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Parishioners of the closed St. Peter's in Detroit who helped dismantle the church and load its contents into a container for shipment to Our Lady Help of Christians in Alytus, Lithuania (Alytaus Marijos Krikščionių Pagalbos Bažnyčia). Former Pastor J. Walter Stankievich and Bob Boris (fifth and sixth from left).

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Diana P. Vidutis

*Lithuanian Citizens' Society of Western Pennsylvania
 1721-25 Jane Street
 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15203*

April 20, 1996

Dear Ms. Vidutis:

The enclosed check for \$518 is a donation from the Lithuanian Citizens' Society of Western Pennsylvania. In addition to the five hundred dollar donation is payment for a one year renewal to BRIDGES.

Congratulations to you on your appointment as Editor to this very informative publication about the Lithuanian community and Lithuania. Your new format is interesting.

Our organization is very concerned about Lithuania, its people and needs. We have contributed to some of the humanitarian projects through the writings of Jeanne Dorr. Keep up the good work.

*Su geriausiais linkejimais,
 Vito A. Yucius, President*

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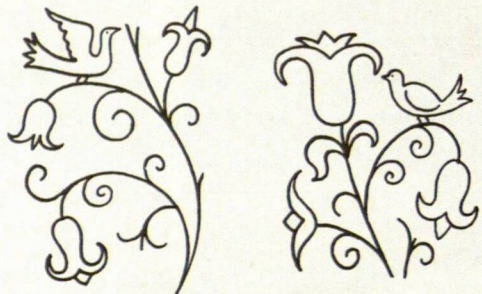
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Victor Nakas



Saying Your Piece or Keeping the Peace

Not so long ago, a friend asked me to describe the Lithuanian national character. It was a question that I used to hear on rare occasions from journalists during 1990 and 1991 when Lithuania was much in the news and it was my job to do what I could to help keep it there. I confess that I had some difficulty answering it. How does one accurately depict the Lithuanian national character without lapsing into stereotypes that range from the self-serving to the insulting, or generalizations so broad that they could describe half the nations of Central and Eastern Europe?

I'm not sufficiently ambitious (or foolhardy) to propose a definitive answer. Perhaps the editors of this journal might wish to elicit the community's collective wisdom by sponsoring a contest to define the Lithuanian national character. It would be an exercise in much-needed introspection and could be fun to boot. My goal is more modest: to describe a phenomenon I have observed in the Lithuanian-American community, to wonder aloud if it is an intrinsic cultural characteristic, and to suggest why, taken in large doses, it may not necessarily be such a good thing.

At the stake

The story begins in the early months of 1994. The first of a multi-volume work entitled *Lietuvos kovų ir kančių istorija* (The History of Lithuania's Struggles and Suffering) is published in Lithuania and disseminated there and abroad. The volumes are intended to fill in some blank spots of Lithuanian history through the publication of previously unavailable primary source material from Soviet archives that documents Lithuania's trials and tribulations in the half century following its loss of independence.

Sponsored by the diaspora organization, Pasaulio Lietuvių Bendruomenė (the Lithuanian World Community), the book set off an avalanche of criticism. According to its critics, the publishers committed a cardinal sin by publishing Soviet documents that grossly understated the gruesome reality of Stalin-era deportations from Lithuania without including an introduction and annotations that would have helped the reader discern where information ended and disinformation began. Eventually the publishers came to acknowledge that, as the saying goes, "mistakes were made," and took steps to correct them with a new, annotated version of the book. But before they did, some

Lithuanian-Americans in New York were moved to stage a public book burning of the offending volume.

It was the book burning more than the alleged flaws in the book that caught my attention. After all, depending on one's taste and point of view, one can walk into any bookstore and find dozens of books that don't merit a reader's attention because of their numerous shortcomings. But it's not every day that someone burns a book in protest. Though I happen to enjoy political theater and believe it serves a useful purpose, this action unsettled me because it was an act of violence against a fundamental symbol of learning. It conjured up, if only faintly, an image with which the protesters doubtless would not have wished to find their action associated — bonfires of literature ordered up by jackbooted totalitarians.

It is obvious why those who burned *Lietuvos kovų ir kančių istorija* did so. The book offended them and they believed they were committing an act of righteousness. But I wonder if they were not acting on another, less obvious, and perhaps less noble, impulse as well. More about that later. First, let us consider a series of events that, on their face, are completely unrelated to the book burning.

Keeping it "cultured"

Over the last five years, Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas has traveled to the United States several times. In the course of these journeys, he has found time to visit Lithuanian-American communities in such places as New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia. President Brazauskas deserves credit for his initial display of chutzpah in deciding to venture into these communities, where more than 90 percent of those eligible to vote in Lithuanian presidential elections chose his opponent. But it may be that after one or two encounters with Lithuanian Americans the President decided he would not have to screw up his courage and maintain a stiff upper lip during future visits. Following one of his initial appearances in New York, his foreign policy adviser told the media in Lithuania that the meeting with local Lithuanians went quite well, better than anticipated. Was the former Soviet diplomat engaging in spin control or was he genuinely surprised at the relatively docile reception the President received from Lithuanian Americans? Brazauskas was,

after all, the Communist Party leader who made open threats against Sąjūdis in 1989 after it went public with its decision to press for independence; acquiesced in the March 11, 1990 independence vote with palpable reluctance (those who forget need only read the *New York Times* account of March 12); and was in no hurry to see Red Army troops removed from Lithuanian soil. He was also the one who advanced the famous 3% solution — the Lithuanian Communist Party had no sins for which to atone because 97% of its members were and always had been closet Lithuanian patriots. All of these positions were anathema to the diaspora.

Under the circumstances, it would have been reasonable for Brazauskas and his advisers to expect overt displays of displeasure, if not outright hostility, when he stepped onto Lithuanian American turf. But these encounters were remarkable for their almost total lack of open dissent. One mover and shaker in Chicago set the tone when he sought to head off any displays of anti-Brazauskas sentiment in advance of the President's visit there by writing that "our total support for the President will be the best evidence to non-Lithuanians that we seek to transform Lithuania into an important country and do not wish to sow confusion." It's true that in California the President was welcomed by confusion-sowing pickets and that in Chicago one individual raised a protest poster. But remarkably it was the protesters themselves, not the President, who ended up on the firing line. According to one newspaper account, the sole Chicago protester was harangued by onlookers for "dissing" the President and ultimately shamed into putting his poster away. An editorial in a Chicago-based Lithuanian language newspaper following the President's visit to the Windy City may have summed up the sentiments of many when it said "Thank God everything proceeded peacefully, in a cultured fashion, with no anticipated or unanticipated incidents." A few days later, another correspondent observed that "the entire visit by the President and his entourage proceeded in a very cultured manner with proper respect paid by all concerned."

What is the connection between the book burning and the excruciatingly polite reception accorded to a man who has been repeatedly pilloried in the Lithuanian diaspora press? It is simply this: an instinct to censor and self-censor that springs from the overly rigid sense of propriety or orthodoxy. Forced to choose, we seem to prefer keeping (or imposing) the peace rather than accommodating those who wish to say their piece. Those who burned the book may have taken the impulse to censor that which offended them to an extreme. But were they all that far down along the continuum from those — among them some who fancy themselves liberal minded — who sought to stifle dissent against Brazauskas? Interestingly, to buttress their arguments those eager to accommodate the President trotted out a title from the age before Mussolini and Hitler gave it

distinctly unsavory reputation — "Tautos vadas" (Leader of the Nation) — and refitted it to suit the post Communist era — "Demokratiškai išrinktas Prezidentas" (democratically elected President) — to scare away those who might wish to dissent. For how, after all, can one think of raising voice in protest against anyone who is *democratically elected*? (Yet, when Bill Clinton and Newt Gingrich go on the road, they fully expect to be met by picketers and hecklers and see it for what it is — a sign of American democracy's robustness, not a threat to the republic.)

Political Correctness—Lithuanian Style

What explains this? Nurture or nature? Is such behavior a quirk of our diaspora, consequence of having pulled guard duty at the barricades for too many years? Or is this trait we share in common with others who belong to our gene pool? I have an inkling that it may be in our genes. This year, Lithuania's Parliament has been seriously considering some interesting legislation. It approved a draft law that would have prohibited the dissemination of information which "violates universally recognized traditional principles of morality." Unfortunately, the Seimas declined to articulate and codify those principles, thereby providing whoever interprets the norms of acceptable behavior with potentially unlimited powers of censorship. The Seimas also voted to prohibit the press from publishing information about individuals' private lives and struck down a provision that would have explicitly allowed the press to publish details about private matters when they were related to public officials. One can only wonder if, under strict enforcement of such law, a former prime minister's creative personal banking practices might have been off-bounds to the media and thus a recent messy crisis for the ruling party could have been avoided.

These laws may yet be modified or scuttled altogether. But they seem to indicate that our cousins overseas share our collective desire to "stifle it," as Archie Bunker would say.

Such passion for order and propriety is not always, perhaps not even most times, a bad thing. In 1991, for example, the self-discipline of the Lithuanian people in the face of bullying and murderous violence and their refusal to be drawn into bloody clashes they could not possibly hope to win saved their peaceful revolution and contributed mightily to the demise of their tormentors. However, when combined with an instinct to repress and censor, orthodoxy can kill creativity, growth, and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. This is particularly dangerous in a diaspora community, which is all about preserving language, culture, and values to begin with and needs fresh air to avoid stagnation. If we stifle our opinions or try to stifle those who wish to dissent, the circle of the faithful will probably only get smaller, with those we can least afford to lose leaving first.

Asta Banionis

U.S. and Lithuanian Political News

Congressional Update

Because the U.S. Congress recessed on Friday, March 29, for a "District Work Period" coinciding with Passover and Easter, and will not be back to work in Washington, DC until April 14, there is little this correspondent can report, but I urge **BRIDGES** readers to seek out their Congressmen and Senators as they travel about in their home districts. They need to know that there are Americans who care about U.S. policy towards Lithuania; they need to know that there are Americans concerned about the continued independence and security of Lithuania. No one else will speak for you; no one else will defend your interests.

Once the Congress returns, it will hustle through new appropriations bills for fiscal year 1997 which begins on October 1, 1996. They will also return to the issue of reorganizing the foreign affairs agencies of the United States, since President Clinton vetoed H.R. 1561, the authorization bill for the State Department and its sister agencies, the U.S. Information Agency (USIA), the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA). The bill also contained the authorization levels for U.S. foreign assistance. The reason for the presidential veto was the bill's requirement that one of the three sister agencies be abolished within six months of passage of H.R. 1561. Under H.R. 1561, as amended, the President was given the choice of which agency to dismantle, shifting its functions to the State Department. The reason why the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. could not support H.R. 1561 was because it slashed authorization levels for East European aid in FY 1997 to only \$270 million, down from \$359 million in FY 1995.

