny, New Jersey 07032) publish a bulletin which consistently contains information - usually not found elsewhere - of interest to those actively working for Lithuania's independence. If you would like to receive this bulletin, send a donation (to cover production/mailling costs) to the address noted above.



Honorary Maryland Citizen:

Mrs. Grazina Landsbergis, wife of President Vytautas Landsbergis, was recently declared an "Honorary Maryland Citizen" as well as an "Honorary Citizen of Baltimore". Mrs. Landsbergis, an accomplished concert pianist, visited Baltimore, Maryland to participate in a reception which marked the opening of an exhibition, in that city, entitled "Art and Crafts of Lithuania". The exhibition was displayed, until last month, in the *Top of the World Observation Level and Museum* at Baltimore's Inner Harbor *World Trade Center*. Mrs. Landsbergis has been in the United States for an 8 city tour, performing along with the *Lithuania Opera Company*.
- Edward M. Budelis



The Lithuanian Connection:

... is a quarterly newsletter of *Madison-Vilnius Sister Cities, Inc.*, of Madison, Wisconsin. (Yes, this is the same organization which, at its inception, generated a considerable amount of controversy among Lithuanian-Americans; because of the status of some of the leadership in Lithuania at that time. Most of that controversy appears to have been overcome by events, i.e., with assumption of various municipal positions, in Lithuania, by democratically elected leaders.) In its publication, this organization notes a virtual multitude of ongoing projects involving Lithuania (medical professionals, educational-student exchange, economic, agricultural, cultural, etc.); for which it is actively seeking participants. Membership in the organization is open, as well. *The Lithuanian Connection*, as well as membership in the organization, is available for an annual fee of \$15.00. For more information, write to: *Madison-Vilnius Sister Cities, Inc.*, Post Office Box 9339, Madison, Wisconsin 53715.



Beauty Contest:

A recent "wire service" story notes that last month's *Miss Universe Pageant* had individual, specific contestants representing Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.



Vilties Balsas:

... is a publication of the *Lithuanian Language and Culture Club* of Baltimore, Maryland. Issued 6 times annually, this professional quality publication contains cultural, historic and activist items of general interest. (It is especially good at highlighting activities taking place in the Baltimore - Washington, DC area; where, because of the significant Lithuanian American population, there are many activities involving visitors from Lithuania, etc. Furthermore, Lithuanian Americans in that area are extremely, innovatively, politically active; so this publication is a good source of ideas which can be successfully applied elsewhere.) Available for a "minimum subscription donation" of \$10.00 annually. Write to: *Vilties Balsas*, c/o Lithuanian Hall, 851 Hollins Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201.



Remembrances of Lithuania:

...is the name of the first exhibition sent to the United States by the Museum of History and Ethnography of Vilnius, Lithuania.

This traveling exhibition is a joint presentation of the originating museum and the *Lithuanian Research and Studies Center (LRSC)*, of Chicago. Having appeared, already, in both Detroit and Chicago, the exhibition is available for booking in additional cities. Arrangements can be made by calling Professor John Rackauskas, Ph.D., President of the *LRSC*; or Ms. Nijole Mackeviciene, Director of the *LRSC* Museums; at 312 434-4545.

This exhibit from the Vilnius museum reciprocates for an exhibit sent to Lithuania, last year, by the *LRSC*; which documented the life and times of the late Aleksandras Stulginskis, President of Lithuania during the period 1920-26.

The exhibit includes five authentic old folk costumes, each from a different region; 25 wooden religious sculptures created during a period of two centuries; and 30 photographs depicting historic Lithuanian village life.



Popularity:

A recent story in *The Wall Street Journal* cites an international opinion poll, taken among Eastern Europeans, which notes that President Landsbergis had a higher popularity rating than the many leaders whose names were mentioned in the poll, including German

Chancellor Helmut Kohl, French President Francois Mitterand, Russian President Boris Yeltsin, Gorbachev, etc. In fact, President Landsbergis, who "topped out" the list, had even a higher rating than did U.S. President Bush!
- *Sigita Ramanauskas*



Balzekas Museum:

The *Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture* (6500 South Pulaski Road, Chicago, Illinois 60629; Tel: 312 582-6500) is celebrating its 25th Anniversary; and has announced plans to open an extension in Vilnius. (Please see the **Updates** section of this issue for even more information.)



Electronically Available Documents:

The *Lithuania advocate Computer Bulletin Board System* has available, for download, by interested individuals, free of charge, files containing a complete set of Lithuania's newly enacted laws relating to business activity. Also available is an extensive compilation of documents, *The Road To Negotiations With The U.S.S.R. - Volume II, October 1990 - April 1991*. This latter item is significant from both an information and historic perspective; and demonstrates, clearly, that Lithuania has more than gone "the extra mile" in attempting to negotiate and communicate, in good faith, with the Kremlin. This document would be especially good reading for both President Bush and the U.S. State Department (which, for some vague reason, keep urging the Lithuanian Government to do precisely this - as if the Lithuanian Government hasn't been doing so/has encountered nothing but a "brick wall" from the Kremlin in this effort). Call the *Lithuania advocate*, via modem, 24 hours a day, at 804 693-6571.



