

BRIDGES

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A.P.P.L.E. Director Vaiva Vėbraitė helps plant one of five apple trees on the grounds of the Anykščiu Vienoklių Mokykla to mark the fifth anniversary of A.P.P.L.E.'s operation in Lithuania.

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To Our Readers:

This month, a pillar of the Lithuanian-American community of Washington, DC was removed by cancer. His legacy is not in political or monetary achievement but in the institutions he created and the traditions he set in motion in a city that sorely needed them. That many of these are taken for granted today without a real awareness of how they came about is a testament to Joe's understated yet all-pervasive influence in the community.



Joe Simanis, a Lithuanian-American born 67 years ago in Pennsylvania and raised in Bridgeport, Connecticut, was an All-American success story. He graduated from Yale University in 1951, received a master's degree in history from Indiana University, and was an army veteran. He went into the Foreign Service and served in consular,

political and economic posts in Germany, Poland and Curacao. From 1967 until his death he worked in the Social Security Administration.

Despite the achievements in his professional career, or perhaps because of them, Joe Simanis was what would today be called a "pro-active" Lithuanian. He and his non-Lithuanian wife, the artist Jane Cordes Simanis, were the engine that powered a sense of cohesiveness into a community that had been strictly demarcated along linguistic lines.

The Vyčiai (Knights of Lithuania) had a longstanding tradition in Washington and carried the torch of Lithuanian independence during its darkest hours. Professional and well-assimilated, many of them were like Joe — accomplished Americans who felt Lithuanian even though their language was imperfect. Then there were the post-World War II arrivals from Lithuania who had been literary and cultural figures in their homeland but now worked at places like the Library of Congress and the Voice of America. Just as devoted to the Lithuanian cause, few could really express themselves well in English and, although they lacked the political savvy and professional aplomb of many Vyčiai, they rarely mingled with them.

In the late 1970s, Joe Simanis was instrumental in bringing these groups together by founding the Lithuanian Mission, a monthly Lithuanian Mass in Washington, DC. The community had no parish or meeting place to call its own. The Chapel of Our Lady of Šiluva at the massive National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception was small and available by appointment only. The Embassy (or Legation, as it was called until 1992) was a dark and lonely place, holding its one social event on February 16, and then only for

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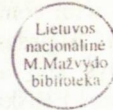
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specially invited visitors. The Latvians, who had offered to build a hall together with the Lithuanians in the suburb of Rockville, now had a premium property whose rent the Lithuanians could not afford.

By establishing an opportunity for all Lithuanians to gather in a central location on the last Sunday of every month, with a coffee-hour in the church basement afterwards, Joe, with Jane at his side, fixed the community on a course of regular meetings. The Masses at Epiphany Parish in Georgetown were not only for the purpose of worshipping

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Asta Banionis



Half-time in the Lithuanian Elections and the First Lithuanian-American U.S. Senator

Close to 53% of all eligible voters in Lithuania went to the polls on Sunday, October 20, 1996, to elect a new national Parliament, the Seimas. But the election process is far from over because 68 seats of the 141-member body remain undecided after the first round of voting. So voters will return to the polls on Sunday, November 10, to vote in these 68 districts.

Four of these 68 districts are likely to go into further run-offs later in the year because they are districts in which fewer than 40% of all registered voters turned out to vote on October 20. In these four districts, heavily populated by Russian and Polish minorities, all of the October 20 candidates will again compete rather than just the top two vote-getters. For example, the 10th voting district, "Naujosios Vilnios," will again see all 15 candidates on the ballot.

Sounds complicated doesn't it? Actually, it demonstrates a weakness of the Lithuanian electoral system that candidates must win more than 50% of all ballots cast, rather than a simple plurality; and that 40% of all registered voters in a district must vote during an election in order for the results to be considered valid. In the "Naujosios Vilnios" district, 39.71% of all registered voters showed up to vote on October 20. But, under Lithuania's voting laws, that wasn't good enough, so the entire process starts over again for the people of that district.

Since **BRIDGES** was going to press before this second round of voting, we will have to bring you the final election results in the next issue. But the political landscape of the new Seimas can already be identified from the election results at mid-cycle.

First Round Results

Of the 70 Seimas seats decided by the voting for party ("at-large" or multiple-mandate) lists, 33 will go to the Homeland Coalition, better known as the Conservative Party of Lithuania. This party, headed by professor Vytautas Landsbergis, has been rebuilt since its defeat in 1992 by an energetic team of young and talented politi-

cians who have concentrated on grassroots organizing and the recruitment of new leadership for the party ranks. It has an economic and social program which comes closest to the model of British and American conservatives. They are well positioned to be the dominant voice in the next Parliament and the next government.

Homeland Coalition/Conservative Party candidates will be competing in 56 of the 65 electoral districts where there will be run-offs. Of those 56 candidates, 33 lead their run-off opponent by 10% or more of the vote. Another 11 Conservative Party candidates lead their run-off opponent by 5% or more. Because two Conservative Party candidates (Landsbergis and Vagnorius) won their individual districts (single-mandate) in the first round of balloting, the Conservative Party now holds 35 seats in the Seimas. It is likely that these other Conservative candidates will win on Sunday, November 10, giving their party a slim, but comfortable working majority in the new Seimas - 79 seats.

Nonetheless, the Conservative Party is likely to bring the Christian Democratic Party into the coalition government with them for two reasons. First of all, the Homeland Coalition (Conservatives) and the Christian Democrats had made a pre-election agreement to work together, despite the differences in their platforms. Secondly, the Conservatives remember all too well the subterfuge used by the Democratic Labor Party (LDLP) to undermine the work of the pre-1992 Parliament and government. It is best to have an overwhelming majority in the Parliament, which would make it more difficult for the LDLP to undermine the efforts of the Seimas to return to the implementation of economic reforms. It is also necessary to have an overwhelming majority as the new Seimas prepares to combat the organized crime structures which have had the protection of the ruling LDLP over the last four years.

In the first round of voting, the **Christian Democratic Party** received almost 10% of the votes cast for the party lists, and was given 11 seats in the new Seimas. In the run-off election on November 10, they will field 22 candidates. Unfortunately, only five of these candidates lead in their

run-off races, four of them with comfortable margins of more than 10% (party leaders Algirdas Saudargas, Povilas Katilius, Ignacas Uzdavinys and a newcomer, Algis Kaseta, running in the Varėnos-Eišiškių district).

Two Christian Democratic Party candidates are running noble and difficult races. In the first, Algirdas Endriukaitis, who has been the leading voice in Lithuania's Seimas protesting Russia's genocidal war against the Chechens, is in a run-off election with the American expatriate Kazys Bobelis who is running as a Christian Democratic Union candidate. Unfortunately, Endriukaitis is 13% behind Bobelis going into the run-off. Bobelis' Christian Democratic Union failed to clear the 5 percent hurdle for party lists, getting only 3.08% of all votes cast. As a result, this run-off in district Nr. 29, Marijampolė, is Bobelis' last chance to return to the Seimas. The second race is between Christian Democratic Party candidate (Ms.) Marytė Kontrimaitė and LDLP candidate Petras Papovas in district Nr. 52, Zarasų-Visagino. This district is heavily populated by ethnic Russians, many of whom work in the Ignalina nuclear power station. It would take an act of God to change the expected outcome of this race. LDLP candidate

Papovas leads Kontrimaitė by almost 20% going into the run-off.

The soon to be ex-ruling party, the **Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party (LDLP)**, came in third in the balloting for party lists on October 20. It received 9.52% of the votes cast and was given ten seats in the new Seimas. It still has a chance to add a few seats to its bloc in the Seimas because it is running 14 candidates in the run-off election. The only outright win which is expected at the moment is in the race between LDLP candidate Papovas and Christian Democratic candidate Kontrimaitė. But there is a dead-heat in district Nr. 41, Kelmės, where LDLP candidate Zenonas Mačernius goes into the run-off with 23.87% of the vote, and his opponent Homeland Coalition (Conservative) candidate, Juozas Listavičius, has 23.76% of the vote. In district Nr. 46, Pakruojo-Joniškio, Social Democratic Party candidate Nikolaj Medvedev has 17.95% of the vote going into the run-off, and his LDLP opponent Alvydas Sėdžius has 17.75%.

The race that is attracting the most attention, however, is the race in district Nr. 53, Ignalinos-Švenčionių, where the



Liberal Party candidate, Kęstutis Trapikas, is leading LDLP Chairman Česlovas Juršėnas by almost 6% (23.82% to 17.99% going into the run-off). Juršėnas is the leader of the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party and has served as the Speaker of the Seimas (Parliament) for the last four years. It would be terribly embarrassing for the LDLP if its Chairman should lose his individual run-off election. Before any of our readers bemoans the loss of Juršėnas' courtly presence on the floor of the Seimas, however, rest assured, Juršėnas will be back. He is already assured a seat in the new Seimas because he heads the LDLP party list which already has been assigned 10 seats.

The fourth largest vote-getter was the **Center Union**. It received 8.13% of all votes cast on October: giving it 20 for the party slates, and will have nine seats in the new Seimas. Only seven of its candidates will be involved in the run-off elections on November 20. Of these, the Center Union has a chance of winning two additional seats: in district Nr. 7, Justiniškių, Center Union chairman of the board, Egidijus Bičkauskas, is leading the Homeland Coalition candidate, Stasys Stačiokas, by 4-1/2% going into the run-off. What is interesting about this race is that both men are lawyers — a rare profession among Lithuania's politicians. Bičkauskas has been a member of the Seimas serving as one of three deputies to the current Speaker. Stačiokas just completed a two-year term on Lithuania's Constitutional Court where as Chief Justice, he distinguished himself as a protector of civil liberties and free speech. In district Nr. 19, Danėš, the Center Union candidate, Vytautas Čepas, is trailing the Homeland Coalition candidate, Vytenis Zabukas, by only 5% and has a chance of winning the seat for the Center Union.

The fifth, and last, party to clear the 5% barrier to qualify for multiple-mandate seats in the Seimas was the **Lithuanian Social Democratic Party**. It received 6.60% of the total vote for the party lists and will have seven seats in the new Seimas. The party has seven seats also in the current Seimas which is about to end its term on November 25. This party proved itself to be the proverbial dark horse. In pre-election polling it appeared that the Social Democrats would not clear the 5% barrier to qualify for seats under the party lists. The **Women's Party** was widely touted to be the party which would take its place in the new Seimas. In the November 10 run-off elections, the Social Democrats will field candidates in six district races. Of these, only three have a realistic chance to win: as mentioned earlier, in district Nr. 46, Social Democrat, Nikolaj Medvedev, is in a virtual tie with LDLP candidate, Alvydas Sėdžius; in district Nr. 63, Suvalkijos, Social Democrat, Juozas Olekas (a former Health Minister), is trailing the Homeland Coalition candidate, Sigitas Slavickas, by only 3-1/2%; and in district Nr. 68, Vilkaikio, the Social Democrat, Algirdas Butkevičius, is only 1% behind Nationalist Party candidate, Jonas Macys.

For all of the complaining of the smaller parties when the 4% voting barrier in multiple-mandate districts (or party lists) was increased to 5% in late September, the change did not alter a single election result on October 20, 1996. All other parties which ran party lists of candidates would have failed to qualify for the Seimas even under the old 4% barrier, garnering between 0.19% to 3.82% of the votes cast. Please see the table to see how many votes your favorite party earned on October 20.

Former Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskienė, whose Women's Party failed to qualify for Seimas seats when the party drew only 3.68% of the vote, still has a chance of making it to the Seimas. She is running in district Nr. 54, Mailed-Švenčionių, against Homeland Coalition candidate, Albinos Garrisons. Going into the run-off, Garrisons is leading with 19.88% of the vote; while Prunskienė has 18.95% of the vote.

























All four referenda on the ballot October 20 failed because fewer than 50% of all registered voters voted in favor of the referenda. The fifth referendum will be on the ballot on November 10. This is the one that would give collective ownership (as in collective farms) the same legal status under Lithuania's Constitution, as private ownership or state ownership. Let's hope that the people of Lithuania have the good sense not to turn back the clock of economic reform and social justice by approving this fifth referendum.

Sour Grapes

The campaigning during the two weeks leading up to the run-off elections has been intense, with the losing Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party (LDLP) urging voters to vote for anyone on the ballot except the Homeland Coalition (Conservative Party) candidates. The LDLP leadership has been explaining away their loss at the polls in the following way:

At a press conference on Monday, October 21, 1996, LDLP Chairman Česlovas Juršėnas said that, "the people projected too many of their hopes on us, more than could be realistically fulfilled... He went on to urge the people to "prevent a decisive win by the right in the run-off elections."

At the same press conference, LDLP board member and current Lithuanian Foreign Minister Povilas Gylys maintained that, "during its leadership, the LDLP had to follow through with unpopular reforms." He added that he was convinced that, "during the last four years, Lithuania could only have been led by the intellectually capable and morally correct LDLP" (of which he was a member).