Nato Issue Nudged Forward

Thanks to the communists and Russian chauvinists in the Russian Duma (lower house of parliament), the NATO enlargement issue has taken one step forward. In their effort to embarrass Boris Yeltsin and gain momentum among Russian voters for the June presidential election, these proponents of Russian imperialism have inadvertently strengthened the Clinton Administration's resolve to bring the Central and East European nations under the NATO security umbrella.

In their effort to embarrass Boris Yeltsin and gain momentum among Russian voters for the June presidential election, these proponents of Russian imperialism have inadvertently strengthened the Clinton Administration's resolve to bring the Central and East European nations under the NATO security umbrella.

On Friday, March 15, the Russian Duma adopted by overwhelming margins (250 to 98 votes) two resolutions which, in essence, call for the restoration of the Soviet Union and direct the executive branch of the Russian government to begin the process of reintegrating the countries on the territory of the former U.S.S.R. President Boris Yeltsin and his Foreign Minister Primakov responded very quickly to the Duma resolutions, denouncing their content as well as asserting that these resolutions were not binding on the President. Most of the nations which used to be part of the U.S.S.R. also denounced the Duma and its neo-imperialist resolutions. The Ukrainian President Kuchma was particularly effective in his criticism of the Russian Duma. President Kuchma poked through the rhetoric and got to the heart of the Duma's action by asking publicly, "Has Russia unilaterally left the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) with this action?" In doing so, he pinpointed the absurdity of what the Russian Duma was advocating, i.e., abandoning its obligations within the alliance formed by the countries which were formerly republics of the Soviet Union (an alliance the Russians themselves initiated) without any consultation with the alliance members.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher was on his way to Eastern Europe when the Russian Duma took action. On

his arrival in Kiev, Ukraine President Kuchma was able to fully brief him on the implications of the Duma resolutions. And on Monday, March 18 Secretary Christopher stated that the Duma's call "to reconstitute the Soviet Union was highly irresponsible". As reported by the Washington Post, Secretary Christopher noted that, "There seems a certain quality of intimidation" in the Duma's vote. The Secretary then flew to Prague, Czech Republic, for a planned meeting of Central and East European nations seeking NATO membership. Secretary Christopher told his audience of 12 foreign ministers that, "NATO enlargement is on track and it will happen." As the Associated Press reported on March 20, "In remarks clearly aimed at Russia, Christopher told NATO candidate nations that their days in the dangerous middle ground between superpowers are drawing to a close."

As Christopher arrived in Moscow on March 21, the Russian Duma's chairman, Gennadi Seleznev, attacked the U.S. Secretary of State's criticism of the Duma resolutions. Seleznev said that Christopher, had "crudely interfered in the internal affairs of Russia." He added that the Duma would consider a resolution censuring Christopher on the following day. Secretary Christopher had come to Moscow for an official visit and a meeting of the international "Contact Group" on Bosnia.

The Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. has thanked U.S. Secretary of State Christopher for his willingness to speak out against the Russian Duma's resolutions. He seems to understand that the independence and security of the nations of Central and Eastern Europe is just as important to U.S. security as the fate of Russia. But we're a long way from guaranteeing that NATO will accept new members, among them Lithuania. And we're still facing the daily battle of bolstering Lithuania's security, while we are waiting for NATO to accept Lithuania.

Events in Lithuania

This winter has brow-beaten the people of Lithuania in more ways than you can count: a record-setting snowfall (still 50 centimeters deep in most sectors), the coldest winter in seven years, a prediction of record-setting floods when the spring thaw sets in, and still more snow fell on March 30. The Lithuanian meteorological officials reported in mid-March that the initial flooding would threaten 46 villages with more than 3,500 inhabitants in the most vulnerable zones of the Šilutė and Klaipėda districts (counties). Sensible Lithuanian farmers are already moving their livestock and equipment to higher ground in neighboring counties, but scarce financial resources of the government are hampering efforts to prepare for the possible flood. Rimantas Liatukas, director of the government-owned Šilutė Embankments company, told reporters on March 18 that his people had not been paid for three months and, "It is stupid to hope that my people will jump into cold water to make embankments stronger if they haven't been paid for so long."

Added to the assault by Mother Nature has come man-made disasters. The Lithuanian government's closure of the two largest private banks in Lithuania a few days before Christmas set off a downward spiral of an already lackluster economy. Thousands of small businessmen and other private entrepreneurs lost their working capital when the two banks were closed by the Lithuanian government. Thousands more lost their life savings. As part of the salvage plan devised by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the depositors of the two banks have begun receiving limited compensation for their lost assets. Each depositor is entitled to get back only 1,000 litai (approx. \$250) regardless of how much money he or she had on deposit at the banks. The Baltic News Service (BNS) reported that between February 19 to March 19, 1996 a total of 21.8 million litai was paid out to 29,918 depositors. There were a total of 53,600 depositors in total at the two banks.

On April 8 the World Bank's experts are due back in Vilnius to evaluate the progress made by the government in reorganizing the nationalized banks. Auditors have been trying to assess the true degree of losses accumulated by the Lithuanian Joint-Stock Innovation Bank (LAIB) and Litimpeks closed in December, 1995 and a third bank, Vakarų, in which the central bank had intervened a few months earlier. The new central bank director, Reinoldijus Šarkinas, has said that the planned merger of the three banks into a single, government-controlled bank called the Jungtinis (United) Bank by July 1, 1996 may yet be adjusted. The new government-appointed administrator of the LAIB is Romualdas Visokavičius, a former Lithuanian central bank director who ran afoul of the ruling LDLP majority and President Brazauskas in September, 1993. He has been an outspoken critic of the central bank's closure of LAIB and Litimpeks, and has argued that these banks could have been saved without the nationalization of the banks.

The increasingly bad economic news for the average Lithuanian is reflected in the unemployment figures. On March 21, 1996 the Statistics Department of the government reported that unemployment had climbed to 8.2 percent in February, 1996 from 7.9 percent in January. A year ago, in February, 1995 the unemployment rate had been 5.4 percent. The Department of Statistics also reported that real wages went down by 3.4 percent in February, 1996 and were down 5.2 percent the previous month (January, 1996). Here are some **average monthly wages** by sector in Lithuania as of February, 1996:

bank employees	1,507 litai
(11 percent decline since Jan.96)	
electric power system workers	1,143 litai
(4 percent rise since Jan.96)	
government ministry and department heads	1,031 litai
(9 percent increase since Jan.96)	
law enforcement officials	880 litai
(4 percent rise since Jan.96).	

Government sector employees	632 litai
Private sector employees	587 litai

On March 12, 1996 Reuters reported that the new Lithuanian Finance Minister Algimantas Križinauskas said the country was behind in financing its budget deficit as demand for government debt has fallen in the wake of the banking crisis. But he insisted the situation was not critical and that the gap was only a small proportion of the total planned deficit. "We are 38 million litas (\$9.5 million) behind in financing the debt," Križinauskas told a press conference. "This is not a tragic situation, and it is only six percent of the (planned) 655 million litas deficit" he added. During its first weeks in office, the new government headed by Prime Minister Mindaugas Stankevičius cut government spending. One of the first casualties of the new austerity budget was government funded construction projects. On March 15, 1996 the Baltic News Service reported that approximately 15,000 Lithuanian construction workers have been idled due to the government's suspension of all building projects. This means a delay of the construction of the water purification plants in the cities of Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai and Palanga including most other projects.

Last month **BRIDGES** reported that natural gas supplies from Russia to Lithuania had been cut by 75 percent. On March 29, 1996 Gazprom, the Russian natural gas supplier, announced that if Lithuania didn't settle up on its outstanding bill, it would totally cut off natural gas to Lithuania on Monday, April 1. As **BRIDGES** was going to print, we could not confirm whether this had actually occurred. Lithuania has no reserves of gas in stock, but some experts claim that it is impossible to totally cut off the gas flow because of safety considerations for the pipeline. The reported Lithuanian indebtedness to Gazprom is \$45 million, but the term of the debt has not been reported. Prime Minister Mindaugas Stankevičius is seeking loans to repay most of the debt to Gazprom and has sent the new Energy Minister Saulius Kutas to Moscow for negotiations to avert the energy crisis. There is no shortage of heating oil, Lithuanian Energy Ministry officials report, as had been feared a few weeks ago. The demand for heating oil in Lithuania grew dramatically during the month of March when Gazprom cut gas supplies to Lithuania from 12 to 2.7 million cubic meters/day and the majority of electric power plants switched from gas to heating oil to fuel their generators.

The Uncertainty of Taxes

The new government's efforts to bring some fiscal order and responsibility to its energy budget has set off a tug-of-war throughout the bureaucracy as various government agencies try to collect payment for energy use from each other. The Energy Ministry cut electricity briefly on March 19 to kindergartens, secondary schools and hospitals in

Vilnius claiming that the city's schools owed 37 million litai for past electricity use and that the city government owed 3.6 million litai for electricity. But since all of the revenue available for local government budgets comes from the central government, it is difficult to understand how Vilnius will be able to pay up. This points up once again the weaknesses in Lithuania's tax structure. Local government, although it has to provide services, has no independent tax base. Tax delinquency rates are high in Lithuania partly because the taxpayers of Lithuania can't see where their tax dollars go, thereby increasing taxpayer reluctance to comply. Unlike the United States, few of Lithuania's taxes are dedicated taxes (only the social security tax is).

Local government authorities elected in last year's spring municipal elections are beginning to understand that they need an independent tax base and are fostering a public policy debate to get the parliament to pass laws that would reorganize the tax system. The city council of Klaipėda has just rejected the 1996 budget plan which the central government sent to the city last month arguing that Klaipėda was being shortchanged by the central government. For instance, Klaipėda has four city hospitals which serve as regional hospitals providing specialized medical care and services for all of Žemaitija (the western half of the country). Yet, the central government's proposed budget for Klaipėda does not take this into consideration, leaving the four hospitals seriously underfunded. City officials know who will take the blame if patients needing care are turned away by the hospitals — it will be they, not the central government officials in far off Vilnius. There is hope that the anticipated fall election for the Seimas (parliament) will change the ruling majority and allow decentralization of government decisionmaking to proceed again.

BIG JOHN.....by Yakutis



Cirrhosis, emphysema, high blood pressure...don't let nobody tell you that you aint a self made man.

Algis Rimas

BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT NEWS

In Memoriam: Drasutis Gudelis (1934-1996)

We at **BRIDGES** are saddened by the recent death in Florida of Drasutis Gudelis who succumbed to cancer after a long illness. A native of Lithuania, Mr. Gudelis was a Lithuanian-American entrepreneur who was an early investor in post-independent Lithuania and who pioneered in introducing western business practices there.

