
BRIDGES

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Highlights from the LAC 50th Jubilee...NATO Updates

P e r s p e c t i v e s

Another Lithuanian-American icon will be only a treasured memory...

In the November 30, 2001 issue of the Darbininkas (The Worker), T. Benediktas Jurčys, OFM, Franciscan Provincial, announced that the weekly newspaper would cease to be published as of January 2002.

According to Jurčys, the Lithuanian Franciscans united three Lithuanian newspapers, which were in financial crisis: Pittsburgh's Lietuvių Žinios (Lithuanian News), Boston's Darbininkas (The Worker), and Brooklyn's Amerika (America) in 1951.

For 50 years Darbininkas provided the connection between many Lithuanians on the East Coast, primarily New York City area. Each subscriber could vicariously be part of activities and events just by reading and communicating with friends about them.

Lithuanians applauded for each other, comforted each other during times of loss, and cheered together when the news was as fantastic as the announcement of the reestablishment of Lithuania's independence.

Why are the presses stopping? The story is all too familiar. Many subscribers have died, youth have not subscribed, and costs to run the newspaper have steadily risen above what was affordable. The Franciscans manned the newspaper and didn't draw a salary. Currently there is only one Franciscan left — the rest are salaried employees.

The only consolation we have is that with each generation of newly-arrived Lithuanians there are changes in the form of increased parishioner numbers at all ready established Lithuanian churches, an interest in maintaining the language by enrolling children into Lithuanian schools, and the desire to connect with others. This connection inevitably takes the form of newspapers, clubs, events, and informal gatherings.

The only difference between what has passed and what will be is the method...the machine by which it is done...the rebirth in a form befitting the future. Will there be other newspapers to take the place of Darbininkas? I truly think so. Connections do not simply fade...they grow stronger and are empowered by a forum. Enterprising newly-arrived Lithuanians will hit the ground running, and we will soon see the presses churning again.

Rasa Ardys-Juška

Editor

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Have you got the time?

Lithuanians haven't always been on "time" with the rest of the world. In fact, it took a few hundred years before she caught up with the calendar we all use today.

The Lunar calendar was used in ancient Lithuania. The Solar calendar took root with the development of agriculture. From the middle of the 13th century until the end of the 16th century, the Julian calendar became official in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The Gregorian calendar was introduced in the year 1586. This counting of time was abolished in 1800 when Lithuania was divided for the last time and fell under Russian rule. Russia used the old Julian calendar and reintroduced it in Lithuania.

In 1918, when Lithuania became independent, Lithuanians began to use the standard calendar. Changes of official calendars caused many disorders and misunderstandings in calendar traditions. Finally, most pagan festivities were connected to the Christian Holydays.

The names of months in Lithuania are connected with phenomena in nature, seasonal works, holidays, flora and fauna. The days of the week are called according to their place in the week; Pirmadienis – first day; Antradienis – second day; Trečiadienis – third day; Ketvirtadienis – fourth day; Penktadienis – fifth day; Šeštadienis – sixth day; and Sekmadienis – seventh day.

On the cover:
GRANDIS Lithuanian folk dancers at the 50th Jubilee Celebration on October 13th, 2001 in Chicago.
Photo: J. Tamulaitis

Teresė Gečienė

LAC GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATION

Threats of terrorist attacks, media hype about fear of flying did not deter Lithuanian-Americans and their guests from Lithuania to gather in the Chicago area for a week long celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. From October 8th through the 14th there were enough events and activities to please every taste: from highbrow discussions to pure Lithuanian entertainment.

To bring as many people as possible from throughout the United States, it was decided by LAC leadership to hold the celebration in conjunction with the annual Board of Directors meeting. To include dignitaries from Lithuania, the semi-annual session of the Joint Commission of Seimas (Lithuanian Parliament) and LAC was scheduled for the first time to meet in the United States rather than in Vilnius during the first part of the week of the Board of Directors session.

A happy coincidence brought the distinguished Boys' Choir *Ažuoliukas* from Lithuania to participate in a youth choirs' Friendship Festival in Salt Lake City in October. Thanks to the coordinating efforts of Marija Remienė, Chair of LAC Cultural Council, the jubilee celebration would have a magnificent finale with a concert by *Ažuoliukas* on Sunday, October 14!

A Brief Summary of Jubilee Events

From October 8-11, the Joint Commission of Seimas and LAC met at the Lithuanian World Center in Lemont, IL. The Commission has four mem-

bers from Seimas representing each of the major political parties and five elected members from the LAC Board of Directors. Co-chairs of the Commission are Vaclovas Karbauskis from Seimas and Liuda Rugienienė from LAC.

The Joint Commission meets to discuss issues of mutual concern both to Lithuania and to Lithuanian Americans, such as double citizenship, educational and economic cooperation, double taxation of pensions of Lithuanian-American retirees living in Lithuania, taxation of charitable donations, etc.

To discuss reforms in Lithuania's higher education brought six administrators of institutions of higher learning in Lithuania and fourteen Lithuanian-American academics to share their experiences in American universities and colleges. Coordinated by Dr. Stasys Bačkaitis, vice president of LAC National Executive Committee for Academic Affairs, they held two day long meetings and presented their conclusions to the Joint Seimas and LAC Commission.

The 16th LAC Board of Directors met for its second annual session October 12-13 at the Radisson Hotel, Alsip, IL. Current Chair of the Board is Regina Narušis, Esq. Among the distinguished guests were Ambassador to the U.S.A. Vygaudas Ušackas, Ambassador to the United Nations Dr. Gediminas Šerksnys, Vice president of Seimas Artūras Skardžius (representing Artūras Paulauskas, President of Seimas), Minister of Education Algirdas Monkevičius, Minister of Social and Human Services Irena Blinkevičiūtė, General Consul of Lithuania Giedrius Apuokas, Honorary Con-

TERESĖ GEČIENĖ is The Lithuanian-American Community Inc.'s Information Services officer.

sul Vaclovas Kleiza, the rectors and vice rectors of institutions of higher learning of Lithuania, as well as members of the Joint Commission from Seimas.

Guests from Lithuania closely observed the session's meetings and also had an opportunity to visit the many Lithuanian institutions in the Chicago area.

One of the more important changes in the LAC structure voted during this session was the creation of the 10th region (apygarda) of LAC to encompass the heretofore "independent" chapters of Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, and Texas.

The Board of Directors session included a gala dinner on Friday, October 12, attended by many prominent Lithuanian-Americans not only from the Chicago area, but also from throughout the United States. The keynote speaker was Vytautas Volertas, former two term national president of the LAC.

Saturday, October 13 was the official commemoration of the Golden Jubilee of the LAC held at the Lithuanian Youth Center (Jaunimo Centras) in Chicago. After official greetings by Dr. Petras Kisielius, President of the Jubilee Organizing Committee, Artūras Skardžius, Vice president of Seimas; Vygaudas Ušackas, Ambassador of Lithuania to the United States; Bronius Nainys, former National President of LAC, former president of the Lithuanian World Community and the author of the book *Lietuvai ir Lietovybei (For Lithuania and Lithuanian Heritage)* written expressly for the Jubilee; delivered the main address.