Party or political organisation	Percentage of received votes of the turnout	
<u>Coalition of Lithuanian National Union and Lithuanian Democratic Party</u>	2.09%	
<u>Homeland Union (Lithuanian Conservatives)</u>	29.78%	
<u>Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party</u>	9.91%	
<u>Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party</u>	9.52%	
<u>The Centre Union of Lithuania</u>	8.13%	
<u>Lithuanian Social Democratic Party</u>	6.60%	
<u>Lithuanian Nationalist Party "Young Lithuania"</u>	3.82%	
<u>Lithuanian Women's Party</u>	3.68%	
<u>Christian Democratic Union</u>	3.08%	
<u>Lithuanian Poles' Electoral Action</u>	3.01%	
<u>Lithuanian Alliance of Ethnic Minorities</u>	2.45%	
<u>Lithuanian Liberal Union</u>	1.86%	
<u>Lithuanian Farmers' Party</u>	1.68%	
<u>Union of Russians of Lithuania</u>	1.64%	
<u>Lithuanian Freedom Union</u>	1.50%	
<u>Union of Political Prisoners and Deportees</u>	1.49%	
<u>Lithuanian Party of Economy</u>	1.20%	
<u>Lithuanian Freedom League</u>	0.92%	
<u>Lithuanian Union of Social Justice</u>	0.89%	
<u>Lithuanian Socialist Party</u>	0.73%	
<u>Republican Party</u>	0.37%	
<u>National Progressive Party</u>	0.29%	
<u>Lithuanian Party of Life's Logic</u>	0.25%	
<u>Lithuanian People's Party</u>	0.19%	

*Data has been obtained from the database of the Central Electoral Committee, pages are prepared by Computer Data Processing Department of the Seimas
Remarks and suggestions are welcome - VyKirn@rc.lrs.lt*

Gediminas Kirkilas, LDLP deputy chairman and head of the 1996 LDLP campaign, suggested that, "the party failed to convince the people of Lithuania that the reforms the LDLP carried through were necessary to Lithuania's future economic success." "We failed to rule in a preventive manner, therefore the banking crisis was unavoidable. Likewise we failed to draw enough investments into the country." But the party leader insisted that during the last four years, the LDLP had laid a solid foundation for Lithuania's economy.

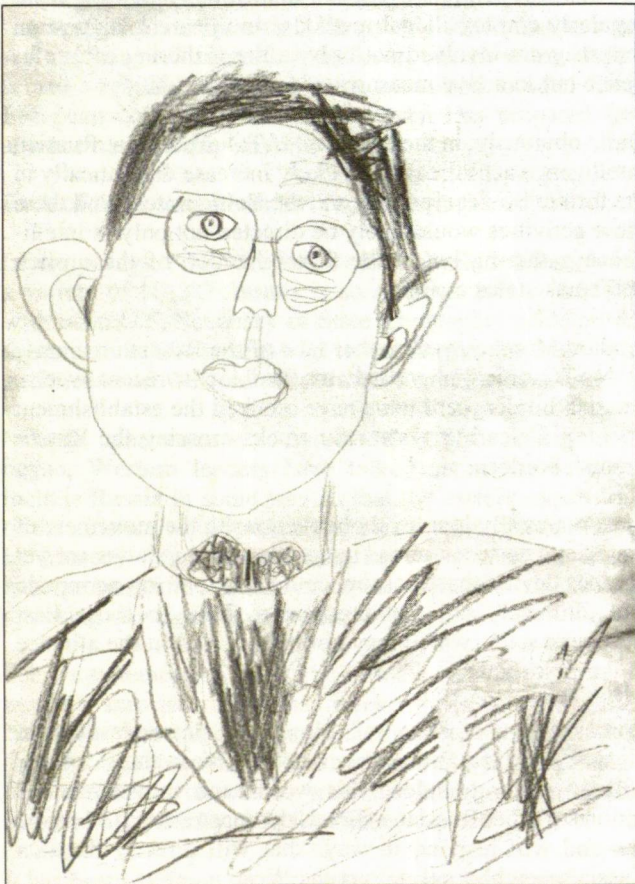
On a more ominous note, the LDLP caucus leader in the Seimas, Justinas Karosas, voiced the opinion, "that after some period, those that were nailing us to the cross, will themselves be nailed to the cross."

If these gentlemen really believe these fanciful notions concerning the governing abilities that they and their party demonstrated over the last four years, the LDLP is woefully out of touch with the people of Lithuania, and more than a little out of touch with reality.

First Lithuanian-American Elected to the United States Senate

On a more upbeat note, Richard Durbin has been elected to the United States Senate from the great state of Illinois with 56% of the vote. He is the first Lithuanian-American, to our knowledge, to be elected to this distinguished body. He will be filling the seat being vacated by Senator Paul Simon when he retires at the end of December. We know that Bridges readers are great history buffs and someone may find another Lithuanian-American from the 19th century who may have served. But until we hear from you, we want you all to write and congratulate our fellow Lithuanian-American, Richard Durbin.

Many **BRIDGES** readers already know that Dick Durbin as a staunch supporter of Lithuania's independence and democracy. His mother, Onutė Kutkaitė, came to the United States as a young girl from Jurbarkas. Dick Durbin himself has served with great distinction in the House of Representatives over the last 14 years serving the people of Illinois' 20th district. We look forward to his service in the United States Senate.



Sen. Paul Simon, D-IL, by Emily Mackevicius, age 7, from "A Child's-Eye View of (Retiring) Statesmen," from the collection of the American Arts Alliance.



Senator Richard Durbin

Paul Goble

Analysis from Washington

The Russian Response to NATO Expansion

Washington, October 2 (NCA/Paul Goble) — Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov acknowledged last week that Moscow is “powerless” to prevent NATO expansion. But he warned that Russia would adopt a variety of countermeasures if the Western alliance goes ahead with its plans to give membership to any East European country.

In recent days, Russian officials and Russian actions have provided some additional clues as to just what these Russian countermeasures might be.

Primakov himself told journalists in New York that any expansion of NATO would inevitably lead to a new “freeze” in relations between Moscow and the West — although he hastened to add that this cooling would not mean a resumption of the Cold War.

But precisely because this threat is so general and has been made so often, it carries relatively little weight.

More serious and specific are the implications of remarks Russian Defense Minister Igor Rodionov made at the NATO ministerial in Norway last week. In blunt language, Rodionov argued that any NATO expansion would inevitably violate the 1990 Conventional Forces in Europe accord.

The obvious import of his words is that Moscow would then feel itself free to violate the CFE accord as well and would move additional Russian military forces westward both within the borders of the Russian Federation — including Kaliningrad — and into neighboring states such as Belarus with which Moscow already has close military ties.

Expanding on this point, several Russian military officers and diplomats in recent weeks have indicated that if Poland becomes a member of NATO, Russia would certainly beef up its forces in Kaliningrad. And they have suggested that Moscow would demand expanded transit rights across Lithuania, Russia’s only landbridge to Kaliningrad. Such a possibility has already frightened many in Lithuania.

But in addition to these political and military steps, Moscow has shown its readiness to use a variety of other measures to project its power and influence westward as NATO considers moving to the East.

On Sunday, Finnish secret police chief, Seppo Nevala, said that Moscow has dramatically increased its intelligence operations in Finland and other Nordic countries. At present, Nevala said, Russian operatives use the region as a “training ground” before moving on to other Western countries.

Not surprisingly, Nevala provided few details, but he did say that Russian intelligence organizations operating there regularly employ illegal methods, an apparent suggestion that they are involved not only in the gathering of intelligence but in active measures of various kinds.

Quite obviously, in the event of NATO expansion, Russian intelligence activities would likely increase dramatically in the former Soviet republics and the Baltic states. And there these activities would likely be directed not only at intelligence gathering but at the destabilization of these often still weak states as well.

And on Monday, yet another face of the Russian response to NATO enlargement became visible. In recent weeks, Russian borderguard units have blocked the establishment of a rapid clearing system for trucks crossing the Russo-Finnish border.

Such nominally low-level obstructions to the movement of goods and services across international boundaries are yet another device that Moscow could use to bring economic and ultimately political pressure to bear on those East European states which may not be included in the alliance in the first round.

Primakov’s confession of Moscow’s powerlessness to block NATO expansion thus does not mean that Moscow will do nothing. Indeed, his words and the words and actions of other Russian officials demonstrate that Moscow can and will respond in ways that will directly threaten Russia’s neighbors if not yet the West.

But because such threats to Russia’s neighbors will inevitably have an impact on European security, the Western alliance will have to take the possibility of such

moves into account as it decides whom to include as its first new members and what to do about those states not among that select group.

New Lines in Europe

Washington, September 30 (NCA/Paul Goble) — U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry made two statements in Norway last week that individually and collectively are likely to redefine the security order in Europe over the next decade or more.

During a meeting of NATO defense ministers, Perry met with Russian Defense Minister Igor Rodionov and said that NATO and Russia will work so closely together that Moscow "will see that NATO is not a threat."

And according to press reports, the U.S. defense secretary told Rodionov in private that Washington was ready to give Moscow the opportunity to participate in the Western alliance in ways just short of full membership.

At the same time, Perry told a press conference on Friday that he did not believe that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania "are ready for membership." He quickly added that he was saying "not yet" rather than not ever, but his words represented a rebuff both to the Baltic states and to other East European countries who may be even less prepared for alliance membership anytime soon.

Each of these statements has enormous implications.

In many ways, Perry's reported offer to include Moscow in a variety of NATO forums is no surprise. It is consistent with what U.S. Secretary of State Christopher said earlier this month in Stuttgart. And it is consistent with what both American and Western officials have said for months.

Indeed, ever since discussions of NATO enlargement began, Western leaders have talked about the need to include Russia in some way so that the eastern expansion of the alliance would not provoke a negative reaction in or by Moscow. And these leaders have continued to make such proposals in the face of repeated Russian statements opposing any expansion at all.

Perry's statement on the Baltics, on the other hand, is very much a surprise. Until last week, American and other NATO leaders had gone out of their way to declare at least publicly that the alliance had not decided which countries it would invite to join or which countries it would not invite either initially or in the future.

It has been common ground among journalists, commentators, and other analysts for some time that the alliance was likely to invite Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in the first round and not to invite the Baltic countries or anyone else at that time.

But officials in alliance countries had been very explicit that no one had been ruled in or out and that no decision would be made until at least the NATO ministerial in December.

Perry's statement appears to be the first public departure from that position by a senior official in a NATO country. And it inevitably raises some serious questions: Why did he make it now? Why did he make it about the Baltic countries and not, say, one of the other East European states? And what does his statement imply about the future of security in Europe?

The answers to all these questions may very well lie in the juxtaposition of Secretary Perry's remarks about the Baltic countries and his reported offer to Moscow. That is because the two occur within the context of a complex negotiation between the West and Moscow about NATO expansion, a negotiation that has been going on despite denials all around.

NATO has been very clear that Russia will not have a veto on alliance enlargement. But the alliance's decision try to find a formula that simultaneously permits the alliance to expand without offending Moscow and integrates Russia into at least some alliance structures inevitably gives Moscow a voice if not a veto on precisely that issue.

Russian officials from President Boris Yeltsin on down have repeatedly said that they oppose any expansion of NATO to the East but that they would be especially offended were NATO to include the Baltic states as members.

Secretary Perry's remarks are the clearest indication yet that a kind of informal deal has been struck on this subject at least for the time being. The implications of that have already disturbed many in the Baltic states and will disturb other East Europeans as well.

But his clear statement that the Baltic countries will be able to join in the future has perhaps an even more important meaning:

It suggests that this latest implicit agreement between Moscow and the West will not last, that the Baltic states already enjoy an implicit security arrangement with the West, and that these three countries can attain NATO membership in the future.

And because Perry made it clear that the Baltic countries were making important strides to qualifying for NATO membership, his words suggest that the fate of the Baltic countries is as much in their hands as in the hands of others.

That by itself is a remarkable change in their security status and a basis for hope as well as concern.

Algis Rimas

Business and Investment News

Lithuanian Elections Signal Changes in Economic Policy

Early returns from the October 20 first-round of the Lithuanian parliamentary elections indicate a sweep by the center-right parties at the expense of the ruling Democratic Labor (LDDP) Party. When the dust settles after the second-round of balloting in November, the front runner Conservatives are likely to form a coalition government with the Christian Democrats and other like-minded, newly-elected legislators. The leader of the Conservative Party, Dr. Vytautas Landsbergis, is expected to gain the Speaker's chair and preside over the Seimas (Parliament). The Conservatives' announced choice for prime minister is Mr. Gediminas Vagnorius, who headed the government previously, in 1991-1992, when Landsbergis last presided over the post-independence parliament. The economy is high on Mr. Vagnorius' agenda and he spoke about making changes even as the first election results rolled-in.

According to the press, Mr. Vagnorius said that the government's budget for 1997 (see below for details), would not escape intact. Although he did not specify his proposed changes, Mr. Vagnorius is on record as calling for major cuts in taxes and in government spending. He has advocated, among other measures, exempting reinvested corporate profits from taxation, reducing government bureaucracy, including closing entire government ministries, and restoring to the central bank its former powers to manage the currency exchange rate, first de-linking the local currency from the U.S. dollar. Mr. Vagnorius has also backed plans to compensate eligible individual households who lost their savings due to frozen bank accounts and steep inflation in the past five years. Proceeds from privatizing state industries would be used to finance this program.

The Conservative Party also concluded a pact with the Association of Industrialists, headed by another ex-prime minister, Mr. Bronislavas Lubys, pledging guarantees for private property rights, promotion of investment and industrial development, government and tax reform along pro-business lines, and a stable banking system. In return, the industrialists endorsed the Conservatives' economic plank in the elections. Interviewed by *Lietuvos Rytas* after

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the close of polling, Mr. Lubys said he was looking forward to an ongoing relationship with any new rightist government as provided by the pact with the Conservatives. Mr. Lubys' group conspicuously withheld their support from the LDDP, the Social Democrats and the Christian Democrats, the last of which is allied with the Conservatives. The Christian Democrats may have failed the business lobby's test by calling for tougher tax measures and elimination of all import tariffs on products not made in Lithuania. By comparison, the current Stankevičius Government is busy negotiating bilateral tariff reductions as a condition for joining the World Trade Organization (WTO). Talks have been started with the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Argentina and Japan.