After launching a successful electronics company in Melbourne, Florida, Mr. Gudelis started the first modern car dealerships in Vilnius, selling and servicing Hyundai and Ford cars and vans. He later expanded into Kaunas and other Lithuanian cities, creating jobs and training a line of competent managers. His dealerships have gained a well earned reputation in Lithuania for honest, reliable service and fair sales practices.

Mr. Gudelis also served as an active member of the Lithuanian American Community's Economic Affairs Council, where he worked to further the development of a competitive free market system and economic development in Lithuania. He will be missed both here and in Lithuania.

More on the Lithuanian Banking Crises

The new head of Lithuania's central bank, Reinoldijus Šarkinas, meeting with a group of foreign investors in early March, assured them that their frozen bank accounts at the main three problem banks eventually would be un-frozen. He said that if the **Joint-stock Innovation**, **Litimpeks** and **Vakarų Bankas** could not get back on their feet through their own efforts by early May, they would be merged by government action.

In the meantime, the banks are trying to get back into business. Both the Joint-stock Innovation and Litimpeks banks have been allowed to resume limited operations: they are accepting new deposits and settling payments with new receipts. They are prevented from touching any of the accounts frozen in last December's bank closures. In the

near future, share owners of the problem banks will be offered a rescue package based on accepting a steep devaluation of share prices, by some accounts to ten percent of their former nominal value, and issuing additional shares for sale to potential buyers. Attempts are also being made to obtain loans and guarantees from foreign banks and to keep old clients from deserting. The former president of Litimpeks, Gintautas Preidys, hopes that up to 70 percent of his bank's depositors will be induced to retain their accounts.

A new temporary administrator has been appointed for the Joint-stock Innovation bank. He is Romas Visokavičius, a former governor of the central bank, and a past president of Litimpeks. Mr. Visokavičius is also one of the founders of the Joint-stock Innovation bank where he served as chairman of the board in the early 1990s. The energetic Mr. Visokavičius indicated that he is confident of securing support from foreign financial institutions. He also suggested that holders of frozen deposits be talked into accepting equity shares in the bank in lieu of getting back their cash.

Whether any of these steps will resuscitate the banks without a hefty injection of government funds is questionable. One economics expert, Dr. Kęstutis Glaveckas, estimates that the banking crisis has cost the country's banking sector some \$325 million. Depositor confidence is yet to return. The government has already paid most of the private depositors the maximum allowable 1,000 litas provided by the country's deposit insurance laws. However, most of the larger claims remain outstanding.

The Lithuanian Economy in February

Retail sales in February rose 6.6 percent over the same month in 1995. February's monthly inflation dipped from the preceeding month's 3.2 percent figure to 2.4 percent. The bad news was that unemployment continued to rise, to 8.2 percent of the workforce.

The government's budget also failed to balance. Revenues were short of expenditures and government borrowing became increasingly more costly. Low demand for government treasuries resulted in soaring interest rates paid for 30-day and 60-day treasury bills. The March auction of 50 million litas (\$12.5 million) 30-day notes saw record annual yields reaching 45 percent. Average yields for 30- and 60-day notes varied between 37 and 40 percent. This was

Algis Rimas is a business consultant living in Reston, Virginia. Before retiring from the U.S. Foreign Service, he served from 1992 to 1994 at the American Embassy in Vilnius as its deputy principal officer.

in steep contrast to commercial borrowing rates which averaged only 25 percent. Rates paid for term savings deposits averaged 17 percent with 25 percent interest available on one year CDs at some banks.

To increase revenue collections, the Seimas passed a law on March 14 waiving the payment of late charges and penalties on overdue corporate taxes for the years 1992 through 1994. Companies were invited to pay their back taxes in cash or by issuing stock certificates to the government. Total unpaid corporate back-taxes are estimated to be over one billion litas (\$250 million). Finance Minister Algimantas Križinauskas said that any company shares received by the government under this program would be sold off to private investors and would not result in the expansion of public sector ownership of industry and commerce.

On the expenditures side of the budget, Prime Minister Stankevičius announced on March 18 a spending freeze on all new government-financed construction and procurement of real property, computers, office equipment and automobiles. According to the Lithuanian press, environmental protection projects could be particularly hard hit. Water sanitation projects, partly funded by the World Bank and the Nordic Bank, and now underway in Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda and Šiauliai faced suspension and this threatened the potential loss of some \$ 37 million in international counterpart funds.

Guarantees Sought for Further Stability of the Currency

The stability of the litas exchange rate also featured in the news recently. President Brazauskas recently submitted to the Seimas a decree proposing that the legislative body consider amending the law which ties the litas to the dollar at a fixed rate (now at 4 lts to \$1) to extend the guarantee of the present exchange rate until the end of 1998. Under this proposal the government would incur the obligation to pay any damages in the event the rate were to change before its stated term expires.

The political opposition in the Seimas has voiced its objection to the continuation of the present fixed exchange rate regime. Although most of the principal trade and industry organizations back a stable exchange rate, some industry leaders have complained that the current rate had made their exports uncompetitive by over-valuing the litas. There is also little evidence that a stable litas had attracted significant foreign investment. According to the Department of Economics, foreign investment in 1995, measured in real terms, remained basically unchanged at approximately \$ 229 million. But, would matters be worse in the absence of a stable litas? In the view of many observers, the answer is yes: capital flight, for one, would increase.

More Privatization of Industry Ahead

Vytis Atkočiūnas, head of the government's privatization agency, has drawn up a list of a further 210 wholly or partially owned state companies proposed to be sold for cash to private owners. Foreign and domestic investors would be allowed to bid on an equal footing. The list was sent to government ministries in late February for their review. Once the government approves, the competition will be announced.

According to Lithuanian media reports, the most lucrative buys on the list will be the Mažeikiai oil refinery, and the company, Lietuvos Kūras. On the other hand, about 20 percent of the firms listed reportedly are small, unprofitable businesses where government holds only a minority of the shares which are the ones that would be sold.

Wrap-up of Current Major Projects

The **Butingė** off-shore oil terminal project, plagued by years of delays, once again faces serious obstacles. At a March 8 shareholders meeting of the company charged with building the terminal, it was announced that they had failed to raise the necessary 30 million litas starting capital as required under their financing agreement. The blame fell on a major shareholder, the Mažeikiai oil refinery, which did not pay its share, 6.8 million litas, as promised earlier.

According to the director of the terminal project, Vladislavas Gedvilas, the one hope to rescue the project is for the Lithuanian government to expand its borrowing on behalf of the terminal in order to retain the foreign credits committed to the project, including earmarked guarantees from the U.S. Export Import Bank. The U.S. engineering firm, Fluor Daniel, is the designated lead contractor for the turn-key terminal.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the European Investment Bank reportedly have allocated \$180 million to build the 1,000 km. proposed **Via Baltica** highway system linking all three Baltic countries to Poland and points west. The Lithuanian portion of the financial package would be approximately \$48 million.

According to the Secretary of the Department of Transportation, Algirdas Šakalys, Lithuania will negotiate the details of the project in the next few months. There are indications that additional financing may become available for the Lithuanian portion of Via Baltica.

More funds may roll in from the World Bank for **agricultural development** projects.

On February 25 it granted Lithuania a \$30 million loan that has yet to be accepted by the Lithuanian government. The

loan would fund small bank loans to private farmers and larger loans to food processors to introduce capital improvements.

Squeeze on Energy Supplies to Lithuania, Again

An unpaid debt of \$36 million to Russia's natural gas supplier, Gazprom, is causing pain to Lithuania's consumers. Gazprom has reduced the flow of natural gas in March from the normal level of 12 million cu. meters/day to 2.7 million cu. meters/day. The gas will be turned up, said Gazprom, if at least \$16 million were paid now. The Lithuanian side is negotiating.

Unpaid bills have also slowed down deliveries of uranium fuel to the nuclear energy generating plant at Ignalina which provides most of Lithuania's electricity. The irony is that much of the electricity surplus is exported to Russia and Belarus. Payments are slow to Ignalina and even slower to reach the nuclear fuel suppliers in Russia.

Crude oil supplies have also not been reaching the Mažeikiai oil refinery and it was forced to shut down temporarily. The problem reportedly was not a lack of payments but the need to make repairs in the principal pipeline between Russia and Biržai. Oil products are said to be reaching Lithuania from the Latvian port of Ventspils.

Business News

Rita Dapkus, the Lithuanian-American from Chicago who resettled in Lithuania and gained fame for her innovative chain of pizza take-out service and restaurants, opened her latest creation: a Vilnius restaurant specializing in Lithuanian cuisine. What is surprising is that it is the first such restaurant in Lithuania.

The moderately priced "**Ritos smuklė**" (Rita's Tavern) offers authentic Lithuanian decor and traditional recipes such as dumplings stuffed with meat, deep-pan potato pie, and pancakes. To drink, there are five selections of mead and Lithuanian beer. The help is dressed in folk costumes.

According to the Vilnius daily, *Lietuvos Rytas*, the \$500,000 price tag for the new restaurant was covered by a loan from the Baltic American Enterprise Fund.

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and journals, all of which to improve the education of rheumatology students, physicians and patients. LAF activities are solely volunteer-based, and the project will serve as an example of single-issue public awareness and information.

The next competition for sub-grants will take place in the Spring of 1996.

Technical Assistance

The third major component of the Democracy Network program is technical assistance. Ms. Elizabeth Henna is currently working in the USBF-Vilnius office and is serving as a consultant in the National Forum Foundation's American Volunteers in Development program. She has met with most of the sub-grant recipients and will consult with additional organizations who request her assistance. The first three-day training seminar is scheduled to begin in Lithuania at the end of May. Topics will include: organizational development, media relations, fundraising, and participation in local and national decision-making. "We are especially excited about working with Lithuanian trainers and consultants to keep the transfer of knowledge and expertise inside Lithuania once the outside trainers have left. Using local partners in the seminar allows the skills to remain and become even more organization-specific," said Ashley Owen, Democracy Network Program Manager.

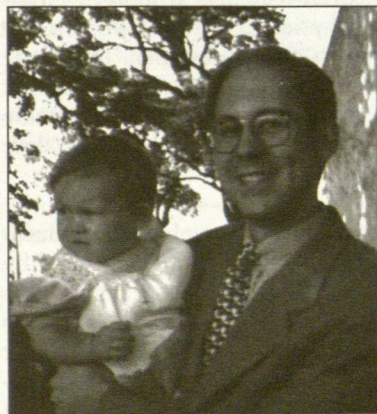
USBF is a not-for-profit foundation established in 1990 to support democratic and free market reforms in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Its programs support local government, public administration, independent media, rule of law and non-governmental organizations and public health. USBF has offices in Tallinn, Riga, Vilnius and Washington, D.C. Contributions to USBF are tax deductible.