S. Algimantas Gečys, current President of the National Executive Committee of the LAC, presented commemorative plaques to five organizations which play prominent roles in the preservation of Lithuanian heritage among the youth: Ateitinkai (Lithuanian Catholic Youth Organization), Lithuanian Scouts of America, Knights of Lithuania, and the Lithuanian Folk Dance Institute. The fifth recipient was The Lithuanian Foundation whose financial support enables much of the cultural, educational, and social services work of the LAC and many other

Lithuanian organizations.

The formal part was followed by a cultural program featuring the choir *Dainava* under the direction of Darius Polikaitis; the Lithuanian Folk Dance Group *Grandis* under the direction of Violeta Smieliauskaitė-Fabianovich; *Kanklės Ensemble of Chicago* under the direction of Genė Razuviene; and recitations by Audrė Budrytė and the Lithuanian Heritage School students.

The evening's program was preceded by a photo exhibit arranged by Leonas Narbutis, Vice president of LAC Cultural Council, to show fifty years of activities by the Lithuanian-American Community in its various fields of endeavors. A reception with music by *Tėviškės Kapela*, directed by Stasė Jagminienė, provided a happy ending to the evening's festivities.



Sunday, October 14 started with a Mass of Thanksgiving at Nativity BVM Lithuanian R.C. Church. Chief celebrant and homilist was Reverend Bishop Jonas Kauneckas from Lithuania. Concurrently, a special service was held at Tėviškės (Homeland) Parish of Evangelical Lithuanian-Americans. In the afternoon, the concert by Lithuania's eminent boys' choir *Ažuoliukas* in Maria High School auditorium drew a full house of enthusiastic listeners.

Vytautas Miškinis, the choir's teacher and musical director, evoked remarkable disciplined performances from his singers. The rapport between the boys and their teacher is one of mutual respect and affection. A standing ovation at the end of the program elicited more than one encore from *Ažuoliukas*.

The next day *Ažuoliukas* flew to Salt Lake City where they successfully participated in a week long Youth Choirs' Friendship Festival. From Salt Lake City, they flew to Canada for concerts in Toronto and Ottawa before returning to Lithuania exhausted, but jubilant about their North American tour, which also included concerts in Washington, New York City, Cleveland and other cities.

The organizing committee published a 200-page anniversary program book, edited by Jūratė

Budrienė. It included official greetings from President Bush of the United States and President Valdas Adamkus of Lithuania, as well as other American and Lithuanian dignitaries. It also provided an historical glimpse into the activities of the LAC with a listing of all chapters, and former and current national officials.

The Lithuanian-American Community will continue to celebrate the Golden Jubilee through this and next year as the original LAC chapters hold their own 50th celebrations. Anniversary celebrations need to bring together the descendants of old

and the new generations of Lithuanian immigrants. Unless the LAC taps and unites the talents and energies of the newest arrivals together with those of former generations, all that has been accomplished and preserved by the LAC and the earliest immigrant pioneers of 19th and early 20th centuries will be lost. Let us use the spirit of the Jubilee not to dwell on the past, but to look forward to the future to carry on our traditions and to continue the social, educational, and cultural services for the future generations of Lithuanian-Americans. ♦

Scenes from the Jubilee Celebration



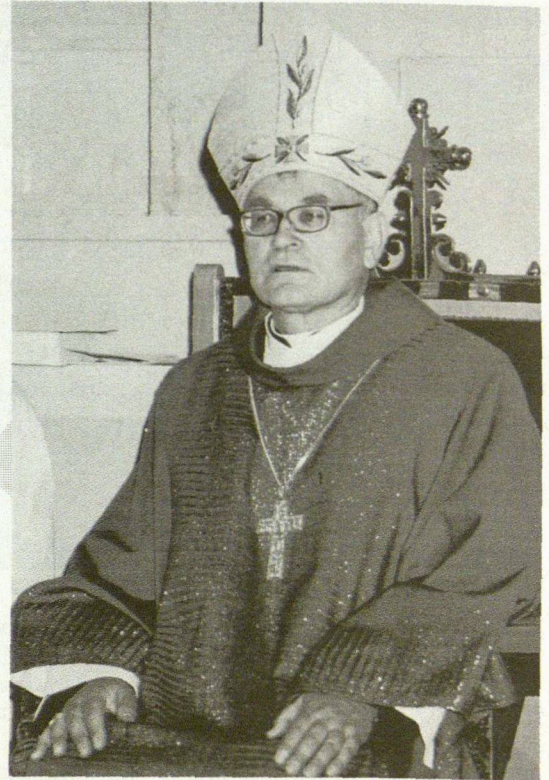
S. Algimantas Gečys, pres. of the LAC National Executive Committee, delivers his annual report to the LAC Board of Directors. From left: LAC Board of Directors officers B. Juodelis, Dr. P. Kisielius (also chairman of the 50th Jubilee Committee), and B. Vilutis.

Photo: K. Razgaitis



Delegation from Lithuania to the Seimas and LAC Joint Commission session Oct. 8–11, 2001. From left: V. Karbauskis, prof. V. Gontis, Dr. R. Motuzas, prof. A. Gaižutis, V. Vidugiris (LAC representative), J. Šniaukštienė, A. Sakalas, J. Razma, A. Lydeka, prof. S. Vaitekūnas, R. Griškėlis (Lithuanian World Center official), Lithuania's Minister of Education Dr. A. Monkevičius, and prof. K. Makarūnas.

Photo: A. Rugjenius



His excellency Bishop Jonas Kauneckas, from Lithuania, during the LAC 50th Anniversary Mass of Thanksgiving on October 14, 2001 in Chicago.

Photo: J. Tamulaitis



Recipients of the LAC 50th Jubilee Awards for Fostering Lithuanian Heritage among Lithuanian-American Youth. From left: for the Knights of Lithuania — Robert A. Martin, jr.; for the Lithuanian Folk Dance Institute — Nijolė Papienė; for the Ateitininkai — Dr. Vytautas Narutis; for the Lithuanian Scouts — Birutė Banaitienė; for the Lithuanian Foundation — Dr. Antanas Razina and Povilas Kilius.

Photo: J. Tamulaitis



Marija Remienė received an appreciation award from prof. Vytautas Miškinis for arranging the American concert tour. From left: V. Miškinis — Musical Director of the AŽUOLIUKAS Boys' Choir; M. Remienė — Chairperson of the LAC Cultural Council; and S. A. Gečys — pres: Of the LAC National Executive Committee.

Photo: J. Tamulaitis



The AŽUOLIUKAS Boys' Choir during their concert in Chicago, Oct. 14th at the LAC 50th Jubilee. Walking across the stage is Vytautas Miškinis, the Musical Director.

Photo: J. Tamulaitis



TĖVIŠKĖS KAPELA plays Lithuanian music at the reception following the formal festivities of the 50th Jubilee Program on Oct. 13th. In the center is the KAPELA's director Stasė Jagminienė.

Photo: J. Tamulaitis



KANKLĖS players and the *DAINAVA CHOIR* singers in the background after their performance at the LAC 50th Jubilee. First at the right in front is Genė Razumienė, director and teacher of the *KANKLĖS* ensemble.

Photo: J. Tamulaitis

Zita Petkus

LITHUANIANS IN SEATTLE:

Origins of a Thriving Community

For its 30th birthday 20 years ago, the national Lithuanian-American Community of the USA, Inc. published a commemorative volume incorporating chapter histories to that date. In celebration of its 50th jubilee, the organization prepared a history of all its chapters, including that of Washington State, for the time period 1981-2000. Below is the overview excerpted from a manuscript that was submitted to the national Lithuanian-American Community on behalf of the Washington State Chapter.