As of this writing, all the initiatives submitted for a referendum vote were headed for defeat. To carry, a referendum would need to pass by a majority of all the registered voters, not just those cast by persons who participated. As only 52 percent of the voters turned-out, no measure could win. Three of the referenda dealt with economic issues. One would have amended the nation's Constitution to permit corporate entities to own land, a privilege currently held only by individual Lithuanian citizens. If the referendum had been passed, land would have become a suitable form of collateral for business loans. Corporate creditors, including banks, currently do not accept land as collateral because they are prevented from taking it into possession in the event of loan default. Another referendum would mandate that 50 percent of government spending would be earmarked for social programs. Only 30 percent are so spent according to current estimates. The third measure would have used the proceeds of privatizing state entities to compensate savings deposits held by households in the state savings bank for losses sustained by run-away inflation in the 1992-93 period.

The Government's Budget

Finance Minister Algimantas Križinauskas announced his government's budget proposal for calendar (and fiscal) year 1997 as aimed at closing, but not eliminating, the budget deficit. Projected expenditures would be 6.4 billion litas (exchange rate is 4 litas to one U.S. dollar) against revenues of 7.6 billion litas. The budget deficit is expected to fall to an equivalent of 1.7 percent of Lithuania's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) compared to 2.4 percent to be reached in 1996. Cumulative public debt at year's end is

estimated to top 1.5 billion U.S. dollars. The Lithuanian government's agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank stipulates that the deficit is not to exceed two percent of the GDP. The maximum budget deficit allowed by the European Union for admission to its membership is five percent.

On the expenditures side, spending on public order would amount to 15.2 percent of the total, agriculture 12.4 percent, education 11.2 percent, social welfare 9.6 percent, health care 8 percent, and defense 5.3 percent (approximately one percent of the GDP). The higher defense spending, up from less than 0.5 percent of the GNP, reflects Lithuania's commitment to meet the military readiness requirements for NATO membership. On the revenue side, the country's value added tax (VAT) is expected to supply almost 36 percent of the total, personal income tax 30 percent, and corporate tax 11 percent. The remainder will be made up of excise taxes, miscellaneous fees and borrowings.

The budget requires enactment by Parliament. The Parliament that will consider the budget has yet to be formed in the aftermath of the elections. Mr. Vagnorius' comments above would indicate a major re-working of the budget. However, any new government will be constrained by the IMF/World Bank agreement to contain the budget deficit in return for continued international support of the Lithuanian economy. Accordingly, there is little wiggle-room for significant departures from the norm acceptable to the IMF regardless of who runs the next Lithuanian government.

A Read-out on the Lithuanian Economy

In the immortal words of Yogi Berra, "it's déjà vu all over again." In the U.S., economists generally give high marks to the U.S. economy but public opinion polls indicate wide-spread public anxiety about perceived falling real incomes and threats of unemployment. There is a similar tendency in Lithuania. The Ministry of Economics recently announced its forecast for GDP growth through 1999. GDP in 1996 is estimated to reach 29.6 billion litas (4 litas = \$1). In 1997 it should grow in nominal terms to 35.0 billion litas, in 1998 to 40.7 billion, and in 1999 to 45.5 billion. The current government intends to retain a fixed litas exchange rate tied to the U.S. dollar. Inflation is expected to drop to 25 percent in 1996, and continue to decline slowly to 16 percent in 1997, 14 percent in 1998, and 10 percent in 1999. The study projects annual GDP growth during this period to be in the 3.5 percent range (however, if the GDP figures are adjusted for inflation, growth rates appear to be much lower). In the short term, the September consumer price index fell to a monthly low of 0.3 percent but rebounded to over 3 percent in October. The official unemployment rate fell to 6.4 percent in September. Average monthly wages increased by 26 percent during the past 12 months to \$168 per month, a figure still below the \$203 paid in Latvia and \$223 in Estonia.

Exports are surging and are expected to reach 12.2 billion litas for the year. Further annual increases are foreseen through 1999. Total trade grew by 34 percent during the year. The share with Russia, Lithuania's major trading partner, declined from 95 percent to 40 percent during the last six years. Western markets picked up the slack. Total foreign debt in 1996 is estimated to be 5.2 billion litas, or 17.5 percent of the GDP. To service the debt this year will cost about 620 million litas, a reasonable figure according to the Economics Ministry.

A public opinion poll, done in August by the company Baltic Research, and announced in September by the daily *Respublika*, claimed that 85 percent of those polled thought the economy was headed downward, compared to 62 percent who responded similarly in 1992. Women, the elderly and rural residents were particularly pessimistic, while young urban dwellers were relatively more positive. Only 0.3 percent indicated their belief that economic prospects for them were excellent. Regardless of their expectations, 77 percent of the sample expressed confidence in the competitive market system, down from 80 percent in 1992. Echoing the poll, a study on social conditions performed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), using 1995 data, concluded that Lithuania is suffering from growing income disparities, housing shortages, declining health care services, rising mortality and falling birth rates, and sexual inequality.

Foreign Investment Climate Improves

According to the Lithuanian Statistics Department, foreign investment reached \$352 million or 6 percent of the GDP. The real figure probably is higher as some investment goes unreported. Lending voice to Lithuania's improved investment climate, the London financial magazine *Euromoney* ranked Lithuania 59th in its country risk tables. Last year, Lithuania placed only 85th in the country ratings. The Lithuanian media stressed that this time *Euromoney* considered Lithuania to be a better investment risk than either of its Baltic neighbors. Latvia came in at the 80th position and Estonia 71st.

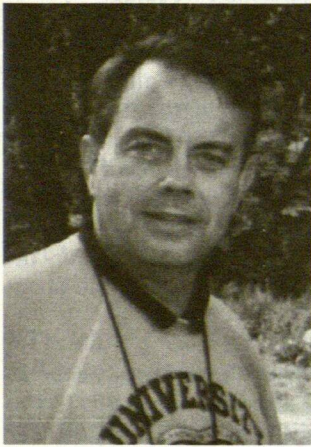
The Lithuanian Investment Agency, on the occasion of a visiting Czech trade mission, identified the best investment prospects in Lithuania. They were said to be in the textile, apparel, furniture, electronics and metal working industries. Factors favoring foreign investments would include tax concessions, the establishment of duty free zones in Klaipėda and Šiauliai, a fixed exchange rate, and positive trends in manufacturing and trade. Darius Šilas, a manager at the agency, reportedly also indicated that investment would be stimulated if state companies in the energy and telecommunications field would be offered for sale to private investors. There is no indication that this will happen any time soon.

Short Notes on Particular Commercial - Economic Developments

- The government amended its tax rules to broaden the list of items exempted from the VAT. The list was expanded to include medicines, equipment and intermediate products for the production of medicines. All hydrocarbon and nuclear fuels also will be added.
- Finance Minister Križinauskas and Central Bank Chairman Šarkinas attended the 1996 annual meeting of the IMF/World Bank during early October in Washington. Mr. Križinauskas told the press his priority was attracting foreign investment. On October 15 the World Bank agreed to the long-awaited \$80 million loan for Lithuania. The first \$40 million are being disbursed in October to pay for energy supplies; the remainder will be paid in March 1997 to fund bank reform, social insurance and agriculture, provided Lithuania meets its commitments to run sound fiscal and monetary policies.
- Lithuania's intellectual property protection agency challenged a TV election commercial prepared by the LDDP, the ruling party, because it featured the melody, Macarena, made famous at the American Democratic Convention. The intellectual property watchdogs demanded proof that copyright royalties had been paid to the composers and performers. When no such proof was forthcoming the commercial was spiked.
- Iran's Transportation Minister, Akbar Torkan, swooped into Vilnius to sign an Air Transport Agreement and a bilateral agreement governing trucking. Details were unavailable. The Iranian reportedly also held discussions with the Lithuanian government on energy, trade and education issues.
- Former Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskienė, in her capacity as Director of the Lithuanian-Europe Institute, led a four day seminar in Vilnius, sponsored by NATO, to discuss international cooperation to develop science-based industries. Participants included scientists and business leaders from the U.S., Germany, Russia, Ukraine, Belorussia, as well as the three Baltic countries. The focus of the seminar was to work out possible joint investment projects that would benefit science and technology in both East and West.
- Infobalt-96, a trade show for the computer and telecommunications industries, took place October 22-25 at the Litexpo fair grounds in Vilnius. Some 134 companies participated. Lithuania matches Spain in the number of mobile phones per 100 residents (11) but lags in computers (there are 5 per 100 residents). Investment in information technology, at \$25 per 100 residents, also ranks below western European levels but is increasing. Lithuania has 35,000 subscribers for mobile phone services. There are three providers: Omnitel, Comliet and Bite GSM.
- The Kaunas based airline "Lietuva" decided to purchase a French-built ATR-42 aircraft for its short-range routes. The ATR-42 won a competition after evaluating competing bids for the SAAB-2000, Fokker 50 and the Jetstream AJP.
- The Mažeikiai oil refinery will begin to refine the western grade A-1 jet fuel in a joint venture with the French oil company, Elf. Mažeikiai also plans to continue refining the Russian type jet fuel, RT.
- The Lithuanian government negotiated with the Czech firm, Karosa, a \$3.4 million purchase of 44 buses for urban transportation. The Czechs reportedly provided a five year loan at seven percent interest.
- The Lithuanian Joint Stock Innovation Bank (LAIB) by mid October raised 112 of the 116 million litas in capitalization required to trigger a governmental rescue package and reopen the bank for normal business. The remainder is expected to be obtained by the October 31 deadline.
- Vilnius Bank was awarded internationally recognized ratings by the publication Thompson Bank Watch. Vilnius received LC-1 for short-term obligations, and BB for long-term loans ratings. The marks are considered to be relatively high in the context of the Lithuanian economy. The bank's chairman, Mr. Julius Niedvaras, reportedly said that a stronger evaluation would depend on the country itself obtaining a higher credit rating, on foreign banks entering the Lithuanian market and on additional computerization of Vilnius Bank.
- Acreage sown for flax is expected to be halved due to the glut on the market of linen cloth. The country's heavily subsidized flax processing plants are reportedly lagging in payments to flax growers since they are in turn not able to collect debts owed them by cloth manufacturers. Prospects for improvement appear slim due to reported falling demand for linen cloth in western markets.

K. Phillip Taylor, Ph.D.

A.P.P.L.E. Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow: An Interview with Vaiva Vėbra



K. Phillip Taylor, Ph.D.

The summer of 1996 marked the sixth year that A.P.P.L.E. (American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education) sponsored in-service training seminars for Lithuanian teachers and administrators in Lithuania. The Alantas Agricultural Center near Molėtai was the site for one of the 1996 seminars. On July 16, Vaiva Vėbra, founder and Executive Director of A.P.P.L.E., sat down with the author to talk about A.P.P.L.E.'s past, present and future. The

author, a member of the A.P.P.L.E. team since 1992, interviewed Vėbra to determine her motivation for founding A.P.P.L.E. He also sought to learn how Vėbra viewed the organization's accomplishments and what predictions she would make concerning the future of A.P.P.L.E. What follows is a summary of that interview.

KT: How did you get the inspiration to begin the organization that has become A.P.P.L.E.?

VV: A person who sees a need should respond to it, not wait for someone else to do it. In 1990, Darius Kuolys was the Minister of Culture and Education for Lithuania. He had a vision of a Western, democratic, modern educational system that he felt would best serve independent Lithuania. He needed help but did not know how to ask for it or whom he should ask. It was good sense that led him to the diaspora in the United States. There were people here whose entire lives had been spent preparing for and wait-

ing to help to rebuild a free Lithuania when the opportunity came.

Providence brought me and Kuolys together at that turning point in Lithuania's history. I accepted his invitation for dozens of reasons, one necessary and all sufficient. He was charismatic, energetic, and together we had an easy rapport. I was not established in a career, but at that time my youngest children were old enough that I could dedicate myself full-time to the project. Developing an initial vision and an action plan for A.P.P.L.E. with him and our other founding members was exciting and seemed almost effortless.

Ultimately, I suppose I responded to the Kuolys' appeal because I knew that I was in a position to do the job and to directly engage with a country I had loved from an unbridgeable distance. What's more, I believe that of all the kinds of assistance we give Lithuania — economic, political, social, technological — the most important to the restoration of Lithuania's freedom, national identity and long-term success is educational. So I said yes.

KT: How many U.S. and Canadian teachers have taught in Lithuania for A.P.P.L.E. since the first seminar in 1991?

VV: Approximately 400 U.S. and Canadian teachers have participated over the years. Seventy-nine educators will participate this summer as teachers and administrators at four seminar locations: Vilnius, Molėtai, Trakai, and Šiauliai.

KT: How many Lithuanian teachers have attended A.P.P.L.E. teacher training seminars?

VV: More than 5,000 teachers, inspectors, and school administrators have attended A.P.P.L.E. courses. This number includes only the summer in-service seminar sessions. Others have attended A.P.P.L.E.-sponsored programs held at various times throughout the year.

KT: That could be a large number. I spent January, 1995 in Lithuania and lectured to students and teachers in six

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A.P.P.L.E. Board of Directors meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, March 30, 1996: Danguolė Vodopolienė, Violeta Gedgaudienė, Rimautas Bitenas, Vaiva Vėbraitė, Irena Giedraitienė, Gita Kupčinskienė, and Emilija Sakadolskienė. Photo by V. Bacevičius.

cities. On that one visit I met with more than 300 students, teachers and school administrators. How many Lithuanian cities & towns have hosted A.P.P.L.E. seminars?

VV: A.P.P.L.E. held its first seminar in Vilnius in 1991. This summer's seminar in Trakai will mark the eleventh A.P.P.L.E. conference location in Lithuania.

KT: How much money has been raised for Lithuanian teacher scholarships?

VV: As you know, the scholarship program was initiated in 1993 to help attendees with the cost of transportation, food and housing. Approximately \$20,000 have been raised each year. Almost all seminar attendees have received scholarship support since 1993.