For more information about the Democracy Network program, or for application forms, please write to: Mr. Nathan Roe, Program Officer for Democracy Network, the U.S.-Baltic Foundation, 1211 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 506, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Nathan Roe

U.S.-Baltic Foundation to Distribute \$50,000 for Lithuanian NGOs

The U.S.-Baltic Foundation (USBF) will distribute \$50,000 to eight Lithuanian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the first phase of the Baltic Democracy Network Program. In August of 1995, the U.S.-Baltic Foundation was awarded a \$2.4 million contract by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for this purpose. The program is designed to build and



Nathan Roe is USBF Program Officer for the Baltic Democracy Network. He is pictured here with his Estonian god-daughter, Linda.

support NGOs in the Baltic States so that they become self-sustaining entities and effective players and advocates in affecting public policy. The program focuses on NGOs shaping policy in the areas of democratization, free markets, environmental protection and social safety nets/health policy. Specifically, this grant provides training for NGO staff, a sub-grant program to provide direct financial assistance to NGOs, and technical assistance from a specialist working full-time in the field.

The competition for the first round of sub-grants began last December. Applications were reviewed by an expert advisory panel chaired by former Kaunas City Council Chairman Vyngintas Grinis. The panel's recommendations were then confirmed by the U.S. Embassy's Democracy Commission under the leadership of Ambassador James Swihart. In March, the Ambassador invited representatives of the eight recipient organizations for a private meeting at the Embassy to congratulate them.

USBF Sub-Grants Round 1 (Total: \$49,750)

Lithuanian Conflict Prevention Center and Association (\$12,500): Funding will be for seminars in five cities to promote the skills and capacities of NGOs. The aim is to

develop practical skills that will allow NGOs to achieve long term sustainability and to facilitate effective cooperation within the sector.

The Occupational and Business Support Foundation M95 (Organization of Visually Impaired) (\$7,500): Money will be provided for a project to integrate the visually handicapped into society by means of active work under market conditions. This includes education and consultation, circulation of publicity materials, cooperation with state establishments, and an Intra-Baltic seminar on lobbying techniques and handicapped-specific legislation.

Public Elderly Women Activities Center "Gaja" (\$5,000): Funding will support courses on nursing, the psychology of aging, and health care, specifically targeting women from rural areas. Training will involve elderly women interested in affecting public policy in the areas of rights of pensioners, social welfare and health policy.

Council of Lithuanian Youth Organizations (\$7,500): This grant will fund eight seminars and training sessions on youth work and policy, democracy-skills training, and project management skills.

Lithuanian Entrepreneur Association (\$6,250): Funding will provide support for a series of seminars on lobbying techniques. The emphasis will be on smaller towns outside the capital.

Actio Catholica Patria (\$4,250): Money will be given for four youth seminars on the following topics: communication, self-confidence, self-analysis, and personal creativity.

Ecologists Club "Atžalynas" (\$3,750): This grant will fund the monitoring and evaluation by students and researchers of the ecological environment and local chemical pollution. Public policy impact includes consciousness-raising about environmental concerns and the establishment of a model local citizens group.

Lithuanian Arthritis Foundation (\$3,000): This grant will fund the publication of educational brochures, the organization of seminars, and the purchase of computers

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Laima M. Karosas, MSN, APRN

Nursing in Lithuania as Perceived by Lithuanian Nurses

The purpose of this research was to describe, from the perspective of Lithuanian nurses, what nursing is in Lithuania and what Lithuanian nurses want nursing to be. Lithuania's director of nursing identified a lack of information about nursing as a barrier to the effective organization of the nursing profession in the country. This research was the first step toward gathering information about nursing in Lithuania.

Located in northern Europe, Lithuania is bordered by Latvia to the north, the Baltic Sea to the west, Belarus, formerly Byelorussia of the U.S.S.R., to the east, and Poland to the south. The population of Lithuania, approximately 3.7 million, is overwhelmingly (79.6%) composed of ethnic Lithuanians. The total area of the country is 26,173 square miles. (In population and area, Lithuania closely approximates Ireland.) The Lithuanian language is one of the two remaining Baltic languages (the other is Latvian) and resembles its mother language, Sanskrit.

Lithuania was established as an independent state in 1236 and became a large and powerful European force. Tsarist Russia extended its domination over Lithuania in 1795, and Lithuanians would not regain their independence until 1918. As a result of a German-Soviet pact in 1939, Lithuania was invaded and annexed by the U.S.S.R. in 1940. After the attempted Soviet military coup and changes in the Soviet government in August 1991, Lithuania was recognized as an independent, sovereign country by over 30 nations including the United States and the Soviet Union. The current government is a parliamentary democracy headed by President Algirdas Brazauskas.

Review of the Literature

Lithuania was under Soviet influence for more than 50 years, and so to understand Lithuanian nursing one must

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first have a basic understanding of the Soviet nursing system. Although the Soviet Union has dissolved, the Soviet system of training nurses continues.

Nursing education in the Soviet system stresses rote memorization of, not an understanding of the rationale behind, nursing actions.¹ Soviet nurses, almost all of whom are women,² are trained at medical-technical schools by physicians.³ Eighty percent of physicians are also women, but administrators and specialists tend to be men. Often, the physicians teaching in nursing schools are unsuited for practice. They may have a personal problem, such as a skin disease, or have unacceptable social problems for their profession, such as alcoholism.²

In the Soviet system, once students complete their education, they must accept a 3-year placement determined by the government.² After the 3 years of practice, those who finish in the top fifth of their nursing class may go on to medical school.¹ Refresher courses are not mandatory for nurses, but every 5 years nurses may be offered opportunities to specialize or continue studying.² Specialization in the Soviet nursing system involves 1 to 6 months of additional course work.³

The product of Soviet and Lithuanian nursing education is a nurse who follows doctors' orders.^{1,3} Nurses, on the middle level of medical personnel along with x-ray and laboratory technicians, are subordinate to doctors, who are on the highest level of medical personnel in the Soviet health care system.² Nurses are considered to be relatively unimportant components in health care.¹

Lithuanian nurses are state employees and receive some benefits. They pay no income tax and qualify for room rental at 4% of their income. A nurse's income is, however, only 50% to 75% that of the average citizen's monthly income.²

The research questions addressed in this study were: How do Lithuanian nurses define nursing, and what are the changes Lithuanian nurses desire in the nursing profession? *Nursing beliefs* was defined as those responses from nurses indicating the ideas, theories, and philosophies of nursing. *Nursing actions* was defined as those responses from nurses that indicated the daily activities of nurses in

the workplace. *Changes in nursing* was defined as the desired changes in the educational system or clinical practice suggested by the nurses.

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nursing education is a nurse who
follows doctors' orders.

Methods

A non-experimental, exploratory design was used to describe Lithuanian nursing as perceived by Lithuanian nurses. In this study themes were identified that Lithuanian nurses used to describe nursing beliefs, nursing actions, and changes needed in the nursing profession. This information was collected by a U.S. nurse researcher and compared with a U.S. nursing context. The descriptive approach was used because, according to Lithuania's director of nursing, no nursing studies have been conducted in Lithuania.

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been conducted in Lithuania.

Santariškės Hospital in Vilnius, Lithuania's capital, was used as the data collection site. A 1079-bed teaching hospital affiliated with the University of Vilnius, Santariškės Hospital employs 402 physicians and 657 nurses. The workload per nurse is 15 to 30 patients during the day and 60 patients at night. Day nurses work 10-hour shifts; night nurses usually work 14-hour shifts.

A convenience sample of 75 nurses was chosen. Those included in the sample were women working at Santariškės Hospital who were available during change of shift and who were able to read, write and speak Lithuanian. Head nurses and male nurses were excluded from the study. The head nurses of each unit handed the study packets to their nurses. The nurses who met the criteria for sample selection but who immediately returned the packets declined participation and were not included in the study. Those who accepted a packet, but failed to send both sets of answers to the researcher, were included in the count of 75 enrollees.

A total of 53 subjects responded to both the demographic and the written sections of the questionnaire. Two subjects

returned only demographic data and were not included in the study. None of the answers to the written section were excluded. When analyzing the data, the few incomplete answers were designated as such.

Data Collection Instrument

The Lithuanian Nursing Questionnaire was developed and used to elicit demographic data and written responses to open-ended questions about the nursing profession. The demographic section was used to report the overall work experience and lifestyle of the subjects. The second part of the questionnaire contained questions relating to how the subjects viewed the nursing profession, what they actually did as nurses during a shift, and what changes in nursing education and practice they would suggest.

The answers to the study were consistent in that all of the subjects wrote the same type of answers to each question. The answers were also accurate because they were the subjects' personal views. The consistency and accuracy indicated high reliability of the data collection instrument. Validity was difficult to establish prior to the study. However, the written answers yielded the precise information necessary to the researcher.

Data Analysis

The majority of data was qualitative and subject to content analysis as described by Patton.⁴ Descriptive statistics were computed for demographic data to describe the sample. The written answers were coded and sorted into the categories of nursing beliefs, nursing actions, and changes in nursing. Because subjects were not limited to one response in each category, there were more responses than subjects.

The data were analyzed for nursing themes by the researcher and a research assistant. The researcher described to the research assistant the categories that the data were divided into. The research assistant demonstrated her understanding of the categories by coding one set of answers. There was 100% agreement on the first attempt, and the research assistant continued with the rest of the coding. The research assistant coded and analyzed the written answers to validate the research method. Both the researcher and the research assistant recoded the first five papers to establish consistency in coding.

Results

The sample consisted of 53 female nurses working at Santariškės Hospital in Vilnius. A majority of the subjects were young, single, had no children, and had worked as nurses less than 10 years. All of the subjects worked full-time as nurses, averaging 10 hours per day, 5 days per week. The average nursing salary was about \$10 a month, barely enough to pay for food and shelter.

It is assumed that the reasons subjects chose nursing coincided with what they thought nursing was. The beliefs nurses held about nursing are shown in Table 1, along with the number of responses in each category.

In "Nursing is working with others," the subjects thought of nursing as a profession that helped others and allowed for interaction with people. Many subjects did not specify how they helped their patients, but others described nursing as providing help with words and actions.

The category of "Nursing evolves from life experience" consisted of events that indicated to the subjects the importance of nursing. The personal experience of an illness, working as a nurses' aide, or watching a mother work as a nurse showed some subjects that nursing was needed. Other subjects cited that nursing was a natural female occupation, a childhood dream, or that it simply "appealed" to them. Some subjects noted that nursing was a calling or a vocation. One subject indicated that in nursing there was less responsibility than in other jobs, and for that reason nursing appealed to her.