Old-timers recall that although the Seattle Lithuanian-American Community was quite active in the 1950's and 60's, membership dropped off, and the pace slowed down in the 1970's. However, in 1979 the idea of "community" took hold once again, and the local chapter of the national Lithuanian-American Community was revived under the leadership of the new president, Ina Bertulytė Bray, with an executive board consisting of Victor Vytautas Lapatinskas, vice president; Bruno Gediminas Morkūnas, treasurer; and Nijolė Maria Raišys, secretary. From that point on, it seemed that the community flourished and grew by leaps and bounds; its activities expanding to encompass diverse cultural, social, and political aspects of Lithuanian interest.

Back in 1979, there were even fewer Lithuanians in Seattle. The membership roster contained well under a hundred names: some were World War II refugees and their children, others were de-

scendants of earlier immigrants, and there was a significant number of "mixed" families (i.e., only one of the spouses being Lithuanian) with no Lithuanian language fluency.

As the reinvented community entered the 1980's, it became clear very quickly that its future stood at risk unless steps were taken to ensure an approach of inclusion, not exclusion on the basis of not knowing the Lithuanian language – as was the unspoken norm elsewhere. Therefore, early on it was decided to conduct community events in English whenever there were non-speakers of Lithuanian present – a radical concept for its time. Over the years this strategy has had great success in bringing together all people of Lithuanian heritage, especially the youngsters, and their friends. No one is excluded – the important common denominator being a connection to "Lithuanianism".

Community life got an additional kick-start with the establishment of the *Lietutis* Lithuanian Folk Dance Group in 1981. Yes, the group provided a

ZITA PETKUS received an honorary appointment as Tulpė Times representative to the Seattle chapter of the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. This article first appeared in the Tulpė Times May 2001 issue.

fun opportunity for people to get together on a frequent and regular basis, but it also fostered the development of friendships and strengthened ties within the greater context of Community life. Many of the dancers became among the most active of Community members and found themselves working together in leadership roles on other Lithuanian projects.

Also in 1981, *Tulpė Times* began publication. An effort to keep Community members in touch with their Lithuanian interests, the bilingual quarterly newsletter started out humbly as a one-time only project. Twenty years later, it continues to have "something for everyone" as it addresses political, cultural, and social interests of the Community, no longer just locally, but internationally. On the occasion of *Tulpė's* fifth birthday in 1986, president Ina Bertulytė Bray wrote: "You have provided the glue that has bound us together."

During its first four years, *Tulpė* stayed away from controversial politics due to concerns about potential reprisals against relatives behind the Iron Curtain. However, in 1985, the floodgates opened with the publication of an article on the Helsinki Accords, and it's been "no holds barred" ever since. In the course of its 20 years *Tulpė Times* has obtained recognition and highly favorable reviews from the wider Lithuanian Community nationwide.

Lithuanian activities in Washington state aren't exclusive to the auspices of the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. A large number of Community members also belong to the local chapter of the Daughters of Lithuania, a charitable organization open to all Lithuanian women. Established in 1975, the Seattle chapter is particularly proud that two of the founders of this international organization, Aleksandra "Mama" Gylys and her daughter, Aldona Minelga, are still active locally. The Daughters host annual workshops in Easter egg dyeing and Lithuanian Christmas tree straw ornament construction, and also hold a yearly fundraiser picnic open to all families and friends. Their motto, "a helping hand for the needy," keeps them focused on fund-raising in support of charitable causes, most recently, needy children in Lithuania. To this end they periodically sponsor bake sales, organize garage sales, and also feature arts and crafts sales.

Seattle's Lithuanian-American Community is justifiably proud of a whole line of talented and

dedicated presidents who not only provided leadership, but with their energy, commitment, and vision prodded, urged, dragged, coaxed, and inspired the community into an impressive scope of Lithuanian activity. In particular, Ina Bertulytė Bray, Irena Blekys, and Jūratė Mažeika-Harrison spring to mind. Their respective administrations operated during the dramatic era of Lithuania's rebirth and re-establishment of independence, when the intensity of political involvement and cultural expression locally paralleled the passion and excitement of events in Lithuania. During those exhilarating but tense times, it seemed that not a day, not an hour went by, without requiring prompt Community response and involvement, at which these three leaders excelled.

Local Baltic-Americans discovered the benefits of inter-community cooperation in 1984, working together on a large scale Baltic cultural exhibit, the first of its kind (though not the last!) in Seattle, at the Nordic Heritage Museum. Thenceforth, Latvians, Estonians, and Lithuanians have joined forces in diverse settings: folk dance parties, political demonstrations, community picnics, and, in recent years, auctions and other projects in support of the Baltic Studies Program at the University of Washington.

In 1986, the Baltic Action Committee was formed to strengthen the joint political clout of the three local communities. Leadership responsibilities were rotated, so that Lithuanians also took their turn in heading up the committee.

With the above elements in place – strong leadership, a philosophy of inclusion, social and networking opportunities, a system for regular communication, and inter-community cooperation with other Balts – over the years the Seattle Chapter has evolved into a dynamic and thriving community that has come to the notice of and commands the respect of larger communities elsewhere. ♦

Editor's Postscript: Lithuania recently opened a consulate in Seattle. Lithuanian ambassador to the U.S. Vygaudas Ušackas spoke at a two-day Seattle Conference on NATO Enlargement in the Baltic States at the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington on Nov. 29th detailing the Lithuanian view on expansion in the Alliance and what that will mean for regional security and cooperation with Russia.

Vygaudas Ušackas

The Baltic States and Russia in an Enlarged Europe

The following is an excerpt from a speech made at The Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS) Seminar in Washington, D.C. on November 13th, 2001.

The common agenda and common efforts to advance the vision of Europe whole and free make us believe that we are within reach to utilize the historic window of opportunity in 2002. As we progress towards this goal [inclusion to NATO], we nevertheless remain realists and acknowledge the demanding and possible bumpy road still ahead of us.

First, we still may need, as my President Valdas Adamkus said on the 10th of September at the CSIS, to counter the (for us a hardly comprehensible) argument: "you are not like us, so we don't want you". However neuralgic to this argument we may be, the best counteraction, however, remains consistent in our efforts to further economic progress and strengthen defense capabilities and to continue to deal with appearing shortcomings of each of us.

Secondly, we may still need to be innovative and redouble our efforts to outreach Russia and to prove for some who are still suspicious – and what for us is self-evident – that the Baltics are not anti-Russian and our aspirations to join NATO will not poison US/Western-Russian relations, in particular at this critical juncture of the war against terrorism. On the contrary, Euro-Atlantic integration of the Baltic States opens new opportunities for us all, for Europe, for the U.S. and for Russia itself.

From my point of view, the positive agenda of Baltic-Russia relations, which was presented by President Adamkus at the CSIS on Sept. 10, 2001,

becomes even more appealing as we witness a change of Russian attitudes towards the U.S. and the West in general.

It remains to be seen whether President's Putin support for the U.S. actions against terrorism, closure of Soviet era military bases in Cuba and Vietnam, and the softening position on NATO enlargement constitute a part of his tactics for the medium term geopolitical considerations and economic needs or it is a much in-depth change of the strategy in relations with the West, which some have already named as a promising new paradigm of relations between Russia and the West.