KT: How are in-country expenses for U.S. teachers covered?

VV: In-country expenses fall into three basic categories:

1. Room and board for American lecturers are covered by the Ministry of Education and Science.
2. Local overhead expenses (i.e., use of school buildings), inter-city and intra-city transportation, and any cultural programs are provided by the local hosts. This may mean the local Department of Education and may also involve the Town Council.
3. A.P.P.L.E. pays all other expenses. The largest single outlay for us has been translators' salaries, which are only a token by Lithuanian standards but still a big

expense for us. A.P.P.L.E. has also been required to pay translators' room and board. The other major cost has been printing. This includes commercial printing as well as copier toner and paper, which are relatively expensive in Lithuania. A.P.P.L.E. has chosen to pay for certain cultural entertainment expenses that exceeded local budgets, such as the boat trips in Birštonas and last summer's Lithuanian wedding.

At this time other expenses are growing quickly. We have begun to pay for our own room and board in certain cities because the Ministry is no longer able to support financially our full program. In 1995, our in-country expenses were about

\$10,000.

KT: What observable changes have you seen in Lithuanian education since the first seminar in 1991? I'm thinking of the establishment of Teacher Centers, teacher exchange programs between Lithuanian and U.S. schools, and the introduction of computers in the classrooms.

VV: Lithuanians have become more sophisticated in their awareness of educational methods throughout the world. But they do not have much experience in applying this theoretical knowledge. They have been empowered by their A.P.P.L.E. experience. Increased communication with their peers and, interestingly, the simple respect they receive from our seminar leaders, do wonders for self esteem and self confidence. We have letters and anecdotal evidence of newly inspired and motivated teachers bringing more creative approaches back to their classes.

Unfortunately, due to the catastrophically floundering economy, many bright people have left the teaching profession in Lithuania. This is especially true for younger and more highly educated individuals. Some say that an equilibrium may have been reached at this point.

The educational infrastructure shows few changes. Construction of new schools has been stopped for want of money. There are many excellent textbooks being published but educational technology is very slow to arrive in Lithuania.

There has been a lot of talk about decentralizing the educational structure and encouraging the establishment of

private schools. However, five years later, there are only about 12 private schools, all struggling for existence. Perhaps the most significant area where new declarations are indeed being matched with resultant action is in the education of handicapped and of abandoned children.

KT: What evidence do you see of countries other than the U.S. aiding the education mission of Lithuania?

VV: In 1991, A.P.P.L.E. seemed to be the only organization sponsoring educational exchange and support for Lithuania. Now, there are dozens of organizations sending "consultants" as well as material support for Lithuanian schools. Many of these organizations are entirely financed by their respective governments. For example, in 1991, the concept of teachers' centers was entirely foreign to Lithuania. The first teachers' centers established traced their origin to support from abroad. The one in Marijampolė was founded by the Danes. The one in Kedainiai was founded by A.P.P.L.E. jointly with the Town Council. We have been told many times that this would not have happened without our direct participation, financially, professionally, and legally. These two centers have become catalysts in the teachers' center "movement" in Lithuania.

KT: What U.S. funding sources have contributed to A.P.P.L.E.?

VV: We have received minor funding in several years from the U.S.I.A. (the United States Information Agency). That organization has paid the plane fare for several lecturers. Similarly, the Open Society Fund in Lithuania (a branch of the Soros Foundation) has provided limited support for specific lecturers.

Our principal source of income was originally membership dues from individuals. Although we still receive dues, many people have chosen to send their money to the scholarship program instead of becoming members. Currently, our largest funding sources are the Lithuanian National Foundation in New York and individual donors.

KT: What advice would you give a group of educators planning a similar educational venture in another country?

VV: Follow this simple four-step procedure:

1. Create a passionately engaged team of people who will support each other through every setback.
2. Always be aware that you are dealing with an essentially different culture and that the actions of in-country partners may be hard to interpret. Your job is not to change the local culture.

3. Make certain that your colleagues in-country have a personal and professional stake in your organization's success.
4. Emphasize in all of your communications as well as in your heart that the point of your efforts is service. Excellent service to a freely chosen ideal is its own reward. To quote Thomas Jefferson: "Education is the anvil upon which democracy is forged." A.P.P.L.E. took this to heart and believes education to be the basis of modern democracy in Lithuania.

KT: Now that A.P.P.L.E. is five years old, what are the plans for the next 5 years?

VV: In truth, five years out is much too far to look in a country that is still emerging from a half-century of brutal repression. Circumstances have a way of intruding on our long-range hopes. We need to keep in mind that educational reform, and the promotion of professional contacts with the West, are part of an ongoing journey. The best predictions about the future of A.P.P.L.E. were developed at the Anyksciai conference in 1995. At that time, the participants determined that A.P.P.L.E. activities should be continued and expanded in five areas: (1) summer in-service seminars, (2) regional teacher resource centers, (3) the organization of winter seminars, (4) securing and delivering material assistance for Lithuania's schools, and (5) increasing international professional ties between teachers.

However, I also think that A.P.P.L.E. will eventually give itself a "job well done" and reposition itself into the background. As an all-volunteer organization, A.P.P.L.E. has consumed the time and resources of its greatest enthusiasts to a degree that cannot be sustained forever. We need eventually to find a gentle balance so that A.P.P.L.E. can continue to provide some contacts and services without depending upon total commitment from volunteers—or we need to secure funding at a higher level that permits professional staffing for a permanent organization. The most urgent need A.P.P.L.E. targeted — the transition to the new era of Lithuanian independence — will come to an end. With this in mind, we must reexamine Lithuania's needs, our assumptions, our goals, our plans.

KT: How can individuals support the A.P.P.L.E. program?

VV: Financial contributions are always appreciated. Persons may join the A.P.P.L.E. organization by mailing their dues in one of three categories: \$25 member, \$100 charter member, or \$250 leadership member to A.P.P.L.E., P. O. Box 617, Durham, CT 06422.

If primary or secondary teachers and administrators, as well as other educational and child welfare professionals, would like to join the summer in-service seminars in Lithuania, they should send a letter of interest to the A.P.P.L.E. address listed above.

Mary Cargill

Lithuania, Literature, and the Democratic Process

An A.P.P.L.E. Summer in Šilutė

One morning in July of 1996 as I approached the front doors of the Vydūnas School in Šilutė, Lithuania, I was surprised to see a boy playing basketball and wearing a shirt with Anfernee Hardaway's name on the back. After having come thousands of miles from Memphis to Šilutė, I hadn't even expected to see a basketball court, much less Hardaway's name on a shirt. The U.S. has exported much to even the remotest corners of Europe, including basketball and Hardaway athletic wear. Now about eighty other Americans and I were here in Lithuania with another export — the democratic process.

In 1990, Lithuania gained its independence after fifty years of Soviet occupation. Now, the country is involved in massive educational reforms that are largely carried out through in-service seminars. Educators from the U.S. and from other nations such as Denmark, Sweden, great Britain, and Finland have conducted these in-service sessions. Many want to help the Baltic States make the transition from authoritarian Soviet methods to the more democratic methods of the West. The American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education (A.P.P.L.E.) based in Connecticut is among those organizations which are assisting in the de-sovietization of Lithuanian education. Vaiva Vėbra, a Lithuanian-American who is the Executive Director of A.P.P.L.E., says that the organization's object in its teacher seminars "has been to assist in the reformation of Lithuania's educational infrastructure as she rejoins the community of nations and is reborn in freedom and democracy."

A.P.P.L.E. has been serving Lithuania in this way since the country's first year of independence.

Lithuanian Education in Flux

Paul Batesel, a professor at Maysville State University in North Dakota and a three-term teacher in the A.P.P.L.E. program's language arts strand, has had an opportunity to study the problems Lithuanian educators face. He sees the Lithuanian curriculum as heavily controlled by the content of a graduation examination. In such an environment, Batesel says, "testing methods become your methodology." But now Lithuanian education is in flux. To some, this

state of flux is too uncomfortable. A Lithuanian woman who directs a public kindergarten told me that during the Soviet occupation teachers worked twenty years or more, but that now the turnover rate is much higher. She believes the reason for this higher turnover is that during the occupation teachers knew their place. They were told what to do, what to teach, and precisely what the students would be tested on. Now the system is in a state of continuous change and some principals and superintendents have given their teachers the freedom to do things in new ways. Some teachers are frightened by this. They find the old ways easier. As one participant told me, "To have a more democratic classroom is threatening to some teachers."

Lithuanian-American Danutė Janutienė describes current practices this way: It's a pure content system. The teacher says, "Here's the content. Now give it back. [Students] are given huge amounts of information." Paul Batesel believes that the Soviet model that is still in use to some degree today is one of "recitation and regurgitation ... devoid of critical thinking."

So what does an organization such as A.P.P.L.E. bring to Lithuanian education? First, the Americans bring themselves. To come at all is to say "we care what happens to you." Second, the Lithuanian teachers are offered an infusion of enthusiasm and encouragement in what are often bleak circumstances. Finally, and perhaps most important, A.P.P.L.E. brings fresh ways of teaching that are a movement away from the rigidity of the Soviet system.

During the summer, about 1000 Lithuanian teachers attend A.P.P.L.E. seminars conducted by Americans at five different sites in Lithuania. After these seminars, Lithuanian teachers return to their classrooms energized. Much depends on how open their colleagues and administrators are to the ideas and methods they bring from these seminars. Some are shut out by their colleagues. Others' attitudes are so contagious that he next summer their fellow teachers want to be participants in A.P.P.L.E..

As to what happens in these seminars, I can only attest to my personal experience in the Šilutė language arts strand. The four Americans who conducted this strand were each to stand before twenty-five teachers of Lithuanian language and literature and model ways of teaching these sub-

jects. Before deciding what to teach and how to teach it, I had to remember that all my material would have to be translated on the spot. Because everything would take twice as long as it normally does, the stories and poems I chose had to be short. Also, because of Lithuanian hostility toward the Russians and because so many Lithuanian teachers are still dependent on Russian classroom texts, I decided not to use any Russian stories or poetry. The third factor in choosing what to teach was universality of theme. In one conversation, the more experienced Batesel said that in our language arts strand there is a "need to synthesize the formal, stylistic concerns and the cultural, sociological, and thematic concerns." Given the brevity of our time with the Lithuanian teachers, I knew I wanted to concentrate on what I believed to be more important — the thematic concerns. Batesel believes that the questions we must ask ourselves are, "What do students need from literature; what should students get from literature?"

This led me to question why I have devoted a lifetime to the study and teaching of literature. Like Zorba's young friend, I read because it helps me to know I am not alone and because it helps me to understand others. And, of course, I read for simple pleasure. I see in the best literature universality of experience. The novelist Amy Tan said recently in Memphis that she asks three questions of each piece she is writing: "What is the voice, what is the story, and why does the story need to be told?" In choosing poems and stories for my sessions, I looked for the stories that needed to be told.

Releasing Energy

My goal was to model teacher-led discussion of this literature. Knowing how to discuss literature freely is a given in most American classrooms, but not necessarily in post-Soviet classrooms. We were to have the experience and privilege of using literature to teach about the democratization of the classroom.

Our Šilutė language arts strand consisted of twenty-five teachers whose experience ranged from one year to forty-one. They taught Lithuanian language arts from the elementary level through high school. Only two men were in our group.

One of the first issues to arise was how to conduct free and open discussion without chaos ensuing. Suddenly all had something to say. It was as if someone had removed tape from the mouths of the participants. To some, our methods were clearly new. They were more accustomed to being told what to do. Often there would be so many people talking at once that we would have to stop all discussion and restore order. Undeniably, one of the things we were modeling was the democratic process.

During one session, Shirley Sabo, a retired Lithuanian-American high school teacher, the A.P.P.L.E. registrar, and long a leader in local politics, talked about her native Connecticut and its tradition of New England town hall meetings. She explained how such methods would be used in the class so that all who wanted to be heard could be and in an orderly way. One of the things the teachers learned from this related to what a former Minister of Education said at the 1995 A.P.P.L.E. conference in Anykščiai in August. He said, "Democracy is a system which is constantly in crisis." One accepts this and learns to deal with it. One teacher said, "We had only one ideology and that was forced upon us. We were locked away from the rest of the world." The teachers I met want to open up Lithuania to other ideas, to the democratic process. The democratic process is sometimes discordant as anyone who has watched the House of Commons on C-Span, but it is a creative discord.

‘Schools in which the expression of individual freedom and creativity are strongly encouraged.’ Yet the most brilliant and universally desired of reforms must start with simple steps: talking over the issues, learning about alternatives, gaining the courage of one’s convictions.”

In a classroom, as in a democracy, we must be willing to enter into discussion, defend our viewpoints, and listen to others. At the Anykščiai conference, Mrs. Sabo told us that as teachers, both Lithuanian and American, "we should be able to encourage people to develop intellectual courage."

Vaiva Vėbra wrote in a recent letter, "Lithuanian educators have embarked on a process of momentous change. The goals of this change have been clearly stated by the Ministry of Education and Science: 'Schools in which the expression of individual freedom and creativity are strongly encouraged.' Yet the most brilliant and universally desired of reforms must start with simple steps: talking over the issues, learning about alternatives, gaining the courage of one's convictions." Thus, the teaching of literature using open discussion fosters the growth of intellectual courage as well as the democratic process. Literature becomes both a means and an end.

Connections through Poetry

Let's move now to some specific examples of how open discussion was used in teaching literature. First, to poetry. Lithuanians love poetry, so I had a ready audience for every poem I presented. Their responses were intelligent and enthusiastic. Most of all, I was surprised by their willingness to relate their experience to whatever we were reading. They saw first my willingness to relate themes to my own experience, though, of course, there are limits to such disclosure.