The category of "Nursing allows for self improvement" included responses indicating that nursing helped nurses as well as patients. Subjects felt satisfied "when patients leave a floor healthy and smiling." One nurse indicated that "all of the information learned in nursing school can be applied to oneself to help others."

The category labeled "Nursing is a bridge to medicine" included those responses indicating that subjects had wanted to go on to medical school. These subjects had poor health, were still in the process of becoming physicians, or had not been accepted by a medical school.

The final category, labeled "Nursing is a field for the undecided," contained responses about nursing as a profession for those who did not know what they wanted to do. These nurses went into the field "by chance," because they needed jobs, or because they had not been accepted elsewhere.

In Table 2 the replies to the question about what nurses do are shown. Subjects cited a total of 186 technical tasks that they performed during 1 day at work. A task cited more than once by a subject was counted as many times as it was cited. All of the tasks cited were as follows: measuring temperature, blood pressure, and pulse; administering medications; drawing blood; starting intravenous drips; bathing and feeding patients; applying compresses; changing dressings; giving enemas; taking out catheters; changing bedding; transporting patients; and disinfecting rooms and equipment.

The category "Non-patient-centered activities" included actions without the patient as the direct focus of attention. In this category were tasks such as completing paperwork, checking equipment, and preparing materials.

"Patient-centered activities" included actions in which the patient was the focus of attention. Some subjects stated that "the work day begins with the 5 minuter [sic] in which we learn what happened on the floor during the night shift." Others indicated that they discussed patients with coworkers or physicians.

Several subjects did not explain the activities they performed during one workday. Two nurses could not or did not want to take the time to explain because, as one wrote: "To explain [my work] is very hard because what I do in one day cannot always be determined by me." One subject answered, "I perform the duties of a staff nurse," and was no more forthcoming.

The subjects discussed the changes in education and practice not only to the direct questions about changes, but also when answering other questions. These answers were appropriately included under "Changes in nursing." Table 3 summarizes the changes that subjects stated were necessary.

The category "Changes in nursing" was divided into "Changes in practice" and "Changes in education." Under "Changes in practice," subjects indicated that salaries for nurses should increase. Subjects wrote that salaries should be higher for nurses who work harder or who work with harmful substances.

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be higher for nurses who work harder
or who work with harmful
substances.**

There were a number of working conditions that subjects thought should be changed. The most recurrent theme was the one for adequate materials at the workplace. One nurse wrote "What kind of conditions can we have when everything is in short supply, starting with needles, syringes, and ending with machinery?" Medicines, machinery, and disposable materials such as needles and gloves were cited by 21 subjects as being in short supply. Other needed improvements in working conditions included shorter hours, smaller patient assignments, adequate staffing, more nurses' aides, freedom to perform independent actions, more time to interact with patients, a career ladder, help with transporting patients, a guarantee against infection, and better hospital food.

"Improvements in living conditions" were also addressed by the nurses. People are granted living space through their places of employment and, as 17 subjects noted, there is

almost no chance of getting an apartment. Hospitals provide a dormitory arrangement to help with the housing shortage, but as one subject wrote, "Three to four nurses, strangers, have to live in one dormitory room."

Subjects were not satisfied with the hospital-sponsored opportunities for rest and relaxation. "The administration could make sure that we get a number of travel guides so that the workers would not have problems during vacation," wrote one subject. Another subject noted that the nurses "need a break room" on the floor to rest.

"Criticisms of the system" contained replies concerned with the lack of prestige for the nursing profession and the problems associated with the health care system. One subject wrote, "I like being a nurse, only here it is incredibly thankless;" another wrote, "There are many problems that need solutions before conditions will change." One subject suggested that until "medical services are paid for by each patient personally, the health care system will not change."

**"I like being a nurse, only here
it is incredibly thankless."**

Under "Changes in education," subjects stated that admission into nursing school should involve tougher competition. One subject wrote that "admission to nursing school should be allowed only after finishing high school, i.e., finishing twelve grades" rather than after finishing eight or ten grades. In addition, prospective nursing students should be screened for specific qualities before admission. According to the subjects, the qualities need to become a nurse were gentleness, goodness, modesty, carefulness, motherliness, attentiveness, understanding, sympathy, patience, conscientiousness, sincerity, sensitivity, tactfulness, strictness, and industry.

The majority of subjects identified a need to change curriculum. Thirty-three subjects desired more clinical practice in nursing school. A subject stated that "much more time would be devoted to the young nurses' clinical practice. The clinical would have to be on the same floor where the future nurse will be working."

Subjects expressed the need to teach more physiology, deontology (relating to patients and their families), communication, and ethics to nursing students. These areas were collectively identified by the researcher as the need to teach nursing students the concept of holism, which involved regarding the patient as more than the illness. One subject indicated that nurses should have a firmer, broader training and be able to work in many areas. Subjects cited the need to learn a foreign language, including English, to excel in Lithuanian, and to study physical education.

Table 1. Nursing Beliefs

What is nursing?	n	%
Nursing is working with others	80	54.4
Nursing evolves from life experience	28	19.0
Nursing allows for self-improvement	15	10.2
Nursing is a bridge to medicine	8	5.4
Nursing is a field for the undecided	16	10.9

Table 2. Nursing Actions

What are nursing activities?	n	%
Technical tasks	186	67.6
Non-patient-centered activities	67	24.3
Patient-centered activities	19	6.9
Cannot explain work	3	1.1

Table 3. Changes in Nursing

What changes are desired in practice?	n	%
Remuneration according to responsibility	35	22.9
Improvements in working conditions	81	52.9
Improvements in living conditions	26	17.0
Criticisms of the system	11	7.2
What changes are desired in education?		
Admission requirements	7	8.5
Curriculum changes	72	87.8
Improvements in student life	2	2.4
Continuing education	1	1.2

Nonmedical classes and philosophy were considered not necessary in nursing education. Subjects also indicated that they needed to learn about current nursing theories and to apply them in practice.

Student life was a concern mentioned by a few nurses. Subjects wrote that students needed increased financial support and should receive scholarships on the basis of achievement.

Subjects identified a need for continuing education. One subject wrote that "the nurse nowadays needs to continually learn, increase her qualifications."

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to describe, from the perspective of Lithuanian nurses, what nursing is in Lithuania and what Lithuanian nurses want it to be. A majority of subjects were young, single, without children and had worked as nurses less than 10 years. They indicated that

nursing meant helping others, and some defined that help as both actions and words. This is consistent with the concept of holism, which calls for the "integration, harmony and balance of body, mind and spirit."⁵ At least in theory, Lithuanian nurses viewed their profession as a holistic framework, with emphasis placed on more than just the illness or wound. They also identified the mutual benefits patients and nurses receive from each other. The practitioner learns about himself or herself as well as the patient as they work through an illness together.⁶ Both patient and nurse grow in self-awareness when they interact, and healing occurs where it is needed.⁵

In practice, however, the nursing focus was on the completion of technical tasks. Like their counterparts in the United States, nurses in Lithuania want adequate staffing and the addition of ancillary personnel to assist with tasks. The holistic model in Lithuania does not hold true in practice, as subjects indicated they did not have time to attend to each patient individually. There were few patient-centered activities in which there could be an opportunity for exchange between nurse and patient.

Approximately 11% of the subjects had not specifically chosen nursing as a career, and another 5% intended to become physicians. These figures indicate that a sizeable number of people in nursing are not primarily interested in nursing. It was not surprising, then, that some nurses called for more stringent admission criteria for nursing school, including screening applications for particular personal characteristics.

There were few patient-centered activities in which there could be an opportunity for exchange between nurse and patient.

Superficially, changes the subjects identified were similar to changes U.S. nurses would also like to see. Many subjects wanted an increase in salary and improvements in working conditions. In Lithuania, however, there was a lack of basic supplies, such as gloves, as well as a need to explore the ramifications of a single nurse caring for 30 to 60 patients on an acute medical or surgical floor.

Curriculum changes accounted for almost 90% of the desired changes in education. This indicates that Lithuanian nurses consider their basic nursing education inadequate for the realities of the workplace. Many subjects wanted more clinical practice to be ready for work. They also wanted to learn about personal relations and how to communicate more effectively with their patients.

Lithuanian nurses know how to complete tasks but have little background in the nonphysical aspects of nursing.

A few subjects stated that nursing students needed more financial support, a common problem in the United States today. Although education in Lithuania is free, students need an adequate income to support themselves. Needs for continuing education and current patient care information were identified. There is a school in Vilnius that holds mandatory yearly courses for nurses, but these courses are similar to reviews, in that they cover broad topics, such as anatomy. Nursing needs specific to hospital settings are not considered in the organization of mandatory courses.

One difficulty encountered was the lack of understanding of the research. Nurses and officials were quick to suggest changes and did not understand the detail involved in completing a study. This problem was not surprising, since there are no advanced practice nurses in Lithuania and no courses on nursing research. The concepts of health and care have not yet been addressed. The responsibilities of the patient in Lithuanian health care have not been uncovered. In the holistic model of nursing the patient is responsible for health care choices,⁶ and self-care and personal responsibility are emphasized.⁵ In addition, holistic practice also involves prevention of problems,⁶ and research is needed to determine whether prevention takes place.

The establishment of holistic nursing in Lithuania would distinguish that profession from other health professions.

Lithuanian nursing needs fundamental principles on which to base the profession. The establishment of holistic nursing in Lithuania would distinguish that profession from other health professions. Holism establishes nursing as an autonomous professional practice,⁷ and a few subjects specifically called for independent actions and legal rights for nurses. Subjects complained about the lack of prestige in the nursing profession. Nurses need to work together and establish an environment that supports personal and professional growth.⁸ The nurses themselves must organize their profession and set guidelines. They must learn to discuss changes among themselves and with other health care workers. Emphasis must be placed on a collaborative approach to improve conditions for the patient and health care for the Lithuanian people. The collaborative approach will also improve the working conditions of health care workers. If nurses understand the problems in the nursing profession, they must begin to take the first steps to solve these problems and discuss solutions. *Continued on page 26*

Tadas Stomas

“Ad Patria” Returns Remains of Lithuanians Exiled to Siberia

For some time now I have wanted to write about an organization in Lithuania called “Ad Patria” which helps bring back the remains of Lithuanians exiled to the Soviet Union and provides for those still living, or any of their descendants, the means to return to Lithuania. I have personally benefited from their help and, likewise, some **BRIDGES** readers may also want to take advantage of their assistance.

Lithuania is the only country, besides Japan, which cares enough to search for the remains of its countrymen who died in Russia under Soviet rule. Others, most notably Poland, do not even allow the living to return, citing the present high unemployment in Poland or that their former homes are now outside the present borders of the country. The Lithuanian group is cooperating with the Japanese. It all started when the Lithuanians found some graves and passed on their locations. Since then, they have been written up in Japanese magazines and all their video equipment (cameras, VCR, TV) are gifts of the Japanese.