I, myself, being an advocate of "consistency and fact building diplomacy with Russia", believe that further efforts of the Baltic states and their friends to "reach" practical cooperative activities with Russia may further reduce anxieties over Baltic membership in NATO and facilitate better appreciation of Russia's cooperation/integration with the West or, at least if not at first, clarify the degree of Russia's readiness to be integrated with the West.

From the outset, let me clarify my understanding of verbs of "Integration or cooperation". Currently, I am often asked, what do Lithuanians/Baltics think about Russian membership in NATO and/or EU. My answer to the American, European, and Russian friends is: "Yes, Russia, which shares the values and conducts herself in accordance to the ideals and principles of the communities which have gathered around the key Euro-Atlantic institutions EU and NATO, would be a success to both

VYGAUDAS UŠACKAS is the Ambassador of Lithuania to the United States

them and us. Moreover, keeping in mind our complex history, Russia, acting like any other country of Euro Atlantic community, would be an important guarantee for stability and security in the region”.

However, the key prerequisites for this (what I consider not a joke) “happy ending” is, first, appreciation of what kind of requirements (including thousands of EU directives) the memberships in EU and NATO contain, and how this would affect the country concerned.

Secondly, unwavering commitment to democracy and determination to pursue demanding economic, political, and military reforms by the President of Russia and by the Russian political class majority. And last but not least, it is the will of the nation itself to be in alliance politically and economically with the West through core Western institutions.

The lack of all the above mentioned prerequisites is probably why the public consideration by some Russian leaders about Russia joining NATO have often been considered not convincing, neither for the Americans or Europeans, or for the Russians themselves. As one senior Russian diplomat said to me the other day: “...it’s going to take 200 years before Russia will be willing and ready to adopt NATO military interoperability requirements”.

Therefore, realistically one can speak at the moment not about the memberships of Russia in NATO or the EU, which neither they have asked for, nor I would imagine at the moment they would have been granted, but rather about the degree of Russian involvement and engagement with NATO or the EU.

The new contours of Russian “integration” have been already made public by recent interviews of Vladimir Putin to the press representatives prior to his visit to the U.S., when he spelled out the goals to get for Russia the chance to participate in the alliance’s decision making and to significantly improve Russia-NATO relations. If this happens, then according to President Putin, “Russia is prepared to reconsider its previous opposition to NATO expansion to the three Baltic States”.

The reference to participation in the decision making process is not by accident. I believe President Putin, being a realist and pragmatic, has now understood that Baltic membership in NATO is a natural process, which is going to happen anyway

and ultimately. It does not threaten Russia’s security as membership of Poland was not a threat. However, my previous experience with Russia, when she was unable to constrain NATO during the Kosovo campaign and Putin’s overall goal to restore Russia’s strength and role in international affairs, leads me to believe that current policies of Putin are only natural because; first, it aims at regaining influence and acquire leverage over the decision making process on key subjects of international politics and, secondly, it promotes further avenues for needed cooperation with the West to bring know-how, investments and technologies to Russia, which are so needed for the country’s recovery and modernization.

What the Baltic countries can do in this context is to continue to build cooperation with Russia and its adjacent regions so as to reinforce a positive trend of appreciation about mutually beneficial cooperation between Russia and enlarging NATO and the EU.

The following basic agreements/understandings and practical steps could facilitate this policy:

- Common understanding that Russian cooperation with the West and the U.S., specifically, are made by Russia’s own choice and not by force. President Putin’s statement that it was time for Russia to end its isolation from the West and “to become a full-fledged member of the international community” is confirmation of it.
- In pursuit of its national interests to regain the strength and place in World Affairs, Russia needs the West/U.S. economically, politically, and strategically to promote investments and thus economic change; to prepare herself for membership in the WTO; and to be in coalition against a possible threat of terrorism.
- Equally, membership of the Baltic states in the EU and NATO, will enlarge the area of countries and reach Russia, where the EU legislation will prevail, free trade will flourish, and investments will flow. Therefore instead of publicly asking or implicitly anticipating “prices” or “gifts” for the support to anti-terrorism or NATO enlargement, Russian political leaders should be encouraged to further advance appreciation of its own decisions to cooperate with the West/U.S.

- Listening to warnings about the possible new “Gorbachev’s fate scenarios” for Mr. Putin and “that the attempt to force a reversal of the foreign policy course should not be ruled out”, tend to agree with the conclusion of Michael McFaul from Stanford University that most importantly, Putin needs the Bush administration to win the Afghan war. “Victory would vindicate Putin’s policy and quiet critics. An American victory would demonstrate to Russia the benefits of being part of the powerful West and the negative consequences of being an enemy of the West.” (... Liberals within Russia also would be politically strengthened, and communists and nationalists weakened. Ironically, rather than a different policy on NATO expansion or Russian debt relief, the best strategy for improving U.S.-Russian ties is to win the war in Afghanistan.)
- At the same time and in the context of the above mentioned, NATO, EU and the candidate countries like the Baltic states, should continue steady and consistent practical cooperative activities with Russia, supported with the enhanced information programme which would help – what at this moment is perceived – the steps already being made by President Putin to change Russian attitudes towards NATO.

President Adamkus in his speech at the CSIS on the Sept. 10th, 2001 laid down the vision for the future Baltic-Russian cooperation. This vision is based upon what has been achieved at home and in the region during the past decade.

First, the Baltic States remain committed to the goal that the borders of the Baltic states should be among the most friendly and cooperative in all Europe. Lithuania and Russia are already off to a good start, especially with regard to Kaliningrad.

We are prepared to build on our successful cooperation with Russia in Kaliningrad and to expand cross-border cooperation with other neighboring regions of Russia and make it a priority. Academic exchange, sharing experience on how to widen the business network, improve public administration, and to develop gradual military contacts are just a few examples to mention. There should be more people-to-people contacts between our countries and regions.

Second, we have a common interest with Russia

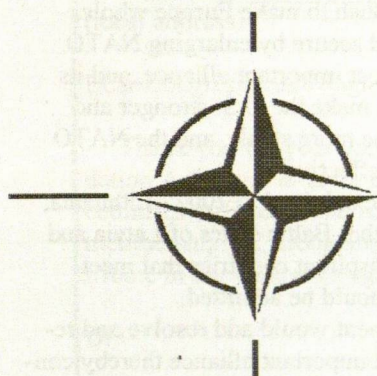
in regional economic growth and prosperity. The more securely we are anchored in the West, the more open we will be to trade and expanded economic cooperation with the East, including with Russia. For centuries Lithuania has been a natural gateway between Europe and Russia. We will be better able to assume that role once we are members of the EU and NATO.

Third, a Russia that is democratic and at peace with itself and with its neighbors is an essential Lithuanian interest. No one will benefit more than us from the success of Russian democratic reform. We, too, want to see a Russia that feels integrated with, and not isolated from, the West. That is why Lithuania will be among those countries in the European Union and NATO who are politically committed to working to make sure that the doors of the Euro-Atlantic community are open for expanded cooperation with Russia.

Finally, at some point Russia will have to come to peace with its history, including with our countries. We recognize that the Russian people suffered as much as anyone else under the yoke of communism. True reconciliation between the Baltic states and Russia can only be based on the truth about history and an honest reckoning with the past. We do not see this as a precondition for moving forward. But so long as Russia is in denial about the past, and insists on upholding the myth that our countries voluntarily joined Soviet Union, our peoples will harbor doubts as to whether Moscow has truly and finally accepted the legitimacy of our sovereignty and independence.