They related easily to Ezra Pound's rendition of Li Po in "The River Merchant's Wife: a Letter" and to his universal themes of love, desire, and maturation. After reading Dudley Randall's "The Ballad of Birmingham," we talked about how we try to hold onto things that belonged to those who have died. It may be a billfold or a comb. Almost always it is personal. One participant whose mother had died giving birth to her told of how she values a pair of her mother's socks, all she has of her mother now. The experiences of death and loss know no national boundaries.

A third poem that evoked an emotional response was "Strokes." After Vilma translated the last line, I told the class of my experience years earlier as a volunteer in a New Hampshire nursing home. When I described my sudden understanding of the aphasic stroke victim, the subject of my story, when I repeated his words, "I only want to be understood," Vilma stopped translating. She lowered her eyes and started crying. I had to stop the class and let them take a break until she had calmed herself. She had gotten so involved with what she was translating that she could not go on. It is easy to begin to think of translators as machine-like, especially when they do their jobs so unobtrusively and so well. But this incident helped me realize how little like a machine she was. Again, the poem transcended national borders and touched Americans and Lithuanians alike.

Another poem which had a surprising effect was Sylvia Plath's "Metaphors." As you may know, this poem contains nine lines with nine syllables per line and is loaded with metaphors for pregnancy. Since the class was overwhelmingly female, most of whom were mothers, this poem spoke to them quite personally. Their engagement with it was on two levels — the emotional and the intellectual — but more strongly on the intellectual. Because

the poem is an intellectual puzzle or riddle, their discussion dealt with solving the riddle. At the end of the class they all wanted Vilma's written translation of the poem. In another teacher's class the next day, discussion of the poem was still going on. As evidence of their enchantment, they were trying to do in Lithuanian what Plath had done in English — let the form reflect the subject matter. Thus, you see the importance of selecting poems with such universal themes as birth and death in teaching across barriers of language and culture.

The most successful short story we studied was Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour." After it was translated, we entered into an analysis of both its form and its meaning, again with emphasis more on thematic than formal aspects. We talked at length about our understanding of Chopin's "monstrous joy" oxymoron. One participant spoke with reserve but with clear insight into the weight of "monstrous joy." I was told later that the woman had married without giving it much thought and mainly because of societal pressures, only to find within two months that she had made a mistake. She had decided to get a divorce when her husband was suddenly killed. In Chopin's story, the woman who thinks her husband has died experiences a "monstrous joy" — a wonderfully expressive pair of words. I was told the participant, too, felt this "monstrous joy" and great guilt came with it. Fortunately, she met someone else whom she loved and married. There was no way to foresee how literary experience would parallel personal experience. Again, reading helped another to understand that she is not alone, that even "monstrous joy" is universal.

One A.P.P.L.E. participant wrote, "I am enchanted by your abilities to know us." Another said, A.P.P.L.E. gives me strength for the battle against 'stagnation' in the schools. Thank you for Anykščiai where I grew wings for a new flight this autumn." Even a supportive administrator at Šilutė said, "A.P.P.L.E. seminars came like a wind bearing new ideas." But a teacher participant from Mažeikiai said it best, "Democratic relationships were not empty slogans but actuality at the A.P.P.L.E. seminar . . . and so, stereotypes fell, and we discovered new ways of thinking. Our lecturers awakened our last optimism and self-confidence."

As one of those lecturers, what I took away was a new appreciation and understanding of the value of the democratic process as practiced in the classroom.

K. Paul Žygas

The Bajorai of Lithuania: An Overview

Most of us were caught entirely unaware when the *bajorai* (boyars) of Lithuania recently formed a society complete with headquarters in Vilnius and founded the journal, *Lietuvos Bajoras*. Despite generations of emigration, assimilation, and deportation, reports of their demise turn out to have been premature. As we see, the *bajorai* are far from extinct and are actually proving to be remarkably resilient.

In Lithuania, their reappearance was initially treated with derision by some and skepticism by others, attitudes absorbed from decades of hostile Soviet caricature. An alternative, more sympathetic, but romantic image, was generally held by older generations raised memorizing passages from Mickiewicz's "Pan Tadeusz" and Maironis' "Čičinskas," which, regardless of their evocative and literary merits, are works of fiction. For their part, Lithuanian zealots and nationalists had early on labelled the *bajorai* as "polonized," quickly dismissing the entire lot.

Valuable German and Polish research aside, a more balanced view of the *bajorai* began to emerge from the works of K. Avižonis, V. Daugirdaitė-Sruogienė, A. Janulaitis, A. Sapoka and other pre-World War II Lithuanian historians; but, since the Soviets considered the *bajorai* anathema, further independent research was impossible. Today, the full range of Lithuania's cultural legacy, including the contributions made by the church, the court and the nobility, is being addressed once again. Stereotypes are being challenged and rejected. The historians now maturing in Lithuania will, in time, re-examine the full range of associated topics and come to their own conclusions. Meanwhile, we may speculate how some problematic issues pertaining to the *bajorai* (such as the Union of Lublin, polonization, serfdom) might be reconsidered in a broader, European context.

Under the Soviets, every aspect of Lithuanian history was distorted or falsified; misunderstandings about the *bajorai* were perpetuated and intensified. New misconceptions were formulated. Although the *bajorai* had formed the backbone of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, serviced its military apparatus, supplied the civil servants and the teachers in its administrative network, and provided the patrons for its cultural and artistic legacy, the Soviets

mocked and dismissed these achievements that had spanned close to a millenium.

The origins and development of the *bajorai* remain obscure, even the etymology of the word "*bajoras*" are obscure. Most linguists derive it not from Slavic but from Mongolian and Turkic languages. In Mongolian, the word "baian" means a wealthy, noble man, while "biar" means strength; in Turkish, the word "bei" refers to an important man, while the word "baiar" was associated with the ruler's elite cavalry. Other linguists see Indo-European roots, for instance, in "berjask" of Old Norse, meaning to fight. As the army of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania originally consisted only of cavalry, *bajoras* in Lithuanian originally meant a mounted warrior. In times of war, these armed ranks put their lives on the line.

To generalize about a military caste evolving over the centuries, one *bajoras* apparently represented ten hearths or households, but in an emergency, the ratio could change to lower ratios. Thus, close to a tenth of the Lithuanian population formed the *bajorija*, a higher percentage than anywhere else in Europe. They were rewarded for their military service with grants of land, and, if a freeman rendered such service, he too would obtain a grant of land and entry into the ranks of the *bajorai*. After membership had become hereditary, but before warfare demanded specialized training and expertise, or could be met by mercenaries, failure to personally meet military obligations could result in the loss of rank, land and status.

We should stress that the great military leaders of Lithuanian history did not act in isolation. Grand Duke Vytautas, for instance, would not have been able to emerge unscathed from his intermittent disagreements with Jogaila and others without the support of loyal *bajorai*. Likewise, the victory of Jogaila and Vytautas at the Battle of Grunwald in 1410 was possible only with the concerted efforts of their respective *bajorai*.

We should bear in mind that the great military leaders of Lithuanian history gained vast territories between the Baltic and the Black Seas. Eventually, and after various treaties with neighboring states, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at its height in the early seventeenth century encompassed some 990,000 square kilometers,



520,000 sq. km. comprising the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. At this time the Commonwealth was the largest state in Europe, larger than Spain and France combined. Its population— about nine million — was twice that of England under Elizabeth I.

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Remarkable administrators, Lithuania's Grand Dukes were also exceptionally tolerant rulers. Their achievements include: liberating the Ruthenians from the Tartars, defending paganism against the awesome ranks of Christendom's finest knights, providing sanctuary to Islamic Tartars and the Jewish schismatic Karaites. Systematically practiced, this tolerance led to large Jewish populations settling in the Commonwealth, now the countries of Eastern Europe.

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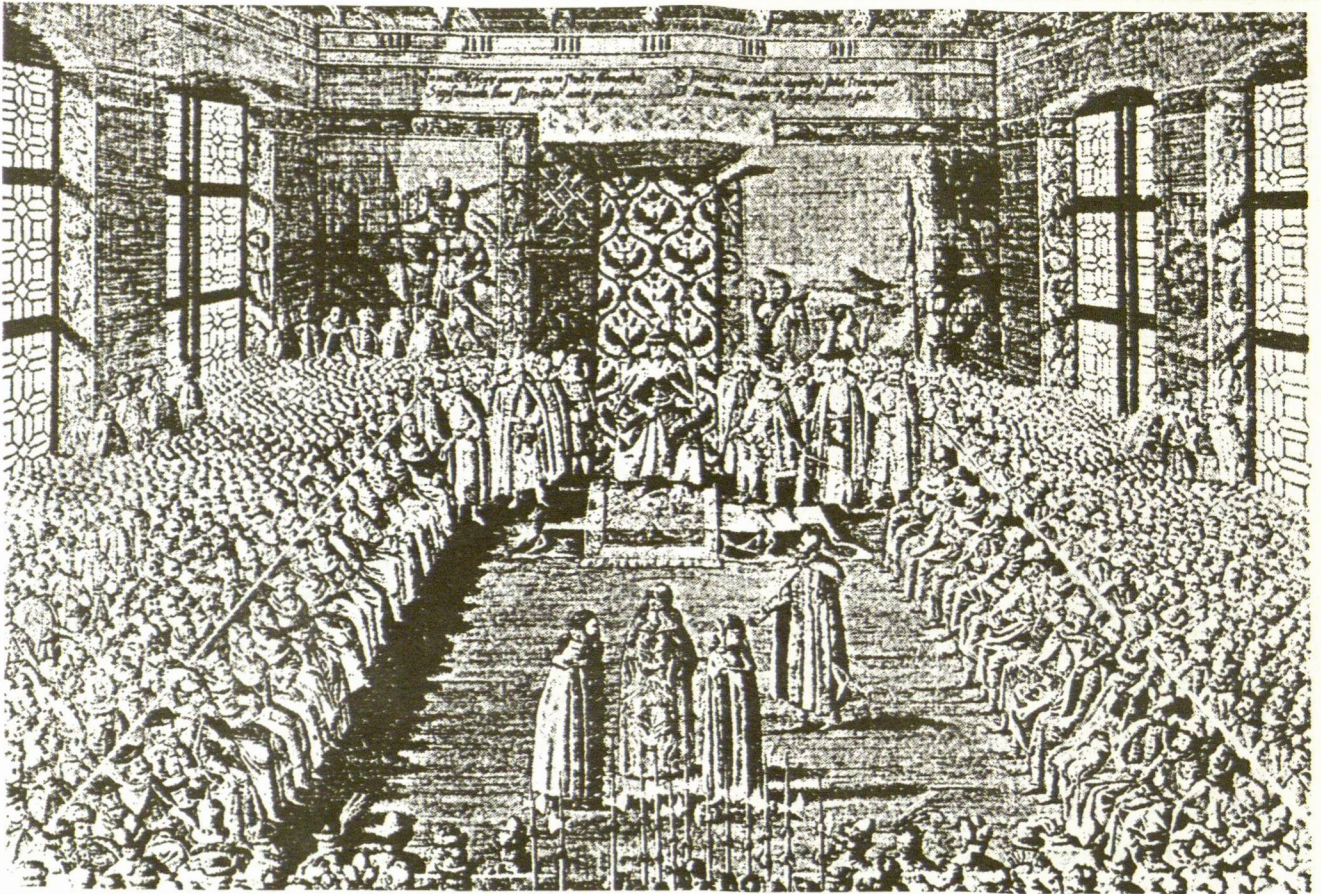
al in Western Europe, must be partially due to the fact that the Lithuanians, themselves a minority in the territories they ruled, empathized with other minorities. (Under Vytautas - Lithuanians numbered about half a million; under Zygmantas the Elder - about 750,000; under Zygmantas III Vasa - perhaps 900,000). Thus, in the lands of the Grand Duchy itself, they made up a quarter or a fifth of its total; in the larger context of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, about a tenth of the population.

These demographic estimates suggest the problems Lithuanian rulers faced trying to administer and defend the vast territories they controlled. The Union of Lublin of 1569, joining Poland and Lithuania in military, economic, and political terms, is frequently seen by Lithuanian zealots as a momentous mistake. But, as a glance at any map reveals, the *bajorai* faced major geo-political difficulties. Above all, they needed allies, potentially against Ottoman Turkey, immediately against Muscovy. For their part, the Poles sought allies as eagerly as they sought access to the lands of present-day Ukraine — endless, fertile and barely settled territories acquired by the Grand Dukes of medieval Lithuania.

It is germane to observe that if Vytautas could claim the lands between the Baltic and the Black Seas, the Ottoman sultans could have easily reciprocated the gesture by claiming lands all the way to the shores of the Baltic. In the mid-16th century, Sultan Suleiman, called "Magnificent" even by his European enemies, held unprecedented military power: his navy dominated the Mediterranean from Gibraltar to Greece; his army occupied Baghdad and was pressuring India in the east, Poland-Lithuania to the north.

The *bajorai*, assembling in Lublin, remembered full well that in their youth King Ludwig II had died in the 1526 Battle of Mohacz against Suleiman (thereby losing forever the Hungarian and Czech lands of Jogaila's patrimony). Although Suleiman had signed a treaty of eternal peace with Zygmantas the Elder in 1533, and although Suleiman had died in 1566 while fighting in Hungary, no one in Lublin could predict what Suleiman's heirs intended for Poland-Lithuania. Luckily for Europe, the allied fleets of Venice, Florence, Genoa, and Spain destroyed the Ottoman navy in the 1571 Battle of Lepanto. But, as the land forces of the Ottomans remained intact, this menace to Europe dissipated only after Sobieski's victory at Vienna in 1683. During the intervening century, the Turks (or their occasional allies — the Cossacks or the Tartars) kept on probing and threatening the extenuated southern perimeters of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Czar Ivan IV, the "Terrible," presented an immediate threat to Lithuania before and after Lublin. Seeking to obtain ports on the Baltic Sea, he started the Livonian War in 1558, continuing its brutalities until his death a quarter of a century later. Lithuania and Poland resisted, but this cost their treasuries dearly. Ivan IV also tried other strate-



Muscovite captives presented to the Zygmantas III Vasa and the *bajorai* assembled for the Seimas (Sejm) of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1611. Engraving of T. Makovski based on a sketch of T. Dolabelli.

gies. Widowed in 1560, he quickly proposed to Catherine, sister of King Zygmantas August, and advocated the creation of a Lithuanian-Russian Alliance.