Mr. Antanas Petrokas, who heads up “Ad Patria,” is a former exile who has dedicated the rest of his life to this work. I first met him in 1992 and he subsequently sent me a write-up (printed below). Briefly, my own story is as follows:

My maternal grandfather, his wife and two sisters, as well as my paternal grandfather, were sent to Siberia in 1941. One sister died en route, so her body must have been tossed somewhere along the way, but the others arrived in the Altai region. My grandfather and his other sister died within a year, but my grandmother lived until 1950 and wrote to us via a relative in Poland. My paternal grandfather died in 1947 and he, too, wrote to relatives in Poland. Although they were not in the same location, I knew their addresses.

This is the information with which I approached Mr. Petrokas. Later, we found a person who remembered where grandfather Stomas was buried. After 45 years, however, bushes had turned into trees and there was no way of finding his remains in what is now a forest. However, at the other location, there was a cemetery, some crosses were still standing and some names could be deciphered. Mr. Petrokas had been there before and had a video tape of it when I met with him and we spotted the name.

On account of some prominence which my grandfather had in pre-war Lithuania, Mr. Petrokas petitioned the Landsbergis government for funds to bring back his remains and was granted a small sum. However, by that time it was already too late in the year to do anything, since there is only a two or three month window when the ground is not frozen and the roads are passable in Altai.

The following year, the government changed and the sum appropriated in talonai, due to inflation, became insignificant. The next government granted a proportionally larger sum and an expedition, which included a distant cousin who is a surgeon, left in May of 1993. Everyone was traveling on their old Soviet passports, as the cost is many times higher for travel by foreigners.

At the site, they found the bones of two women and a man, which my cousin, based on old photographs and measurements, determined to be my grandfather, his sister and my grandmother. The funeral in Lithuania was held on June 14, 1993, on the 52nd anniversary of their deportation. I and many relatives attended, which made me feel as if this was our final act of defiance towards the system and the people who perpetrated this inhumanity.

The story of my family is no different from that of thousands of Lithuanian families. Similarly, the story by Marija Stankus-Saulaitis in the December issue of **BRIDGES** — change the names and it could be me. This is why I feel that there must be others who would also find great satisfaction in being able to return their family members from the Soviet Union for burial in their homeland.

About “Ad Patria”

The Committee “Ad Patria” for the Removal of Remains and for Social Aide to Lithuanians deported to the Soviet Union is a charitable organization motivated by compassion, which was founded in October of 1989.

The main task of the Committee is to help the Lithuanian population in bringing back the remains of their loved ones who have been the victims of repressions between 1941 and 1953, the years of Stalin’s occupation. The Committee’s chairman, Antanas Petrokas, himself a former exile, is also one of the organizers of the Sajūdis movement. The sub-

sistence of the Committee consists mainly of donations by the Lithuanian population.

On May 22, 1948, at the age of eleven, Mr. Petrokas was exiled from Lithuania to the Irkutsk region of Siberia. It befell him to see hundreds of his fellow countrymen die of starvation and disease, their only wish being to be buried someday in Lithuanian soil. Everyone wanted to return to their homeland.

In the years between 1941 and 1953, about 350,000 people were exiled from Lithuania to Siberia. About 30,000 starved to death, froze or died from diseases. Fifty years later, this Committee organized the removal and return of their remains. It showed the whole world and Russia the reverence Lithuanians have for their dead and for their sacred principles.

To date, the Committee has organized and assisted relatives in returning to Lithuania the remains of more than 1,200 deportees from various districts of Siberia and from near the Arctic Circle. Among those brought back were the remains of the last Lithuanian underground book distributor, Alekaitis, and those of the Minister of Agriculture of Independent Lithuania, J. Aleksas. The burial sites of the last Chairman of Lithuania's Cabinet of Ministers, Anatanas Merkys, and that of one of the signatories of the Act of Independence, Donatas Malinauskas, and his family were found. However, the Committee has no means of bringing back their remains due to the present difficult economic condition of the Lithuanian population.

The Committee "Ad Patria" is the only Lithuanian organization which annually has an expedition to Siberia for the purpose of locating Lithuanian exiles, meeting with deportees still residing there, making detailed maps of cemeteries, reinscribing decipherable names on surviving tombs and crosses, taking photographs and making video documentaries. So far, three videos have been made which relate to those deported to the Altai territory, Irkutsk region and Buryat-Mongolia.

The task of each expedition is very difficult. The old settlements of Lithuanian deportees are crumbling, the roads and cemeteries are turning into impassable woods, the unattended cemeteries are being choked with high grasses and the crosses are rotting and falling. Soon, no sign of this tragic part of Lithuanian history will remain. This Committee wants to collect and preserve for future generations as much material as possible dealing with the deportations of Lithuanians.

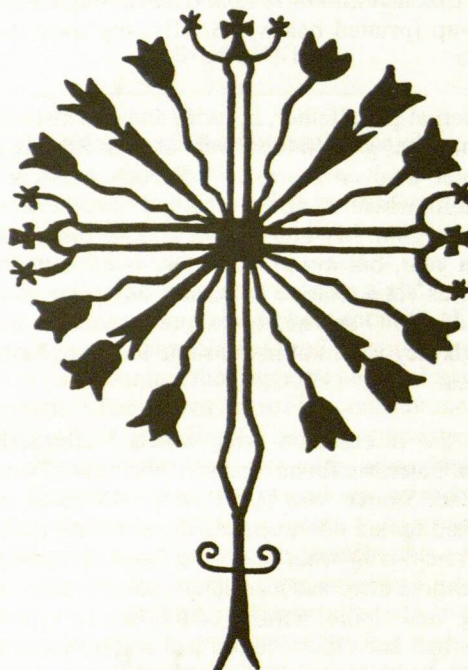
According to a Decree by the Republic of Lithuania, all those who fled to the West for fear of repression are also classified as deportees. Many of their relatives were not so fortunate and are now buried near the Arctic Circle or in Siberia.

The Committee would like to humbly address Lithuanians and other people of good will, who are not strangers to the pain of deportees, to make at least a small donation towards this Committee's efforts. Russia, after the restoration of Lithuanian independence, considers Lithuanians as foreigners and demands hard currency for transportation, lodging and other services.

It is our hope that people of good will everywhere will not refuse to fulfill the desires of those dead deportees to be someday buried in their Lithuanian homeland.

In the years between 1941 and
1953, about 350,000 people were
exiled from Lithuania to Siberia.
About 30,000 starved to death, froze
or died from diseases.

COMMITTEE "AD PATRIA"
For the Removal of Remains And
for Social Aid to Lithuanian Deportees
Partizanų g. 90-50
Kaunas 3041
Tel: 011-3707-779-534



Jeanne Dorr

From Detroit to Alytus, With Love

In September of 1994's **BRIDGES**, I wrote an article about *Aid to Lithuania*, a non-profit organization affiliated with the **Knights of Lithuania (Vyčiai)**. *Aid to Lithuania* is dedicated to providing medicine, medical supplies and medical equipment to charitable, medical and public welfare institutions in Lithuania. The aid is distributed to the poor and the indigent regardless of creed or ethnic origin. **BRIDGES** readers responded to this article with their usual enthusiasm and generosity. One non-Lithuanian reader from Tennessee actually donated the contents of a container filled with medical supplies. Now *Aid to Lithuania* has accepted another challenge — that of moving the contents of Lithuanian churches that are closing in American cities to churches in Lithuania.

This is a very expensive undertaking but yet it is far less expensive than asking the Lithuanian people, who can barely make ends meet, to donate money to buy pews, organs, altars, statues, etc. Please keep in mind that for fifty years the churches were rarely, if ever, allowed to obtain the necessary building permits to build new buildings or even to make necessary repairs. Imagine your own house if you did not maintain the interior or exterior for fifty years. I don't think I need to explain further the reasons behind this article. I also have a personal stake in this story — it was because I was lost in Prienai.

Searching for Magdalena

As I have written in the past, my grandmother was one of the most influential people in my life. She could not read, write or speak English, but she was the kindest and most patient person a little girl could ever hope to have in her life. She has been dead for more than thirty years but not a day goes by that I don't think of her. After Lithuania regained her independence I was determined to find the descendants of anyone who was left from this side of the family. That part of Lithuania was closed off to tourists during the old days. Communication was lost for over forty years with the family and everyone who could help on this side was also dead. But I did have her brother's baptismal certificate which was issued from a church in Prienai. My great uncle was baptized over a hundred years ago so I knew it would be like looking for a needle in a haystack; I just didn't realize how high and how deep the haystack would be.

And there was 95-year-old Petras, frail but mentally sharp as a tack. He expected someone from the American family to show up sooner and wanted to know what took me so long to find him.

Along with some friends from Kybartai, we actually went door to door trying to find older people who recognized the name. Some thought they remembered; others thought they knew a name that sounded like this one. Someone said they were all dead; others said they had moved. The frustration was heart-wrenching. All this work and time with nothing to show for it. Then someone said they knew my grandmother's nephew. He lived in a village outside the town. I knew the person had to be mistaken; the nephew would be too old. We traveled dirt roads through some of the worst poverty imaginable. And there was 95-year-old Petras, frail but mentally sharp as a tack. He expected someone from the American family to show up sooner and wanted to know what took me so long to find him.

He asked about the family of whom no one was left. He remembered my grandmother's address in Scranton, Pennsylvania, even though so many years, more than forty, had passed. The only problem was he couldn't remember his sister's address in Prienai which was only a few miles from where he lived. Try as I might, I couldn't get any help from him. Yes, he visited her twice a week but the bus let him off "somewhere" and she would meet him and walk him back to her house.

My next stop was back at the church where a young priest was saying a funeral Mass. I left the church and tried the rectory but got no answer. I guess frustration must have been written all over my face because after I sat on a bench in the churchyard two elderly women asked me what was the matter. I told them my problem and they insisted I



Helping to load the container transporting church pews, a pipe organ, baptismal font, vigil light stands, etc. from St. Peter's Church in Detroit bound for Our Lady Help of Christians in Alytus, Lithuania (Alytaus Marijos Krikščionių Pagalbos Bažnyčia).

speak to the new priest. I would have to wait until he returned from the cemetery; they were sure it wouldn't be long. We sat on the bench and talked. They were full of questions about America. Before long we saw the priest being dropped off. He didn't own a car. My two new friends escorted me to a small house across the street from church which was not the rectory. Before I could open my mouth they explained my plight. Unfortunately, Father Leonas Jakimavičius had just been ordained two weeks earlier and didn't really know the parishioners. This didn't stop the two women as they proceeded to lecture him that he would just have to help me. After they reluctantly left, Father showed me around his living quarters which were also the Caritas office. I left him with my address and I really thought that was the end of it. I returned to America without finding Magdalena and I would have to be satisfied that at least I had found Petras.