I am more hopeful and optimistic about the U.S.-Russia relationship and the Lithuania-Russia relationship than at any time in the past ten years. It is in Russia’s interest for Lithuania and the Baltic states to be part of NATO. The events of September 11th made this way of thinking more acceptable to Russia as it joins the new world coalition, and I believe Mr. Putin’s visit to the U.S. will further solidify this new way of thinking. We in Lithuania have worked hard at our relationship with Russia, and we will continue to do our part. We are optimistic Russia will do the same not just in the context of NATO enlargement but also in the wide range of issues within which we deal with each other. ◆

From the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. Washington Office



AMERICA AND LITHUANIA'S FUTURE IN NATO

On October 24, 2001 Congressman Doug Bereuter (R-Nebraska) introduced into the House International Relations Committee the Freedom Consolidation Act of 2001 (H.R.3167). The draft legislation was cosponsored by Congressmen Lantos, Hastert, Bonior, Armev, Hyde, Gilman, Goss, Cox, Gellegly, Mica, and Tanner.

On the same date, Senator Jesse Helms (R-North Carolina) introduced the same bill into the Senate Foreign Relations Committee as S. 1572. The cosponsors included Senators Lieberman, Lugar, Durbin, Smith (Oregon), Mikulski, Kyl, Allen, Hagel, McCain, Brownback, McConnell, Frist, Dewine, Voinovich, Grassley, Hatch, Lott and Enzi.

The Freedom Consolidation Act of 2001 affirms the vision that President Bush expressed this June in Warsaw when he called for a Europe whole and undivided, and urging a further round of NATO enlargement at the 2002 NATO Summit. The Act is bipartisan as it is consistent with the policies of former President Clinton who launched the first round of NATO enlargement.

The bill describes how the NATO enlargement would aid in the global campaign against terrorism and that the proposed legislation would further peace and stability in Europe. Modest levels of financial assistance are included to assist the aspirant countries to better prepare for their membership in NATO. (The full text of the Act may be found on the internet at www.uscongress.usg.)

The interests of the United States and Lithuania would be best served by a quick enactment of this legislation. Enactment would strengthen the resolve of the Bush Administration in supporting NATO enlargement in 2002 and inviting Lithuania, its fellow Baltic neighbors, and other adequately prepared aspirants into NATO.

We were very pleased that on November 7 the House of Representatives adopted with a 372 vote majority the now renamed Gerald B.H. Solomon Freedom Consolidation Act. For a listing of the roll call vote, please refer to the following internet address: <http://clerkweb.house.gov/cgi-bin/vote.exe?year=2001&rollnumber=431>. Senate approval is now required.

Additional support for S. 1572, the Freedom Consolidation Act 2001, is urgently needed from Senators of both parties. Accordingly, the Lithuanian-American Community's Public Affairs Council seeks your assistance that not only Lithuanian Americans, but all voters in your localities urge their Senators to support S. 1572. It would also be advisable to send your Congressperson a thank you note for a vote cast in favor of H.R. 3167 for the now renamed Gerald B.H. Solomon Freedom Consolidation Act or a note of concern in the event of a negative vote.

Listed below are some talking points and samples of letters that may be written to Senators and Congressmen. The writers may wish to include some thoughts on their personal experiences and the values of individual freedom and opportunity in

THE LAC WASHINGTON OFFICE is located at 11250 Roger Bacon Dr., Suite 17C, Reston, VA 20190. E-mail: lacinc@erols.com. Algirdas Rimas is the chairman of the LAC Public Affairs Council at this office.

the United States. Many may wish to share the thought that we wish to share the values of freedom that we cherish in the United States with all the people of Europe, including Lithuania.

It is advisable to mail hand written letters to Congressional offices in the respective states and electoral districts, not Washington, or to have them sent via fax. Please look up the address of your representative's office in your local telephone directory or enquire at your area public library. Sending e-mail is not recommended as the large volume of such messages arriving at Congressional offices precludes their being given adequate attention .

Talking points to use in discussing NATO enlargement and the Freedom Consolidation Act

1. I am your constituent, and I have a strong interest in the passage of the Freedom Consolidation

Act 2001 (S. 1572).

2. I urge you to support this bill because it affirms the bipartisan policy of both former President Clinton and President Bush to make Europe whole, free, undivided, and secure by enlarging NATO.

3. NATO is our most important alliance, and its enlargement would make the U.S. stronger and more secure, Europe more stable, and the NATO organization more effective.

4. NATO should be enlarged in 2002. Lithuania, together with the other Baltic states of Latvia and Estonia, and other aspirant countries that meet NATO standards should be admitted.

5. NATO enlargement would add resolve and resources to our most important alliance thereby contributing to our a vital national objective: victory in the global campaign against terrorism.

Sample Letters

To your U.S. Senator –

The Honorable _____
(address of local office)

Dear Senator _____:

I am writing to urge you to support the Freedom Consolidation Act 2001 (S. 1572). This bill is important to me because it endorses the vision of a Europe whole, undivided, free and secure and reaffirms the strong and bipartisan Congressional commitment to NATO enlargement in 2002.

In the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States, NATO enlargement is especially important because it would affirm our recognition that collective self defense remains vital to our national interests. A stronger NATO alliance would assist us in the global campaign against the scourge of terrorism.

NATO should be enlarged at the 2002 NATO Summit meeting to include Lithuania, the other Baltic countries of Latvia and Estonia, and other aspirant countries that meet NATO standards for membership.

Sincerely,
Your full name

To your U.S. Congressman/woman:

The Honorable _____
(local address)

Dear Congressman/Congresswoman _____:

Thank you for your vote in favor of H.R. 3167, the Gerald B.H. Solomon Freedom Consolidation Act. I am in favor of NATO enlargement in 2002 to include Lithuania, the other Baltic countries of Estonia and Latvia, and other aspirant countries that meet NATO standards for membership. A strong and enlarged NATO is important to the United States, and it would contribute in our campaign against terrorism.

Or:

I write to express my disagreement with your negative vote on H.R. 3167, the Gerald B.H. Solomon Freedom Consolidation Act. I am in favor of NATO enlargement in 2002 to include Lithuania, the other Baltic countries of Estonia and Latvia, and other aspirant countries that meet NATO standards for membership. A strong and enlarged NATO is important to the United States, and it would contribute in our campaign against terrorism.

Sincerely,
Your full name

NATO Updates...

From the Press**

Balt's NATO Candidacy Advancing

On November 7, the U.S. House of Representatives took the unprecedented step of approving security assistance funds for countries that aspire to join NATO. The three Baltic states were earmarked as recipients, along with four other applicant countries (Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria) from the Vilnius Ten group. The House authorized US\$55 million. The bill is expected to pass in the Senate as well.

This legislation's international political significance is fourfold. First, it passed by the overwhelming margin of 372 to 46, indicating a substantially broader American support for NATO's enlargement than had recently been assumed. Second, while the measure concerns seven countries,

the floor debate focused, because of the Russian factor, on the Baltic candidacies. The debate and the overwhelming vote laid conclusively to rest the thesis that NATO ought not to admit countries bordering Russia.