Noting the three thousand Muscovite boyars murdered by Ivan IV during the *oprichnina* of 1565-1572, as well as the slaughter of the Great Novgorod's merchants, clergy, and nobles (including their wives and children) in 1570, the Lithuanian *bajorai* certainly had good reason to consider an alliance with Poland. Ivan IV's threatening presence and his numerically overwhelming armies did not disappear after the Union of Lublin. In 1572 he actively sought the throne of Poland-Lithuania once again, a calamity averted by his inability to gain sufficient support among the nobles of Lithuania and Poland as well as by his reluctance to agree to the conditions set in Cracow.

Two centuries later, after absorbing the Lithuanian parts of the Commonwealth, the czars of Russia had good reason to mistrust the *bajorai* of the former Grand-Duchy. After all, their ranks had produced T. Kosciusko and J. Jasinskis, exceptional generals leading the Insurrection of 1794 in Cracow and Vilnius respectively. Although some *bajorai*, like M. Oginskis and A.J. Cartoryskis, sought accomodation with the czars, larger numbers remained neutral or

openly hostile. In 1812, for instance, many entered the quickly formed Army of Lithuania, initially under Napoleon's direct command. All tolled, the 18th-22nd Infantry Regiments, the 8th, 17th-21st Uhlan Regiments, and the 1st-6th Light Battalions assembled some 15,000 men under D. Radvilas, A. Chodkevicius, M. Tiskevicius, K. Rajeckas, and K. Plateris, to name just a few leading *bajorai*. Despite the disastrous results of this campaign against Moscow, the *bajorai* of the following generations actively participated in the Insurrections of 1831 and 1863.

Knowing that the *bajorai* would form the backbone of any opposition, the czars made every effort to reduce, weaken, and thin out their ranks. Catherine II promulgated laws requiring the *bajorai* to prove their status, compliance with the legal provisions becoming increasingly more difficult and expensive. By 1845, when these petitions ceased to be accepted, only about 20% of the *bajorai* had been able to supply the necessary documentation. Subsequent statutes forbade *bajorai* in the guberniyas of Vilnius, Kaunas and Gardinas (Grodno) from selling land to anyone but Russians, a strategy aimed at disenfranchising and disconnecting the *bajorai* from their ancestral patrimonies. Furthermore, Lithuanians rarely found entry and made careers in the civil service, the common route into boyar

status for the upwardly mobile of the czar's subjects during the 19th century.

Given the czars' strategies for diluting the ethnic mix of the *bajorai*, given the intermarriages between Lithuanians and Poles, Russians, Germans, Swedes, and Ukrainians, given the thousands of *bajorai* and their families who were exiled to Siberia or chose to emigrate after 1794, 1812, 1831, and 1863 to Western Europe, the United States and elsewhere, it is a surprise to discover that in 1897, for the first census of the Russian Empire, a third of the *bajorai* in the historical Lithuanian guberniyas stubbornly gave Lithuanian as their native tongue. (This percentage is little changed from the percentage of Lithuanian *bajorai* estimated living in medieval Lithuania.)

This suggests that, contrary to popular belief, Lithuania's *bajorai* had not been assimilated by their neighbors. Comparing their situation to that of the Irish, the Scots, and the Welsh in the context of Great Britain, it seems that the commitment of the Lithuanian *bajorai* to their language and heritage was remarkably steadfast, becoming the basis for Lithuania's eventual political and cultural revival.

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Although the earliest Gaelic and Celtic religious and literary texts are considerably older and more numerous than their Lithuanian equivalents, these two languages are much less viable today than they were at the beginning of the 19th century. The reverse is true for Lithuanian. (From 1547 to 1800 the total number of books printed in Lithuanian numbered only about two hundred titles.) Notwithstanding this altogether inauspicious base, and notwithstanding the prohibitions against Lithuanian letters starting in 1864, Lithuanian gained strength as a spoken and a literary language throughout the century.

This was largely due to the efforts of radical 19th century writers, journalists and activists who had rejected Polish in favor of Lithuanian. Many of them stemmed from the *bajorai* and, to identify a handful, we mention: D. Poska, S. Daukantas, G. Petkevicaite-Bite, Satrijos Ragana, Julija Zemaite, Vincas Kudirka, Gabrielius Landsbergis, Aleksandras Fromas, Vladas Putvinskis, Stanislova Paskeviciene, Mecislovas Davainis. Their counterparts in Ireland, Scotland and Wales, on the other hand, were less effective with the result that, despite continuing and valiant efforts, extinction still threatens Gaelic and Celtic today.

Lithuanian fiction under the Soviets invariably featured the *bajorai* as a malicious, even evil, holdover from the past. That *kolkhozes*, collective farms created by the Soviets, had revived serfdom in another guise was an observation that could not be made in public. Explanations that serfdom had been virtually universal throughout Europe were rarely encountered. The abject poverty of most *bajorai* was also ignored (reports submitted to Catherine II in 1795 noted that, of the 60,000 *bajorai* living in Lithuanian lands, 45,000 held no serfs whatsoever; in other words, most *bajorai* were as destitute as the serfs). Eventually, other systems of land management gradually replaced serfdom everywhere, although it survived in Italy, Spain and Mexico until the land reforms in the early decades of this century.

Some Lithuanian *bajorai* opposed serfdom early on; the Sanguskiai and Cartoryskiai, for example, freed their serfs years before the French Revolution. Other *bajorai*, such as Kosciuska, Bristovksis, Karpis, Nagurskis, liberated their serfs soon afterward. We also note that in medieval Lithuania, as elsewhere in Europe, prisoners taken in war became slaves; their fate certainly being worse than that of the serfs. The Grand Duchy of Lithuania began to restrict slavery with the Statutes of 1566 and the practice gradually disappeared.

Elsewhere slavery persisted well into the 19th century: Great Britain abolished it in its colonies in 1833, France in 1848, Denmark in 1860. In the United States, we should recall, Presidents Washington and Jefferson worked slaves on their plantations. Slavery survived here until 1865, the end of the Civil War, but its after effects lingered well into the 20th century, as the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s vividly testifies.

Genealogical societies exist in most countries as a normal and integral part of their communities, representing diverse origins and memberships. The bluebloods of the United States, for instance, pride themselves for ancestry from the souls arriving here in the stuffed baggage holds of the Mayflower. Other societies are based on similar narrowly defined rationales: First Families of Virginia, Daughters of the American Revolution, and so on. The aristocrats in the Golden Book of Venice derive from the twenty-four families which first fished, gathered reeds, and dried salt in the

lagoon of Venice a thousand years ago. Australia's high society derives from the British civil servants sent there two centuries ago to supervise its penal colonies.

The Germans clearly distinguish the *Uradel* (original or ancient nobility) from the *Briefadel* (the new nobility), that is, the oldest families from those receiving patents of nobility in 1806 or later. Persons descending from medieval orders of knights are held in the highest esteem. In the case of Lithuania, the descendants of the Lithuanian clans named in the 1413 Acts of Horodlo, or mentioned in the histories of J. Dlugosz (died 1480), and especially those clearly identified and described in the works of B. Paprocki in 1584, V. A. Kojalavicius in 1656, J. A. Jablonovski in 1742, K. Niesiecki in 1728-44, the Dunaburg manuscript of 1778, or surfacing through the research efforts of A. Boniecki and J. Wolff during the 1880s, all have good reason to be proud of their roots. After all, it is considerably more honorable to defend your own country than to attack and colonize someone else's.

Soviet historical works misrepresented Lithuanian history and a more accurate picture was available only from pre-Soviet and Western historians (or one's parents or grandparents). Consequently, the efforts of the *bajorai* to establish a society and to publish a journal should be welcomed by everyone interested in Lithuania's history and culture. Given the well-orchestrated attempts of the Soviets to demoralize and lobotomize Lithuania, every effort should be made to re-establish and strengthen its historical memory, its heritage and identity, be it the folklore of the illiterate peasantry or the high culture of its most sophisticated sons and daughters. Like every other country, Lithuania has its own unique and fascinating past. And, if this legacy is to be appreciated in all of its depth, variety and richness, then, the *bajorai* should be completely rehabilitated and their patrimony thoroughly re-appraised.

BOOKS

Ramunė Kubilius

The History of the Lithuanian Language

Have you ever wanted to have scholarly information available to use in telling someone about the glorious history of the Lithuanian language? In 1996, Mokslo ir enciklopediju leidykla in Vilnius published Ramutė Plioplys' translation of a Lithuanian language work by renowned Lithuanian linguist Prof. Zigmantas Zinkevicius of the University of Vilnius.

The book seems to be useful to diverse audiences. It definitely contains much linguistic detail in vocabulary strange to many of us. However, there are also some sections which would be of interest to the student, researcher or fact checker.

Here are some interesting excerpts found in the book:

FROM THE FOREWORD (on the authority of the author)

William R. Schmalstieg of University Park, Pennsylvania, writes: "It is a great pleasure for me to greet the first history of the Lithuanian language ever to be published in English. The author, Prof. Zigmantas Zinkevicius of the University of Vilnius, is one of the most distinguished and prolific contemporary Lithuanian linguists with more than 500 articles and books to his credit. His entire study of Baltic philology

and the propagation of the Lithuanian language and culture..."

FROM THE FOREWORD (on the origin of the name of Lithuania)

"Zinkevicius writes that the name Lietuva 'Lithuania' was originally applied to the territory bounded by the rivers Neris, Neumunas and Merkys and most likely comes from the river name Lietava, a small right tributary (about 11 kilometers long) of the Neris located not far from Kernave, an important political center of Old Lithuania."

FROM A CHAPTER ENTITLED "THE FIRST REFERENCES TO LITHUANIANS..." (on the first mention of Lithuanians in historical documents)

"Lithuanians are first mentioned in historical sources at the beginning of the 11th century, later than most of the other Baltic tribes (the Yotvingians are mentioned from the 10th c., the Prussians and Semigallians - from the 9th c., the Curonians - from the 7th c., the Selonians - perhaps from the 3rd c., and the Aistians - from the 1st c.). The first time that the actual name of Lithuania is undoubtedly mentioned is

in 1009 A.D. in the Quedlinburgh chronicles written in Latin..."

FROM A CHAPTER ENTITLED "THE LITHUANIAN LANGUAGE IN INDEPENDENT LITHUANIA" (on the standardization of the language)

"The influence of foreign languages and the disparate ways in which many new words were stressed had done much damage to the accentological system of standard Lithuanian...A major break-through occurred around 1934 when stricter pronunciation and accentuation norms were established. Artists and announcers were given special lessons to learn these new norms...The grammatical structure of standard Lithuanian was established with the normative grammars written by Jablonskis, especially the 1922 edition..."

FROM THE SAME CHAPTER (on words borrowed from other languages)

"The determination of the proper status of loanwords in the standard language was also a pressing concern. Those loanwords which came into Lithuanian along with their attendant new realia were tolerated. Only those foreign loanwords which appeared as a result of enforced Polanization, Russification or Germanization for which good Lithuanian equiva-

lents already existed were opposed. Attempts were made to popularize Lithuanian equivalents..."

In scanning the book, I did not see mention of the preservation and use of Lithuanian outside of Lithuanian borders (in Western Europe, Australia, South America, North America), or the interest of linguists such as Prof. Schmalstieg. No notice seems to be made of college level Lithuanian language courses taught at foreign universities, thanks to the efforts of the post-World War II diaspora. However, some mention is made of Lithuanian-speakers who lived in Siberia or Kaliningrad, and the author mentioned the revival of Lithuanian language groups and the Lithuanian Language Institute after the revival of independence.

The chapter "THE RESTORATION OF INDEPENDENCE" did not seem to address the tremendous recent influence of the English language in Lithuania, the use of "startas", "finishas", "meetingas" and many other words with Lithuanian endings (when Lithuanian words exist), the "Lithuanization" of non-Lithuanian last names ("Danas Kvilas" for Don Quayle), etc. Reading the excerpt on pre-World War II experiences with preserving Lithuanian, one can contend that "history repeats itself" where language is concerned. A language must change and adapt if it is to live on, but linguists have always been concerned with preserving characteristics of languages which set them apart from others and popularizing their feelings among speakers of that language.

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Ramune Kubilius

A Woman in Amber

The book *A Woman in Amber: Healing the Trauma of War and Exile* by Agate Nesaule is reaching the attention of Balts and persons who read women's literature and memoirs. The book was published in 1995 by Soho Press, Inc. It is written by post-World War II Latvian war refugee, Agate Nesaule, who moved to Germany and later to Indiana with her family. The author is a graduate of Indiana University and received her doctorate from the University of Wisconsin. She is currently a professor of English and Women's Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and lives in Madison. She was in her pre-teen years at the time of the war.

The back of the book jacket reflects the various emotions the book has brought out in its readers, many of whom who are authors themselves. Doris Lessing writes "This book, about the sufferings of civilians during the Second World War is unlike most war books, because it deals with the long-term effects of war, and this makes it relevant now with more and more people in the world hurt by war." Tim O'Brien writes that it is "A heartbreaking yet inspiring memoir of tragedy and healing..." Garrison Keillor writes that "...It is her story, her family's, and that of other Latvians, and to read it is to enlarge one's own experience..." Fay Weldon writes that it is "A privilege to read this book though dreadfully disturbing..."