I was settled into my regular routine when I received a letter from Father Leonas. He found Magdalena. She lived on the same street where I visited him, one block away. I was thrilled but I also felt cheated. How I could be so close and

yet so far from her? She was 85 years old and the chance that I would ever meet here were slim. But the letters started to fly between Prienai, Lithuania and Riverton, New Jersey. Magdalena would write that Father had been to visit her and chopped her wood or that he brought her much needed groceries. I wrote to thank him and another friendship was started. And then I received a letter that he was being made a pastor in Alytus. The only problem was that there was no church. It had to be built from the bottom up. With Lithuania's economic conditions, where do you start building a church? There were other churches in Alytus but the bishop saw a growing need for a new church.

We continued a friendship via the mail. When the pastor of St. Andrew's Church in Philadelphia, Father Peter Burkauskas, visited Lithuania, I asked him to visit Father Leonas. Father Burkauskas was so impressed that he invited him to Philadelphia to hold a retreat. As luck would have it, the timing was terrible. It was the winter of 1993-94. Many people could not get to church during those five weeks but all who did became closely involved with Father and his new church. Father Leonas met members of St. George's Parish in Philadelphia as well as members of the Knights of Lithuania (K. of L. or Vyčiai) Council 3. They pledged their help, and their generosity had no bounds.

The Resurrection of St. Peter's

The next summer some of the Philadelphia K. of L. people were in Lithuania, as was Robert Boris, President of *Aid to Lithuania*. The Knights introduced Father Leonas to Bob and from that moment on *Aid to Lithuania* was like a mir-



The latest donation from the Knights of Lithuania's Catholic Medical Mission Board, New York which was sent on October 17, 1995 to the Lithuanian Ministry of Health. Here we are on December 9, 1995 (my driver, a worker, N. Razmienė and R. Sturdžienė of the "Lithuanian Information Bureau," and myself (Fr. Leonas Jakimavičius) having loaded 62 boxes of medicine, dental hygiene equipment, clothing, etc. destined for the Caritas chapter at Our Lady Help of Christians in Alytus, Lithuania (Alytaus Marijos Krikščionių Pagalbos Bažnyčia).



Fr. Leonas Jakimavičius guiding parents in blessing their children who received First Holy Communion in St. Peter's Chapel (named in honor of the closed Detroit church) in the rectory in Alytus in May 1995. Approximately 400 children received the sacrament that year in the new parish of Our Lady Help of Christians (Marijos Krikščionių Pagalbos Bažnyčia).

acle to the new parish. The rectory in Alytus was built with many rooms so that it could be utilized in various ways. There is an elementary school in it with a new grade to be added each year. It also houses a dental clinic and *Aid to Lithuania's* first gift was a complete dental unit and boxes of supplies.

But the generosity was not to stop there. Bob Boris knew that St. Peter's Church in Detroit was scheduled to close. St. Peter's had all the problems that many ethnic parishes in this country face — declining membership, buildings which need repairs and are often in unsafe areas of cities. The younger generation have their own lives and they live in the suburbs. Often the church is closed after the pastor retires, as was the case in Detroit with the retirement of Rev. Casimir Butkus. Regardless of the reasons, there is always heartbreak and sadness when an ethnic parish closes — it seems as though the hearts of the people are cut from them. An ethnic parish is not just a building, it is a way of life. St. Peter's parishioners were devastated when the final Mass was said on May 21, 1995. So many memories would be left behind: baptisms, First Communions, marriages, funerals. How many people had poured out their hearts in the church since its doors opened in 1921. But closing is a problem that any ethnic parish has to live with.

The Lithuanian churches in the United States were built by the early immigrants who came to this country with hopes and dreams of a better life. Instead of streets paved with gold, they found lives of hardship and homesickness. Most would never have the opportunity to see Lithuania or their families again. But they endured so that future generations would have a better life or, as they used to say, "make something of themselves." Their lifeline was their church with its many organizations. These Lithuanian churches

were not built by hosting \$500-a-plate dinners or donating \$1,000 gold bricks to the building fund. There were no big business donors to take out an expensive ad in a patron book. The churches were built by the sacrifices of the coal miners, steel workers, stock yard workers, and the men who stood on the assembly lines building cars. After they worked their 10 and 12-hour days, they didn't rest on the weekends. Instead, they dug, with hand shovels, the foundation of the church, as was the case of St. Peter's in Detroit. The "funding" was obtained in the form of a mort-



Parishioners clearing the site for the new church Our Lady Help of Christians in Alytus, Lithuania (Alytaus Marijos Krikščionių Pagalbos Bažnyčia).

gage from a local bank. The bulk of the money came from their meager pay packets.

Remember how your mothers and
grandmothers wrapped those few
precious coins in a clean white
handkerchief to be put into the collection
basket? They had no thoughts of getting
a tax deduction, they gave with their
whole heart and soul.

Remember how your mothers and grandmothers wrapped those few previous coins in a clean white handkerchief to be put into the collection basket? They had no thoughts of getting a tax deduction, they gave with their whole hart and soul. Some could ill afford the few coins they gave on Sunday.

After the church was built, the school was often close behind. Again, after back-breaking jobs, they would turn to digging, building, plastering and putting in floors. If you

had no special skill you could always push a wheelbarrow full of dirt. These people could not discuss the writings of the great Lithuanian poets and they did not speak the "correct" Lithuanian. Most could barely read and write, but they left a legacy far more important — they left a heritage and a culture for those to come. When the new wave of immigrants arrived after the second World War, they had very little but they did find Lithuanian churches and schools, thanks to the sweat and sacrifices of an earlier generation.

Before the contents of St. Peter's could be shipped to Lithuania, Bob Boris once again had to raise funds for the 40-foot container. This money was raised nationwide with much of it coming from the Knights of Lithuania Councils. Just as the early immigrants did the back-breaking work of building the church, the people of St. Peter's disassembled the contents themselves. The pews were 12-feet long and made of oak, weighing over 1,000 pounds each. Disassembly of the pipe organ cost over \$4,000, but what new church in Lithuania has an organ valued at \$75,000? The entire interior of the church was packed up including the altar, vigil light stands, baptismal font and many other items. The final item to be packed was a large crucifix donated in the early years of the parish by the grandparents of former Michigan State football coach George Perles. Thanks to the good hearts of the St. Perpetua parishioners and the Ladies of Charity of St. Hugo of the Hills Parish, Bloomfield Hills, every inch of the container was filled. They donated 130 plastic bags of used clothing. These would be distributed to the many needy parishioners in the new parish of Our Lady Help of Christians.

The container was sent to Norfolk, Virginia and from there it sailed on a steamship to the Lithuanian port of Klaipėda. It was trucked to Our Lady Help of Christians (Marijos Krikščionių Pagalbos Bažnyčia) in Alytus. The contents are being held in storage while the church is being built. To the people of St. Peter's, you did not lose your church. You lost a building but, through your generosity, the spirit of your church will live in the hearts of the parishioners in Our Lady Help of Christians. Mass is currently being celebrated in the chapel in the Alytus rectory — the name of the chapel now bears the name St. Peter's.

In Vilkaiviškis

The next challenge for *Aid to Lithuania* was to help the Cathedral of Vilkaiviškis. But once again, this feat could be accomplished only in the wake of the devastating news that another Lithuanian parish was being closed, this time it was St. Casimir's Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Some of the furnishings that were sent to Vilkaiviškis were the organ, stations of the cross, statues, etc.

Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Farmington, Michigan, was replacing its pews. The pews were offered to *Aid to Lithuania* and, once again, the volunteers, mostly Knights of Lithuania members, began the exhausting job of disman-

ting and packing up the pews for shipping. Four days later, the pews were loaded into a container along with an electronic organ, tabernacle, 20 chasubles and other liturgical items. Msgr. Hurley of Our Lady of Sorrows also presented a check to *Aid to Lithuania* to help with the shipping.

The costs of shipping the first container from St. Casimir's Church were covered by the Lithuanian Citizen's Society of Western Pennsylvania. This fine group of people do so much to help the Lithuanian people and yet they never ask for anything in return. They seek no publicity but quietly go about the work of aiding those in need. Thank-you from all of us involved in humanitarian work. You make our work a pleasure.

Another thank-you must go to Cardinal Adam Maida of Detroit who sent a \$5,000 check earmarked for this project. And yet, with all this help, the bank account of *Aid to Lithuania* is being depleted. The more aid they send to Lithuania, the greater their expenses. I am making a special appeal to the children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren of the early immigrants to help defray these expenses. Please make a donation in their memory. There are no plaques to remember their courage for coming to this far away land. Perhaps you recognize them only from yellowed photographs and old stories but this is your opportunity to honor them by helping the work they started so many years ago in America to continue in Lithuania. We truly owe them that for all the sacrifices they made during their lifetime.

To the second wave of immigrants, please be generous. The Lithuanian parishes were here for you to help ease the pain of losing your homes and your country. To our non-Lithuanian and non-Catholic readers, I ask you to support this project from an economic standpoint by helping *Aid to Lithuania* remove the great financial burden from the backs of the Lithuanian people. Most are giving what they can but they face such economic conditions that they need our help. **BRIDGES** readers, let's help to send the closed Lithuanian parishes home to Lithuania. Our buildings may be locked but our hearts and spirits continue to live in Alytus and Vilkaiviškis.

To Bob Boris, the Knights of Lithuania and to all the people and organizations who in any way helped with this work, thank you. You are not only helping the people in Lithuania but you have given the most beautiful memorial possible to the early immigrants. You are sending the fruits of their labors home again.

Please send you tax-deductible checks to:

Aid to Lithuania

4557 Fairway Court
Waterford, MI 48328-3483
Tel: (810) 682-0098
Fax: (810) 682-5201

continued on page 26

Ramune Kubilius

Excerpts from Lithuanian Sources in the U.S.

Tenth Annual Lithuanian American Youth Association (LAYA) Political Seminar, May 17 - 19 in Washington, DC

Interested in finding out the latest news about:

- Prospects for NATO membership for Lithuania?
- U.S. Military assistance to the Baltics?
- World Bank and IMF programs in Lithuania?
- The current goals and priorities of the Lithuanian government?
- Lithuanian political parties and the upcoming parliamentary elections?
- The current activities and future plans of the Lithuanian American Youth Association?

For all this and more, including visits to the Pentagon and the Embassy of Lithuania, a night on the town in Washington and a Potomac River boat cruise to view the monuments by moonlight, all in the company of fellow Lithuanians between the ages of 18 and 35...