American Baltic News:

... is the name of a new, monthly (anticipated), tabloid sized newspaper. This attractively laid out publication is offered at \$20.00 for 12 issues. Write to ABN Publishing Company, Post Office Box 19398, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49019-0398.



Friends of the Lithuanian Legation:

... is the name of a newly incorporated group of Lithuanian-Americans whose goal is to raise funds for operation and maintenance of the Lithuanian Legation, in Washington, D.C. (which, at the present time, is operating with extremely limited, rapidly diminishing funding). **BRIDGES** will have an article about

this organization, the reason behind its formation, its goals and its plans to reach those goals, in the July/August issue. (For now, you can say that you read about it, first, in **BRIDGES**!)



The Week in the Baltic States:

... is a publication of the *Research Institute of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*; and is available on a subscription basis. For more information, write: Corporate Affairs, RFE/RL, Inc., 1201 Connecticut Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20036; or call: 202 457-6912; or fax: 202 457-6978.
- *Nancy Umbrasas*



Some Telephone Numbers:

ABC News: 212 887-2800; *NBC News*: 212 664-4692; *CBS News*: 212 975-3019; *CNN*: 404 827-1519; *Reuters*: 212 603-3300; *National Public Radio*: 202 822-2000; US State Department Operations Desk: 202 647-9387; White House Comment Line: 202 456-1111.

If you are unhappy with the way Lithuania is being treated, then make your feelings heard. Call these numbers and ask them to investigate what is going on in Lithuania.
- *Lithuanian Communications Center*



Did You Really Know?:

The Lithuanian - American Community, Inc. (LAC) represents Lithuanian - Americans through its 77 chapters in the United States. Every person of Lithuanian descent is considered to be a member of the organization. During its existence, the *LAC* has steadfastly pursued three major objectives:

1. To promote active participation in American society,
2. To foster and maintain Lithuanian culture and heritage, and
3. To aid in re-establishment of an independent Lithuania.

The activities of the *LAC* are carried out by the *National Executive Committee*, which is chosen by sixty (60) members of the Board of Directors elected for a three-year term. (These elections were held last month; and we look forward to listing all members in an upcoming issue.)
- *Washington, DC Chapter, LAC*



Letter Writing Ideas:

If you need a little bit of help in getting your "creative juices" flowing for letters to editors of your local newspaper, to elected officials, etc.; consider getting copies of letters written by others, in the ➡

past, from the sources listed below. Feel free to modify these letters, as much, or as little as you desire; to fit your own style, your own approach to the subject. Both of these sources welcome re-use of the available letters; and these sources exist for precisely this purpose.

Mr. Vilius Brazenas (Post Office Box 2565, Bonita Springs, Florida 33959) operates the *Letter Bank*. He clips letters which he, and others have written; and which have been published in English language newspapers all over America. He has literally hundreds of letters available; and looks forward to sharing those letters - most of which are as timely as when they were originally written. Furthermore, he looks forward to having others send him letters which have appeared in print; so that he can add them to the *Letter Bank*, and distribute them for further use. This is an amazing resource; and use of same can assist in generation and publication of far more letters about Lithuania's plight in newspapers all over America.

The *Lithuania advocate Computer Bulletin Board System* has literally hundreds of letters which can be used in a similiar manner. Because they are available in electronic format, these letters can be downloaded and re-arranged, re-formatted, synthesized, and changed - as one may desire - for use by others. (Imagine, no re-typing! All one has to do in order to use these letters is to re-address them to their own newspaper, or Congressman; add their own name and address; and then simply print out on their own computer printer. Really - no reason why future letter writing has to be more than a 3 or 4 minute action!) In order to access the *Lithuania advocate*, call, with a modem, 804 693-6571, 24 hours a day. All of these letters are in ASCII text format; so they are suitable for use by virtually any type of computer/any type of wordprocessor.



Baltic Freedom Walk:

Lithuanian-American human rights activist Paulius Klimas, as well as a Lithuanian, a Latvian and an Estonian began a 600 kilometer walk at noon, on May 14th, from the Supreme Council building in Tallinn, Estonia. Lithuanian dissident Petras Grazulis will also participate in this walk.

This *Baltic Freedom Walk* was to follow Route M12 through Riga, Latvia, and was scheduled to be finished in Vilnius, Lithuania on June 14th.

On June 14, 1941 the Soviets deported thousands of Balts to Siberia. Klimas' grandparents spent almost ten years in Siberia.

The Lithuanian movement *Sajudis* and two other Baltic popular fronts support this walk; and will be coordinating it. Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians will be encouraged to walk with these activists.

In 1988, Klimas walked 500 miles in a 23 day journey from Rochester, NY to the White House in

Washington D.C., to help free then imprisoned Lithuanian dissident Mr. Petras Grazulis. Mr. Grazulis was released from a Soviet prison in October of 1988.