Third, the Baltic states' shares in the overall funding are proportionately higher than the shares of the other four countries, in what constitutes a reflection on the Balts' homework for NATO and political backing for their candidacies. And, fourth, the vote's timing, on the eve of the U.S.-Russia summit, should dissuade Russian President Vladimir Putin from trying to place NATO's Baltic enlargement on the bargaining table. Some of Putin's prominent advisers are recommending that

he try that, apparently underestimating the Bush administration's commitment to enlarging the alliance.

The term "enlargement" might itself be inadequate, as NATO's Secretary-General George Robertson recently suggested in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (October 23). The applicant countries themselves, Robertson pointed out, are initiators of the process as a matter of sovereign policy choice. In that vein, the House International Relations Committee chairman Henry Hyde argued that "it would be shameful as well as stupid of us to ignore their pleas to become members of the Atlantic Alliance" (AP, Reuters, November 7).

This level of political support increases U.S. traction power to lead the European allies toward admitting the Baltic states into the alliance next year. It suggests, moreover, perhaps for the first time that a more comprehensive round of admissions is a politically realistic goal for next year's summit.

On the military track, the Baltic states and NATO ran a massive naval exercise in de-mining operations, MCOPEST-2001 (mine clearing operation Estonia), [from Nov. 4th to the 19th] in the Bay of Tallinn. NATO's minesweeping squadron (MCMFORNORTH), the Estonian-Latvian-Lithuanian naval squadron Baltron, and a Norwegian divers' unit participated in the operation, which involved twenty-two ships from seven NATO and Nordic countries. In terms of both participation and duration, this exercise was the most ample of its kind since the restoration of the Baltic states' independence. For the first time, a NATO-aspirant Baltic state – Estonia in this case – is commanding a major allied exercise (BNS, ETA, LETA, October 31, November 5-6; see the Monitor, September 6, 17, 28, October 10). ♦

***This article was edited by Vladimir Socor, socor@cybernet-ag.de for the Jamestown Foundation, Monitor, Volume VII, Issue 207, 09 Nov 01.*

From the Baltic News Service **Putin speaks on NPR with a Seattle Lithuanian**

A Seattle-area Lithuanian, Rimas Mikšys, had an opportunity to question visiting Russian president Vladimir Putin during his interview with National Public Radio on the issue of NATO expansion to include the Baltic states. The interview was conducted by Robert Siegel in NPR's New York offices.

At first, Putin tried to evade the question with a rerun of 20th century Cold War history and concluded with, "... So what I am trying to say is that while Russia acknowledges the role of NATO in the world of today, Russia is prepared to expand its cooperation with this organization. And if we change the quality of the relationship, if we change the format of the relationship between Russia and NATO, then I think NATO enlargement will cease to be an issue -- will no longer be a relevant issue. I guess that would be my comment."

Not satisfied, NPR radio interviewer Robert Siegel repeated the question posed by Rimas Mikšys, and Putin responded by saying, " Not only I am not opposed to it, I actually don't think it



makes any sense. If we were to deal with increasing its national security, NATO enlargement does not make sense. We of course are not in a position to tell people what to do. We cannot forbid people to make certain choices if they want to increase the security of their nations in a particular way. But I don't think that enlarging or enhancing NATO mechanically makes any sense."

The Baltic states and other Central European states anticipate an invitation to join NATO during the summit meeting in Prague in November 2002. For the full transcript see <http://expandnato.org> (see under "Baltic"). ♦

From the Baltic News Service

NATO Information Center opened in Vilnius

International Security and NATO Information Center opened at the National Martynas Mažvydas Library in Vilnius on Nov. 19th. The center was established at the initiative of the Lithuanian Atlantic Treaty Association (LATA) and Mažvydas Library. The Czech, Canadian, Norwegian, Turkish, Danish and U.S. embassies in Lithuania as well as the Foreign Ministry contributed most to the implementation of the project.

The opening of the center was attended by Lithuanian Foreign Minister Antanas Valionis, foreign ambassadors residing in Lithuania, Lithuanian MPs, representatives of non-governmental organizations and other guests.

Valionis presented the center with a set of the most recent works by foreign authors on international security and NATO, said the Foreign Ministry. ♦

Lithuanian Defense officials in U.S.

Deputy Lithuanian defense minister Povilas Malakauskas and director of the ministry's NATO Department lieutenant colonel Romualdas Petkevičius are visiting the United States during the last week of November.

Their goal is to familiarize U.S. Defense Department officials, representatives of NGOs and congressional aides with Lithuanian preparations for NATO membership, reforms in the Lithuanian armed forces, and review of the military command structure.

A Defense Ministry press release said that with one year left to go in the run up to the meeting of NATO heads of state in Prague, where a decision on new members is expected to be issued, Lithuania is making public its progress and readiness to join the organization.

Similar trips to Germany, Denmark and Poland have already been made. ♦

From the Baltic News Service

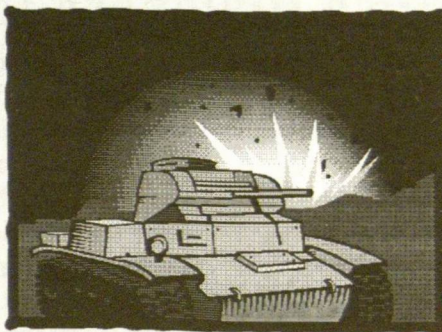
Autumn Thunder training exercises in full swing

Autumn Thunder exercise start in Lithuania's central training grounds

A training session, "Autumn Thunder", held by Lithuania's motorized infantry brigade Žemaitija started in the central training grounds in Pabradė on Nov. 26th, the Defense Ministry reported.

It said the "Autumn Thunder", held for the second time in the history of Lithuanian armed forces, was attended by Žemaitija's two battalions from Šiauliai and Tauragė.

This year's training session focused on the battalion's attack and defense capacities, with firing of mortars, anti-tank and rifle weapons during the exercise both in daylight and at night.



The war games, in Pabradė some 50 kilometers northeast of Vilnius until Dec. 2nd, embraced more than 800 professional service troops and conscripts, 147 pieces of military equipment, and four airplanes.

One of the goals of the exercise was development of physical and psychological endurance. Tasks were also

intended to improve the skills of organizing and carrying out defense and attack, and step up interaction with the higher superiors. ♦

From the Baltic News Service

Lithuania's Mažeikių Nafta causes oil spill in Baltic Sea

After submarine pumping hoses at the terminal on the Baltic Sea apparently broke loose, Butingė oil terminal caused an oil spill into the Baltic Sea on Friday, Nov. 23rd. Lithuania's rescue services and the Butingė oil terminal completed the clean-up of oil on Sunday afternoon, Nov. 25th.

Lithuanian environmental protection minister Arūnas Kundrotas said this latest oil spill amounted to at least 40 metric tons of crude released into the Baltic Sea, and damage to the environment could be calculated to USD 750,000.

The Mažeikių Nafta (Mazeikiai Oil) company, technically the owner of the Butingė facility, told BNS that about four cubic meters or some 3.2 tons of oil were collected in the Baltic Sea off the Lithuanian coast during the three days of work. Mažeikių Nafta is partially owned and fully administered by the U.S. company Williams.

Oil pumping activities at Butingė were temporarily halted following the spill that happened when a Norwegian tanker ship, *Catherine Knutsen*, was involved in cargo transfer



operations at the floating terminal on the extreme northern coast of Lithuania.