The author admits in her note that memory itself is unreliable. She does not guarantee historical accuracy. She tells what she remembers. The book is organized into parts and chapters which follow, more or less, the chronological order of her family's departure from Latvia. She recounts the things a child remembers — the adults staying up late to determine whether they should go, her fondness for certain aspects of the DP camps in Germany where everyone was of a similar background, her parents arguing about emigration from Germany to Brazil or Indiana.

Wartime was brutal, but life after leaving Latvia wasn't easy either. The author married a non-Latvian of whom her

family did not approve, which raised a lot of consternation in the family. Readers are exposed to other revelations about a dysfunctional family, drinking problems, underage working to supplement family income, problems in marriage...Many readers could identify with these universal problems. Set against the context of the immigrant family, they strike a familiar note with many audiences.

Garrison Keillor writes that "...It is her story, her family's, and that of other Latvians, and to read it is to enlarge one's own experience..."

Does the author mention only Latvians in her book? For the most part, yes, but in Chapter 10 "Waiting," there is a section about life in the DP camps:

A story started circulating immediately that a Lithuanian woman had managed to save her pig by putting it in a dress and covering its head with a scarf. She cried that her little girl was near dying with mysterious fever and spots, and the soldiers backed out, convinced that she was tenderly bending over a feverish child rather than a pig to be roasted on Lithuanian Independence Day. Those Lithuanians, they're so brave and they know what they are doing, in spite of most of them being Catholics, said the Latvians. The Estonians, on the other hand, claimed that the Latvians, resourceful schemers and managers, had contrived to hide some pigs in the woods because the camp administration favored them with advance information..."

Yes, the book is disturbing, but it apparently was a cathartic exercise for the author.

Ramune Kubilius

Bits and Pieces

Voting Absentee

"Of the 1200 Lithuanian-Americans who requested absentee ballots (to vote in Lithuania's elections-rk) through the Lithuanian Embassy in Washington, D.C., about half were Illinois residents. That voting block is small but influential, because American dollars can purchase political advertising in Lithuania..."

The political activism of Lithuanian-Americans stands in contrast to the apathy of many Americans during this presidential campaign, where a minority watched the Democratic and Republican political conventions and the presidential and vice presidential debates...

Lithuania allows eligible citizens permanently residing outside the country to vote in its elections. Those 18 and older with a valid passport can vote absentee or in person at the Washington Embassy and consulates in Chicago, Los Angeles and New York..."

(CHICAGO TRIBUNE, 10/17/96, from an article by Teresa Puente)

Ninth Lithuanian Youth Congress

The IX World Lithuanian Youth Congress is scheduled to take place on the East Coast of the United States in the Summer of 1997. The tentative starting date is July 18, 1997 in Washington, D.C. A study week for official representatives of the National Youth Association will take place in Washington and New York. There will also be boat rides in the New York Harbor, festive events in New York and Boston, and a camp for all participants (representatives included) along the coast of Massachusetts. The Congress will conclude August 3rd in Boston

The organizing committee, chaired by New Yorker Tomas Matušaitis, has been hard at work since Spring 1996 planning this event. Other organizers are based in Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York. Information about the Congress is available via e-mail from Jonas Jankauskas at jankauskas@aol.com, by writing "snail mail" to PLJK, PO Box 283, Manhasset, New York 11030, U.S.A., or by visiting the Web site: <http://www.pljk.org>

Since 1964, the World Lithuanian Youth Congresses have drawn close to 11,000 young people. The first congresses

drew young people of Lithuanian descent who were living mostly in the larger diaspora communities: in the United States, Canada, South America, Australia. After the downfall of the Soviet Empire, participants have included youth from Lithuania, all of Eastern Europe and Russia.

(The official parts of the Congresses traditionally have been conducted in Lithuanian, with translations as needed. Issues discussed at the study week have included concerns of Lithuania, the diaspora, and opportunities for networking among young people of Lithuanian descent. There has always been plenty of time for work and play.-rk)

(PASAULIO LIETUVIS, August 1996 and DRAUGAS 8/30/96)

Lithuanians in Atlanta's Parolympics

There were 127 countries represented at the Parolympics in Atlanta, Georgia this summer. Lithuania was 34th in the number of medals. In Lithuania there are 26 sports clubs where more than 2,000 disabled persons exercise and compete. The Lithuanian team consisted of nine people who watched the Lithuanian flag raised eleven times. Some of the gold medals won by Lithuania included Malda Baumgrade who won for shotput and disk, Aldona Grigaliūnas for longjump (where she also made a world record). The athletes were happy with their trip, but did say that Atlanta was hot and muggy, and that there were some organizational difficulties to overcome.

(LIETUVOS SVEIKATA, 8/29-9/4/96)

Vans for the Disabled

The Lithuanian Government is funding the purchase of 35 specially equipped vans ("mikroautobusai") through a special Invalid Program Fund. Twenty-one brand new Volkswagens rolled into the Eva Auto Salon courtyard in Vilnius in late August. The government will continue the support through 1999. In 1996, its support was for 2 million litai. The vans cost 85,000 litai each and are totally disabled-accessible, each containing 2 platforms for wheelchairs and four seats. At special ceremonies, the vans are being turned over to regional and city governments, and a special international disabled persons' logo/seal will be affixed on each van. At the ceremonies, besides local and national government officials, there was a Salesian

Religious Order student who planned on raising the issue of support for Lithuania's disabled when he returns to his studies in Italy.

(LIETUVOS SVEIKATA, 8/22-8/29/96)

Olympic Bronze Stolen

Upon his return after playing with his club "Neptune" in Sweden, basketball player Eurelijus Žukauskas was dismayed to find that his apartment in Klaipėda had been broken into. Among the things stolen — his Olympic bronze medal from the Atlantic games, and some equipment which he had purchased with money awarded after the win by the Lithuanian government. Žukauskas placed a notice in the daily paper *Klaipėda* requesting that the thieves be so kind as to return anonymously the sentimental Olympic souvenir to its rightful owner.

The Polinkevičiūtės of Panėvėžys: Twin Sister Bicyclists

At the World Bicycling Championships in Lugano, Switzerland on October 12th, Lithuania's twin bicyclist sisters Rasa and Jolanta [featured on the cover of the June/July 1996 issue of **BRIDGES**] Polinkevičiūtės (Polinkevičiūtės) rode well. Rasa won a silver medal in the 100.8 km race by riding in 2 hours, 53 minutes, 22 seconds. The winner was Barbara Heeb of Switzerland who won by only 17 seconds. Jolanta was fifth and another Lithuanian, Edita Pučinskas (Pučinskaitė), was eighth. In the "Tour de France" during the summer of 1996, Rasa was second and Jolanta was fourth. At the Atlanta Olympics, Jolanta was fifth, and Rasa was twelfth.

(DRAUGAS, 10/18/96)

Lithuanian Acrobat in Oklahoma

Lithuania's Jurgis Kairys won a silver medal in the acrobatics flying championships held recently in Oklahoma. In the world standings, which are tallied by championship point totals, Kairys stands fourth in the world.

(DARBININKAS, 10/4/96)

Lithuanians First to Link into Legal Network

The October 1996 issue of *American Libraries* published a news item about the Global Legal Information Network (GLIN). About a dozen project directors met September 3 - 6, 1996 at the Library of Congress, having received assistance in travel funding by the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. GLIN is a database of the laws of 11 participating nations, with abstracts in English based on a common legal thesaurus accessible on the Internet. An additional dozen nations are currently seeking membership. GLIN Director Rubens Medina congratulated

Aušra Petraitienė of Lithuania, which received the GLIN Model Station award for being the first nation to achieve full database participation.

Baltic News Service

A new agency, the Baltic News Service, has begun to make news available on the Internet with updates every two hours. The news is available in English and in Lithuanian. Some of the links on the BALTIC NEWS SERVICE Web home page are interesting in their diversity. The Lithuanian page leads to home pages such as the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture (in Chicago), the folk dancing group "Audinys" (in Detroit), to food recipes, information about Lithuania's weather, travel information, links to governmental agencies, etc. The home page address is www.bns.lt

(from DARBININKAS, 10/5/96 and from sweeping through the site a bit-rk)

Fulbright Artist from Lithuania

Aidas Bareikis was born 1967 in Vilnius. He attended the M.K. Čiurlionis Middle School in Vilnius and later entered the Vilnius Art Academy. In 1993, he received a Fulbright Scholarship and is studying at Hunter College, part of the City University of New York. He is preparing for his master's degree. To support his education, he received one-time funding from the Open Society Fund (Soros) in Lithuania and the Lithuanian National Foundation in New York. Bareikis doesn't want to think about creativity within someone else's framework. Creativity, in its highest form, becomes an arena which can countermand tradition and convention. September 5-28th at the 1996 Soho Art Festival, Aidas Bareikis was invited to participate with his installation art. Work was selected from master's degree students by MOMA (Museum of Modern Art) curator in New York, Robert Storr.

(DARBININKAS, 10/4/96, from a longer article by Aleksandra Kasiuba)

Gintė Damušis Transfers to Vienna

Gintė Damušis, formerly an advisor to the Lithuanian Mission to the United Nations, and longtime Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid employee and Director of its Information Center, moved to Vienna, Austria in October. She will work as an advisor to the Lithuanian Embassy in Vienna, and as section head of the Lithuanian Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. (Gintė was born and raised in Detroit and is a graduate of Wayne State University.-rk)

(DARBININKAS, 10/4/96)

Credit Union

The Lithuanian Credit Union "Taupa" of New England has been in existence for 15 years. Its capital now is \$8.5 million. "Taupa" is proud of the fact that its CD (certificate of deposit) returns are comparable or better than other banks in the area. The "Vytyis" Mastercard has been very popular among its clientele. Four full-time staff members are employed at the credit union.

(DARBININKAS, 10/11/96, from an article by J.A.)

Pažaislis Convent History

The Pažaislis convent near Kaunas has published a brochure about the convent's history, its baroque-style architecture, and its importance to Lithuanian Catholic life. At present, the brochure is being published only in Lithuanian, but plans are underway to translate its contents into English, German, and Italian.

This publication represents the first time that tourists from Western Europe will receive detailed information about this artistic jewel which was a project of Italian masters. At the time Lithuania's chancellor Pacas paid eight barrels of gold for the labor. The brochure will also serve to educate Lithuania's youth. The brochure is a project of Sister Margaret Petcavage, a Sister of St. Casimir from Chicago, IL.

(DARBININKAS, 10/11/96, from an article by A. Liepinaitis)

Canadian-Lithuanian Days in Mississauga

The Lithuanian Folk Institute was founded by Canadian Lithuanian immigrants in 1977. The Institute has published a number of books about Lithuanian folk and ethnic art. Members meet on a regular basis, and in 1996 the meeting is scheduled to take place October 12th at the Canadian Lithuanian Days in the Mississauga, ONT Anapolis Parish Exhibit Hall...

Laisvoji Lietuva Folds

On September 19th, the last issue of the newspaper *Laisvoji Lietuva* was distributed in Chicago. The newspaper ended its life at age 50 due to the decreasing number of readers and capable editorial staff...

"Brevis" Choir Wins First Place

The "Brevis" choir of the St. Casimir Church in Vilnius returned from the Flemish (Belgian) international choral competition with a first place award in its division. The collective also won a first place "Grand Prize" award in April at an international choral competition in Slovenia.

(DARBININKAS, 10/11/96)

Rubackytė in Chicago and on CD

The Marco Polo Music Publishing Company has put out a compact disc of pianist Muza Rubackis (Rubackytė) playing the piano works of composer M. K. Čiurlionis. Music critic Guy Richards of the journal *Gramophone* and music critic Adrian Corleon of *Fanfare* both gave positive reviews for its emotional rendition of the works and recommended the disc. Muza has performed concerts to North American Lithuanian audiences, and she is scheduled to perform again in Chicago on November 10th.

(DRAUGAS, 11/12/96)

Partisan Choir

"Girių Aidas" is a men's choral ensemble comprised of former Lithuanian partisans of World War II. The ensemble is scheduled to come to North America (Chicago, Los Angeles, Detroit, Toronto, Denver and New York) for fund-raising concerts in October.

A number of them are musically educated and one is an opera singer. They will present programs of songs not frequently heard, composed and sung in the difficult years of exile from Lithuania — songs of sorrow, homesickness, patriotism, and hope for the future. (The living conditions of former partisans upon their return to Lithuania from exile to Siberia has been difficult since most of them do not receive pensions.-rk) Among the choir members is Antanas Luksa, brother of the legendary partisan Juozas Luksa-Daumantas, who went by the name "Arūnas." Antanas was one of five brothers, who, together with their farmer father resisted the occupation of Lithuania in various ways, and were severely punished for it.

(DRAUGAS, 11/12/96, from an article by Marija Remys)

The Draft in Lithuania

The fall call for military service registration has begun in Lithuania. Between September and November, 2700 youths between the ages of 19-27 will be called to register. Of that group, approximately 1,000 will be selected for military service, the national guard, civil defense, and the Lithuanian Military Academy service. About 1500 will be assigned other service duties such as in the border patrol. After one year of service, they will be "on call."

The new call to service has been computerized. Medical clinics have been set up in the regions to help process the young men. It may become more difficult for young men to get out of required military service. To date, that has been all too easy. Of the 24,059 young men sent notifications in the spring of 1996, about one half did not show up for registration. Of those who did register, about 40% were able to avoid service for medical reasons indicated on the list of medical release.