The song entitled, "*About Being Free*" is the walk's theme song. It emphasizes that non-violence is the key for occupied nations that intend on regaining their independence. Folk singer Bonnie Abrams wrote and recorded this song at *Dynamic Recording Studios* in Rochester, New York. Klimas also wrote a "Baltic Walk Speech" which explains that the Baltic States have a right to RE-ESTABLISH their independence.

Klimas works as a clerk for *Thomas James Associates*, a stock brokerage firm in Rochester, NY. *Thomas James Associates* donated \$500 to the *Baltic Freedom Walk*; and allowed Mr. Klimas to take a Leave of Absence. The Baltic communities of Rochester, NY donated \$1,000 to this cause.

This is Klimas' first trip to Lithuania.

-From a News Release



Rotary International:

In the May 16th edition of the *Chicago Sun-Times* (in "Kup's Column"), it was reported that, "Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis, before leaving town [Chicago], received an award from the *Rotary Club* in appreciation of the fact that his father was a founding member of *Rotary* in Vilnius, the Capitol of Lithuania."

- Ramune Kubilius



Lithuanian Independence: The U.S. Government Response 1990-1991:

... is the name of a recently published pamphlet (24 pages) consisting of, "...selected statements by the current Administration of the United States, from January 1990 to the present, regarding Lithuania's drive to regain its independence." It is edited by Mr. Algirdas J. Silas; and is available from the publisher, *Ethnic Community Services*, 7 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60603.

- Sigita Ramanauskas



Camp Neringa:

Youth camp, sponsored by the *Sisters of the Immaculate Conception*; in Brattleboro, Vermont. English language camp, June 30-July 13; Lithuanian language camp, July 14-August 3. For information, write to: *Neringa*, ICC, Route 21, Putnam, Connecticut 06260. (Scholarships are available for needy children. Please write to the above address for application procedures, etc.)



New books, of varied kinds, but all oriented to Lithuania.

Serving Lithuania:

...by J.K. Valiunas (*Valiunas Publishing, Ltd.*, 37 Kenwood Road, Southampton, New York 11968; 288 pages; \$18.00 + \$2.00 P&H/hardcover) is an account (mainly) of Mr. Valiunas' almost life long activities related to helping keep alive the idea of freedom for Lithuania/working towards the goal of freedom for Lithuania. Mr. Valiunas offers interesting accounts of several historical incidents; in which he was personally involved. Because he was a long time Chairman of VLIK (in English, the *Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania*), Mr. Valiunas' account of activities in regard to Lithuania, over the past 50 years, is almost entirely from a VLIK perspective (and some readers might not agree on the author's view of key individuals who were involved/in the way some of the incidents/events are described).

This book serves, as well, as a primer on VLIK and its history. In relating some of his activities, Mr. Valiunas gives an interesting overview of Lithuanian communities in Latin America and elsewhere.

This is an interesting, unique, first person account of the struggle for Lithuania's freedom; as waged, over 50 years, by those living outside of Lithuania.

- Joseph Arlauskas



Poland And The Baltic Republics:

Trogen Books has released a book, written by Ronald L. Tarnstrom, dealing with the military history of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. The military history of each country is discussed from the Middle Ages or before, up until last year.

This 175 page hardcover book (available for \$19.95, by mail, from *Trogen Books*, Route 1, Box 2, Lindsborg, KS 67456) is a comprehensive description of the armed forces of Poland and the Baltic Republics and the major actions in which they participated.

About one half of the book is devoted to Poland; and the rest is evenly divided between the three Baltic Republics.

The military history of Lithuania is discussed from the struggle of the Lithuanian ancestors against the Teutonic Knights to the valiant efforts of the Republic of Lithuania's armed forces against the Germans and

Soviets. Current events up until the March 11, 1990 re-declaration of independence are given fair treatment.

Latvia and its military tradition are examined from the Duchy of Courland in the 17th Century up until the events of 1990. Treatment is given to the Latvian military's fight against German and Soviet invaders.

Estonia's series of conflicts with the Soviets and Russians is discussed in the last section of the book. The reader learns of Estonia's almost constant struggle against acts of aggression from its eastern neighbor. The country's current events and motions towards secession from the U.S.S.R. are mentioned.

All throughout the book, Tarnstrom supplies detailed lists of the equipment and organizations from the military units at various times. Accompanying these extensive inventories are scale drawings of the tanks, planes, and other pieces of military hardware.

This is a well organized and informative book on the military history of Poland and its neighboring Baltic Republics. Students of military history or anyone who would like to know more about the contributions of the militaries of the Baltics should definitely read this book.

The military history of Poland is examined from the Middle Ages until the present. Extensive coverage is given to Poland's role in World War II.

- Ted Arlauskas



Baltic Independence And Russian Empire:

... by Walter C. Clemens, Jr. (*St. Martin's Press*, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010; \$35.00/Hardcover - significant volume discounts available for organizations wishing to purchase more than 10 copies) is, according to the publisher, "... written by a widely respected expert in the field [and] analyzes [the recent,] remarkable developments [in Lithuania] against the historical background of changing East-West relations and the upheavals triggered by *perestroika* and *glasnost*. Despite countless obstacles, the prospects for freedom in the Baltic republics outweigh those for servitude. The author proposes policies to create values for all concerned."