Mažeikių Nafta, operated by U.S. energy group Williams International, said that aerial surveys located no oil slick in the Baltic Sea except for a small area of the water covered with a thin oil slick some 11-12 kilometers off the Lithuanian coast. The oil slick was sprayed with a biological dispersal agent on Saturday.

The company claimed the agent, called "simple green," was harmless to the environment. The refinery's terminal and pipeline director Glenn Emery said that the collection of contaminated water was completed on Sunday, with the collected oil loaded onto another vessel at the Klaipėda port later that day.

According to the press release, divers

worked at the Butingė buoy's submarine hose on Sunday to disconnect the hose from the buoy. The submarine examination showed that the oil entered the marine environment from one of the underwater hoses connecting the buoy with the pipeline. The final conclusion on the reason of the oil spillage will be published after an examination of the hose.

Mažeikių Nafta's pipeline and terminal director Glenn Emery pledged in a press release to work together with government officials and to provide them with information about the circumstances of the "unfortunate accident."

On Nov. 23rd, Lithuanian Prime Minister Algirdas Brazauskas and the prosecutor general ordered investigations into the latest in a string of spills at Butingė. The PM's board of inquiry into the cause and scale of the accident is to present findings by Dec. 4th. Lithuanian Transportation Vice-Minister Arijus Ramonas heads the PM's working group.

The General Prosecutor's Office said it was motivated to investigate the incident because

of the pattern of negligence emerging in a series of oil spills by the company. The Klaipėda area Prosecutor's Office has been ordered to head the prosecution's investigation into the accident.

This latest spill is the third since Butingė began operations in 1999. The last oil spill at Butingė occurred in March, again with a Norwegian tanker, the *North Pacific*, which was transferring crude. In that incident a line anchoring the tanker to a terminal buoy snapped in heavy winds, causing a hose pumping oil to break. Around three metric tons of oil joined the waters of the Baltic Sea in that event, some of it reaching Latvian waters. Some of the oil was collected, and the company used the same biological dispersal agent, although in contradiction to Lithuanian law, since they hadn't received permission to spray chemicals at sea from the Lithuanian Environmental Protection Ministry. Latvia demanded monetary compensation, and negotiations on a sum are on-going. ◆

Fuel refining facility explodes at Mažeikių Nafta

A fuel-refining facility and its discharge fuel exploded at Lithuania's oil refinery Mažeikių Nafta (Mažeikiai Oil) on Saturday evening, Nov. 24th, but did not cause a fire or injuries of staff members, the company reported.

Spokesman for the Mažeikių Nafta, Tadas Augustauskas said that the plant's production and emergency services responded immediately, putting the facility to halt and ensuring security of the territory.

The oil refining cycle has not been halted because the Mažeikiai company has two analogous facilities. However, production output

has been reduced by 15 percent.

Mažeikių Nafta's experts are looking into causes of the incident. Director general James Sheel said the investigation found that an undetermined amount of petrol leaked into the furnace fuel system. A special team of contractors is expected in Mažeikiai to investigate the damage of the chimney equipment. ◆

C u r r e n t E v e n t s

Lithuania will enter EU only in 2005 -- *The Economist Group*

Lithuania will enter the European Union (EU) not in 2004, as it was expected, but a year later, an expert of *The Economist Group* publishing and consultations organization has said.

Jeremy Kourdi, a consultant of the influential British *The Economist* magazine and chairman of an international business conference in Vilnius in mid-November, told the press that the EU itself will not be ready for taking in new members in 2004.

"The ten candidates have nearly 170 million residents, which is more than Germany, Great Britain, and France would make up together," Kourdi told journalists.

In his words, *The Economist Group* forecasts that the EU enlargement will take place in two waves, with Hungary, Estonia, Slovenia, Poland, Czech Republic and Cyprus, which launched membership talks in 1998, entering the union in 2004.

According to Kourdi, Lithuania, Latvia, Slovakia, and Malta, having started membership negotiations in 2000, will join the EU in 2005. Such is the

opinion of all of *The Economist Group*, Kourdi underscored.

On the other hand, official EU representatives have said that Lithuania might expect to join the organization already in 2004 if it continues with the current integration and reform tempos. But in Kourdi's evaluation, the states of "the first wave" are more advanced in the membership negotiations.

Kourdi led a two-day roundtable discussion for the Lithuanian government and local and foreign businesspeople during the conference. Gintaras Rimšelis, director general of Kraft Foods Co. in the Baltic states and an active participant in the discussion, said he understood that Lithuania, currently holding EU talks very successfully, will have to pass through the "most complicated stage of integration".

According to Rimšelis, the discussion participants said that the present leaders of Lithuania must prepare the country for transition properly since only then it can join the EU smoothly. ◆

— BNS

Lithuania grants Afghanistan humanitarian aid

The Lithuanian government ruled on Nov. 21st to grant 50,000 litas (USD 12,500) to Afghanistan helping to alleviate their suffering, the Cabinet's press service reported.

It said ministers commissioned the Foreign Ministry to transfer the amount to the bank account of the United Nations' (UN) High Commissioner for Refugees, which helps the world's uprooted peoples by providing them with basic necessities such as shelter, food, water, and medicine in emergencies.

According to information available to the Lithuanian government, there are currently over six million persons in Afghanistan in need of urgent humanitarian aid, with the number expected to grow further in the future. After the winter starts, a part of Afghanistan's mountainous regions will be hard to access, leaving local communities without food and other supplies.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees said

that financial contributions were the best way of assistance, adding that humanitarian aid could also be offered in material values from the list compiled by the commissioner's office. According to the guidelines, the humanitarian aid should be brought to states bordering Afghanistan at the contributing country's expense. Therefore, Lithuania decided to offer financial assistance to save transportation costs.

Afghanistan had been extremely exhausted by the fight against occupational Soviet troops ongoing for several decades now, internal wars, and the country's ruling Taliban regime.

In addition to this latest humanitarian aid, The Lithuanian government allocated 200,000 litas to flood-stricken neighboring Poland this summer, and 100,000 litas and 200,000 litas to Ukraine and India, respectively, to fight consequences of natural calamities there. ◆

— BNS

U.S. bestseller shows Lithuania as land of anarchy and crimes

The ambassador of Lithuania to the United States Vygaudas Ušackas invited Jonathan Franzen, author of fiction novel **The Corrections**, to visit Lithuania and discover a real picture of a country that he described as a land of anarchy and crimes in his book.

A passage in **The Corrections**, which won the National Book Award, caricatures the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius with a description of criminal warlords, "chronic coal and electricity shortages, freezing drizzles, drive-by shootings, and heavy dietary reliance on horsemeat."

"I read with interest the attention you showed my country in your work [...] Unfortunately, I was saddened by your portrayal of Lithuania," Ušackas said in a letter to the author.

A New York-based internet newspaper *Smartertimes.com* quoted the head of the Lithuanian-American Community in New York, Giedrė Kumpikas, as saying, "I've never heard of anybody eating horsemeat in Lithuania...I don't know where this gentleman is getting his facts or if it's just hearsay or scandalous rumor."

The criminal warlords and anarchy described in the novel "bear no relation to reality," the International Monetary Fund representative in Lithuania, Mark Horton, told *Smartertimes.com* in response to quotes from Franzen's book.

A publicist, Peter Miller, for Farrar Straus and Giroux, said that the author "picked an Eastern European country at random. He created a Lithuania that I assume was largely in his imagination."