For registration form or other information, contact:

e-mail: rutavirkutis@abtassoc.com
phone: Nerija Orentas (703) 683-3649
REGISTRATION FEE- \$80

Seminar organized by the Washington, DC (LAYA) chapter. We thank the World Lithuanian Youth Association and the Lithuanian Foundation, Inc. for their generous support.

Lithuanian Youth Gather in Washington, DC

On March 9th, about 50 young people gathered at Lithuania's Embassy in Washington, D.C. It was the second such gathering to draw young Lithuanian Americans and young people from Lithuania who now work or study in the United States. Ambassador Alfonsas Eidintas greeted the participants and gave them an overview of the work of the Embassy in the areas of politics, economics and defense. He also later reminded attendees of the significance of March 11th and of the remaining assignments to ensure freedom in Lithuania. Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. Executive Committee member Vitolis

Vengris gave an overview of the LAC, encouraging those who recently have arrived from Lithuania to join into Lithuanian American activities.

Nerija Orentas, president of the Washington, D.C. chapter of the Lithuanian American Youth Association, greeted attendees and encouraged them to attend the 10th annual political seminar sponsored by the chapter, to be held May 17-19th. She also told them about preparations for the World Lithuanian Youth Congress, to be held 1997 in North America.

The second part of the program consisted of discussions about the ties between young Lithuanian Americans and young people who recently arrived from Lithuania. There is a sense of mistrust, and one of the barriers to good feelings is that each group has stereotypes about the other. It was acknowledged that young Lithuanians studying at American universities do not network with each other much, and they were encouraged to take advantage of the e-mail and electronic capabilities available to them at their universities.

(DRAUGAS, 3/9/96)

Lithuanian-American School Student Groups to Dance in Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival

Several Lithuanian language schools' students will participate in the 10th Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival, to be held July 6th at the Rosemont Horizon in Rosemont, IL. The schools are: "Aušrinėlė" from the Vincas Kudirka School in Delaware (dance teacher is Estera Bendzius-Washofsky); the Chicago Lithuanian Middle and High School (the teachers are Nijolė Pupius and Ligija Erna Tautkus); Lemont (IL) Maironis Lithuanian Language School (the teacher is Lidija Ringus); Cleveland's St. Casimir School (the teacher is Egle Laniauskas); Gary, Indiana's St. Casimir School (the teacher is Jean Valeika); and Detroit's "Žiburys" Lithuanian Language School (the teacher is Viktorija Viskontas).

(DRAUGAS, 3/9/96)

New German-Lithuanian Bus Route

On February 6th, a new bus route began "Vilnius- Berlin-Hamburg- Bremerhaven." This was a cooperative venture between Lithuania's "Joana" firm and Germany's "Von Rahden." Before this bus route was initiated, the only way to get to Berlin, Hamburg and Bremen was through privately hired rides. Buses will drive the route on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and in Lithuania they stop in Kaunas and Marijampolė. If the route proves to be popular, it may move to become a daily route. The buses are of 1992 vintage and feature air-conditioning and other amenities — toilets, televisions and a bar. There are two Lithuanian drivers and one German driver.

(DRAUGAS, 3/9/96, from an article in "Lietuvos rytas" of 2/7/97)

Lithuanian Students in the US, Canada and Lithuania Connect by E-Mail

The "Švyturys" class of Cleveland's St. Casimir Lithuanian School has begun electronic mail correspondence with Lithuanian students in Montreal, Canada and Vilnius, Lithuania. Teacher Amanda Muliolis and her son Linas Muliolis served as advisers on the project.

(DRAUGAS, from a photo caption of Vl. Bacevicius, 3/15/95)

Lithuanians in Omaha, Nebraska

Omaha, Nebraska's Lithuanian community isn't large and its humanitarian efforts are coordinated by a small group, which seems to serve in many capacities. A few scouting families have proven to be especially resilient in extending a helping hand. For the past few years, they have honored their scout oath to love their neighbor by collecting food, clothing and other necessities for needy families in Lithuania. Beginning with 19 families, this year they have added to their list the support of 12 additional families. Thus, the small Lithuanian American community of Omaha is providing support for 31 needy poor families and for those with many children. The families have sent letters of acknowledgment and thanks to their benefactors.

(DRAUGAS, 3/14/96)

Fire Destroys Care Packages in Boston

A fire in South Boston's Lithuanian Hall destroyed packages of food and medicine awaiting mailing to Lithuania's needy.

The fire, which occurred March 10th, also interrupted the community's 45th St. Casimir Festival (Kaziuko Mūgė) which had drawn about 300 young people and their parents. The Lithuanian scouts had prepared to act out "Pelenė"(Cinderella). Everyone was safely evacuated and

no one was hurt, but the cause of the fire was not determined.

(DRAUGAS, 3/14/96)

Lithuanian Children's Hope

The Lithuanian Children's Hope Committee ("Lietuvos Vaikų Viltis") between 1991 and November 1995 has helped 68 children from Lithuania come to the United States for treatment and surgeries at Shriners Hospitals. 15 children are presently in the United States undergoing treatment (which lasts from 3 months to 1 and ½ years). The children undergo primarily complicated spinal or orthopedic surgeries. The Shriners Hospitals absorb the costs of treatment, but the costs for the children and their parent or guardian of housing, transportation and outpatient medications is covered by LVV.

(DRAUGAS, 3/13/96, from an interview with Lithuanian LVV Committee chair Elena Gervickas whose daughter underwent treatment in the United States)

SUMMER SERVICE PROJECT IN LITHUANIA

July 20 - August 20, 1996*

Service Brings Smiles (SBS) is looking for college undergraduate and graduate women who would like to volunteer as English teachers at a summer camp for high school girls in Lithuania. As Lithuania took its first steps as an independent state, local church groups and the Lithuanian Roman Catholic Federation asked *SBS* to coordinate this U.S. volunteer effort. 1996 marks the fifth consecutive year of the project.

The English Camp consists of two ten-day sessions. The volunteers teach three hours of English each morning and lead sports and social activities in the afternoon and evening. Catechism and practical classes on Christian living are part of the program. The Catholic Prelature of Opus Dei (Work of God) provides the spiritual formation offered at the camp. The schedule includes long hours of teaching, conversation and coaching.

In recent years, volunteers from Princeton, Notre Dame, Marquette, Brown, University of Dallas, University of Illinois and other colleges have dedicated their time and talents to young people in Lithuania. The Lithuanian students deeply appreciate the efforts of the American volunteers to teach them English as their country emerges from the Soviet system into the European community. The American volunteers also play an active role in helping the Lithuanians rediscover their Christian roots. This *SBS* cultural exchange fosters strong lifetime friendships between the Lithuanian girls and the U.S. volunteers.

The cost of the program is approximately \$1,300 for those going from Chicago or New York (\$1,000 travel; \$300 food and lodging while in Lithuania). Participants are encouraged to seek sponsors for the project.

*Dates may vary slightly depending on final flight schedule arrangements.

For more information about this exciting service opportunity please contact:
Sharon Hefferan, 1331 N. Astor Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202

Tel (414) 276-1329

FAX (414) 273-5233

e-mail: petawa@delphi.com

Jeff Shain

Lithuanian Look Goes Global

Phoenix, Feb. 13 (UPI) The Lithuanian basketball team, which made a colorful splash at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics with their tie-dyed T-shirts, has discovered marketing savvy. The Lithuanian federation announced Tuesday night it has struck a deal with the NBA's Phoenix Suns to market the Lithuanian look in the United States and elsewhere.

"This marriage is so hard to believe, that the Phoenix Suns can help us," said Šarūnas Marčiulionis, the Sacramento Kings guard who led Lithuania to the Olympic bronze medal in 1992. "Now we can be sure we won't be short of money, and we can be successful in the Olympics. Now I can just worry about playing basketball."

Under the agreement, the Suns' merchandising department will be the official outlet for "Lithuania" apparel, featuring the team's logo of a skeleton playing basketball. Shirts feature the skeleton in such action as driving to the basket and dunking.

The logo is an offshoot of the insignia used by the Grateful Dead, who donated some of their tie-dyed T-shirts to the Lithuanian team prior to the 1992 Olympics, where they became the hot marketing item in Barcelona.

"A beat writer in San Francisco introduced us to the Grateful Dead, and they empathized with our cause," said Suns assistant coach Don Nelson, who also serves as an assistant for the former Soviet satellite.

"They believe in the freedom of expression. So we entered into this magical marriage. They sent us a check and also some boxes of tie-dyed T-shirts. These guys were so used to wearing black and gray. We decided to wear them in warmups as an expression of thanks. They believed in us when we were nobodies."

Lithuanian basketball apparel will first be available at the Suns' official team shops in the Phoenix area. Beginning in March, orders may be taken on a Lithuanian basketball World Wide Web site that is being planned.

"With the 1996 Atlanta Summer Games just around the corner, it is time to re-introduce this popular line of clothing," said Algis Pavalonis, president of the Lithuanian Basketball Federation. "We are pleased that the Phoenix Suns are helping us market our product because they know marketing better than anyone in the NBA."

The Lithuanian federation also announced Tuesday that it plans to use Phoenix as its base for pre-Olympic training camp, spending a week in workouts at America West Arena before embarking for Atlanta. The schedule will conclude with an exhibition July 12 against the Suns' summer rookie-free agent select team.

"We'd like it if Phoenix would take us under their wing," Nelson said. "We understand that (United States) Dream Team is No. 1 (in people's hearts), but we look at this as a chance to help a team that needs their help in getting to the Olympics."

The Lithuanian team's appearance will cap a week of Olympic basketball in Phoenix, which also features a game between the United States and China on July 10.

In Tuesday's Olympic basketball draw held in Atlanta, Lithuania and the United States were drawn into the same first-round pairing. Those two teams will be part of Group A, along with Angola, Argentina, China and Croatia.

"It's tough," said Marčiulionis, who along with Portland's Arvydas Sabonis make up Lithuania's NBA connection. "We have to play every game well, be very serious."

Asked if everybody else was playing for the silver medal behind the Dream Team, Marčiulionis said: "I think so. That's how everybody things as far as the European teams. But all the teams would love to surprise the fans and the Dream Team. We want to compete and we want to win."

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Nursing continued from page 16

Supported by the Keggi Orthopaedic Foundation; the Lithuanian American Women's Alliance, Chapter 17; the Lithuanian-American Community of Hartford, Inc.; and the Hartford Ramovėnai.

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From Detroit, With Love continued from page 22

P.S. Yes, I found my beloved Magdalena and we were united in Prienai during the summer of 1994. One of my happiest moments was when my "third son," Father Leonas, brought us together. However, just a few weeks ago, Petras died after an illness. I like to feel I played a very small part in this important project of *Aid to Lithuania* simply because I was lost in Prienai.

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