(DRAUGAS, 10/12/96)

Jeanne Dorr

A Tale of Two Grandmothers

This article is another in a series on Orphan Care. As the holidays approach (as does the cold weather), what would make a better present than to sponsor a child through Lithuanian Orphan Care? For \$150, a child's needs can be taken care of for a year. In most cases, this donation makes it possible for that child to remain in his or her family, be it with a grandmother, a sibling, or another close relative.

This month I'd like you to meet two grandmothers whose beautiful spirits would be hard to match anywhere in the world. One is a city resident and the other lives in a small village. Both are raising their grandchildren and, thanks to the generosity of American sponsors, they are able to keep their families together.

In Bebrūnų Village.

In the summer of 1994, I traveled with Gražina Landsbergis to a small village outside of Anykščiai. There we interviewed a grandmother, took the information necessary to find her two grandchildren sponsors, and left her with clothing, food, and vitamins. Two years passed between my trips to Lithuania and, although I met hundreds of children and their families, there were certain ones I couldn't get out of my mind. I had no contact with this family except to know they had sponsors, but I still had a gnawing feeling about this case. Maybe it was because the children were so beautiful, or maybe it was because the grandmother reminded me of my own grandmother who left Lithuania so many years before. Whatever it was, I had to go back to that village.

Traveling through Lithuania's villages is always a challenge, even for native Lithuanians, especially if they are city born and bred. I talked my friend and her husband into driving me to Bebrūnų village. We left Vilnius in the morning and I kept wondering what I would tell them if I found no one home. My head would probably roll if it turned out that I had dragged them on a wild goose chase. Since the family had no phone, I had no way to make prior visiting arrangements.

However, I did discover that some things are universal; people will give directions whether they know the place or not. Five different people gave us five different directions for the road we were trying to find. At last, an older woman who was walking her cow along the road told us to drive a short distance and turn at the tall building on the corner.

She assured us there was absolutely no way we could miss it since it was the only big building in the village. She went



Dzolana and Ugnius and their grandmother in Bebrūnų village.

on for five minutes with an elaborate description which had to be nothing short of a skyscraper. In my own mind, I was trying to figure out why there would be such a building on a dirt road in the middle of nowhere. We drove and drove and kept coming back to where the "skyscraper" should be located. We finally spotted our lady friend again when she proudly pointed to a two-story building on the corner. This was our "skyscraper" landmark. Now things were back to normal again.

Our grandmother was working in her small field tending her vegetables. She was stooped and workworn but was genuinely glad to see me again. She told me that 14-year-old Dzolana was in the woods picking berries and 8-year-old Ugnius was fishing. This wasn't pleasure and relaxation fishing — this was dinner fishing. I told her I had other families to visit in the town of Anykščiai and that we would return on our way back to Vilnius.

We spent seven hours visiting other Orphan Care children and their families when we started our return trip to Bebrūnų village. Now that we knew where to turn at the "skyscraper," we didn't have any problems finding our road. The children and their grandmother were waiting for us all dressed up in their best clothes. The clothes had been given to them as part of their Orphan Care provisions. I

toured the garden, admired the chickens and the cow, but still couldn't shake the feeling that something wasn't right. The children took my friends to show them a project they were working on near the barn while the grandmother and I went inside.

The house consisted of two rooms and a tiny room off the back porch which held a small bed. There was no indoor plumbing or central heat and I couldn't help but wonder how cold it must be during the long Lithuanian winter. Everything was spotless. You could literally eat from the floor. There was nothing out of place, but then again, the family didn't own many possessions.

The grandmother told me how grateful she was to Mrs. Landsbergis and Lithuanian Orphan Care. She could not afford to keep her small family together without help. And yet these grandchildren were all she had in the whole world. She had only one child and he was killed in a motorcycle accident. She proudly pointed to a large picture of him which hung on the wall. She explained to me that she had always raised the children because their mother abandoned them even before their father died. The mother has no contact with them and they thought perhaps she was in prison but they weren't sure.

"Bad Luck and Bad Breaks"

From my last visit I remembered there was a grandson in his early twenties. I asked her how he was doing since I knew he was the breadwinner of this small family. It was at this point that two large tears rolled down her cheeks and then the tears started like a flood. Her grandson was riding his bicycle home from work when he was hit by a drunk driver. He was lying in a hospital in Vilnius and the prognosis was not very good. He would probably never walk again and had fallen into a deep depression. He was terrified of what would happen to his grandmother, sister and little brother. He wanted to die because now his grandmother would have the added burden of taking care of him when he returned. Few Lithuanian drivers have car insurance, and in this case, the driver didn't even have a job. Unlike America, there are no law suits; there is just bad luck and bad breaks. Between her sobs, she kept apologizing for "spoiling" my visit. Lithuanian people are very proud and they don't like to burden others with their problems. I assured her that both younger children would continue to receive support from Lithuanian Orphan Care.

Before I left Philadelphia for Lithuania, a woman pressed some money into my hand and told me to find someone who could use it. I left this grandmother with half of it because I still didn't know what would be in store for me on the rest of my trip. I couldn't help her grandson but, through the generosity of a grandmother in far away Philadelphia, this grandmother could at least stop worrying about money for few months. When I asked her what we could do to help her, she replied, "Please pray for my

grandchildren." As is typical of our Orphan Care families, she asked nothing for herself. The sponsors of these children will never really understand the impact they have on the lives of these little ones.

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grandchildren."

Blueberries in Kaunas

The second grandmother I would like to introduce you to lives in Kaunas with her five granddaughters. At least this time I wouldn't have to look for a "skyscraper" on a dirt road. The only problem is that I have no sense of direction and everything in this large city looks the same to me. This time, I dragged my cousin with me.

You really haven't lived until you've traveled on a local bus in Lithuania. Now I know what a sardine in a can must feel like. We were not only wall-to-wall people, we were floor-to-ceiling people. I finally breathed a sigh of relief when I found a place to stand that had a seat to hang onto. Now my biggest worry was not to knock over the pails of berries that were on the floor next to many seats. Lithuanians are patient people, but I'm sure their patience has a limit when they see their many hours of hard work rolling down the aisle of the bus. Since my cousin and I were standing separately, I was trying to concentrate on watching her to see where we should get off. In the meantime, three people on each side of me were telling me their life stories. They also included advice about how all of Lithuania's problems could be solved. This information was unsolicited on my part but it didn't seem to bother them in the least. As I was stepping off the bus, I felt great relief — I had the answers to all of Lithuania's problems and I hadn't spilled even one pail of berries.

As we approached the large maze of old soviet-style apartment buildings, I decided to run into a store across the street and buy the children some candy. I bought five bags

Caring for the Caregiver



Gintarė, Indrė, Ingrida, Jūratė, Naujolika, and their grandmother in their Kaunas apartment.

of mixed candy for about 12 cents a bag. I had telephoned the day before my visit so the grandmother and her five granddaughters, ages 16 to 7, were waiting at the door for us. They all threw their arms around me and I felt very much at home. We exchanged news and I gave them the photographs I had taken of the children two years earlier. Photographs are a luxury for this family and, even by the light of only one bulb, they couldn't look at them enough.

A Room and A Half

As in the case of the country grandmother, the house was spotless. All six people live in a room and a half. The table, a small coffee table, was set with a white tablecloth and I would have offended them if I did not eat. Besides, after that bus trip from one end of the city to the other, I was starved. The menu consisted of cold blueberry soup, blueberry pancakes, and blueberry bread. I guess I don't have to tell you what berries were in season at that time of the year.

As we devoured this delicious meal, the talk turned to the previous winter which was just as brutal as the "96" American winter. The grandmother had fallen on the ice and severely injured her arm, leg and hip. It was impossible for her to go up and down the many flights of stairs so she was homebound. She spoke of her joy and gratitude when Father Viktor Aukštakalnis appeared at her door not only with the Orphan Care support money for her granddaughters but also with clothing for the children and much needed food. The grandmother cried when she told me that Father Viktor provided her not only with the material necessities that were so important but also with spiritual guidance to get herself well for the sake of the children. I thought to myself how fortunate this family was to have Father Viktor among them.

These grandmothers provide material and spiritual guidance for their grandchildren but who worries about them? Who is there to listen to their problems or comfort them when they need someone to encourage them: She was a widow who raised her own daughter to the best of her ability but it wasn't enough. The daughter entered into a disastrous marriage and was abandoned by her alcoholic husband. She, in turn, also became an alcoholic neglecting and then abandoning her children. For some reason, one that only she alone can understand, she refused to give the children to her mother or to tell her mother where they were. She dumped four of the girls on the steps of an orphanage. But what had she done with the youngest daughter? The grandmother was able to obtain custody of the four children but almost a year of tears, prayers and sleepless nights passed before she found the youngest child in a different orphanage. Today, the children seem happy and well-adjusted, but the grandmother is terrified that she will not live to see them all grown. As for the mother, she is still an alcoholic walking the streets of Kaunas. Imagine the pain this mother must feel when she sees her daughter on the street, or imagine the agony of the older children when they see their mother trying to sell herself so she can buy a drink. Mercifully, she has no contact with her mother or her children.

The grandmother told me that one day they packed a lunch and went to a nearby lake. The children shuddered when they saw a group of children from an orphanage on a similar outing. They seemed so sad. Their grandmother told them that if it were not for Lithuanian Orphan Care and the goodness of American strangers, they might find themselves in a similar position. The children were so moved they gave their homemade bread to the orphanage children. They realized you can always find someone whose circumstances are worse than yours.

As I was leaving, I gave each child a bag of candy. They were delighted as their grandmother pretended to scold me for "spoiling" them. But we all saw the twinkle in her eye and the smile on her face. As we once again hugged goodbye, the grandmother asked me to relay a message for her. She asked me to tell the people at Orphan Care and the children's five sponsors that not a night goes by that the family does not say a prayer for us. She didn't seem surprised when I told her that every night I said a prayer for the Orphan Care children and their families. She insisted on giving me a gift as I was leaving . . . what else but a jar of blueberries? It was time for one more hug, and now it was my turn to stand on the crowded bus with berries, but at least mine were in a jar and not a pail. But more than holding berries in my hand, I was holding memories in my heart.

The cost to sponsor a child is \$150 a year but any donation is greatly appreciated. You will receive the name, address, birth date and any other pertinent information we have about your child. It is up to you to contact the child if you so choose. We are not a "professional" organization. We have no 800 telephone number, plush offices, or outlandish administrative salaries. WE ARE VOLUNTEERS. We try to send every possible dollar to the family. But for our work to continue to grow, WE NEED YOU! Without your support, there is no Lithuanian Orphan Care. For each child we help, there are hundreds more waiting for sponsors. Lithuania's children are her unfinished symphonies. Their futures are in YOUR hands.

I'd like to close with a quote from the late Helen Keller:

The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt from the heart.

Please carry Lithuania's forgotten children in your heart.

Tax deductible checks may be sent to:
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Letter to the Editor

October 8, 1996

Letter to the editor:

There is much to be said about the gradual dissolution of ethnic minorities into the melting pot of this nation. This is also true of the Lithuanian-American community as Dr. Tomas Michalskis duly notes in his article for BRIDGES (June-July, 1996). He also takes issue with some of my own views on this phenomenon in a brief article for BRIDGES (May, 1996).

A more extended exposition of my views on this subject may be found in "A Rich Heritage" published by BRIDGES in September, 1994 which I commend to Dr. Michalskis.

Sincerely Yours,


Albert Cizauskas, MA.

To Our Readers, from page 2

together but also for sharing information through the monthly church bulletin, giving schoolchildren a public forum for their performances, and providing a focal point for the community as a whole.

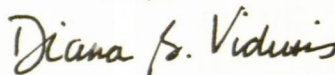
Joe also knew how to make a good thing better. There had been a long-standing tradition in the Washington community of holding a Mass in Lithuania's intention on the Sunday closest to February 16 at St. Matthew's Cathedral, the same church in which the funeral Mass for President John F. Kennedy had been held. An active participant in his own parish, Annunciation, Joe decided to speak with the church authorities to suggest ways to raise the profile of Lithuania through this Mass. I recall that the priest at St. Matthew's always gave a highly intelligent, well-researched and moving sermon about the plight of Lithuania to the huge Sunday crowd, most of whom were not Lithuanian. Unbeknownst to most, the sermon had been painstakingly crafted by Joe himself, and the priest a friend of Joe from Annunciation, Father Duffy. Joe arranged for the flag to be placed on the altar and for the hymn "Faith of Our Fathers" sung, with its references to the hardships of sustaining faith also applicable to a Lithuania suffering under the Soviet regime. Finally, Joe provided for the outstanding choir at St. Matthew's to deliver beautiful renditions of "Marija, Marija" and

"Lietuva, Tėvynė Mūsų" in Lithuanian — a feat most Lithuanians would probably never have thought American voices would wish to or be capable of undertaking.

Although numerous individuals have served on the Lithuanian Mission's board over the years (myself included), the voice of reason, practicality, and consistency was always Joe's. He was jealous of no one, content with himself, and always ready to get to work. He spoke slowly and evenly, pausing always to consider his response before giving it, but allowing a twinkle of merriment to enter his eyes if he could inject some humor into the discussion.

It is no small accomplishment these days to note that Joe had a strong marriage to the same wonderful woman for 28 years and that he raised two good children. He loved New England, and his children live there now. It was partly because of his enthusiasm for Neringa in Vermont, where his children attended Lithuanian heritage camp, that I take my children there now. He supported his wife in her artistic endeavours, and she supported him in his Lithuanian activities. He had a very rich life, and we are the poorer for losing him. We will miss you, Joe.

Su viltim,



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Parishioners of the Sacred St. Peter 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 (Alytus Marijos Krikščionių Pagalba Bažnyčia) Former Pastor J. Walter Stankevich and Bob Burns (left and sixth from left).

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Chicago's Navy Pier, site of the 10th Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival's "get acquainted" evening.

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