In his letter to Franzen, the Lithuanian ambassador said "I would like to invite you to visit Lithuania and discover the beauty, the vitality of our people and shared sense of values my country has with yours."

According to a U.S. magazine, *The New York Review of Books*, Franzen's fiction novel about an American person coming to Vilnius to help his friend create the website *Lithuania.com* intending to swindle money out of credulous U.S. investors.

— BNS

WTO to grant Lithuania concessions in new obligations

Lithuanian representatives succeeded in convincing the World Trade Organization (WTO) to make a commitment to take into account their requirement to grant Lithuania more favorable conditions when taking on new obligations at the next round of negotiations on the world trade liberalization.

Deputy Lithuanian Foreign Minister Evaldas Ignatavičius told the press that the WTO will take into consideration the proposal by Lithuania to postpone the meeting by the new WTO member states of requirements on the further liberalization of trade until the states meet the accession commitments.

Ignatavičius headed the Lithuanian delegation at the WTO 4th Ministers' Conference on Nov. 9-14 in Doha, Qatar. The forum was the first Lithuania attended as a full-fledged WTO member.

According to Ignatavičius, the taking on of new obligations regarding the reduction of subsidies and state support would negatively affect the functioning of some of the economy sectors, the agricultural sector in particular.

Seven other new WTO member states, Albania, Georgia, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Croatia, Moldova and Oman, joined Lithuania and made a common statement on their large membership commitments, asking to take them into consideration during the negotiations on further trade liberalization, the deputy foreign minister said.

Ignatavičius also said that Lithuania also has certain interests in the recently launched Russian WTO membership negotiations. "Being a WTO member state, we should defend our interests during the Russian negotiations," Ignatavičius said, naming the elimination of restrictions and unfavorable conditions for [Lithuanian] businesspeople in Russia as the most important of the interests. ♦

— BNS

**BNS - news from
the Baltic News Service

Professional Development Fellowships

The Institute of International Education (IIE) announces a fellowship program for young American researchers in professional, policy and public administration-related fields who want to develop a specialized knowledge of the NIS. Candidates may apply for grants to Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Slovak Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine or Uzbekistan.

The program is funded by the U.S. Department of State through the Research and Training for Eastern Europe and the Independent States of the Former Soviet Union Act of 1983 (Title VIII).

The program is intended to support young specialists in the fields of business and economics, education reform, environmental and conservation policy, international relations, journalism, law, public administration and public health.

Fellows will go to a country in the region to deepen their understanding of current reforms and national development, and become familiar with scholarly resources, which they will use in future projects. Applicants will be expected to propose feasible research, study or internship plans for the period of the fellowship and indicate a desired institutional affiliation in the host country.

Applications solely in support of dissertation research or language research will not be considered. Grants are available for periods of three to seven months.

Applicants must: be U.S. citizens; and be at least in the second (or terminal) year of a graduate or professional degree program; or have graduated

within five years from a graduate or professional degree program. Have language ability sufficient to carry out the proposed project by the time of departure from the U.S. Only advanced language study will be approved as part of an award.

Applications will be accepted in the following general fields:

- Business and Economics
- Education Reform
- Environmental and Conservation Policy
- International Relations
- Journalism
- Law
- Public Administration
- Public Health

All applicants will submit a detailed proposal of study/research/ internship that clearly demonstrates how work carried out in the host country will be of benefit to their future plans and professional careers.

The deadline is extended to Friday, March 15, 2002. Finalists, who will be selected by a panel of specialists in appropriate fields, will be interviewed by telephone in mid-April. Final notification will be made in May.

For further information, please contact:

U.S. Student Programs
Professional Development Fellowships
Institute of International Education
809 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017-3580
Tel: (212) 984-5330
Fax: (212) 984-5325
E-mail: pdfnis@iie.org (mailto:pdfnis@iie.org) ◆

Sociology Lecturers in need

Beginning in the fall of 2001, the Sociology Department of Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, Lithuania, began teaching a new series of courses in Social Politics. Courses are being taught to students in the Public Administration program. Future courses that have already been approved will also include Philanthropy and related subjects. During the summer, faculty members sponsored a series of courses for Eastern European university Social Work Department faculty.

The Vytautas Magnus University Sociology Department seeks to network with North American colleagues who have developed and taught such courses, and invites colleagues to consider coming to the University as guest lecturers. For more information, contact:

Social Sciences Dean:
Doc. Dr. Jolanta Kuznecovienė
Tel. +370 7 323 777
El: Jolanta_Kuznecoviene@fc.vdu.lt ◆

Lithuanian becomes "Ford Supermodel of the Year"

Sixteen year-old girl student from Kaunas, Lithuania, Asta Buziliauskaitė, has been named Ford Supermodel of the World 2002 after winning the contest of the same name held in Miami, Florida.

The Ford Models modeling agency is a firm which organizes beauty contests and model searches in some 50 states and around the world annually. Finalists from the global competitions assemble for the supermodel contests held by Ford in the U.S. in fall to fight it out for the title of most fair.

Buziliauskaitė, winner of the latest Ford Supermodel of the World 2002 contest, will now be

asked to sign on to a three-year employment contract with Ford to work at its agency in New York. The employment contract will reportedly net the winner USD 250,000 over the three-year period.

Last summer Buziliauskaitė won the Ford Supermodel of Lithuania 2001 contest. An American girl, Amanda Daniel, whose grandparents are Lithuanian, took second place in the Miami contest at the Level Theater venue.

Ford Supermodel finalists and winners have often gone on to lucrative careers in the fashion and music industries. ♦

— BNS

Australia's new edition of *The Lithuanian Papers*

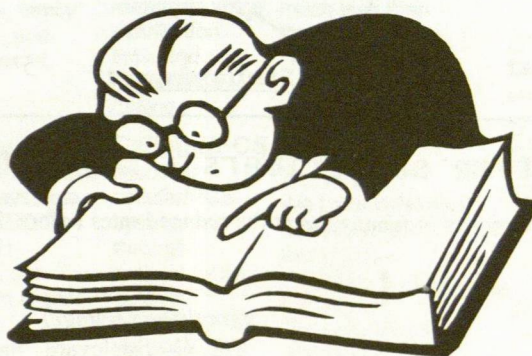
Did you know about the Lithuanian idealists who traveled inside Soviet Russia in the 1970s and 1980s – and, at a great danger to themselves, spread the Word of Jesus? Well, there are millions of English-speaking people in the US, UK, Australia and elsewhere who don't know. Indeed, they have never heard of this peaceful Lithuanian response to the Soviet persecution.

This inspiring story has now been told – for the first time in English – in this year's *Lithuanian Papers* journal.

This year's issue is especially important: in addition to the documentary report on Lithuanian "apostles" in the depths of Russia, the journal has expert articles on suicides in Lithuania, on NATO, relations with Poland, as well as Lithuanian poetry, humour, and more.

Lithuanian Papers has been regularly published by the Lithuanian Studies Society at the University of Tasmania (Australia), for the past 15 years. The price of a single issue is still \$8 in U.S. or Australian currency. This \$8 contribution includes air-mail postage to any address in the world.

You may order by e-mail now,
<ATaskunas@utas.edu.au>



and pay later. Or you may post your order to PO Box 777, Sandy Bay, Tas. 7006, Australia. We accept bank drafts, international postal orders, personal checks, and cash. Sorry, no credit cards.

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